

OCTOBER 14, 2025 | NEWS

Toledo High School Football Star Wins Appeal to Stay in the Game

Shumaker Helps Kayden Zoeller Regain Eligibility to Play for St. John's Jesuit High School after Transfer

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TOLEDO, OH — Shumaker is proud to announce that Toledo high school football athlete Kayden Zoeller has won a rare appeal before the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA), allowing him to continue playing this season and into the playoffs for St. John's Jesuit High School.

Zoeller, a junior, transferred from Perrysburg High School to St. John's Jesuit at midyear last season. Under standard OHSAA transfer rules, he would have been required to sit out the final 50 percent of the current football season, as well as any possible playoff games.

Shumaker lawyers were able to demonstrate at the appeal hearing in Columbus on Wednesday that Zoeller met one of the few, narrow exceptions that OHSAA rules provide to gain relief from the 50 percent sit-out rule, allowing him to regain his eligibility.

"An appeal like this is very difficult and rare to win, and we're thrilled with the result," said Robert Boland, Partner with Shumaker's Hospitality, Leisure & Sports Industry Sector Team, which led the effort. "Kayden's case reflects how these rules can impact young athletes, and we're proud to help ensure fairness in the process.

"We'd like to compliment OHSAA for the fairness of the hearing process and the concern the appeals board showed for Kayden," Boland added. "Obviously, we are gratified by the decision, but even more so by the fact Kayden is thriving academically and personally at St. John's Jesuit. As a firm founded 100 years ago in Toledo, we at Shumaker are exceptionally proud to fight for deserving Toledo-area athletes like Kayden."

The successful appeal ensures Zoeller can resume competing and contribute to St. John's Jesuit's playoff run. Zoeller played Friday night in a Jesuit loss to Detroit Central Catholic. He missed two games before the appeal could be heard. Shumaker's legal team included Robert Boland, Bart Lambergman, and Bennett Speyer.

Why It Matters

Selection Sunday is quickly approaching for high school football programs across Ohio and Michigan, as teams battle for playoff positioning and postseason eligibility.

As of Friday, October 11, Saint John's Jesuit was ranked No. 9 in Region 6, Division 2, according to OHSAA computer ratings. With two weeks left in the regular season, and matchups against Warren De La Salle and Detroit U-D Jesuit, the Titans are striving to stay within the top 12 to secure a playoff berth.

Zoeller's eligibility could be critical as the Titans look to finish strong and extend their postseason hopes. But for Zoeller, the win could be especially difference making, as he is beginning to be recruited by colleges—having at least three more regular season games to both develop and have positive game tape could be very significant to his case.

Kayden is the son of Keith and Michelle Zoeller, and they reside in Perrysburg.

Shumaker's national Sports Law practice represents a diverse group of coaches and athletic directors at NCAA member institutions, professional franchise coaches, and other sports figures and entertainers. Lawyers in the group collaborate with clients and their agents, accountants, and financial and other key advisors to create comprehensive career and financial plans.