

The Road to a Referendum

History, Process & Data

Basics



OHSAA Membership Basics

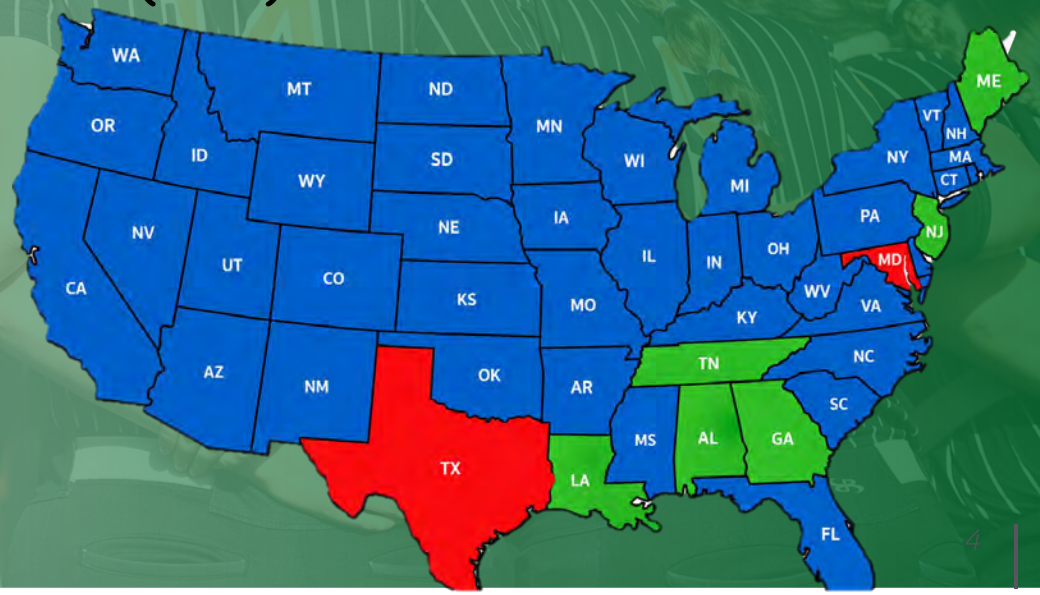
- The OHSAA currently has 813 member schools:
  - 121 private schools (15%)
  - 692 public schools (85%)

- Per ODEW, there are 660 public school districts in Ohio:
  - 504* accept open enrollment from any school district (76%)
  - 41* accept open enrollment, but only from adjacent districts (6%)
  - 113 do not accept any open enrollment (17%)
  - 2 were listed as "no submission"

**Though districts are listed as having open enrollment, they may not accept students during any given year and/or timeframe.*

AROUND THE COUNTRY

- 42 state associations elect to have private and public schools compete together during both the regular season and postseason under the same association. (blue)
- Two states, Texas and Maryland, operate separate associations for the public and private schools in those states. (red)
- Six others, including Georgia, Louisiana, New Jersey, Tennessee, Maine and Alabama, keep private and public schools in the same association but generally split them for postseason competition. (green)





History

PUBLIC & PRIVATE SPLIT

Petition History



- Petition attempts to separate historically occur approx. every 15 years
  - *1978, secured signatures for vote, defeated by a wide margin*
    - *(83.9% to 16.1%)*
  - *1993, secured signatures for vote, defeated in by a lesser margin*
    - *(66.8% to 33.2%)*
  - *2010, Formation of Competitive Balance Committee in January 2010. Group recommended proposals in 2011, 2012 and 2013, which all failed, before the membership adopted current CB plan in 2014. Petition to separate also attempted in 2013/2014.*

EARLY COMPETITIVE BALANCE PROPOSALS

- 2011 Failed 332 to 303 (29 vote difference)

The formula took into account concepts dealing with open enrollment, socio-economic factors and prior success in OHSAA tournaments..

- 2012- Failed 339 to 301 (38 vote difference)

Beginning Enrollment + Boundary Factor – Socioeconomic Factor + Tradition Factor

- 2013 Failed 327-308 (19 vote difference)

This formula was an early iteration of what is currently in place. *"Where did your players come from?"* How do we capture this?

- 2014 Passed 411 votes to 323 (88)

With implementation in August 2016.
Ultimately implemented in 2017 after technology was developed.

The Formula

Initial Enrollment Count (from EMIS - all students in grades 9 through 11 in a school)
+ **Additional Roster Count** (the students on a respective team, which is determined by multiplying each student on the Initial Roster Count by either Tier 0, Tier 1 or Tier 2 Sport Specific Factor {which is explained below} and adding them together)
= **Adjusted Enrollment Count** (count used for tournament division placement; calculated by the OHSAA office)

Changes to CB Over the Years

- Initially included all students in grades 9-12. Now only tournament roster & varsity participation
- Teams were limited to moving up a maximum of one division each year. Now teams can move up as many divisions as their numbers show, as well as opting all the way up to Division 1
- Feeder school selection process for private schools used to be based on a single school district. Now allows for feeder schools within a 12.5 mile radius of the high school.
- New exception for student managers and students with intellectual disabilities to play in a contest without being included on CB roster.
- Changed values for Tier 2 (Football from 2>3, soccer from 5>7, others from 6>7)
- Students playing under state law were initially coded as Tier 2. Eventually changed to Tier 1.

