

OHSAA SPORTS REGULATIONS

Introduction

Article 5-6-1 of the Constitution grants authority to the Board of Directors to determine the contest rules and regulations for each sport.

The Board of Directors has adopted the following playing rules and contest regulations effective August 1, 2023, except as specified within this section. The Executive Director is authorized to modify these regulations when it is deemed necessary by the Executive Director, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors.

These regulations apply to all interscholastic teams and contests, including but not limited to varsity, junior varsity, reserve, junior, sophomore, freshman and 7th & 8th grade teams. **For additional regulations specifically for grades 7 and 8, see General Sports Regulation 9.**

GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Official Playing Rules and Rule Books

The official playing rules and rule books as published by the listed organization have been approved by the Board of Directors for all interscholastic athletic contests in the following sports.

SPORT	PLAYING RULES	STATUS
CROSS COUNTRY	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
FIELD HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
FOOTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
GOLF	UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION	RECOGNIZED
SOCCER	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
TENNIS	UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION	RECOGNIZED
VOLLEYBALL (GIRLS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
BASKETBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
BOWLING*	UNITED STATES BOWLING CONGRESS	RECOGNIZED
GYMNASTICS*	U.S.A. GYMNASTICS	RECOGNIZED
ICE HOCKEY	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
SWIMMING AND DIVING	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
WRESTLING* (BOYS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
WRESTLING* (GIRLS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION	EMERGING
BASEBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
LACROSSE (BOYS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
LACROSSE (GIRLS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
SOFTBALL	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
TRACK AND FIELD	NATIONAL FEDERATION	RECOGNIZED
VOLLEYBALL* (BOYS)	NATIONAL FEDERATION	EMERGING

*Per Bylaw 1-4-3, "Interscholastic competition shall be conducted using playing rules adopted by the Board of Directors and/or modifications or changes in sport rules are not permitted except those provided in the rule book and approved by the Board of Directors." Denoted sports have rule modifications outside of those permitted within the Rules Book that have been approved by the OHSAA Board of Directors.

2. Mandatory Attendance at or Participation in OHSAA-Sponsored Rules Interpretation Meetings

- 2.1) Any school sponsoring a sport recognized by the OHSAA in which a state tournament is held must have the head varsity coach, assistant varsity coach or athletic administrator attend or participate (online) in an OHSAA-sponsored state rules interpretation meeting in that sport by the communicated deadline date.
- 2.2) A late fee will be assessed to access an online meeting or to participate in an in-person meeting after the first day a regular season contest is permitted in the respective sport.
- 2.3) Failure to attend or participate in the sport's state rules interpretation meeting by the established deadline shall result in ineligibility to participate in the OHSAA-sponsored tournament in that sport.
- 2.4) Those attending a meeting in person will be responsible to be in attendance within 10 minutes of the start of the meeting and remain until the conclusion of the meeting to receive credit for attendance.

3. Mandatory Requirement for Tournament Officials Selection

To assist in the process in determining which contest officials will be assigned to OHSAA tournament contests the following school year, schools are required to vote for officials, and coaches are highly encouraged to rate officials. Voting by athletic administrators and ratings by coaches are combined with votes from local officials associations and officiating leaders to create a composite score which develops a pool of tournament-eligible officials for the next school year. The sports in which voting

is required and ratings are needed; the deadlines in which voting and ratings must be completed, and the procedures on how to vote for and rate officials are published on the OHSAA website, in the sport-specific OHSAA coaches/officials manual and provided in memos disseminated to athletic administrators.

3.1) Voting by Athletic Administrators

By the established deadlines, athletic administrators are responsible for submitting a ballot listing a maximum of 15 officials in each required sport, preferably after consulting with their coaches.

Failure to participate in the required voting process will result in the school being fined \$50 per occurrence and may prohibit the school from participating in all future tournament competition in the sport for which the fine was issued.

3.2) Ratings by Head Coaches

Following each varsity contest, head coaches are highly encouraged to rate the contest officials from that day's or evening's contest on a scale of 1-5. Coaches may rate as many as 50 officials throughout the season.

Note: The OHSAA reserves the right to modify the rating and voting procedures based on the technology that is available.

4. Penalties for Failure to Acquire Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit (PAPP)

Coaches, paid and/or volunteer, in grades 7-12, who do not possess the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit, which is part of the State Board of Education requirements to coach in Ohio, shall not be permitted to coach at any level at an OHSAA member school. Individuals who have applied for a Permit but who have not yet been issued a valid credential shall not be permitted to interact with athletes, even under the supervision of a credentialed coach, until his/her Pupil Activity Permit number is formally issued. However, per Ohio Administrative Code 119.06, coaches who have already obtained their permit and are going through the renewal process are permitted to continue coaching during the pendency of ODE's review as long as the coach filed an application for their renewal within the specified time and in the manner required. Action by ODE rejecting any coach's renewal shall not be effective prior to fifteen days after notice of the rejection is mailed to the coach.

The OHSAA encourages all athletic administrators to utilize the tools in *myOHSAA* to track their coaches' certification. All Board-approved and properly credentialed coaches shall be listed on the Emergency Contact form for each sport. Further, any high school coach who does not possess this Permit at the first level of the tournament shall not be permitted to coach at any level of the tournament until such time that the Permit is obtained and verification of such permit is provided to the OHSAA. Falsification of this information shall result in a coach's removal from the OHSAA tournament.

Note: It is the intention of the OHSAA to perform random audits of the coaching permits throughout the school year and to fine schools that have not complied with Bylaw 6-1-2 in the amount of \$250 per coach. In addition, the penalty for a coach not listed on the Emergency Contact form is removal from coaching in the OHSAA tournament.

5. Penalties for Failure to Conduct Pre-Season Meetings

When it has been verified that the member school has failed to conduct a pre-season meeting(s) in accordance with Bylaw 3-1-4, the school shall be fined \$500 for each violation.

Note: Please refer to the OHSAA website for a checklist of items that must be covered and sample agendas and other resources to assist with compliance. Each member school shall record on *myOHSAA* the date and time of each meeting as well as the person responsible for each meeting.

6. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Entry/Withdraw Procedures and Draw/Seed Meetings

6.1) In order for a member school to participate in an OHSAA tournament, the school principal or athletic administrator shall indicate and authorize their student-athletes' tournament participation in *myOHSAA* prior to the established deadlines.

6.2) A tournament entry/withdraw deadline will be established for each OHSAA tournament. The tournament entry/withdraw deadlines for each OHSAA tournament for the upcoming school year are listed later in Regulation 6.

6.2.1) Schools may change their tournament participation prior to the established deadline without penalty. Changes to OHSAA high school tournament participation after the established deadline will result in a penalty up to and including tournament ineligibility.

6.2.2) Schools that desire to enter an OHSAA tournament after the deadline may do so by filing a "Petition Letter of Late Entry" with the OHSAA Executive Director's Office only. Late entry may be approved provided the tournament allows entry after the established deadline; the "Petition Letter of Late Entry" is received in the OHSAA Executive Director's Office prior to noon on the Friday before the established draw/seeding date, and the school has met all tournament eligibility requirements prior to noon on the Friday before the established draw/seeding date. The OHSAA Executive Director's Office shall have the authority to approve or deny such "Petitions of Late Entry." Tournament managers and District Athletic Boards do not have the authority to approve such "Petitions of Late Entry." Decisions to deny a late entry petition may be appealed.

6.2.3) Schools needing to withdraw from an OHSAA tournament after the established deadline may do so by filing a "Petition Letter of Withdraw" with the OHSAA Executive Director's Office. Tournament managers and District Athletic Boards do not have the authority to approve such "Petitions of Withdraw."

6.3) A school coach, administrator or authorized school representative shall attend a mandatory coaches/draw/seed meeting for each sport for which a meeting is held. District Athletic Boards will provide schools with seeding information and

will notify schools of the exact locations and times of the meetings. The specific dates for each sport’s coaches/draw/seed meeting dates during the upcoming school year are listed later in Regulation 6. Common tournament draw/seed procedures shall be used as approved by the Board of Directors and listed within each sport’s tournament regulations.

6.3.1) Schools that fail to send a coach, administrator or authorized school representative to a mandatory coaches/draw/seed meeting and/or fail to submit required seeding information or a seeding ballot will be assessed a penalty for each offense as shown later in Regulation 6. See the specific tournament regulations for additional procedures and/or penalties.

