

NORTH CAROLINA

Middle/Junior High School Athletic Manual



JULY 2023



North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Foreword

A Commitment to Our Children

General Statute 115C-47(4) makes it the responsibility of the local board of education to regulate extracurricular activities, including athletics. This statute reads as follows: "Local boards of education shall make all rules and regulations for the conducting of extracurricular activities under their supervision, including a program of athletics..., provided that all interscholastic athletic activities shall be conducted in accordance with rules and regulations prescribed by the State Board of Education." General Statute 115C- 47 reflects our state's commitment for youth to be involved in activities that enhance physical, social and emotional well-being.

This revision of the handbook for middle/junior high school athletic programs has been completed to assist local boards of education and their staffs in carrying out the intent and purpose of the statute cited. Recommendations were made by many of you who served in some capacity to the revision of this manual. It is our intent that this manual provides guidelines for LEAs to provide consistency, sportsmanship and fairness for all children who choose to participate in interscholastic athletics. As you would expect, a major focus of the handbook is the safety of the participants.

The effectiveness of any program is based primarily on the understanding and commitment of those who are charged with the responsibility for its implementation. I am convinced that you have that understanding and commitment. It is our hope and belief that this handbook will be an invaluable tool as you continue to improve a program that is already recognized as excellent.

Eric Davis, Chairman
State Board of Education

Catherine Truitt, State Superintendent
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

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Interscholastic Athletics

Interscholastic athletics have a vital place in the total educational program when they are effectively planned, organized, administered, supervised, and evaluated. Through school athletics, many of the interests and needs of young people can be served better than through any other channel. For this reason, it is important that school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community personnel determine what educational objectives seem most desirable and plan athletic programs in keeping with the overall purposes of the school program. These additions should be printed in handbook format and provided to all member schools to ensure compliance and fairness.

Underlying every phase of the athletic program should be a primary concern for the athlete as a person, student, and a member of society. At all times, emphasis should be placed upon progressing levels of maturity both physical and emotional, upon integrity both personal and social, and upon responsibility, both for oneself and to all involved in the athletic program. Any play between organized teams or individuals from different schools is defined as an "interscholastic athletic contest" and shall be subject to all regulations pertaining to such contests.

Statutory provisions state that "Local boards of education shall make all rules and regulations necessary for the conducting of extracurricular activities in the schools under their supervision, including a program of athletics, where desired, without assuming liability therefore provided, that all interscholastic athletic activities shall be conducted in accordance with rules and regulations prescribed by the State Board of Education."

G.S. 115C-47(4)

State Board of Education Regulations

Realizing the need for acceptable standards for the operation of sound athletic programs on a statewide basis, county and city superintendents, principals, and coaches of the state devised and recommended minimum regulations for consideration by the North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE). The standards, "Regulations Governing Athletes," (page 17) were first adopted by the North Carolina SBE on June 5, 1952. These regulations, which are kept up-to-date through frequent amendments, have been considered as minimum standards for each local administrative unit to abide by or surpass in its efforts to maintain the highest possible standards relative to its interscholastic athletic program.

NC Administrative Code

16 NCAC 06E.0204 Interscholastic Athletics and Administering Organizations for High School Athletics

- (a) Definitions:
- (1) "Administering organization" is defined in G.S. 115C-407.50(1).
 - (2) "Participating school" is defined in G.S. 115C-407.50(7).
 - (3) "Public school unit" (PSU) is defined in G.S. 115C-5(7a).
- (b) PSUs are authorized to determine whether and to what extent students in grades 6 through 12 may participate in interscholastic athletics; provided students in grade 6 are not eligible to participate in tackle football. This Rule shall not apply to charter school athletic programs in kindergarten through grade 8.
- (c) To participate in public school interscholastic athletics, a student shall meet the following requirements:
- (1) A student who attends a school supervised by a local board of education shall only participate in the school to which the student is assigned under G.S. 115C-366. A student enrolled in a charter, regional, statewide public school, or school operated by the University of North Carolina, shall meet all the enrollment criteria for that school and attend that school. If a student is over the age requirements, for the school the student attends, the student may participate at the school to which the student would be assigned or attend at the next higher grade level.
 - (2) A student shall meet the age requirements at each grade level to participate. PSUs shall determine the age of participating students based on a preponderance of the evidence known to them. A student ineligible to participate at one grade level due to age shall be eligible to participate at the next higher grade level only, provided, no student shall be eligible to participate at the middle school level for a period lasting longer than six consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's entry into grade 6 and no student shall be eligible to participate at the high school level for more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's first entry into grade 9 or participation on a high school team, whichever occurs first.

- (A) A student shall not participate on a grade 6, 7, 8 team if the student becomes 15 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
 - (B) A student shall not participate on a grade 9 through 12 team if the student becomes 19 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
- (d) To be eligible to participate during any semester in grades 6, 7, or 8, the student shall have passed at least one less course than the number of required core courses the prior semester and meet promotion standards established by the PSU, provided, a student who is promoted from grade 5 to grade 6 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirement set forth in this Paragraph to participate in the first semester of grade 6. To be eligible to compete during any semester in grades 9 through 12, the student shall have passed at least five courses (or the equivalent for non-traditional school schedules) the prior semester and meet promotion standards established by the PSU, provided a student who is promoted from grade 8 to grade 9 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirement set forth in this Paragraph to participate in the first semester of grade 9.
- (e) To be eligible to participate, a student shall receive a medical examination every 395 days by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of G.S. 90-9.1, G.S. 90-9.2, G.S. 90-9.3, 90-18.1, and 90-18.2.
- (f) A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics after any of the following:
- (1) graduation, except that the student may continue to participate in playoff and state championship contests in spring sports after graduation
 - (2) signing a professional athletic contract, except that the student may continue to participate in any sport for which the student has not signed a professional contract;
 - (3) receiving remuneration as a participant in an athletic contest, except that the student may accept a gift, merchandise, trophy, or other thing of value, provided :
 - (A) the value does not exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) per student per sports season;
 - (B) the item is totally consumable and nontransferable, or labeled in a permanent manner, for example, monogrammed or engraved items; and
 - (C) the item is approved by the student's principal and superintendent; or
 - (4) participating on an all-star team or in an all-star game that is not sanctioned by the administering organization of which the student's school is a member provided, the student shall be ineligible only for the specific sport involved.
- (g) Each PSU shall require the principal of a school that participates in interscholastic athletics to sign and date a list of eligible students for each sport. The PSU shall maintain copy of the most current list in the principal's office and the office of the superintendent.
- (h) A PSU shall impose at least the following penalties on a student, coach, or school official in grades 6 through 12 who is ejected from an athletic contest:

- (1) for the first offense, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
- (2) for a second offense, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended from participating in the next two games at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
- (3) for a third offense, the person shall be suspended for one calendar year;
- (4) a coach who is suspended shall not coach any team for any grade level during the period of suspension.

Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season. If no member of the school's coaching staff is present to assume an ejected coach's duties, the contest shall be terminated by a forfeit.

- (i) PSUs may allow their schools to belong to an administering organization designated by the State Board of Education.
- (j) An administering organization entering into a memorandum of understanding with the State Board of Education for the purpose of administering interscholastic athletics under this Rule shall apply and enforce all of the requirements of this Rule.
- (k) The State Board of Education shall delegate to an administering organization its authority over participating schools to:
 - (1) waive any student eligibility requirement contained in this Rule, if it finds in a particular case that the requirement fails to promote academic progress, health, safety, and fair play, or it works an undue hardship on a student who has lost eligibility due to circumstances that made participation impossible such as prolonged illness or injury or if a waiver is necessary to reasonably accommodate a student's disability, as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act, U.S.C. § 1201 et seq.;
 - (2) adopt, apply, and enforce penalty rules that establish a system of demerits that includes reprimands, probations, suspensions, forfeitures of contests, forfeitures of titles, and disqualifications;
 - (3) adopt, apply, and enforce administrative rules, as defined in G.S. 115C-407.55(5);
 - (4) adopt, apply, and enforce gameplay rules, as defined in G.S. 115C-407.55(6); and
 - (5) establish and collect from all its members a uniform membership fee of either:
 - (A) one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for each participating school, or
 - (B) one dollar (\$1.00) for each student enrolled in a participating school.
- (l) An administering organization shall:
 - (1) enter into a memorandum of understanding with the State Board of Education no later than March 15 prior to the academic year in which it is to begin administering interscholastic athletics and before each subsequent renewal of a memorandum of understanding;

- (2) submit an audit report signed by an independent certified public accountant or accounting firm in good standing with the North Carolina State Board of Certified Public Accountant Examiners to the State Board of Education no later than March 15 each year;
 - (3) broadcast the meetings of its membership and board of directors in a manner that is announced on its website and which may be viewed electronically by any member of the public;
 - (4) provide to the State Board of Education within 30 days any requested organizational records, including but not limited to, financial information, annual audit reports, and any matters related to or impacting participating schools;
 - (5) enter into written agreements with PSUs that allow their eligible schools to participate in interscholastic sports, which agreements shall include an explanation of the fees to be charged, the obligations of the PSU and participating schools, penalties for the violation of this Rule at the high school level that may be imposed, and an explanation of the process to contest or appeal adverse decisions; and
 - (6) publish the organization's rules through a link on the first page of its website.
- (m) The State Board of Education will appoint an appeals board to hear and act upon appeals from final decisions of an administering organization, or from the Department of Public Instruction if necessary pursuant to G.S. 115C-407.60(b), regarding student eligibility, penalties, fees imposed, retaliation, or discrimination. Panels of no fewer than three members of the appeals board may hear and decide matters on behalf of the board. A PSU aggrieved by a final decision of the administering organization may file an appeal with the State Board of Education's Office of General Counsel within five days after receipt of the administering organization's final decision. The notice shall be mailed to the Superintendent or board of trustees of the PSU.
- (1) The administering organization's notice shall contain:
 - A. findings of fact;
 - B. conclusions of law, including citation to any rules related to the decision;
 - C. a description of any penalties; and
 - D. a statement that the PSU may file a notice of appeal within five days of receipt of the administering organization's decision by mailing the notice to the State Board of Education's Office of General Counsel, 301 S. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, N.C. 27601, and emailing a copy of the notice of appeal to the Office of General Counsel for the State Board of Education.
 - (2) The PSU's appeal shall:
 - A. be in writing;
 - B. include a description of the facts of the dispute;
 - C. include any evidence submitted to the administering organization;

- D. present an argument explaining why the PSU believes the administering organization's final decision was not based on substantial evidence as defined in G.S. 150B-2(8c) or is affected by an error of law.
- (3) The administering organization may file a response to the PSU's submissions within five days. The panel may shorten the time to for filing the administering organization's response if the decision affects a student's or coach's eligibility to participate in an intervening athletic contest.
- (4) All documents filed in the appeal shall be simultaneously served on all parties. in the manner prescribe in G.S.1A-1, Rule 5 of the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure.
- (5) Any hearing shall be recorded.
- (6) No later than 30 days after the State Board of Education's receipt of the appeal, a panel of the appeals board shall issue its decision. The panel shall affirm the administering organization's final decision unless a majority of the panel determines that the final decision is not supported by substantial evidence or affected by an error of law.
- (7) The panel's decision shall be final.
- (n) The PSU that has jurisdiction over a school may impose penalties in addition to those required by an administering organization.

History Note: Authority G.S. 115C-12(12); 115C-12(23); 115C-47(4); 115C-407.50, 115C-407.55; 115C-407.60; 115C-407.65; 116-235(b);

Emergency Adoption Eff. August 20, 2019;

Amended Eff. March 1, 2021;

Temporary Amendment Eff. July 1, 2022.

Amended Eff. July 1, 2023.

Middle/Junior High School Athletic Eligibility

Only students in grades six through eight may participate in middle school (6th, 7th and 8th grades) interscholastic athletic competition. Only students in grades seven through nine may participate in junior high school (7th, 8th and 9th grades) interscholastic athletic competition.

Note: Sixth grade students are ineligible to participate in tackle football.

Eligibility begins for all students with initial entry into the sixth grade regardless of:

- the school organization pattern
- the decision of the LEA to allow 6th grade participation

In order to qualify for public school participation, a student must meet the following requirements:

Academics

1. In grades six, seven and eight, the student must pass at least one less course than the number of required core courses each semester and meet promotion standards established by the LEA.
2. If an athlete is "academically eligible" or "academically ineligible" at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester.
3. It is the responsibility of the school principal to check the academic status of each student/athlete enrolled in school at the beginning and close of a semester.
4. A principal shall prohibit any student known to be academically ineligible from participating in any competitions. Within eight days (excluding Saturday and Sunday) of the last day of the first semester, a principal shall verify the grades of all students participating in interscholastic athletics. The principal may restore eligibility to any debarred student after he or she has qualified at the end of a semester. Any student who has his or her eligibility restored may participate the day following the completion of the semester of ineligibility.

