



**SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SDHSAA MEMBERSHIP
SDHSAA OFFICE BUILDING**

April 22, 2026

11:00 a.m.

Pierre, South Dakota

The SDHSAA membership held its annual meeting on April 22, 2026 at the SDHSAA office in Pierre, with a Zoom option for membership attendance. The meeting was called to order by SDHSAA Executive Director Dan Swartos at 11:10 A.M.

Representing the SDHSAA staff in the SDHSAA office were Dan Swartos, Randy Soma, Kristina Sage, Brooks Bowman, and Ryan Mikkelsen.

Item #1-Determine that a quorum is present

Dr. Swartos took a count of represented schools and determined that the threshold of ten (10) member schools was present, with the following 17 schools represented:

Elkton-Lake Benton	Frederick Area	Harding County	Harrisburg	Huron
Lennox	Pierre T.F. Riggs	Rapid City Central	SF Jefferson	SF Lincoln
SF Roosevelt	SF Washington	Todd County	Watertown	Waverly-South Shore
Lyman	Sturgis Brown			

Item #2-Approval of the Agenda

It was moved by Dr. Jeff Danielsen, Watertown, seconded by Chuck Wilson, Todd County, to approve the agenda as presented.

The motion carried 17-0.

Item #3-Designate a parliamentarian for the meeting

Dr. Swartos designated Randy Soma of SDHSAA as the meeting parliamentarian.

Item #4-Approval of the minutes of the April 23, 2025 Annual Meeting

It was moved by Chad Allison, Lennox, seconded by Ryan Rollinger, Harrisburg, to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2025 minutes of the SDHSAA Annual Meeting as presented.

Motion Carried 17-0.

Item #5 - Financial Report:

Mr. Brad Reinke of New Edge Advisors/Reinke-Gray Wealth Management presented an overview of the SDHSAA financial position to the membership.

Item #6- Accept Nominations from the floor for Board of Directors positions, beginning July 1, 2025

Dr. Swartos announced that he was ready to receive nominations for the **Division IV Representative**- to be filled by a Superintendent. This position is currently held by Jeff Kusters of Frederick Area. He is eligible to re-run as he filled a partial term of less than two years. The Division IV representative may be nominated from any SDHSAA member school with a 25-26 ADM of from Parker (100.55) to Elk Mountain (2.0). **Any member school may nominate a person for this position and all member schools have the opportunity to vote.** The person elected will serve a five-year term on the SDHSAA Board of Directors and is unable to run for re-election.

Dr. Swartos recognized Jon Meyer, Waverly/South Shore, who placed the name of Jeff Kusters, Frederick Area, in nomination.

Hearing no more nominations, Dr. Swartos declared nominations closed.

Sample Ballot can be found in Appendix A.

Item #7-Introduction of three (3) proposed constitutional amendment as submitted by SDHSAA staff

Executive Director Dr. Daniel Swartos introduced three proposed constitutional amendments, as approved by the SDHSAA transfer rules task force.

It was moved by Jeff Kusters, Frederick Area, seconded by Chris Long, Lyman, to send constitutional amendments #1-#3 to the membership for vote.

Motion carried 17-0

Sample ballot can be found in Appendix B

Item #8-Explanation of voting procedures and time frame to be followed.

Dr. Swartos explained the following voting procedures:

- The ballot pertaining to the Board of Directors position will be e-mailed to the Superintendent of each member school within ten days following the Annual meeting- May 2, 2026.
- Deadline for return of all ballots is May 31, 2026.
- The ballots pertaining to the proposed constitutional amendment will be e-mailed to the Superintendent of each member school within ten days following the Annual Meeting- May 2, 2026.
- Deadline for return of all ballots is May 31, 2026.
- For a constitutional amendment to pass, it must receive a sixty percent favorable vote of the Association members who cast a ballot.

Item #9-Recognition of all past members of the SDHSAA Board of Directors and retiring administrators

Dr. Swartos asked all past members of the SDHSAA Board of Directors and any retiring administrators to be recognized. Dawn Seiler of Aberdeen Central was recognized for her contributions to SDHSAA state events and to the youth of Aberdeen Central. Thanks and best wishes were sent to all retiring administrators and coaches.

