

## News Release – Ohio High School Athletic Association

Commissioner Daniel B. Ross, Ph.D.

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## OHSAA to Revise School Enrollment Counts for 2015-16

*Board of directors votes to withdraw community school and STEM school students and reconfigure tournament divisional assignments*

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** – The Ohio High School Athletic Association board of directors deliberated Thursday and voted to remove students who attend community schools and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) schools from their local public school enrollment counts. This decision changes the OHSAA's previous policy and will result in the OHSAA revising and reposting the enrollment counts for each school and the divisional alignments that will be used for the upcoming fall tournaments. Winter and spring sports divisional alignments will follow in the near future.

The passage of Ohio House Bill 487 in July of 2014 now gives those students the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities at their local public school. Since data from the Ohio Department of Education included the public school district where those students reside, the OHSAA decided to include those community school and STEM school students in the enrollment counts of their local public school. For districts with multiple high schools, those students were divided evenly among that districts' schools. However, today's action by the board in their first meeting of the 2015-16 school year reversed that decision.

"Simply put, the decision to include charter school students was based on our longstanding past practice of counting kids who had participation opportunities," OHSAA Commissioner Dr. Dan Ross said. "We were not wrong to make that decision at the time, but the feedback we've received from many member schools across the state about the negative impact this had on tournament divisional movement for schools, combined with the belief that so few of these students currently take advantage of these participation opportunities, made us realize it is best for us to study this issue further. This is a new issue we now have to address and has many ramifications. I give extreme credit to our board, which is comprised of elected school administrators from around the state, for recognizing that and changing the course in this particular area."

As soon as possible, the OHSAA will configure the new divisional assignments for fall sports, including new regional assignments in football, and will post the updated information at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/members/sptdivis15.htm>

The OHSAA had already begun the process of forming a committee to study the issue. The committee will still meet this fall to determine the best way to include community school and STEM school students in enrollment counts in the future.

In June, the OHSAA issued a release explaining why charter school and STEM school students were included in enrollment counts. The release is posted at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/members/Memos/20150626.pdf>

### OHSAA ###

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