ATHLETIC COUNCIL
MINUTES

November 19, 2025

ACTION ITEMS

1.2 **CARRIED:** Move the finance report to follow 2.1 in the order of the agenda

3.1 **CARRIED:** September 17, 2025 Section VI Athletic Council meeting minutes

4.2 **CARRIED:** 26-27 North & South Proposed Timelines for Schedules and Assignment of Officials (Appendix A)

5.1 **CARRIED:** Combining of Schools Applications

5.2 **CARRIED:** Outside Agency Applications

6.1.1 **CARRIED:** Keep Lake Shore/Silver Creek Boys Lacrosse in Class B for the 2026 spring season. (Previously approved to move from Class C to Class B for the 2025 season).

6.3.1 **CARRIED**: Treasurer's report (Appendix B)

6.4.1 **CARRIED:** Baseball, Boys Golf, and Unified Basketball reports spring 2025 post season reports (Appendix F)

6.14.2 **CARRIED:** D. Ljiljanich as Section VI President-Elect (Remaining term through June 2026)

ATHLETIC COUNCIL
MINUTES

1.0 **CALL TO ORDER** (D. Lilleck)

1.1 Pledge of allegiance

1.2 ***Motion to move the finance report to follow 2.1 in the order of the agenda***
CARRIED
Taylor/Kelly

2.0 **PRESENTATION & AWARDS**

2.1 Toth's Sports (Rusty Knight)

3.0 **MINUTES** (D. Lilleck)

3.1 ***Motion to approve the September 17, 2025, Section VI Athletic Council meeting minutes***
CARRIED
Zirkle/Penhollow

4.0 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** (M. DiFilippo)

4.1 ***Motion to approve the 26-27 North & South Proposed Timelines for Schedules and Assignment of Officials.*** (Appendix A)
CARRIED
Zirkle/Dimitroff

4.2 Mandatory AD Workshop – January 22, 2026, at Erie 1 BOCES (Informational)

4.3 Officials Negotiations – identification of lead negotiators due 2/1/26, remaining team members due 3/1/26
In September, the council was asked to discuss with their respective leagues and bring forth 2 nominations each for review. Any other recommendations for the Section VI negotiation team are due by December 15, 2025 in advance of the December 17, 2025 executive committee meeting. M. DiFilippo and K. Schon will be having discussions with leagues regarding feedback about the initial proposal package.

4.4 NYSPHSAA Summer Meeting / Foundation Golf Tournament July 27, 2026
With Adam Stoltman assuming the role of NYSPHSAA President, Section VI is scheduled to host the July 27-29 2025 state meeting. M. DiFilippo encourages leagues to assemble foursomes for the golf tournament on Monday, July 29, 2026.

4.5 2026-2027 BEDS numbers and classification cut-offs
Numbers that were submitted in June 2025 are the numbers that were approved in October 2025, and will be in effect for 26-27. BEDS are 9th, 10th and the average of 9th and 10th.

Schools may have their boys and girls teams of the same sport placed in different classifications. The cutoff numbers change based on the number of schools participating in a sport.

4.6 McKinney Vento Transfers
SED provided clarification that McKinney Vento transfers are not an automatic approval.

4.7 NYSPHSAA Private School Participation
At the last NYSPHSAA meeting, the schools without boundary proposal regarding a uniform procedure to classify schools without a boundary was approved. Section 1 is requesting reconsideration, wanting full removal of the private and charter schools. With that, R Zayas canvased the section executive directors, requesting feedback from superintendents to determine where the consensus falls.

Based on the approved proposal, Section VI must present placement of its charter schools for the fall 2026 season to NYSPHSAA at the February 2026 meeting. By the January 14, 2026 athletic council meeting, the Charter School Classification Committee must have a recommendation for fall 2026 charter school teams.

