

**MID HUDSON ATHLETIC LEAGUE  
ATHLETIC DIRECTORS WORKSHOP  
JANUARY 14, 2026 - 9:30AM  
Dutchess BOCES**

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

2. SECTIONAL REPORT - GREG RANSOM AND JIM OSBORNE

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT- TOM CASSATA

4. REGIONAL OFFICE REPORT- CHRIS MAYO

5. ATHLETIC COORDINATOR'S REPORT - DENNIS BURKETT

1. STANDINGS
2. MARCH MEETING CONFLICT
3. PHILOSOPHY COMMITTEE REPORT
4. GIRLS WRESTLING DUAL CHAMPIONSHIP
5. VIRTUAL BOWLING

6. COMBINING OF TEAMS- FRANK ALFONSO

7. MODIFIED REPORT- MATT SALAMONE

8. OLD BUSINESS

9. NEW BUSINESS

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN

## **Proposal: Section 9 Girls Wrestling Dual Meet Championships**

**A. PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Section 9 Girls Duals is three-fold: it is to crown a dual meet champion, but also set the pathway for when NYSPHSAA approves a NYSPHSAA Girls Dual Meet Championships. This will give us more head-to-head matchups that will help us in seeding our Sectional Tournaments at the end of the year.

**B. THIS YEAR'S DATES AND SITES:** The 2025-26 Section 9 Girls Duals will be held on one day (late Jan or early Feb,) and the site is TBA. For the inaugural season, we anticipate 3 rounds of wrestling at the most.

Schools interested in hosting in 2025-26 must have the ability to hold 2 mats with adequate space for score tables and at least 500 spectators. Host Schools must supply: 2 Timers, 2 boppers, 1 Ticket-taker, Security (as needed), and a trainer. Schools interested in hosting must e-mail the Section 9 Chairman.

Preference will be given to schools that are centrally located.

**C. ELIGIBILITY:** All teams interested in entering must be able to contest at least 7 weight classes. We also ask the Section 9 Athletic Council to approve this as a postseason event, so it will not count towards competition points for teams who participate.

### **D. SEEDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF BRACKETS:**

The week the weight certifications end, all teams that wish to participate will submit their best anticipated January lineup by weight (assuming the +2-pound weight allowance has taken effect). The weight certifications will determine the lowest weight class each wrestler can compete in.

Coaches will also note any weight classes they will not be able to fill.

Once received, the Section Chairman will assign point values to the submitted lineups as follows: Based on prior year Sectional place: 6 pts for 1st or 2nd place, 5 pts for 3rd place, 4 pts for 4th place. Each returning non-placer will earn 1 pt. Projected forfeits will cause a -6 point deduction. Total points per team will be tallied and used as the team's seeding point value. -Should any teams have the same total points, # of points earned in the prior year's sectional tournament will be used as the tie breaker.

Section	3-Year Growth of Certified Wrestlers		2025-26		Year-to-Year Growth of Certified Wrestlers		2024-25		Year-to-Year Growth of Certified Wrestlers		2023-24	
	%	Certified Wrestlers	Certified Wrestlers	%	Growth of Certified Wrestlers	%	Certified Wrestlers	Growth of Certified Wrestlers	%	Certified Wrestlers	Growth of Certified Wrestlers	%
1	104.62%	133	133	101.52%		66	65	1.54%		65		65
2	48.56%	413	413	10.72%		373	278	34.17%		278		278
3	116.95%	384	384	42.22%		270	177	52.54%		177		177
4	100.61%	327	327	59.51%		205	163	25.77%		163		163
5	114.04%	244	244	22.00%		200	114	75.44%		114		114
6	62.32%	336	336	27.27%		264	207	27.54%		207		207
7	72.73%	19	19	46.15%		13	11	18.18%		11		11
8	316.39%	254	254	135.19%		108	61	77.05%		61		61
9	100.00%	240	240	22.45%		196	120	63.33%		120		120
10	250.00%	21	21	61.54%		13	6	116.67%		6		6
11	49.31%	215	215	18.13%		182	144	26.39%		144		144
<b>Total</b>	<b>92.12%</b>	<b>2586</b>	<b>2586</b>	<b>36.83%</b>		<b>1890</b>	<b>1346</b>	<b>40.42%</b>		<b>1346</b>		<b>1346</b>



