

BYLAWS

Revised by Referendum — May 2022

The bylaws outlined in this handbook are an integral part of the member schools of the OHSAA and the Executive Director's Office in order to create, administer and maintain the valuable and unique form of competition interscholastic athletics has to offer. This unique form of competition is a carefully constructed system that promotes competitive balance and serves the mission and purpose of education-based sports and activities. Interscholastic sports and activities are intended to foster a sense of community as well as to teach teamwork, citizenship and discipline. Other sporting organizations (and other forms of competition) exist to promote free player movement and are primarily designed to promote athletic development of the individual and provide a showcase for the athletic talents of those individuals. These organizations do not share the primary purposes of the member schools of this Association or the Executive Director's Office and therefore cannot provide the unique type of competition created and maintained by the OHSAA through its member schools. Efforts randomly to impose adjustments or favoritism on these rules damage and undermine the very purposes for sponsorship of interscholastic competitions, the member schools and their Association and, in turn, damage all the students who either participate in an Association sport/activity or who support them. The member schools of the OHSAA and the Executive Director's Office established by these member schools and charged with the ultimate authority to enforce these rules are committed to maintain this unique form of competition.

BYLAW 1 — COVERAGE AND ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS

Section 1. Application of Bylaws and Sports Regulations

- 1-1-1 The bylaws and sports regulations apply to all participants in interscholastic athletic contests involving students in grades seven through twelve and include matters of eligibility, contracts, qualifications, responsibility and behavior of various personnel.
- 1-1-2 Students enrolled below the seventh grade are ineligible for participation in interscholastic athletics. Students enrolled in grades 7 or 8 are ineligible for interscholastic competition on the same squad with students in grade 9 or higher.
EXCEPTION: A student who attains the age of 15 prior to August 1 is eligible for interscholastic athletics only at the high school level not to exceed eight semesters.
- 1-1-3 Ninth grade students in all schools are high school students and shall compete in athletics in accordance with high school bylaws and regulations.
- 1-1-4 Four-year high schools may elect to have all students in grades 9-12 eligible to participate in varsity, junior varsity, reserve and class teams.
- 1-1-5 9-12 grade students are not permitted to compete in interscholastic competition on the same team or squad with students below ninth grade.
- 1-1-6 These bylaws cannot be waived, modified or amended by mutual consent between or among contesting schools. Likewise, these bylaws cannot be waived, modified or amended by the Executive Director's Office except in accordance with Constitution 8-1-1 as authorized by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Sponsorship

- 1-2-1 All practices, games, previews and other interscholastic athletic contests shall be under the direct sponsorship and supervision of the schools involved and shall be the financial responsibility of such schools. Please see Bylaw 3-2-1, School's Responsibility When Hosting a Contest and Bylaw 8-2, Selection of Officials for additional information relative to this obligation.
Note: Please see Bylaw 9-2-3 for sanctioning requirements if the contest is co-sponsored by or titled in the name of an organization outside the school community.
- 1-2-2 This bylaw applies to all sports recognized by the OHSAA.

Section 3. Penalties

- 1-3-1 Penalties for violations of the Constitution, Bylaws and Sports Regulations shall be assessed in accordance with Bylaw 11 unless a specific penalty is provided in the Constitution, Bylaws and Sports Regulations. In such cases the specific penalty shall apply.

Section 4. Interscholastic Competition

- 1-4-1 An "interscholastic athletic contest," as used throughout the Bylaws and Sports Regulations of the OHSAA, is defined as a sports event which take 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 or unless otherwise permitted in the sports/specific regulations for individual sports. 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.

- 1-4-2 Instructional clinics and demonstrations designed for the teaching of fundamental skills and conducted for learning theory, techniques, rules, game procedure and strategy shall not be counted as a scheduled contest.
- 1-4-3 Interscholastic competition shall be conducted using contest rules adopted by the Board of Directors. Modifications or changes in sport rules are not permitted except those provided in the rule book and approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Recognized Sports

- 1-5-1 A “recognized sport” is one adopted by the Board of Directors and for which the OHSAA sponsors a tournament.
- 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.
- 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.
- 1-5-4 If and when a school or school district sponsors or authorizes a varsity, subvarsity, 7th or 8th grade squad/team that competes with other interscholastic squads in a “recognized sport,” the school or school district shall be responsible for assuring that any and all such squads/teams comply with all OHSAA Bylaws and Sports Regulations, particularly those related to scholarship, transfer, residency, age limitations and contest limitations. For purposes of this bylaw, a “sponsored” team or squad shall include any “club” sport or team/squad.

Section 6. Team Membership

- 1-6-1 Girls may play on a boys team. A female to male (FTM) transgender student may participate on boys teams as long as he is compliant with the OHSAA transgender policies. Please see the OHSAA policies on the Transgender Student here at <http://www.ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/TransgenderPolicy.pdf>
- 1-6-2 A girl or transgender male (FTM) who is compliant with the OHSAA transgender policies and who is a member of a boys team shall follow all contests rules and regulations regarding the sport as specified for the boys.
- 1-6-3 Boys may not play on girls’ teams unless the overall opportunities, as referenced in the 1979 US Department of Education’s Title IX Policy Interpretation in accordance with Part 1 of the three part test, for interscholastic competition for boys are less than for girls and the competing schools mutually agree. A male to female (MTF) transgender student may participate on girls’ teams as long as she is compliant with the OHSAA transgender policies. Please see the OHSAA policies on the Transgender Student here at <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibilityDocs/TransgenderPolicy.pdf>
- 1-6-4 Interscholastic teams/squads sponsored by a member school may not consist of students from more than one school unless otherwise permitted under an exception to Bylaw 4-3-1 or in accordance with the exception below:
EXCEPTION: Member schools containing grades 7 and 8 may combine students from two or more schools within the school district/system to form one or more interscholastic team in a sport. Requests for permission to combine students from two or more schools in the same public district or non-public system must be submitted annually prior to the start of each sports season to the OHSAA in writing by the superintendent of the public district or non-public system.
The written request must contain the following:
 - 1 – Names of schools involved.
 - 2 – Total number of students from each school involved in the sport.
 - 3 – Total number of boys or girls in each grade of each school in the combination.
 - 4 – Rationale for requesting the combination to form more than one team/squad in each sport.
 - 5 – The name of the principal, name of the combined school (which must be the name of one of the member schools represented within the combination) for purposes of registration into the *MyOHSAA* system, and the complete address (including email) of the one administrator responsible for the conduct and operation of each combined team or teams.

For purposes of tournament assignment, eligibility and placement, the Board of Directors and the Executive Director’s Office of the OHSAA shall adopt and publish from time to time, such rules as deemed necessary and proper for the timely, accurate and transparent implementation of this bylaw so as to give effect and meaning to this section.

Section 7. Team Competition Between Sexes

- 1-7-1 Teams of the opposite sex shall not compete against each other in any interscholastic athletic contests. However, the Executive Director’s Office may waive the prohibition of this bylaw on a case-by-case basis provided the administrators of the proposed competing schools follow the procedures for obtaining such a waiver as prescribed by the Executive Director’s Office.

BYLAW 2 — DIVISIONS AND TOURNAMENT ASSIGNMENTS

Note: As a result of the May 2014 referendum, Bylaw 2 relating to classification and organization was significantly amended, effective beginning with the 2017-18 school year. Please visit the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) for further details on the competitive balance plan, which should help administrators understand how to proceed. While the bylaw had an effective date of 2017-18, 'roster data' collection began in 2016 and is ongoing. Please continue to check the OHSAA website for updates and guidance, including the business rules for competitive balance.

Section 1 — Divisions and Tournament Assignments

2-1-1 School teams or individuals that wish to compete in OHSAA-sponsored tournaments may compete in only those tournaments to which assigned. Furthermore, by entering into an OHSAA sponsored tournament, schools, on behalf of their teams and individuals, agree to compete at the sites, dates and times assigned to them by the OHSAA.

Note: In team sports, schools are permitted to enter only one team in OHSAA-sponsored tournaments. 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.

2-1-2 Enrollment information used for assigning schools to divisions shall be provided by the State Department of Education's enrollment report. All boys and girls in grades 9, 10 and 11 included in the school's October enrollment report shall be counted for enrollment purposes except for students who are identified as children with disabilities within the OHSAA Business Rules for Obtaining Enrollment Data.

The Board of Directors is authorized to adopt policy for assigning students, who are not specified as assigned to a particular high school, to the appropriate member high school and to publish the policy on the Association's website.

Note: The policy, Business Rules for Obtaining Enrollment Data, was first prepared in April 2007, has since been modified, and is posted on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org).

2-1-3 High schools in school districts that consolidate will be placed into divisions based on school enrollment of boys or girls in grades 10, 11 and 12 as of September 10 of the effective year of consolidation in accordance with the business rules, plus the real-time Adjusted Enrollment Count (outlined in Bylaw 2-2-1) in all applicable sports. In the event of the opening of a new high school or transfer of territory under Section 3311.38 of the Ohio Revised Code, member school division assignments will be based upon actual number of boys or girls enrolled in grades 10, 11 and 12 as of September 10 of the current year in accordance with the business rules, plus the real-time Adjusted Enrollment Count (outlined in Bylaw 2-2-1) in all applicable sports.

2-1-4 In the case of the opening, merging or closing of a high school or schools in a multi-high school district or non-public school system, or in the case of a non-member comprehensive high school or non-traditional high school becoming a member, the member high school division assignments for all high schools within the district/system shall be based upon the actual number of boys and girls enrolled in grades 10, 11 and 12 as of September 10 of the current year in accordance with the business rules, plus the real-time Adjusted Enrollment Count (outlined in Bylaw 2-2-1) in all applicable sports.

Section 2. Tournament Assignment – Team Sports of Football, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball and Softball

2-2-1 Teams in the sports of football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball shall be assigned to a division based upon that school team's Adjusted Enrollment Count. For purposes of this section, Adjusted Enrollment Count is the count as determined by adding the Initial Enrollment Count (EMIS reported number of boys or girls) and the Additional Roster Count for the given sport (Initial Enrollment Count + Additional Roster Count = Adjusted Enrollment Count).

2-2-2 The Additional Roster Count is determined by multiplying designated students on the given sport's Initial Roster by the specific factor or Tier and adding them together.

- In the sports of soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball – the designated students shall include students on a team's tournament roster and anyone else who played in a varsity contest during the regular season.
- In the sport of Football – the designated students shall include students in grades 10-12 on any roster and any freshman who played in a varsity contest during the regular season.

EXCEPTION: A student who participates in a single varsity contest during a regular season is not required to be included in the Additional Roster Count submission provided the following criteria are met:

- 1 — The participation happens one time during the regular season; and
- 2 — The student is a manager/student assistant or has an intellectual or physical disability; and
- 3 — The student would not likely otherwise participate in a meaningful way or have an impact on the outcome of a contest; and
- 4 — It is required that the opposing coach and/or officials are made aware of the student's participation before the student enters the contest.

The intent of this exception is to specifically reward and/or recognize a student manager or a student with an intellectual or physical disability for his/her special contributions to a team without potentially impacting a team's divisional placement.

Note: The annual submission of the Additional Roster Count for each respective sport shall be utilized to help determine the division to which that team shall be assigned the following school year.

- 2-2-3** Factors shall be assigned three levels of points: Tier 0, Tier 1 and a Tier 2. The purpose of the Factors is to determine from where the student-athletes come, from what system of education they come or if they are non-enrolled students in accordance with state law, and to make appropriate adjustments accordingly.
- Note:** See the exception under Bylaw 2-2-2 for students who are not required to be tiered.
- 2-2-4** For public member schools, Factors shall be assigned as follows:
- Tier 0 – the student and at least one legal custodian currently reside within the school district/designated/assigned attendance zone (unless the student is participating as a non-enrolled student at the member high school in accordance with state law).
 - Tier 1 – the student and at least one legal custodian currently reside outside the school district but the student has been continuously enrolled in the district since the beginning of 7th grade OR 2) the student, who is attending a school in a multiple-high school district, and at least one legal custodian currently reside outside the school’s designated/assigned attendance zone but still live within the school district OR 3) the student is participating as a non-enrolled student at the member high school in accordance with state law, or the student is participating on a JI Visa.).
 - Tier 2 – the student and at least one legal custodian currently reside outside the school district and/or designated/assigned attendance zone and the student has not been continuously enrolled in the district since 7th grade.
- 2-2-5** For non-public member schools, Factors shall be assigned as follows:
- Tier 0 – the student attended the same system of education continuously since the beginning of the 7th grade and attended one of the designated/assigned feeder schools continuously since the beginning of 7th grade.
 - Tier 1 – the student attended the same system of education continuously since the beginning of 7th grade but did not attend one of the designated/assigned feeder schools continuously since the beginning of 7th grade or the student is participating on a JI Visa.
 - Tier 2 – the student did not attend the same system of education continuously since the beginning of 7th grade.
- EXCEPTION:** If a non-public school system assigns all students to a specific high school based on the geographic location of the student’s parents. Factors shall be assigned as follows:
- Tier 0 – the student attended the same system of education continuously since the beginning of the 7th grade and the student and at least one parent currently resides within the assigned attendance zone.
 - Tier 1 – the student attended the same system of education continuously since the beginning of 7th grade but the student and at least one parent currently resides outside the assigned attendance zone.
 - Tier 2 – the student did not attend the same system of education continuously since the beginning of 7th grade.
- 2-2-6** The Tier 2, or Sport Specific Factors, shall be as follows:
- Three (3) in the sport of football.
 - Seven (7) in the sports of soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball.
- 2-2-7** The Board of Directors and the Executive Director’s Office of the OHSAA shall adopt and publish from time to time such rules as deemed necessary and proper for the timely, accurate and transparent (verifiable) reporting of the roster data in order to give effect and meaning to this section.
- Note:** Schools that do not sponsor a respective team the immediately preceding season shall be assigned to a division in accordance with the Competitive Balance business rules that have been adopted by the Board of Directors. <http://www.ohsaa.org/School-Resources/Competitive-Balance-Resource-Center>.