Age

1. The principal must have evidence of the legal birth date of the student.
2. A student shall not participate on a sixth, seventh or eighth grade team if the student becomes 15 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
3. A student shall not participate on a ninth grade junior high school team if the student becomes 16 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
4. A middle/junior high school student who is overage for middle/junior high school play shall be eligible for senior high school participation.
5. Ninth graders can be divided so that some play with the seventh and eighth grades at the middle school. Others play at the senior high level, depending upon local policy.

6. Once a student begins practicing with a high school team, he/she may not, at a later date, move down to the seventh, eighth, or ninth grade (junior high school) team.
7. A ninth grade student beginning play with the junior high school team may, at a later date, move to the high school team, but could not return to the junior high school team.

Attendance

1. A player must meet the LEA attendance policy during the previous semester.
2. A student must, at any time of any game in which he or she participates, be a regularly enrolled member of the school's student body, according to local policy.
 - a. If there is no local policy, "regularly enrolled" is defined as enrolled for at least one-half of the "minimum load."
3. It is recommended the student be in school the day of the contest.

Eligibility Lists

1. Each PSU shall require the principal of a school that participates in interscholastic athletics to sign and date a list of eligible students for each sport.
<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/academic-standards/programs-and-initiatives/nc-healthy-schools/athletics#eligibility>
2. The PSU shall maintain a copy of the most current list in the principal's office and the office of the superintendent.
3. All eligible students shall be included and all information must be complete and accurate when certified by the principal.
4. It is recommended to keep these lists on file for at least three years.
5. A player shall not dress for a game or scrimmage when he or she is not eligible to participate in the game.
6. Dressing and being in the designated team area shall be interpreted as participating in the game.
7. Any school that uses an ineligible player or a player not included on the eligibility list in any contest is to immediately drop the player from the team and forfeit all games in which the player participated. (This includes individual sports.)
8. Schools not filing a completed eligibility list with the local superintendent's office or designee for any interscholastic athletic team shall be suspended from playing in that sport until such list is received by the local superintendent's office.

Felony Policy

Any student who is subject to the Middle School six semester rule who:

1. is convicted of a crime classified as a felony under North Carolina or federal law;
or
2. is adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult, is not eligible to participate in the North Carolina Middle School Athletic sports program.
3. Such ineligibility shall be immediate and shall prohibit participation in the NC Middle School sports program from the date of conviction or adjudication of delinquency through the end of the student's middle school career.

Gfeller Waller Concussion Awareness

In order to be eligible for practice or participation in any interscholastic athletic contests:

1. Student-athletes will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
2. Students shall read, initial, sign, and return the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet before beginning participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.
3. Parent/Legal Guardians will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
4. Parent/Legal Guardians shall read, initial, sign, and return the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet before the student begins participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.
5. School Representatives (parent/coach/volunteer/school nurse/athletic directors/first responders) will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet.
6. All above adults shall read, initial and return the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet before the student begins participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.

Promotion

Promotion is defined as progressing to the next grade.

1. In grades six, seven and eight, the student must meet state and local promotion standards each semester. This includes all academic requirements listed in this manual.
2. Regardless of the school organization pattern, a student who is promoted from the fifth grade to the sixth grade automatically meets the courses passed requirement for the first semester of the sixth grade.

Residence

The student must meet the residence criteria of G.S. 115C-366(a).

1. The student may participate only at the school to which the student is assigned by the LEA.
2. Transfers within the same administrative unit may be governed by the local Board of Education policy.
3. A student transferred from one administrative unit to another by mutual agreement, as provided in G.S.115C-366.1 (F), is immediately eligible for athletic participation in the receiving unit.

Semester Rule

1. No student may be eligible to participate at the middle school level for a period lasting longer than six (6) consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's entry into sixth grade.
2. The principal shall have evidence of the date of each player's entry into the sixth grade and monitor the six (6) consecutive semesters.

Sports Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form

In order to be eligible for practice or participation in any interscholastic athletic contests:

1. The student must receive a medical examination once every 395 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of G.S.90-9.1, 90-18.1, and 90-18.2.
2. All eligible students must submit to the school athletic director a completed North Carolina High School Athletic Association Sport Pre-Participation Examination Form prior to participation in any practice or athletic contest. A copy of the Sport Pre- Participation Examination Form can be found at:

<https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety>

Students with Identified Disabilities

Students with identified disabilities are eligible for participation in athletic programs at the middle/junior high school level.

1. Ninth graders participating in high school athletics are governed by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.
2. Participation in athletic team tryouts may not be denied a student with a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan when accommodations or modifications are necessary to provide the student with an equal opportunity to benefit. For example, a deaf student would require an interpreter for the deaf.
3. A student with a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan must meet all requirements that apply to the regular education student.

Hardships

The local Board of Education or the Conference of which the school is a member shall have the authority, in response to a request of the principal of the school, to set aside the effect of any (other than 6th grade participation in tackle football) eligibility rule upon the individual student when, in its opinion, the rule fails to accomplish the purpose for which the rule is intended or when the rule works undue hardship upon the student.

1. Decisions of local Boards of Education or Conferences regarding hardships are final.

NOTE: It is to be understood that ordinary cases in ineligibility shall not be considered as coming under the hardship category, and that the conditions which cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility requirements, must have been beyond the control of the school, the student and/or his/her parents. Injuries, illnesses, or accidents which cause the student to fail to meet one of the basic requirements are possible causes for hardship consideration.

Health and Safety

Athletic Injury Management

LEAs shall work toward having a licensed athletic trainer or first responder available for all school practices and games of all sports at both the high school and middle school. Link to NC Administrative Code [16 NCAC 06E.0206 Athletic Trainers](#)

Sports Pre-participation and Medical Examination Form

1. In order to be eligible for practice or participation in any interscholastic athletic contests, the student must receive a medical examination once every 395 days by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of G.S.90-9, 90-18.1, and 90-18.2.
2. All eligible students must submit to the school athletic director a completed North Carolina High School Athletic Association Sport Pre-Participation Examination Form prior to participation in any practice or athletic contest. A copy of the Sport Pre- Participation Examination Form can be found at:
<https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety>
3. Students absent from athletic practice for five or more consecutive days due to illness or injury must receive a medical release either by a physician licensed to practice medicine or his/her designees (nurse practitioner, physician's assistant or licensed athletic trainer) before re-admittance to practice or contests.
 - a. Students with potential head injuries must receive a medical release by a licensed health care provider before readmittance to practice or contests. (See Gfeller Waller Concussion Awareness below.)
4. If an athlete misses five (5) or more consecutive days of practice due to injury or illness, they must participate in at least three (3) separate days of practice before returning to competition.