Changes to CB Over the Years

- CB group met October 1, 2026 and is still assessing current formula and making recommendations. Planning to meet again in December 2026 to make recommendations to OHSAA Board of Directors.

- Current formula looks at where your kids come from. Should we adjust to how long your kids have been with you? Trying to identify transfers…
- Should we remove Tier 1 students if they've been enrolled in your school/system since XX grade level?
- Should we remove "system of education" and simply look at "private schools"
- Adjusting football roster for freshman. Currently added if they play in 1 game, change to play in 5 games?
- Should SAM Act kids be Tiered higher if they live outside of the district?

Data



COMPETITIVE BALANCE DATA

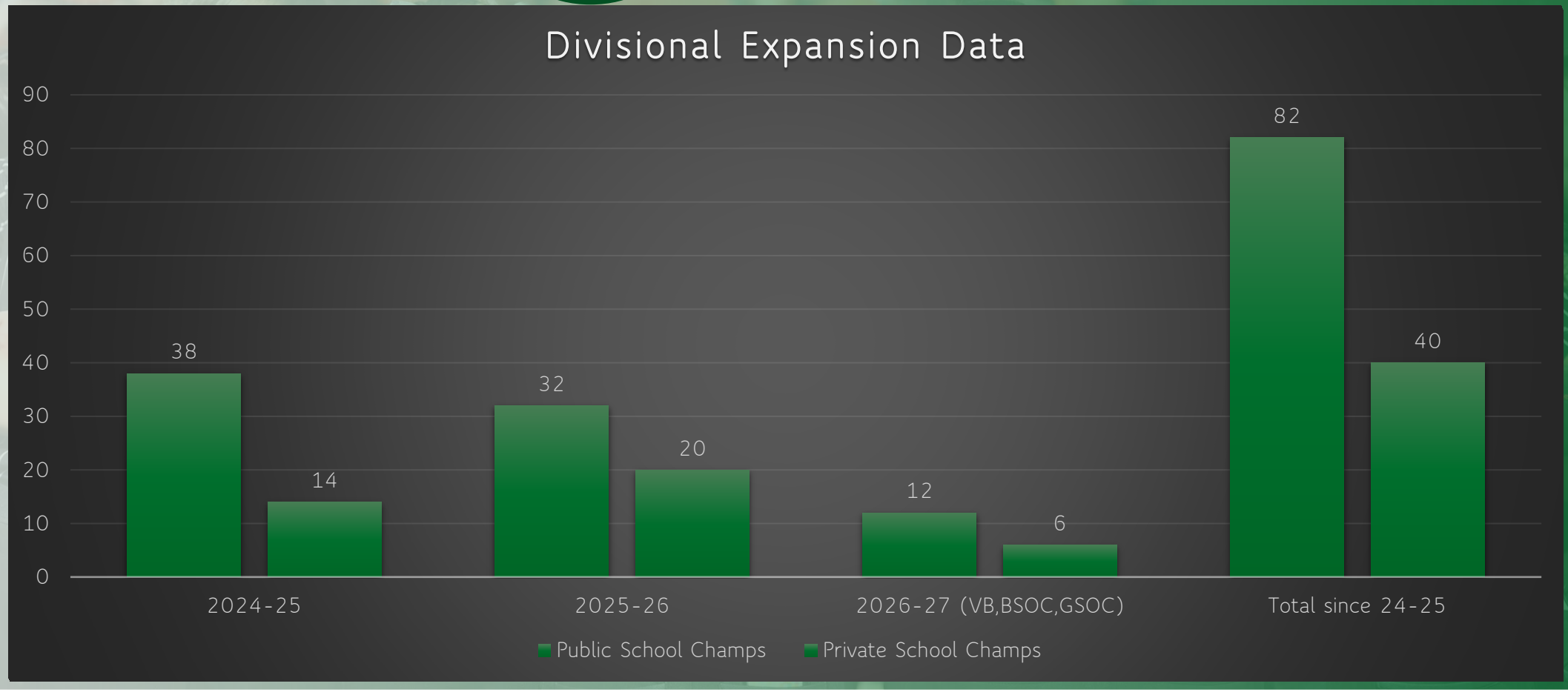
- Between 2000-2017, No Competitive Balance Data *(18 school years):*
  - Private schools won 44% of team state championships (251 titles), while composing 15% of the membership
  - Public schools won 56% of team state championships (315 titles), while representing 85% of the membership

- Since 2017-2026 using the Competitive Balance System *(8-9 school years):*
  - Private schools have won 34% of team state championships (107 titles), while composing 15% of the membership
  - Public schools have won 66% of team state championships (212 titles), while representing 85% of the membership

SINCE DIVISIONAL EXPANSION

(2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 VB, BSOC & GSOC)

- Private schools won 33% of team state championships (40 titles)
- Public schools won 67% of team state championships (82 titles)



2026 FOOTBALL REG SEMI/FINAL DATA

Regional Semifinalists (112 teams)