T. Nelson commented the Schools Without Boundaries Committee was informed NYSPHSAA could take the stance of offering a separate state tournament for the private and charter schools.
He went on to share; the association would have to defend full removal of private and charter schools defend at the state and legislative levels. The consequences of removing them altogether as seen in other states have not been favorable. North Carolina was specifically noted as a state that tried this, which resulted in their state legislators now making decisions, not their member schools.
NYSPHSAA's current system, where member schools and section decide classification placement, has been supported by the courts and state legislation.
The problem is the highest classification. At that point, there is no place to move. NYSPHSAA staff made a proposal, when 4 or more schools in a sport from private and charters reached the highest class, NYSPHSAA could then create a separate class for them for the state playoffs. They would not participate in sectionals, automatically moving to state playoffs. There would be a semifinal and a final for 4 teams: a quarterfinal, semi and final for 8 teams. This would mirror the same way every other school participates (venue, awards).
This procedure allows the state to take it out of the sections hands and reclassify the non-public and charter schools based on criteria that has already been approved, keeping consistency throughout the state.
NYSPHSAA is of the position to make changes that are proven to be upheld in the courts and state legislature. It is not too late to go back to the drawing board and reconsider those proposals.

Private schools and charter schools make up 10% of NYPSHSAA membership. Since 2017-2025, They have won less than 10% (if you count all team sports) of the championships.

5.0 **COMMUNICATIONS** (M. DiFilippo)

5.1 ***Motion to approve of the Combining of Schools Applications, numbers (1) through (35)***
CARRIED
Zirkle/McDuffie

WINTER APPLICATIONS

Informational: Wrestling G, Existing, Chautauqua Lake, Panama, Clymer, Brocton, Westfield add Sherman back 11/6/25, 779, One Division, V, Informational (dropped Sherman – now adding Sherman back in) BEDS 779

1) Basketball G, NEW, **West Seneca West,** West Seneca East, 1427, AAA, V
2) Cheer Competitive, NEW, **Eden,** North Collins pending signature & app, 335, C, V
3) Swim B, Existing, **East Aurora,** Holland received application 11/6/25, 573
4) Wrestling G, New, **Orchard Park,** Frontier, Hamburg & East Aurora, 3058, One Division, V/ JV, Pending
5) Wrestling G, NEW, **Niagara-Wheatfield,** Niagara Falls add Newfane 11/6/25 NW & NF approved at June AC, Now 2622* One Division, Varsity
6) Wrestling G, New, **Sweet Home,** Amherst Need ECIC approval, 1455
7) Wrestling G, New, **Clarence,** Iroquois Need ECIC approval, 1406

SPRING APPLICATIONS

8) Baseball, Existing, **Olmsted,** Cul Arts, Emerson, 1021, AA, V
9) Baseball, Existing, **I-Prep,** DaVinci, 818, A, V
10) Baseball, Existing, **Burgard,** Performing Arts, 661, A, V
11) Baseball, Existing, **MST**, East, 562, A, V
12) Baseball, Existing, **MEC**, LJ Bennett, Res Lab, 536, A, V
13) Baseball, Existing, Silver Creek, Forestville, 246, B, V, JV, 789
14) Unified Basketball B/G, Existing, **West Seneca West,** West Seneca East, V, 1427
15) Unified Basketball B/G, New, **Medina,** Roy-Hart, 600, V
16) Unified Basketball B/G, Existing, **Silver Creek,** Forestville, 243, V
17) Flag Football, Existing, **Hutch Tech,** all BPS Schools, 7615, A, V
18) Flag Football, Existing, **West Seneca West,** West Seneca East, V, 1074
19) Flag Football, New, **Silver Creek,** Forestville & Lake Shore, 616, B, V
20) Flag Football, New, **Akron,** Alden, 497, C, V
21) Flag Football, Existing, **Southwestern**, Frewsburg, 348, C, V