BYLAW 3 – ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL

Section 1. Primary Responsibility

- 3-1-1** The principal of the school shall be held primarily responsible in all matters pertaining to interscholastic athletics involving the school. The principal has the responsibility to educate the member school’s students, coaches, school personnel, boosters and other appropriate persons involved in interscholastic athletics regarding OHSAA bylaws and sport regulations that could affect them. Further, the principal shall monitor the school’s compliance with OHSAA bylaws and sports regulations and conduct an appropriate inquiry if information arises concerning a possible violation of OHSAA bylaws and/or sports regulations.
- 3-1-2** All school administrative and athletic personnel have a duty to immediately report violations that may affect the status of an athlete, team or contest.
- 3-1-3** The principal, at his or her discretion, may assign other members of the administrative team to sign contracts and any other paper work requiring an official school signature.
- 3-1-4** No later than two weeks after the beginning of each sports season, the principal, through his/her athletic administrator, coaches and such other personnel as deemed advisable by said principal, shall conduct a mandatory, preseason program with all student-athletes who wish to participate in the upcoming sports seasons, their parents and booster club officer(s). The meeting shall consist of (a) a review of the student-eligibility bulletin and key essential eligibility requirements; (b) a review of the school’s Athletic Code of Conduct; (c) a sportsmanship, ethics and integrity component, and (d) a review of issues concerning concussions and steroids.

Note: See General Sports Regulation 5 for penalties for non-compliance of this bylaw.

Section 2. School's Responsibility When Hosting A Contest

- 3-2-1** The host school has the responsibility to ensure that a contest or event is administered in a manner which emphasizes the educational values inherent in interscholastic athletics. It is the host school's responsibility to remove any individual(s) who disrupts the educational goals of the contest or event.

Likewise, the host school is ultimately responsible for the safety of all participants (players, coaches, officials, spectators, etc.) in the interscholastic contest immediately before, during and immediately after each contest or event. Therefore, the host school shall appoint a site director/manager or administrator-in-charge for every contest or event. The host school shall ensure that the site director/manager or administrator-in-charge is aware of the school's emergency action plan and how to adjust it to meet the needs of the particular contest or event.

Included in the emergency action plan shall be procedures to deal with emergencies, crowd management and health and safety protections. The plan shall also include procedures to ensure that unauthorized personnel are kept from the playing field; to provide safety and security for the visiting team(s), their spectators and the contest officials, and to provide safety and security for parking areas related to the contest or event.

Penalties for violation of this bylaw shall be imposed by the Executive Director's Office as specified in Bylaw 11.

Section 3. School Representative Must Accompany Team

- 3-3-1** The principal or representative (s) authorized by the principal, in addition to the coaches, shall be present throughout all varsity football, and boys and girls varsity basketball games, home and away. It is highly recommended that a school administrator be present for all interscholastic contests, home and away, especially in the sports of boys' and girls' soccer and ice hockey. In all other sports, the host school shall appoint a site director/manager, who could be a coach, or administrator-in-charge, for every contest or event.

- 3-3-2** When a male coach is assigned to a girls' team, an adult female (non-high school student) should be present at the contest. When a female coach is assigned to a boys' team, an adult male (nonhigh school student) should be present at the contest.

Section 4. Courtesy to Officials and Visiting Schools

- 3-4-1** Recognized law enforcement officials should be given specific instruction by the school administrator as to duties before, during and after the contest. This will include keeping spectators from the field or floor during the contest, supervision of parking and safe conduct of contest officials and visiting team from the contest area. Failure to protect the contest, the teams or the officials constitutes a violation of the bylaws.

Section 5. Student Participation and Physical Examination Forms

- 3-5-1** Athletic participation forms for participants in any of the grades 7-12 shall be signed by a medical examiner (Physician [M.D., D.O., or D.C.], Advanced Nurse Practitioner or Physician's Assistant), the participant and by a parent or guardian. These forms must be on file with the principal or designee before any candidate for a team may participate in a practice. These forms shall require the medical examiner to certify the individual's physical fitness no less than once every 13 months.

EXCEPTION: If the preparticipation athletic evaluation is conducted between May 1 and June 1, the preparticipation evaluation, signed by the medical examiner, is valid for one calendar year plus the remainder of the next school year.

- 3-5-2** If a student athlete transfers to another school, the physical examination forms shall be transferred to the new school.
- 3-5-3** Section 3313.73 of the Ohio Revised Code reads in part as follows: "This section does not require any school child to receive a medical examination (preparticipation physical evaluation) or receive medical treatment whose parent or guardian objects thereto." A form certifying this objection shall be signed by the parent or guardian and attached to the required parental consent forms. However, nothing in Section 3313.73 of the ORC would preclude a school from adopting a Board of Education policy that would deny participation in interscholastic athletics for any student whose parent or guardian refused to permit a preparticipation physical evaluation.

Section 6. Eligibility Certificates

- 3-6-1** At the beginning of each sport season each school's administration shall prepare an eligibility certificate listing only those students eligible under OHSAA rules to represent the school in each sport. This eligibility certificate and the information contained therein shall be verified and signed by the principal of the member school. Said eligibility certificates shall be prepared separately for each sport in which that school participates and available for inspection upon request.
- 3-6-2** Corrections, additions and deletions may be made as the sport season progresses and filed in the appropriate school office.

Section 7. Duties Regarding Appeals

- 3-7-1** All school administrative and athletic personnel, including interscholastic coaches, and student-athletes themselves, have a responsibility to cooperate fully with the Executive Director, the Executive Director's staff and members of the Board of Directors in all matters which are the subject of any investigation, hearing or appeal. In addition, any retaliation or threatened retaliation against an individual or individuals, either inside or outside of the school's employment or community, who provide information in connection with any investigation shall be regarded as a major violation of this bylaw provision, subject to Bylaw 11 sanctions including, but not limited to, membership suspension.
- 3-7-2** When requested by a member of the Board of Directors, or the Executive Director, the principal shall attend any and all hearings or appeals conducted on behalf of the OHSAA.

BYLAW 4 – STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Section 1. Eligibility

4-1-1 Each student shall meet all requirements in this bylaw to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic competition. Notwithstanding any provision of this Bylaw 4 to the contrary, if a student has met all of the substantive eligibility requirements of this Bylaw 4 but is declared ineligible due solely to an administrative error on the part of the school/school personnel, the Executive Director’s office may, in its absolute and sole discretion, restore eligibility to that student (prospectively and retroactively), provided it can be shown that the student’s actions or failure to act did not contribute in any way to the administrative error that caused the declaration of ineligibility in the first place. Notwithstanding the restoration of eligibility, the school may be subject to additional penalties as prescribed in Bylaw 11.

Note: The authority to correct administrative errors is limited to correcting student eligibility issues as codified within Bylaw 4 – Student Eligibility. Students who have not met the high school or middle school scholarship requirement are not “substantively eligible”; and a student who fails to register for enough credit hours, fails a class(es) or drops a class that lowers the student below the requisite number of credits, always has a shared responsibility for this shortcoming thus disqualifying such shortcoming from the “due solely to an administrative error” category. Therefore, this Bylaw shall never be used in conjunction with Bylaws 4-4-1 or 4-4-5.

EXCEPTION: A student who only participates in a single contest during a regular season is not required to meet all the requirements of Bylaw 4 but only if the following criteria are met:

- 1 – The participation happens one time during the regular season; and
- 2 – The student is a manager/student assistant or has an intellectual or physical disability; and
- 3 – The student would not likely otherwise participate in a meaningful way or have an impact on the outcome of a contest; and
- 4 – The opposing coach and/or officials are made aware of the student’s participation before the student enters the contest and the playing time is agreed to by both coaches.

The intent of this exception is to specifically reward and/or recognize a student manager or a student with an intellectual or physical disability for his/her special contributions to a team even if they fail to meet certain criteria within Bylaw 4.

4-1-2 If a student participates in an athletic contest and his or her eligibility has been established by falsified information (includes but is not limited to: name, address, transcripts, birth certificate, etc.), or if an attempt is made to establish eligibility for a student by falsified information, the student shall be ineligible in Ohio for a maximum of one year from the date the penalty is imposed.

4-1-3 A student who is determined to be ineligible in accordance with Bylaw 4, or who is ineligible in accordance with any policy, rule or regulation as set forth in the General/Specific Sports Regulations, shall be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic sports contests, shall not be dressed in full uniform for any such contests and shall not participate in pre-game warmups during the student’s period of ineligibility. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it shall remain within the discretion of the student’s school administrators as to whether the student may continue to practice with the team, assist the coaches/managers with pre-game warmup drills, sit on the team bench/sidelines (jersey only), travel with the team and/or take part in other team functions during this period of ineligibility.

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.

Section 2. Age Limitation

4-2-1 Once a student attains the age of 20, the student will no longer be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition notwithstanding where that 20th birthday falls in relation to the sports season.

EXCEPTION 1: If the student is a “child with a disability” as that term is defined within the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Part B of the Federal IDEIA requirements and the student’s specific disability was diagnosed contemporaneous with the events which caused the student to be unable to meet the requirements of this bylaw; and whose disability is the primary reason for student’s inability to meet the requirements of this bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director’s office if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director’s office, the Executive Director’s office determines that:

- a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and
- b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes; and
- c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and
- d) there is no evidence of “red-shirting” or other indicia of academic dishonesty.

4-2-2 If a student enrolled in grade 7 or 8 attains the age of 15 before August 1, the student shall be ineligible to participate in 7th & 8th grade interscholastic athletics for the school year commencing in that calendar year.

EXCEPTION 1: If the student is a “child with a disability” as that term is defined within the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Part B of the Federal IDEA requirements and the student’s specific disability was diagnosed contemporaneous with the events which caused the student to be unable to meet the requirements of this bylaw; and whose disability is the primary reason for student’s inability to meet the requirements of this bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director’s office if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director’s office, the Executive Director’s office determines that:

- a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and
- b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes; and
- c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and
- d) there is no evidence of “red-shirting” or other indicia of academic dishonesty.

EXCEPTION 2: If a student has repeated any grade from kindergarten through grade 3 at the recommendation of the student’s teachers or other educational professionals and for purely academic reasons and, as a result of repeating any of these grades, the student cannot meet the age limitations of this bylaw in the student’s eighth grade year with the 7th & 8th grade school, the Executive Director’s office may declare the student eligible notwithstanding this bylaw 4-2-2 if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director’s office, the following criteria can be met:

- a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and
- b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes of her/his grade level; and
- c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and
- d) there is no evidence of “red-shirting” or other indicia of academic dishonesty.

- 4-2-3** An 8th grade student may, at the student’s option, become eligible for interscholastic athletics at the high school level when the student attains his/her 15th birthday before August 1 of the ensuing school year. The student who chooses to commence high school eligibility while still enrolled in grade eight is eligible at the school where the student is expected to enroll at the ninth grade level. A student opting to commence her/his eligibility at the high school level shall have no more than eight semesters of high school eligibility taken in order of attendance in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-3.

Note: This means that a student’s senior year of eligibility will be affected if the student chooses to commence high school eligibility while still enrolled in grade eight. Furthermore, if the student does not opt to become eligible at the high school level, she/he shall be ineligible on account of her/his age at the 7th-8th grade level of interscholastic competition.

- 4-2-4** In determining the age of a student, the date of birth as recorded in the school records shall be considered as final, except that when birth records, filed within six years after date of birth, are available in the State Bureau of Vital Statistics or a comparable governmental agency, it shall be used. If this information is not available and if the school records do not agree, the earliest date of birth shall be considered the valid date of birth.
- 4-2-5** Family Bibles, physician’s statements, parents’ affidavits, baptismal certificates etc., will not be accepted in lieu of birth certificates. Amendments to birth certificates filed after six years from date of birth will not be considered.

Section 3. Enrollment and Attendance

For purposes of this section and the interpretations there under:

1. — A student cannot attend a school without being officially enrolled;
2. — A student cannot be enrolled in more than one school at any given time, and
3. — Once a student is enrolled and attending a new school, the OHSAA shall consider the student withdrawn from the former school.

Note: Notwithstanding these exceptions to Bylaw 4-3-1, all high school students must also comply with the transfer Bylaw 4-7.

- 4-3-1** All students participating in a school-sponsored sport must be enrolled in and attending full-time in accordance with all duly adopted Board of Education or similar governing board policies of that school.

EXCEPTION 1: A student enrolled in the ninth grade separate from the high school (grades 10- 12) is eligible to participate with the school squad of the high school the student will be assigned to attend.

EXCEPTION 2: A student enrolled in a joint vocational school is eligible at the high school where the students’ records are maintained.

EXCEPTION 3: A student enrolled full time in a postsecondary institution (now known as College Credit Plus) is eligible to participate at the high school where the student’s records are maintained, provided the student is receiving high school credit for a minimum of five one credit courses in the postsecondary institution.

EXCEPTION 4: A student enrolled in a non-traditional (alternative, magnet, career-oriented, digital, specialty, etc.) school that is sponsored by a Board of Education/Governing Board is eligible to participate at the member school, operated by the district/system sponsoring the non-traditional school provided the non-traditional school does not sponsor interscholastic athletics. Each student will be counted on the EMIS report for the member high school where that student's eligibility is vested. Students who attend non-traditional schools that are sponsored by a multiple high school public school district shall be assigned for interscholastic athletics to member schools within the district based on the business rules for participation that have been adopted by the Board of Directors. <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/BusinessRulesMultiHSPublic.pdf>

EXCEPTION 5: A student who is receiving home instruction in accordance with division (A) (2) of section 3321.04 of the Revised Code and is enrolled in a non-public member school in accordance with the partial enrollment policy of the governing board of that non-public school may be eligible at the non-public school where the student is enrolled and attending. Such partial enrollment policy requires that at least one of the courses be an academic course taken at the school's physical location.

Note: A student entering a member non-public school from a home school must do so at the beginning of the school year after having been home educated for at least one calendar year. Failure to meet this one-year provision requires the student to be enrolled for a minimum of one grading period before the student can be declared eligible.

Note: State law permits home educated students in accordance with ORC 3312.04 (A)(2) to be afforded the opportunity to participate at the public school in the district of residence of the parents without any enrollment obligation. If the residential public school district does not offer the sport, the home educated student MAY participate at another non-residential public school provided the superintendent of that district permits such participation.

