

Akron Beacon Journal

Ranking the top 30 Akron area high school football players in 2026



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Key Points

- We rank our top 30 Greater Akron high school football players entering this season.
 - The season begins Aug. 20.
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[High school football season](#) is here and we're as excited as anyone for it to begin.

With that in mind, here's the Greater Akron top 30 player rankings, regardless of position.

While [recruiting](#) played a role in some of these selections, this top 30 is based on play and potential.

Argue away:

1. Brysen Hall

Wadsworth quarterback, 6-foot, 198 pounds, Class of 2028

Hall is coming off a season in which he was first-team Division II All-Ohio. He completed 139 of 215 passes for 2,490 yards and 29 touchdowns with just four interceptions. The standout has offers from Pittsburgh, Kent State, Toledo, Miami (Ohio), UConn, USF, Buffalo and Syracuse.

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2. Karsen Fisher

Nordonia tight end/edge, 6-4, 225, Class of 2027

How good is Fisher? The Toledo commit showed up on our top defensive linemen, linebacker, two-way players and tight end lists. Fisher had 28 receptions for 393 yards and four touchdowns on offense last season. Fisher also had 66 tackles (nine for loss), 1½ sacks, a forced fumble, a fumble recovery, an interception, a TD and a blocked kick on defense and special teams.

3. Tommy Kopec

CVCA running back, 6-1, 210, Class of 2028

The All-Ohio honorable mention linebacker ran for 446 yards and seven TDs on 56 carries, and had three catches for 72 yards and two TDs. He finished with 70 tackles, five QB pressures, five tackles for loss, three sacks and an interception. He already has received an offer to join his brother Joey at Rutgers and is attracting attention from other Big Ten schools.

4. Steven Fakult

Nordonia quarterback, 6-3, 200, Class of 2027

Fakult is coming off a season in which he was second-team Division II All-Ohio. He completed 199 of 354 passes for 3,072 and 27 TDs with only four interceptions. He has offers from Findlay, Walsh and Clarion.

5. David Ternosky

Walsh Jesuit quarterback, 6-0, 185, Class of 2027

Ternosky was second-team all-district a season ago after completing 117 of 186 passes for 1,455 yards and 19 TDS. Ternosky, who added 404 yards and four TDs on the ground, led the Warriors to the state semifinals for the first time since 1999.

6. John Johnson

Hoban wide receiver/safety, 6-4, 190, Class of 2027

Johnson committed to play wide receiver at Bowling Green in June over other scholarship offers from Kentucky, Toledo, Miami (Ohio), James Madison, Kent State, Western Michigan, Liberty, Eastern Michigan, Marshall and Ball State. Johnson had 24 catches for 479 yards

and three TDs last season.

7. Terrel Karim Jr.

East tight end/defensive end, 6-3, 200, Class of 2027

Karim is a Bowling Green commit who had 31 catches for 503 yards and four TDs, and 42 tackles (19 for loss), 10 sacks, an interception and a TD on defense in 2025. The Division III honorable mention All-Ohioan, who led the Dragons to a City Series title, has 16 college offers.

8. Dylan Fantone

Twinsburg quarterback, 6-2, 175, Class of 2027

Fantone completed 214 of 344 passes for 2,324 yards and 23 TDs in 2025. He has offers from Valparaiso and Gannon and interest from Youngstown State.

9. Caleb Williams

Hoban offensive tackle, 6-4, 290, Class of 2027

Williams was a key piece to an offense that averaged 292.2 yards per game with 189.0 of that coming on the ground. He has offers from Akron, Ohio University, Austin Peay, Youngstown State, Kent State, Marshall, Sacred Heart, Fordham, Buffalo and Ball State.

10. Owen Pelkowski

Walsh Jesuit offensive tackle, 6-foot-5, 280 pounds, Class of 2027

Pelkowski anchored an offense that averaged 369.2 yards per game and one that averaged 242.5 yards on the ground. He committed to Akron in June over the likes of Kent State, Miami (Ohio), Illinois State and Cornell.

11. Jaiden Daniels

Hoban cornerback, 6-0, 160 pounds, Class of 2027

Hoban lost a huge amount of talent on defense because of graduation and transfers, but it still has this lockdown cornerback in its arsenal. Daniels finished with four interceptions and 11 pass breakups last season as most teams chose to throw the other direction. He has committed to play football at Ball State.

12. Marcus Council Jr.

East running back/defensive back, 5-9 175, Class of 2027

Council was a third-team All-Ohio defensive back in Division IV and an impact running back last year at Streetsboro before transferring in the offseason to East. He ran for 851 yards and 13 TDs on 91 carries last season, caught 14 passes for 100 yards and a TD and had six interceptions, 36 tackles and a fumble recovery.

13. Jason Beverly

Norton running back/linebacker, 5-10, 170, Class of 2027

Beverly was an All-Ohio honorable mention running back in Division IV last season after rushing for 964 yards and 17 TDs on 108 carries last season. Look for those numbers to increase this year in coach Glen Kruger's offense. He made 72 tackles (eight for loss), four sacks, two fumble recoveries, an interception and a TD as a linebacker.

14. Dominick Jackson

Nordonia wide receiver/defensive back, 6-1, 195, Class of 2027

Jackson was an All-Ohio honorable mention selection in Division II last season at wide receiver. He recorded 49 catches for 933 yards and 12 TDs on a high-scoring offense that guided Nordonia to another playoff appearance. He also had 30 tackles, three interceptions and scored a touchdown as a cornerback.