## Championship Philosophy Committee Meeting Report

Date: December 10, 2025 @ 1:00pm - ZOOM

### Attendees:

Dan Belfi, proxy for Tom Baker (I), Mark Bubniak (2), Scott Sugar (III), Eric Race (IV), Jen Lapinski (V), Mark DiFilippo (VI), Matt Walentuk (VII), Brett Kornblum/Pat Pizzarelli (VIII), Greg Ransom (IX), Mark Wilson (X), Joe Mercado (XI), Tim Lincoln (Team Sports), Dan Doherty (Individual Sports), NYSPHSAA – Dr. Robert Zayas, Tim Mullins, Kristen Jadin, Todd Nelson, Joe Altieri, Chris Joyce, Adam Stoltzman, Debra Ferry  
Not Present:

### Status Updates/Items Discussion/ Action Taken:

1. **Welcome:** Dr. Zayas opened the meeting, welcoming members and introducing Eric Race (Section IV) as a new representative. He reiterated that the committee convened due to continuing concerns from multiple sections regarding excessive numbers of athletes qualifying for state championships via at-large standards.

2. **Qualifying Process Proposals**

**Section V:** Jen L. stated Section V proposes that all qualifiers, team or individual, must qualify at the sectional/state qualifying event. Athletes should not qualify during the regular season by hitting state standards. The rationale is the current system is inconsistent across sports. Jen emphasized the proposal is philosophical, not driven by reducing numbers.

**Section VIII:** Pat Pizzarelli presented Section VIII's proposal, emphasizing this would allow only two athletes per event, per section should qualify (champion & runner-up). He suggested eliminating all at-large qualifiers. State championships should be elite, not participation driven.

Dan D. raised concerns that weather and facility differences do not impact all athletes equally, noting that qualification systems relying on performance standards can disadvantage sections with less favorable conditions. He highlighted a past example from Section XI, where three athletes had cleared seven feet in the high jump, placing them among the top performers in the state, yet only two were permitted to advance because of sectional limits. Joe M. supported efforts to reduce championship field sizes, he encouraged a more gradual, phased approach to avoid significant disruption. He explained that Section XI has already implemented meaningful changes, including a requirement that athletes who meet a regular-season standard must also finish in the top five at the state qualifier to advance. Based on early projections, this change alone is expected to reduce Section XI's qualifiers by approximately 20–25 athletes. Dan D. added that track and field has already undergone substantial adjustments, such as shifting qualifying standards to three-year post-COVID seed averages, with additional reductions planned for the 2026 season.

**NYSPHSAA Staff: Establishing standard qualifying criteria for championships in which athletes qualify by time.** Todd N. explained the proposal.

Scott expressed concerns about the complexity of the proposed qualification system, noting his preference for a single standard rather than multiple layers. He also cited an example from swimming in which lane assignments can limit athletes' chances of winning. Todd N. clarified that swimming's preliminary rounds allow all athletes an opportunity to advance to the championship heat, ensuring that anyone can ultimately win the state title. Greg R. added



broader philosophical concerns, emphasizing that under some proposals, an athlete could finish second at the state qualifier yet fail to advance, while another athlete who once ran a faster time earlier in the season could qualify instead. Chris J. said that performance standards are designed to advance the highest-performing athletes overall, not just those who happen to perform best on one particular day.

Jen L. reiterated concerns about inconsistencies across sports, noting that activities such as golf, gymnastics, and bowling do not have mechanisms allowing athletes to qualify through regular-season standards. She emphasized the need for any adopted philosophy to avoid creating sport-specific inequities. Todd N. explained that sport committees would need to develop appropriate standards. Dan B. questioned whether such an approach would be feasible given the significant variability among ski courses.