EXCEPTION 6: Unless otherwise mandated within the Ohio Revised Code. Nonetheless, a student whose participation opportunity is afforded through these statutory provisions is still subject to the remaining eligibility requirements as with all other student-athletes including, but not limited to, age, semesters, scholarship and transfer eligibility bylaws.

See these documents for an explanation of the current mandates:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/BusinessRulesMultiHSPublic.pdf>

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/BusinessRulesSingleHSPublic.pdf>

EXCEPTION 7: A student who is a "child with a disability" as that term is defined at 42 U.S.C. Section 12102 (ADA) and the Regulations promulgated thereunder who is enrolled in a Special Education program at a school outside of the district of residence of parents is eligible at the school where the student attends classes or the school located in the district of residence of the parents, PROVIDED each of the following is met: (a) the student's parents reside in Ohio; (b) the school district in which the parents reside does not provide the required programs to meet the student's special education needs; and (c) there is a contractual agreement specifying the responsibility for educating a "child with disabilities" between the respective schoolboards or between the parents and the school the student with the disability will attend.

4-3-2 For purposes of the semester bylaws 4-3-3 and 4-3-4 only, enrollment and attendance in a school shall be deemed continuous until such date when a student has been officially withdrawn from the school in accordance with that school's policies.

4-3-3 After a student completes the eighth grade or is otherwise eligible for high school athletics participation, the student may be eligible for a period not to exceed eight semesters taken in order of attendance, regardless of whether the student participates or is even eligible to participate in accordance with these eligibility bylaws. A student in grade 7 or 8 who attains the age of 15 before August 1 shall be eligible only at the high school level for a period not to exceed eight semesters commencing with the semester of the student's first participation at the high school level.

See Bylaw 4-3-5 for further definition of what constitutes "order of attendance" as it relates to these semester bylaws.

EXCEPTION 1: The Executive Director's Office may permit a student who completes the eighth semester of eligibility during the season of a sport to complete the sports season of the sport in which the student is participating provided the student is enrolled in school. If such extension is granted, the student is ineligible for further interscholastic participation when the sports season, regular and tournament, has ended.

EXCEPTION 2: If the student is a "child with a disability" as that term is defined within the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Part B of the Federal IDEIA requirements and the student's specific disability was diagnosed contemporaneous with the events which caused the student to be unable to meet the requirements of this bylaw; and whose disability is the primary reason for student's inability to meet the requirements of this bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director's office if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director's office, the Executive Director's office determines that:

- a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and
- b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes; and
- c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and
- d) there is no evidence of "red-shirting" or other indicia of academic dishonesty.

EXCEPTION 3: The Executive Director's Office, in its sole discretion, may permit a student who began high school in another country to have eight semesters of high school eligibility in the United States when evidence can be presented

that the student's placement in high school outside the United States was inappropriate for the student's age and academic capabilities.

Note: If a student competes at the high school level as an ineligible student, that semester(s) of eligibility shall count toward the eight semesters permitted.

- 4-3-4** After a student completes the sixth grade or is otherwise eligible for 7-8th grade athletics participation and before the student enters the ninth grade, the student may be eligible for a period not to exceed four semesters taken in order of attendance, whether the student participates or not.

EXCEPTION: If the student is a "child with a disability" as that term is defined within the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Part B of the Federal IDEIA requirements and the student's specific disability was diagnosed contemporaneous with the events which caused the student to be unable to meet the requirements of this bylaw; and whose disability is the primary reason for student's inability to meet the requirements of this bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director's office if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director's office, the Executive Director's office determines that:

- a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and
- b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes; and
- c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and
- d) there is no evidence of "red-shirting" or other indicia of academic dishonesty.

- 4-3-5** A student who is enrolled 15 or more school days in any semester, or who participates in an interscholastic contest prior to or during a semester, shall have that semester count as one semester of eligibility. In addition, the following situations shall count as a semester of eligibility:

1: A student who does not attend school in a semester due to a suspension or an expulsion shall have that semester(s) count in the total of **four (grades 7-8) or eight (high school)** that are permitted. 2: A student who does not attend school due to enrollment in a postsecondary institution that is not part of the College Credit Plus Program (dual credit for both high school and postsecondary school) shall have that semester(s) count in the total of **four or eight** that are permitted. 3: A student who does not attend any school for a semester(s) due to truancy shall have that semester(s) count in the total of **four or eight** that are permitted. 4: A student who does not attend any school for a semester(s) due to withdrawal, **and a student who is excused from compulsory attendance to be home educated** shall have that semester(s) count in the total of **four or eight** that are permitted.

EXCEPTION: The Executive Director may, in the exercise of the Executive Director's sole discretion, disregard a particular semester of "enrollment" if extenuating circumstances of such enrollment are presented and are shown to have existed through no fault of the student-athlete.

- 4-3-6** A student is considered a graduate when the student has completed the work required for graduation and is declared a graduate by the Board of Education or a similar governing board. Notwithstanding the fact the student may be age eligible and have semesters of eligibility remaining, a graduate is no longer eligible for interscholastic sports except for participation in the remaining contests of that semester.

- 4-3-7** A student who has received his or her education outside the United States is considered a graduate when the student has completed the work required for graduation or has completed the requirements for compulsory education as mandated by that country in which the student received his/her education. Notwithstanding the fact the student may be age eligible and have semesters of eligibility remaining, such a graduate is no longer eligible for interscholastic sports except for participation in the remaining contests of that semester.

EXCEPTION: If it has been determined that a student, who has been educated in a system outside the United States, has not met the substantive academic requirements of the NCAA initial eligibility center in regard to high school graduation (notwithstanding ACT/SAT scores or English proficiency), the student may be declared eligible at a member school at the sole discretion of the Executive Director's office.

Section 4. Scholarship

Note 1: The OHSAA will accept scholarship eligibility for students enrolling from outside Ohio if those students had met the eligibility standards of the state from which they transferred or the standards found in 4-4.

Note 2: For students who attend community schools, vocational schools or non-traditional schools sponsored by a school district, students who are involved with STEM, College Credit Plus and other educational options and students who are home educated, the immediately preceding grading period determination shall be the grading period of the school for which the student wishes to compete.

Please see <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/OtherEligibiltyDocs/CCP.Non-EnrolledStudentGradeSheet.pdf> to obtain a form to assist you in documenting grades for these students.

Note 3: Scholarship Eligibility for the home educated student who was not home educated for an entire year, leaves a school for home education during a school year or who commences home education during the school year after being declared ineligible, shall be evaluated for eligibility based on ORC§3313.5312.

Note 4: No student who has failed a course or was not enrolled in a course during the grading period shall be able to use that course to fulfill the scholarship requirement if the course was not a course that the student was enrolled in and passing at the conclusion of the grading period.

4-4-1 In order to be eligible in grades 9-12, a student must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period. For the purpose of this Bylaw 4, Section 4, the term “grading period” is defined as the school’s Board-adopted calendar (e.g., six week, nine week, 12 week or semester) and does not mean an interim marking period. Furthermore, at the conclusion of the preceding grading period, the student must have received passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one-credit courses or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation. For the purpose of this bylaw, the term “immediately preceding grading period” refers to the grading period of the school which immediately precedes the grading period in question.

EXCEPTION 1: The Executive Director’s office may waive this requirement for a student in her/his 12th and final year of school who (a) has accumulated sufficient credit hours to have graduated in the preceding semester; (b) maintains a grade point average in the top ten percent of the student’s class; and (c) can demonstrate that the underlying purposes of this bylaw have been otherwise fulfilled by the student.

EXCEPTION 2: The Executive Director’s office may waive the requirements of this bylaw provided the student has been **physically** withdrawn or removed from school because of circumstances due to personal accident, illness or family hardship. An appeal for such a waiver must come from the principal of the school and be in writing. The appeal for waiver shall contain documents with school and medical supporting evidence.

EXCEPTION 3: If a student’s failure to meet the requirements of this bylaw are due to an “incomplete” given in one or more courses which the student was taking during the grading period in question, the student may have his/her eligibility restored by the Executive Director’s office once the “incomplete” has been changed to a passing letter grade provided:

- a) the failure to complete the required coursework during the grading period was due to calamity day(s), family tragedy, or illness or accident as verified by a physician contemporaneous at the time of the incident; and
- b) the “incomplete” was given in accordance with Board of Education/other governing board adopted policies and procedures and is applicable to all students in the school; and
- c) the previously scheduled work and/or exams is/are completed within the time period provided in Board policy for completing work required to convert an “incomplete” into a letter grade; and
- d) there is no evidence that the “incomplete” was given in order to afford the student extended time in order to provide the student tutoring or other educational services simply to avoid a failing grade.

Note: This exception only applies where an “incomplete” has been issued and not a letter grade that is subsequently changed as a result of the extended time/additional work. If a high school district/system does NOT have a Board Policy on the Restoration of an Incomplete to a Grade or did not have a policy when this exception was requested, the student shall not be able to avail him or herself of this exception.

4-4-2 If, either through the due process procedure or the direct mediation process established by the Ohio Department of Education in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, it is determined that a school has failed to provide all of the support services as identified in a student’s IEP as necessary for the student to receive a “free and appropriate public education,” AND the Executive Director’s office determines that this failure to provide these necessary services caused the student to fail to meet the requirements of Bylaw 4-4-1 or Bylaws 4-4-4 or 4-4-5, the student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director’s office upon the student’s successful completion of the appropriate compensatory education as ordered by the Independent Hearing Officer (I.H.O.) or through the mediation process.

4-4-3 The eligibility or ineligibility of a student continues until the start of the fifth school day of the next grading period, at which time the grades from the immediately preceding grading period become effective. For the purposes of this bylaw, “school day” includes faculty in-service days, calamity days and regular school attendance days but not holidays or school breaks.

EXCEPTION 1: Eligibility or ineligibility for the first grading period commences with the start of the fall sports season.

EXCEPTION 2: A student coming off the “ineligible status” may become eligible after the fifth calendar day immediately following the end of the grading period provided those grades can be obtained and verified by a school administrator.

4-4-4 A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of four of all subjects carried the immediately preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.

4-4-5 A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades at the conclusion of that grading period in a minimum of four of those subjects in which the student received grades.

EXCEPTION 1: The Executive Director’s office may waive the requirements of this bylaw provided the student has been withdrawn or removed from school because of circumstances due to personal accident, illness or family hardship. An appeal for such a waiver must come from the principal of the school and be in writing. The appeal for waiver shall contain documents with school and medical supporting evidence.

EXCEPTION 2: If a student’s failure to meet the requirements of this bylaw are due to an “incomplete” given in one or

more courses which the student was taking during the grading period in question, the student may have his/her eligibility restored by the Executive Director's office once the "incomplete" has been changed to a passing letter grade provided:

- a) the failure to complete the required coursework during the grading period was due to calamity day(s), family tragedy, or illness or accident as verified by a physician contemporaneous at the time of the incident; and
- b) the "incomplete" was given in accordance with Board of Education/other governing board adopted policies and procedures and is applicable to all students in the school; and
- c) the previously scheduled work and/or exams is/are completed within the time period provided in Board policy for completing work required to convert an "incomplete" into a letter grade; and
- d) there is no evidence that the "incomplete" was given in order to afford the student extended time in order to provide the student tutoring or other educational services simply to avoid a failing grade.

Note: This exception only applies where an "incomplete" has been issued and not a letter grade that is subsequently changed as a result of the extended time/additional work. If a school district/system does NOT have a Board Policy on the Restoration of an Incomplete to a Grade or did not have a policy when this exception was requested, the student shall not be able to avail him or herself of this exception.

4-4-6 The primary responsibility for verifying eligibility rests with the receiving school. Eligibility shall be verified by reviewing school records or written verification from the sending school.

4-4-7 Summer school and other educational options may not be used to bring a student into compliance with Bylaws 4-4-1, 4-4-4 or 4-4-5.

Note: The prohibition in this bylaw is applicable both prospectively and retrospectively.

Section 5. Conduct, Character, Discipline

4-5-1 In matters pertaining to personal conduct in which athletic contests and their related activities are not involved, the school itself is to be the sole judge as to whether the student may participate in athletics.

4-5-2 In matters pertaining to personal conduct in which athletic contests and their related activities are involved, the principal and game officials shall file a report and the Executive Director's office shall have jurisdiction to determine additional penalties including whether or not the student may participate in athletics.

4-5-3 Physical attacks on any official shall be reported to the Association office immediately by the officials involved. The Executive Director's office shall conduct an investigation and determine the penalties involved.

4-5-4 Any students who are ejected or disqualified from an athletic contest in any sport for unsporting conduct or a flagrant violation shall be immediately placed under the direct supervision of a school official.

4-5-5 Any student suspended or expelled from a member school shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletics at any member school for the duration of the suspension or expulsion. For the purpose of this bylaw, suspension refers to the denial of attendance at school for a period of not more than 10 days. Expulsion refers to the involuntary removal of a student for more than 10 days.

4-5-6 Any student who is subject to a penalty or consequences for violations of a school's Board adopted Code of Conduct (Student, Athletic) shall be declared ineligible in the event the student transfers to another school before the penalty or consequence has been fully served. Once the terms of the penalty or consequence have been fully served at the new school then the student is permitted to regain their athletic eligibility assuming they are eligible in all other respects. It is the responsibility of an administrator at the new school to inquire from the administrator at the student's former school of any violation of this nature that would affect the student's eligibility in interscholastic athletics and the duration of the suspension for that violation.

Section 6. Residence

4-6-1 The districts for all public schools are established by the State Board of Education and defined for athletic purposes. In addition, school districts with multiple high schools may establish attendance zones within those districts. In determining one's residence for purposes of these bylaws, the following criteria shall apply: (a) where the parents and family members sleep the majority of the time, (b) where the mail is received, (c) where the meals are prepared and eaten, (d) where the parents are registered to vote, and (e) where important family activities take place during significant parts of each day.

Note: It shall not be considered a "bona fide" change of residence as prescribed in Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 1, or Bylaw 4-7-4 (1) if the parents of a transfer student vacate the residence prior to one year from the date that the student's transfer is approved, and the student remains in the school into which the transfer was approved.

