



OHSAA Business Rules for Competitive Balance

*Created by OHSAA Competitive Balance Committee and OHSAA Staff
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In accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 2-2-7 (Tournament Assignment – Team Sports of Football, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball and Softball), these business rules were created to assist with the implementation of Bylaw 2, Section 2, otherwise known as Competitive Balance.

Table of Contents:

1. Obtaining and Use of Enrollment Numbers
2. Appeal of Data/Divisional Placement
3. Submission of Attendance Zones for Multi-High School Districts
4. Selection of Feeder Schools for Non-Public Schools
5. Selection of Attendance Zones for Schools Within Non-Public School Systems with Defined Geographic Boundaries
6. Determining “System of Education” for Non-Public Schools
7. Drawing Divisional Lines/Placing Schools in New Division
8. Process For Schools When No Roster Data Available From Previous Year
9. Tiering of Non Enrolled students attending a STEM school sponsored by a school district
10. International Exchange Students – F-1 Visa
11. Competitive Balance Tiering vs. 90-day Eligibility
12. Requirements to Tier Students
13. Other Special Situations

Additional Informational Note: Non-Enrolled Student Classification

1. Obtaining and Use of Enrollment Numbers

- In accordance with the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Business Rules for Obtaining Enrollment Data, adopted by the OHSAA Board of Directors, the OHSAA obtains Initial Enrollment Numbers for member schools from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) for use on a biennial basis.
- The data are extracted from the Department's Education Management Information System (public schools) or Report of a Nonpublic School (non-public schools) for students in grades 9, 10 and 11 by gender using the information from the October count. The OHSAA refers to this Initial Enrollment Number as a school's EMIS count.
- For divisional assignments to OHSAA tournament, beginning with the 2021-22 school year data (Initial Enrollment Numbers or EMIS count) will be calculated in a school year beginning with an odd numbered year for use in the next two school years.
- For each Competitive Balance sport, the Initial Enrollment Number (EMIS) is combined annually with a specific sport's distinct Competitive Balance Roster Data (referred to as Competitive Balance Enrollment) to create a school's final Tournament Enrollment for each specific sport.
- The Tournament Enrollment is then utilized to assign a school to its respective tournament division, following the principles as outlined in the General Sports Regulations.

Note: More specific information on Competitive Balance Rostering and the Principles of Tiering is available here:

<http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/SchoolResources/CompetitiveBalance/CompBalSummary.pdf>

2. Appeals of Data/Divisional Placement

- **Procedures for appealing Initial Enrollment Data (EMIS) is described in Business Rule 1 above:**
 - o School principals or superintendents/heads of school will have the ability to appeal their EMIS numbers in a procedure developed by the Executive Director's Office. The procedure will be sent electronically to school administrators and posted on the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org).
 - o The appeals process will occur AFTER the EMIS numbers have been shared with each member school. The EMIS numbers are generally shared with member schools within the four months following the collection of the data from ODE during each even-numbered year.
 - o The appeals process will include submitting to the Executive Director's Office a report/written correspondence that supports the enrollment number that the school believes is a more accurate reflection of the enrollment at their school and includes a detailed explanation of how the school determined the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) made an error in pulling the data.
 - o No requests for review will be accepted that are not authorized and signed by either the principal or superintendent and no requests may be submitted directly to ODE.
 - o No further inquiries or appeals will be accepted after the established/published deadline. Depending on when the data is received/verified, a deadline will be established accordingly for schools to appeal.
- **Procedures for appealing Competitive Balance data:**
 - o AFTER the Competitive Balance data submission deadlines have passed in each sports season of each year (regardless of whether or not it is an EMIS collection year), the Executive Director's Office will email each school the data that has been submitted for review (appeal). This email will be sent to school athletic administrators generally within two weeks after the submission deadline.

