

NEW JERSEY STATE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
1161 Route 130 North Robbinsville, NJ 08691

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 15, 2026

Roll Call - The meeting of the Executive Committee, held on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at the NJSIAA Administration Building in Robbinsville, New Jersey, was called to order by the President, Judy Finch Johnson, at 11:04 am.

The following members were present: Michael Baldwin, Sr., Mike Bartram, Brian Bosworth, Anthony Browning, Tony Cattani, Jason Corley, Jorge Diaz, Barry Fitzgerald, John Fraraccio, Michael Gallo, John Germano, Natalie Gorman, Dr. Brack Healy, Brian Henry, Steven Jenkins, Dr. Elizabeth Jewett, Kurt Karcich, Jennifer Killough-Herrera, Howard Krieger, Dr. Michael Kuchar, Brendan McGovern, Jason Miller, Russell Petrocelli, Michael Raimondi, Senator Paul Sarlo, Steve Shohfi, Dr. Gregory Troxell, Joseph Ursino, Michael Vinella, Tammy Wagner, Tripp Welborne, Dr. Clifford Williams, and Sjoquelynn Winstead. Also present: Colleen Maguire, Executive Director; Paul Popadiuk, Chief Compliance Officer; Tony Maselli, Chief Operating Officer; Assistant Directors - Al Stumpf, Derryk Sellers, and Sandy Mamary; and Steven P. Goodell, Esq., NJSIAA Counsel. The following sportswriters were in attendance: Jake Aferiat - *NJ Advance Media*, Mike McGarry - *Press of Atlantic City*, and Darren Cooper - *Bergen Record*.

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Jason Corley, seconded by Russell Petrocelli, to accept the minutes of the February 25, 2026 Executive Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Legislative Update (Paul Anzano) – Mr. Anzano is tracking approximately 40 bills for the association. A new legislative session just began so there's not a lot of activity, especially on bills that affect NJSIAA. Legislators are currently focused on the budget, specifically state aid and special ed programs. A bill sponsored by Senator Gopal passed last year, that established various requirements for charter schools. Mr. Anzano plans to set up a meeting with him soon to touch base and ensure his bill is in line with NJSIAA's current rules.

Executive Director Update – Colleen Maguire

First Ms. Maguire welcomed new Executive Committee Brian Henry to his first in-person meeting. Next, she announced that NJSIAA legal counsel, Alexis Smith gave birth to Patrick Charles, on March 16. Last, Ms. Maguire congratulated Derryk Sellers on his induction into the DAANJ Hall of Fame.

Winter Season Recap – A summary of state champions across all sports was distributed. Ms. Maguire thanked her staff for organizing over 140 events in a 2½-month window, from sectionals through state finals across all winter sports. She also shared how much she appreciated the support, seeing so many Executive Committee members at tournament events.

Competitive Balance Policy Update – Mr. Popadiuk tabulated success points earned by all boys and girls basketball teams. As a result, 14 boys basketball teams and 16 girls basketball teams met the success factor. Mr. Popadiuk then reviewed the enrollment policy for each individual school. As a result, 9 boys basketball teams and 4 girls basketball teams met the criteria of a non-traditional school which requires placement in the next highest classification group. A detailed summary of these schools and review of the enrollment policies was distributed to all committee members and all schools impacted by

the policy have been notified of their classification group for the next classification cycle – which starts with the 2026-2027 school year.

Spring Newsletter – NJSIAA’s spring newsletter, which contains a lot of important updates and reminders for upcoming events and spring sports, was distributed.

NJSIAA Annual Meeting – May 4, 2026 – The annual meeting will be held at the Pines Manor in Edison on Monday, May 4th. It will start at 12:00pm. A buffet lunch, sponsored by the NFHS Network, will begin at 11:15am.

Annual Meeting Legislation – Final Approval – One Reading – Voice Vote – The final ballots for the annual meeting on May 4 were presented. After being reviewed by the Executive Committee in January, they were reviewed by the membership at two sectional meetings hosted by NJSIAA staff (one on March 11 at the DAANJ Conference; the second virtually on March 25).

A motion was made by Jorge Diaz, seconded by Barry Fitzgerald, to approve the following four ballots in its final format and place on the 2026 NJSIAA Annual Meeting ballot for vote by the membership.