Joe M. stressed that every individual sport is unique, cautioning against the application of blanket rules that may not fit the realities of each discipline. He also reiterated that track and field has already implemented substantial reforms that should be evaluated before additional changes are considered. Brett K. said that weather should not play a role in determining advancement, noting that no other sport uses weather conditions as a criterion for state qualification. Kristen suggested that the charge of the Championship Philosophy Committee is not to solve issues solely within track and field, but to establish a consistent statewide philosophy that applies to all timed sports.

NYS PHSAA staff will revise the proposal to the following:

Consider approval to create standard criteria for how athletes may qualify for state championships in which athletes qualify by time. The criteria would state:

- A qualifying standard must be set by the committee each year prior to the start of their season, with approval from the Central/Executive Committee.
- Only automated timing results may be used for qualifying standards; no hand timing results may be used.
- Athletes may only qualify for the state championships at a state qualifier meet. The following athletes would qualify in each event:
  - o The first-place finisher
  - o Any place finisher within the top 5 that achieved the qualifying standard at any time during the season
- No exceptions or waivers would be granted for athletes that did not compete in the state qualifier meet.

#### **NYS PHSAA Staff: Amend Championship Philosophy Regarding Percentage of Championship Participation.**

The committee discussed the 5–8% participation guideline, with Chris J. providing the NYS PHSAA Staff recommendation of removal of the 5% minimum. In some sports, such as tennis, function well below it and expanding them to meet 5% would unnecessarily inflate their tournaments. He emphasized keeping the 8% cap as a benchmark for event quality, while noting that being under 8% should not automatically justify expansion; logistics, venue capacity, finances, and event quality must also be considered. Chris also pointed out that some sports, like skiing, exceed 20% and will need to review their qualification processes. Mark D. questioned the purpose of having a percentage at all if it is not a primary criterion. Chris clarified that the percentage serves as a guiding tool, especially for individual sports, rather than a strict requirement. Todd N. added that



sports exceeding 8% will be asked to make appropriate reductions. This proposal will also be shared with Sections and committees to consider.

3. **Next Steps:** Sections will review the revised proposal and the percentage proposal. NYSPHSAA staff will share both with sport committees impacted. Tentative timeline of proposal is below.
- Winter/Spring 2026: Continued discussion across sections and sports.
  - October 2026: Discussion item on Executive Committee Agenda, pending a proposal from Championship Philosophy committee
  - February 2027: Possible Action Item Vote
  - Fall 2027: Targeted implementation

**Future Meeting:**

1. TBD

**Championship Philosophy -**  
**Establish Standard Qualifying Criteria for Championships in Which**  
**Athletes Qualify by Time**

- Action Item  
 Discussion Item  
 Informational Item

**Presenter:**

Todd Nelson, Assistant Director  
Joe Altieri, Assistant Director  
Chris Joyce, Director of Foundation & Marketing

**Proposal:**

Consider approval to create standard criteria for how athletes may qualify for state championships in which athletes qualify by time. The criteria would state:

- A qualifying standard must be set by the committee each year prior to the start of their season, with approval from the Central/Executive Committee.
- Only automated timing results may be used for qualifying standards; no hand timing results may be used.
- Athletes may only qualify for the state championships at a state qualifier meet. The following athletes would qualify in each event:
  - o The first-place finisher
  - o Any place finisher within the top 5 that achieved the qualifying standard at any time during the season
- No exceptions or waivers would be granted for athletes that did not compete in the state qualifier meet.

**Effective Start Date:**

Fall 2027

**Rationale:**

The membership has expressed concerns with the number of athletes qualifying in events for individual championships. Each sport has different qualifying standards, and many allow athletes to qualify at any time during the year, which makes it difficult to control the number of qualifying athletes in each event from a particular section. The criteria listed in the proposal would help limit the number of athletes within an event without sacrificing the quality of the meet. A majority of the time a section will send two athletes per event, with allowances for exceptional athletes that may bring the total number of qualifiers up to five.

By requiring athletes to qualify only at the state qualifier meet, it ensures quality competition with a field of athletes that have all earned their right to participate.