4-6-2 A student whose parents, (**biological or adoptive**), reside outside the state of Ohio will be ineligible for interscholastic athletics in a member school. (See Bylaw 4-8-1 for eligibility requirements for international students).

Note: Students affected by this out of state residence bylaw may still be affected by all other eligibility standards in Bylaw 4 including the transfer provisions in 4-7 and the international provisions in 4-8.

EXCEPTION 1: The Executive Director's office may declare a student who is the subject of a custody or guardianship order issued by a court of proper jurisdiction conferring custody/guardianship upon a grandparent, aunt, uncle or sibling who resides in Ohio, if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director's office, the Executive Director's office determines that the purpose of this change in custody was not for athletic reasons, but purely for the best interest of the student

in terms of the student's mental, physical and educational well-being. Such a student is ineligible until declared eligible by the Executive Director's office.

The Executive Director's Office, in its sole discretion, may waive the formal requirement of a court order for a student who is 18, when circumstances are presented that the student was compelled to transfer schools and reside with a primary relative as outlined above who is a bona fide resident of the state of Ohio.

Note: Upon enrollment of a student whose parents live outside the state of Ohio but within the United States or any of its territories, or if the parents move outside the state of Ohio prior to or during the student's high school career, the principal of that school in which the student is being enrolled shall notify the Executive Director's office of said enrollment, and the facts and circumstances regarding any change of custody so that the Executive Director's office can make an informed decision regarding the student's qualifications under this exception.

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7-2 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

EXCEPTION 2: The Executive Director's office may grant eligibility to a student who makes a bona fide move into Ohio with his/her legal custodian/guardian, and it can be shown that, pursuant to a court order, the individual has had legal custody/guardianship of the student for a minimum of one year. Such a student is ineligible until declared eligible by the Executive Director's office.

Note: Upon enrollment of a student whose parents live outside the state of Ohio but within the United States or any of its territories, or if the parents move outside the state of Ohio prior to or during the student's high school career, the principal of that school in which the student is being enrolled shall notify the Executive Director's office of said enrollment, and the facts and circumstances regarding any change of custody so that the Executive Director's office can make an informed decision regarding the student's qualifications under this exception.

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception #2 and have been under the custody/guardianship of the individual who is now an Ohio resident for less than two years, must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

EXCEPTION 3: If a student's parents move outside the state of Ohio at any time after the student has been enrolled and attending a minimum of 15 days at the beginning of the student's 11th grade school year, the student may be declared eligible for the remainder of the student's high school career at the high school he/she was attending at the time of the parents' move, provided:

- a) the student's enrollment at that high school has been continuous following the parents' move, and
- b) the student meets all other eligibility requirements of these Bylaws.

EXCEPTION 4: A student who enrolls at first grade level in a school consisting of grades 1-12 and who maintains continuous enrollment shall be eligible for interscholastic athletics in grades 7-12 in that school regardless of place or state of residence of parents.

EXCEPTION 5: A student whose parent(s) has been continuously employed for a minimum of three years as a fulltime, licensed or classified employee in an Ohio school district or system, may be declared eligible in an Ohio school in that district or system where the parent is employed. Once eligibility is established at the member school/district, the student shall remain eligible under this exception for as long as he or she maintains continuous enrollment in that school. **The student shall be ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office.**

EXCEPTION 6: A student who resides within the boundaries of a parochial school system consisting of grades 1-12 that has multiple sites organized into elementary schools (1-8) and secondary schools (9-12), and who has enrolled by the beginning of the fourth grade level of an elementary school in that system and has maintained continuous enrollment in that school system through grade 8, shall be eligible for interscholastic athletics in grades 9-12 providing the secondary school attended by the student is the school designated by the school system for the continuance of the student's educational program.

Note: The OHSAA does require that the superintendent of the non-public school system provide the Executive Director's Office with a list of any elementary schools under the system's jurisdiction that are located both inside and outside of Ohio.

The student shall be ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office.

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7-2 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

EXCEPTION 7: A student who resides within the boundaries of a public school district in a neighboring state; and who attends an Ohio public school system under an arrangement through which the entire grade of the out-of-state student attends the Ohio public school system; and for whom the tuition or cost of education for said out-of-state student is paid by the neighboring state's school district of residence; and who will be eligible to receive a high school diploma from an Ohio public school system shall be eligible for interscholastic athletics in grades 7-12 at the schools designated by the Ohio school system for attendance by the students from the neighboring state. **The student shall be ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office.**

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7-2 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

EXCEPTION 8: A student who is enrolled in a member school that provides housing for the student and accepts the role of the parent in loco parentis. **The student shall be ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office.**

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7-2 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

EXCEPTION 9: A student who has been enrolled in an Ohio school pursuant to the Interstate Compact of Educational Opportunities for Military Children may be declared eligible at a member school upon submission of a special power of attorney, relative to the custody or guardianship of a child of a military family and executed under applicable law. **The student shall be ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office.**

EXCEPTION 10: A student who is a citizen of the United States may be declared eligible for interscholastic athletics in the event that the student's parents are deported from the United States as long as the student maintains continuous enrollment in an Ohio school. **The student is not eligible until declared eligible by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office upon submission of the appropriate documents.**

EXCEPTION 11: A student may be declared eligible for interscholastic athletics when the student's parent(s) are citizens of the United States who reside outside the United States or any of its territories. **The student is not eligible until declared eligible by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office upon submission of the appropriate documents.**

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7-2 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

EXCEPTION 12: A student who is a United States citizen, and whose parent(s) are non-citizens living outside the United States or any of its territories, may be eligible for interscholastic athletics subject to the restrictions and conditions set forth below:

- a. The student may be eligible for a maximum of one school year which is the first year of enrollment at the Ohio member school.
- b. The student has not previously participated in any other visitor exchange program in Ohio or any other state within the United States or any of its territories, or attended any other high school in the United States or any of its territories. The period of participation in another visitor exchange program or the period of attendance at another high school in the United States or any of its territories shall count against the one-year maximum eligibility set forth in (a) above.
- c. There shall be no evidence of a direct placement for athletic purposes into a specific member school in Ohio.
- d. The member school at which the student wishes to be declared eligible for interscholastic athletic participation must submit the appropriate form(s) to the Executive Director's office, and the student and school must cooperate with the Executive Director's office in determining that all other requirements for eligibility have been satisfied, including the scholarship and age requirements.

The student is not eligible until declared eligible by the OHSAA Executive Director's Office upon submission of the appropriate documents.

Note: A student may travel freely back and forth between the United States or any of its territories and the home country with the proper U.S. passport. Thus a student could have attended high school in the United States or any of its territories previously without being part of any International Exchange Program. It is the responsibility of the school administration to verify that the student in these circumstances meets all the requirements of eligibility expressed above.

Please be advised that students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this residence exception must adhere to an exception to the transfer bylaw 4-7-2 or be prepared to fulfill the transfer consequence in any sport in which they participated in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer. After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests. Furthermore, the student shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s).

Section 7. Transfers

Note: Students who change high schools (transfer) are reminded that they must meet all eligibility standards found in Bylaw 4. This includes meeting the out of state residency bylaw 4-6-2, which requires a student to have a parent residing in Ohio or to meet one of the exceptions to that residency bylaw.

4-7-1 The transfer bylaws apply to all students enrolled in grades 9-12 who are transferring high schools whether the schools are public or non-public, member or non-member or whether the high schools are within the same school system or district.

4-7-2 A student is considered to have transferred whenever a.) enrollment is changed from one school to another school and the student attends a new school, or b.) enrollment is changed from one school to become home schooled or vice versa, or c.) the student participates in a practice, scrimmage or contest in an OHSAA recognized sport with a school-sponsored squad of a school in which the student has not been enrolled and attending, or d) the participation opportunities afforded a student pursuant to state law change. Notwithstanding (c) and (d) above, if a non-enrolled student’s participation is pursuant to O.R.C. §§ 3313.5311 (Ohio non-public school students) or 3313.537 (Ohio community/STEM school students), the non-enrolled student’s participation opportunity shall transfer back to the non-public school or Community/STEM school in which the student is enrolled without transfer consequences. If the non-public school or Community/STEM school ever sponsors the sport/sports in which the non-enrolled student wishes to participate, the student’s participation opportunity shall also be transferred back to the school of attendance without consequence. Furthermore, any in-season changes in the participation opportunities that may be afforded by state law shall be subject to Bylaw 4-7-3.

If a student transfers at any time after commencing the ninth-grade year, the student shall be ineligible for all OHSAA tournaments in those sports in which the student participated during the 12 months immediately preceding this transfer. In addition, the student shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels AFTER the first 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests have been competed in those sports in which the student participated during the 12 months immediately preceding this transfer. The transfer consequence shall remain in effect until the one-year anniversary of the date of enrollment in the school to which the student transferred, at which time the student is no longer considered a transfer student. For purposes of the transfer bylaws, a student will be considered as having commenced the ninth grade year by either attending five or more days of school as a ninth grader or by establishing eligibility at a school by having participated in a contest. Furthermore, the term “participated in a contest” for purposes of the transfer bylaw means to have played at least one play in a scrimmage, preview/jamboree, Foundation game or regular season/ tournament game or contest.

A student who did not participate in an OHSAA recognized sport in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer is not subject to the consequence of this transfer bylaw.

Notwithstanding the above, if a student transfers during the season of a sport in which he or she has participated in a regular season contest, and if Bylaw 4-7-3 requires that the student is ineligible for participation in the remainder of the contests in that sports season, the student shall remain ineligible for the remainder of all regular season contests, as well as the OHSAA tournament, in that sport at the school into which the student has transferred (or at the school where the student is now permitted a participation opportunity). Furthermore, the student shall finish fulfilling his/her transfer consequence, for ONLY that sport in which the mid-season transfer occurred, at the start of the sport season during the next school year, unless an exception can be met to restore eligibility for the next sport season. This consequence requires that the student shall remain ineligible for all preseason contests (scrimmages, preview/jamboree, Foundation games) and all regular season contests until the total number of varsity regular season contests missed (including those missed during the previous season) equals 50 percent of the maximum allowable regular season contests in that sport.

Note 1: ORC 3313.5312 (Ohio home educated students) has been intentionally left out of the exclusions of subpart (b) addressing students participating in programs where they are not enrolled. Once a home-educated student participates with a school sponsored squad of a school in which the student is not enrolled, the student’s eligibility is established at that school. Participating on any other schools’ sponsored squad will be considered a transfer for which the balance of this bylaw and its exception would be applicable.

Note 2: The Executive Director’s Office, in its sole discretion, is authorized to make certain equitable adjustments to the period of REGULAR SEASON ineligibility in cases when a student, through no fault of the athlete, is subject to documented, extenuating circumstances which prevent him/her from competing during all or part of the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests in a sport. However, no such approval shall ever permit a student-athlete a participation opportunity in the OHSAA postseason tournament of a sport in which they are ineligible. If such an adjustment is granted, 1) the student must be physically attending the school at the start of the season for such an adjustment to be considered and 2) the student will only be eligible for those contests outlined in the Executive Director’s Office’s approval, which will never exceed 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests regardless of whether the student participates in those contests. It is the sole responsibility of the school to which the student transfers to ensure a student granted such an adjustment participates only during the appropriate contests outlined in the Executive Director’s Office’s approval.

Maximum Allowable Contests in All OHSAA-recognized Sports and Formula for Determining Eligibility under the 50% Transfer Consequence

Sport	Maximum # of Contests as per the OHSAA Board of Directors Policy	Transfer Student BECOMES INELIGIBLE AT VARSITY:
Baseball	27 Games	Game 15
Basketball (Boys and Girls)	22 Games	Game 12
Bowling (Boys and Girls)	24 Matches	Match 13
Cross Country (Boys and Girls)	16 Meets	Meet 9
Field Hockey	16 Games	Game 9
Football	10 Games	Game 6
Golf (Boys and Girls)	20 Matches	Match 11
Gymnastics	14 Meets	Meet 8
Ice Hockey	35 Games	Game 19
Lacrosse (Boys and Girls)	18 Games	Game 10
Soccer (Boys and Girls)	17 Games	Game 10
Softball	27 Games	Game 15
Swimming and Diving (Boys and Girls)	16 Meets	Meet 9
Tennis (Boys and Girls)	22 Contests	Contest 12
Track and Field (Boys and Girls)	16 Meets	Meet 9
Volleyball	22 Matches	Match 12
Wrestling	20 Points/16 points (for those schools that do not field teams – 6 or fewer weight classes)	Point 11/9

If it is determined that one or more of the exceptions that follow represents an event which creates the need to transfer, i.e., creates a cause and effect relationship, then one or more of the following exceptions may apply:

EXCEPTION 1: If a student is compelled to transfer to another high school as a result of a bona fide legal change of residence made by BOTH PARENTS (biological, adoptive or stepparents) from one public school district into another public school district, whether from outside the state of Ohio or within Ohio, the Executive Director’s Office, in its sole discretion, may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sport seasons.

- a) the public high school in which the new residence is physically located (or any school to which the student is placed and enrolled in a multiple high school district) or;
- b) any non-public high school if family’s new residences is at least 15 miles from their former residence, as determined by the most direct route when using google maps or other such navigational system, or;
- c) any high school, public or non-public, if the new residence into which the family has moved is more than 80 miles from the residence from which the family moved, as determined by the most direct route when using google maps or other such navigational system.

The requirement that “both parents” make the move may be waived by the Executive Director’s Office if the marriage of the parents has been or is in the process of being legally terminated or if the parents were never married. In addition, the Executive Director’s Office, in its sole discretion, may extend conditional eligibility for up to 90 days immediately following the date of the student’s transfer in cases where parents are making a bona fide move into a residence that is more than 80 miles from their former residence, and there are extenuating circumstances that are presented which prevent one of the parents from making the move immediately. This 90-day conditional provision may be extended for up to 90 more days ONLY in the case of medical or military obligations that prevent one of the parents from making the move at the same time as the other parent.

If the person(s) making the bona fide move is not the biological or adoptive parent or stepparent of the student, the school administrator must disclose the custodial relationship, provide the court ordered documents and advise as to the whereabouts of the student’s biological or adoptive parents.