Ballot #1 - Amend the Specific Sport Regulations to Add the Sport of Girls Flag Football.

Ballot #2 - Amend Article III of the Bylaws to allow tri-ops in the sport of girls wrestling.

Ballot #3 - Require a shot clock for all varsity boys and girls lacrosse games, starting with the 2027-28 school year and pending NHFS approval.

Ballot #4 - Require a shot clock for all varsity boys and girls basketball games, starting with the 2027-28 school year.

Motion carried unanimously.

Football NCAA Open Recruiting Period Reminders – April 15 – May 24 – The NCAA open recruiting period starts today and will run through May 24. There are specific guidelines, found on p. 16 of NJSIAA’s Policies and Procedures, that must be followed. Specifically, workouts may only occur upon the request of a college coach – schools cannot advertise dates nor can a workout occur without a college coach present. Also, schools may not join with another high school nor comingle student-athletes from different schools.

Program Review Committee – Colleen Maguire

Thirteen members of the committee met virtually on Monday to review the following two proposals.

1. Football Tournament Regulations – One Reading – Voice Vote – On behalf of the Football Committee and the Football Leagues and Conferences Committee, NJSIAA staff recommended the following updates to the football tournament regulations.

Week 0 Start Date.

Traditionally, when Week 0 falls on Labor Day weekend, schools have been allowed to play on Thursday. For the 2026-2027 school year, Week 0 falls on the weekend preceding Labor Day weekend. However, schools would still like the flexibility of playing on Thursday to assist with their staffing availability. Both committees unanimously endorsed designating the Thursday of Week 0 as the opening day for all levels of competition moving forward.

Public School Snake Seeding - Update

The Football Leagues and Conferences Committee solicited feedback on the modified seeding procedures that were used during the 2025-2026 season. The overall feedback indicated that the modified seeding procedures did address some travel concerns, the unintended consequences

outweighed the benefits of the reduced travel concerns – there were several instances of schools losing a higher seed and/or home game. Both committees unanimously endorsed reverted to the traditional snake seeding methodology for the 2026-2027 season and moving forward.

Classifications – Non-Playoff Eligible Teams

Due to an increase in the number of teams participating in the Super Football Conference non-playoff eligible division (Ivy division), the Football Leagues & Conferences recommend that the north/south section alignment exclude these schools to ensure that there is an equitable number of schools eligible for the state tournament in each section across each group. The Ivy division schools are all in the north section and this led to a disadvantage for the schools in the south sections – the north sections had less playoff eligible schools classified. Both committees unanimously endorsed excluding the Ivy division schools from the north/south section alignment.

Non-Public Multiplier Schools

Below is the list of non-public schools that will start the 2026-2027 season in the following categories. There are no changes to how the multiplier will be calculated when a public school competes against one of these schools. In addition, consistent with prior year, if a non-public multiplier school loses to a non-multiplier school during the regular season, then they will move down a category or no longer be considered a multiplier school. This allows necessary fluidity during the course of the season to ensure the integrity of the multiplier values.

A (80% of SI)	B (75% of SI)	C (70% of SI)	D (70% of SI)
Bergen Catholic DePaul Catholic Don Bosco St. Joe’s (Montvale) St. Peter’s Prep	Delbarton Paramus Catholic Red Bank Catholic St. Joe’s (Metuchen)	Pope John St. Augustine Seton Hall Prep	Donovan Catholic Holy Spirit St. John Vianney St. Thomas Aquinas

Season Dates – 2026 – 2027 School Year

Below is a list of regular season start dates and state tournament dates:

Week 0 – Thursday, August 27, 2026 (all levels)

Week 1 – Thursday, September 3, 2026

Public – First Round – Friday, October 30, 2026, or Saturday, October 31, 2026

Non-Public First Round – Friday, November 6, 2026, or Saturday, November 7, 2026

State Championships – Friday, November 27, 2026 – Sunday, November 29, 2026 *

State Championships – Thanksgiving Day team – Wednesday, December 2, 2026

*Dependent on facility availability at Met Life Stadium and Rutgers University.