Note: Students absent for other reasons e.g., funeral, quarantine, school suspension, etc. are not subject to this rule.”
5. It is recommended that players be covered by adequate medical and accident insurance and that medical aid be immediately available at all times.
6. Schools should have medical release forms on site at athletic events in case medical treatment is required.

Gfeller Waller Concussion Awareness

The Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act, implemented to protect the safety of student-athletes in North Carolina, was signed into law on July 16, 2011. To maintain compliance:

1. Student-athletes will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
2. Students shall read, initial, sign, and return the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
3. Parent/Legal Guardians will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
4. Parent/Legal Guardians shall read, initial, sign, and return the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
5. School Representatives (parent/coach/volunteer/school nurse/athletic directors/first responders) will be provided with the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet.
6. All above adults shall read, initial and return the Gfeller Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet.
(It is at the discretion of each educational institution to identify who will distribute, collect, and maintain the above forms.)
7. Emergency Action Plan:
Each school shall have a venue specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that follows the specifications outlined in the EAP guidelines on the website.
This plan should be:
 - a. in writing,
 - b. reviewed by an athletic trainer licensed in North Carolina,
 - c. approved by the principal of the school,
 - d. distributed to all appropriate personnel,
 - e. posted conspicuously at all venues, and
 - f. reviewed and rehearsed annually by all licensed athletic trainers, first responders, coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, and volunteers for interscholastic athletic activities.
8. Each school should maintain documentation that it is in compliance with the law.

When an injury occurs:

1. Concussion: If a student-athlete exhibits signs and symptoms consistent with a concussion (even if not formally diagnosed), the student-athlete is to be removed from play and is not allowed to return to play (game, practice, or conditioning) on that day.
2. Student-athletes are encouraged to report their own symptoms, or to report if peers may have concussion symptoms. Coaches, parents, volunteers, first responders,

school nurses, licensed athletic trainers (if available), are responsible for removing a student-athlete from play if they suspect a concussion.

3. Following the injury, the student-athlete should be evaluated by a qualified medical professional with training in concussion management. It is strongly recommended that each institution seek qualified medical professionals in the surrounding community to serve as resources in the area of concussion management.
4. Any student athlete who suffers a head injury that results in a concussion or ANY symptoms associated with a concussion must submit to his/her coach or athletic director a completed and signed NCHSAA Concussion Return to Play Form before resuming any athletic activities.

A copy of all required Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act can be found at:

<https://www.nchsaa.org/parents-students/health-safety/concussion-awareness>

A copy of the required NCHSAA Return to Play form can be found at:

<https://www.nchsaa.org/parents-students/health-safety/concussion-awareness>

Inclement/Hot Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Sports

All outdoor sports should follow the Inclement/Hot Weather Guidelines found at:

<https://www.nchsaa.org/handbook>

These guidelines are reviewed/revised annually by the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the NCHSAA.

Sanitary and Safety Measures

While the risk for blood-borne infectious diseases, such as HIV/Hepatitis B, remains low in sports, proper precautions are needed to reduce the risk of spreading diseases. Along with these issues are skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment.

Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports

1. Shower immediately after all competition and practice
2. Wash all workout clothing after practice
3. Wash personal gear, such as knee pads, periodically
4. Don't share towels or personal hygiene products with others
5. Refrain from (full body) cosmetic shaving

Infectious Skin Diseases

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

6. Notify guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any lesion before competition or practice.

7. Athlete must have a health-care provider evaluate lesion before returning to competition.
 - a. If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, consider evaluating other team members for potential spread of the infectious agent.
 - b. Follow NFHS or NCHSAA guidelines on “time until return to competition.”
8. Allowance of participation with a covered lesion can occur if approved by health-care provider and in accordance with NFHS or NCHSAA guidelines.

Blood-Borne Infectious Diseases

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include;

9. Bleeding must be stopped immediately and all wounds covered. All blood-soaked clothing must be removed before continuing competition or practice.
10. Contaminated clothing must be cleaned before using again.
11. Athletic trainers or caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
12. Immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
13. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves with cleaning.
14. Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and evaluated by a medical provider immediately.

These procedures were obtained and revised by the NFHS (August 2005)

NOTE: A bucket or squeeze bottle with a 10 percent bleach solution or isopropyl alcohol solution and rubber gloves should be placed at each sporting event for cleaning purposes. Surfaces should be cleaned using the above solution and disposable clean-up materials should be placed in a sealed plastic bag for discarding.

NOTE: It is important that any time there is blood present, even on uniforms, that it is treated with care regarding its ability to transmit infectious diseases.

Tobacco

The use of all tobacco products, including but not limited to e-cigarettes and all vaping products, by any person in school buildings, in school facilities, on school campuses, and in or on any other school property owned or operated by the local school administrative unit is prohibited.

General Rules and Regulations Governed by the State Board of Education

The SBE authorizes the LEA or the conference of which the school is a member to administer the rules and regulations.

LEAs have the authority to be more strict than NC Administrative Code 16 NCAC 06E.0204 Interscholastic Athletics if they so choose.

Administration and Supervision of Games

1. The school administration is responsible for adequate supervision of athletic contests to secure safety and proper conduct of athletes, coaches, fans, and officials.
2. It is recommended that officials be escorted to safety at the end of every game.

Cheerleading

1. Cheerleading is an activity that comes under the control of the LEA and conference.

Composite Teams

When an administrative unit is experiencing difficulties in organizing interscholastic athletic teams at the middle/junior high school levels, a local board of education may form composite teams with students from different schools within the administrative unit.

Conforming Rules

To align middle/junior high school athletic rules with rules governing high school athletics, the following shall apply:

1. In defining participation in middle/junior high school athletics, dressing and sitting on the bench shall be interpreted as playing in the game.
2. Girls are allowed to participate on a boys' interscholastic athletic team where the school does not have a girls' team in the same sport. (Fast pitch softball is not the same as baseball).
3. Boys are not allowed to participate on any girls' team, as defined by interpretation of the Office for Civil Rights interpretation of Title IX in 1994.

