



**MINUTES
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
August 10, 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, August 10, 2026, at the AIA Office, 7007 N 18th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85020.

President Corey Newland called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Members in Attendance:

William Duarte, 1A Conference (Superior Jr./Sr. High School)
Tim Bridges, 2A Conference (American Leadership Academy – Anthem South)
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)
Missy Townsend, Arizona Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (Prescott High School)
Jim Dean, Ed.D, AIA Executive Director

AIA Staff Present:

Rosa Leon, Legal Counsel*
Toni Corona, Associate Executive Director
Nathan Slater, Associate Executive Director
Tayler Coady, Executive Administrative Assistant
Brian Gessner, Commissioner of Officials
Brian Bolitho, Director of Business Development
Tyler Cerimeli, Director of Athletics & Officials
Mark Panepinto, Tournament Coordinator

Guests:

Brady Pond
Chris Lentz
Nathan Bolden
William Castelamare
Shawn Lytle
Shelly Arredando
David Huffine

**Indicates attendance via teleconference*

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – AUGUST 10, 2026

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the August 10, 2026 agenda.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion duly made, seconded and carried, President Newland in accordance with Article 6, Section 3, Paragraph 3, Subparagraph 2 of the AIA Constitution, called for the following Executive Session(s):

- ✓ 8:31 am – 8:56 am
- ✓ 10:31 am – 11:04 am

REGULAR MEETING:**MEMBERSHIP COMMENTS**

None.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

The NFHS Summer meeting was held in Salt Lake City, Utah in June. AIA Staff members attended and presented information about the new AZP365 Podcast and how that process has worked over the last few months. Dr. Dean presented alongside other Executive Directors regarding resources created to assist parents, students and athletic directors in the transfer process. Discussions continue amongst all state associations about transfers and legislative concerns.

The September 15 Executive Board meeting will be held in Prescott, AZ at the conclusion of the AIAAA Conference at the Prescott Resort Convention Center.

Members of the AIA staff will travel and participate in the NFHS Annual Sports Summit in October.

The NADC (formerly NIAAA) will be held in Phoenix in December 2026.

Arizona is well represented with members from AIA serving on multiple NFHS Committees this year. Those include the following:

- Jeanie Kosower - Officials Advisory
- Tyler Cerimeli - Football Rules / Flag Football Chair
- Mark Panepinto - Wrestling Rules
- Erin Coy - Heart of the Arts
- Jim Dean - NFHS Foundations Board / NFHS Strategic Plan / NFHS Appeal Board
- Rich Hamilton - Coach Advisory
- David Martinez – Softball Officials
- Bev Nielsen – Volleyball Officials

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**FINANCIAL REPORT**

In accordance with Article 6, Section 5, Paragraph 15 of the AIA Bylaws, the Executive Board **approved** the following financial report:

- ✓ Financial Report for End of Year 2026

FUTURE DATES

August 11, 2026	Hardship Appeal Deadline – Fall Round 2
August 11-12, 2026	Hardship Appeals – Fall Round 1
August 13, 2026	Bylaw Workshop – Chandler District
August 17, 2026	Bylaw Workshop – Lake Havasu High School
August 18-19, 2026	Hardship Appeals – Fall Round 2
August 20, 2026	4A Conference Meeting
August 24, 2026	6A Conference Meeting
August 25, 2026	Executive Board Meeting – Hardship Appeals – Fall Round 1
August 26, 2026	District AD / Conference Leadership Meeting // 1A Conference Meeting
August 27, 2026	3A Conference Meeting // Bylaw Workshop – Deer Valley District Office
September 1, 2026	Executive Board Meeting – Hardship Appeals – Fall Round 2
September 2, 2026	Student Leadership Advisory Committee Meeting
September 12-15, 2026	AIAAA Conference – Prescott
September 15, 2026	Executive Board Meeting – Prescott

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 – May 18, 2026

AIA Lifetime Passes

1. Michael Garcia	Basha/CUSD
2. Melanie Mock	Estrella Foothills
3. David Webb	Corona del Sol/TUHSD
4. Benjamin Maxfield	Corona del Sol/TUHSD
5. Erik Johnson	Glendale Union School District
6. Christine Lopezlira	Peoria Unified School District
7. David Romero	Mountain View Marana
8. Patricia Laperuta	Mountain View Marana
9. Leah Oliver	Marana
10. Matthew Taylor	Catholic of Diocese of Phoenix
11. Steve Coffey	Salpointe Catholic
12. Pat Ryden	Salpointe Catholic
13. Brian Avila	AIA Official
14. Ilsa Bednar	AIA Official
15. Paul Carrillo	AIA Official
16. Chuck Coplan	AIA Official
17. Baldemar Dagnino	AIA Official
18. Glenn Dobbin	AIA Official
19. Thomas Drzazgowski	AIA Official
20. Edward Enriquez	AIA Official
21. Rodd Gatewood	AIA Official
22. Erich Helmich	AIA Official
23. Russell Hill	AIA Official
24. Stan Hoover	AIA Official
25. Tom Jenkins	AIA Official
26. Terry Jones	AIA Official
27. Guillermo Lopez	AIA Official
28. Jeff Lopez	AIA Official
29. Romulo Martinez	AIA Official
30. Michael Ransom	AIA Official

