



Ohio High School Athletic Association
4080 Roselea Place
Columbus, Ohio 43214
614-267-2502
www.ohsaa.org

TRANSGENDER POLICY

Consistent with the OHSAA philosophies with respect to participation in interscholastic sports and its mission statement and stated purpose as found in Article 2 of the OHSAA *Constitution*, the Board of Directors hereby adopts the following policy considerations and policy relating to transgender student athlete participation.

Policy Considerations:

The Board of Directors of the OHSAA, Executive Director's Office and member schools do hereby reaffirm the following policy considerations respecting participation in interscholastic sports in Ohio:

1. *Participation in interscholastic and intercollegiate athletics is a valuable part of the education experience for all students.*
2. *Transgender student athletes should have equal opportunity to participate in sports.*
3. *The integrity of women's sports should be preserved.*
4. *Policies governing sports should be based on sound medical knowledge and scientific validity.*
5. *Policies governing sports should be objective, workable, and practicable; they should also be written, available and equitably enforced.*
6. *Policies governing the participation of transgender students in sports should be fair in light of the tremendous variation among individuals in strength, size, musculature, and ability.*
7. *The legitimate privacy interests of all student athletes should be protected.*
8. *The medical privacy of transgender students should be preserved.*
9. *Athletic administrators, staff, parents of athletes, and student athletes should have access to sound and effective educational resources and training related to the participation of transgender and gender-variant students in athletics.*

TRANSGENDER PARTICIPATION POLICY:

For purposes of this policy, the following terms shall have the meanings as set forth herein:

“Sex” - Sex is assigned at birth as male or female, usually based on the appearance of the external genitalia. When the external genitalia are ambiguous, other components of sex (internal genitalia, chromosomal and hormonal sex) are considered in order to assign sex.

“*Transgender Person*” describes an individual whose gender identity (one’s internal psychological identification as a boy/man or girl/woman) does not match his or her assigned sex at birth.

“*Transgender*” - An adjective to describe a diverse group of individuals who cross or transcend culturally-defined categories of gender. The gender identity of transgender people differs to varying degrees from the sex they were assigned at birth.

“*Gender Transition*” - A period of time when individuals change from the gender role associated with their sex assigned at birth to a different gender role. For many people, this involves learning how to live socially in “the other” gender role; for others this means finding a gender role and expression that is most comfortable for them. Transition may or may not include feminization or masculinization of the body through hormones or other medical procedures. The nature and duration of transition is variable and individualized.

“*Gender identity*” - A person’s intrinsic sense of being male (a boy or a man), female (a girl or woman), or an alternative gender (e.g., boygirl, girlboy, transgender, genderqueer, eunuch). Since gender identity is an emotional, rather than a physical characteristic, one’s gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

“*Transgender Female*” is a person whose sex at birth is male but who self identifies and lives as a female (male-to-female or MTF). The pronouns “she” and “her” are the proper pronouns in referring to a transgender female.

“*Male-to-Female (MTF)*” - Adjective to describe individuals assigned male at birth who are changing or who have changed their body and /or gender from birth-assigned male to a more feminine body or role.

“*Transgender Male*” is a person whose sex at birth is female but who self identifies and lives as a male (female-to-male or FTM). The pronouns “he” or “his” are the proper pronouns in referring to a transgender male.

“*Female-to-Male (FTM)*” - adjective to describe individuals assigned female at birth who are changing or who have changed their body and/or gender role from birth-assigned female to a more masculine body or role.

Notice to the School: The transgender student and/or the parent of a transgender student shall contact the school administrator or athletic administrator indicating that the student has a consistent gender identity different than the gender assigned at birth, listed on the student’s school registration records or as listed on the state birth record, and that the student desires to participate in activities in a manner consistent with his/her gender identity.

Notice to the Executive Director’s Office of the OHSAA: Upon receipt of notice from a transgender student and/or parent of a transgender student wishing to participate in interscholastic sports in a manner consistent with his/her gender identity, the school administrator or athletic director shall notify the Executive Director’s Office in writing on school letterhead of the student’s interest in participating in interscholastic athletics.

