

2020 OSSAA FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SERIES MODIFICATIONS

RATIONALE: The cancellations of multiple games during the regular season has caused a concern regarding the accuracy of seedings of each district entering the playoff series. Schools needing to make up multiple canceled contests and the concerns from member schools regarding playing multiple contests in a relatively short time frame was also a factor to considering modifying the current OSSAA plan. Adding a “play-in round” so that all schools may, if they desire, qualify for the playoff series can address potential inaccuracies in the seeding process.

RANKINGS: To facilitate possible seeding scenarios, all districts will begin ranking teams in their district beginning the weekend of October 23 through the OSSAA Rankings platform. The ranking process would include three rankings beginning the weekend of October 23, the second ranking during the weekend of October 30 and last ranking concluding the weekend of November 6. Rankings will open each Friday at noon and close at noon on Saturday.

SEEDINGS WITHIN THE DISTRICT FOR ADVANCEMENT: Districts that ***have not*** canceled any district games would use the seeding process for advancement from the OSSAA Football Manual. “Flagged districts”, districts that have had canceled games, could ***choose*** to use the ranking process to determine final district places for advancement. A majority of the schools within each district may elect to use the ranking process through the OSSAA Rankings site. District Chairman of currently flagged districts must notify OSSAA by 10 am on Friday, October 23 that the flagged district has chosen to use the ranking process. Absent notification by 10 am on October 23, the district will use the flagged district standing for seeding advancement by default. (Districts that are not currently flagged but become flagged after October 23, will have until Friday at 10 am of the week they become flagged to notify OSSAA of their intention to use the ranking process for seeding advancement. Absent a notification, the district will use the modified seeding process for districts that have had games canceled.)

ADDING A PLAY-IN ROUND: Week 19 in the OSSAA calendar (the 11th week of the football season) would be designated as the date for a “play-in round.” (Games will be scheduled on a Friday or Saturday based on the availability of officiating crews. Teams may mutually agree to move the game to Thursday.) All member schools currently in district play would be offered an opportunity to join the playoff bracket. Play-in games would be paired between Districts 1 and 2; 3 and 4; 5 and 6; 7 and 8. Teams would be paired (crossing districts) with 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5 with the higher seed hosting. (Member schools may “opt-out” of the play-in round by notifying the District Chairman as soon as possible; deadline of noon on November 7. District Chairman will notify OSSAA by 1 pm on November 7 what teams have opted out.) (The District chairman for each district is indicated by an * on the link **2020-21 and 2021-22 Football Districts** found on the Football Page of the OSSAA website.)

DETERMINING HOME TEAMS IN PLAYOFF ROUNDS: The play-in round is designated as Round 1. The higher district seed shall host in Round 1. The District Champion shall host in Round 2 if the District Champion advances. (See Board Policy in the OSSAA Football Manual **XI. STATE PLAY-OFF SERIES**, letter C for Round 2 criteria to host.) Determining host teams in 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, A, B, and C for Round 3 shall follow the criteria listed in Board Policy in the OSSAA Football Manual **XI. STATE PLAY-OFF SERIES**, letter D. (Classes 2A, A and B shall use the same criteria for Round 4.) Neutral sites will be used for semi-final rounds. Championship contests in all 11-man classifications will be played at UCO. Eight-man championship game sites will be determined at a later date. (NOTE: Schools that receive a bye in any round would ***not*** be considered as hosting a game in that round.)

INTERRUPTION OF THE BRACKET DUE TO COVID SCENARIOS: A team that cannot play a non-championship playoff game on the scheduled date due to a COVID situation will be eliminated from the series. That team’s opponent in the preceding round will be offered the opportunity to fill that line on the bracket on the scheduled date. If the preceding opponent declines the opportunity or there is no proceeding opponent as in the case of a bye, the remaining team will advance to the next line. State Championship final games issues with the COVID will be handled by OSSAA staff.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS DATES: Adding the play-in round, moves the state championships dates for Class 5A, 4A, 3A and C to the weekend of December 11 and 12. Class 2A, A and B would then be on the weekend of December 18 and 19. Class 6A would remain the weekend of December 4 and 5. (The 6A bye-week will be eliminated.)

MODIFICATION TO THE FOOTBALL END OF SEASON POLICY: Board Policy **II. BEGINNING AND END OF FOOTBALL SEASON** from the Football Manual states that the football season will terminate with week 18 of the OSSAA calendar or a school’s elimination from the OSSAA Football Playoff Series. This year due to the cancellations of many regular season games, member schools that were not able to play 10 regular season varsity games ***may*** complete their 10-game varsity schedule up through the date of the championship game in their classification.