



ATHLETIC COUNCIL MINUTES

September 23, 2026

HIGHLIGHTS

- 3.1 **CARRIED:** June 17, 2026 Section VI Athletic Council meeting minutes
- 4.2 **CARRIED:** Independent status for CSAT – NFL Boys and Girls Soccer 26-27, Global Concepts – ECIC Girls Volleyball 26-27, North Tonawanda – NFL Girls Basketball 26-27, CSAT – NFL Baseball and Softball 26-27.
- 5.1 **CARRIED:** Combining of Schools Applications, numbers (1) through (20)
- 6.1.1 **CARRIED:** Move Eden/North Collins girls lacrosse from class D to class C, based on Dominance, for the 2027 spring season.
- 6.3.1 **CARRIED:** Treasurer's report
- 6.3.2 **CARRIED:** Section VI to sell pre-sale paper tickets at \$10, and charge spectators \$13 at the gate for the 2026 football sectional championships to be held at Broadview Stadium (UB).
- 6.14.2 **CARRIED:** Matt Miller as Section VI Girls Ice Hockey Chairperson, Term July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029

ATHLETIC COUNCIL MINUTES

1.0 CALL TO ORDER (D. Lilleck)

Commenced: 11:30am

1.1 Pledge of allegiance

2.0 PRESENTATION & AWARDS

2.1 Spring 2026 State Champions

- a) Lancaster Softball
- b) Pioneer Flag Football
- c) Ben Walker (Amherst) Discus Class B
- d) Zach Bridenbaker (Depew) 110 Hurdles Class B
- e) Isabella Caparco Hamburg Discus Class B
- f) Ryan Hough (Wilson) Long Jump, High Jump Class C
- g) Ethan Verbosky Maple Grove 800 m Class C
- h) Nathan Mays Silver Creek Pentathlon Class C
- i) Tryniti Card Southwestern 800m Class C
- j) Mikayla Johnson Southwestern Discus Class C
- k) Kendra Cook Springville Pentathlon Class C

3.0 MINUTES (D. Ljiljanich)

3.1 *Motion to approve of the June 17, 2026 Section VI Athletic Council meeting minutes*

CARRIED

Taylor/Zirkle

4.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (M. DiFilippo)

4.1 Section VI Agendas - New Process

Section VI is trialing a more efficient way to share information by providing committee agendas via shared Google files. This allows everyone to see updates in real time. In addition, instead of attached appendices, all supporting documents will now be linked directly within their respective agenda items.

4.2 Conflict of Interest – Annual Acknowledgement

The conflict of interest form is a mandatory, annual acknowledgement. It will be sent out from the Section VI office to council members via email. Prompt reply is kindly requested.

4.3 NYSPHSAA Summer Meeting / Foundation Golf Tournament July 27, 2026

The summer meeting was hosted by Section VI. Positive feedback was received.

4.4 *Motion to approve approve independent status for CSAT – NFL Boys and Girls Soccer 26-27, Global Concepts – ECIC Girls Volleyball 26-27, North Tonawanda – NFL Girls Basketball 26-27, CSAT – NFL Baseball and Softball 26-27.*

CARRIED

Almeida/Taylor

4.5 27-28 [North](#) & [South](#) Proposed Timelines for Schedules and Assignment of Officials

The timelines are established annually and reviewed with the league heads. They will be an action item at the November 18, 2026 athletic council meeting.

4.6 Schools w/o Boundaries (SWOB) and 3 Region Rotation NYS Committees

M. Fallacaro-Dougherty is the Section VI representative on the NYSPHSAA SWOB Committee. J. Roth is the Section VI representative on the 3-Region Rotation Committee, but is willing to step aside if another is interested in taking over the position. Anyone interested should contact M. DiFilippo prior to the November 18, 2026 athletic council meeting.

Both Committees are scheduled to convene December 2026. Some early concerns about the 3-Region Concept have materialized, and the committee will discuss how to address them.