6.4) Schools that fail to participate in a tournament (individual or team) after indicating that they will enter a tournament may be ineligible to participate in that particular sport’s OHSAA-sponsored tournament the following year.

Additional penalties may be assessed and may include: 1.) a monetary fine issued by the OHSAA Office; 2.) payment of officials’ fees for the missed contests; 3.) payment of the opponent’s travel expenses for the missed contests, and 4.) additional penalties as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director in collaboration with the respective District Athletic Board. See General Sports Regulation 16.4 for additional information on “Failure to Appear.” The penalties rendered by the OHSAA Office may be appealed.

6.5) Tournament fines and penalties shall be assessed by the OHSAA Office. District Athletic Boards do not have authority to determine or set fines. All fines shall be uniform across all sports of the OHSAA.

6.5.1) Fines and penalties are adopted and designed to: 1.) mitigate unnecessary costs in conducting a tournament when a school team does not attend according to the schedule adopted by the Executive Director, and 2.) provide a financial disincentive from a school making a decision to not participate in the OHSAA tournament.

6.5.2) All violations of General Sports Regulation 6 for a sectional or district tournament shall be communicated to the OHSAA Office. The OHSAA Office and the District Athletic Board shall coordinate the entry and withdrawal of teams and individuals from the tournament.

6.5.3) The Executive Director’s office shall prepare and invoice the school being issued the monetary penalty.

6.5.4) All fines for activities in General Regulation 6 may be waived by the OHSAA Office only for extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary circumstances are defined as unusual in nature and infrequent in occurrence.

ISSUE	PENALTY
Late entry petition to participate in tournament	\$50
Withdraw petition submitted after deadline to withdraw	\$50
Failure to submit seeding information when prescribed by OHSAA regulation	\$50
Failure for coach, administrator or authorized team representative to attend the tournament draw	\$150
Failure to pay specific sport fees required for tournament participation by the deadline (e.g., golf greens fees, bowling lineage fees or wrestling weight management fees).	Tournament ineligibility until fees are paid
Failure to show up for a scheduled tournament contest	\$150 (Team Sports), \$50 (Individual Sports), plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cost of officials scheduled to officiate; plus, • cost of any site expenses incurred by the OHSAA; plus, • team expenses incurred by the opposing team, except for presale ticket revenue.

GENERAL SPORTS REGULATIONS 2023-2024

2023-24 Sport	First-Round Tournament	Tournament Entry/Withdraw	Late Tournament Entry (with Penalty)	Draw/Seed Meeting Date (all at 2:00 unless noted)
FALL SPORTS				
Golf	Sectional 9/25-10/30 & 10/2-10/7	7/1-9/4	9/5-9/11 at 12:00 noon	9/17
Girls Tennis	Sectional 10/2-10/7	7/1-9/11	9/12-9/18 at 12:00 noon	9/24
Soccer	Sectional 10/16-10/21	7/1-9/25	9/26-10/2 at 12:00 noon	10/8 (G-3:00 p.m.)
Girls Volleyball	Sectional 10/16-10/21	7/1-9/25	9/26-10/2 at 12:00 noon	10/8
Girls Field Hockey	Regional 10/16-10/28	7/1-9/25	9/26-10/2 at 12:00 noon	10/8
Cross Country	District 10/21	7/1-9/25	9/26-10/2 at 12:00 noon	10/8
Football	Regional First Round 10/27	7/1-10/2	10/3-10/9 at 12:00 noon*	NA
WINTER SPORTS				
Swimming and Diving	Sectional 2/5-2/10	7/1-1/15	1/16-1/22 at 12:00 noon	1/28
Girls Gymnastics	Sectional & District 2/12-2/24	7/1-1/22	1/23-1/29 at 12 noon	2/4
Bowling	Sectional 2/11-2/18 (DII), 2/18-2/25 (DI)	7/1-1/22	1/23-1/29 at 12 noon	2/4
Girls Basketball	Sectional 2/12-2/24	7/1-1/22	1/23-1/29 at 12 noon	2/4
Ice Hockey	Regional 2/12-3/2	7/1-1/22	1/23-1/29 at 12 noon	2/7
Girls Wrestling	TBD	7/1-1/29	1/30-2/5 at 12 noon	2/11
Boys Wrestling	Sectional 2/19-2/24	7/1-1/29	1/30-2/5 at 12 noon	2/11
Boys Basketball	Sectional 2/19-3/2	7/1-1/29	1/30-2/5 at 12 noon	2/11
SPRING SPORTS				
Girls Softball	Sectional 5/4-5/11	7/1-4/15	4/16-4/22 at 12:00 noon	4/28
Boys Tennis	Sectional 5/6-5/11	7/1-4/15	4/16-4/22 at 12:00 noon	4/28
Track and Field	District 5/13-5/18	7/1-4/15	4/16-4/22 at 12:00 noon	4/28
Track and Field 7th/8th	State Championship 5/11	NA	NA	NA
Boys Volleyball	Regional 5/4-5/11	7/1-4/15	4/16-4/22 at 12:00 noon	4/28
Baseball	Sectional 5/11-5/18	7/1-4/22	4/23-4/29 at 12:00 noon	5/5
Boys Lacrosse	Regional Qualifying 5/10-5/19	7/1-4/22	4/23-4/29 at 12:00 noon	5/5 (3:00 p.m.)
Girls Lacrosse	Regional Qualifying 5/10-5/19	7/1-4/22	4/23-4/29 at 12:00 noon	5/5 (3:00 p.m.)

*Indicates no penalty for schools withdrawn from the tournament per OHSAA regulations for not meeting the eight-game minimum for tournament qualification

6.5.5) Failure to pay fines prescribed in General Sports Regulation 6 may prohibit the school from participating in all future tournament competition until the fine is paid and/or have their membership status reviewed.

6.5.6) Fines for tournament withdrawal after the deadline shall not be imposed in addition to other penalties listed within this sports regulation.

6.6) The appeals procedure shall be established and communicated by the OHSAA Office.

6.7) The table of fines and penalties for tournament activities is as follows:

7. Non-Interscholastic Participation and Individual Skill Instruction

7.1) Non-Interscholastic Participation Definitions

7.1.1) **Definition of a Non-Interscholastic Program or Team** – A non-interscholastic program, also known as a non-interscholastic team, is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program or team is not under the direct or indirect control of the OHSAA member school. This means the OHSAA member school does not sponsor (one that is Board of Education- or other governing board-approved), supervise or have financial responsibility for that non-interscholastic program or team.

The non-interscholastic program or team, in which participation occurs outside the school season, may be composed of participants in grades 7 through 12 and may be operated within or outside the OHSAA member school facility. Admission may be charged, and fees or expenses may be collected for training and/or competitions sponsored by that non-interscholastic program or team. It is not necessary for a coach to be present or for instruction to be given for a program or team to be considered a non-interscholastic program or team.

Examples of or names associated with non-interscholastic programs or teams are: church, intramural, rec (recreation), YMCA, CYO, AAU, USAVB, USSF, USASwimming, all-star, club, non-interscholastic or any combination of players involved in team play.

Note: See Sports Regulation 7.3.1.a) for the number of team members permitted on the non-interscholastic team who came from the same school or who participated in that sport as a team member at another school in the preceding season. A roster is defined as all the members of the entire non-interscholastic team that would practice together or participate together. “Rotating players” from the same interscholastic team is not permitted in the non-interscholastic team player limitation.

- 7.1.2) **Definition of a School Program or Team** – A school (interscholastic) program or team is one in which a student-athlete participates in team play or as an individual, and that program or team is under the direct or indirect control of the OHSAA member school. This means the OHSAA member school sponsors (one that is Board of Education- or other governing board-approved), supervises or has financial responsibility for that program or team. See Bylaw 3 for administrative responsibilities as they relate to a school program or team.

Member schools may sponsor more than one varsity or sub-varsity team for interscholastic competition, but each team must have its own schedule and may not exceed the contest limitations for that sport.

Note: See the specific sport regulations for participation limits for individuals.

- 7.1.3) **Definition of a School Contest** – An “interscholastic athletic contest,” as used throughout the Bylaws and Sports Regulations of the OHSAA, is defined as a sports event which takes place during the defined sports season in which student-athletes representing at least one school are engaged in sports-related activities with students representing at least one or more schools or non-interscholastic programs. This includes, but is not limited to, scheduled contests/meets/matches, previews, scrimmages, jamborees, electronic contests, invitational contests, and alumni games. Practices involving two or more schools shall also count as a contest unless those squads share the same board-approved coach. See Bylaw 9 regarding contests requiring special attention.

