

**MID HUDSON ATHLETIC LEAGUE  
ATHLETIC DIRECTORS WORKSHOP  
MARCH 9, 2026 - 9:30AM  
ZOOM MEETING**

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-DIVISION/CONFERENCE/NON LEAGUE
  2. NEXT MEETING 4/22@8:30AM MARIST
  3. BYLAWS
  4. SPRING DROPS
  5. SCHEDULING
  6. SCHOLAR ATHLETE BREAKFAST 5/28 9AM WILTWYCK GOLF CLUB
6. COMBINING OF TEAMS- FRANK ALFONSO
7. MODIFIED REPORT- MATT SALAMONE
8. OLD BUSINESS
9. NEW BUSINESS
10. MOTION TO ADJOURN



## Voting Items – March 2026

### 1. Field Hockey:

Motion to approve: a two-year pilot program to allow 9 vs 9 players at the JV and/or Modified level using a regulation field with adjusted rules. Some adjustments would be:

- Narrowing the width of a regulation field.
- Play 12-minute quarters instead of 15 minutes with substitution on the fly.
- Play penalty corners with a full defensive team available.
- All players at the Modified level are 5 yards away on all free hits.
- Both teams will play with an equal number of players on the field during games.
- No overtime with teams with less than 11 v 11 games.
  - Effective Start Date: Fall 2026

### 2. Cheerleading Classification Numbers:

Motion to approve: Classification Cut-Off numbers for Competitive Cheerleading.

- The proposal updates the same philosophy as has been currently used for classifications: top 75, bottom 100 and splitting the rest into two divisions, along with a CO-ED division.
- Viewing our current numbers, due to changes in enrollment as well as teams participating, the below new numbers are being recommended.
- Class A- 973 and up; Class B-972 to 613; Class C-612 to 274; Class D -273 and below; Co-Ed- One Class
- Effective Start Date: 2026-2027 Winter Competitive Season

### 3. Softball Warm-up time limitations:

Motion to approve the NYSPHSAA Softball State Committee request to adopt a standardized pregame timeline and protocol for all regular season contests to start at the scheduled time for that game. The committee unanimously recommends implementing a 30-minute pregame clock for the visiting team beginning upon the visiting team's arrival at the field.

- Rationale: Due to concerns from umpires, coaches, and the state committee, it is necessary to set a timeline and rules to ensure warmups and games start on time in addition to sportsmanship being demonstrated.
- Effective Start Date: Spring 2026

### 4. Championship Philosophy Committee Items:

- a. Motion to approve: Creating 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:

- The first-place finisher
- 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

b. Motion to approve: amending 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

# New York State Public High School Athletic Association



Executive Committee Meeting – February 4, 2026

## FIELD HOCKEY – Establish a Pilot Program for Modified and Junior Varsity Teams

- Action Item
- Discussion Item
- Informational Item

### Presenter:

Bev Hooper, NYSPHSAA Field Hockey State Coordinator

### Proposal:

Consider approval of a two-year pilot program to allow 9 vs 9 players at the JV and/or Modified level using a regulation field with adjusted rules.

Some adjustments would be:

1. Narrowing the width of a regulation field.
2. Play 12-minute quarters instead of 15 minutes with substitution on the fly.
3. Play penalty corners with a full defensive team available.
4. All players at the Modified level are 5 yards away on all free hits.
5. Both teams will play with an equal number of players on the field during games.
6. No overtime with teams with less than 11 v 11 games.

### Effective Start Date:

Fall 2026

### Rationale:

The field hockey state committee has reported the sport is struggling with Modified and JV programs. Modified and JV teams who do not have 11 players on their teams are having their games canceled. A two-year, 9v9 pilot program would help keep programs alive and competing while also reinstating programs that were previously dropped due to low participation. Modified and JV sports focus on player development, and programs should not be eliminated simply because they lack a full roster of 11 players.

According to the NFHS rulebook, Rule 1-4-1 states that “Each team shall consist of not more than 11 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A team may compete with a minimum of seven players. When a team plays with fewer than 11 players, a goalkeeper shall be one of the players.”

### Proposal Originated:

Field Hockey Committee - January 9, 2026

### Notes:

The Field Hockey Committee voted 9-0 in unanimous support of this proposal.  
No budgetary impact.

DATE REVISED: January 16, 2026

To: Section Coordinators

From: Bev Hooper, State Field Hockey Coordinator

Re: Modified/ Junior varsity Field Hockey teams hold an important role in the success of field hockey in NYS

It appears throughout the state, field hockey seems to be struggling with the Modified and JV programs. To help grow the sport, the NYS Field Hockey Committee have discussed several ideas that would give opportunities for student athletes to participate in the sport of field hockey. Ways to help struggling programs and give student athletes the opportunity to play the game.

It was discussed at our last meeting that Modified and JV teams who do not have 11 players on their squads are canceled. This is detrimental to the Varsity program and field hockey in general as it does not feed the Varsity level team with quality players or encourage/increase participation. In addition, it has younger players playing at the higher level just to have a varsity team able to compete for that school.