4.7 January 28, 2027 Mandatory AD Workshop at ERie 1 BOCES (Informational)

4.8 New Opt-Out Forms

Opt-out forms have moved online. Schools are to use the digital submission form if they plan to opt out of Sectionals. Submissions are sent to Section VI office staff and respective sport chairs.

4.9 National Banner Winners - Unified Sports 2026

Clarence, Eden, Lancaster

Section VI continues to set the standard for unified sports, leading New York State in both team participation and state awards.

5.0 COMMUNICATIONS (M. DiFilippo)

Informational:

Exec. Approval 9/2/26 Girls Tennis New Chaut. Lake, Maple Grove

Demerge Swimming G Eden, North Collins., Gowanda approved 1/14/26 DROPPED Gowanda 8/12/26

Demerge Swimming B Fredonia, Dunkirk, Silv. Cr, Forestville approved 6/17/26 DROPPED Forestville 7/28/26

Demerge Indoor Track BG, Hutch Tech, Emerson, Culinary Arts, South Park approved 6/17/26 DROPPED South Park 9/16/26

5.1 *Motion to approve of the Combining of Schools Applications, numbers (1) through (20)* [COS Status Chart](#)

CARRIED

Zirkle/Taylor

WINTER 2026-27

1. Basketball B., Existing Bennett, Alternative 460, A
2. Basketball B., Existing, MEC, Research Lab, 306, B
3. Basketball G, Existing, Culinary, Emerson, 716, AA
4. Basketball G, Existing, MEC, Research Lab, 306, B
5. Bowl BG, Existing, Frewsburg, Southwestern, 350, D2
6. Unified Bowl, WS West, WS East, 1322, one division
7. Unified Bowl, Existing Medina, Roy-Hart, 509, one division, **pending league approval**
8. Unified Bowl, Existing, Silver Creek, Forestville, 300, one division, **pending league approval**
9. Hockey G, New, Starpoint, Nia-Wheat, Lew-Port, Nia. Falls, & North Tonawanda, 3501, one division, V
10. Hockey G, Existing, WS West, WS East, Hamburg, Eden, & Cheektowaga, 2812, one division, V
11. Swimming B, Existing, Frewsburg, Southwestern, Jamestown, Falconer, 1752, one division, V
12. Swimming B, Existing, WS West, WS East, 1322, one division, V
13. Wrestling B, Existing, **WS West**, WS East, & Depew, 1270, D1, V, 7/8,
14. Wrestling B, Existing, Fredonia, Forestville, & Silver Creek, 503, D2, V
15. Wrestling B, Existing, Gowanda, Pine Valley, 290, D2, V, 7/8/9
16. Wrestling G, Existing, **Orchard Park**, Frontier, Hamburg, 2675, One Division, V, JV
17. Wrestling G, Existing, Frewsburg, Jamestown, & Southwestern, 1482, one division, V
18. Wrestling G, Existing, Kenmore East, Kenmore West, 1463, one division, V, **pending league approval**
19. Wrestling G, New, Sweet Home, Amherst, Cheektowaga, & Tonawanda, 2289, one division, V
20. Wrestling G, Existing, Fredonia, Forestville, & Silver Creek, 656, one division, V

6.0 STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Combining of Schools Committee (J. Sortisio)

[COS Committee Spring 2027 Recommendations](#)

- 6.1.1 ***Motion to approve to move Eden/North Collins girls lacrosse from class D to class C, based on Dominance, for the 2027 spring season.***
CARRIED, 4 Opposed
Zirkle/Almeida

*Noted: Jeff Sortisio abstained from this vote.

- 6.1.2 Eliminate the end of season reporting requirements for Combined Unified Teams - move to Policy Committee

6.2 Charter Schools Classification Committee (J. Sortisio)

Nothing to report

6.3 Finance Committee (S. Penhollow)

- 6.3.1 ***Motion to approve the Treasurer's report***
CARRIED
Penhollow/Zirkle

- 6.3.2 ***Motion to approve Section VI to sell pre-sale paper tickets at \$10, and charge spectators \$13 at the gate for the 2026 football sectional championships to be held at Broadview Stadium (UB).***
CARRIED
Penhollow/Zirkle

Section VI's approved and published ticket price for the football sectional championships is \$10 (both presale and at the door). Following notification from the 2026 venue, the University at Buffalo (UB), regarding a \$3 service fee, the Finance Committee recommends seeking approval to increase the at-the-door ticket price to \$13.

6.4 Sectional/Intersectional (M. DiFilippo)

- 6.4.1 Wrestling Tournament Adjustment

Leagues will first discuss the matter at the request of Sectional/Intersectional Committee members. The committee will then vote on a final recommendation at its October 2026 meeting and forward it to the Athletic Council.

- 6.4.2 Rationale Girls and Boys Basketball Proposals (27-28 implementation)

Leagues will first discuss the matter at the request of Sectional/Intersectional Committee members. The committee will then vote on a final recommendation at its October 2026 meeting and forward it to the Athletic Council.

Both proposals are the result of the discussions the past 2 school years in regard to different neutral sites for boys and girls semi-finals. Last year was a transition year where Girls Basketball was moved to a college venue (SUNY Fredonia, JCC, Buffalo State).

Basketball is the only sport that utilizes a neutral site prior to the championship round. Moving forward, Section VI must review this format through an equity lens and evaluate how it compares to the structures of all other sports.

The athletic council will only take action if the proposals are recommended for approval by the Sectional/Intersectional Committee.

6.4.3 [26 27 At Large and sub regionals](#)

Informational - list of all at larges and subregionals for the entire year.

6.5 Safety (M. McKenna)

Nothing to report

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

6.6.1 Rolling agenda

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X_iVIWi-nmrYKJ5C3laJsbqWXMoZuray1XyZb79uuto/edit

Noted: For schools struggling with enrollment numbers in field hockey, 2 year pilot program approved for 9 v 9 at mod and JV level only

6.7 State Executive Committee/Central Committee

a) Superintendent (J. Sortisio)

6.7a1 Central Committee was productive and non controversial. Congratulations to Adam Stoltman on his elevation to president.

b) Principal (C. Alvarez)

Nothing to report

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

The following are discussion items ([link to full proposals](#)). Action will be taken via Google survey, sent October 6th, due October 13th close of business, to provide direction for M. Fallacaro-Dougherty, Female Representative, and J. Roth, Male Representative, at the October 2026 NYSPHSAA Executive Committee Meeting

6.7c1 Championship Philosophy - Amend Championship Philosophy regarding percentage of championship Participation

6.7c2 Championship Philosophy - Establish standard qualifying criteria for championships in which athletes qualify by time

6.7c3 Handbook - Individual on a team, max number of contest penalty

6.7c4 Boys/Girls Swimming & Diving - Establish a team state championship

6.7c5 Girls Wrestling - Establish a dual meet state championship in 27-28

6.7c6 Boys Wrestling - Legal uniform at NYSPHSAA Boys Wrestling individual championship

6.7c7 Boys Wrestling - Section and NYSPHSAA dual meet championships and NYSPHSAA representation rule

6.7c8 Baseball Committee & Safety Committee - To permit pitchers and catchers (battery only) to start one week prior to the official spring sports start date

6.7c9 Baseball - Revise the current pitch count guidelines and nights rest

6.7c10 Softball - require all suspended regional and state tournament games to be completed regardless of

being official

6.7c11 Flag Football - Classification cut-off numbers

6.7c12 Flag Football - NFHS Waivers

6.7c13 Flag Football - Overtime Rules

6.7c14 Flag Football - Uniform waiver for sub-varsity

**Note: The NYSPHSAA office sent an additional action item (Wrestling Weight Certification Appeal) for the October 2026 Central Committee meeting. M. DiFilippo informed the league heads and athletic council via email of the item and that it would be included in the google vote scheduled to be distributed on October 6, 2026.*

6.8 Extended Eligibility (M. DiFilippo)

6.8.1 Application Denied (Football, Basketball)

6.9 SAAC (J. Grzymala)

6.9.1 Student Leadership

- a) Section VI Leadership 3 Opportunities - Sign-up was given out at AD Meeting on 8/20 (October - November Dates Available) Theme - Build The Bond
- b) April Conference Dates - April 7th and 8th - Registration Deadline is December 2026 to attend the event for student athletes

6.10 Transfer/Foreign Student (M. DiFilippo)

Reports were shared with the Executive Committee

6.11 Sportsmanship (J. Graczyk, D. Ames)

6.11.1 Recognition Ceremony Review
Positive feedback reported.

6.11.2 NYSPHSAA Sportsmanship Committee meeting is scheduled for October 8th, 2026.

6.12 Veterans (J. Trampert)

6.12.1 Veterans extend thank you to the athletic council for sponsorship of the annual veterans gathering.

6.13 Mixed Competition (C. Alvarez)

Nothing to report

6.14 Nominations (K. Kelly)

6.14.1. Section VI Boys Golf Chairperson Position, remaining term through June 30, 2028 - **No Applicants**
The golf application will be reposted on the Section VI website with a deadline of October 30, 2026 to submit.

6.14.2 **Motion to approve of Matt Miller as Section VI Girls Ice Hockey Chairperson, Term July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029**

CARRIED

Zirkle/Taylor

6.14.3 Section VI Superintendents' Representative (J. Sortisio), Term Expiration June 2027

J. Sortisio has been requested to state his intention regarding term renewal at the Executive Committee meeting on October 14, 2026. Should he decline renewal, or if there are other candidates interested in the role, Section VI will open the application process after the meeting.

6.15 Corporate Partners (K. Schon)

6.15.1 Corporate partnership discussions were initiated with OnCore Golf for Boys & Girls Golf, and Runners Roost for Indoor and Outdoor Track & Field. While both vendors expressed strong interest, they are currently reviewing potential offerings with their respective teams. The council will be updated as things evolve.

6.16 [Hall of Fame](#) (C. Bullis)

The above link shares 2026 ticket and dinner information, list of inductees, as well as advertisement information.

6.17 Policy Committee (K. Schon)

K. Kelly, Section VI President-Elect, will assume the duties of B. Banker, Section VI former President-Elect as Policy Committee Chair.

7.0 **SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

7.1 All WNY Scholar Athlete (J. Roth)

Nothing to report.

7.2 Schools Without Boundaries Ad Hoc Committee (M. Fallacaro-Dougherty)

7.3 DEI Committee (A. Lloyd)

7.3.1 [DEI Report - June 23, 2026](#)

The following areas of the attached report were highlighted

- Flag Football
- The Committee identified participation access and belonging
- BPS losing representation in girls soccer and softball
- Facility equity can affect participation opportunities

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

8.1 [Handbook Committee - June 23, 2026](#)

8.2 [CAC Committee - June 24, 2026](#)

8.3 [Cross Country - August 20, 2026](#)

8.4 [Football Committee - August 10, 2026](#)

8.5 [Boys Lacrosse - July 16, 2026](#)

8.6 [Softball - June 11, 2026](#)

8.7 [Foundation August 18, 2026](#)

9.0 **GUEST REPORTS**

9.1 NYSPHSAA (R. Zayas & T. Nelson)

9.2 NYSAAA Report (J. Lehmbeck)

- Intramurals and physicals - required that every student participation in intramurals must have a valid physicals. This is a significant shift from past procedures.
- It was also noted there is no current representation for athletics in the NYSED

10.0 **OLD BUSINESS**

Nothing to report.

11.0 **NEW BUSINESS**

Nothing to report.

12.0 **GOOD OF THE ORDER/ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn

CARRIED

Salisbury/Penhollow