An *Affidavit of Bona Fide Residence* in the form requested by the Executive Director’s Office, must be submitted along with any request for the application of this exception. Please refer to Bylaw 4-1-2 concerning eligibility established via falsified information.

Note 1: Please refer to Bylaw 4-6-1 for a definition of bona fide residence. Also, the student and the student's parents must reside in this new residence for a period of one year from the date on which this exception was applied to a given student in order to maintain eligibility at the school into which the student's transfer has been approved. The school district will have a continuing duty to monitor compliance with the residency requirements during this one year period.

Note 2: If, as a result of a bona fide change of residence of the student's parents, a student transfers and is permitted a participation opportunity at a member school where he or she is not enrolled, in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-1 exceptions #4 and/or 6, the Executive Director's Office may apply this exception 1 to restore full eligibility in regard to transfer/change of participation opportunity provided the student's participation is in accordance with OHSAA business rules and in accordance with Bylaw 4-7-3.

EXCEPTION 2: If, as a result of a legal change of custody as between a student's parents, who live in two different school districts, the student is compelled to transfer from one school district to the other school district where the other parent resides, the Executive Director's Office may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sport seasons provided the student continues to live with the new custodian in order to support the approval of the transfer to the new high school. If custody/guardianship of a student is changed to a non-parent which custody/guardianship change is the result of the death or incarceration of the prior custodian, the intervention of child protective services, social services or similar state agency, and the new custodian/guardian lives in a different school district than the previous custodian/guardian, the Executive Director's Office may waive all or part of the 50 percent period of ineligibility for one or more sports/sport seasons provided the student continues to live with the new custodian/guardian in order to support the approval of the transfer to the new high school.

The Executive Director's Office, in its sole discretion, may waive the requirement of a court-ordered legal change of custody for a student who is 18, when circumstances are presented that the student was compelled to transfer schools and reside with a parent who is a bona fide resident of the state of Ohio.

By operation of statute, both parents in a Shared Parenting Plan are the residential and custodial parents of the child at all times under such Plan. Therefore, so long as a Shared Parenting Plan remains in effect, there can be no "change of custody" as contemplated by this Exception 2. However, in the event a Shared Parenting Plan remains in effect but a change in the designation of "residential parent" has been made by the court within that plan, the student who is the subject to the Shared Parenting Plan may apply one time to the Executive Director's Office for a one time exception to the transfer bylaw under this provision.

Exception 2 permits the choice of the public high school located in the residential school district of the new legal custodian or new residential parent, or any non-public school.

EXCEPTION 3: If the high school, which is either a chartered high school in a single high school public school district or a chartered non-public high school, in which the student is enrolled closes or discontinues its entire high school educational program after grade nine, the student may enroll in any school and be immediately eligible at that high school insofar as transfer is concerned. Likewise, if the bona fide residence of the student's parents is annexed to a different school district or consolidated within a school district, the student may be ruled eligible upon transfer to a school in the annexed or consolidated district subject to modification by formal action by the Boards of Education concerned. A copy of such action by Boards of Education must be on file in the Association office before the Executive Director's office can rule the student eligible. This exception shall be available to any student whose high school has closed as long as that high school was an OHSAA member school prior to the 2012-13 school year.

Note 1: For school closings in a multiple high school district, see Bylaw 4-7-4 regarding intra-district transfers.

Note 2: This exception has no application to the closing of any "non-traditional school" such as a community school or a non-chartered non-public high school or an out of state high school.

EXCEPTION 4: A student who does not live in the same school district as parents or legal guardian and who is financially self-supporting may be ruled eligible upon approval of the Executive Director at a school in the district where the student resides. The Executive Director is empowered to establish requirements for the student to be determined to be self-supporting. These requirements shall be established for each school year by May 15th of the preceding year. Self-support documentation must be submitted for approval every 30 days. The student becomes ineligible beginning with the second 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests until declared eligible by the Executive Director's Office under this exception. **Note:** Living with and/or being employed by a relative does not qualify for self-support under this exception.

EXCEPTION 5: A student may return to non-public education and have his/her eligibility restored at the discretion of the Executive Director's Office provided the following conditions are met:

- a) the student had been continuously enrolled in the same system of non-public education (e.g., Catholic Conference of Ohio, Ohio Association of International Schools, Association of Christian Schools International or other category as denoted by the State Department of Education) beginning in the 4th grade and continuing consecutively through the entire eighth grade and;
- b) the student has not attended more than one other high school during the course of their high school enrollment and;
- c) the student returns to the same system of non-public education prior to the start of the student's junior year and;

- d) the student can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Executive Director's Office that the transfer is not occurring/not taking place for athletic reasons.

Furthermore, if the student commences attendance at any high school within the same system of non-public education then breaks enrollment for a period of time at a school located outside the same system of non-public education, this exception will only be available for use back to the same high school at which the student was previously enrolled, provided the aforementioned criteria are all met.

EXCEPTION 6: The Executive Director shall have the discretionary power to waive the residence requirements for a student who has been enrolled in the district in accordance with ORC §§ 3313.64 (F)(6) or 3313.64 (F)(7). The student is ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office.

EXCEPTION 7: If a student is a victim of harassment, intimidation or bullying as those terms are defined at ORC §3313.666 (A)(2) which harassment, intimidation or bullying has been documented to the school district in accordance with the ORC, and as a result of this documented harassment, intimidation or bullying the student is compelled to transfer, the Executive Director's Office, in its sole discretion, may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sports seasons provided:

- 1) The District's Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, Anti-Bullying policies and procedures adopted in accordance with ORC §3313.666 have been substantially followed and complied with; and
- 2) The District provides the Executive Director's Office with a copy of the duly adopted policies and procedures; and
- 3) The District secures the appropriate releases from the student/student's parents authorizing the District to provide a complete record of the events and circumstances on which the policies and procedures were initiated including:
 - a) A specific, detailed report of the prohibited incident(s);
 - b) An outline of the procedures used to respond to and investigate the reported incident(s);
 - c) A copy of the findings that were a result of the complaint process and investigation;
 - d) A specific, detailed disciplinary procedure for any individual found guilty of harassment, intimidation or bullying;
 - e) All reports of notification to parents or guardians of any student involvement in the incident(s);
 - f) A report of the intervention strategies and remedial action the school has undertaken to assist the student and redress the complaint.
- 4) The District provides the Executive Director's Office with all of the above-referenced records.
- 5) In concurrence with ORC §3313.666 (A)(2), this exception cannot be used for any isolated incidents or alleged incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying, nor can this exception be used in cases where there has been no contemporaneous reporting of the alleged bullying, harassment or intimidation.

EXCEPTION 8: A student who has transferred to another high school to take advantage of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program may be ruled eligible upon approval of the the Executive Director's Office. Such a student who transfers under this provision and who subsequently drops out of the Diploma Program shall be declared immediately ineligible and may be subject to sanctions in accordance with Bylaw 11-Penalties.

EXCEPTION 9: If, as a result of a transfer/transfer of participation opportunity to a public high school located in the public school district within which the student's residential parent/legal custodian has resided for a minimum of one year, the Executive Director's Office may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more of the sport/sport seasons. This exception may be used regardless of whether the student is transferring from a public or nonpublic school but cannot be applied to transfer to and from high schools within a multiple high school district/system. (See Bylaws 4-7-4, 4-7-6 and 4-7-7 for the transfer rules which apply to intra-district or system transfers; See Note 1 below for transfers into a multiple high school district.) This Exception may be used only once during a student's four years of high school eligibility.

Note 1: For transfers covered under this Exception into a multiple high school district, the Executive Director's authority to waive all or part of the period of ineligibility shall be applicable at only the member high school located in the parent's residential attendance zone or, if there are no defined attendance zones, at the member high school that is closest to the parent's residence unless the district superintendent makes a specific request, based upon objective educational criteria, for application of this Exception at another high school within the district. Such a request should accompany the Exception 9 application.

Note 2: Exception 9 cannot be used to transfer from the public high school of the district in which one residential parent/legal custodian resides to the public high school of the district in which the other residential parent/legal custodian resides in a split-family situation. Conversely, a non-public student whose parents live in two different public school districts may have the option under this bylaw to transfer to the public high school in either public school district in which the student's parents reside provided the student has never established eligibility at a public school in a district in which a custodial parent resides.

Note 3: If, as a result of a transfer/change of participation opportunity in accordance with exception 9, a student is per-

mitted a participation opportunity at a member school where he or she is not enrolled in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-1 exceptions 4 and/or 6, the Executive Director's Office may apply this exception 9 to restore full eligibility in regard to transfer/change of participation opportunity provided the student's participation is in accordance with OHSAA business rules and in accordance with Bylaw 4-7-3. Application of this exception as a non-enrolled student shall constitute the student's one time use of this exception.

EXCEPTION 10: A student who has been enrolled in and attending a member school in a school district that, through formal action by the school district's Board of Education, has elected to effectively cease with its sponsorship of its entire interscholastic athletic programs, may transfer to any other school district/system and have his/her eligibility restored upon application to the Executive Director's Office. Furthermore, if the school district formally elects, through Board of Education action, to resume its sponsorship of its interscholastic athletic programs, a student who transferred under the provisions of this Exception may transfer back to the member school from which she/he transferred under this provision provided this transfer back occurs prior to the start of the next school year following the school year in which resumption of the sponsorship of interscholastic athletic programs occurred.

In consideration of all applications for the restoration of eligibility pursuant to this Exception, the Executive Director's Office shall give due consideration to all factors relating to the transfer and particularly the timing of the transfer in relation to the formal actions taken by the Board of Education in either the cessation and/or resumption of its sponsorship of these programs. For purposes of this Exception, "formal action" shall mean more than the mere threat of cessation of sponsorship, and resolutions that are contingent upon a future event or happening will not be regarded as "formal action" until such contingency has been met.

No student transferring under this provision shall be eligible until declared eligible by the Executive Director's Office.

EXCEPTION 11: If a student has experienced a death of an immediate family member (parent, grandparent, legal custodian, sibling) with whom the student was residing at the time of death, and because of this loss it becomes necessary for the student to transfer, if the transfer occurs within a reasonable time after the death, the Executive Director's Office, in its sole discretion, may waive all or part of the 50 percent period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sports seasons. In order to assist the Executive Director's Office in determining whether the transfer was necessary as a result of the death of the family member, the Superintendent of the school district from which the student transferred must certify to the Executive Director's Office that the transfer was necessary to protect the student's physical and/or mental well-being. Absent such certification from the Superintendent, the Executive Director's Office may not apply this exception.

EXCEPTION 12 – A student returning from a domestic exchange program with whom the member school has partnered to the same high school the student attended immediately before entering into this domestic exchange program may be declared eligible insofar as the transfer bylaw is concerned if all of the following conditions have been met:

- a) The domestic exchange program exists primarily for academic and educational learning experiences; and
- b) The student receives credits that apply toward the student's graduation in the Ohio member school for the student's work in the domestic exchange program; and
- c) In the event that student did participate in interscholastic athletics while enrolled in this domestic exchange program, the student's athletic participation was secondary to his/her academic and educational reasons for participation in the program; and
- d) The domestic exchange program has, in its curriculum guide, a structured beginning and ending to the program itself; and

The Executive Director's Office in its sole discretion may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility upon submission of the appropriate documentation for this exception.

EXCEPTION 13 – If, as a result of the conduct of an adult associated with the school, a student is compelled to transfer in order to protect the student's physical and/or mental well-being, the Executive Director's Office may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sport seasons provided ALL of the following criteria are met:

- a) there is documented evidence the adult conduct was directed specifically towards the student; and
- b) the adult conduct is of such a nature as to trigger a criminal investigation or an event which is otherwise a "reportable" event that would require a mandatory reporter to report to the proper legal authorities; and
- c) the student suffered/suffers physical harm and/or severe emotional distress that required/requires medical treatment and/or mental health treatment, which was contemporaneously documented at the time of the event; and
- d) there is no evidence the transfer is due to the student/family's displeasure with a former coach's training tactics and/or the student's playing time.

For purposes of this bylaw, "conduct" may include behavior of a physical nature as well as verbal and/or written expressions, gestures and interactions. The conduct referred to herein may also include interactions via social media or other forms of electronic communications.

This exception will not be applied where there has been no documented evidence of a criminal investigation or a "reportable" event as outlined in criteria (b), nor will this exception be applied for a student who simply alleges displeasure with a former coach's training tactics.

4-7-3 If a transfer, as defined in Bylaw 4-7-2, takes place during the sport season in which the student has participated in a **regular season interscholastic contest** in a sport, the student shall be ineligible in that sport for the remainder of all regular season contests, as well as the OHSAA tournament, in that sport at the school into which the student has transferred (or at the school where the student is now permitted a participation opportunity). Furthermore, the student shall finish fulfilling his/her transfer consequence, for **ONLY** that sport in which the mid-season transfer occurred, at the start of the sport season during the next school year, unless an exception can be met to restore eligibility for the next sport season. This consequence requires that the student shall remain ineligible for all preseason contests (scrimmages, preview/jamboree, Foundation games) and all regular season contests until the total number of varsity regular season contests missed (including those missed during the previous season) equals 50 percent of the maximum allowable regular season contests in that sport.

An in-season transferring student may not use any of the exceptions to Bylaw 4-7-2 or 4-7-4 to restore full athletic eligibility **EXCEPT** if one of the following circumstances occurs:

- 1) — The parents make a bona fide move into a new public school district, the student is approved for transfer eligibility under the requirements of Exception 1 of Bylaw 4-7-2 **AND** the school building into which the student transfers is more than 50 miles from the school building from which the student transfers as determined by mapquest.com, or such other navigational system as adopted by the Board of Directors at its August meeting, using the most direct route.
- 2) — As a result of a change in placement in which Children’s Services or a similar government agency is involved, the student may be approved for transfer eligibility provided the school building into which the student transfers is more than 50 miles from the school building from which the student transfers as determined by mapquest.com, or such other navigational system as adopted by the Board of Directors at its August meeting, using the most direct route.

For purposes of this bylaw, “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 into which the student transferred (or at the school where the student is now permitted a participation opportunity) participates in a contest (regular season or postseason).

