



# CONDENSED SUMMARY OF 2026 REFERENDUM ISSUES



The full language of each issue can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2026Ref> and at the QR code above ↑

## **Constitution Articles (1 Issue – Voted on by High School Principals):**

### **ISSUE 1C - Constitution Article 8, Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws (Modification)**

Would allow the OHSAA Board of Directors to reinstate a bylaw or constitutional provision that was previously removed to comply with state law, if that law is later repealed. This eliminates the need for an emergency referendum and allows the rule to take effect immediately as it was last approved by the membership.

## **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Ballot (3 Issues):**

### **ISSUE 1B – Bylaw 4-2-2, Exceptions 1 & 2, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Age Exceptions (Modifications) AND**

### **ISSUE 2B - Bylaw 4-3-4, Exception 1, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Semesters Exception (Modification)**

Would revise the current requirement that a student must have *no impact* on the outcome of a contest to qualify for the requested exception, changing it to require that the student does not have a *significant impact*. This allows students who play a limited role (*e.g., are in the rotation but not a major contributor*) to still be eligible. The Executive Director’s Office will consider the extent of the student’s participation when making determinations. All other requirements remain unchanged.

### **ISSUE 3B - Bylaw 4-4-5 Exception 1, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Academic Hardship Exception (Modification)**

Would remove the requirement that a student must have been withdrawn or removed from school during the immediately preceding grading period for the exception to apply. Instead, the student and/or family must provide documentation showing that a hardship existed at the time their ineligibility occurred.

## **High School Ballot (8 Issues):**

### **ISSUE 1B - Bylaw 4-1-4, Member of an Interscholastic Team (Modification)**

Would add language to clarify that a school is considered to have “sponsored a sport” once its team participates in a regular-season contest (*not a preseason event*). This helps determine student eligibility to participate elsewhere, either under state law or Bylaw 4-3-1 Exception 8 (if approved), when their school of attendance cancels its season.

### **ISSUE 2B - Bylaw 4-3-1, Enrollment & Attendance, Exc. 8, Non-Enrolled Participation (New Exception)**

Would allow students at an OHSAA member public school that does not sponsor a particular **team** sport to participate in that sport at another OHSAA member public school, provided that:

1. The other school is within 20 miles (by the most direct route), and
2. The superintendents of both schools approve the arrangement.

In multi-high school districts, students whose school does not offer a specific sport may be assigned to participate at another school within the same district. Participation within a multi-high school district will follow OHSAA business rules for non-enrolled students (see full bylaw language for additional details).

**ISSUE 3B - Bylaw 4-4-1 Exception 1, High School Academic Hardship Exception (Modification)**

Would remove the requirement that a student must have been withdrawn or removed from school during the immediately preceding grading period for the exception to apply. Instead, the student and/or family must provide documentation showing that a hardship existed at the time their ineligibility occurred.

**ISSUE 4B - Bylaw 4-6-2, Exceptions 4 & 6, Residency Exceptions (Modifications)**

Modifications to Exception 4 would permit a student whose parents live outside the state of Ohio, but who have been continuously enrolled within the same member public school/district since the start of 6<sup>th</sup> grade\*\*, to participate at the member high school in which they are enrolled.

*\*\*Current requirement is enrollment from the start of 1<sup>st</sup> grade for public high schools, and the start of 6<sup>th</sup> grade for non-public high schools. Proposed modification brings consistency to requirements.*

Parallel modifications to Exceptions 4 and 6 would add language to permit students whose parents live outside the state of Ohio, but who have been continuously enrolled within the same member school district/system since the start of 4<sup>th</sup> grade, to participate within that district/system in 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Applicable for both public and non-public members.

**ISSUE 5B - Bylaw 4-7-2, Definition of Transfer (New Note)**

Would exempt a student from being subject to the transfer bylaw when they change their enrollment to a different but return to the same school of attendance **without** participating in any sport(s) while enrolled at the other school.

**ISSUE 6B - Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 1, Bona Fide Change of Residence (New Definition)**

Would codify a formal definition of a bona fide change of residence. The definition would require a student's parents to fully relinquish all responsibility for their previous residence, such as by selling it, leasing it to a non-family member, transferring it to an LLC for business purposes, or terminating the lease, in order for this exception to apply. The new language also gives the Executive Director's Office discretion to review and address cases where this requirement has not been fully met.

**ISSUE 7B - Bylaw 4-7-8, Superintendent's Memorandum of Understanding, Transfer (New Bylaw)**

Would allow a transfer student to have their eligibility fully restored upon a transfer if the Superintendents or Heads of School from both OHSAA member school systems enter into a memorandum of understanding confirming that the transfer is necessary to protect the student's physical or mental well-being or to address other appropriate extenuating circumstances. This exception may be used up to two times during a student's high school career.\*\*\*

*\*\*\*If approved, Bylaw 4-7-2 Exceptions 4 (Self-Support), 9 (Discontinues Entire interscholastic Athletics Program), and 10 (Death of Immediate Family Member) would be stricken.*

**ISSUE 8B – Bylaw 4-11 NIL (Modifications and New Section)**

Would add clarifying language to Bylaws 4-11-2 (b) and (d), and 4-11-3 to ensure consistent application within NIL regulations. Also creates new Bylaw 4-11-8, which allows students to enter into agreements with athlete agents (*only as defined in ORC §§ 4471.01*) solely for marketing purposes. Any such agreement must also be disclosed to the Executive Director's Office within 14 days.