- Athletic administrators are highly encouraged to specifically review their students – especially those that are Tier 2 – to make sure the students have been tiered correctly.
 - **Note:** Athletic administrators at public schools who work with an outside technology company to collect their data are especially encouraged to review their Tier 2 students since history has shown not all addresses collected by such companies match those specifically assigned to the school’s attendance zone.
- Should the athletic administrator find an error, the appeals process will include submitting to the Executive Director’s Office a report/written correspondence via email that supports the school’s belief that a student(s) Tier should change before a specified deadline.
- No further inquiries or appeals will be accepted after the established/published deadline. The deadline will generally be no later than two weeks after the email regarding the data has been sent.
- Once the OHSAA Board of Directors approves the tournament division alignments and school division assignments for the next school year, **no inquiries or appeals will be accepted.**
 - Exceptions will occur if an error was made by the Executive Director’s Office or the Executive Director’s Office discovers an error (whether intentional or not) was made by the school.
 - 1.) Corrections of such errors will only be made when it results in the school(s) being placed in a higher tournament division.
 - 2.) Corrections of such errors will NOT result in the tournament division alignments being redrawn and/or the movement of any other schools not involved in the error to another division (Example: It is discovered that School A tiered a student incorrectly and the Executive Director’s Office corrects the error. The result of the correction is that School A moves from Division II to Division I. School B is the last school in Division I before the dividing line to Division II. Even though School A is being moved to Division I, School B will NOT be moved to Division II to compensate for School A moving and will remain in Division I.).

3. Submission of Attendance Zones for Multi-High School Public Districts

- The OHSAA will collect attendance zones from all multiple-high school public school districts on a biennial basis during the spring of every odd numbered year, for implementation the following fall. These attendance zones will be used to assist multi-high school districts in identifying Tier 0 vs. Tier 1 students.
 - These attendance zones shall remain on file at the OHSAA Office for a duration of two years.
 - For multiple-high school districts that **do not have defined attendance zones** (i.e. “open enrollment” districts) - the Executive Director, with assistance from OHSAA staff, if needed, shall work with each respective district representative (i.e. the district athletic administrator) to determine reasonable attendance zones for application for Competitive Balance rostering purposes ONLY (these zones shall NOT be enforced for school placement purposes).
 - These developed attendance zones will remain consistent for two years and are required to be submitted and remain on file at the OHSAA office.
 - If a multiple-high school district **with defined attendance zones for school placement purposes** realigns its boundaries in the middle of a two-year cycle, the district shall submit

the new attendance zones to the OHSAA office to keep on file for the remainder of the cycle. Furthermore, all district schools will then be permitted to Tier students based on the new, updated attendance zones *that were designed by the district for school placement purposes*.

- Should this realignment occur in the middle of a two-year cycle and impact the attendance zone placement of any non-public feeder schools located within the district, all affected non-public schools shall be permitted to change their attendance zone selection (i.e. their feeder school{s}) for the remainder of the cycle. They are, however, also permitted to retain their originally submitted attendance zone/feeder school(s) selection if the realignment is not beneficial.

NOTE: Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, the attendance zone collection process changed from the spring of every even-numbered year to the spring of every odd-numbered year. This was done to realign with the new EMIS cycle that was pushed back a year due to Covid (i.e. divisions from 2020-21 were repeated for 2021-22 for a third and final year). Therefore, attendance zones will be collected in spring 2021 for application during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. However, because Competitive Balance works one year in arears, the data from these attendance zone classifications will not be implemented until the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years which aligns with the new EMIS cycle.

4. Selection of Feeder Schools for Non-Public Schools

Option 1 – Feeder School(s) from Public School District or Attendance Zone

This option will permit non-public schools to utilize any school that is physically located within a public school district (with a single high school) or public school district attendance zone (with multiple high schools) as a designated feeder school.

The process the OHSAA shall use should a school choose this option will be as follows:

After the collection of the multiple-high school attendance zones has taken place, the OHSAA will physically “map” all the non-public schools containing grades 7 and 8. This process will place every “feeder school” into a single high school district, or into an attendance zone contained within a multi-high school district. The OHSAA shall rely on the Ohio Department of Education website to assist in determining all the non-public schools containing grades 7 and 8. The process the OHSAA will then use to determine the school district/attendance zone in which each feeder school(s) is physically located is as follows:

- 1. Collect the list of all non-public schools in Ohio, addresses included, from the ODE website.
- 2. Narrow that list to only include non-public schools that contain grades 7 & 8.
- 3. Change each P.O. Box address to the school’s physical address by visiting each respective school’s website.
- 4. Enter each respective school’s physical address into the Ohio Department of Taxation website to determine which school district in which the school is physically located: <https://thefinder.tax.ohio.gov/streamlinesalestaxweb/AddressLookup/LookupByAddress.aspx?taxType=SchoolDist>
- 5. Double-check each entry.
- 6. Place each feeder school located in a multiple-high school district into a certain attendance zone by comparing the attendance zone map/documentation vs. the physical address of each feeder school.