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – Cont'd**AIA Lifetime Passes**

32. Jerry Schuchardt	AIA Official
33. Harold Sakamoto	AIA Official
34. Jon Terpay	AIA Official
35. Ruben Trinidad	AIA Official
36. Mick Varela	AIA Official
37. Sharon Watson-Murray	AIA Official
38. John White	AIA Official
39. James Winfrey	AIA Official
40. Ron Williams	AIA Official

Request for AIA Sanction/Intrastate and Interstate Activities – 2026-27 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 2026-2027 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****RED MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL** – Mesa Public Schools

Rule: Article 15. Student Eligibility Rules, Section 12 Recruitment Rule (15.12.4.6)

Reported Violation:

In May 2026, a current Red Mountain football position coach contacted the mother of an eighth grade student regarding attendance at Red Mountain High School. The student had previously played for a Red Mountain feeder football team. At the time of contact, no football camps or organized activities were taking place, and the student was boundary-assigned to another high school. The coach believed that, because the student had participated in the Red Mountain feeder program, and had not attended high school yet, he was permitted to contact the family and discuss the Red Mountain football program and the school.

Schools Corrective Action:

Conducted a thorough investigation and meeting with the head football coach, who was unaware of the contact. Following the investigation, the entire football staff was addressed regarding the applicable bylaw and expectation for compliance. Throughout the summer, meetings have continued with head coaches and assistant coaches across programs to ensure a clear understanding of the bylaw and to reinforce strict adherence to its requirements. Furthermore, the coach involved in this incident is no longer a member of the Red Mountain High School coaching staff in any capacity as a result of this violation. These actions were taken to ensure accountability and to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future.

Executive Board Action:

The Executive Board, in accordance with Article 16, Section 1 of the AIA Bylaws, placed the Red Mountain High School **Football Program** on **Warning** for one year 8/10/26-8/10/27.

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 program(s) that could have a bearing on regional or state playoffs:

<u>SCHOOL REQUESTING:</u>	<u>VAR PROGRAM CANCELLING:</u>
1. Catalina	Boys' Volleyball
2. Marana	Boys' Beach Volleyball
3. Red Valley – Cove	Girls' Volleyball
	Boys' / Girls' Basketball
	Baseball / Softball
4. Duncan	Boys / Girls Track
5. Arcadia	Boys' Beach Volleyball
6. Heritage Academy Gateway	Boys / Girls Tennis
7. Valley Union	Football
8. El Capitan	Football
9. Seton Catholic	Boys' Beach Volleyball

VARSITY CONTEST CANCELLATIONS: 45

ADDITIONAL GAME REQUESTS

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

- A. **Rio Rico** – additional VAR girls' flag football game to help fill **Sabino's** schedule.
- B. **Rio Rico** – additional VAR/JV/FrSo boys' basketball games to help fill **Amphitheater's** schedule.
- C. **Apache Junction** – additional VAR girls' flag football game to help fill **Heritage Maricopa's** schedule.
- D. **Desert Ridge** – additional Fr/So tackle football game to help fill **Skyline's** schedule.
- E. **Az College Prep** – additional VAR girls' flag football game to help fill **Cactus Shadow's** schedule.
- F. **Saguaro** – additional VAR girls' flag football game to help fill **Raymond Kellis's** schedule.
- G. **Benjamin Franklin** – additional VAR girls' flag football game to help fill **Horizon's** schedule.
- H. **Nogales** – additional VAR girls' flag football game to help fill **Cienega's** schedule.
- I. **Queen Creek** – additional VAR/JV/FrSo boys' basketball games to help fill **Hamilton's** schedule.
- J. **Yuma Catholic** – additional VAR/JV/FrSo boys' basketball games to help fill **Palo Verde's** schedule.
- K. **Camelback** – additional Fr/So football game to help fill **Barry Goldwater's** schedule.
- L. **Northwest Christian** – additional Fr/So football game to help fill **ALA Radiance's** schedule.
- M. **Winslow** – additional JV football game to help fill **St John's** schedule.

AIA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL – MEETING DATE

It is recommended that the annual AIA Legislative Council Meeting be held on **April 16, 2027**. Based on an April 16, 2027 meeting date, and in accordance with Article 5, Section 1 of the AIA Constitution, the deadline for submitting an agenda item would be February 26, 2027. The agenda mail-out deadline would be March 19, 2027.

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the date for Legislative Council.