Note: In addition, if a student’s participation opportunity changes during the sport season in which the student has already participated in a regular season interscholastic contest in a sport at a school where they are not enrolled (pursuant to O.R.C. §§ 3313.5311 or 3313.537), the student is ineligible in that sport for the remainder of that sport’s season at the new school into which the student is now entitled a participation opportunity. A student may not use any of the exceptions to Bylaw 4-7-2 or 4-7-4 to circumvent this bylaw if the student is not transferring schools. If the student is transferring schools, then the same exceptions as outlined above apply.

4-7-4 The superintendent or person delegated by the superintendent of either a non-public system or public school district may transfer students within the system without jeopardizing their eligibility only by using one of the following exceptions.

EXCEPTION 1: If, as a result of a bona fide legal change of residence made by **BOTH PARENTS** (biological, adoptive or stepparents) from one attendance zone into another attendance zone in a multiple high school district/system, the student is compelled to transfer to another district/system high school, the Executive Director’s Office may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sport seasons. The requirement that “both parents” make the move may be waived by the Executive Director’s Office if the marriage of the parents has been or is in the process of being legally terminated or if the parents were never married.

If the person(s) making the bona fide move is not the biological or adoptive parent or stepparent of the student, the school administrator must disclose the custodial relationship, provide the court ordered documents and advise as to the whereabouts of the student’s biological or adoptive parents.

An affidavit of bona fide residence in the form requested by the Executive Director’s Office shall be submitted along with any request for application of this exception.

Note: Please refer to Bylaw 4-6-1 for a definition of bona fide residence. Also, the student and the student’s parents must reside in this new residence for a period of one year from the date on which this exception was applied to a given student in order to maintain eligibility at the school into which the student’s transfer has been approved. The school district/system will have a continuing duty to monitor compliance with the residency requirements during this one-year period. Exception one permits the choice of the public high school in the parents’ new attendance zone only.

EXCEPTION 2: If, as a result of a legal change of custody as between a student’s parents, who live in two different attendance zones within the multiple high school district/system, the student is compelled to transfer from one district/system high school to another district/system high school, the Executive Director’s Office may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sport seasons provided the student continues to live with the new custodian in order to support the approval of the transfer to the new high school. If custody/guardianship of a student is changed to a non-parent, who lives in a different attendance zone than the previous custodian, which custody/guardianship change is a result of the death or incarceration of the prior custodian, the intervention of child protective services, social services or a similar agency, the Executive Director’s Office may waive all or part of the period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sport seasons. A re-designation of residential parent within a Shared Parenting Plan will not comply with this exception.

EXCEPTION 3: A member school in the district/system closes, or there was a mistake made in the student’s initial placement. This exception has no application to the closing of any “non-traditional school” or a non-chartered non-public high school.

EXCEPTION 4: The student is a child with a disability whose program as prescribed by the student’s I.E.P. has been changed to another high school.

EXCEPTION 5: The student transfers pursuant to state or federal statutes addressing unsafe schools or academically poor performing schools, and the student can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the superintendent that the transfer is for purely academic reasons and not athletic reasons. (Note: This exception will not apply to transfers from one poor performing school to another poor performing school.)

NOTE: The OHSAA uses the Ohio Department of Education’s List of Priority Schools as of the date the transfer request is received in the Executive Director’s Office to denote academically poor-performing schools.

EXCEPTION 6: If a student is a victim of harassment, intimidation or bullying as those terms are defined at ORC §3313.666 (A)(2) which harassment, intimidation or bullying has been documented to the school district/system in accordance with the ORC, and as a result of this documented harassment, intimidation or bullying, the student is compelled to transfer, the Executive Director’s Office, in its sole discretion, may waive all or part of the 50% period of ineligibility for one or more sport/sports seasons provided;

- 1) – The District’s Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, Anti-Bullying policies and procedures adopted in accordance with ORC §3313.666 have been substantially followed and complied with; and
- 2) – The District provides the Executive Director’s Office with a copy of the duly adopted policies and procedures; and
- 3) – The District secures the appropriate releases from the student/student’s parents authorizing the District to provide a complete record of the events and circumstances on which the policies and procedures were initiated including:
 - a) A specific, detailed report of the prohibited incident(s)
 - b) An outline of the procedures used to respond to and investigate the reported incident(s);
 - c) A copy of the findings that were a result of the complaint process and investigation;
 - d) A specific, detailed disciplinary procedure for any individual found guilty of harassment, intimidation or bullying;
 - e) All reports of notification to parents or guardians of any student involvement in the incident(s);
 - f) A report of the intervention strategies and remedial action the school has undertaken to assist the student and redress the complaint.
- 4) – The District provides the Executive Director’s Office with all of the above-referenced records.
- 5) – In concurrence with ORC§3313.666 (A)(2), this exception cannot be used for any isolated incidents or alleged incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying, nor can this exception be used in cases where there has been no contemporaneous reporting of the alleged bullying harassment or intimidation.

The student becomes ineligible beginning with the second 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests until declared eligible by the Executive Director’s Office under this exception.

4-7-5 Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 4-7-2 and 4-7-4, if a student transfers pursuant to state or federal statutes addressing unsafe schools or academically poor performing schools, and the student can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Executive Director’s office that the transfer is for purely academic reasons and not athletic reasons, the Executive Director’s office may declare such transferring student eligible upon application to the Executive Director’s office. The OHSAA uses the Ohio Department of Education’s (ODE) List of Priority Schools, or other such ODE publication denoting poor performing schools, as of the date the transfer request is received in the Executive Director’s Office, to denote academically poor performing schools.

Note 1: The student shall be entitled to one transfer only under the provisions set forth in this bylaw. In addition, this bylaw shall not be used to establish eligibility at another high school if the student transfers into and then back out of the poor performing school in an attempt to circumvent the transfer bylaw, nor can it be used to transfer between poor performing schools.

Note 2: If a student has used this bylaw to transfer out of a poor performing school at any time during his or her high school career, the student shall not be permitted to transfer back to the same poor performing school and regain transfer eligibility.

4-7-6 If a student transfers between high schools within the same public school district, the student may have his/her eligibility restored by the Executive Director’s office provided the following conditions have been met:

- 1) – The student has been reassigned to the high school by the school district as a result of redistricting or a **specific change of program** the details of which shall be clearly stipulated in writing to the Executive Director’s office; and
- 2) – The reassignment takes place after the conclusion of the previous school year and prior to the beginning of the current school year; and the student commences enrollment and attendance on day one of the current school year;

and

- 3) – The District petitions the Executive Director’s office for the restoration of eligibility for the student no later than 15 school days after the beginning of the school year; and
- 4) – The student becomes ineligible beginning with the second 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests until declared eligible by the Executive Director’s Office under this exception.
- 5) – This bylaw will have no application for seniors who are requesting a “specific change of academic program.”

This transfer option is available one time only during the student’s high school career. A student who subsequently withdraws from the academic program to which he or she has been assigned shall be declared immediately ineligible and may be subject to sanctions in accordance with Bylaw 11.

Note: Students who are transferring to take advantage of the IB Diploma Program shall have junior standing and be fully enrolled in the IB Diploma Program.

4-7-7

If a student transfers to a high school located within the jurisdiction of a non-public multiple high school system (e.g., Catholic Conference of Ohio, Ohio Association of Independent Schools, Association of Christian Schools International or other category as denoted by the State Department of Education) from another high school within that same system, the student may have his/her eligibility restored by the Executive Director’s office provided the following conditions have been met:

- 1) – The student has been reassigned to the high school by the superintendent or other administrative authority of that school system as a result of a **specific change of academic program** the details of which shall be clearly stipulated in writing to the Executive Director’s office; or a material change in economic circumstances so as to create a hardship; or a material change in transportation circumstances so as to create a hardship; and
- 2) – The reassignment takes place after the conclusion of the previous school year and prior to the beginning of the current school year; and the student commences enrollment and attendance on day one of the current school year; and
- 3) – The superintendent or other administrative authority of the system petitions the Executive Director’s office for the restoration of eligibility for the student verifying in detail the specific reason for the transfer in accordance with item #1 and certifying that the transfer is not for athletic reasons no later than 15 school days after the beginning of the school year; and
- 4) – The student becomes ineligible beginning with the second 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests until declared eligible by the Executive Director’s Office under this exception.
- 5) – This bylaw will have no application for seniors who are requesting a “specific change of academic program.” This transfer option is available one time only during the student’s high school career. A student who subsequently withdraws from the academic program to which he or she has been assigned shall be declared immediately ineligible and may be subject to sanctions in accordance with Bylaw 11.

Note: Students who are transferring to take advantage of the IB Diploma Program shall have junior standing and be fully enrolled in the IB Diploma Program.

Note: This exception will have no application for seniors who are requesting a “specific change of academic program.”

Section 8. International and Exchange Students

4-8-1

For the purpose of this bylaw, an international student is a student who is not a United States citizen and who is in Ohio receiving education in an Ohio school. An international students who does not have a parent (biological or adoptive) residing in Ohio is ineligible for interscholastic athletics in Ohio unless the student can meet one of the exceptions below. The following exceptions apply.

Note: Students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this international exception must adhere to transfer bylaw 4-7-2.

EXCEPTION 1: The international student who is a participant in a recognized visitor exchange program may be eligible for interscholastic athletics subject to the restrictions and conditions set forth below:

- a. The international student may be eligible for a maximum of one school year which is the first year of enrollment at the Ohio member school.
- b. The international student has not previously participated in any other visitor exchange program in the United States. If the international student has participated in another visitor exchange program in Ohio or any other state, the period of participation in that other program shall count against the one year maximum eligibility set forth in (a) above.
- c. The international student is in this country pursuant to a J-1 Visa. No other visa type, passport or other documentation shall qualify the student for eligibility under this exception.
- d. There shall be no evidence of a direct placement for athletic purposes into a specific member school in Ohio.
- e. No more than five (5) international students from the same visitor exchange program, in one member

school, shall be permitted to be eligible during any school year.

- f. The member school at which the international student wishes to be declared eligible for interscholastic athletic participation must submit the appropriate forms to the Executive Director’s office, and the student and school must cooperate with the Executive Director’s office in determining that all other requirements for eligibility have been satisfied.

The international student described in this Exception 1 shall be ineligible until declared eligible by the Executive Director’s office upon submission of the appropriate form.

EXCEPTION 2: An international student may be declared eligible for interscholastic athletics upon the submission of a court approved document certifying the student’s adoption by a legal resident of the school district in which the student is attending. The student is not eligible until declared eligible by the Executive Director’s office upon submission of the appropriate court documents.

EXCEPTION 3: An international student may be declared eligible in accordance with specific state or federal statutes.

Note: Students who transfer into an Ohio high school under this international exception must adhere to transfer bylaw 4-7-2.

- 4-8-2** An Ohio student returning from an international exchange program may resume interscholastic competition in the same Ohio member school from which the student left provided the student meets all requirements relative to age, semesters of eligibility as well as preceding grading period scholastic requirements upon return to the member high school.

These requirements mean that the student shall be considered to have used semesters of eligibility while studying abroad, and shall have received passing grades which count toward graduation in a minimum of five one credit courses or the equivalent in the final grading period of the exchange program (Bylaw 4-4-1). Such a student is ineligible until ruled eligible by the Executive Director’s office.

However, if a student intends to audit all course work while engaged in the international exchange program and thus receive no credit for the experience, the Executive Director’s office may consider restoration of academic and/or semester eligibility upon return to the same high school under the following conditions:

- 1) — An application for consideration, which clearly articulates the academic program the student will fulfill, is filed with the Executive Director’s office prior to commencing participation in the international exchange program. The application will specify the course work to be attempted and the fact that no credit will be earned for the experience.
- 2) — The student will not participate in any sport in which he or she wishes to retain semesters of eligibility while engaged in the international exchange program. If the student participates in either an interscholastic or non-interscholastic program, the semesters during which such participation takes place shall count toward the total of eight which are permitted.
- 3) — This waiver is available only for students who have completed their first or second year of high school.

Section 9. Recruiting

- 4-9-1** A student is considered a prospective athlete after enrolling in the seventh grade, or the grade corresponding to the seventh grade for a student from a foreign country, irrespective of whether the student is currently enrolled in a public 7th-8th grade school located within a public school district or a non-public school that is part of a non-public system. Any attempt to recruit a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes shall be strictly prohibited.

- 4-9-2** For purposes of this Bylaw Section 9, the term “recruit” shall mean the use of influence by any person connected or not connected with the school to secure the enrollment of a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes.

The Executive Director’s Office may suspend the privilege of participation in interscholastic athletics for up to 30 days during the pendency of any alleged recruiting violation.

EXCEPTION 1: It is permissible for coaches and other school employees of a public school district to have contact with seventh and eighth grade students currently enrolled in that public school district; however, coaches and other school employees in a multi-high school public school district may have contact with only those students in grades seven and eight who are assigned by that district to attend that high school where the coach or school employee works.

EXCEPTION 2: It is permissible for coaches and other school employees of a non-public school system to have contact with seventh and eighth grade students currently enrolled in a non-public school of the same type (Catholic Conference of Ohio, Ohio Association of Independent Schools, Association of Christian Schools International or other category as denoted by the State Department of Education) provided the boundaries of that non-public school system are clearly defined and on file with the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the contact is restricted to students enrolled within that defined boundary. Likewise, it is permissible for non-public school coaches to have contact with 7-8 grade students if the non-public school is K-12 and the 7-8 grade building is located in the same building as the high school and the 7-8 grade students would be assigned to the high school where the coach or school employee works.

Note: Feeder schools boundaries designated for competitive balances purposes are NOT the same boundaries as referenced in this exception to the recruiting bylaw. Unless a school system assigns all the students at the elementary school(s) within a particular boundary to a particular high school and these boundaries are on file with the OHSA, coaches are prohibited from contacting these students in accordance with this exception.