For purposes of this definition, “defined sport season” shall be determined by the sports regulations for that sport, beginning with the first date on which coaching may begin and concluding on the last date the school participates in a regular or postseason contest.

- 7.1.4) **Definition of a Member of an Interscholastic Team/Team Member (Bylaw 4-1-4)** – A student is a member of an interscholastic squad when the student participates in an interscholastic contest. Such status as a squad member continues until the start of the next school season in that sport. An athletic contest involving participants from another school or any non-interscholastic or any organized adult team is a game, preview or a scrimmage.
- 7.1.5) **Definition of Coaching** – Coaching is providing instruction or being present with a team or individual during contests, tryouts, training and practices. If a school coach, whether paid, volunteer or designated, is approved for his/her coaching position by a Board of Education or similar governing board prior to June 1, the coach is accountable to all OHSAA rules and regulations beginning June 1. For additional regulations on school coaches, see Bylaw 6.

7.2) Regulations Prohibiting Students from Participating on Non-Interscholastic Teams During the School Team’s Season

- 7.2.1) **Team Sports** – A member of an interscholastic team in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may not participate in an athletic contest, a tryout or any type of interscholastic team or group training or practices (including open gyms/fields) with a non-interscholastic team in that same sport during the interscholastic team’s season.

Note: This regulation applies to students invited to participate in a tryout, group training or practice at a college or in contests, tryouts, group training or practices with any non-interscholastic program or team.

- 7.2.2) **Individual Sports** – A member of an interscholastic team in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field and wrestling may not participate in an athletic contest with a non-interscholastic team or in non-interscholastic competition in that same sport during the interscholastic team’s season.

However, athletes in these individual sports are permitted to participate with a non-interscholastic program in a tryout or a practice(s) during the school season.

7.3) Regulations Permitting Students to Participate on Non-Interscholastic Teams Outside of the Interscholastic Team’s Season

- 7.3.1) **Team Sports (Other Than Football)** – A member of a school program or team in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may participate with a non-

interscholastic program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the interscholastic team’s season under the following condition:

- a) The number of team members on the non-interscholastic team who are enrolled at the same school and/or participated in that sport at that same school in the preceding season, or team members on the non-interscholastic team who participated in that sport at another school in the preceding season and transferred or matriculated to the same school, is limited to the number of team members outlines below. Rotating players from the same team is not permitted within the player limitation.

Note: Students who did NOT play for an interscholastic team the previous year do not count in the team limitation of that sport.

The team limit is as follows:

Limitation on Sport	Number of team members
Baseball	6
Basketball	3
Field Hockey	6
Ice Hockey	5
Boys Lacrosse	5
Girls Lacrosse	6
Soccer	6
Softball	6
Volleyball	3

Notes:

- a.) The team limit is not in effect for the sports of basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer and volleyball from June 1 through July 31 when the non-interscholastic team is coached by a coach not employed by the school in which the team members are participating.
- b.) The team limit is not in effect for the sports of baseball, boys volleyball, lacrosse and softball as soon as a team member has completed his/her interscholastic team’s season through July 31 when the non-interscholastic team is coached by a coach not employed by the school in which the team members are enrolled and participating.
- c.) If the non-interscholastic team is being coached by a school coach, whether paid, volunteer or designated, the team limitation shall remain in effect at all times (with the exception of the 13-day rule as outlined in GSR 7.5).
- d.) For purposes of this regulation, team members who matriculate to the same school do not count toward the team limitation for that school until they are enrolled and attending that school.
- e.) For purposes of this regulation, “rotating players” is defined as utilizing a member of a school program who was not on the original roster of the non-interscholastic team in place of another member of the same school program due to an absence or injury.
- f.) A member of an interscholastic team may continue to participate with a non-interscholastic team in a national qualifying tournament after July 31 until the team is eliminated from the tournament but no later than Labor Day.
- g.) Graduating seniors or students completing their athletic eligibility at the end of the semester are exempt from the team limitation once their school season in the same sport has been completed.
- h.) These regulations do not apply if the “members” of the non-interscholastic squad are all siblings (by blood or adoption) and no other player from the same interscholastic squad is a participant on behalf of the non-interscholastic squad.
- i.) Students from interscholastic teams shall not be required to attend the coaching/instruction. A paid or unpaid school(interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student’s chance to be selected for an interscholastic team is contingent upon this participation.
- j.) If a student-athlete quits or is dropped from an interscholastic team and joins a non-interscholastic team during the interscholastic team’s season, he/she may not rejoin that interscholastic team for the remainder of the season

- 7.3.2) **Individual Sports** – A member of an interscholastic team in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling may participate with a non-interscholastic program or team in contests, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the school's season with no restriction when coached by either a school coach or a non-interscholastic coach.

Notes: Students from interscholastic teams shall not be required to attend the coaching/instruction. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

If a student-athlete quits or is dropped from an interscholastic team and joins a non-interscholastic team during the interscholastic team's season, he/she may not rejoin that interscholastic team for the remainder of the season.

7.4) Regulations Prohibiting Football Players from Participating on Non-Interscholastic Teams

- 7.4.1) A member of an interscholastic football team may not participate in an athletic contest with a non-interscholastic team in that same sport between August 1 and May 14. Any contact football, flag football, touch football and arena football are examples of non-permissible events. (See General Sports Regulation 7.2.1 for in-season restrictions.)
- 7.4.2) A member school or program or team in the sports of football may participate with a non-interscholastic program in camps, tryouts, training and/or practices prior to and after the interscholastic team's season under the following conditions:
- They may not play in any contest including 7 on 7 (except between May 15 and July 31).
 - All activities must be non-contact.
 - The only football equipment the player may wear are helmets and cleats.
- 7.4.3) From May 15 to July 31, a member of an interscholastic football team may participate in an athletic contest, a tryout or any type of team or group training or practices with a non-interscholastic team provided all participation is non-contact and the only football equipment being worn are helmets and cleats. This would include 7-on-7 participation. (See General Sports Regulation 7.5 regarding coach's involvement the 13-day rule.)

Note: All activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear are helmets and cleats.

7.5) Regulations Permitting Coaches to Coach Their Own Student-Athletes on Non-Interscholastic Teams Outside of the Interscholastic Team's Season

- 7.5.1) **Team Sports (13-Day Rule)** – Members of a school team's coaching staff in the team sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball may coach and/or provide instruction to (including, but not limited to, video or film study) any number of students from their teams in excess of the team limit set forth in General Sport Regulation 7.3 for a maximum of 13 days from May 15 through July 31 except that participation cannot be mandatory. In addition:
- In the sport of football, a day is counted as one of the 13 days when the number of students from an interscholastic team being coached by members of the interscholastic team's staff exceeds seven. Further, only non-contact football is permitted.
 - Sport specific events coordinated by a school shall count as one of the 13 days when the number of students from that school's team exceeds the team limit set forth in General Sport Regulation 7.3, or seven in the sport of football, even if the event does not involve a member of an interscholastic team's coaching staff coaching.
 - The 13-day limitation applies to the entire coaching staff. Each individual coach is not entitled to 13 different days for coaching. The days refers to any amount of time utilized during the 13 days (i.e. the regulation does NOT permit 312 total hours of coaching . . . 13 days of 24 hours each).
 - Participation during the 13 days shall not be mandatory.
- 7.5.2) So long as the team limitation is observed (See 7.3.1), a paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach approved by a Board of Education or other governing board may coach students from his/her interscholastic teams in team play at any time except during the mandatory no-contact period. See General Sports Regulation 7.3.1 for more details on the non-interscholastic team limitation.
- 7.5.3) **Individual Sports** – Members of a interscholastic team's coaching staff in the individual sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling may coach students from their interscholastic teams outside the school (interscholastic) season. In addition:
- Students from interscholastic teams shall not be required to attend the coaching instruction.

7.6) Regulation on All-Star Games (Coaching or Participating on Non-Interscholastic Teams Outside of the Interscholastic Team's Season)

7.6.1) School coaches may coach players from his or her school in special "All-Star" contests. Coaches may also coach in "All-Star" contests during the no-contact period.

7.6.2) Individuals shall not participate in "All-Star" contests until after they have completed their final contest for their school.