Filming and Videotaping

Filming or videotaping of a contest by non-participating schools, in any sport, is considered unsportsmanlike conduct, unless agreed upon by competing teams.

Practice

There shall be no athletic practice during the regular school day.

1. This means no individual or team practice or contest may begin until after the last regularly scheduled instructional period.
2. No authorized practice, contest, or workouts may occur during the work day for teachers during the ten-month teaching calendar, and coaches may not use their vacation or leave time to hold a practice during the teacher work day.
3. There shall be no Sunday practice or contest in any sport. This regulation includes the assembling of members of athletic squads for purposes of viewing films, chalk talks, or other matters pertaining to coaching.
4. Once the students' school calendar year ends, non-mandatory teacher workdays are governed by local policy.
5. This rule also applies to non-faculty coaches.

Exception: if a superintendent gives permission for schools in his/her unit to practice prior to the end of a work day **DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER ONLY**.

6. Team practice in any sport is prohibited after the sports season ends until the first day following the final day of the school year.

Games and Contests

There shall be no athletic contests during the regular school day.

1. Evening contests and/or games shall start no later than 7:00 p.m. when followed by a school day. The exception is for tournaments.

Non - school team preseason scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in each sport in an academic year.

2. The scrimmage does not count as one of the seven (7) football regular season games or one of the 14 regular season contests in a specific sport.

Season Limitations:

Regular Season

3. Teams and individuals shall not participate in more than seven (7) football games and fourteen (14) athletic contests during the regular season in baseball, basketball,

cross country, golf, gymnastics, soccer, softball, tennis, track and field, volleyball, and wrestling in an academic year.

Post Season

4. Teams and individual students are permitted to participate in one school tournament or play-off championship game in each sport in an academic year.
5. Conferences may play up to two additional games (except football that may play one) in lieu of a conference tournament or play-off championship game in each sport in an academic year.

Weekly Limitations:

6. Teams and/or individuals may participate in only one regularly scheduled football game per week.
7. In other sports, students may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.
8. During tournament play a third game will be permitted.

Emergency Exception:

9. A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.
10. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed Contests

11. Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.
12. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
13. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
14. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

All Star Teams / Games

15. Participation on any all-star team or in any all-star game in which a student is representing the Middle School is prohibited.
16. Students are prohibited from wearing any and all school uniforms, including all protective equipment, while competing on any all-star team, in any all-star game or in any athletic event outside the purview of this manual.

Game Rules

Schools shall use the adopted rules in this manual from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

1. The adopted rules are defined in each sport section. General Statute 115C-47(4) makes it the responsibility of the local board of education to regulate extracurricular activities, including athletics.
2. **LEAs have the responsibility of monitoring National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules and guidelines and incorporating them into local policy yearly.**

Head Coaches

In accordance with SBE policy, the head coach of an interscholastic athletic team shall be a bona fide member of the faculty and as such, shall be responsible for supervision of athletic teams during all practices, games, and trips.

1. The local superintendent may, with the concurrence of the local board of education, designate non-faculty persons as head coaches until such time as a suitable bona fide faculty member becomes available.
2. Any person paid or employed as a principal shall not coach interscholastic athletic teams.
3. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of assistant coaches, players, and bench personnel.
4. It is recommended that the head coach attend a rules clinic in the sport he/she coaches.
5. It is recommended that all coaches, paid and volunteer, take the following free NFHS courses annually: <https://www.nfhslearn.com/>
 - a. Concussion in Sports
 - b. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
 - c. Heat Illness Prevention
 - d. The Collapsed Athlete
 - e. Sportsmanship

Officiating

Officials are recommended to be obtained through a satellite-booking agent of the NCHSAA.

1. Complaints about officiating are to be filed with the booking agent making the assignment.
2. Under no circumstances shall a game be played when officials are taken from the audience of spectators or from school personnel.
(Exception: In an emergency situation, North Carolina High School Athletic Association certified officials may be used when permission is acquired from the office of the local superintendent of the home team or host school.)
3. To eliminate any real or perceived conflict of interest, booking agents should not officiate in the sport which they are responsible for booking.
4. Officials should be instructed to inform school officials when ejections occur.
5. It is recommended that officials be escorted to safety at the end of play in all games.

Out-of-State Competition

The local superintendent shall make the decision involving schools playing in out-of-state athletic contests.

Skill Development Sessions

Definition of Off-Season Skill Development

- skill development that occurs outside of the sports season during the school year

Off-season skill development sessions are allowed during the school year for sixth, seventh and eighth graders.

Definition of Summer Skill Development

- skill development that occurs outside of the sports season and outside of the school year
1. Skill development sessions shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport.
 2. All skill development sessions must be voluntary and open to all students with a current and valid sports pre-participation physical and medical examination form.
 3. Student insurance is strongly recommended for all those involved in athletics, in season and out-of-season.
 4. At no time may a coach require skill development sessions as a measure of potential or continued participation on a team for any student.
 5. The primary focus of off-season skill development should be on individual student athletes, not team.

6. Skill development sessions are not restricted in the number of participants on a daily basis.
7. There are no restrictions on the number of coaches who may work with the athletes.
8. Skill development sessions are open to only students enrolled at that school.
9. Any team practice or game environment, including scrimmages, created in an off-season skill development session is prohibited during the students' school calendar year.
10. Team practice in any sport is prohibited after the sports season ends until the first day following the final day of the school year.
11. During the summer, working with individuals, including rising and eligible sixth, seventh and eighth graders, will be allowed, as long as it is not required.
12. For safety purposes, school administrators or other school personnel should be present as supervisors during any skill development session or open facility.

Any individual who coaches at a middle school, head or assistant, paid or non-paid, faculty or non-faculty, parent volunteer, etc., must abide by the skill development, out of season workout rules.

13. If a coach, regardless of the sport (basketball, soccer, etc.) he or she coaches at the middle school, also coaches a "non-school" or "club team" during the sports season or outside the sports season but during the school year, whether head or assistant, and has any students from the middle school on that outside team, he or she must abide by the numbers restrictions, one less than a team (see below) in an out-of-season workout.

Number of participants from one school, on any outside team on a given day.