22) Flag Football, Existing, **Maritime Charter**, Tapestry Charter, 346, C, V
23) Lax B, Existing, **City Honors**, All BPS school, 7615, A, V
24) Lax B, Existing, **Lewiston-Porter**, Niagara Falls, 1963, A, V, JV
25) Lax G, Existing, **City Honors**, All BPS school, 7615, AAA, V
26) Softball, Existing, **Culinary Arts**, Emerson, 679, AA, V
27) Softball, New, **MEC**, LJ Bennett, Res Lab, 550, A, V
28) Softball, Existing, **Sherman**, Clymer, 170, C, V, JV, 78
29) Tennis B, Existing, **West Seneca West**, West Seneca East, V, 1133 Pending League approval
30) Tennis B, Existing, **Culinary Arts**, Emerson, 514, Small, V
31) Tennis B, New, **Southwestern**, Frewsburg, 365, Small, V
32) Track & Field BG, Existing, **Culinary Arts**, Emerson, 481, B, V
33) Track & Field BG, Existing, **LJ Bennett**, Alt Ed, 403, B, V
34) Track & Field BG, New, **Eden**, North Collins, 335, C, V/78/9
35) Track & Field BG, Existing, **Silver Creek**, Forestville, 243, C, V/78/9

5.2 ***Motion to approval of the Outside Agency Applications, numbers (1) through (3)***
CARRIED
Salisbury/Kelly

1) Basketball-Boys, Jolly Boys, 12/12/25, Amherst High School, Amherst High School & Jolly Boys of Wmslv
2) Wrestling, Holiday Classic Wrestling Tournament, 12/12-13, JCC, Randolph & STOWA State Sanctioned
3) Cheerleading, Fredonia Blue Devils Cheer Competition, 1/25/26, SUNY Fredonia, Dunkirk HS and SUNY Fredonia

6.0 STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Combining of Schools Committee (J. Sortisio)

6.1.1 ***Motion to approval to keep Lake Shore/Silver Creek Boys Lacrosse in Class B for the 2026 spring season. (Previously approved to move from Class C to Class B for the 2025 season).***
CARRIED
Zirkle/Salisbury

6.1.2 Combining of Schools Deadline Proposal (Appendix B)

Council members were asked to submit any feedback to J. Sortisio by December 15, 2025. Any proposed changes to the recommendation will be reviewed by the executive committee at their December 17, 2025 meeting. The final recommendation will be an action item for approval at the January 14, 2025 athletic council meeting.

6.2 Charter Schools Classification Committee (J. Sortisio)

6.2.1 Classification of Fall Sports due February

6.3 Finance Committee (S. Penhollow)

6.3.1 ***Motion to approve of the Treasurer's report*** (Appendix C)
CARRIED
Liljanich/Taylor

6.3.2 26-27 Proposed Budget (Appendix D)
This is a voting item at the January 14, 2026 athletic council meeting. Looking at the current rates and fees, the proposed budget for 26-27 would have resulted in a $64,000 deficit. As a result, the committee recommends increasing each class fee by $500 and the federated sports fee by $10. Even with these recommended increases, the proposed budget is at a $5000 deficit.

6.3.3 26-27 Proposed Coordination Fee Formula (Appendix E)
This will be a voting item at the January 14, 2026 athletic council meeting. See 6.3.2.

6.4 Sectional/Intersectional (M. DiFilippo)

6.4.1 ***Motion to approve the Baseball, Boys Golf, and Unified Basketball reports spring 2025 post season reports*** (Appendix F)
CARRIED
Croft/Kelly

6.4.2 At Large Proposal (*Action to be taken Jan 2026 AC) (Appendix G)
This will involve all of our 6 classification sports with the new 3-region concept. Section VI tested it this fall 2025 with field hockey, Orchard Park and Clarence.

6.4.3 Split Classification Pilot (*Action to be taken Jan 2026 AC)

- Recommendation to make the split classifications after opt-out formal policy beginning with the 26-27 school year. Pilot was approved for a 1-year extension, through 25-26, at the May 2025 AC meeting.

  This will affect all team sports when splitting classes.

  The Boys Basketball Committee is not in favor of this proposal. They prefer to have a picture in advance of who the teams will be and concerned about scouting. If the athletic council approves this proposal, Boys Basketball will have to follow this policy.