Division I: 12 P / 4 NP (75% - 25%)
Division II: 13 P / 3 NP (81% - 19%)
Division III: 12 P / 4 NP (75% - 25%)
Division IV: 15 P / 1 NP (94% - 6%)
Division V: 12 P / 4 NP (75% - 25%)
Division VI: 16 P / 0 NP (100% - 0%)
Division VII: 16 P / 0 NP (100% - 0%

Total: 96 P / 16 NP (87% - 13%)

Regional Finalists (56 teams)

Division I: 6 P / 2 NP (75% - 25%)
Division II: 6 P / 2 NP (75% - 25%)
Division III: 6 P / 2 NP (75% - 25%)
Division IV: 8 P / 0 NP (100% - 0%)
Division V: 7 P / 1 NP (87.5% - 12.5%)
Division VI: 8 P / 0 NP (100% - 0%)
Division VII: 8 P / 0 NP (100% - 0%)

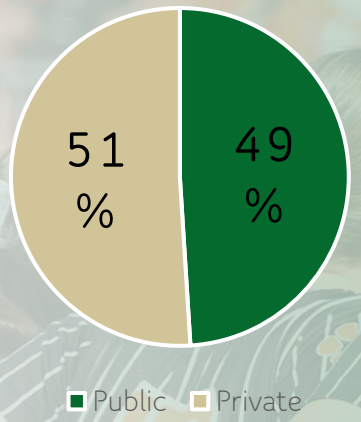
Total: 49 P / 7 NP (87.5% - 12.5%)

