

GHSA tightens rules on scheduling, seeding, lawsuits

By TODD HOLCOMB The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Apr 14, 2026

1 of 2



GHSA logo

With major changes coming to how it selects playoff teams, the Georgia High School Association is getting tougher on schedule making and reporting to ensure games don't show up or disappear midseason or go missing.

The GHSA's executive committee also voted on changes Monday intended to help defend itself against lawsuits such as the one that prevented it from suspending nearly 40 Gainesville football players during the 2025 playoffs.

The scheduling rules changes are necessary because the GHSA has adopted a math model to determine playoff matchups in bracket sports for all classifications starting in 2026-27. That math model, which produces the GHSA's Post Season Rankings, considers every game or

contest played.



In the past, region games largely determined playoff teams and their seeds. Nonregion games were less concerning, rarely giving the GHSA reason to get involved beyond contract disputes.

Now that all games will matter, executive director Tim Scott said the GHSA wants to ensure accurate reporting and to prevent coaches from manipulating their teams' PSR with late schedule additions.

The GHSA has set a minimum number of contests that each team must play to make the playoffs in each sport.

"Let's say that basketball gets 22 games (minimum), and as a coach, I decide to schedule 20, and I put my 20 in before the first play date," Scott said. "Then later in the season, I'm looking at my PSR, maybe I can grab another game and make it better. We're trying to prevent that. You shouldn't have a fluid schedule throughout the season."

Schools will be required to submit a permanent schedule a week before each sport's regular season. If a school neglects to enter a scheduled game, it will be fined \$100 for each late addition or correction. Schools will not be able to schedule new games once the season has begun unless it replaces a canceled game, or the school can argue a hardship.

Earlier this year, the GHSA fined four schools \$1,000 apiece for failing to report at least one game. The fines were steep because of their late discovery, which forced the GHSA to reseed the Class 3A boys and girls basketball brackets one day before the first round. The new rules would make it harder for those games to go undetected.



Classes 3A, 2A, A Division I and Private already use the PSR to pick and seed playoff teams, but region finish still matters for this academic year. Region finish won't matter in 2026-27, when the GHSA applies PSR to all classifications.

The GHSA's changes to protect itself legally include making itself a nonprofit corporation instead of an unincorporated nonprofit. Lawsuits against a nonprofit corporation must be filed in the county of the corporation, Scott said. The executive committee approved that move unanimously.

In the Gainesville case in November, the GHSA defended itself in a Hall County courtroom with an elected Superior Court judge, who issued an injunction against the GHSA from suspending players from a playoff game.

The GHSA also amended and added bylaws making it clear it has the ability to discipline athletes and coaches because of misconduct that occurs after games are completed until the athletes or coaches leave the venue.

The bylaw changes also assert that the GHSA may use testimony of law enforcement or school officials, and not just game officials, in making those post-game judgments.

In other business, the GHSA voted not to allow eligibility for transfers who arrive to their new schools within 20 days of the end of the regular season.

The GHSA voted to allow five-on-one offseason skill development periods. The previous bylaw allowed a single coach to work with only four athletes in these offseason practices.

The GHSA reelected president Jim Finch and vice president Curt Miller.