Football	no more than 10
Basketball	no more than 4
Baseball	no more than 8
Volleyball	no more than 5
Tennis	no more than 4
Soccer	no more than 10
Golf	no more than 3
Softball	no more than 8
Wrestling	no more than 8
Track	no more than 6
Cross Country	no more than 4
Lacrosse men	no more than 9
Lacrosse women	no more than 11

Open Facilities

14. Permitted year-round during the academic year (Monday through Saturday).
15. Schools may use the facilities for students in their building prior to or after the school day.
16. It shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport.
17. Must be voluntary and open to all students.
18. To participate, students must have a current and valid sports pre-participation and medical examination form.
19. At no time may a coach require an open facility as a measure of potential or continued participation on a team for any student.

NOTE: Sixth, seventh and eighth graders are not permitted to participate in high school open facility or skill development sessions during the school year.

Sports Seasons

All sports may be played during any season of the school year and run as follows:

Fall - Practice may begin no earlier than ten (10) school days prior to the first day of school for students in the fall semester to November 15

Winter - October 15 to March 1

Spring - February 1 to the end of the spring semester

Although dates permit, sports seasons should not overlap whenever possible.

Weight Training

Weight training programs are permitted for all students eligible for middle school athletics.

1. All weight training and conditioning must be voluntary and open to all students. Coaches shall verify that every student participating in weight training or conditioning has a valid Preparticipation Physical Examination Form.
2. Personnel knowledgeable of weight training and conditioning for middle school students should be on hand at all times to observe and ensure proper techniques and practices are followed.
3. If high school weight rooms or other athletic facilities are used or shared with middle schools, the middle school student athletes shall not use such facilities at the same time as the high school student athletes.

NOTE: The school administration is responsible for providing adequate supervision of the off-season skill development and weight training sessions and their intended purposes.

Sports Regulations

Time Lines

All sports may be played during any season of the school year and run as follows:

Fall - Beginning no earlier than ten (10) school days prior to the first day of school for students in the fall semester to November 15

Winter - October 15 to March 1

Spring - February 1 to the end of the spring semester

Baseball

Baseball Coaches are required to wear a skull cap style helmet when coaching in the Coaches Box during games.

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship tournament in an academic year.

Weekly Limitations:

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

3. During post-season championship tournament play a third game will be permitted.

Baseball Exception

Doubleheader

Teams are allowed to play two (2) contests in one day. One (1) doubleheader is permitted per week.

4. When playing two (2) contests in a day, contests are limited to five (5) innings each, except to break a tie.
5. No team or individual shall play more than three (3) contests in a week, i.e. Monday through Saturday.
6. Penalty: Forfeit

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (bad weather, epidemics or other unavoidable mishaps) may be rescheduled and played in addition to the regular number of contests allowed.

7. No more than three contests may be played in a single week, even with postponements and rescheduling.
8. Postponed contests will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
9. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.
10. A contest called for any reason, where a winner cannot be determined, or any contest called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended contest.
11. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools. The contest will be continued from the point of suspension with the lineup and batting order of each team the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules of the contest.
12. If more than four (4) innings have been played and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.
13. In a situation where a team does not want to make up a postponed contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.
14. If any postponed or suspended baseball contest, that would affect the winning of a conference title, is to be played, it shall be rescheduled on the same field unless changed by mutual agreement by the two schools.
15. This rule is effective upon mutual agreement of the competing schools or by conference adoption.

Mercy Rule

If agreed upon by both teams prior to the game or by conference adoption,

16. In baseball, the game is terminated if a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs after three innings or ten (10) after five innings.

Post Season

The number of single elimination championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

17. This is not to exceed three contests in a week.

Pitching Limitation

A player is limited to pitching 10 innings Monday through Saturday. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched. (Schools should adopt conference rules to govern pitching outside of school in league play.)

NOTE: Violation of the pitching limitation rule is interpreted as the use of an ineligible player. The penalty is a forfeit of the game for which the ineligible player participated.

Adopted Contest Rules

By conference adoption, middle school teams may use modified distances and should decide on a bat size for the conference play.

Basketball

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship tournament in an academic year.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

3. During post-season championship tournament play a third game will be permitted.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

4. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

5. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
6. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
7. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Mercy Rule

If agreed upon by both teams prior to the game or by conference adoption,

8. In basketball, there is a continuous clock when a team has a twenty-eight (28) point advantage over its opponent in the third quarter or later. The clock would only stop for shooting fouls, timeouts, injuries and the administration of technical fouls. The clock will continue to run for the remainder of the game, regardless of the point differential becoming closer than 28 points.

Post Season

The number of single elimination championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

9. This is not to exceed three contests in a week.

Adopted Contest Rules

10. Contests involving only middle school students shall be played in six-minute quarters.
11. Contests involving teams with combined ninth grade students with students in the eighth and/or seventh grade (junior high) may be played in eight-minute quarters.
12. By conference adoption, either legal-size ball (girls or boys) may be used for boys' competition.
13. A legal-size girls' ball shall be used for girls' competition.

Cross Country

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship meet in an academic year.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

3. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

4. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
5. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
6. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Post Season

The number of championship meets is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

Adopted Contest Rules

The maximum distance for middle/junior high school students is two (2) miles.

Football

Sixth grade students are ineligible for participation in tackle football.

Date of First Practice

Practice may begin no earlier than ten (10) school days prior to the first day of school for students in the fall semester.

Acclimatization/Physical Conditioning

The first five (5) days of practice shall be devoted entirely to physical conditioning/acclimatization activities.

1. During the first two (2) days, helmets, T-shirts, shorts, and football shoes constitute acceptable dress, and no other football attire shall be worn.
2. On days three (3), four (4) and five (5), complete football attire may be worn, but absolutely no body- to-body contact is permitted.
3. Practice during the five (5) day period shall be limited to a one (1)-a-day period, not to exceed two (2) hours in length.
4. The first two (2) days of this conditioning week are limited to calisthenics, kicking, throwing, running, and similar exercises.
5. Arm shields may be used, but tackling or blocking dummies, charging sleds, or similar devices may not be used until days three (3), four (4), and five (5).

6. Squad meetings, skull sessions, and film study are not allowed during the five-day period, since it shall be for the sole purpose of improving physical conditioning rather than football excellence.
7. Contact activities may begin on the sixth (6th) day of practice i.e., as soon as the required physical conditioning phase of practice has been completed.
 - a. Only one (1)-a-day contact session may be conducted and shall not exceed two (2) hours in length.
8. It is recommended that water breaks be offered every 20 to 30 minutes and that the Inclement/Hot Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Sports in this manual be followed.
 - a. It is also recommended that athletes do daily weigh-ins in order to monitor weight loss.