2024: 6P/1NP

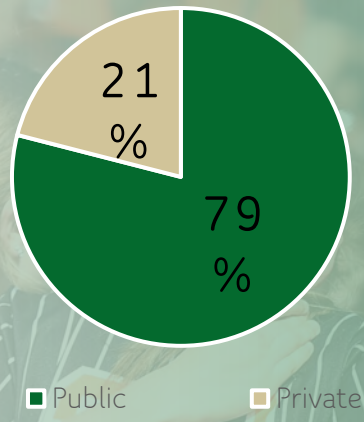
2025:6P/1NP

COMPETITIVE BALANCE SPORT BREAKDOWN

Football pre CB

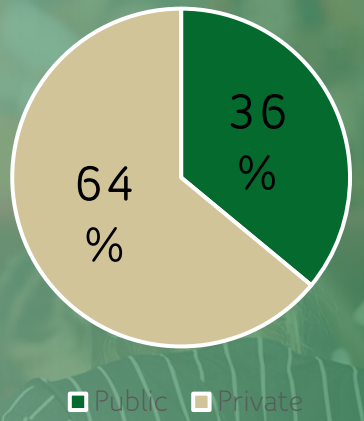


Football post CB

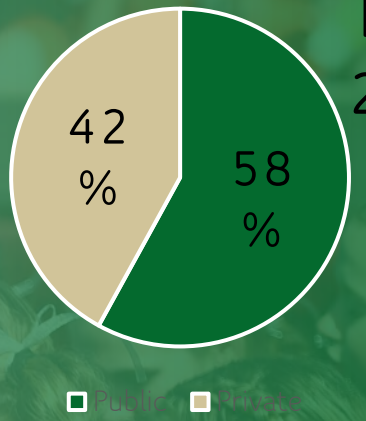


Plus 30%

GSOC pre CB

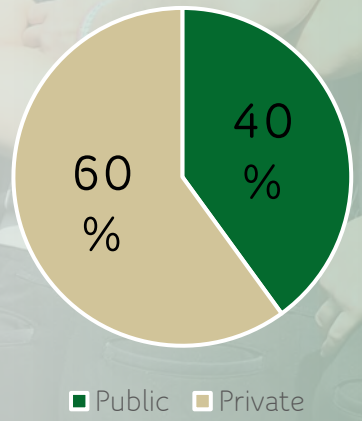


GSOC post CB

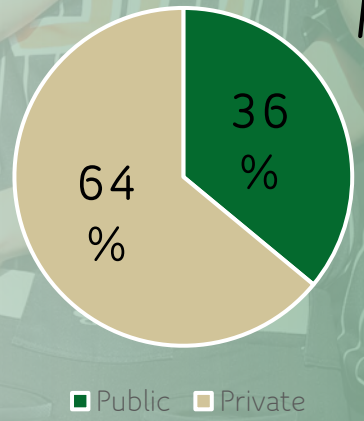


Plus 22%

Volleyball pre CB

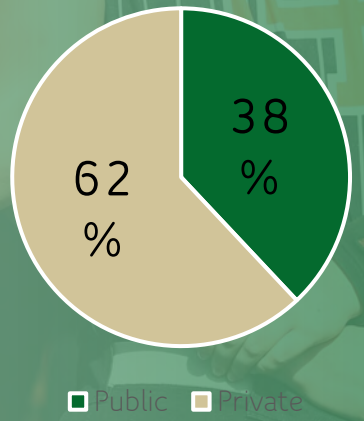


Volleyball post CB#

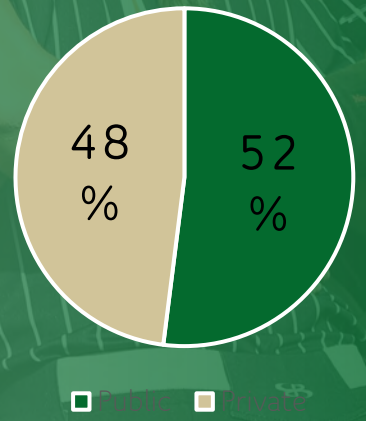


Minus 4%

BSOC pre CB



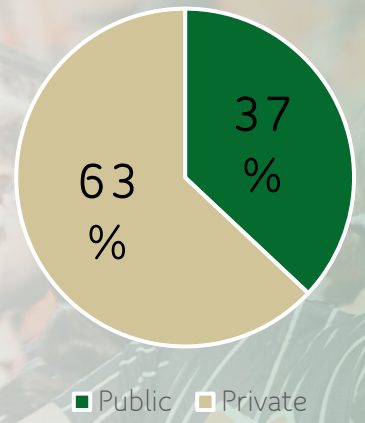
BSOC post CB



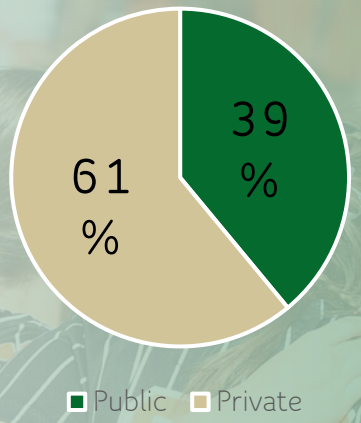
Plus 14%

COMPETITIVE BALANCE SPORT BREAKDOWN

BBKB pre CB

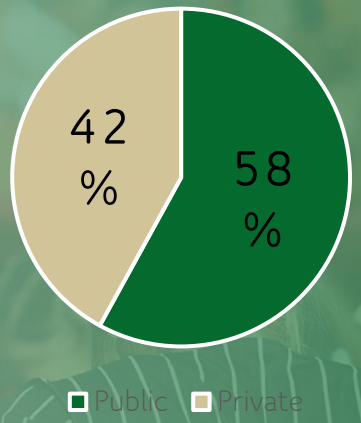


BBKB post CB

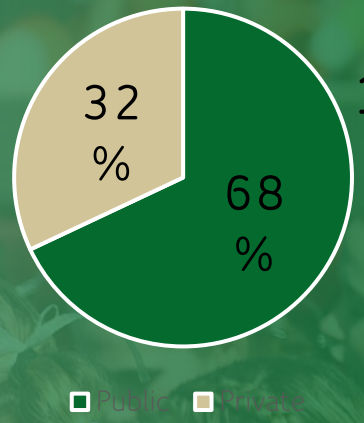


Plus 2%

Baseball pre CB

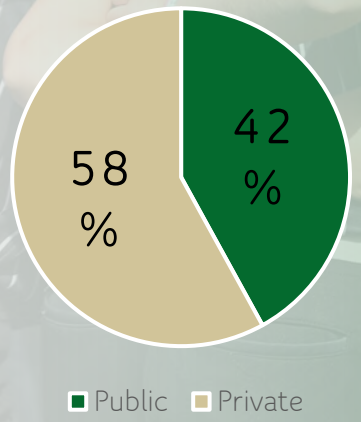


Baseball post CB

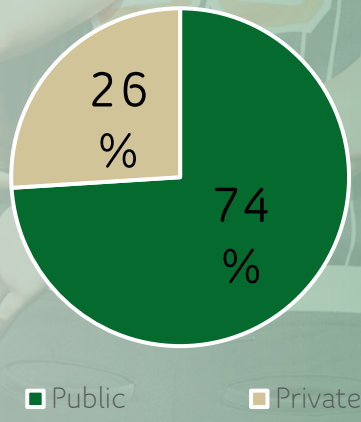


Plus 10%

GBKB pre CB

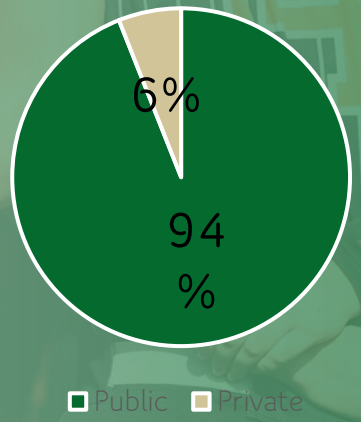


GBKB post CB

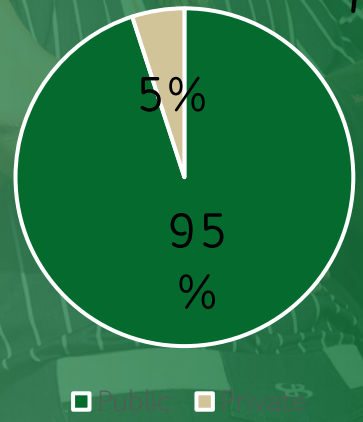


Plus 32%

Softball pre CB



Softball post CB



Minus 1%

Current Petition

CURRENT PETITION

- The following petitioners, Superintendents, Principals and Athletic Directors representing Aurora, Barberton, Brecksville-Broadview Heights, Copley, Highland, Hudson, Kenston, North Royalton, Nordonia, Mayfield, Medina, Revere, Solon, Stow-Monroe Falls, and Twinsburg (collectively the Suburban League), desire to place the following amendment(s) on the referendum ballot in May 2027.