6.5 Safety (M. McKenna)

6.5.1 October 1, 2025 Report (Appendix H)

M. McKenna summarized the October 1, 2025 report.

6.6 Modified Committee (L. Bergman, M. Librock)

6.6.1 Rolling agenda
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X_iVIWi-nmrYKJ5C3IaJsbgWXMoZuray1XyZb79uuto/edit

6.6.2 Promotion Rule
The Modified Committee recommends that any athlete for any modified sport be can elevated at any time during the season. This proposal is being moved forward to the state level for action.

6.6.3 NYSPHSAA Modified Committee Meeting Updates

- Wrestling – discussion of changing from 30 to 20 minute wait time between matches.
- Swimming & Diving – discussion on adjusting the number of dives and types of swims allowable.
- Field Hockey – discussion of moving from 12 minute 30 second periods to 15 minute quarters.
- Football Standards – review, concern of the significant restrictions.

6.7 State Executive Committee/Central Committee

a) Superintendent (J. Sortisio)

Nothing to report

b) Principal (C. Alvarez)

Nothing to report

c) Female Rep./Male Rep. (M. Fallacaro-Dougherty/J. Roth)

The following are discussion items for the November 19, 2025 Athletic Council meeting and action items at the January 14, 2026 Athletic Council meeting to provide direction for M. Fallacaro-Dougherty, Female Representative, and J. Roth, Male Representative, to vote at the February 2026 NYSPHSAA Executive Committee meeting. (Appendix I)

6.7c1 Handbook Committee – Addition to Representation Rule

6.7c2 Modified Committee – Flag Football Coordinator

6.7c3 Modified Committee - Ice Hockey Coordinator

6.7c4 Modified Committee – Revision to the NYSPHSAA Promotion Rule

6.7c5 Boys Basketball: Adopt new 5-second closely guarded NFHS rule (by State Association adoption)

6.7c6 Boys/Girls Bowling – Establish minimum roster size of five (50 bowlers on the school team at the State Tournament

6.7c7 Girls Flag Football NFHS Rule Adoption

6.7c8 Girls Flag Football Rule Request: Dead Ball Flag Checks

6.7c9 Girls Flag Football Pilot: Onside Play

6.7c10 Outdoor Track – To utilize the super standard, an athlete must finish top five in the state qualifier meet, effective 2026

6.7c11 Outdoor Track – No Additional performances using the super standard (obtained after the state qualifier meet) will count toward entry into the state meet.

6.7c12 Outdoor Track – Utilize the three-year average for the formula for qualifying standards using the seed Performances

The intent is to refine the number of athletes at the state event.

6.7c13 Baseball: Make it optional to utilize a double first base during the 2026 season (regular & postseason)

Not mandatory until 2027 season.

6.8 Extended Eligibility (M. DiFilippo)

Nothing to report

6.9 Chemical Awareness (Eric Valley on behalf of J. Grzymala)

- Student Leadership Conference was held on Oct. 28th (Our 1st one of 3 offerings by Section VI) was a huge success - Thank you to Toth's Sports our sponsor, Villa Maria College, Section VI SAAC Committee Members
- Next SAAC SECTION VI Opportunity is Tuesday January 13th at University of Buffalo North Campus --Asst. Director Kim Schon will send out a reminder to ALL Section VI ADs in her weekly / monthly emails
- NYSPHSAA Student Leadership Conference Deadline to sign up for the April Conference is December 12th on the NYSPHSAA website --any questions AD's can reach out to John Grzymala Section VI Rep.

6.10 Transfer/Foreign Student (M. DiFilippo)

Nothing to report

6.11 Sportsmanship (J. Graczyk, D. Ames)

6.11.1 Sportsmanship Report, September 25, 2025 (Appendix J)

6.12 Veterans (J. Trampert)

Nothing to report

6.13 Mixed Competition (C. Alvarez)

Nothing to report

6.14 Nominations (B. Banker)

6.14.1 Section VI Female Representative (M. Fallacaro-Dougherty) Term Expiration June 2026

- Incumbent wishes to renew term
- Challenger application posted on website, deadline March 1, 2026
- Action item May 13, 2026 athletic council meeting

6.14.2 ***Motion to approve of D. Ljiljanich as Section VI President-Elect (Remaining term through June 2026)***
CARRIED
Croft/Kruzynski

D. Ljiljanich is invited to attend executive committee meetings as a non-voting member for the reminder of the 25-26 year and continue to hold the NFL Superintendent's Representative portion on the athletic council. If B. Banker steps down from the President-Elect position prior to the end of the 25-26 school, D. Ljiljanich would move into the president-elect position and the NFL Superintendent's Representative alternate would assume the role.