On behalf of the Program Review Committee, a motion was made by John Fraraccio, seconded by John Germano, to approve the four key updates to the football tournament regulations for the 2026 football season, recommended by the Football Committee and the Football Leagues and Conferences Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Public School Classifications – One Reading – Voice Vote – The 2026-2027 school year is the first in a new two-year classification cycle. Prior to each new classification cycle, NJSIAA staff reviews the number of schools competing in each sport and the number of schools entering each state tournament to ensure the classifications used are consistent, where appropriate, and lead to an efficient and competitive state tournament. Therefore, in efforts to continue to normalize its classifications and enhance the level of competitiveness, NJSIAA staff recommended the following changes to the girls volleyball, boys/girls tennis and boys/girls swimming public school classifications. The recommendation is based on factors that impact each sport.

1. G Volleyball (Public Schools) – the total number of public schools hosting girls volleyball is approximately 280, which includes 20 charter schools. The current classification model uses four sections across four groups – close to 90% of schools are seeded in the state tournament. For comparison, approximately 360 public schools host girls basketball while approximately 70% of schools are seeded in the state tournament across four sections and four groups. The current girls volleyball classifications have led to uncompetitive preliminary round matches – during the 2025-2026 season, approximately 15% of schools seeded had five or less wins.

NJSIAA staff recommend using a north/south sectional model across all four groups, starting the 2026-2027 classification cycle. The north/south classification model will ensure that all brackets are filled, improve competitiveness in preliminary rounds and will eliminate the state semifinal round – schools will advance from the sectional final to the state championships. The elimination of the state semifinal round will allow more scheduling flexibility during the tournament, allow for additional rest days and reduce travel expenses for member schools participating. Lastly, the north/south classification model will reduce the number of first round matches (approximately 115 matches v. 64 matches) which will help ensure quality officials are available to assign to every match.

2. B/G Tennis (Public Schools) – the total number of public schools hosting girls tennis is approximately 280 and boys tennis is approximately 270. The current classification model uses four sections across four groups – which allows approximately 90% of schools to be seeded in the state tournament. However, there is an increasing trend in the number of tournament brackets that are not full – some with as few as 11-teams seeded.

NJSIAA staff recommend using a north/south sectional model across all four groups, starting the 2026-2027 classification cycle. The north/south classification model will ensure that all brackets are filled, improve competitiveness in preliminary rounds and eliminate the state semifinal round – schools will advance from the sectional final to the state championships. Currently, the state semifinal is held on the same day as the state championship at Mercer County Park. This a long day for the student-athletes and provides little flexibility to navigate weather or graduations.

3. B/G Swimming (Public Schools) – the total number of public schools hosting girls swimming is approximately 175 and boys swimming is approximately 210. The current classification model uses four sections across three groups – approximately 50% of schools are seeded in the state tournament. However, for competitive balance, the tournament currently provides double byes to the higher seeded teams in each section.

NJSIAA staff recommends moving to a north/south sectional model across all three groups, starting with the 2026-2027 classification cycle. The north/south sectional model will better ensure that the best teams qualify for the tournament, will eliminate the costly state semifinal round, eliminate the sectional fee assessment on participating schools and provide scheduling flexibility during the state tournament.

NJSIAA staff continues to move sports to the north/south sectional model based on the number of schools participating in the sport because it is believed the four sectional model should be reserved for sports with large participation, such as: soccer, cross country, basketball, track and field, baseball and softball. These sports have at least 315 schools, or more, participating which is approximately 85% of total member public schools. It is also important to note that elimination of the state semifinal round in these sports will result in reduced travel for member schools, increased scheduling flexibility to help with inclement weather, and additional rest between later rounds in the tournament. Lastly, this proposal will provide NJSIAA staff with the ability to schedule play-in rounds where circumstances warrant. Such as the Group 1 tournament in volleyball which has a significant number of charter schools participating relative to the other Groups. The tournament could seed additional teams to participate in a play-in round in a competitively balanced match – many leagues and conferences use play-in rounds in their

own tournaments. NJSIAA staff will determine the number of play-in rounds in consultation with the sport committees and will be established prior to the start of each season.