A player shall have participated in a minimum of eight (8) separate days of team practice, three (3) of which shall be in full pads and included body-to-body contact, before participating in a football contest or scrimmage with outside competition.

9. The exception to this rule is athletes from other sports who play only as kickers
10. There are no other exceptions; to fulfill this requirement, these must be football practices.

It is also recommended that EMS be available on game days.

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

11. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 7 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

No more than one (1) contest may be scheduled per week for a total of seven (7) contests in an academic year.

12. An individual is limited to only one (1) contest per week.
13. Play-off/championship contests are not to be scheduled as a regular season contest.
14. Up to one additional contest may be played in lieu of a post-season championship game in an academic year.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

15. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

16. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
17. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
18. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.
19. A contest called for any reason, where a winner cannot be determined, or any contest called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended contest.
20. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools. The contest will be continued from the point of suspension with the lineup of each team the same as the lineup at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules of the contest.
21. If the game has reached at least half-time and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.
22. In a situation where a team does not want to make up a postponed contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.
23. If any rained-out football contest, that would affect the winning of a conference title is to be played, it shall be rescheduled on the same field unless changed by mutual agreement by the two schools.
24. This rule is effective upon mutual agreement of the competing schools or by conference adoption.

Mercy Rule

If agreed upon by both teams prior to the game or by conference adoption,

25. In football, there is a continuous clock when a team has a twenty-eight (28) point advantage over its opponent at half time or thereafter. The clock would only stop for timeouts by coaches or officials or injuries. The clock will continue to run for the remainder of the game, regardless of the point differential becoming closer than 28 points.

Post Season

The number of championship games is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

Tie Breaker

If at the end of the fourth (4th) quarter, the teams have identical scores, the tie may be resolved by the method of the ten (10) yard line overtime procedures as set forth by the National Federation Football Rules Book.

26. Teams should notify booking agents regarding the rule that allows the Tie Breaker so he/she can inform the game officials.

Adopted Contest Rules

27. Based on adopted contest rules, contests involving only students in the seventh and eighth grade (middle/junior high schools) shall be played in eight- minute (8) periods.
28. Games involving teams with combined ninth grade students with students in the eighth and/or seventh grade (junior high) may be played in ten- minute (10) periods.
29. A youth legal-size ball may be used in middle/junior high competition.

Summer Camp

During the entire time period between the end of football season and up through the first five days of practice for the next season, ABSOLUTELY NO body-to-body contact is allowed.

30. This regulation applies to workouts, combines, practices on/off campus, and summer camps.

Golf

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Regular season contests are limited to nine holes.
3. However, in tournament play, 18 holes are permitted.
4. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship tournament in an academic year.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

5. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

6. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
7. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
8. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Post Season

The number of championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year, and athletes may play 18 holes.

Game Rules

Games rules follow those of the United States Golf Association (USGA).

Gymnastics

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship meet.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

3. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

4. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
5. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
6. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the

Post Season

The number of championship meets is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

Soccer

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests.

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship tournament.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

3. During tournament play a third game will be permitted.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

4. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

5. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.

6. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
7. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.
8. A contest called for any reason, where a winner cannot be determined, or any contest called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended contest.
9. If the contest is suspended in the first half, even if one team is ahead, contest is to pick up from the point of interruption unless coaches agree to end.
10. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools. The contest will be continued from the point of suspension with the lineup of each team the same as the lineup at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules of the contest.
11. If the contest is suspended at half time or beyond, the contest is over.
 - If the score is tied when the contest is suspended, then the contest ends in a tie.
 - If one team is ahead when the contest is suspended, then that team is the winner.
12. In a situation where a team does not want to make up a postponed contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.
13. If any postponed or suspended soccer contest, that would affect the winning of a conference title, is to be played, it shall be rescheduled on the same field unless changed by mutual agreement by the two schools.
14. This rule is effective upon mutual agreement of the competing schools or by conference adoption.

Mercy Rule

If agreed upon by both teams prior to the game or by conference adoption,

15. When a team leads by seven (7) goals at halftime or thereafter, the game shall be terminated.

Post Season

The number of single elimination championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

16. This is not to exceed three contests in a week.

Tournament Play

In tournament play, the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) tie-breaking procedure may resolve tied contests.

Adopted Contest Rules

The contest shall be played in two (2) 30-minute halves.

17. If a tie score exists at the end of regulation play in regular season conference or non-conference contests, with prior mutual consent of the teams, play will continue with two overtime periods of five (5) minutes each.
18. If there is no winner at that point, the contest shall be considered a tie for both teams.

Softball (Fast Pitch)

Softball Coaches are required to wear a skull cap style helmet when coaching in the Coaches Box during games.

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship tournament.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

3. During tournament play a third game will be permitted.

Fast Pitch Softball Exception

Doubleheaders

Teams are allowed to play two (2) contests in one day. Two (2) doubleheaders are permitted per week.

4. When playing two (2) contests in a day, contests are limited to five (5) innings each, except to break a tie.
5. No team or individual shall play more than four (4) contests in a week, i.e. Monday through Saturday.
6. Penalty: Forfeit

NOTE: The legal-size (12-inch) ball shall be used for competition.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (bad weather, epidemics or other unavoidable mishaps) may be rescheduled and played in addition to the regular number of contests allowed.

7. No more than four contests may be played in a single week even with postponements and rescheduling.
8. Postponed contests will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
9. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.
10. A contest called for any reason, where a winner cannot be determined, or any contest called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended contest.
11. If the contest is to be completed it may be continued at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools. The contest will be continued from the point of suspension with the lineup and batting order of each team the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules of the contest.
12. If more than four (4) innings have been played and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.
13. In a situation where a team does not want to make up a postponed contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.
14. If any postponed or suspended softball contest, which would affect the winning of a conference title, is to be played, it shall be rescheduled on the same field, unless changed by mutual agreement by the two schools.
15. This rule is effective upon mutual agreement or by conference adoption.

Mercy Rule

If agreed upon by both teams prior to the game or by conference adoption,

16. In softball, the game is terminated if a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs after three innings or ten (10) after five innings.