- 7. Determine what “system of education” each feeder school is classified by ODE.
- 8. List each of the feeder schools (that will be labeled by system of education) by district/attendance zone to provide non-public high schools an easy, accessible list in order to select their chosen school district (or attendance zone, if applicable) and, essentially, choose their selected feeder school(s).
 - If there is any dispute on what is listed as to the school district in which the feeder school is physically located, the OHSAA needs to be made aware of this discrepancy by a specified date.

To complete the feeder school selection process should a school choose this option, a senior level administrator from each non-public school will need to login to the school’s myOHSAA account and select its chosen school district (single high school) or public school district attendance zone (multiple high schools). Once selected, the system will automatically populate the feeder schools of the same system of education (see Competitive Balance Business Rule 6 for more information) physically located within that area. This selection will need to be made by a communicated deadline during the summer of every odd numbered year.

- **NOTE:** These feeder schools will remain consistent for a minimum of two years (beginning with every odd-numbered year), at which time each non-public school will be permitted to change its selected school district/feeder schools to better benefit each respective school or choose to utilize Option 2.

NOTE: Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, the feeder school collection process changed from the spring of every even-numbered year to the spring of every odd-numbered year. This was done to realign with the new EMIS cycle that was pushed back a year due to Covid (i.e. divisions from 2020-21 were repeated for 2021-22 for a third and final year). Therefore, new feeder schools will be collected in spring 2021 for application during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. However, because Competitive Balance works one year in arrears, the data from these feeder school classifications will not be implemented until the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years which aligns with the new EMIS cycle.

Option 2 – Feeder School(s) Located Within Radius of 12.5 Miles

This option will permit non-public schools to utilize any school that is physically located within a 12.5-mile radius of the high school as a feeder school. Note that the 12.5-mile radius shall be the most direct path (as the crow flies) between the high school and the elementary school(s).

To complete the feeder school selection process should a school choose this option, a senior level administrator from each non-public school will need to login to the school’s myOHSAA account and select “Option 2.” Once selected, the system will automatically populate the feeder schools of the same system of education (see Competitive Balance Business Rule 6 for more information) physically located within 12.5 miles of the school. This selection will need to be made by a communicated deadline during the summer of every odd numbered year.

- **NOTE:** These feeder schools will remain consistent for a minimum of two years (beginning with every odd-numbered year), at which time each non-public school will be permitted to submit any changes to its list of feeder schools within the 12.5-mile radius or choose to utilize Option 1.

NOTE: Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, the feeder school collection process changed from the spring of every even-numbered year to the spring of every odd-numbered year. This was done to realign

with the new EMIS cycle that was pushed back a year due to Covid (i.e. divisions from 2020-21 were repeated for 2021-22 for a third and final year). Therefore, new feeder schools will be collected in spring 2021 for application during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. However, because Competitive Balance works one year in arears, the data from these feeder school classifications will not be implemented until the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years which aligns with the new EMIS cycle.

5. Submission of Attendance Zones for Schools Within Non-Public School Systems with Defined Geographic Boundaries

- There is an exception in place for tiering non-public school students who attend a school within non-public school systems with defined geographic boundaries that mirrors the process utilized by schools within multi-high school public districts.
- The Diocese shall be required to submit to the OHSAA Office the attendance zones for their schools following a similar process as that described in Item 4 above, and students shall be tiered based on the student's educational history and the residence of the student and at least one parent.
- This currently only applies to schools within the Columbus Diocese.