On behalf of the Program Review Committee, a motion was made by Anthony Browning, seconded by Dr. Brack Healy, to move to a north/south sectional model across all groups, starting with the 2026-2027 public school classification cycle, for girls volleyball, boys/girls tennis and boys/girls swimming. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Compliance Officer Update (Paul Popadiuk)

Eligibility Updates – The last eligibility committee of the year will review both fall and spring Age, Credit and Semester eligibility waiver requests.

The US Bowling Congress Awards has been trying to grow the sport of bowling by hosting tournaments, often with financial rewards for top finishers. Mr. Popadiuk had to send a reminder to Athletic Directors about the association’s Amateur Athlete rule – NJSIAA athletes are not permitted to accept monetary winnings.

Disqualification Report – Winter Season – There was an increase in the number of boys and girls basketball player disqualifications from last year. Mr. Popadiuk analyzed the data and found that the increased number was due to isolated games with a large number of students disqualified from one big altercation, instead of multiple incidents of fighting. One girls game had over 20 players disqualified. If you don’t include those games, the numbers were consistent with years past.

NJSIAA Bylaws Clarification – Transfer Ineligibility Period – First Reading – Voice Vote – The transfer ineligibility period is currently 22 days or $\frac{1}{3}$ of the maximum contests, whichever is less or 30 days or $\frac{1}{2}$ of the maximum contests, whichever is less. However, in football the transfer ineligibility period relies on the number of games while in wrestling the period relies on the number of days due to the specificity of each sport – these sports do not have the “whichever is less” option. Due to the flexibility around competition start dates, schools were able to manipulate the transfer ineligibility period during this past basketball season. Some schools decided to play on the first date possible (no scrimmage), then not play for a week to 10 days. This resulted in some student athletes who should have sat 11 or 12 games only sitting 5 games. In order to restore consistency, integrity and equity to the transfer ineligibility period in the sport of basketball, the following updates are proposed to Bylaws Article V, Section 4 K. (additions are italicized, deletions are struck through):

2. Definitions:

Maximum Number of Contests: The “Maximum Number of Contests” for each sport are as set forth in the Program Regulations, Section 15. ~~For football, the sit-out period will be three (3) games for a 22-day period of ineligibility and four (4) games for a 30-day period of ineligibility regardless of the maximum number of contests. For wrestling, and other sports without a~~ maximum number of contests listed in the Program Regulations, the period of ineligibility shall be the number of days specified in each section below.

CL1: To ensure that the transfer ineligibility periods in the sports of basketball, wrestling and football are applied predictably, consistently, and equitably, it is necessary to have fixed standards. Therefore,

(a) the basketball ineligibility periods are eight games (for first transfer in the senior year) and 12 games (for second or subsequent transfer and transfer after start of practice);
(b) the wrestling ineligibility periods are 22 days (for first transfer in the senior year) and 30 days (for second or subsequent transfer and transfer after start of practice); and
(c) the football ineligibility periods are three games (for first transfer in the senior year) and four games (for second or subsequent transfer and transfer after start of practice).

4. Transfers occurring after the Start of Practice:

Students who transfer after the Start of Practice Date will be subject to a 30-day period of ineligibility or ½ the Maximum Number of Contests in that sport, whichever is less. (See *Maximum Number of Contests Clarification 1 for specific penalties*)

6. A student's second or subsequent transfer:

Students who transfer a second or subsequent time will be subject to a 30-day period of ineligibility or ½ the Maximum Number of Contests, whichever is less for all NJSIAA sanctioned sports in which the student participated during the 12 months preceding the transfer. (See *Maximum Number of Contests Clarification 1 for specific penalties*)

7. Senior transfers:

Senior transfers, as defined above, are subject to a 22-day period of ineligibility or ⅓ the Maximum Number of Contests, whichever is less in each sport in which they participated during or after their third season of eligibility, during the 12 months preceding the transfer. (See *Maximum Number of Contests Clarification 1 for specific penalties*)

A motion was made by Dr. Gregory Troxell, seconded by Steve Shohfi, to amend the ineligibility periods in basketball, wrestling and football outlined in NJSIAA Bylaws, Article V, Section 4.K, to ensure that the transfer ineligibility periods are applied predictably, consistently, and equitably. Motion passed first reading unanimously.