Note: For the sport of football, only graduating seniors or students completing athletic eligibility at the end of the current semester may participate in "All-Star" competition (Football Regulation 6.2).

7.6.3) All-Star contests are considered non-interscholastic and the limitations outlined in General Sport Regulation 7 shall apply to underclassmen.

7.7) Exceptions to Participation on Non-Interscholastic Teams for Students

7.7.1) **Special Olympics or Paralympics** – After a student becomes a member of a school (interscholastic) team sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, the student may participate in tryouts and/or a contest(s) sponsored by either the Special Olympics or the United States Paralympics provided:

a.) A request for waiver is submitted to the Executive Director's Office that includes that student's name, nature of the disability and the date of the event(s) in which the student desires to compete. The waiver must be submitted by the school's principal or another senior administrator.

7.7.2) **National Governing Body Selection or Other Waivers** – After a student becomes a member of a school (interscholastic) team sponsored by the Board of Education or other governing board, the student may participate as a member of a national team, as determined by the National Governing Body in that sport, or in a national or international competition by virtue of his/her past performance in an OHSAA sport.

Note: Students who wish to participate in contests/events that are not national competitions approved by a National Governing Body may, if applicable, request a waiver for such participation in accordance with the specific regulations of that respective sport.

7.8) Individual Skill Instruction Definitions

7.8.1) **Definition of Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction** – Instruction or coaching provided by a board approved coach to a member of that same interscholastic team in which the techniques and skills of the sport are being taught and the activity does not involve team instruction or play.

7.8.2) **Definition of Providing Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction** – It is considered to be providing individual skill/coaching instruction by a school coach when the techniques and skills of the sport are taught in a one-on-one or individual setting. This means instruction or coaching comes directly to a student-athlete from a coach or instructor. A student-athlete watching video/film with a coach or instructor is also an activity defined as individual skill/coaching instruction.

7.8.3) **Definition of Team Play** – activity of individuals with more than one player opposing one player (2-on-2, 2-on-1, 3-on-2, 3-on-3, 4-on-4, 5-on-5, etc.).

7.9) General Individual Skill Instruction Regulations

7.9.1) Students from interscholastic teams receiving individual skill/coaching instruction from a school coach shall not be **required** to participate in sessions where individual skill/coaching instruction is provided. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or similar governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.

7.9.2) There is no limit on the number of school coaches that may be present when individual skill/coaching instruction is provided to student-athletes as long as the contact between the coaches and athletes adheres to the regulations outlined in 7.10.1.

7.9.3) Non-interscholastic coaches or instructors may provide individual skill/coaching instruction to a member of an interscholastic team at any time provided the individual skill/coaching instruction does not violate any Board of Education (or similar governing board), school administrators' or school coaches' policies or the Ohio Revised Code.

7.9.4) Students from interscholastic teams may be used for out-of-season demonstration purposes if approved in advance by the Executive Director's Office.

7.10) Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction – Team Sports of Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball

7.10.1) **From August 1 through May 14 From School Coaches** – In the sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball, individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of an interscholastic team or individuals at any time prior to and after the school season and **outside the defined no-contact periods** (see General Sports Regulation 11) from school coaches provided the number

of individuals per group per school coach providing instruction **does not exceed the team limit set forth in General Sports Regulation 7.3.** During such instruction, the coach and their individual groups may be in the same facility; however, the groups must be clearly defined and shall not combine for instruction at any time or participate in “team play.” Please refer to General Sports Regulation 7.8.3 for the definition of “team play.” It is permissible to have groups rotate to different coaches for specific skill instruction being delivered by that coach, however, the students in each group must remain the same.

In the sport of football, individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of an interscholastic team or individuals at any time prior to and after the school season and **outside the defined no-contact periods** (see General Sports Regulation 11) from school coaches provided that there are no more than **seven (7) members of an interscholastic team** per group per school coach providing instruction. During such instruction, the coach and their individual groups of seven (7) may be in the same facility; however, the groups must be clearly defined and shall not combine for instruction at any time or participate in “team play.” Please refer to General Sports Regulation 7.8.3 for the definition of “team play.” It is permissible to have groups rotate to different coaches for specific skill instruction being delivered by that coach, however, the students in each group must remain the same.

Note: All activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player(s) may wear is helmets and cleats.

- 7.10.2) **From May 15 through July 31 From School Coaches** – In the sports of baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball and volleyball, individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of an interscholastic team or individuals at any time from school coaches provided the number of individuals present per group per school coach providing instruction **does not exceed the team limit set forth in General Sports Regulation 7.3.** During such instruction, the coach and their individual groups may be in the same facility; however, the groups must be clearly defined and shall not combine for instruction at any time to participate in “team play” without utilizing one of the team’s 13 days permitted within General Sports Regulation 7.5.1. Please refer to General Sports Regulation 7.8.3 for the definition of “team play.” It is permissible to have groups rotate to different coaches for specific skill instruction being delivered by that coach, however, the students in each group must remain the same.

In the sport of football, individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of an interscholastic team or individuals at any time from school coaches provided that there are no more than **seven (7) members of an interscholastic team** per group, per school coach providing instruction. During such instruction, the coach and their individual groups of seven (7) may be in the same facility; however, the groups must be clearly defined and shall not combine for instruction at any time to participate in “team play” without utilizing one of the team’s 10 days permitted within General Sports Regulation 7.5.1. Please refer to General Sports Regulation 7.8.3 for the definition of “team play.” It is permissible to have groups rotate to different coaches for specific skill instruction being delivered by that coach, however, the students in each group must remain the same.

Note: All activities must be non-contact and the only football equipment the player may wear is helmets and cleats.

- 7.11) Individual Skill/Coaching Instruction – Individual Sports of Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Track and Field and Wrestling
- 7.11.1) Individual skill/coaching instruction may be received by a member of an interscholastic team at any time from either school or non-interscholastic coaches or instructors.
- 7.12) Penalties for Violation of Regulations in This Section
- 7.12.1) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations by a member of an interscholastic team shall be ineligibility for interscholastic athletics for a maximum of one year.
- 7.12.2) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations by a paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or similar governing board shall be suspension from participation in camps, clinics, workshops and programs where individual skill/coaching instruction is provided to members of the interscholastic team were employed for a maximum of one year and any other penalties in Bylaw 11-1-2, Penalties, as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director’s Office.
- 7.13) Penalties for Violation of Regulations in This Section
- 7.13.1) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations for any non-senior member of an interscholastic team may be ineligibility in that sport for the remainder of the season or the ensuing season.
- 7.13.2) The maximum penalty for violation of these regulations for a senior may be ineligibility for all interscholastic athletics for the remainder of the school year.
- 7.13.3) The penalty for a coach for a violation of these regulations may include suspension, probation, public reprimand, a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per occurrence or any other penalty as the Executive Director may deem appropriate.

8. Individual Non-Interscholastic Competition Deadline

A period of time has been created between the start of the OHSAA sport season and a later sport-specific deadline in which an individual may compete non-interscholastically prior to joining his/her OHSAA school team in that sport and still be eligible to compete in the OHSAA tournament. The sport-specific deadline (e.g. non-interscholastic date) to cease all non-interscholastic competition in order for that student to be eligible for the OHSAA tournament is listed in the specific sport’s regulations published elsewhere in this handbook.

Note: Students are not eligible to participate non-interscholastically and on the OHSAA school team in the same sport at the same time. Should the student cease non-interscholastic participation by the sport-specific deadline, all other applicable bylaws and regulations must be followed.

In addition, an athlete who has participated for the school in an individual sport (bowling, cross country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, and wrestling) and who violates this non-interscholastic competition date by participating in a non-interscholastic contest shall be ineligible for OHSAA tournament competition in that sport in addition to any other penalties that may be prescribed.

9. Conditioning, Weight Training and/or Physical Fitness Programs

9.1) **Definition of a Conditioning, Weight Training or Physical Fitness Program** – These programs include specific training for strengthening the body, developing the cardiovascular system, improving flexibility and agility and do **not** include specific sports skills training or instruction.

9.2) Specific Regulations

- 9.2.1) These programs may be conducted at any time and are not a violation of OHSAA Bylaws and Regulations so long as no coaching and instruction of sports techniques and skills is provided. Students from school teams shall not be required to attend these programs. A paid or unpaid school (interscholastic) coach employed by a Board of Education or other governing board violates this regulation when he/she suggests or implies that a student's chance to be selected for a school (interscholastic) team is contingent upon this participation.
- 9.2.2) These programs may have oversight by any individual approved by the Board of Education or governing body including coaches.
- 9.2.3) Equipment used in playing a sport is prohibited in these programs.