Item #10-Member Comments

Dr. Swartos asked if there were any comments from member schools in the crowd. No further comments from the membership were offered.

Item #11-Any other business that the membership and/or Board of Directors might wish to consider

Dr. Swartos asked if there was any other business. No other business was raised.

Item #12-Adjournment

It was moved by Randy Hartmann, Pierre, second by Jeff Kusters, Frederick Area, to adjourn. *Motion carried 17-0.*

There being no further business, Dr. Swartos declared the Annual Meeting adjourned at 11:35 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Swartos".

Daniel Swartos, Ed.D.
SDHSAA Executive Director



**SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION
2026 OFFICIAL ELECTION BALLOT
Division IV Representative
TERM: JULY 1, 2026 TO JUNE 30, 2031**

Division IV Representative To be filled by a Superintendent

This position is currently held by Jeff Kusters of the Frederick Area School District. He is able to run for re-election because he filled a partial term of less than two years on the Board. The Division IV Representative may be a Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent from any SDHSAA member school with a 25-26 ADM from Parker (100.55) to Elk Mountain (2.0). This position must be filled by a Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. **Any member school may nominate a person for this position and all member schools have the opportunity to vote.** Lyman and Harding County are ineligible as they already have members on the Board of Directors. The person elected will serve a **five-year term** on the SDHSAA Board of Directors and is unable to run for re-election.

You may vote for **one** candidate.

The deadline for the return of this ballot is **May 31, 2026.**

Jeff Kusters, Frederick Area School District

Name of Member School

Date

Signature (Superintendent or Principal)

Signature (School Board President)

Unless there are TWO signatures, this ballot will be unacceptable and declared void.



SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

2026 OFFICIAL AMENDMENT BALLOT

The deadline for the return of this ballot is **May 31, 2026**. In order to pass, a proposal must receive a 60% favorable vote. Please refer to the accompanying document for the text of the amendment and the rationale that was given at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

AMENDMENT NO. 1

To Amend Chapter I, Part IV, Section 1, Subsection D of the SDHSAA By-Laws

Yes

No

Name of Member School

Date

Signature (Superintendent or Principal)

Signature (School Board President)

Unless there are TWO signatures, this ballot will be unacceptable and declared void.

BALLOTS DUE: May 31, 2026

**SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
AMENDMENT #1**

1.) Amend Chapter 1, Part IV, Section 1, Subsection D of the SDHSAA By-Laws.

C. Eight Semester/Twelve Trimester Rule. A student shall be eligible for four first semesters and four second semesters OR twelve trimesters of interscholastic competition while enrolled in grades 9-12. For the purpose of this subsection, enrollment and attendance in school or participation in one or more contests shall count as a semester/trimester of eligibility. Once a student enrolls as a ninth grader, all semesters/trimesters must be consecutive unless waived as per Article VII, Section 3 (l), page 18 of the Constitution.

D. Four Semester/Six Trimester Middle School Participation Rule. Middle school students shall be eligible for four consecutive semesters OR six consecutive trimesters of high school interscholastic competition while enrolled in grades 7-8. The four semesters/six trimesters begins when the student enrolls as a 7th grader or is a student enrolled in alternative instruction as set forth in SDCL 13-27-3, must be consecutive, and are not dependent upon actual participation in high school level interscholastic competition (the four semesters/six trimesters start at enrollment/recognition as a 7th grader, not upon participation in high school competition). **Upon initial completion of the 8th grade (four semesters/six trimesters of 7th and 8th grade), the student shall begin their eight semesters/twelve trimesters of high school eligibility. No “redshirt” or “reclassification” years will be recognized.**

NOTE: Attendance Defined: If the student is used in the ADM count, full or partial day, they are considered to have attended school.

Rationale: Clarifies the intent of the previous year’s amendment limiting middle school participation in varsity sports to four semesters/six trimesters, specifies that “redshirt” and “reclassification” years between 8th grade and 9th grade are not recognized.

Positives- Provides clarity to schools and families on a question that is being asked on an increasing scale of “can my child repeat 8th grade for sports before starting 9th grade”, “can my child homeschool for a year after 8th grade before entering 9th grade and not have their high school eligibility start?”, and “can my child homeschool and do a year of club sports between 8th and 9th grade before starting their high school eligibility?” The answer to all of those questions is No; the whole concept of redshirting and reclassifying for the purpose of sports goes against the concept of education-based activities.

