



**MINUTES
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
March 16, 2026**

In accordance with Article 6, Section 3, Paragraph 1 of the Arizona Interscholastic Association, Inc. (AIA) Constitution, a regular meeting of the Executive Board was held on Monday, March 16, 2026, at the AIA Office located at 7007 N 18th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020 and via teleconference.

Member Billy Duarte called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Members in Attendance:

William Duarte, 1A Conference (Superior Jr./Sr. High School)
Tierra Yazzie, 2A Conference (Hopi High School)*
Greg Haagsma, 3A Conference (Valley Christian High School)*
William Wright, 4A Conference (Estrella Foothills High School)
Corey Newland, 5A Conference (Paradise Valley School District)
Jennifer Burks, 6A Conference (Perry High School)*
Tim Carter, Cognia (Yavapai County School Superintendent, Retired)
Steve Johnson, Arizona School Boards Association (CAVIT)
David Verdugo, Arizona School Administrators (Santa Cruz Valley School District – Rio Rico)
Jim Dean, Ed.D, AIA Executive Director

Members Absent:

Missy Townsend, Arizona Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (Prescott High School)

AIA Staff Present:

Toni Corona, Associate Executive Director
Nathan Slater, Associate Executive Director
Tayler Coady, Executive Administrative Assistant

Guests:

Derek Fahleson
Sam Diaz
Matt Smith

**Indicates attendance via teleconference*

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – MARCH 16, 2026

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the adoption of the March 16, 2026 agenda.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion duly made, seconded and carried, Member Duarte, in accordance with Article 6, Section 3, Paragraph 3, Subparagraph 2 of the AIA Constitution, called for the following Executive Sessions:

- ✓ 8:31 am – 9:00 am
- ✓ 10:04 am – 10:18 am

REGULAR MEETING:**MEMBERSHIP COMMENTS**

None.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

The winter championship season has wrapped up. It was an overall exceptional season with higher attendance numbers and high energy games. Congratulations to all those involved in the playoffs and championship games. We are looking forward to a successful spring season.

The 2A, 5A and AIAAA Board Representative positions will be opening for the next three-year block (2026-2029). Information will be sent out to the respective conferences/organization to request applications. Applications will be due to the AIA by April 10th and the Executive Board will make the final determination at the April 20th Board meeting.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**MARICOPA HIGH SCHOOL - DISCUSSION**

Matt Smith provided information to the Executive Board surrounding incidents that occurred at Maricopa High School and at a visiting school involving the boys' basketball team. Mr. Smith discussed the changes that will take place at Maricopa High School moving forward to ensure these incidents do not take place in the future.

FUTURE DATES

March 23, 2026	6A Conference Committee Meeting
March 25, 2026	Student Leadership Advisory Committee Meeting (Xavier) District AD / Conference Leadership Meeting
March 30, 2026	4A Conference Committee Meeting
April 3, 2026	Holiday – AIA Office Closed
April 6, 2026	Athletic Director / Student Leadership Summit (Xavier)
April 9, 2026	5A Conference Committee Meeting
April 20, 2026	AIA Executive Board Meeting
April 27, 2026	4A Conference Committee Meeting // 6A Conference Committee Meeting
April 29, 2026	Student Leadership Advisory Committee Meeting

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

On a motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the Executive Board **approved** the following consent agenda items:

Approval of Minutes

- Executive Board Meeting – February 17, 2026
- Special Executive Board Meeting – February 25, 2026
- Special Executive Board Meeting – February 26, 2026

AIA Lifetime Passes

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Max Ragsdale | Campo Verde |
| 2. Ramona Zuvers | Alhambra |
| 3. David Kruszewski | Sahuaro |
| 4. Jennifer Kruszewski | Sahuaro |
| 5. Karl Thompson | Lake Havasu |
| 6. Nicholas Hysong | Shadow Mountain |
| 7. Pamela Wolfe | Salome/Bicentennial |
| 8. Ryan Wolff | Thunderbird |
| 9. Dr. James Dearing | Thunderbird |

Request for AIA Sanction/Intrastate and Interstate Activities – 2025-26 Master Calendar

In accordance with Article 10, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, the Executive Board approved the sanction requests for the intrastate and interstate activities reflected in the 2025-2026 Master Calendar. The master calendar is posted online at <http://www.aiaonline.org/calendar/?id=5>.

The Master Calendar, which is prepared by the AIA for its member schools, reflects activities (events) that have been sanctioned by the AIA Executive Board. It is the responsibility of each member school to limit its participation in these sanctioned activities to the maximum number of contests set forth in the AIA Bylaws.