- Article 8-1-5, An amendment may be initiated by the Board of Directors or by petition signed by the principals of no less than 75 member schools with a minimum of five signatures required from each district.

- Article 8-1-7 requires petitions to be submitted to the Executive Director's Office between August 1st and December 1st

CURRENT PETITION LANGUAGE

2-2-1 For OHSAA tournament competition, all member schools shall be classified into one of two categories based on the following criteria:

Public School: To include any school operated by or under the authority of an Ohio public school district or established under Ohio law as part of the state's system of public education, including but not limited to traditional district schools, community (charter) schools, and STEM schools.

Non-Public School: To include any school not operated as part of Ohio's public education system and instead operated by a private entity, including both chartered nonpublic schools and nonchartered nonpublic schools as recognized under Ohio law.

2-2-2 The Board of Directors and the Executive Director's Office shall establish separate and parallel postseason tournaments for public school competition and non-public school competition. Divisions within each tournament shall be determined based on enrollment counts as outlined in Bylaw 2-1-2 and shall be structured to ensure comparable competitive opportunities within each division. Each division shall conduct postseason competition culminating in the recognition of its own state champion

Note: In accordance with Bylaw 1-4-1, Section 4, Interscholastic Competition, it is permissible for schools classified in separate OHSAA public and non-public tournaments to participate against one another during non-OHSAA tournament competition (e.g. contests/meets/matches, previews, scrimmages, jamborees, electronic contests, invitational contests and practices involving two or more schools, unless those squads share the same board-approved coach).

CURRENT PETITION LANGUAGE

- Competitive Balance process would end after 2027-28 school year.
- If passed via referendum, full implementation would take place during the 2028-29 school year to align with the new two-year EMIS cycle.
- The actual number of divisions in each sport would continue to be governed within General Sports Regulation 17, and left to the discretion of the OHSAA Board of Directors to annually address fluctuations to the number of teams, the logistics surrounding tournament site availability, etc.

Hypothetical Divisional Breakdowns

- *Any data/projections which follow are purely for discussion purposes and do not reflect any final decisions by the OHSAA Board of Directors regarding the number of divisions each group will have if the referendum vote passes.*

Sport	Private Schools Teams	Public Schools Teams	Total Teams
Baseball	98	676	774
B Basketball	107	689	796
G Basketball	104	684	788
B Bowling	58	429	487
G Bowling	49	406	455
B X Country	75	538	613
G X Country	76	506	582
Field Hockey*	15	27	42
Flag Football*	48	150	198
Football	70	630	700
B Golf	85	576	661
G Golf	50	411	461
Gymnastics*	15	105	120
Ice Hockey*	21	49	70

Sport	Private Schools Teams	Public Schools Teams	Total Teams
B Lacrosse	35	119	154
G Lacrosse	41	109	150
B Soccer	88	500	588
G Soccer	77	478	555
Softball	88	669	757
B S&D	42	272	314
G S&D	45	283	328
B Tennis	62	324	386
G Tennis	60	313	373
B T&F	86	659	745
G T&F	87	659	746
B Volleyball	32	160	192
G Volleyball	107	689	796
B Wrestling	48	523	571
G Wrestling*	8	243	251

*Current 1-division sports

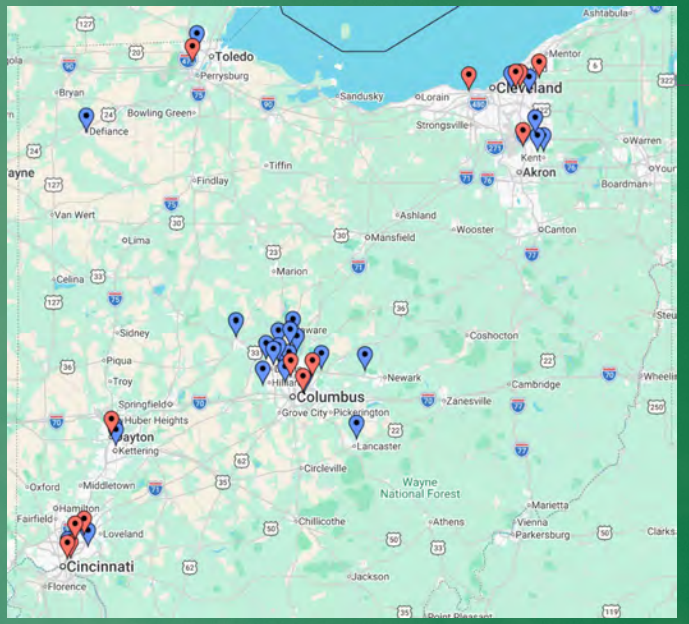
Under the current petition language, there is no exception for low-number sports. All sports will be divided public/private. (18)

Small Sport Logistics - FH, IH

- Field Hockey

Currently only has 1 divisions with 42 teams.