Negatives/Things to Look For- Parents need to be aware of this rule and need to know that if they do this, the high school eligibility clock starts after completion of 8th grade and their child may run out of eligibility a year sooner than they anticipated. We need to be clear with parents on this rule so there are no surprises.

There may be legitimate reasons why a student would need to be held back a year between 8th and 9th grade. For that situation we have our hardship process to examine the situation individually.



SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

2026 OFFICIAL AMENDMENT BALLOT

The deadline for the return of this ballot is **May 31, 2026**. In order to pass, a proposal must receive a 60% favorable vote. Please refer to the accompanying document for the text of the amendment and the rationale that was given at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

To Amend Chapter II, Part I, Section 1, Subsection J of the SDHSAA By-Laws

Yes

No

Name of Member School

Date

Signature (Superintendent or Principal)

Signature (School Board President)

Unless there are TWO signatures, this ballot will be unacceptable and declared void.

BALLOTS DUE: May 31, 2026

**SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
AMENDMENT #2**

2.) Amend Chapter II, Part I, Section 1, Subsection J of the SDHSAA By-Laws as follows:

J. The eligibility of a student is not affected by a transfer from a school that closes. **The transfer cannot occur until the date of the school closure or the end of the school year in which the school closes. End of school year would include the end of all SDHSAA state championships for the school year.** A student living in a district that does not support and maintain a high school may be declared eligible at a high school that regularly serves that district to which the student commutes daily.

RATIONALE: Existing language is not specific that when a school closes, the transfer cannot take place until after the school closes. We have had questions the last few years regarding schools that are going to close (or are rumored to be closing) and parents wanting a free transfer prior to the school closing. This amendment clarifies that it cannot occur until the school closes.

Positives- Provides clarity to parents, students, and schools of schools that are closing, as well as the surrounding area schools who will be absorbing those students at the closure of the school.

Negatives- We will continue to get questions from families who want to transfer early and families who desire to transfer early to get a head start on academic and athletic participation at the new school.



SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

2026 OFFICIAL AMENDMENT BALLOT

The deadline for the return of this ballot is **May 31, 2026**. In order to pass, a proposal must receive a 60% favorable vote. Please refer to the accompanying document for the text of the amendment and the rationale that was given at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors.

AMENDMENT NO. 3

To Amend Chapter I, Part III, Section IV of the SDHSAA By-Laws

Yes

No

Name of Member School

Date

Signature (Superintendent or Principal)

Signature (School Board President)

Unless there are TWO signatures, this ballot will be unacceptable and declared void.

BALLOTS DUE: May 31, 2026

**SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
AMENDMENT #3**

3.) Amend Chapter I, Part III Section IV of the SDHSAA By-Laws as such:

SECTION 4. POST GRADUATE PARTICIPATION. Student eligibility terminates at graduation, with the exceptions listed below. Graduation means graduation from a traditional school setting, graduation from an alternative instruction setting, graduation from an online school setting, or completion of a GED program.

Exceptions:

1. Students who graduate at the end of the first semester/first or second trimester are eligible until the first day of classes of the second semester/second or third trimester.
2. High school graduates are permitted to participate in inter-school meets or tournaments sanctioned by the Association during the summer months immediately following a second semester/third trimester graduation date.

~~Notwithstanding Section 1 of this chapter, high school graduates may be permitted to participate in inter-school meets or tournaments sponsored by the Association during summer months immediately following such graduation, unless the Board of Directors rules otherwise in the case of any such tournament or meet.~~

Rationale: This clarifies that completion of a high school program, an online high school degree program, graduation from an alternative instruction high school degree program, or graduation/completion of a GED program constitutes graduation and terminates eligibility with the listed exceptions.

Positives- Provides clarity to schools, students, and parents on what constitutes graduation and what happens if you graduate early.

Negatives- Still quite a bit of grey area on what constitutes “graduation” from some listed programs, and manipulation could occur. With the increased use of alternative instruction, homeschool collectives, microschools, and self-guided online degree programs we will likely have to continue to work through these scenarios to address them as they come.