ACTION ITEMS:**SCHOOL VIOLATIONS****NOGALES HIGH SCHOOL** – *Nogales Unified*

Rule: Article 14. General Provisions, Section 4 Non School Participation (14.4.1)

Reported Violation:

Two male basketball student athletes competed for a “national” club team in Mexico over the weekend of 1/31-2/1 and again on Tuesday, 2/3.

Schools Corrective Action:

AD received evidence of participation and met with student-athletes and parents regarding infraction. We reviewed the student-athlete handbook in addition to the information reviewed during pre-season student-athlete/parent meetings, both general and team specific. AD met with coaching staff to review incident and established a team meeting to review bylaw 14.4. AD met again with spring staff to ensure this bylaw is also reviewed in their pre-season team meetings to avoid infractions in our spring sports beginning this month.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Nogales High School **Boys’ Basketball Program** on **Advisement** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

SAINT MARY’S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL – *Catholic Diocese of Phoenix*

Rule: Article 14. General Provisions, Section 4 Non School Participation (14.4.1)

Reported Violation:

It was brought to our attention that a male soccer student athlete of ours may have practiced with a group outside of our school’s team. Upon investigation it was confirmed that this student did practice over Christmas break with a team making him ineligible. Student did participate prior to this discovery.

Schools Corrective Action:

Contest forfeited. Student forfeited the remainder of his season upon discovery of the violation. Game student participated in is forfeited. School will work to further educate families on the bylaw and implement a sign off sheet in final forms requiring parents and students to sign off confirming their understanding of the bylaw before eligibility is cleared. All coaches will receive further training on the bylaw as well moving forward.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the St. Mary’s Catholic High School **Boys’ Soccer Program** on **Advisement** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

SCHOOL VIOLATIONS – Cont'd**ST. JOHN PAUL II CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL** – *Catholic Diocese of Phoenix*

Rule: Article 11. Schedules of Contests and Scheduling Contracts, Section 4 Schedule Contracts (11.4.1)

Reported Violation:

Athletic director received a call from the boys' basketball head coach on 2/5 towards the end of the JV game. He mentioned there were numerous concerns that he had regarding player safety. Coach told the AD that the JV game was very physical from his account, sharing that a few of the players were getting hurt, with one getting an elbow directly to the nose. This caused him to have a bloody nose with an excessive amount of blood. Another was pushed to the ground. This athlete had just returned from a Concussion and our Return to Play protocol. Additionally, he stated that another one of our players was being called derogatory names, ones that I believe would have caused physical retaliation from his end. Thank be to God, this athlete did not retaliate. I shared with my coach to monitor the situation, speak with the officials professionally and with available administration about this situation as player safety should be a priority.

In the end the decision was made by Coach to not play the varsity game out of fear of his athletes receiving extensive injuries. The majority of the JV players would have been playing the varsity game as well. I do not believe Coach was acting out of spite but had a genuine concern for his athletes. Was it the right decision after reflecting on it? No. I as the AD take full responsibility for these decisions as I am the school administrator and leader of my coaches. This type of decision will not take place again by St. John Paul II Catholic High School.

Schools Corrective Action:

Contest forfeited. St. John Paul II will pay the fee for the forfeit/contest cancellation the day of the event. I as the AD have spoken with the Mohave Accelerated AD and apologized to him for this decision and also letting him know we will accept any penalty given. In addition, I as the AD will do a better job to instruct my coaches the importance of honoring a contract between two schools, to be patient and poised in these situations and to speak to all appropriate parties of authority at another site in order to be understanding. With this being said, the coach and St. John Paul II have mutually agreed to part ways. JP2 will begin the process of looking for our next head coach.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the St. John Paul II Catholic High School **Boys' Basketball Program** on **Warning** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

SCHOOL VIOLATIONS – Cont'd

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL – *Mingus Union School District*

Rule: Article 15. Student Eligibility Rules, Section 3 Enrollment Rule (15.3.1 and 15.3.4)

Reported Violation:

A Mingus online student athlete was dropped/unenrolled on February 12 due to inactivity. She continued to practice softball until February 17 when we were made aware of the problem. This was prior to the start of any games.

Schools Corrective Action:

The Athletic Department will submit rosters to the Mingus Online Director at the start of every season. The Online Director will cross check rosters and identify the students participating in athletics. A season calendar request will be sent to the Online Director who will be reminded to submit a report verifying attendance and progress on a weekly basis (Friday at 8am)

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Mingus Union High School **Activities Program** on **Advisement** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

CASA GRANDE UNION HIGH SCHOOL – *Casa Grande Union High School District*

Rule: Article 17. Coaches and Coaching, Section 4 Coach's / Sponsor's Code of Ethics (17.5.3.7)

Reported Violation:

Our head girls' soccer coach made comments about the officials to a newspaper reporter on February 13 after their play-in 5A tournament game.