NOTE: Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, the feeder school collection process changed from the spring of every even-numbered year to the spring of every odd-numbered year. This was done to realign with the new EMIS cycle that was pushed back a year due to Covid (i.e. divisions from 2020-21 were repeated for 2021-22 for a third and final year). Therefore, new feeder schools will be collected in spring 2021 for application during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. However, because Competitive Balance works one year in arears, the data from these feeder school classifications will not be implemented until the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years which aligns with the new EMIS cycle.

6. Determining "System of Education" for Non-Public Schools

The Ohio Department of Education has a record of the classification of each non-public school in the state (i.e. Catholic Conference of Ohio, a specific Catholic diocese, Ohio Association of Independent Schools, Association of Christian Schools International, etc.).

- There are some non-public schools that are classified a certain way by ODE (i.e. Association of Independent Schools), but still associate and subscribe to certain requirements of another group (i.e. Catholic Conference of Ohio or a specific Catholic diocese). Despite this dual recognition, the only feeder schools that are permitted to be considered Tier 0 or 1 students for a particular high school are those students who have continuously been enrolled in a school (since the beginning of 7th grade) that is the same classification as what ODE has on file for the high school.
- Examples in this area are as follows:
 1. There are high schools in Ohio that are both Catholic schools and are also members of the Association of Independent Schools (AIS), but they are thus solely classified as AIS by the ODE. Therefore, students entering those high schools from a Catholic school would **not** be considered the same system of education as those entering from an AIS school.
 2. The same principle noted in example 1 above would also be true for schools that ODE classifies as Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Students entering an ACSI school from another school, even if it is a Christian school, which is not either a member of or accredited by ACSI would **not** be considered the same system of education as those entering from an ACSI school.

7. Drawing Divisional Lines/Placing Schools in New Division

- After the number of divisions is approved by the Board of Directors, schools are assigned to tournament divisions based on the number of school teams that participated in the tournament the previous year, with each tournament division to have as equal number of teams as possible (see the OHSAA General Sports Regulation for the exception to this regulation in Division I football).
- Unlike the original business rule which limited a school to being placed in its tournament division a maximum of one division higher than its base enrollment count (EMIS) after Competitive Balance tier numbers are added to that base enrollment count, in October 2017 the OHSAA Competitive Balance Committee recommended removing that limit.
- The Board of Directors approved this amended business rule at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 18, 2018. Therefore, there is no limit to the number of divisions a team can move up from its base enrollment count (EMIS) after its Competitive Balance tier numbers are added to that base enrollment count.

8. Process For Schools When No Roster Data Available From Previous Year

a. Schools that Merge or A School District (Single or Multiple High Schools) that Adds a School

- Draw division lines with old EMIS and Competitive Balance data (all member schools).
- During the year when the change takes place - For the schools that are being impacted, start with new basic EMIS number, then add a real-time Competitive Balance numbers by September 10 for application that same year.
 - o Keep in mind this is a one-year only process. So even though the rosters are being used during different school years (as opposed to the rest of the member schools), this is a better option then using their raw EMIS number.
 - o **Exception** (*approved by Board of Directors August 9, 2018*): A new school which opens but does not have a full complement of grade levels will be required to continue to submit real-time Competitive Balance numbers by September 10 for application that same year through the first academic year in which that school has a full complement of grade levels.

b. Brand New School or Schools on Probation Regaining Good Standing

- During the probationary period, these schools will be required to submit their Competitive Balance roster data **in writing** as part of their probationary requirements (since they will/may not have access to Arbiter).
- Their first year in good standing, we will use the proper EMIS and Competitive Balance roster (the year prior) to place them in tournament divisions.
 - o Note 1.: This process is different than the school merger and school district adding a school.
 - o Note 2. (*approved by Board of Directors August 9, 2018*): If the process in 8b. was not adhered to during the probationary period, these schools shall follow the process outlined in 8a. above.

c. School Offering a Sport It Did Not Offer the Previous Year

- Place them in EMIS divisions based solely on EMIS number.