Clearance by Executive Director's Office. Upon written receipt of notice from a member school that a transgender student athlete wishes to participate in an OHSAA sponsored sport in a manner consistent with his/her gender identity, the Executive Director's Office shall take the following action:

A transgender female who is taking medically prescribed hormone treatment related to gender transition may participate on a boys' team at any time. However, before a transgender female can participate in a girl's sport or on a girls' team she must either (1) have completed a minimum of one year of hormone treatment related to gender transition or (2) demonstrate to the Executive Director's Office by way of sound medical evidence that she does not possess physical (bone structure, muscle mass, testosterone, hormonal, etc.) or physiological advantages over genetic females of the same age group.

A transgender male who has not yet begun medically prescribed testosterone treatment for purposes of gender transition may participate on a boys' team. If, however, the transgender male student athlete is taking medically prescribed testosterone treatment, before he can participate on a boys' team, medical evidence must be submitted to the Executive Director's Office that certifies that (1) the muscle mass developed as a result of this testosterone treatment does not exceed the muscle mass that is typical of an adolescent genetic boy; (2) that he has not started any hormone treatment (or that the testosterone treatment does not cause hormone levels to exceed normal levels); and (3) his hormone levels are monitored by a licensed physician every three to six months.

In any case where a transgender student athlete is taking hormone treatment related to gender transition, that treatment must be monitored by a physician, and the Executive Director's Office must receive regular reports about the athlete's eligibility according to these guidelines.

Confidentiality. All communications among involved parties and required supporting documentation shall be kept confidential and all records of proceedings sealed unless the student and family make a specific request otherwise. All medical information provided pursuant to this policy shall be kept strictly confidential as is consistent with medical privacy law.

Appeal. Should any questions arise about whether a student's request to participate in a sports activity consistent with his or her gender identity is bona fide, a student may seek review of his or her eligibility for participation through the procedure set forth below:

A. First Level of Appeal:

I. The student will be scheduled for an appeal hearing before the Gender Identity Eligibility Committee specifically trained to hear gender identity appeals. The OHSAA shall schedule a hearing as expeditiously as possible, but in no case later than five (5) school business days prior to the first full interscholastic contest that is the subject of the petition, or within a reasonable time thereafter in cases of emergency, including, but not limited to, any unforeseeable late student enrollment. The Gender Identity Eligibility Committee will be comprised of a minimum of three of the following persons, at least one of whom must be from the physician or mental health professional categories:

- Physician with experience in transgender health care and the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care
- Psychiatrist, psychologist, or licensed mental health professional familiar with the WPATH Standards of Care
- School administrator from a non-appealing school
- OHSAA staff member
- Advocate familiar with issues of gender identity and expression

No updates as of 3/20/2020

II. **Documentation:** The appealing student shall provide the Eligibility Committee with the following documentation and information:

- Current transcript and school registration information
- Documentation of the student's consistent gender identification (e.g., written statements from the student and/or parent/guardian; written statements from the student's treating physician/psychologist or other health care provider)
- Any other pertinent documentation or information

III. **Committee Decision Process:** The Eligibility Committee shall apply the same standard of review as utilized in all other student eligibility appeals. The student/student's family and the school on whose sports team the student would be participating will be notified of the Eligibility Committee's decision in writing within 48 hours once that decision has been reached.

IV. When there is confirmation of a student's consistent gender identity, the Eligibility Committee/OHSAA Commissioner will affirm the student's eligibility to participate in OHSAA activities consistent with the student's gender identification.

B. Appeal of Eligibility Committee's Decision

Upon completion of the appeal to and through the Eligibility Committee, the student will have exhausted all administrative remedies available to him/her. No further appeals with or through the OHSAA exist at that point. However, due to the nature of these issues, the same student may have her/his case revisited by the Executive Director's Office (and subsequently, the Eligibility Committee) as the facts and circumstances of the student evolve or change.

Note: The OHSAA would not anticipate revisiting a case without a sufficient lapse of time such that the circumstances of the case have changed significantly.

Please direct all inquiries and requests for ruling to:

Dr. Deborah B. Moore, Ph.D.
Senior Director for Compliance and Sports Medicine
dmoore@ohsaa.org