According to the NFHS rulebook, **Rule 1-4-1 states that "Each team shall consist of not more than 11 players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A team may compete with a minimum of seven players. When a team plays with fewer than 11 players, a goalkeeper shall be one of the players."**

Based on the NFHS rulebook, teams can play if they have fewer than 11 players. The reason games are not being played at the Modified/ JV level should not be because there are not 11 players on game day. The Field Hockey committee is suggesting to pilot for 2 years a 9 V 9 game at the Modified and JV level using a regulation field with minimum adjustments and adjusted rules for this level game.

Some adjustments would be:

1. Narrowing the width of a regulation field.
2. Play 12-minute quarters instead of 15 minutes with substitution on the fly.
3. Play penalty corners with a full defensive team available.
4. All players at the Modified level are 5 yards away on all free hits.
5. Both teams will play with an equal number of players on the field during games.
6. No overtime with teams with less than 11 v 11 games.

Modified/ JV teams exist to allow young players in a high school program to develop, learn to compete, deal with wins and losses, plus individual successes, and failures. It gives coaching staff a chance to evaluate how their players are progressing. This pilot program may bring Modified and JV programs that have been dropped due to low enrollment back. Modified/ JV sports are about young developing players. Let's not drop a Modified or JV program because they don't have 11 players on their team. Let's allow the smaller schools or programs the opportunity to play.

Let's continue to grow the game of Field Hockey!

# New York State Public High School Athletic Association



*Executive Committee Meeting – February 4, 2026*

## Competitive Cheerleading: Classification Cut-Off Numbers

- Action Item
- Discussion Item
- Informational Item

### **Presenter:**

Jen Simmons, NYSPHSAA Cheerleading State Coordinator

### **Proposal:**

The NYSPHSAA Cheerleading Committee is recommending the following Classification Cut-Off numbers for Competitive Cheerleading. The proposal updates the same philosophy as has been currently used for classifications: top 75, bottom 100 and splitting the rest into two divisions, along with a CO-ED division. Viewing our current numbers, due to changes in enrollment as well as teams participating, the below new numbers are being recommended.

- Class A – 973 and up – 75 schools
- Class B – 972 to 613 – 110 schools
- Class C – 612 to 274 – 110 schools
- Class D – 273 and below - 100 schools
- Co-Ed – One Class

### **Effective Start Date:**

2026—2027 Winter Competitive Season

### **Rationale:**

The Cheer Committee felt that the numbers needed to be reviewed, as once again the number of teams in one division was much higher than the others and was no longer close to our initial class divisions number of teams. So after the two years at the current numbers, the participating schools BEDS numbers were reviewed. To reinforce our initial philosophy, The Cheer Committee agreed that most of our smaller schools were once again not able to compete and be successful against the larger schools with the current divisional breakdown. The current numbers left: Class A with 68 schools, Class B with 129 schools, Class C with 109 schools and Class D with 89 schools.

### **Proposal Originated:**

NYSPHSAA Cheerleading Committee

### **Budgetary Impact:**

None.

### **Notes:**

All Section Cheerleading Representatives, reviewed and approved these new numbers

DATE REVISED: January 12, 2026

**SOFTBALL– ESTABLISH PREGAME TIMELINE AND PROTOCOL  
FOR REGULAR SEASON GAMES**

- Action Item
- Discussion Item
- Informational Item

**Presenter:**

Dr. Jim Wright, NYSPHSAA Softball State Coordinator

**Proposal:**

The NYSPHSAA Softball State Committee is requesting approval to adopt a standardized pregame timeline and protocol for all regular season contests to start at the scheduled time for that game.

**Effective Start Date:**

Spring 2026

**Rationale:**

Due to concerns from umpires, coaches, and the state committee, it is necessary to set a timeline and rules to ensure warmups and games start on time in addition to sportsmanship being demonstrated.

The committee unanimously recommends implementing a **30-minute pregame clock** for the visiting team beginning upon the visiting team's arrival at the field. This period would allow time for personal preparation and adequate on-field warm-up. In alignment with existing state tournament procedures, the **home team is expected to complete its warm-up activities prior to the visiting team's arrival** to prevent delays and reduce gamesmanship.

Recognizing that some facilities require additional walking time from the parking area to the playing field, reasonable accommodations may be made when those circumstances exist.

The overarching goal of this proposal is to **ensure games begin promptly**, respecting the time commitments of umpires, coaches, student-athletes, and spectators while maintaining fairness and consistency across all programs.

The 30-minute clock will be monitored by game officials.

**Proposal Originated:**

NYSPHSAA Softball Committee on December 3, 2025

**Budgetary Impact:**

None

**Notes:**

The NYSPHSAA Softball State Committee voted 11-0 in favor of this proposal at its December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**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.

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:**

NYSPHSAA 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.

**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.