TRAVEL AND EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

The Executive Board reaffirmed its determination of September 16, 1996 concerning Article 15, Section 15, Paragraph 1 of the AIA Bylaws, which states that the AIA member schools should recognize only the foreign exchange programs approved by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) (www.csiet.org).

The Executive Board directed that, as a convenience for AIA member schools, these official minutes reflect the travel and exchange programs listed in the CSIET's **2026-2027** edition of **Advisory List** - <https://aiaonline.org/files/18056/2026-2027-csiet-advisory-list.pdf>

It shall be the responsibility of the local school administrator to ensure that all other eligibility requirements are met before a student participates in interscholastic activities.

REQUEST – 1A CONFERENCE – COPPER DIVISION

The 1A Conference has after careful consideration and polling of 1A Conference school participants, opted out of the Copper Division Basketball Tournament. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact 1A Conference Leadership.

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the withdrawal of the 1A Conference from the Copper Division Basketball Tournament.

REQUEST – CO-OP BOWIE/SAN SIMON // MEMBERSHIP FOR BOWIE

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the co-op request for Bowie/San Simon beginning the 2026-2027 school year. With the approval of the Co-Op the Executive Board, approved the membership for Bowie High School.

REQUEST – RESCIND CANCELLATION FINE

Tonopah Valley is requesting to rescind the \$1,000 fine from a softball game with Benjamin Franklin.

The softball game was played and suspended due to darkness. They were unable to find a date that worked for both schools to continue the game.

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board, **upheld** the cancellation fine imposed to Tonopah Valley High School.

AMENDMENT – ARTICLE 14 – ALL-STAR COMPETITION

Discussion took place regarding the All-Star bylaw and the current AIA policy.

REQUEST – DESERT EDGE HIGH SCHOOL – ALL STAR GAME

Desert Edge High School is requesting approval to participate in the January 2027 all-star football game in San Antonio. The following individuals are involved:

- Head Coach – Henri MacArthur (Assistant Coach for the event)
- Class of 2027 – Blake Roskopf
- Class of 2028 – Jalandie George, Jaelyn Easterling Flores, Nekhi Lambeth

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

AMENDMENT – ARTICLE 15

Conversation regarding potential amendments to Article 15, after discussion, a motion was made and carried, with a vote ending in a tie, no action taken.

FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SEEDING

The AIA made the recommendation to adopt the MaxPreps National Football Rankings for all Conferences. MaxPreps will work to display these rankings on AZPreps365.com by the end of August.

Thanks to Brian Bolitho and Tyler Cerimeli for their work alongside MaxPreps to make this happen. MaxPreps has created an extensive FAQ document that provides information regarding the ranking system and its various components. The FAQ can be found [here](#).

On a motion made, seconded and carried the Executive Board **approved** the use of the MaxPreps National Football Rankings.

AMENDMENT – ARTICLE 24 – FOOTBALL

Recommendation from NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

On a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **approved** the amendment.

AMENDMENT – ARTICLE 37 – CHESS

On a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **approved** the amendment.

AMENDMENT – ARTICLE 40 – SPIRITLINE

On a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **approved** the amendment.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY APPEAL

REQUEST FOR HARDSHIP ELIGIBILITY – FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENT

15.15.1 **FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS** – A foreign exchange student is a student that is in the U.S. under a J-1 Visa, and who is placed in a school by an educational exchange program approved by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). A foreign exchange student is eligible at a school in the attendance zone of the home in which the student is placed. A foreign exchange student must meet all other eligibility requirements and is eligible for a maximum of one school year.

- Valley Vista High School

The following representatives entered the meeting for a student eligibility appeal and left upon completion of their presentations

Valley Vista

Mat Clark – Athletic Director, Kevin Cashatt – District Athletic Director

Following review and discussion of the written and oral information, on a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **denied** the above appeal.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY APPEAL**REQUEST FOR HARDSHIP ELIGIBILITY – MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION**

15.9 **MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION RULE** – After a student first enrolls in the ninth grade, he/she has a maximum of eight semesters of opportunity and a maximum of four seasons of opportunity in each sport or activity. **Semesters 1-8 must be consecutive.**

- Tempe High School

The following representatives entered the meeting for a student eligibility appeal and left upon completion of their presentations

Tempe Shelly Arredondo – Athletic Director, David Huffine – District Athletic Director, Parent

Following review and discussion of the written and oral information, on a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **approved** the above appeal.

APPEAL – WRESTLING DIVISION PLACEMENTS

- Chinle High School (DIII to DIV)

Following review and discussion of the oral information presented, on a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **approved** the above appeal.

- Peoria High School
 - Boys – Section Placement
 - Girls – DII to DI

Following review and discussion of the oral information presented, on a motion made, seconded, and carried the Executive Board **denied** the above appeal.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion made, seconded, and carried, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 am.

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