10. Open Gymnasiums or Facilities

Member Schools Facilities

10.1) Regulations

- 10.1.1) A school may open its athletic facilities for unstructured free play provided the activity is supervised by a school employee who may remove participants or spectators for disciplinary reasons.
- 10.1.2) The school may designate the sport or sports that will be played during the free play period, but may not limit participation to a select group of students from within the school. The school may also designate the grade levels involved and may limit participation to students enrolled in the school.
- 10.1.3) There may be no designation from coaches of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.
- 10.1.4) Coaches may not extend individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted to any student who is not enrolled and in that school district. However, school coaches may send an invitation to other school coaches to invite their students to an open gymnasium or facility.
- 10.1.5) A coach, paid or unpaid, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- 10.1.6) Mandatory attendance at open gymnasiums or facilities is not permitted.
- 10.1.7) It is not a violation for the coach or supervisor to participate in unstructured free play in the open gym or facilities.
- 10.1.8) Member schools may restrict individuals from observing the open gym activity.
- 10.1.9) Open Facilities are intended to be a stand-alone activity. Open Facilities may not be part of a structured camp or clinic.

10.2) Penalty for Violation

- 10.2.1) Any individual who violates any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.
- 10.2.2) A school which permits use of athletics facilities in violation of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

Non-School Facilities

10.3) Regulations for School Squad Members (Bylaw 4-1-3)

A school squad member may participate in unstructured free play at non-school athletic facilities without jeopardizing athletic eligibility providing there are no violations of the following regulations:

There may be no designation from coaches of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only the students participating may be involved in selecting or substituting players.

- 10.3.1) Coaches may not extend individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted to any student who is not enrolled and in that school district. However, school coaches may send an invitation to other school coaches to invite their students to an open gymnasium or facility.
- 10.3.2) A coach, paid or volunteer, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic team is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- 10.3.3) Mandatory attendance at non-school facilities is not permitted.

10.4) Penalty for Violation

- 10.4.1) A squad member who participates at a facility where there is one or more violations of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations may be penalized not to exceed one year of ineligibility for interscholastic athletics.
- 10.4.2) A school coach who is responsible for causing a violation of any of the open gymnasium or facilities regulations by a squad member is subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

11. Mandatory No-Contact Periods — Coaches

- 11.1) Any coach, paid or volunteer, approved by the Board of Education shall not coach or provide skill instruction (including, but not limited to, video or film study) to team members in their sport of the sports of basketball, field hockey, football, ice hockey, soccer or girls volleyball for the period of time starting with the first day after the school's last interscholastic contest and ending 28 days later. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition, or any skill instruction facilitated or organized by any coach, paid or volunteer, by the Board of Education.
- 11.2) Any coach, paid or volunteer, approved by the Board of Education shall not coach or provide skill instruction (including, but not limited to, video or film study) to team members in their sport of the sports of baseball, basketball, boys volleyball, ice hockey, boys and girls lacrosse or softball for the period of time between August 1 and August 31. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic competition, or any skill instruction facilitated or organized by any coach, paid or volunteer, by the Board of Education.

Exceptions — Activities which may be conducted by a coach with members of a school team in their sport during the mandatory no-contact period include: **all-star contests**; awards ceremonies; fundraisers; providing oversight during weight training; conditioning or physical fitness programs; verbal contact with underclass athletes for the purpose of reviewing the season that just concluded and goal setting for the next season; verbal contact with a senior athlete for the purpose of facilitating the college recruitment process; contact as a faculty member assigned to teach in the regular curriculum (ex.: physical education courses such as weight training, fitness, etc.); contact as a certified athletic trainer involved with athlete rehabilitation and treatment, pick up and return of school-issued equipment, and attendance at OHSAA tournaments.

Penalty — Any coach who violates the mandatory no contact periods regulations may be prohibited for one calendar year from out-of-school season contact with athletes from the school where employed. Violations of the mandatory no-contact periods are subject to penalty as specified in Bylaw 11.

12. Regular Season Participation Limitation Penalty

A team that exceeds the regular season participation limitation (maximum number of contests permitted) or participates in regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests in the respective sport is subject to the penalties outlined in Bylaw 11, **which may include denial of any school team in the respective sport from participation in the OHSAA tournament**. Athletes from sub-varsity teams may not be used to replace the varsity team in the OHSAA tournament.

An athlete who exceeds the regular season participation limitation (periods, quarters, halves, or contests) as specified in the individual sports regulations becomes an ineligible athlete. The athlete is ineligible for further regular season competition if the violation occurs prior to the end of the season or tournament competition if the violation occurs during the last regular season contest in the sport concerned. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 10.

Should a team in an individual sport exceed the regular season participation limitation but a specific individual athlete on that team did not exceed the individual participation limitation, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

Should a team in an individual sport participate in a regular season contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests but a specific individual athlete on that team did not participate in a contest(s) prior to the designated start date for contests, that specific individual athlete may be eligible for participation in the OHSAA tournament.

13. Ejection Procedures for Schools

13.1) Ejections by OHSAA Contest Officials

After a contest official provides electronic notification of an ejection, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator, who shall have seven days to respond to the notification and outline the subsequent contests in which the ejected individual(s) shall fulfill their mandatory suspension(s). If no response has been received after seven days, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator a second time, and the athletic administrator shall be given seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the second 7-day period lapses, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's principal, who shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the third 7-day period lapses (21 total days), the OHSAA shall electronically notify both the principal and athletic administrator one final time, and the school shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification.

If no response has been received after the fourth 7-day period lapses (28 total days), the OHSAA shall assess the school a \$150 fine per unanswered report. Failure to adhere to this procedure shall result in the school being subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

13.2) Ejections by Non-OHSAA Contest Officials (Out-of-State Ejections)

It is the responsibility of each member school to notify the OHSAA Office each time a coach or player(s) has been ejected from a contest played out of state within seven days once the team has returned to the school. Failure to adhere to this procedure shall result in the school being fined \$150 and subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

14. Ejection for Unsporting Conduct (Disqualification for unsporting conduct or flagrant violation)

14.1) Players

14.1.1) Standard Ejection Penalty

Any player ejected or disqualified from a contest (including scrimmages and previews) for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until the student has sat out two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) at the same level as the ejection or disqualification and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

14.1.2) Sub-varsity Ejections

Ejections that occur at sub-varsity levels must serve the same ejection consequence as stated above or until the passage of 10 calendar days following the ejection, whichever occurs first.

14.1.3) Football Ejections

In the sport of football, a player disqualified for flagrant personal fouls other than fouls in Rule 9, Section 4 Articles 1, 2 and 3-j, shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. Such fouls will not carry the automatic one game suspension. The disqualification for these fouls may be extended through the next scheduled game at the same level of the disqualification by the OHSAA Football Administrator or his/her designee. Video of these fouls is required to be sent (preferably via an email) to the OHSAA Football Administrator or his/her designee within 48 hours of the contest. The OHSAA Football Administrator may add a one game suspension upon review.

14.1.4) Wrestling Ejections

In the sport of wrestling, any player ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until two regular season/tournament contest points or two event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

14.1.5) Soccer Disqualifications

In the sport of soccer, a player is considered "disqualified" upon receiving a subsequent caution, or "double yellow" (NFHS Rule 12-8-2(b)) and shall be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the current contest as well as one subsequent contest of the same level.

14.1.6) Ejections for Fighting

Any player ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/tournament contests (two in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification. In the sport of wrestling, any player ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until four regular season/tournament contest points or four event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

The definition of fighting is found in the NFHS playing rules and reads as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact."

If video is presented to the Director of Officiating, or their designee, and the video clearly shows the ejection action did not meet the NFHS definition of fighting (as written above), the suspension length may be reduced. The player(s) in question is ineligible until such time as the designee rules on the submitted video or the four-game penalty (two in football) has been fulfilled.

