



Oregon School Activities Association

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To: Athletic Directors and Head Track Coaches
From: Kelly Foster, Assistant Executive Director
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Subject: 2026 Track and Field Pre-Season Memo

Included within this memo are reminders regarding OSAA policies and NFHS rules specific to Track & Field that each coaching staff should review as we begin a new season. The links provided will take you directly to more detailed information regarding that specific reminder. Each school offering Track & Field should have received one copy of the NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book from the OSAA, and if your Athletic Director has your email address listed on the OSAA website under your school, you will be able to have one NFHS eBook of the rules. If your school didn't receive your copy, please let me know. Feel free to contact me if you have questions and best of luck this season!

NEW: All 2026 state qualifying events must be measured in metric.

GENERAL INFORMATION

OSAA Track and Field Plan Book

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/planbooks/tfplan.pdf>

The 2025-26 OSAA Track & Field Plan Book is available on the OSAA website. This plan book contains information regarding important season dates, NFHS rules information, OSAA Track & Field rules and policies, state championship information and qualifications, etc.

Health and Safety Information

<http://www.osaa.org/health-safety>

The OSAA website contains a variety of information regarding heat and hydration, lightning safety, air quality, and concussion management. This page contains links to informational items that all coaches should familiarize themselves with as practices begin.

Heat Index Alerts

<http://www.osaa.org/heat-index>

ADs and coaches should subscribe to heat alerts through the OSAA website. Alerts are sent about 11am daily when the forecasted heat index in your area is high. If an alert is received, OSAA policy requires that schools check the actual heat index within one hour prior to the start of practice to determine if modifications must be made. If no alert is received, no further action is required by the school that day.

Practice Model

<http://www.osaa.org/docs/handbooks/PracticeModelBP.pdf>

The Practice Model **requires athletes to have a minimum of five days of actual practice prior to participation in a jamboree or interscholastic contest.** Please familiarize yourself with this policy. Notable requirements contained in the policy include:

- ✓ Prohibition on consecutive days of multiple practice sessions
- ✓ A teaching session as one of the practice sessions on the first two multiple practice days (the intensity, duration and pace of all practice components in a teaching session shall be modified from a normal practice session)
- ✓ Maximum of one hour of weight training before or after practice on a single practice session day

2025-26 NFHS Track & Field / Cross Country Rule Changes

See the [NFHS website](#) for a complete list of changes.

Participation Limitations

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/handbooks/osaahandbook.pdf#page=132>

- A. **Team.** A school team shall not compete in more than 12 meets at each level of competition, exclusive of the varsity district meet and state championships. A meet, whether one day or two days, shall count as one meet. There is no

limitation on the number of schools that may participate in a track and field meet. Any time a student participates representing their school, it shall count toward the school's team limitation.

- B. **Individual.** A student shall not compete in more than 12 meets, exclusive of the varsity district meet and state championships.

A contestant shall not enter or compete in more than two distance races – 800, 1500 and 3000. If a contestant does enter or compete in all three-distance events, that contestant's school shall forfeit the meet. If a contestant violates the Rules Book limit of four events but does not violate the Executive Board distance race limit, then all points earned by that contestant in the meet are forfeited.

New Synthetic Turf Field - Heat Guidance

<http://www.osaa.org/heat-index>

The OSAA's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) has produced guidance for use of turf fields when it's warm outside. Synthetic turf field surface temperatures can reach up to 200 degrees Fahrenheit, which not only increases the risk of heat illness, but may cause burns to exposed skin. Radiant heat from the synthetic surface can have a "heat island" effect that may not be accounted for if Heat Index is checked by local Zip Code.

The following guidelines should be considered when practicing, working out, or playing contests on synthetic turf from May 1 through September 30 when the outdoor temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperature should be measured on-site within one hour of the start of the event and monitored for the duration of the event.

1. If outdoor temperature is greater than 80 degrees Fahrenheit coaches should be aware of increased risk and observe athletes for signs of heat illness. Additional rest, water, and shade breaks should be utilized as needed.
2. If outdoor temperature is greater than 90 degrees Fahrenheit consider avoiding the use of synthetic turf fields between peak sun times of noon to 3pm.
3. If outdoor temperature is greater than 95 degrees Fahrenheit consider moving all practices, workouts, and contests to natural grass fields.

Pre-Event Safety Timeout

<https://www.osaa.org/health-safety/pre-event-safety>

Prior to the start of each contest (at all levels) the site supervisor and/or home head coach shall gather the following personnel to review these questions; Site Supervisor, Coaches, Officials, and Medical Personnel.

- ✓ Who is the onsite contact for each school?
- ✓ Is there a qualified medical professional present? If not, who will lead in case of an emergency?
- ✓ Is there an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the venue? Who calls 911 and who meets the ambulance (and where)?
- ✓ Where's the nearest AED?

Lightning Safety Guidelines

<https://www.osaa.org/docs/handbooks/osaahandbook.pdf#page=91>

The OSAA has made a concerted effort to educate member schools and officials associations regarding the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. Once thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.

Air Quality Guidelines

<http://www.osaa.org/health-safety/air-quality>

It's important to review the updated [Air Quality Guidelines](#). The OSAA Executive Board recently amended this policy which allows schools to participate in contests up to an AQI of 150 (previously 100). Schools should consider rescheduling to a different time and/or area with a lower AQI when the AQI is between 101-150 (orange). Cancellation is required for outdoor events when AQI reaches 151 (red). It also clarifies that schools in remote areas not near a DEQ reporting station may refer to Purple Air monitors for monitoring air quality using the [EPA's Fire and Smoke Map](#). The policy suggests schools consider the impact of elevated AQI lasting for multiple days and the impact of prolonged exposure for athletes and staff on multiple practice session days when making decisions.

We will continue to provide updated information on our OSAA website for both [boys track and field](#) and [girls track and field](#).