9. Tiering of Non-Enrolled Students Attending a STEM School Sponsored by a School District

- The “Non-Enrolled” student classification was specifically designed to capture students who have a participation opportunity at a school in accordance with state law, but who are NOT captured on a school’s original EMIS number.
- In eligibility respects, these non-enrolled students have a participation opportunity in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-1, Exception 6. However, there was some confusion regarding the reference of STEM schools. Many multiple high school districts sponsor STEM schools, and these students **ARE counted and distributed evenly amongst a multi-high school district’s EMIS numbers**. Even though these students do attend a STEM school, their participation opportunity is NOT governed by state law, but rather by Bylaw 4-3-1, Exception 4.
- ***These students, who attend a STEM school sponsored by a district who are counted in a district’s original EMIS numbers, should be coded as Tier 0.*** Furthermore, these student should always be Tier 0 because, according to the OHSAA business rules for placement of non-enrolled students, students who attend these STEM schools sponsored by a district should always be assigned for athletics at the high school located within the attendance zone of the parent’s residence (or at the high school closest to the parent’s residence for districts that do not have defined attendance zones).

10. International and Exchange Students – F-1 Visa

- In October 2017 and reaffirmed in October 2018, the Competitive Balance Committee decided to leave international students here on an F-1 Visa that have a participation opportunity coded as Tier 2 based on the recent state law that was enacted. The committee will continue to study where the state legislators may move forward with this trend prior to recommending any changes to F-1 Visa students.
- Conversely, international exchange students here on a J-1 Visa will be coded as Tier 1 per OHSAA Bylaw 2-2-4.

11. Competitive Balance Tiering vs. 90-day Eligibility

- ~~Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 6 allows the OHSAA office to grant a student 90 days of eligibility, even when a student and his/her parents are not yet living in a school district, but the student is enrolled at the school in accordance with ORC 3313.64 (F)(6) or 3313.64 (F)(7). If this transpires, the school is permitted to tier the student as Tier 0, even though the family is not currently residing within the district, **with the understanding that a reexamination will need to occur at the end of the entry period.**~~
- ~~If the student and his/her family have not physically moved into the district by the end of the roster entry period, then the student’s tier should be changed to Tier 2.~~

NOTE: Due to legislative action taken by Ohio’s General Assembly in mid-July 2019 within the main operating budget, exception 6 to Bylaw 4-7-2 is no longer applicable. Therefore, this particular business rule will remain stricken until such a time that this exception is restored.

12. Requirements to Tier Students

- As noted in OHSAA Bylaw 2-2-2, in the sports of soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball students who are required to be assigned a Tier include students on a team’s tournament roster **and anyone else who played in a varsity contest during the regular season**. This business rule shall clarify that if ANY team (subvarsity, club, etc.) participates against a varsity opponent then that school shall be required to input that roster data to remain in compliance with this bylaw. If

said team(s) only participate against non-varsity opponents then there would be no roster entry obligation on behalf of the school since the team would not have participated in *“a varsity contest during the regular season.”*

13. Special School Situations

- As noted in OHSAA Bylaw 2-2-7, additional rules have been developed that are deemed necessary to address how to tier students in schools that are “unique” as it relates to Competitive Balance. Therefore, business rules have been created for a member school that is a residential treatment center and another chartered, public school that is unique since it is run by one public school district but physically located in another.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Non-Enrolled Student Classification

- Initially, the “Tier 2 Non-Enrolled” classification was specifically designed to capture students who have a participation opportunity at a school in accordance with state law, but who are NOT captured on a school’s original EMIS number.
- After feedback from public schools who say state law is forcing them to give these students a participation opportunity, combined with the fact that many schools have ‘no-cut’ policies and are rightfully stressing the benefits of interscholastic athletic participation, the Competitive Balance Committee recommended to change this classification to Tier 1 Non-Enrolled beginning with roster data submissions during the 2018-19 school year for use during the 2019-20 school year. This would change their factor from sport specific to instead adding “1” back to their enrollment count since the student was not originally included in the EMIS count.
- The Board of Directors originally approved this as a business rule at its regularly scheduled meeting in February 2018, only to realize subsequently that non-enrolled students were codified in the Bylaws and any change would need to go to referendum.
- The Board of Directors did place this proposal before the membership during the May 2019 referendum voting, and the membership approved this recommendation. Therefore, non-enrolled students will be classified as “Tier 1 Non-Enrolled” beginning with roster data submissions during the 2018-19 school year for use during the 2019-20 school year and moving forward.

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