14.1.7) Guidelines for Ejected Athletes

A student who has been declared ineligible for two games (one in football; see wrestling policy above) may be on the

sidelines/team bench, accompany and/or travel with the team but may not participate in pregame warmups and may not wear a team warmup or game uniform while on the sidelines/team bench, accompanying and/or traveling with the team. See Bylaw 4-1-3 for additional regulations regarding what ineligible athletes are permitted to do during their period of ineligibility. When ejection or disqualification of a player results from illegal substitution in baseball, softball or basketball, the two contest ineligibility does not apply.

14.1.8) Ejections Occuring at the End of Season

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which the student participates and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

14.1.9) Ejection for a Second Time

A student who is ejected or disqualified a second time in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office. A student who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Executive Director. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

14.1.10) Enforcement of Ejection Policy

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Executive Director as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

Note: When national playing rules (see the specific national playing rules) refer to a disqualification for unsporting conduct or a flagrant violation, this is considered an ejection as referenced in this regulation.

14.2) Coaches

14.2.1) Standard Ejection Penalty

Any coach ejected or disqualified from an interscholastic contest (including scrimmages and previews) for unsporting conduct shall be suspended from coaching in all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until the coach has sat out two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

Further, the coach shall be fined \$100, with the fine payable to the OHSAA no later than 30 days after the OHSAA's 'Season Ends' date, and the coach shall take the National Federation of State High School Association's "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course, which must be completed no later than 30 days after the OHSAA's "Season Ends" date and can be taken at www.nfhslearn.com. Additionally, the coach may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

14.2.2) Sub-varsity Ejections

Ejections that occur at sub-varsity levels must serve the same ejection consequence as stated above or until the passage of 10 calendar days following the ejection, whichever occurs first.

14.2.3) Wrestling Ejections

In the sport of wrestling, any coach ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until two regular season/tournament contest points or two event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

14.2.4) Soccer Disqualifications

In the sport of soccer, a coach is considered "disqualified" upon receiving a subsequent caution, or "double yellow" (NFHS Rule 12-8-2(b)) and shall be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the current contest as well as one subsequent contest of the same level.

14.2.5) Ejections Due to Fighting

Any coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/tournament contests (two in football) are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification. In the sport of wrestling, any coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until four regular season/ tournament contest points or four event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed.

The definition of fighting is found in the NFHS playing rules and reads as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact."

If video is presented to the Director of Officiating, or their designee, and the video clearly shows the ejection action did not meet the NFHS definition of fighting (as written below), the suspension length may be reduced. The player(s) in question is ineligible until such time as the designee rules on the submitted video or the four-game penalty (two in football) has been fulfilled.

14.2.6) Guidelines for Ejected Coaches

On the day of the ejection, a coach who has been disqualified shall be ejected from the vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, including electronic communication with team members, managers and other coaches during the remainder of the contest. The coach must return to the locker room or team bus or leave the premises. The coach shall not go to the spectator area. After the initial ejection and suspension, a coach who has been suspended from coaching for the next contest(s) may attend the next contest(s), but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest including halftime or any intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the squad to an away contest.

14.2.7) Ejection Occurring at End of Season

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

14.2.8) Failure to Comply with Ejection Regulations

The penalty for failure of the coach to comply with the ejection regulation shall result in the forfeiture of the contest.

14.2.9) Ejection of Coach When No Other Coach Present

If a coach is ejected/disqualified from a contest and no other coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education from that school is present (Bylaw 3-2-1), the contest shall be forfeited.

14.2.10) Ejection for a Second Time

A coach who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest shall be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory conference with the Executive Director at the OHSAA headquarters. The principal of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with Bylaw 11.

14.2.11) Enforcement of Ejection Policy

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When a suspended coach is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Executive Director as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

15. Participants Leaving The Playing Area — Spectators Entering the Playing Area

15.1) No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the 'playing area' in which a contest is being conducted and enter the 'spectator area' of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the 'playing area' and enters the 'spectator area' of a facility to so engage a person, the maximum penalty may include ineligibility for up to one calendar year.

15.1.1) The school shall immediately report the situation to the Executive Director's Office and conduct an investigation to report what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what 'safeguards' have been implemented by the school to prevent future occurrences. The school and/or student-athlete shall be subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

15.2) No spectator at any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the 'spectator area' in which a contest is being conducted and enter the 'playing area' of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a spectator leaves the 'spectator area' and enters the 'playing area' of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:

15.2.1) The OHSAA shall recommend to the member school sponsoring the contest that the individual shall be denied admission to any contests sponsored by the member schools of the OHSAA for a period of time to be determined in consultation with school administration and the Executive Director's Office.

15.2.2) The school shall immediately report the situation to the Executive Director's Office and conduct an investigation to report what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what 'safeguards' have been implemented by the school to prevent future occurrences. The school shall be subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11

16. Recognized Sports, Emerging Sports and Sponsored Events

16.1) Recognized Sports

Recognized sports for the 2022-23 school year are baseball, basketball, bowling, cross country, girls field hockey, football, golf, girls gymnastics, ice hockey, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, soccer, girls softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, volleyball, wrestling.

16.2) Emerging Sports

Per Bylaw 1-5-2, an “emerging sport” is a recognized sport that does not have wide-spread sponsorship by and among member high schools but for which there exists a growing or expanding interest in sponsorship by member schools. The Board of Directors shall adopt sport specific regulations and tournament regulations for participation in the tournament sponsored by the OHSAA but they may suspend the strict compliance to specific general sport regulations for that emerging sport.

Note: Sports that the Board of Directors had approved as “recognized sports” as of August 1, 2022, shall be grandfathered in as recognized sports regardless of the percentage of member schools that sponsor that sport.

- 16.2.1) Boys volleyball and girls wrestling shall be Emerging Sports for the 2023-24 school year.
- 16.2.2) A process for training and registering contest officials shall be developed and a director of officiating development shall be hired.
- 16.2.3) A process for assigning officials to tournament contests shall be developed and adopted.
- 16.2.4) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to suspend compliance with General Sports Regulation 17.1, Divisions Determination.
- 16.2.5) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to assess membership dues that are different than those assessed for Recognized Sports.
- 16.2.6) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to provide financial assistance for sites to host tournament contests that is different than those provided for Recognized Sports.
- 16.2.7) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to determine the implementation year of an Emerging Sport.
- 16.2.8) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to determine at any time if a sport shall remain an Emerging Sport, move to a fully Recognized Sport or be discontinued.
- 16.2.9) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to adopt additional stipulations for Emerging Sports that have not been listed.

16.3) Sponsored Events

Per Bylaw 1-5-3, A “sponsored event” is an interscholastic contest(s) contracted through/for the Executive Director’s Office for which special rules must be created in conjunction with an outside entity to establish a format for statewide competition. Further, the Executive Director’s Office shall determine which OHSAA student eligibility bylaws, if any, are applicable to the athletes involved.

- 16.3.1) Sponsored Events for the 2023-24 school year are pending and subject to Board of Directors approval.
- 16.3.2) Should the OHSAA align with an outside entity, all policies, procedures and regulations related to the organization and administration of the Sponsored Event shall be memorialized in writing and agreed to by the OHSAA Executive Director, or their designee, and a representative of the outside entity.
- 16.3.3) Among the items a signed agreement between the OHSAA and an outside entity shall provide clarity on for a Sponsored Event include, but are not limited to, what OHSAA bylaws and general sports regulations shall be adhered to; what are the Sponsored Event’s regular season and/or championship or tournament regulations; what are the financial arrangements; what insurance coverage is in place; how is officiating handled, and who has oversight of legal issues, including site agreements, certifications, sponsorships, merchandise, media, licensing and trademarks.
- 16.3.4) The Board of Directors shall have the discretion to adopt additional stipulations for Sponsored Events that have not been listed.

16.4) Process for Consideration for Emerging Sports and Sponsored Events

- 16.4.1) Organizations, entities and school groups interested in the OHSAA adopting an Emerging Sport or Sponsored Event should contact the Executive Director’s Office. Once details are shared, those organizations, entities or school groups may be directed to work with the within the Executive Director, or his/her designee.
- 16.4.2) Organizations and school groups interested in the OHSAA adopting an Emerging Sport shall only be considered after completing the OHSAA Emerging Sport Checklist, available upon request from the Executive Director’s Office.

16.5) Non-Recognized Sports

A non-recognized sport is one which is not listed as Recognized or Emerging. There is no obligation for a school to comply with any OHSAA bylaws or sports regulations when conducting interscholastic athletics programs in sports which are not recognized. However, schools are asked to register a non-recognized sport with the OHSAA for record-keeping purposes. A local school district may reserve the right to require participants in non-recognized sports to meet certain eligibility standards and conform to certain sports regulations.