Schools Corrective Action:

The AD had a meeting with the head coach to reinforce the bylaw that was violated on that day. I let him know that this can't happen again.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Casa Grande High School **Athletic Program** on **Warning** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

SCHOOL VIOLATIONS – Cont'd

MINGUS UNION HIGH SCHOOL – *Mingus Union School District*

Rule: Article 19. Policies and Procedures, Section 3 Removal of team (19.3.1)

Reported Violation:

Boys' soccer coach removed the players from the game against Lee Williams with 13:32 left in the game. At that time the game was called by the officials.

Schools Corrective Action:

The coach was placed on administrative leave for the remainder of the season. We will further investigate this incident and take necessary steps to correct this from happening in the future.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Mingus Union High School **Boys' Soccer Program** on **Warning** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

CATALINA HIGH SCHOOL – *Tucson Unified School District*

Rule: Article 19. Policies and Procedures, Section 3 Removal of team (19.3.1)

Reported Violation:

Boys' soccer coach chose to remove his team from play with 8:21 remaining in the game against Gilbert Christian Academy.

Schools Corrective Action:

Contest Forfeited. Coach has been served with a letter of direction which will remain in his file as a warning. A copy of this letter is attached. Coach is required to complete the Sportsmanship certification via the NFHS and will be required to obtain education on AIA bylaws pertaining to this incident from the Athletic Director.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Catalina High School **Boys' Soccer Program** on **Warning** for one year 3/16/26=3/16/27.

SCHOOL VIOLATIONS – Cont'd**MIAMI HIGH SCHOOL** – *Miami Area Unified*

Rule: Article 15. Student Eligibility Rules, Section 10 Transfer Rule (15.10.2)

Reported Violation:

A dual transfer male track and field student athlete participated in an interscholastic athletic event on February 25, 2026. It was determined that a student-athlete enrolled at Miami Senior High School competed in an AIA-sanctioned event on February 25, 2026, despite not meeting eligibility requirements due to a dual transfer situation. The student was previously enrolled at Miami Senior High School, withdrew on January 6th, 2026, and enrolled at Globe High School. The student subsequently withdrew from Globe High School and re-enrolled at Miami Senior High School on January 20th, 2026. The student did not complete and submit the required AIA Form 550 (Transfer Form) upon returning to Miami. The athletic department did not verify the student's withdrawal and re-enrollment status through the attendance office prior to allowing participation. As a result, the student participated in the February 25 event without clearance from the AIA regarding transfer eligibility.

Schools Corrective Action:

To improve efficiency, accuracy, and accountability in student clearance and athletic participation, the following measures shall be implemented immediately:

Before any athlete participates in practices, scrimmages, or competitions, the following will be completed and verified:

- Enrollment Status Confirmed
- Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) Transfer rules reviewed and 550 Form completed
- Academic eligibility confirmed
- Parent residency verified

All requirements must be signed by the Athletic Secretary, Athletic Director, and Head Coach prior to participation.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Miami High School **Activities Program** on **Advisement** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

SCHOOL VIOLATIONS – Cont'd**SIERRA LINDA HIGH SCHOOL** – Tolleson Union High School District

Rule: Article 21. Baseball, Section 3 Preseason Interschool Varsity Scrimmage (21.3.1.2)

Reported Violation:

Sierra Linda and Westview High Schools head baseball coaches held a baseball scrimmage on February 28th without informing school administration or using district transportation.

The scrimmage was not held the week prior to the AIA date of competition (after season started). The scrimmage was not sanctioned by the AIA and no AIA officials were present.

Schools Corrective Action:

The head baseball coach will:

- Serve a 2-game suspension during the next two AIA varsity contests. Effective 3/3/26
- Review and confirm your understanding of all applicable AIA bylaws and TUHSD athletic policies.
- Arrange a meeting with the athletic office every Friday to review the following weeks events.
- Provide a written plan to the principal outlining how you will ensure all future athletic activities are properly authorized and supervised.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Sierra Linda High School **Baseball Program** on **Advisement** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

WESTVIEW HIGH SCHOOL – Tolleson Union High School District

Rule: Article 21. Baseball, Section 3 Preseason Interschool Varsity Scrimmage (21.3.1.2)

Reported Violation:

Sierra Linda and Westview High Schools head baseball coaches held a baseball scrimmage on February 28th without informing school administration or using district transportation.

The scrimmage was not held the week prior to the AIA date of competition (after season started). The scrimmage was not sanctioned by the AIA and no AIA officials were present.