15. Cambell Lann

Walsh Jesuit wide receiver, 6-4, 215, Class of 2027

Lann committed to Western Michigan in May over other scholarship offers from Toledo, Kent State, Fordham, Miami (Ohio), Austin Peay and Youngstown State. Lann had 21 catches for 289 yards and four touchdowns last season as Walsh (11-2) made a Division II state semifinal appearance.

16. Dario Jeras

Walsh Jesuit defensive end, 6-foot-2, 240 pounds, Class of 2027

Jeras was a key part to the Warriors reaching the state semifinals for the first time since 1999. The Division II honorable mention All-Ohioan finished with 67 tackles, 13 for loss and

registered six sacks. He has offers from Brown, Howard, Butler, Sacred Heart and Western Michigan.

17. Otto Grill

Hudson offensive tackle, 6-7, 285, Class of 2028

Grill committed to Ohio University in July over the likes of Kent State, Yale, Air Force and Dartmouth among others. The Explorers averaged 299.8 yards last season with 155.7 of that coming on the ground.

18. Trey Kersten

Norton quarterback, 6-0, 180, Class of 2027

Kersten was third-team Division IV All-Ohio a year ago after completing 101 of 155 passes for 1,784 yards and running for 260 yards. He combined for 33 touchdowns in the Panthers' high-scoring offense.

19. Phil Partin

Manchester running back, 5-10, 180, Class of 2027

Partin is primed for a big senior season after missing the first five games last season with an injury and then playing in the final seven games. He earned second-team All-Ohio in Division V after running for 1,196 yards and 10 TDs on 125 carries. Partin was healthy his sophomore season and earned first-team All-Ohio when he ran for 1,961 yards on 268 carries and scored 33 TDs.

20. Kahlil Diming

Hoban, running back/defensive back, 5-11, 180, Class of 2027

Diming is projected to be Hoban's top running back this season with senior Jaiden Daniels also set to get regular carries. Diming and Daniels, who are also talented defensive backs, step into larger roles in the offensive backfield after Brayton Feister transferred to Massillon.

21. Lawrence Cherry Jr.

East running back/defensive back, 5-11, 185, Class of 2027

Cherry was an All-Ohio honorable mention running back in Division III last season after

rushing for 916 yards and six TDs on 111 carries for the Akron City Series champion. He also caught a TD pass and is a solid defensive back who had 55 tackles (11 for loss). His impact on the both sides of the ball helped East win two OHSA playoff games for the first time in the same season.

22. Carter Maxa

Woodridge tight end/linebacker, 6-6, 225, Class of 2028

Maxa has scholarship offers to play tight end from Cincinnati, Dartmouth, Toledo and Miami (Ohio), and is receiving interest from Pittsburgh, Arizona State and Michigan State. Maxa started last season at tight end, and moved to quarterback in the third quarter of Week 1 because of an injury. He was the starting QB Weeks 2-6 and returned to TE for Week 7. He had 10 catches for 165 yards and three TDs, 58 carries for 167 yards and eight TDs and completed 42 passes for 617 yards and two TDs.

23. Evan Foust

Highland tight end/linebacker, 5-11, 208, Class of 2027

Foust earned second-team All-Ohio honors in Division II last season as Highland (12-1) won a Suburban League American Conference title and made a second straight regional final appearance. Foust totaled 14 catches for 255 yards and four touchdowns, and added 73 tackles (14 for loss), 3½ sacks, five forced fumbles and an interception on defense.

24. Jonah Kowza

Highland kicker, 6-1, 170 pounds, Class of 2027

It's hard to leave a five-star kicker off the list who is ranked 16th in the nation and first in Ohio, so we won't. Kowza was 37 of 38 on PATs last year and 3-of-5 on field goals with a long of 43 yards. He had 33 touchbacks last season. Ohio State is one of many schools after the All-Ohioan.

25. Josiah Neumeyer

CVCA offensive guard, 6-0, 240, Class of 2027

Neumeyer was part of an offensive line that guided the Royals to their first state semifinal in school history. CVCA averaged 375.9 yards per game with 300.7 of that coming on the ground. He was Division II honorable mention All-Ohio last season.

26. Hayden Lipinski

Hudson quarterback, 6-3, 195, Class of 2027

Lipinski is primed to have a breakout season after an already very good junior season in which he was 125-of-213 passing for 1,654 yards and 19 touchdowns.

27. Major Cribbs

Hoban quarterback, 6-1, 185, Class of 2028

Yes, the name sounds familiar. His father is Cleveland Browns great Josh Cribbs. But the younger Cribbs is not resting on his name to get him anything. He separated himself with a great 7-on-7 season after he split time on varsity and junior varsity last year. He already has an offer from Kent State, his father's alma mater.

28. Reno Ferri

Hudson running back/defensive back, 5-8, 205, Class of 2027

Ferri was second-team all-district in Division II last season after rushing for 851 yards and six TDs. He also added 115 receiving yards and two receiving TDs.

29. Anderson Tetzl

Wadsworth, tackle/defensive end, 6-3, 275, Class of 2027

[Anderson](#) was out last season when the offense averaged 434.6 yards per game with 217.9 yards coming on the ground. He has an offer from Ashland and interest from Kent State and Valparaiso. Anderson will have an expanded role on defense.

30. Kade Thomas

Mogadore wide receiver/safety, 5-10, 170, Class of 2027

Thomas recorded 36 receptions for 728 yards and seven touchdowns, a rushing TD, 43 tackles and four interceptions last season. He earned All-Ohio honorable mention recognition in Division VII in 2025 as the Wildcats (11-2) advanced to a regional final.

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