

From the OHSAA

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Fourteen of the 15 proposed Ohio High School Athletic Association Constitution and Bylaw revisions passed as voted upon by OHSAA member schools, Commissioner Daniel B. Ross, Ph.D., has announced. Changes were approved to three Constitution items and 11 Bylaw items.

The bylaw issue that did not pass was a proposal to change how schools are assigned to tournament divisions in the team sports of football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball. Rather than place schools into OHSAA tournament divisions based strictly on male or female enrollment, a recommendation to develop a sport-by-sport athletic count would have begun with enrollment and then potentially added enrollment based on how schools secure students (boundary factor) and a four-year tradition of success factor, while schools could have potentially lost enrollment based on a socioeconomic factor (high school students involved in the free lunch program). The proposed bylaw on this issue to address competitive balance in OHSAA tournaments failed 332 to 303 (52 percent to 48 percent).

“As most of our school administrators and coaches are aware, this change was recommended by an OHSAA Competitive Balance Committee, and we believe this would have been a fairer way to assign schools in team sports to their tournament divisions,” Ross said. “We also stressed to the membership that this was just a starting point for change since a companion OHSAA Sports Regulation would have allowed the Board of Directors to make modifications over time as a standing committee on competitive balance made recommendations.

“Our Board of Directors will have to provide direction on whether to reconvene the OHSAA Competitive Balance Committee to review other ‘competitive balance’ options, so I cannot speculate on whether or not that possibility exists. At the same time, we’re also hearing that discussions to file a petition may be taking place by some member schools that are seeking to separate our tournaments totally between public schools and non-public schools. Again, whether that occurs or not, it’s too early to tell.”

In order for the latter scenario to take place, a petition must be signed by 75 principals, including a minimum of five principals within each of the six OHSAA athletic districts, and submitted to the OHSAA office between August 1 and December 1. Voting on an issue would take place during the first two weeks of May 2012. Two such issues to separate the tournaments failed overwhelmingly in both 1978 (83.9 percent to 16.1 percent, or 637 to 122) and 1993 (66.8 percent to 32.3 percent, or 482 to 240).

All 15 proposals in 2011 were placed up for referendum vote by the OHSAA Board. High school principals had between May 1 and 16 to cast their votes, and a simple majority is all that is required for a proposed amendment to be adopted. The referendum issues that passed become effective August 1 unless noted.

The complete final voting results are available on the OHSAA web site (www.ohsaa.org), and the 2011-12 Constitution and Bylaws will be posted on the site sometime in late June or early July.