Chief Operating Officer Update (Tony Maselli)

Baseball Update – Coaches are very happy that the state finals were moved to Rutgers this year. The university just recently renovated their stadium.

SMAC Meeting Update – The committee met last week and focused on two major topics. First, the committee is making plans for their concussions video, which will be tailored to officials working in New Jersey. The plan is for in subsequent years to create a video for NJ coaches. Second, the committee would like to beef up the medical pages currently on the NJSIAA website. In the upcoming June meeting, all members will be assigned topics to expand. Then this summer the website can be updated.

“Game Finder” Update – The new Game Finder system is going well. Each day more schools are joining and utilizing it. The old tool is still running, alongside the new program, but will be officially taken down on 6/30.

New Sportsmanship Violation Reporting Options - Officials – With the introduction of this form, officials are confused and filling out both this form and the disqualification form. This form should be utilized when a player is ejected, not disqualified. Officials should only be filling out one of the two forms, not both. Mr. Maselli will re-evaluate this system to see how he can make it easier for officials.

Officials Fees - Proposals – The State has created a committee to discuss recommended state-wide officials fees. The recommendations are good for a two-year cycle, and are not mandated, just recommended. Though Mr. Maselli is not a committee member he attends these meetings for informational purposes. To assist officials in having their voices heard at these meetings, Mr. Maselli will

create a hub for official chapters to submit their recommendations for their sport. Chapters should get together to submit one proposal, then Mr. Maselli can present the suggestions. Next year is the first year of a two-year cycle.

Al Stumpf, Assistant Director Update

Golf Update – The Entry Form opens on 4/24. Sectionals will take place on 5/4 and 5/5, while the finals will be on 5/11 (boys) and 5/12 (girls).

Spring Track Update – MileSplit will open on 4/26. All sites for the tournament have been secured. Sectionals will be on 5/15 and 5/16 followed by the Group Championships on 5/29 and 5/30 and the Meet of Champions on 6/3.

Unified Track Update – The state championships will take place at Franklin HS on 5/28.

Derryk Sellers, Assistant Director Update

Softball Update – Mr. Sellers has been traveling around the state trying to see as many softball games as he can. The state finals will take place at Ivy Hill Park on 6/10 for non-public schools and 6/12 for the public schools.

Boys Volleyball Update - The state finals will take place at South Brunswick HS on 6/9 and 6/10.

Boys Lacrosse Update – The boys and girls finals will take place at TCNJ on 6/12 and 6/13.

Sandy Mamary, Assistant Director Update

Boys Tennis Update – The team entry form is already open and live and will close on 5/8. Ms. Mamary is excited because this is the first year the Single and Doubles quarterfinals and semifinals will be played at Princeton University. They have indoor courts so there will be no need for rescheduling matches if there is bad weather.

Girls Lacrosse Update – The boys and girls finals will take place at TCNJ on 6/12 and 6/13. If a school has both a boys and girls team competing in the finals, they will be scheduled on the same day.

Finance Committee Update – Judy Finch-Johnson

Approval of Monthly Checks – The February 24, 2026 through April 13, 2026 checkbook was approved by the finance committee and all checks were approved per policy before they were disbursed. On behalf of the Finance Committee, Michael Raimondi made a motion, seconded by Brian Bosworth, to approve the February 24, 2026 through April 13, 2026 check registers. Motion carried unanimously.

Report of Counsel (Steven P. Goodell) – Mr. Goodell represented the association last week in the Superior Court of Mercer County when a student challenged an Eligibility Appeals Committee (EAC) decision, rendered in November 2025. The student was denied a waiver of the eight-semester rule by the EAC, so she appealed the decision. The court ruled in favor of NJSIAA. The decision from the courts said that the EAC exercised its discretion appropriately and came to its conclusion reasonably. The rest of Mr. Goodell's update was given in closed session.

Old Business / New Business – none.

Closed Session – A motion was made by Barry Fitzgerald, seconded by Jorge Diaz, at 11:45am to enter in to closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

Open Session/Adjournment - There being no further business, a motion was made by Anthony Browning, seconded by Michael Gallo at 12:08 pm, to enter open session and adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Maguire
Executive Director

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