Schools Corrective Action:

The head baseball coach will:

- Coach is no longer with the program
- Review and confirm your understanding of all applicable AIA bylaws and TUHSD athletic policies.
- Arrange a meeting with the athletic office every Friday to review the following weeks events.
- Provide a written plan to the principal outlining how you will ensure all future athletic activities are properly authorized and supervised.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Westview High School **Baseball Program** on **Advisement** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

SCHOOL VIOLATIONS – Cont'd**COOLIDGE HIGH SCHOOL** – *Coolidge Unified*

Rule: Article 15. Student Eligibility Rules, Section 2 Application of Student Eligibility Rules (15.2.3)

Reported Violation:

On the evening of March 2, 2026, I was made aware that a baseball student athlete was participating in games without a 550 form submission. Once submitted and speaking with a fellow athletic director, it was discovered that this student competed at the JV baseball level at Perry high school the year prior. Since discovered, we are being proactive by self-reporting and adhering to the AIA bylaws.

Schools Corrective Action:

Contest forfeited. Coolidge High School will meet with all coaches prior to the start of their season to ensure any student athlete that's new to the team (regardless of class) will be thoroughly vetted prior to clearance.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, **accepted** the report from Coolidge High School.

GOODYEAR HIGH SCHOOL – *Agua Fria Union High School District*

Rule: Article 15. Student Eligibility Rules, Section 7 Physical Examination Rule (15.7.1 and 15.7.2)

Reported Violation:

We recently discovered that a student athlete has been participating in baseball since the start of the season without a FinalForms registration. This occurred due to confusion between two students with the same first name and similar last name. one student who is participating in another spring sport, had selected baseball in FinalForms and was properly cleared. The student who actually tried out for and has been participating in baseball never created a FinalForms account. As a result, the coach mistakenly believed the participating student had been cleared, leading to this clerical oversight.

Schools Corrective Action:

School administration will issue district level consequences and meet with coach to review policy and procedure. A formal final forms training and an attendance plan will be created to ensure this does not happen in the future.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Goodyear High School **Activities Program** on **Warning** for one year 3/16/26-3/16/27.

CANCELLATION REQUESTS – CONTEST AND/OR PROGRAMS

In accordance with Article 11, Section 4, Paragraph 3, Subparagraph 1 of the AIA Bylaws, the Executive Board **approved** the following cancellation request for a varsity, junior varsity, freshman program(s) that could have a bearing on regional or state playoffs:

SCHOOL REQUESTING:

1. BASIS Flagstaff
2. Mountain Pointe
3. Apache Junction
4. Leading Edge Academy
5. Cicero Prep
6. North Valley Christian
7. Buckey Union
8. Phoenix Christian
9. Maricopa
10. Veritas
11. Mountainside
12. El Capitan/Fredonia
13. Patagonia

HEREBY CONSENT:

- VAR Girls’ Tennis Program
- VAR Boys’ Volleyball Program
- VAR Boys’ Tennis Program
- VAR Softball Program // VAR Boys’ Volleyball Program
- VAR Boys’ Volleyball Program
- VAR Softball Program
- VAR Boys’ Tennis Program
- VAR Girls’ Beach Volleyball Program
- VAR Girls’ Beach Volleyball Program
- VAR Baseball Program
- VAR Baseball Program
- VAR Softball Program
- VAR Girls’ Tennis Program

SUB VARSITY PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS – 38

CONTEST(S) Cancelled: 177 total contests cancelled (VAR/JV/FR/SO)

SCHOOL REQUESTING:

1. St. John Paul II

HEREBY DOES NOT CONSENT:

Mohave Accelerated – VAR Boys’ Basketball Contest

ADDITIONAL GAME REQUESTS

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the following requests:

- A. **Odyssey Institute** – additional VAR/JV baseball games to help fill **ALA Mesa North’s** schedule.
- B. **Winslow** – additional VAR/JV softball games to help fill **St. John’s** schedule.
- C. **Desert Mountain** – additional JV girls’ beach volleyball match to help fill **Verrado’s** schedule.

REQUEST – RANCHO SOLANO – EXCEPTION TO ARTICLE 42.8.2 – ESPORTS

Rancho Solano Prep is requesting an exception to the ESPORTS playoff requirement that all members of the team must compete from the same room to compete as a team. Members of their team will be scattered in different locations due to their high school grade academic focused class trips scheduled for April 11 - April 17.

Rancho Solano has outlined a plan to ensure a fair and equitable match.

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **denied** the following request.

NFHS RULE ADOPTION – SOFTBALL

It is requested that beginning the 2026-2027 school year the use of a double first safety bag go into effect for softball.

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the adoption beginning the 2026-2027 softball season.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY APPEAL

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **tabled** the request.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion made, seconded, and carried, the meeting adjourned at 10:20 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Dean Ed., D.
AIA Executive Director