

July 16, 2026

ELIGIBILITY UPDATE: Additional Participation Opportunities for Public School Students Effective for 2026-27

To: Member School Superintendents, Principals, & Athletic Administrators

This memo is to inform member schools of a recent change in state law that expands participation opportunities for certain students attending public high schools in Ohio. Although the OHSA membership voted on this issue in May 2026, the Ohio General Assembly subsequently enacted ORC 3313.5321, otherwise known as the Student Athlete Mobility (SAM) Act. Under this new law, a student attending a public high school may petition to participate in a sport at a neighboring public school if the student's school of attendance does not offer that sport. Importantly, the SAM Act does NOT provide students with an unrestricted choice of another school at which to participate. The following limitations apply:

- The law applies only to students attending public high schools and only when the student's school of attendance does not offer the sport in which the student wishes to participate. Per the law, it does not apply to students enrolled in OHSA member schools serving grades 7-8.
- A student may only petition to participate at a neighboring public school as defined by the law. A student's residential district and/or the availability of a sport within the neighboring districts do not extend additional opportunities.
- **Participation requires the approval of both superintendents, the superintendent of the student's school of attendance and the superintendent of the school at which the student seeks to participate. If either superintendent does not approve the request, the student may not participate at the other school.**
- Students attending a school within a multi-high school district must first petition to participate at another high school within that district. Only after completing that process may the student petition to participate at a neighboring public school, still subject to applicable Superintendent agreement.
- Students participating under this law must satisfy the same requirements as other participants, including all applicable academic, nonacademic and financial requirements, as well as any tryout or team-selection requirements.

There is no paperwork which needs to be submitted to the OHSA office if such an agreement is made. However, to assist member schools, the Executive Director's Office has created a template to help facilitate such an agreement. The link to the form is located here:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/SuptAgree3313.5321.pdf>

The Executive Director's Office has also created guidance and business rules to assist with the assignment of these non-enrolled students. The link to this guidance is located here:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/4-3-1-SAMActGuidance.pdf>

Please contact a member of the Eligibility team if you have any questions about these new options. Best of luck as you finish preparations for the new school year!

For Reference: Participation Options for Non-Enrolled Students

Any alternative options **only apply if the school of attendance does not offer the sport in which the student desires to participate. For a printable version of this information, [please click this link](#).*

Traditional Public School – Single High School District (ORC 3313.5321)

- **Primary Option:** School of enrollment
- **Alternative Option 1:** A public school located in a neighboring school district, subject to Supt. agreement

Traditional Public School – Multi-High School District (ORC 3313.5321)

- **Primary Option:** School of enrollment
- **Alternative Option 1:** A different school sponsored by the same multi-high school district, subject to Supt. assignment per OHSAA business rules
- **Alternative Option 2:** A public school located in a neighboring school district, subject to Supt. agreement

Specialty School – Multi-High School District (ORC 3313.5321 and OHSAA Bylaw 4-3-1, Exception 4)

- **Primary Option:** School of enrollment
- **Alternative Option 1:** A different school sponsored by the same multi-high school district, subject to Supt. assignment per OHSAA business rules
- **Alternative Option 2:** A public school located in a neighboring school district, subject to Supt. agreement

Ice Hockey at a Public High School (ORC 3313.536)

- **Primary Option:** School of enrollment
- **Alternative Option 1:** Any public school located within a 20-mile radius, subject to Supt. agreement

Non-Public High School (ORC 3313.5311)

- **Primary Option:** School of enrollment
- **Alternative Option 1:** A public school located in the student's district of residence
- **Alternative Option 2:** A public school located in the district in which the non-public school is located, subject to Supt. agreement

Ohio Community School (ORC 3313.537)

- **Primary Option:** School of enrollment
- **Alternative Option 1:** A public school located in the student's district of residence

Traditionally Home-Schooled Student (ORC 3313.5312 AND 3313.5313)

- **Primary Option:** A public school located in the student's district of residence
- **Alternative Option 1:** Any other public school, subject to Supt. agreement, and only if the student's district of residence does not offer the sport
- **Alternative Option 2:** Any other public school, pursuant to ORC 3313.5313.