

New York State Committee On Open Government: NYSPHSAA Meetings Should Be Open To The Public

Opinion Enables Wrestling Coaches Association To Press NYSPHSAA For Multiple-Entry Tournament

A letter from The New York State Committee on Open Governments issued an opinion that the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) was “a public body that falls within the requirements of the Open Meetings Law”.

The opinion was requested after the NYSPHSAA Coordinator for Wrestling barred the NYS Wrestling Coaches Association from attending the state wrestling committee meeting in May where changes in the New York State Wrestling Tournament were to be proposed. Among the proposals to be considered then was the NYS Wrestling Coaches Association proposal for a two-division multiple-entry tournament – supported by 175 coaches from across the state.

This opinion is especially significant in that New York State Courts have viewed the advisory opinions prepared by the Committee as authoritative, often citing them in judicial decisions.

“This is great news,” said Rich Romeo, President of the New York State Wrestling Coaches Association. “We thought they were wrong to try and exclude us in the first place. We’re looking forward to attending their future meeting and we intend to press for real reforms in the state tournament”.

The NYS Wrestling Coaches Association is the leading advocate for reforming the NYS Wrestling Tournament. The Association is campaigning for a multiple-entry state tournament organized in a way that provides a fair opportunity for wrestlers to qualify for the state tournament. New York is the only state in the union that limits their state wrestling tournament to a single entry per division and it’s one of just two states that doesn’t organize its qualifying tournaments with equal numbers of competitors. The other state, California, compensates for their uneven qualifying events by sending multiple entries to their state tournaments based on the number of competitors in the respective qualifiers.