

OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION MEMO
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TO: Member High School Principals and Athletic Administrators and 7th-8th Grade Principals and Athletic Administrators

FR: Jerry Snodgrass., OHSAA Executive Director

RE: Preseason Meetings and Related Materials

Our staff has updated an OHSAA preseason meetings presentation that we highly encourage you to review and then present during your preseason athletic team meetings with student-athletes and their parents. If you recall, OHSAA Bylaw 3-1-4 requires that preseason meetings be held no later than two weeks after the beginning of each sports season. While the use of OHSAA-provided materials is not required for your meetings, we strongly believe your student-athletes and their parents will only benefit from utilizing this information and viewing the PowerPoint presentation that is described below.

The 2020-21 OHSAA preseason meetings PowerPoint presentation can be accessed as either a PowerPoint or a PDF. They are accessible in the middle of the School Resources page of the OHSAA website under 2020-21 OHSAA Preseason Meeting Information. The link is: <http://www.ohsaa.org/School-Resources>.

The presentation is **41 slides** and includes information on the purpose of education-based athletics along with:

- Rules and Regulations (essential regulations that impact athletic eligibility);
- Health and Safety (preparticipation physical evaluation and consent forms; concussions; sudden cardiac arrest, alcohol, tobacco, supplements, anabolic steroids and prescription drugs);
- Sporting Behavior and
- The OHSAA (a quick look at who we are and services we provide).

Administrators are welcome to add slides to the PowerPoint with their own school material.

Please note that another document that includes 1.) a suggested agenda for a general information preseason meeting; 2.) a suggested agenda for a sports specific preseason meeting; 3.) sample scripts to use when addressing sporting conduct and tobacco, alcohol and drug prevention, and 4.) sample invitations, student participation contract and evaluation form is also posted under 2020-21 OHSAA Preseason Meeting Information at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/School-Resources>.

Current OHSAA Bylaw (3-1-4) on Mandatory Preseason Meetings

As mentioned, conducting preseason meetings is required in OHSAA Bylaw 3-1-4. The bylaw says: “No later than two weeks after the beginning of each sports season, the principal, through his/her athletic administrator, coaches and such other personnel as deemed advisable by said principal, shall conduct a mandatory, preseason program with all student-athletes who wish to participate in the upcoming sports seasons, their parents and booster club officers. The meeting shall consist of (a) a review of the student-athlete eligibility bulletin and key essential eligibility requirements; (b) a review of the school’s Athletic Code of Conduct; (c) a sportsmanship, ethics and integrity component, and (d) a review of issues concerning concussions and steroids.”

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OHSAA General Sports Regulation 4 adds the following:

“When it has been verified that the member school has failed to conduct a preseason meeting(s) in accordance with Bylaw 3-1-4, the member school shall be fined \$500 for each violation.” It is also noted that “the OHSAA intends to conduct random audits of compliance with this standard. Each member school shall record on *myOHSAA* the date and location of each meetings as well as the person responsible for each meeting.”

Reinforcing the essential eligibility standards is of utmost importance in these meetings so that students and their parents are aware of the obligations they must meet in order to have the privilege of participating in interscholastic athletics. As you can see, however, the OHSAA believes addressing other key areas is also essential. In addition, schools are given the flexibility to hold preseason meetings for fall sports in the late spring or early summer, while at the same time requiring that these meetings be held no later than two weeks after the start of the season.

Additional Preseason Meetings Notes

The OHSAA strongly recommends that, if a student and/or his or her parents do not attend the mandatory preseason meeting, participation in interscholastic athletics be denied until the meeting can be completed. Allowing them to view the OHSAA PowerPoint presentation individually by going to the OHSAA website is one option, or you are more than welcome to copy and paste the link to the presentation onto your school website, instruct parents and student-athletes to view it from there and have them sign-off that it was viewed.

In addition, you are not necessarily encouraged to have multi-sport athletes and their parents view the preseason meeting presentation each time prior to each season. However, you ARE still required to conduct a preseason meeting for each season.

Additional Materials on Preseason Meetings

Also, both the *2020-21 OHSAA Student-Athlete Eligibility Guide for High School Students* and the *2020-21 OHSAA Student-Athlete Eligibility Guide for 7th and 8th Grade Students* have been posted on our website. It is highly advisable to print out, duplicate and distribute copies of these publications for your student-athletes and their parents and/or to include the publications in your student-athlete handbook. The links to those two publications can be found at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/Eligibility>.

And finally, you are highly encouraged to make use of the resources available under the Sports Medicine area of the OHSAA website. The link is: <http://www.ohsaa.org/medicine>.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please contact our office if you have any questions!