# New York State Public High School Athletic Association



For clarity, an example of who may qualify in a race is provided below:

100M Dash

Athlete 1: 10.69

Athlete 2: 10.81 – qualifying standard during the year

Athlete 3: 10.96

Athlete 4: 11.03 – qualifying standard during the year

Athlete 5: 11.14

Athlete 6: 11.32

Athlete 7: 11.58

Athlete 8: 11.70

A race contains 8 athletes. Athlete 1 qualifies as the winner of the race. Athletes 2 and 4 qualify for hitting the qualifying standard during the year and finishing in the top 5. No other athletes qualify from this race.

## **Proposal Originated:**

NYS PH SAA staff at the request of the Championship Philosophy Committee

## **Budgetary Impact:**

A change in costs to sections will likely occur but will vary by sport and by section.

## **Notes:**

This would currently apply to Boys and Girls Swimming & Diving, Skiing, Indoor Track & Field, and Outdoor Track & Field. Diving and field events would be included because they are events within a championship in which athletes qualify by time.

## **Current qualification processes are:**

**Boys and Girls Swimming & Diving:**

A qualifying standard is the 5-year average of the 20<sup>th</sup> place finisher in that event.

Adjustments may be made to keep the total number of participants at or below the 8% threshold.

**Skiing:**

In each Alpine and Nordic: one school team per section, three individuals per section, and at-large competitors selected based on a formula considering the number of programs in a Section and the winning Section from the previous year's meet.

**Indoor Track & Field:**

Each section may send the top two competitors per event, plus the third-place finisher if they have met the qualifying standard. The qualifying standard is the 5-year average of the 6<sup>th</sup> place finisher. Sections are permitted one entry per relay event.

# New York State Public High School Athletic Association



## Outdoor Track & Field:

A qualifying standard and super standard must be set by the committee each year prior to the start of their season, with approval from the Central/Executive Committee.

Athletes may only qualify for the state championships at a state qualifier meet. The following athletes would qualify in each event:

- The first place finisher
- The next highest place finisher that achieved the qualifying standard at any time during the season
- Any place finisher within the top 5 that achieved the super qualifying standard at any time during the season
- No exceptions or waivers would be granted for athletes that did not compete in the state qualifier meet.

## Attachments:

None

**Championship Philosophy - Amend Championship Philosophy Regarding Percentage of Championship Participation**

- Action Item
- Discussion Item
- Informational Item

**Presenter:**

Todd Nelson, Assistant Director  
Joe Altieri, Assistant Director  
Chris Joyce, Director of Foundation & Marketing

**Proposal:**

Consider approval to amend the designated participation range in the NYSPHSAA Championship Philosophy to a recommended maximum of 8% of varsity participation in that sport. Sports could exceed 8% with Central/Executive Committee approval. The 5% floor would be removed. Percentage of participation would be one of several criteria used to determine tournament expansion, along with logistics, scheduling, venue capabilities, financial impact, etc.

**Effective Start Date:**

Fall 2027

**Rationale:**

The current criteria of 5-8% no longer meets the needs or fits the operations of the association. An upper limit is necessary to ensure high-quality competition, but the lower limit has not been followed nor does it contribute to achieving the goal of a quality championship event. Removing a minimum percentage of participation will also prevent the unnecessary expansion of tournaments in pursuit of reaching the 5% minimum. If a sport felt there was a legitimate reason to exceed the 8% limit, they could provide justification and submit a proposal for review by the Championship Advisory Committee and approval by the Central/Executive Committee. The 8% recommended limit should be one of several factors when considering expanding tournaments, and is not intrinsically a reason to expand. Other factors such as event logistics, scheduling, venue capabilities, financial impact, etc will be considered when evaluating proposals regarding the number of participants in championship tournaments.

**Proposal Originated:**

NYSPHSAA staff at the request of the Championship Philosophy Committee

**Budgetary Impact:**

Reduction in costs in events where participants may shrink, and increased awareness of financial impact with future participation proposals from sport committees.

**Notes:**

The following sports are currently over the recommended 8% threshold and would need to revise their criteria or provide justification for approval: skiing, gymnastics, boys swimming & diving, girls wrestling.