6.14.3 President-Elect Position, term July 2026 – June 2028 (CCAA League Region)

- Action item May 13, 2026 athletic council meeting
- The application will be posted on the Section VI website with a deadline of March 1, 2025 following this meeting

6.15 Corporate Partners (K. Schon)

- The University of Wyoming was a successful partnership and Section VI looks forward to future opportunities with them.

6.16 Hall of Fame (Cindy Bullis on behalf of J. Dunnigan)

B. Banker and J. Dunnigan were thanked for their years of service. Jim Dunnigan is currently mentoring C. Bullis and will step aside after this year's ceremony.

There were 33 applications this year. Nine candidates were chosen for induction. It was noted that officials was added as a category for nomination.

This year's ceremony will be held December 4, 2025 at The Columns Banquets in Elma, NY.

6.17 Policy Committee (K. Schon)

Last year, the Policy Committee, made sure the language and operations are up to date with how Section VI currently operates.

At their most recent meeting, B. Banker framed out the purpose for the committee to be a reviewing committee, through a lens of language and clarity, when standing committees recommend something under their purview. The committee will continue to move forward in this manner annually.

7.0 **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

7.1 All WNY Scholar Athlete (J. Roth)
The Fall 2025 submission deadline is December 8th, 2025. The form is located on the Section VI website.

7.2 Schools Without Boundaries Ad Hoc Committee (M. Fallacaro-Dougherty)
See agenda item 4.7.

7.2 DEI Committee (A. Lloyd)
A. Lloyd summarized the report in Appendix K.

8.0 **STATE COMMITTEE REPORTS** (informational only) Appendix L

8.1 Outdoor Track (9/9/25)
8.2 Wrestling (9/17/25)
8.3 Ice Hockey (9/19/25)
8.4 Flag Football (9/23/25)
8.5 Championship Philosophy Report (9/24/25)
8.6 Handbook Committee Report (9/24/25)
8.7 Indoor Track (9/25/25)
8.8 Bowling (9/26/25)
8.9 Boys Basketball (10/1/25)
8.10 Girls Golf (10/3/25)
8.11 CAC (10/8/25)
8.12 NFHS Rule Changes (25-26)

9.0 **GUEST REPORTS**

9.1 NYSPHSAA (T. Nelson)

- Philosophy committee meets in December. Sections were asked to report any recommendations
- Sections are encouraged to submit state championship bids. Bids with deadlines are posted on the NYSPHSAA website.

9.2 NYSAAA Report (J. Lehmbeck)

9.2.1 Professional Development November 25, 2025, at Erie 1 BOCES
Registration closes on Friday, Nov 21.

10.0 **OLD BUSINESS**

10.1 Unified Sports

- National Banner Unified Championship Schools: Cattaraugus-Little Valley, Cheektowaga, Dunkirk, East Aurora, Fredonia, Iroquois, Silver Creek, Niagara Wheatfield, Starpoint, Pioneer, Amherst
  This must be renewed every 3 years and meet the standards (2 or more unified teams, whole school Engagement, youth activation committee) set by New York State.
  NYS Unified Championship Schools (recognized by the Special Olympics): Cattaraugus-Little Valley, Cheektowaga, Dunkirk, Eden, Fredonia, Iroquois, Lockport, Jamestown, Orchard Park, and Silver Creek

11.0 **NEW BUSINESS**

Nothing to report

12.0 **GOOD OF THE ORDER/ADJOURNMENT**

12.1 ***Motion to adjourn***
CARRIED
Donahue/Zirkle