Catastrophe insurance under the OHSAA plan for Recognized and Emerging sports will not be available for non-recognized sports. Schools are offered an opportunity to purchase catastrophe insurance coverage for non-recognized sports under a separate plan.

17. Tournaments

17.1) Tournament Assignments

OHSAA high school tournaments will be sponsored and conducted in divisions according to the number of schools sponsoring a team in the recognized sport.

Team Sports—Those that require a certain number of players to form a team. For the 2023-24 school year, those sports are baseball, boys and girls basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, boys and girls lacrosse, boys and girls soccer, softball and boys and girls volleyball.

Individual Sports—Those that involve primarily participation and scoring by individuals and in which team scoring could be obtained by totaling the efforts of individuals. For the 2023-24 school year, those sports are boys and girls bowling, boys and girls cross country#, boys and girls golf, gymnastics, boys and girls swimming and diving, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls track and field and boys and girls wrestling.

The minimum number of individuals required for a team designation* follows:

Bowling	5	Swimming and Diving	7
Cross Country#	5	Tennis	4
Golf	4	Track and Field	9
Girls Gymnastics	3	Wrestling	7

*The number for a team designation has been selected to reflect either the minimum number of participants needed to score in a contest or the number of participants needed to compete in at least half of the contest’s events.

#See the Cross Country Tournament Regulations for the procedures utilized for determining team designation in the sport of cross country.

Divisions Determination—The number of divisions in OHSAA high school tournaments in a sport shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournaments the preceding year or years, depending upon the sport. The Board of Directors shall have the final authority in determining the number of Divisions per sport and may use the following table as a guideline.

Number of Teams Participating in Tournaments	Divisions
200 or less	I
201-450	I, II
451-700	I, II, III
701 or more	I, II, III, IV

Sports tournament changes relative to adding or discontinuing a division **may** be made only after the number of schools has been higher or lower for two successive years.

Exceptions:—The Board of Directors may schedule tournament play in divisions other than specified in the table above for all emerging sports and for the recognized sports of football, boys and girls lacrosse and boys wrestling.

Note: Bylaw 2-1-1 indicates that in team sports, schools are permitted to enter only one team in OHSAA-sponsored tournaments and that in individual sports, schools are only permitted to enter the maximum number of individuals in OHSAA-sponsored tournaments as prescribed in the respective sports’ playing rules and/or tournament regulations.

17.2) School Assignments—Divisions

After the number of divisions is approved by the Board of Directors, schools are assigned to high school tournament divisions based upon the specifications in Bylaw 2-1-2 and Bylaw 2-2-1.

The number of schools assigned to each division shall be determined by the number of school teams that participated in the tournament either the previous year or two years earlier, with each tournament division to have as equal number of teams as possible.

Exceptions: In all sports, except football, a school sponsoring a sport is eligible for tournament participation regardless of regular season performance. The top 10 percent of football-playing schools based on enrollment will be placed in Division I of the football tournament. The remaining schools will be divided as evenly as possible and placed into six additional football divisions based on enrollment. All divisions shall qualify 64 teams (16 per region) to the OHSAA Tournament.

17.3) Failure to Appear and School Closures – OHSAA Tournament Contests

Teams and competitors are required to play tournament contests at the scheduled time, date and location.

“Closure,” “closed” or “school closing” shall mean that a local school or school district’s board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school has canceled all high school classes and/or school-sponsored extracurricular activities due to inclement weather; a strike; a natural or technological/man-made disaster; an issue deemed catastrophic or an emergency*, or the local health authority has canceled all high school classes and school- sponsored extracurricular activities due to a specific public health/safety concern.

***Note:** A local school or school district may be open but a local school or school district’s board of education/governing board or superintendent/head of school may also determine that it is unsafe for its school’s team to travel to the site of the tournament contest.

The following tournament regulations apply to team and individual sports unless national playing rules address “failure to appear” or school “closures”:

17.3.1) **Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball**

If a team “fails to appear” without notifying the opposing team, officials and/or site management or is not ready to play within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the tournament contest, a ‘no contest’ shall be declared and the opposing team shall advance to the next round of competition. See Bylaw 10 and Sports Regulation 21 for additional details that may be applicable.

In the event of a school “closure” within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided that such rescheduled dates do not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/tournament schedule and contest officials can be obtained.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament contest within 48 hours of a tournament contest(s) in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament contest(s) for the schools thus affected.

Note: In the event a school is not closed but unforeseen or extenuating circumstances arise within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the competing school with rescheduling the contest (time, date and/or location), provided that such rescheduled dates do not adversely affect the next round of the tournament competition/ tournament schedule.

17.3.2) **Bowling, Cross Country, Golf, Gymnastics, Swimming and Diving, Tennis, Track and Field, Individual Wrestling**

If a team or individual participant “fails to appear” without notifying the opposing team, officials and/or site management or is not ready to play within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the tournament contest, a ‘no contest’ shall be declared and the opposing team/individual shall advance to the next round of competition. See Bylaw 10 and Sports Regulation 21 for additional details that may be applicable.

In the event of a school “closure” within 48 hours of a tournament contest in which the school is scheduled to participate, the tournament shall proceed as scheduled.*

***Note:** The Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, reserves the right to delay or reschedule a tournament competition when all factors related to the severity of the situation are considered and provided it is practical to delay or reschedule such competitions.

In the event of a “closure” at the site of the tournament competition within 48 hours of a tournament competition in which schools are scheduled to participate, the Executive Director’s Office, in collaboration with the administrative staff, District Athletic Boards and/or Board of Directors and tournament personnel, shall reschedule (time, date and/or location) the tournament competition for the schools thus affected.

17.4.3) Information on any changes **related to dates, times and/or sites for OHSAA tournament contests** will be posted on the Association’s website (www.ohsaa.org).

18. OHSAA-Sponsored Tournaments Curfew Regulations (formerly GSR 24)

The priority when making the decision to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a contest is the safety of the student-athletes, coaches/school administrators, parents/fans and officials.

18.1) No tournament contests/events shall start later than 11:00 p.m.

18.2) When deciding whether to delay, suspend, continue or postpone a tournament contest/event, the tournament manager must consult with the school administrator/designee. Items to consider in the decision:

- The estimated time to complete the contest.
- The travel time of all schools involved.
- The current and expected weather conditions.
- The availability of the officials.
- Other events scheduled at the host site and the participating schools.

18.3) In the case of unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, the following factors shall be used to develop a tournament contest/event contingency plan:

- Overnight accommodations.
- A list of all parties involved and local emergency telephone/cellular numbers.
- Plans established by the participating schools' emergency plan.

Note: A sample tournament contest/event contingency plan is posted on the OHSAA website (www.ohsaa.org).

The OHSAA recommends that all member schools develop an athletic contest/event contingency plan for use during the regular season.

19. Grades 7 & 8 Participation for OHSAA Member Schools

19.1) A student shall not participate in more than one interscholastic contest in the same sport on any one day unless permitted by specific sports regulations. **Exceptions:** baseball, basketball, softball, volleyball, tennis. (See specific sport regulations.)

19.2) Sports Season Waiver — Schools, leagues or conferences may adjust seasons to accommodate school teams because of the lack of availability of physical facilities or personnel or due to other reasons as deemed appropriate by the league or conference. Proposed changes in seasons shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director and include the proposed dates of the 7th & 8th grade season not to exceed the length of the interscholastic season for the sport concerned. All other regulations regarding contest limitations, required practice time and coaching requirements shall be followed.

19.3) 7th & 8th grade students shall not practice with or participate on the same team with 9th through 12th grade students, and vice versa. Please note Bylaw 1-7-1 for competition between sexes.

Note: 7th & 8th grade students in the sports of bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field and wrestling may practice at the same facility, at the same time as 9th through 12th grade students and under the supervision of the same coaching staff so long as there is no head-to-head competition or physical contact.

19.4) It is strongly recommended that 7th & 8th grade teams/individuals avoid competition against 9th through 12th grade students, and vice versa. Please see individual sport regulation for any specific rules and note Bylaw 1-7-1 for competition between sexes.

19.5) Per Bylaw 1-1-2, students below the 7th grade may not practice with or participate with 7th through 12th grade students.