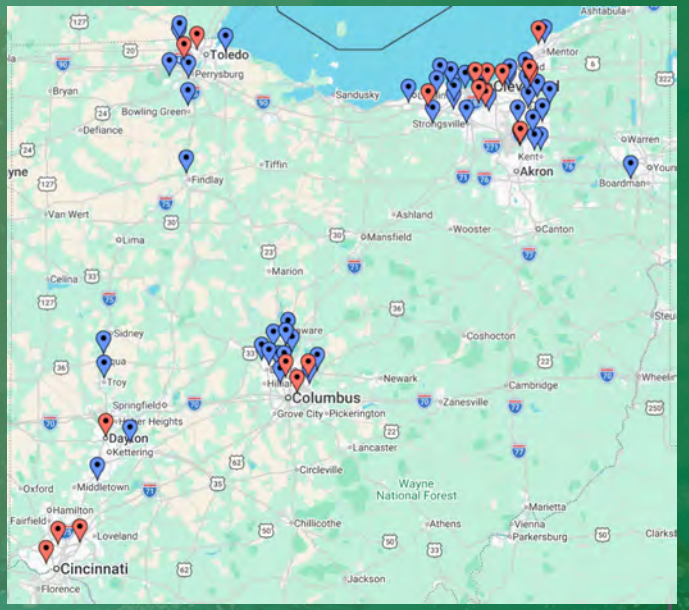
If divided:
Blue- Public (27)
Red- Private (15)



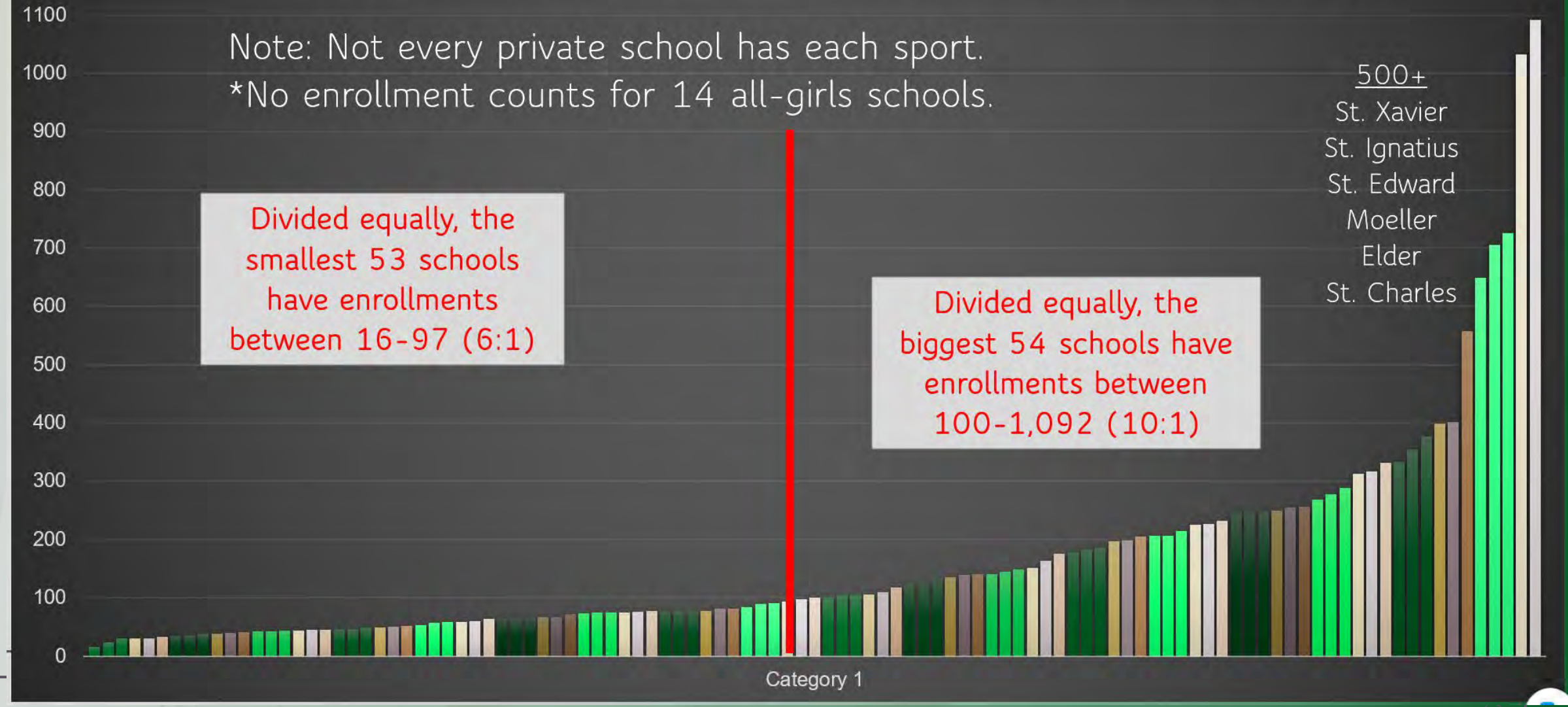
- Ice Hockey

Currently only has one division with 70 teams.