4-9-3 “Marketing,” though a form of recruiting students, may be permitted under this bylaw by any and all member high schools provided the marketing complies with the following requirements:

- 1) — Any marketing must involve the entire high school program and all of its elements and shall not be solely or primarily for the school’s athletic program or programs.
- 2) — If a mailing or electronic transmission is utilized, the mailing/transmission may not be directed to a specific individual or individuals by name. The use of “occupant” or “resident” is permitted. Once a prospective student-athlete has attended an open house/information session/shadow day as outlined in 4-9-3 #3, only then it is permissible for the school to send enrollment/general school information to the named individual. (See 4-9-4 #3 and #4 for guidelines outlining when a coach or other students are permitted to contact a prospective student-athlete.)
- 3) — Conducting an open house/information session/shadow day for all prospective students, which SHALL be held on the campus of the member school, in a church or other house of worship that is a sponsor for that member school, or in one of the other schools sponsored by that same school system or district, is permissible provided all elements of the school program are presented. During such an event, it is permissible for a coach to talk with a prospective student-athlete in the presence of a school administrator if the conversation centers around program procedures and expectations but not the student’s expected impact on the program.

EXCEPTION: A school may be permitted to hold an open house at an alternative site provided:

- a) the facility is open and accessible to the general public; and
 - b) the facility is not a private club, private room within a public facility or a private home; and
 - c) the school submits a request for a waiver to use this alternative site at least 30 days prior to the open house.
 - d) no open house or information session may be held in a private home.
- 4) — Inviting a prospective student to campus for activities that are related to all aspects of the school’s educational offerings and not solely for athletic purposes is permissible provided the prohibition in item #2 is not violated.
 - 5) — Using the school website or other forms of media such as billboards, newspaper advertisements, etc. to advertise all aspects of the school’s educational offerings and not solely athletics information is permissible. Schools are permitted to utilize athletic advertisements of this nature so long as the advertisement simply congratulates a team and does not attempt to promote the athletic program (i.e. a billboard congratulating a state championship team).
 - 6) — Providing athletic camp brochures that advertise athletic camps/clinics available to a general population is permissible as long as 1) there are no direct mailing to specific individuals (See #2) and 2) the brochures are solely used to advertise for a specific non-interscholastic opportunity (camp/clinic). These brochures are not to be used to promote the school. (See 4-9-4 #9 regarding prohibitions on school personnel who are permitted to be in attendance at these camps/clinics.)
 - 7) — The only time in which it is permissible to invite students and/or their parents to a high school contest or another athletic related event such as a banquet or recognition ceremony is when the invitation is extended to an entire group or team, such as a school’s 7th or 8th grade team or a non-interscholastic group such as a C.Y.O. program in a specific sport, AND the participation is mutually agreed upon by the administration of both schools/organizations.
 Though the group may receive admission to the contest, this invitation to attend a high school contest or athletic related event shall not include running out onto the contest venue with the team or standing on the sidelines and shall not include locker room visits, pre-contest meals with the high school team and/or any other interaction with the team prior to or after the contest.

4-9-4 Forms of recruiting that are prohibited by this bylaw include but are not limited to:

- 1) — Using direct mailings or electronic communication to send information to a specific individual or individuals by name. However, mailings to “occupant” or “resident” are permitted provided the stipulations outlined in 4-9-3 #1 and 4-9-3 #2 are followed.
- 2) — Meetings with, functions for or marketing to a select athletic group or individual/individuals, i.e., eighth grade team or individual sports participant for the purpose of influencing enrollment at the high school.
- 3) — Any coach or group of coaches having any contact with prospective student-athletes, except as permitted in Bylaw 4-9-3, who are not presently enrolled in the school’s educational program, or their parents/non-interscholastic coach, prior to 1) the student’s application fee being submitted to the school (for tuition based schools) or 2) the school accepting the student’s application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools). Outside the context of a meeting during an open house/information session/shadow day, a coach is not permitted to have communication with a prospective student-athlete about athletics.

Note: For the purposes of this section of Bylaw 4, the description of “coaches” as stated in Bylaw 6-1-1 and 6-1-2 shall be applicable. Furthermore, the mere fact that a coach may also have another job title with his/her employer does not relieve that individual from this prohibition.

- 4) — Any individual associated with a school, including team members, attempting to use electronic communication or a social media platform(s) to communicate with a prospective student-athlete about athletics prior to 1) the student’s application fee being submitted to the school (for tuition based schools) or 2) the school accepting the student’s

application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).

- 5) — Interscholastic coaches answering athletic questions from prospective student-athletes and/ or their parents and describing their programs except within the school in accordance with approved administrative policies and procedures (i.e. via admissions offices) and consistent with the provisions set forth in Bylaw 4-9-3 #3.

Note: When an admissions officer is also a member of a coaching staff, that admissions officer shall have no contact with prospective enrollees except as specified within these bylaws as permissible for coaching staff members.

- 6) — Member schools distributing athletic publications or advertising solely for athletics, with the exception of camp/clinic brochures following the guidelines outlined in 4-9-3 #6. All athletic materials must be accompanied by general school information prior to 1) the student’s application fee being submitted to the school (for tuition based schools) or 2) the school accepting the student’s application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).
- 7) — Providing favors or inducements, such as T-shirts or caps, to prospective student-athletes or their parents. However, if a perspective-athlete attends a camp/clinic run by a school, this student is permitted to accept any items (T-shirt, bag, etc.) as long as they are given to every participant at the camp/clinic.
 - a) EXCEPTION: A small token, such as a “goodie bag” containing an item or items, the value of which cannot exceed \$25 and which cannot be related to the school’s athletic program, may be given to prospective students who “shadow” or visit a member school in contemplation of enrollment.
- 8) — Providing financial aid or scholarships to a student-athlete on the basis of athletic ability/involvement. See Bylaw 4-10 for prohibitions on offering athletic scholarships to a student currently enrolled in a school.
- 9) — Using an athletic camp/clinic to distribute general admission information about the school. (i.e. nosetting up an admissions table or having admissions personnel/administrators available to answer questions about enrollment) During these camps/clinics a perspective athlete is permitted to accept any items (T-shirt, bag, etc.) as long as they are given to every participant at the camp/clinic.
- 10) — If a coach leaves a school to pursue a coaching opportunity at another school, the coach shall refrain from any communication regarding athletics with any students at his or her former school. Further as it relates to any former student-athlete who might transfer to or enroll at the school where the coach is now approved as a member of the coaching staff, said transfer or enrollment shall create a rebuttable presumption of recruiting and render the student ineligible for up to one year from the date of enrollment unless the recruiting can be rebutted. Once the coach has been employed by or appointed to his/her new school for one calendar year from the date of employment/ approval, the coach is still prohibited from communication with any students at his/her former school, but there is no longer any obligation for the new school to rebut the presumption of recruiting unless specifically requested to do so by the Executive Director’s Office.

4-9-5 Prior to enrollment, a student-athlete may visit a public or non-public school in contemplation of enrollment, as long as that contemplated enrollment is consistent with Board of Education or similar governing board policy formally adopted by that school district and arrangements for the visit are made through the principal and/or school administrator designated by the Board of Education or similar governing board. During such an event, it is permissible for a coach to talk with a prospective student-athlete in the presence of a school administrator if the conversation centers around program procedures and expectations but not the student’s expected impact on the program. After the conclusion of the visit, a coach is not permitted to have further communication with the prospective student-athlete about athletics (outside the context of another open house/information session/shadow day) prior to 1) the student’s application fee being submitted to the school (for tuition based schools) or 2) the school accepting the student’s application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).

4-9-6 All questions relating to enrollment, attendance or the athletic program shall be handled through the school administration or the admissions office. If a coach is contacted by a parent or another individual who is advocating for a student, the coach is obligated to immediately disclose this contact to a school administrator and to cease all contact with the prospective student and/or parents until 1) the student’s application fee is submitted to the school (for tuition based schools) or 2) the school accepts the student’s application for enrollment (for non-tuition based schools).

4-9-7 Any violation of the recruiting prohibitions as set forth in this bylaw may cause the recruited student-athlete to be ineligible upon enrollment. If it is determined by the Executive Director’s Office that a student-athlete was recruited in violation of these prohibitions, the Executive Director’s Office may deny the student-athlete from participation (which may include participation in the OHSAA tournament) in the sport or sports for which the student-athlete was recruited. Furthermore, the school into which the recruited student-athlete enrolls or the school the recruiting attempts were intended to benefit shall be subject to sanctions as set forth in Bylaw 11. If a coach has been found to have violated these recruiting prohibitions by the Executive Director’s Office, and is employed/approved to coach in the ensuing school year by another member school in the same sport in which the violations occurred, the school where the coach is employed/approved to coach may be subject to other penalties as set forth in Bylaw 11 including, but not limited to, ineligibility for OHSAA tournament competition in that sport.

Section 10. Amateur

4-10-1 A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who participates in the activities of his/her sport for the purpose of deriving the physical, mental and social benefits of organized sports competition with no expectation of compensation for his/her participation. Since the student is considered

an integral member of the student body, a clear line of distinction between educationally based athletics and professional sports must exist and be maintained at all times. It shall be the shared responsibility of school personnel, the athletes and their parents to maintain this clear line of distinction.

An athlete is permitted to be a professional in one sport (in which they do not participate interscholastically) but still retain their amateur status in another interscholastic sport.

4-10-2 An athlete forfeits amateur status, and thus interscholastic athletic eligibility, if any of the following standards of amateurism are violated:

a) Competing in athletic competition(s) for money/cash or other remuneration.

EXCEPTION: If a student competes, in a competition where travel, meals and lodging expenses are being reimbursed, or where prize money is available, the student shall complete prior to the competition a Request for Retention of Amateur Status written declaration prior to the competition in which the student agrees that he or she:

- a) will not accept any prize money/cash and;
- b) will only accept awards/gifts/prizes which do not exceed the awards amount authorized by the Association (See Bylaw 5) and;
- c) will only accept allowable travel, meals and lodging expenses provided that these expenses are not contingent upon the student's individual or a team's finish or performance or given as an incentive to achieve a specific goal or performance. Receipt of expenses received by the athlete shall be reported to the OHSAA via the approved form so as to determine whether or not the expenses are in excess of those reasonable amounts for travel, meals and lodging.

- b) Capitalizing on the athlete's fame by receiving money, merchandise or services of value. An athlete "capitalizes" on his/her "athletic fame" by accepting money, merchandise or services of value based in whole or in part upon the notoriety the athlete received through his/her athletic skills and achievements. This includes using the athlete's skill, directly or indirectly, for pay in any form in that sport. "Pay" includes, but is not limited to, any direct or indirect remuneration, gratuity or other economic benefit in either the present or future, or any division or split of surplus (bonuses, games' receipts, etc.). Scholarships to institutions of higher education are specifically exempted;
- c) Signing a contract or making a commitment of any kind to play professional athletics, regardless of its legal enforceability or any payment received. This prohibits signing a contract during the interscholastic athletics season that is dated after the completion of the athlete's interscholastic athletic eligibility;
- d) Receiving, directly or indirectly, a salary, reimbursement of expenses, merchandise or services or any other form of financial assistance or benefits from a professional sports organization based upon athletics skills or participation.

EXCEPTION: An athlete may receive reimbursement of expenses as per item (a) for a professional tryout;

- e) Competing with any professional athletics team, even if no pay or remuneration for expenses was received; or
- f) Entering into an agreement with a sports or marketing agent (O.R.C. §§4771.01 et seq.).

4-10-3 The following activities do not jeopardize amateur status:

- a) Accepting a fee for instructing, supervising or officiating in an organized youth sports program or recreation, playground or camp activities;
- b) Receiving school-sponsored membership or participation fees in youth serving agencies, athletic clubs, community recreation centers, instructional programs or camps, etc. provided such fees are paid directly to the agency;
- c) Receiving an award, playing equipment or prize of monetary value which does not exceed the awards amount authorized by the Association;
- d) Receiving all non-monetary benefits and awards provided to members of an Olympic team beyond actual and necessary expenses, including entertainment, equipment, clothing, long distance telephone service, Internet access, and any other item or service for which it can be demonstrated that the same benefit is available to all members of the nation's Olympic team or the specific sport Olympic team in question;
- e) Accepting funds that are administered by the United States Olympic Committee pursuant to its Operation Gold Program; or
- f) Participating in member school, charitable or educational promotions or fund-raising activities that involve the use of athletic ability by student-athletes to obtain funds (e.g., swim-a-thons, lift-a-thons, shoot-a-thons) from donors, provided no compensation or prizes are given to the student-athletes based on their performance. Symbols of participation (T-Shirts, bags, etc.) are permitted as long as they are given to every athlete involved.
- g) Accepting scholarship funds that are administered by a national governing body, e.g. the United States Bowling Congress' Scholarship Program, provided such funds are paid directly to a postsecondary institution and the funds are not available until after the student has graduated from high school.

4-10-4 A high school student who loses amateur status/athletic eligibility may apply to the Association for reinstatement in the inter-

scholastic program. Such appeals shall be handled by the Executive Director in accordance with the bylaws and will include, but not be limited to, considerations such as length of time student relinquished amateur status, and total monetary gains achieved and considerations if those monies can be returned, and whether or not the student signed a contract. If a student-athlete in one sport violates a provision of the amateur bylaw as detailed above, the student-athlete may represent the member school in a different sport.

BYLAW 5 — AWARDS

Section 1. Awards, Gifts and Prizes — Approved

- 5-1-1 An athlete may accept awards, gifts and/or prizes resulting from their participation/finish in athletic competition(s), in sports which they are an interscholastic athlete, from any entity provided:
 - a) the item does not exceed \$500 in total value per competition and;
 - b) the award is not money/cash (See Bylaw 4-10-2 (a))

For purposes of this bylaw, gift cards/certificates which can only be used at specific businesses (local restaurant, retail stores, etc.) are not considered “money/cash” and are permitted to be given provided the value of the item does not exceed \$500. Gift cards which can be used at various locations (i.e. “Visa gift cards”) are considered “money/cash” and are not permitted under this bylaw.

Graduating seniors who have completed their respective sport season are no longer subject to the award/gift/prize limitation for their participation in that respective sport, regardless of their future participation in any other OHSAA recognized sport(s).

NOTE: This bylaw has no application for events which are conducted outside a recognized sporting contest (i.e. slam dunk contests, homerun derby, etc.) or an event which is not identified as an OHSAA recognized sport (i.e. chess, etc.)