19.6) It is strongly recommended that the coaches of 7th & 8th grade sports complete the OHSAA rules interpretation meetings for the sports they are coaching.

20. Athletic Uniforms (formerly GSR 17)

20.1) Uniforms

The purpose of an athletic uniform is to identify participants. Uniforms worn by participants in a high school athletic contest must conform to the playing rules adopted by the OHSAA for that sport. High school uniforms shall not be used as a medium to express an individual/team's opinion/platform on any given topic.

Unless precluded in the sport rulebook, any lettering or emblems on uniforms must pertain to the school name, school nickname, individual's name, the sport, drug use prevention, sportsmanship, ethics or integrity, promotion of a health/wellness cause (suicide prevention/cancer awareness, etc. or be an American flag, provided it does not violate the rules of the sport in regard to location. Any visible manufacturer's logo on a uniform or undergarment must conform to the rules adopted by the national rules committee for that sport. However, if there is no specific rule, the maximum size is 2¹/₄ square inches with no dimension exceeding 2¹/₄". Additional regulations are indicated within the playing rules of the sport and may be included in the sport's specific regulations.

20.2) Head Decorations/Headwear/Religious Apparel

Regardless of NFHS Playing rules, Ohio state law requires that officials/contest administrators not prohibit, require a waiver, or create any obstruction to wearing religious apparel when competing or participating in interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activities, unless a legitimate danger to participants is identified due to wearing religious apparel. If such a danger is identified, the administrator or official of the event or activity shall offer all reasonable accommodations to the participant wearing religious apparel.

21. No Contests/Forfeitures, Interrupted/Suspended Contests and Tournament Forfeits (formerly GSR 31)

21.1) No Contest

Any scheduled regular season or tournament contest which is not started shall be considered 'no contest' unless specified in the sport specific regulations. A 'no contest' shall not be included in won-lost records, shall not count towards a student/coach fulfilling any ejection consequence, shall not count towards a student fulfilling his/her transfer consequence and shall not count towards the number of maximum allowable regular season contests permitted. Additionally, if a regular season contest is scheduled to be played but the assigned officials fail to fulfill their contract, the contest can still be played, subject to agreement by both schools, but it shall be counted as a "no contest" and shall not count in the win-loss record for either team. However, the event shall still count towards the team's maximum allowable regular season contest total.

21.2) Interrupted/Suspended Contest

If an interscholastic contest (game, match, meet, etc.) is interrupted/suspended for any reason beyond the control of the responsible administrative authority, the contest shall be resumed from the point of interruption unless there is a specific procedure for determining the outcome of an interrupted contest (e.g., baseball, football, lacrosse, soccer and softball). If there are no game-ending procedures outlined in the sport and if the contest is not resumed, the contest shall be counted as a no contest and shall not be included in won-lost records, shall not count towards a student/coach fulfilling any ejection consequence, shall not count towards a student fulfilling his/her transfer consequence, and shall not count towards the number of maximum allowable regular season contests permitted. Unless denoted in other OHSAA regulations, forfeitures of regular season or tournament contests may occur if a team refuses to resume a contest which has already started and which teams are still present (e.g. it has then been suspended and has not concluded)

21.3) Tournament Forfeits

Please see Bylaw 10 for regulations regarding tournament forfeitures. Should a forfeiture occur not involving an ineligible student, the forfeit shall be included in won-lost records. Many national playing rules stipulate the exact score of forfeited contests. In accordance with Bylaw 10, forfeitures in OHSAA team sports tournaments shall mean the forfeiting team shall be disqualified from the tournament and the opponent in the contest of the forfeited tournament contest, or the next highest ranking team, may take its place in the tournament. See football tournament regulations regarding qualifiers to the OHSAA state football tournament.

22. Interscholastic Scrimmage

- 22.1) An interscholastic scrimmage is defined as a contest in sports in which the rules of the sport are not required to be followed in all respects. In all sports with the exception of golf, the length of the scrimmage is limited to a maximum of three hours per squad or individual per day for grades 9-12, and two hours per squad or individual per day for grades 7-8.
- 22.2) A scrimmage may involve any number of teams from various schools. A scrimmage does not count in the won/lost record for any school involved in the scrimmage.
- 22.3) Admission may be charged for a scrimmage at the discretion of the school.
- 22.4) This regulation prohibits two or more school teams from practicing together unless it is a scrimmage or unless both schools have the same board-approved coach.
- 22.5) A scrimmage must be considered the same for all schools involved.
- 22.6) See each sports' specific regulations to determine if that sport permits scrimmages. The regulations for those sports in which scrimmages are permitted will specify whether scrimmages must be completed prior to the first regular season contest or scrimmages may be held after the first regular season contest.

23. Preview

- 23.1) A preview is an athletic contest played according to the adopted rules for a sport except that one-half the length of a regular season contest is permitted. Previews are permitted only in those sports in which scrimmages are allowed. Refer to the specific sport relative to length of preview and when it may be scheduled.
- 23.2) A preview may be scheduled and played only starting with the first day after the official start date of coaching and ending with the date of the first regular season contest of the teams involved. See the Football Regulations for the exception to this regulation. A preview does not count in the won/lost record.
- 23.3) Admission may be charged for a preview at the discretion of the school.

Note: See specific sport-by-sport regulations for additional guidance on previews.

24. Exhibition Competition

Any event or competition involving students representing member schools may involve only students who are eligible in all respects insofar as age, enrollment and attendance, scholarship, residence and individual sports limitation. So-called "scratch" or "exhibition" competition permitted or conducted by any school could result in ineligibility for athletes and additional penalties assessed to in accordance with Bylaw 11.

Exception: The Board of Directors may authorize competition in events within specific sports in order to accommodate students with disabilities without affecting team scoring in those sports.

25. Sunday Contests

Sunday contests are permitted by the Board of Directors. Local Board of Education/league/conference polices shall govern regular season schedules but, per GSR 17.3, teams/individuals are required to play OHSAA tournament contests at the scheduled time, date and location, including any scheduled Sunday contests. Any team/individual electing not to participate on the scheduled date will result in a forfeiture.

26. Transportation To and From Interscholastic Contests

It is the responsibility of the Board of Education or other governing board of a member school to provide for the safe transportation of student-athletes and other contest participants to and from athletic events. The OHSAA Catastrophe Accident Insurance Policy covers team or group travel directly to and from a covered event. A covered event is defined by the OHSAA (the authorized policy holder) as any regular-season (includes scrimmages and previews) or tournament competition in an interscholastic athletic event in an OHSAA-recognized sport, sponsored by the Board of Education or

governing board of a member school. Travel must be supervised by staff members or designated representatives of the member school.

Therefore, it is recommended that schools require student-athletes and other participants in interscholastic athletic events to travel with their school squads in school-authorized carriers. It is not recommended that students be released to travel with parents or other persons; however, permission to make alternative travel arrangements remains the purview of the Board of Education/governing board of the member school. In the event that such alternative arrangements are approved, it is strongly recommended that the Board of Education secure proof of insurance from those who will be providing the transportation.

27. Cheerleading Pyramids and Acrobatic Routines

27.1) All cheer and spirit sideline activities and game performances during regular season contests shall be in accordance with the safety standards prescribed by the National Federation High School Spirit Rules.

27.2) Additional Regulations for OHSAA Tournaments:

27.2.1) In addition to the NFHS Spirit rules, the following stunting skill restrictions are in place at OHSAA sponsored tournaments, including the OHSAA Spirit State Championships:

- No basket, sponge or elevator tosses allowed
- No inversions
- No twisting release dismounts from stunts
- Single leg extended stunts are limited to liberties and liberty hitches

27.3) Penalty

In OHSAA-sponsored tournaments, individual sideline spirit participants violating the regulations shall be removed from the field or court immediately.

28. A Note on Public Health Issues

The Centers for Disease Control, Ohio Governor, Ohio General Assembly and/or Ohio Department of health will offer guidance as to whether or not to close a school or university due to a public health issue. Local decisions can also be made by the local health authority or each board of education/governing board. Closures are not recommended except in extreme circumstances.

29. Penalties

Penalties for violations of these General Sports Regulations that are not otherwise stated shall be administered in accordance with Bylaw 11.

30. Lightning and Inclement Weather

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas, and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to the designated safer area:
 - a.) A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a.) When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
 - b.) 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed* prior to resuming play.
 - c.) Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
 - d.) When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning-detection device.

*At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.

4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.