

2026-27 ACTIVITY / RULE / BY-LAW CHANGES

As of July 1, 2026

State Wrestling Site 2029

The 2029 State Wrestling tournament will be held at the University of Idaho in Moscow.

Regular Membership Requirements

Article 1, Section 1 of the by-laws was modified to require schools to serve as associate members for two years prior to becoming regular members of the association.

Rule 2-5 Representation

State Tournament representation for boys' and girls' soccer, volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball and softball was modified and will now be based on the number of schools in each classification, the number of teams in each district, and may include berths from district tournament results and MaxPreps final rankings. District tournament completion and MaxPreps deadline was moved to the Tuesday prior to the play in games.

Play In Game Changes

Play in games were affected by Rule 2-5-1 modifications. Beginning fall 2026:

1. Final MaxPreps rankings will determine play in game matchups.
2. The high seed will host and manage play in games.
3. Officials will be selected from and assigned by the host district commissioner.
4. Finances will be shared by participating teams once travel has been reimbursed.

State Softball and Baseball Sportsmanship Awards

Beginning in the spring of 2026, State Tournament Sportsmanship awards will be presented at the State Softball and State Baseball tournaments in all classifications.

Classification Petitions

The IHSAA considered multiple requests for schools/teams to petition up or down a classification for the 2026-2028 classification cycle. All approved petitions can be found in the September 2025 Board minutes.

Rule 13-3-4 Physicals

The change requires a student in the 10th and 12th grades to have a physical exam prior to participation if they have transferred from another state or country and submitted a physical form that does not meet IHSAA participation standards.

Coaching Mental Wellness Course

Coaching Mental Wellness will now be required on even-numbered years for all coaches and will replace the Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention course. Coaching Mental Wellness can be found on the NFHS Learn platform.

Tennis Seeding Update

Season records will be used as qualification #8 in the seeding process for all classifications.

District Composition Changes for 26-28

Four modifications were approved: 1. 5A Dist V and VI will combine (except non-athletic activities); 2. 3A Dist IV and V will split; 3. Mountain Home HS will rejoin Dist III (FB will remain in Dist IV); and 4. 1A Dist V and VI combine in FB and split in VB and BB.

Rule 10-1-2b and d Background Checks for Officials

Officials will be required to have a background check upon registering and every five years thereafter. Language was also added regarding self-disclosure requirements when an arrest, charge or conviction occurs.

Music Rule Modification 3-2 and 3-3

The approved changes limit student overlap in ensemble events to a maximum of 30% and changes and regroups the student numbers for the ensemble event categories.

State Swimming Representation for Individual Events

Three at-large qualifiers were added to both the 6A and 5A individual event representation. Individual events will now have 21 qualifiers statewide.

Gem Prep Meridian North Membership

Gem Prep Meridian North was approved for speech and debate only and was allowed to compete immediately after approval.

State Baseball Tournament Format

The State Baseball tournament format was removed from pilot status and will continue as currently implemented.

New Associate Member Schools

Richard McKenna Charter Secondary School and Pine Grove Academy were approved as associate members.

AD Mentoring Program

The IHSAA, IAAA and IASA have developed a mentoring program for new athletic/activity directors beginning in 2026.

Rule 1-1-8 Meeting Attendance

All new athletic directors must attend an in-person, IHSAA training before the school year begins.

Rule 10-1-6 Play In Game Officials

All play in game officials will now be selected and assigned by the host district.

Rule 8-14-1 Termination of Previous Residence

If a student transfers within 50 miles of their previous residence, the proof of termination of their previous residence must show that the escrow papers, lease or rental contract is in another party's name.

Football Game Limitations for Individuals

Participation in special teams does not count as a quarter played.

Rule 2-5-2 Wrestling Representation

Wrestling representation will be calculated annually using participation data from January 10 for the current year's state tournament.

Rule 2-2-2a Classification Proposal Timeline

The deadline for submitting new classification proposals was moved from December 15 to September 10.

Addition of 1A State Track

Beginning with the 2027 State Track meet, the IHSAA will sponsor a 1A classification with 12 berths for individual events and 8 berths for relays.

Girls Wrestling Expansion

Girls will be split into two divisions beginning in 2027. Schools with enrollment of 1200 and above will be in Division I and schools with enrollment of 1199 and below will be in Division II.

Idaho Fine Arts Academy – Limited Membership

Idaho Fine Arts Academy was approved as a member school in speech and debate only beginning in fall 2026.

***Requires final reading in Aug 2026**

Rollie Lane Wrestling Tournament Exception

The Rollie Lane tournament will count as a single event for participating wrestlers in 2026-27 and 2027-28.

Golf – Allowable Coaching During Matches

Coaches will now be allowed to coach their players from tee to green as long as pace of play is not affected. No coaching will be allowed on the green.

Rule 8-2 Age Eligibility

Students will not be eligible for the sport season in which they turn 20 years of age.

Rule 2-5-6b Idaho MaxPreps Rankings Deadline

Rankings are considered final once they are posted on the IHSAA website.

Lifetime Pass Eligibility for Athletic Trainers

Athletic trainers were added to the list of roles that qualify for a lifetime pass after 25 years of service at the high school level.

Rule 2-5-1 Schools Electing Not to Participate in Play In Games

If a school chooses not to participate, the game will be considered a forfeit and the opponent will automatically advance. In baseball, if a school chooses not to participate in a 3-team regional, the remaining teams will play a best 2/3 series.

Golf Team Hardship

Only teams that miss qualifying by one place at the district tournament are eligible to submit a team hardship for State qualification. Additionally, the review committee will use a performance score calculation that incorporates course rating for evaluating hardships.

Policy Changes Due to Budget Considerations

Three major policy changes were made during approval of the FY26-27 budget approval.

1. State Tournament ticket prices will increase approximately \$2 per ticket.
2. Team reimbursements for volleyball and wrestling were eliminated. Team reimbursements for other state tournaments will be limited to those schools who do not reside in the host district.
3. IHSAA activity cards will increase from \$35 to \$40. Cards will be digital using the Dragonfly platform.