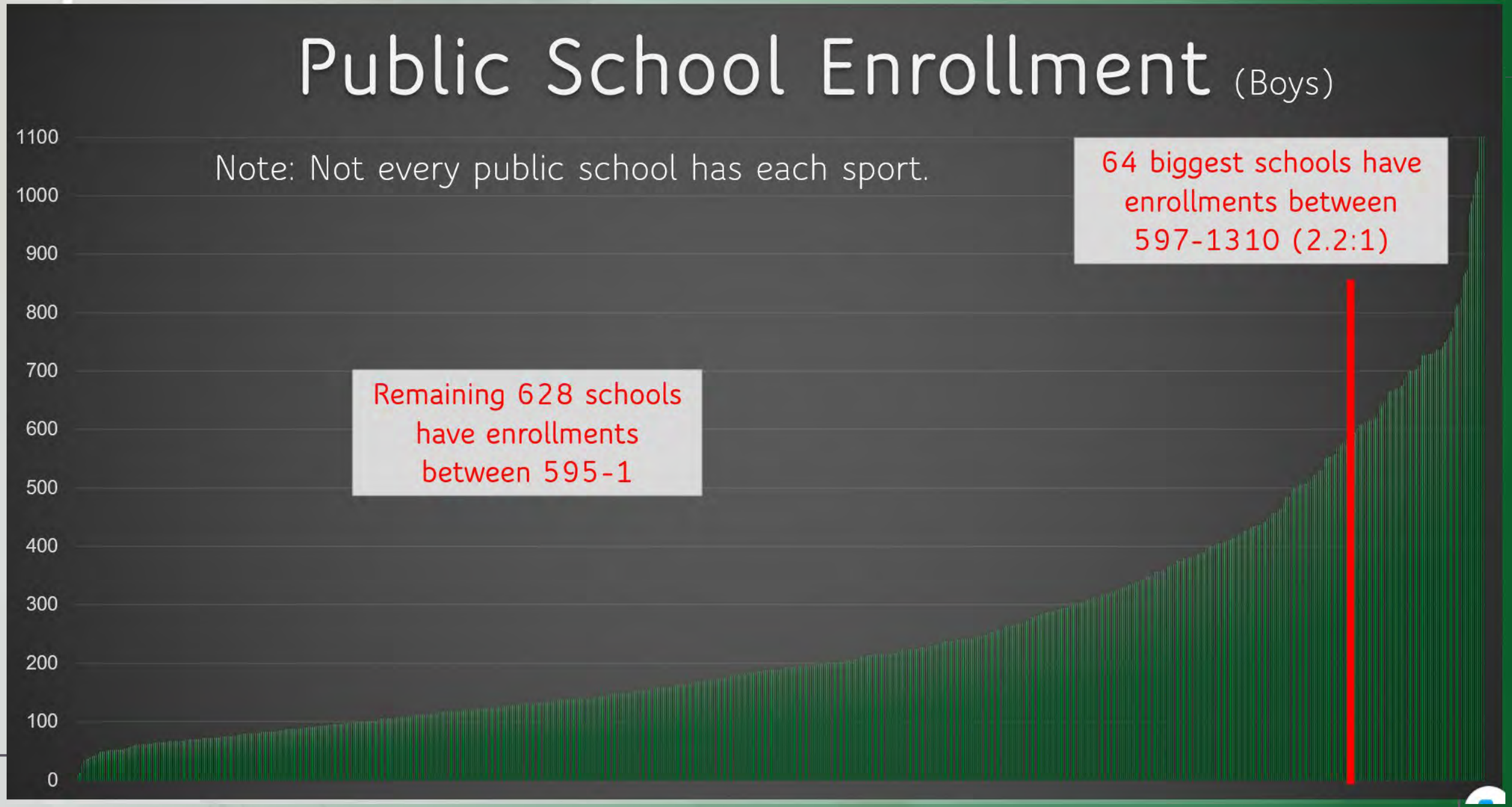
If divided:
Blue- Public (49)
Red- Private (21)



Private School Enrollment (Boys)



Public School Enrollment (Boys)



CURRENT DIVISIONAL BREAKDOWNS

After the transition from 4 divisions to 7 divisions (5 in soccer), the ratio between the biggest school in a division and the smallest school in a division is almost always less than 2:1.

Football

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	601 and more	80
II	600 - 356	98
III	355 - 257	106
IV	256 - 197	104
V	196 - 150	105
VI	149 - 107	107
VII	106 and less	108
	Total Schools	708

B Basketball

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	616 and more	65
II	417 - 615	72
III	263 - 416	132
IV	192 - 262	129
V	136 - 191	131
VI	93 - 135	134
VII	92 and less	134
	Total Schools	**797**

Volleyball

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	567 and more	64
II	384 - 566	73
III	256 - 383	130
IV	179 - 255	129
V	128 - 178	129
VI	90 - 127	130
VII	89 and less	134
	Total Schools	789

B Soccer

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	618 and more	64
II	416 - 617	72
III	243 - 415	147
IV	157 - 242	144
V	156 and less	145
	Total Schools	**572**

G Basketball

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	566 and more	66
II	383 - 565	73
III	251 - 382	126
IV	179 - 250	124
V	130 - 178	127
VI	89 - 129	127
VII	88 and less	127
	Total Schools	**773**

G Soccer

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	564 and more	64
II	376 - 563	72
III	226 - 375	130
IV	160 - 225	129
V	159 and less	129
	Total Schools	**524**

AGAIN: Any data/projections which follow are purely for discussion purposes and do not reflect any final decisions by the OHSAA Board of Directors regarding the number of divisions each group will have if the referendum vote passes.