- 5-1-2 College scholarships may be accepted provided the amount of the scholarship is paid for college expenses.

Section 2. — Awards — Violations

- 5-2-1 The penalty for violation for any member of a school squad, except a senior, shall be ineligibility in that sport for the ensuing season.
- 5-2-2 The penalty for violation for a senior shall be ineligibility for all interscholastic athletics the remainder of the school year.
- 5-2-3 The school itself shall be held accountable to the Association for any violation of this bylaw, by individuals or groups before, at, or after graduation.

BYLAW 6 — COACHES

Section 1. Requirements for Coaching

- 6-1-1 School administrators are primarily responsible for the supervision of coaches prior to, during and after all interscholastic contests except as specifically referenced in national playing rules that are applicable during an interscholastic contest and enforced by contest officials for proscribed conduct only.
- 6-1-2 All coaches, paid and volunteer, shall meet the criteria established by the State Board of Education. For more information, visit the Coaches Corner on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org).

Note: See Sports Regulation 4 for penalties for non-compliance with this Bylaw and procedures to adhere to for verification of such.
- 6-1-3 All coaches shall be approved by the Board of Education or similar governing board in non-public schools.
- 6-1-4 The designated head coach and all assistant coaches (paid and unpaid) for each sport team or individual sport for which a member school provides sponsorship shall, in addition to teaching the skills and strategies of their sport, be for their athletes a proper role model for citizenship, ethics, integrity and sporting conduct.

Section 2. Salary of Coaches

- 6-2-1 The Board of Education or other similar governing board shall have exclusive jurisdiction on matters of salary, stipend or compensation of its coaches.

BYLAW 7 — CONTRACTS

Section 1. Contracts for Athletic Contests

- 7-1-1 Regular season contests between two or more member schools should be memorialized in writing and signed by representatives authorized by the competing member schools. Not all disputes involving the contracts referenced herein that can be resolved between the member schools themselves shall be referred to the Executive Director’s office for binding resolution.

Note: As it pertains to this bylaw, electronic signatures are acceptable.

- 7-1-2 When schools come together to form a league or conference and said league or conference publishes a league or conference schedule of contests for its member schools, the league or conference schedule shall serve as a binding contract between the member schools of that league or conference in lieu of the single game contract referenced in Bylaw 7-1-1.

- 7-1-3 All member schools of a league or conference shall adopt a Constitution and Bylaws of said league or conference which Constitution and Bylaws shall serve, among other purposes, as a binding contract between each of the member schools of said league or conference.
- 7-1-4 The voiding of a contract can only be done upon the mutual consent of the contracting schools. The decision of a school to change league or conference affiliation does not void its previous contract obligations with the league or conference and its member schools. Furthermore, all league or conference contract obligations shall take precedence over any contracts executed later in time.
- 7-1-5 The suspension or termination of a school's membership in the OHSAA shall render all contracts voidable by schools whose membership remains in good standing with the OHSAA.
- 7-1-6 When a new school district is created under Sections 3311.26 and 3311.37 of the Ohio Revised Code, all contracts for contests and officials made by the former school districts are declared null and void and new contracts for contests and officials should be negotiated by the new school district.
- 7-1-7 If game contracts cannot be fulfilled by reason of weather, strike, force majeure or similar such circumstances, the contracting school may:
 - a) Void the contract by mutual consent of the schools involved, or
 - b) Attempt to reschedule the contest at a convenient time and date to all schools. If the contest in question is a varsity football contest, if the schools are unable to mutually agree to rescheduled date to take place within 72 hours of the cancelled contest, the contract shall be considered null and void.
 - c) Refer the matter to the Executive Director's Office for resolution.
- 7-1-8 If a school which has entered into a game contract cancels or attempts to cancel a game contract without the consent of the other school, or otherwise breaches the terms of the game contract, the schools shall:
 - a) Attempt to resolve their contract dispute by and between themselves; or
 - b) The non-breaching school may invoke the liquidated damages clause as set forth in its game contract; or
 - c) Determine the financial loss to the non-breaching school and make a financial settlement; or
 - d) Refer the matter to the Executive Director's Office for binding resolution. In arriving at a binding financial resolution, the Executive Director's Office shall consider the financial records (attendance, gate receipts, concession sales, others) of past games previously played to ascertain damages to the non-breaching school.

In addition to the foregoing remedies, the Executive Director's Office is authorized to sanction the breaching school with a full array of sanctions as set forth in Bylaw 11 including, but not limited to, denial of participation in the OHSAA tournament in the sport in which the contract disputed occurred.

Section 2. Contracts with Officials

- 7-2-1 The contract between the school and the contest official should be executed on an OHSAA Contract for Officials or similar form and signed for specific dates by the official and the home school administrator or a certified OHSAA officials assigner authorized by the home school.
- 7-2-2 The official's contract may be voided or terminated by mutual agreement of the official and the home school administrator or the certified OHSAA officials assigner authorized by the home school provided such voiding or terminating is executed in writing.

BYLAW 8 – OFFICIALS

Section 1. Officials Required

- 8-1-1 OHSAA officials shall be used in certain sports played in Ohio. The list of sports and officiating requirements will be found in the *Handbook for Officials* and in the specific sports regulations found in this handbook.
- 8-1-2 Schools that violate the provisions of this section can be fined a maximum of \$100.00 payable to the OHSAA for each offense and will not be accepted as a member school the following year unless any administered fine is paid.

Section 2. Selection of Officials for Regular Season Contests

- 8-2-1 The principal of the school, the official designee or a certified assigner shall attend personally to the selection of officials. Great care should be exercised in the selection of officials, well in advance of the contest and shall be mutually agreed upon by the schools involved.
- 8-2-2 When the contest begins each school waives all of its rights so far as objecting to the officials.

Section 3. Decisions by Officials

- 8-3-1 Protests arising from the decisions and interpretations of the contest playing rules by officials will not be considered, and those decisions shall be final. The Executive Director's office does not have the authority or jurisdiction to order contests replayed, or to overturn decisions of contest officials regarding the decisions and interpretations of contest playing rules. The decisions and interpretations of the rules by the contest officials are final.

Note: The Executive Director's Office may consider the use of any reliable, probative and substantial evidence to correct ONLY the misidentification of a participant who was ejected, regardless of whether the ejection is the student's first or second sports season.

8-3-2 The record of the official scorekeeper at the conclusion of the contest is final unless an error is discovered. Such error shall be corrected as covered by specific contest rules.

8-3-3 Any team leaving the contest area before the conclusion of the contest because of dissatisfaction with the officiating will render the school liable to disciplinary action by the Association.

Section 4. Handbook for Officials and Directory

8-4-1 The Board of Directors, upon recommendation of the Executive Director’s office, shall approve on an annual basis a *Handbook for Officials* that shall outline the officiating code of ethics, officials/officiating requirements, officiating permit procedures, and such other matters as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board of Directors. This *Handbook for Officials*, along with a *Directory of Officials*, shall be published for annual distribution to all member schools and registered officials.

Section 5. Rules Examination

8-5-1 The dates for applications and examinations on the rules of the various sports to become an official will be determined and published by the Executive Director’s office.

Section 6. Rules Meeting Requirements

8-6-1 Officials are required to attend local rules discussion meetings and state rules interpretation meetings as scheduled. Specific requirements for each sport are listed in the *Handbook for Officials*. Officials who have allowed their OHSAA permit to lapse and those not attending the designated meetings may be reinstated as outlined in the *Handbook for Officials*.

Section 7. Officials Uniforms

8-7-1 The official uniform for officials in interscholastic sports shall be as specified in the officials manual in that sport or as adopted by the Board of Directors in that sport and specified in the *Handbook for Officials*.

BYLAW 9 – CONTESTS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

Section 1. Contests with Non-Member Schools and Non-Interscholastic Teams

9-1-1 Members of the Association shall observe all Ohio eligibility standards, general and sport-specific sports regulations and playing rules in contests with non-member and non-interscholastic teams while competing in Ohio. Member schools are permitted to play non-member and/or non-interscholastic teams at their own discretion.

Section 2. Contests with Out-Of-State Schools

9-2-1 Schools may travel out of state to compete in contests in states or provinces in Canada that border Ohio regardless of distance to travel. The states are Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The province is Ontario. Additionally, schools may travel out of state one time per sport per interscholastic season to compete in contests in any location that does not border Ohio subject to approval from the Executive Director’s Office. (Visit ohsaa.org to obtain the required form to request this travel permission).

Penalty for violation: A school which travels to a non-bordering location to compete in contests on more than one occasion shall be ineligible for the OHSAA postseason tournament in the sport in which the out-of-state travel was involved and could be subject to additional penalties as referenced in Bylaw 11. A school which travels to a non-bordering location without approval from the Executive Director’s Office shall be subject to a fine and could be subject to additional penalties as referenced in Bylaw 11.

9-2-2 School-sponsored teams and individuals may not travel out of state for practice purposes.

EXCEPTION 1: If the school’s normal practice and/or competitive facility is located out of state, the school shall be permitted to practice/compete at that facility.

Note: In all other cases, the Executive Director may grant permission to practice out of state in rare or limited circumstances.

The principal shall request this permission from the Executive Director’s office in writing.

EXCEPTION 2: If the school is traveling outside the boundaries of the states/province that border Ohio for the one-time per season competition opportunity, the school squad may also practice during that trip. This provision is made provided the squad is engaged in allowable competition as stipulated in that sport’s regulations.

9-2-3 Whether a contest/event is in Ohio or outside of Ohio, schools must secure a sanction through the National Federation of State High School Associations for competition by a member school in any of the following contests:

- (a) ANY event which includes an Ohio AND an out-of-state school that is co-sponsored by or titled in the name of an organization outside the school community;
- (b) Events involving non-bordering states where five (5) or more states are involved;
- (c) Events involving non-bordering states if more than eight (8) schools are involved;
- (d) Events involving two (2) or more schools that includes a team from a foreign country, with the exception of-Canada and Mexico.

NOTE: In (b) and (c) above, no sanction is required if the contest(s) only involve Ohio schools and/or schools which border Ohio.

Schools desiring to participate in an event covered under the aforementioned scenarios must visit <https://www.nfhs.org/>

Sanctioning/ in order to obtain the sanction.

- 9-2-4** In all contests competed outside Ohio, each participating school shall follow all Ohio eligibility standards, general and sport-specific sports regulations but shall follow the playing rules (NFHS or national governing body) as adopted by the host state Association.

BYLAW 10 — PROTESTS AND FORFEITURES

Section 1. Protests Relative to Eligibility

- 10-1-1** Concerns relative to the eligibility of a player on a competing team shall be presented, when discovered, to the principal for investigation. A written request for investigation of eligibility may be filed with the Executive Director in any sport.

Section 2. Forfeitures

- 10-2-1** All athletic contests in which ineligible players have participated shall be forfeited. All forfeitures shall be reported immediately in writing to the OHSAA and all opponents. Please follow the guidance at <http://www.ohsaa.org/eligibility/GuidelinesForReportingUseOfIneligibleStudent.pdf> to file a report.

EXCEPTION: If a student participates in an athletic contest and his or her eligibility has been established by falsified information, the student shall be declared ineligible (see Bylaw 4-1-2), and forfeiture of the contest may be required.

- 10-2-2** Forfeitures of contests cannot be waived by mutual agreement.
- 10-2-3** If an ineligible student participates in an OHSAA-sponsored tournament in a team sport (soccer, field hockey, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, volleyball, basketball, baseball or softball), the team shall be disqualified from the tournament and the last team defeated, or the next highest ranking team, may take its place in the tournament.
- 10-2-4** A member of an eliminated team may participate in OHSAA individual tournament competition, if qualified.
- 10-2-5** If an ineligible student participates in a regular season or an OHSAA-sponsored tournament contest in an individual sport (bowling, golf, cross country, gymnastics, tennis, swimming and diving, track and field or wrestling) the contest is forfeited and all points, records, awards and qualifying positions won by the ineligible student shall be forfeited. However, all eligible participants shall keep their points, records, awards and qualifying positions.

Section 3. Additional Penalties

- 10-3-1** Additional penalties may be assessed to the offending player, coach and/or school by the Executive Director.

BYLAW 11 — PENALTIES

- 11-1-1** Penalties for violation of the OHSAA Constitution, Bylaws and Regulations shall be imposed by the Executive Director or another administrative staff member designated by the Executive Director.
- 11-1-2** Penalties include: suspension of membership, suspension of eligibility, forfeiture of games, forfeiture of championship rights, probation, reclamation of expenses for the conduct of investigations and all other fees/expenses associated therewith, public censure, denial of participation in postseason tournaments (applicable to administrators, coaches and student-athletes), fines not to exceed \$10,000 per occurrence or such other penalties as the Executive Director's Office deems appropriate.
- 11-1-3** If property is damaged at a tournament site by competing school teams, student body or spectators, the school from which the students and/or spectators come shall be liable and pay the cost of repair or replacement.
- 11-1-4** If a lawsuit is commenced against the OHSAA seeking to enjoin the OHSAA from enforcing any or all of its Constitution, bylaws, sports regulations, decisions of the OHSAA, and an Order from a Court of proper jurisdiction is subsequently either voluntarily vacated, or stayed, or reversed or otherwise determined by the Courts that the equitable relief sought is not or was not justified, the Executive Director may impose any one or more of the following in the interest of restitution and fairness to other member school's athletes:
- Require that individual or team records and performances achieved during such participation be vacated or stricken.
 - Require that team victories be forfeited to opponent.
 - Require that team or individual awards earned during such participation be returned to the Association.
 - Require the return of any financial receipts realized from tournament participation.
 - Impose a monetary penalty commensurate with the expense to the OHSAA for the litigation.

BYLAW 12 — SUSPENDED SCHOOLS

- 12-1-1** When a school has been suspended as a member of the Association for violation of the constitution, bylaws or regulations of the Association, all contracts with other member schools are null and void.
- 12-1-2** Member schools of the Association shall not compete with schools which are under suspension by the Association.

BYLAW 13 — PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- 13-1-1** Robert's Rules of Order shall govern procedures in each situation not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws.