

FHSAA football committee endorses new RPI ranking to decide playoff spots

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A major change in the way football teams qualify for the [Florida High School Athletic Association](#) state playoffs passed its first hurdle Thursday.

The FHSAA Football Advisory Committee voted unanimously at its annual meeting in [Daytona Beach](#) to move away from the current playoff power points formula in favor of one that relies on a ratings percentage index (RPI).

The new system would essentially add a third layer to the power points system used the past two seasons. The RPI ranking will factor in the winning percentage of a team, along with the winning percentages of its opponents and its opponents' opponents.

The proposed revision eliminates bonus points from the equation and pushes football more in line with a new MaxPreps ranking system set to be implemented in the 2019-20 school year for other sports under the FHSAA umbrella.

FHSAA director of athletics Frank Beasley noted that MaxPreps will not be used to rank football teams. The three variables will be weighted as follows: 35 percent for a team's win percentage, 35 percent for the win percentage of each opponent, and 30 percent for the win percentage of the opponents' opponents.

District champions in Classes 8A through 5A would still earn an automatic spot in the postseason.

Recommendations approved by the football advisory committee must pass through the athletic directors committee on Wednesday and the FHSAA board of directors later this month before being adopted for 2019.

"I like things to be settled on the field," Seminole athletic director Mike Kintz said during the meeting. "A system like this does that, and at least allows for some of the geographical rivalries to stay in place. We're headed in the right direction with this."

The committee also endorsed a recommendation to allow football players to compete in up to six varsity and sub-varsity quarters per week, up from the current rule of one game per week. It's a topic that's been discussed numerous times to no avail in the past.

"I believe it allows kids to develop more," Winter Springs coach Steve Mikles said. "We couldn't even field a JV team last year and a lot of

kids missed out on playing their sophomore year."

Should the recommendation advance past the other committees, a player could compete in a freshman or junior varsity game early in the week and be eligible for playing time on a limited basis in a varsity game.

Other recommendations unanimously approved Thursday included allowing late scheduling additions to be counted toward rankings and creating a "dead period" after each sport season before coaches can ask players to participate in offseason training.

The committee denied a measure to adjust the 35-point mercy rule and tabled a discussion regarding a procedure to determine playoff brackets at an earlier date.

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