Note: Financial implications are still unknown. No guarantee what attendance numbers will allow for final number of divisions.

CURRENT DIVISIONAL BREAKDOWNS

After the transition from 4 divisions to 7 divisions (5 in soccer), the ratio between the biggest school in a division and the smallest school in a division is almost always less than 2:1.

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	Total Schools	**797**

Boys Basketball Example

4 Public Divisions, 2 Private Divisions- Divided Evenly

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1310-337 (3.8:1)	173
Public 2	336-191 (1.7:1)	172
Public 3	190-114 (1.6:1)	172
Public 4	113-8	173
Private 1	1092-106 (10.3:1)	53
Private 2	105-16	54

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	616 and more	65
II	417 - 615	72
III	263 - 416	132
IV	192 - 262	129
V	136 - 191	131
VI	93 - 135	134
VII	92 and less	134
	Total Schools	**797**

Boys Basketball Example

4 Public Divisions, 3 Private Divisions- Smaller D1/2

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1310-595 (2.2:1)	64
Public 2	594-398 (1.5:1)	73
Public 3	397-154 (2.6:1)	276
Public 4	183 or less	277
Private 1	1092-278 (3.9:1)	16
Private 2	277-81 (3.4:1)	46
Private 3	80-16 (5:1)	45

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	616 and more	65
II	417 - 615	72
III	263 - 416	132
IV	192 - 262	129
V	136 - 191	131
VI	93 - 135	134
VII	92 and less	134
	Total Schools	**797**

Boys Basketball Example

5 Public Divisions, 2 Private Divisions

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1300-595 (2.2:1)	64
Public 2	594-398 (1.5:1)	73
Public 3	397-185 (2.1:1)	185
Public 4	184-118 (1.6:1)	188
Public 5	117 or less	180
Private 1	1091-199 (5.5:1)	32
Private 2	198-16 (12:1)	75

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	616 and more	65
II	417 - 615	72
III	263 - 416	132
IV	192 - 262	129
V	136 - 191	131
VI	93 - 135	134
VII	92 and less	134
	Total Schools	**797**

CURRENT DIVISIONAL BREAKDOWNS

After the transition from 4 divisions to 7 divisions (5 in soccer), the ratio between the biggest school in a division and the smallest school in a division is almost always less than 2:1.

Football

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	601 and more	80
II	600 - 356	98
III	355 - 257	106
IV	256 - 197	104
V	196 - 150	105
VI	149 - 107	107
VII	106 and less	108
	Total Schools	708

Football Example

5 public (631), 2 private (71 schools)

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1300-595 (2.2:1)	64
Public 2	594-398 (1.5:2)	73
Public 3	397-211 (1.9:1)	165
Public 4	210-129 (1.6:1)	165
Public 5	128 or less	164
Private 1	1,091-278 (3.9:1)	16
Private 2	277-43 (6.4:1)	55

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	601 and more	80
II	600 - 356	98
III	355 - 257	106
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V	196 - 150	105
VI	149 - 107	107
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	Total Schools	708

Football Example

5 public (631), 2 private (71 schools)

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1300-595 (2.2:1)	64
Public 2	594-295 (2:1)	141
Public 3	294-190 (1.5:1)	141
Public 4	189-121 (1.6:1)	143
Public 5	120 or less	142
Private 1	1,091-278 (3.9:1)	16
Private 2	277-43 (6.4:1)	55

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Football Example

4 public (631), 3 private (71 schools)

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Public 1	1300-595 (2.2:1)	64
Public 2	594-241 (2.5:1)	190
Public 3	240-138 (1.7:1)	190
Public 4	137 or less	187
Private 1	1,091-278 (3.9:1)	16
Private 2	277-124 (2.3:1)	32
Private 3	124-43 (2.9:1)	23

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
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V	196 - 150	105
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Girls Soccer

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	Total Schools	**524**

Girls Soccer Example

3 public (478), 2 private (77 schools)- Divided Evenly

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	564 and more	64
II	376 - 563	72
III	226 - 375	130
IV	160 - 225	129
V	159 and less	129
	Total Schools	**524**

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1263-335 (3.7:1)	159
Public 2	334-177 (1.8:1)	159
Public 3	176-49 (3.6:1)	160
Private 1	543-176 (3:1)	35
Private 2	172-25 (6.8:1)	35

Girls Soccer Example

3 public (478), 2 private (77 schools)- Smaller D1

Division	Adjusted Enrollment	Schools
I	564 and more	64
II	376 - 563	72
III	226 - 375	130
IV	160 - 225	129
V	159 and less	129
	Total Schools	**524**

Division	Enrollment	Schools
Public 1	1263-559 (2.3:1)	65
Public 2	557-199 (2.8:1)	207
Public 3	198-49 (4:1)	206
Private 1	543-176 (3:1)	35
Private 2	172-25 (6.8:1)	35



Comments & Questions