

# Swimming & Diving Advisory Committee Recommendations

Winter 2026

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Recommend adding language to Swimming & Diving Manual Section 2.F (Missouri Swimming & Diving Adoptions and Notes regarding NFHS Rules) to formally adopt the use of backstroke ledges in Missouri high school swimming competitions. (7-0)**

**Rational:** In March 2025, the NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee approved Rule 2-7-3, granting state associations the option to permit the use of backstroke ledges beginning with the 2025–26 school year. This rule establishes clear parameters for implementation, including:

- A minimum water depth of six feet from the starting wall extending at least 16 feet, 5 inches (5 meters).
- Standardized dimensions for the ledges.
- A requirement that, if used, identical ledges must be provided in all lanes by the host facility.
- Optional use by individual swimmers, ensuring no athlete is required to utilize the equipment.

The adoption of this rule is the result of extensive review and research focused on athlete safety, risk minimization, and alignment with national and international swimming standards. Backstroke ledges are widely recognized for enhancing start stability and consistency without increasing risk when used under regulated conditions.

The Missouri state championship facility has confirmed that procurement and implementation of backstroke ledges would be feasible, with equipment available for use beginning with the 2026–27 fall and spring championship season.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Recommend revising Swimming & Diving Manual section 3.G.4: *The competitor must complete attempt all scheduled dives. No failed dives.* A diver shall be disqualified and shall perform no further dives if two dives are failed, in accordance with NFHS Rule 9-8-3. (7-0)**

**Rational:** Currently, divers are permitted to qualify for the state meet despite recording a failed dive at the district level. However, the existing language in Section 3.G.4 creates a more restrictive standard for advancing to the district level than is applied at the state level. This inconsistency places an unnecessary burden on athletes during earlier stages of competition.

Aligning the district qualification standard with state-level expectations ensures consistency across all levels of competition and adherence to NFHS Rule 9-8-3, which permits a diver to continue competition until two failed dives occur.

- \* Denied
- \*\* Tabled
- \*\*\* Approved as Amended
- \*\*\*\* No Action

**All Others Approved**

Action taken by Board of Directors – April 10, 2026