Post Season

The number of single elimination championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

17. This is not to exceed three contests in a week.

Adopted Contest Rules

By conference adoption, middle school teams may use modified distances and/or pitching limitations for conference play.

Tennis

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.1.
The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests.

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be held in lieu of a post-season championship tournament.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, and volleyball, and wrestling.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

3. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

4. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
5. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
6. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Post Season

The number of single elimination tournament championships is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

Adopted Contest Rules

Adopted contest rules are those of the United States Tennis Association (USTA).

Track and Field

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be held in lieu of a post-season championship meet.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

3. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

4. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
5. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
6. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Post Season

The number of championship meets is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

Adopted Contest Rules

7. Middle/Junior high school students may compete in a maximum of three (3) events.
8. The maximum distance for middle/junior high school students is two (2) miles.

The following order of events was developed as a guide to arrange track and field competition that will best meet the needs of middle/junior high school students. It is recommended that this order of events be followed, unless an alternative order is established by mutual agreement of the officials of the competing teams prior to the day of competition.

The recommended order of events shall be shown in the following tables:

Table 3: Track Events

Boys	Girls
110m Low Hurdles	55m Low Hurdles
100m Dash	100m Dash
800m Relay	800m Relay
1600m Run (or 1200m Run)	1600m Run (or 1200m Run)
400m Relay	400m Relay
400m Dash	400m Dash
800m Run	800m Run
200m Dash	200m Dash
1600m Relay	1600m Relay

Table 4: Field Events

Boys	Girls
High Jump	High Jump
Long Jump	Long Jump
4.0kg Shot	2.74kg Shot
Discus	Discus
Triple Jump	Triple Jump
Pole Vault	Pole Vault

Table 5: Hurdle Specifications

Event	Hurdle Height	Number of Hurdles	Start to 1st Hurdle	Between Hurdles	Last Hurdle to Finish
Girls 55 m Low Hurdles	30"	5	13.0 m	8.5 m	8.0 m
Boys 110 m Low Hurdles	30"	5	18.288 (60') m	18.288 (60') m	18.56 m 60'10 3/4

Field events should be started before the running program, in order to be completed prior to the final running event.

Specifications for Implements Used in Events

The discus:

9. shall weigh two (2) lbs., 3.27 oz. (1 kg)
10. have the following minimum and maximum dimensions: Diameter 7 1/8 in. - 7 1/8 in. (180 mm - 182 mm)
Thickness of 1 1/2 in. - 1 5/8 in. (37 mm - 39 mm) at the center and 1/2 in. - 1/4 in. (12 mm - 6 mm) from the outer edge which shall be rounded with a radius of 1/4 in. (6 mm).
11. The discus shall have a core two (2) in. (50 mm).

The shot:

12. The shot for boys shall consist of a solid sphere of any metal not softer than brass, weighing 4.0 kg (8 lbs. 13 oz.). It shall have a diameter of at least 3 3/4 in., but not more than 4 1/4 in. (95- 108 mm).
13. The shot for girls shall consist of a solid sphere of any metal not softer than brass, weighing 2.74 kg (6 lbs.) and have a diameter of at least 3 1/4 in. but not more than 4 in.

The scratch line in long jump should be approximately eight (8) feet from the edge of the landing pit.

Other equipment will be similar to that used at the high school level.

Volleyball

Date of First Practice

Practice may begin no earlier than ten (10) school days prior to the first day of school for students in the fall semester.

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be played in lieu of a post-season championship tournament.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

3. During tournament play a third game will be permitted.

Volleyball Exception

4. Two (2) doubleheaders (best 2 of 3 sets) are permitted per week.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

5. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

6. With the exception of wrestling, volleyball and softball games, no team or athlete shall play more than three games in one sport per week.
7. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
8. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Post Season

The number of single elimination championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year.

9. This is not to exceed three contests in a week.

Scoring

Rally scoring will be used in all contests.

Adopted Contest Rules

By conference adoption:

- In regular season and tournament play, matches shall be decided by the best two (2) of three (3) sets, or three (3) of five (5) sets.
- The net may be lowered to a minimum height of six (6) feet, four (4) inches.

Wrestling

Non - school team scrimmages and games are not permitted in any sport.

Preseason Scrimmage

One (1) pre-season scrimmage is permitted with other school teams in an academic year.

1. The scrimmage does not count as one of the 14 regular season contests

Number of Regular Season Contests

The number of regular season contests is limited to no more than 14 in an academic year.

2. Up to two (2) additional contests may be held in lieu of a post-season championship tournament.

Weekly Limitations

Teams and/or individuals may participate in two regularly scheduled contests per week, except as noted in Sports Regulations for the sports of baseball, softball, volleyball and wrestling.

Wrestling Exception

Two tri-meets are permitted per week.

3. Individuals are limited to two (2) contests per day.
4. All matches during the tri meet shall count against the athlete's total number of fourteen (14) permitted regular season contests.

Emergency Exception

A single contest postponed because of an emergency may be rescheduled and played in addition to the number of contests permitted per week.

5. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

Postponed and Suspended Contests

Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled and played, in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.

6. No more than four contests may be played in a single week even with postponements and rescheduling.
7. Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
8. Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

Post Season

The number of championship tournaments is limited to one (1) in an academic year, not to exceed an eight (8) wrestler bracket using the bracket found [here](#). (Appendix C)

9. Third and fourth place may be determined in tournament play using the wrestleback format.

Weight Classifications

For both middle and junior high schools the weight classes are as follows:

76, 83, 90, 98, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 220, and heavyweight.

10. The maximum weight for the heavy weight contestants will be 250 pounds.
11. The minimum weight for the heavyweight class is 196 pounds.
12. The minimum weight for a 90-pound weight class contestant is 75 pounds.
13. The minimum weight for an 83-pound weight class contestant is 68 pounds.
14. The minimum weight for a 76-pound weight class contestant is 61 pounds.
15. A two (2) pound growth allowance will be allowed after December 25th each year.

NOTE: The use of artificial weight loss devices/measures is prohibited.

Sanitary and Safety Measures

All mats must be cleaned with a 10-percent bleach solution or isopropyl alcohol solution prior to the first match and each time blood gets on the mat.

16. A bucket or squeeze bottle with a 10-percent bleach solution or isopropyl alcohol solution and rubber gloves should be placed at each mat for cleaning purposes.
17. This same solution should be used to wipe any blood off an opponent's skin.
18. It is important that any time there is blood present, even on uniforms, that it is treated with care regarding its ability to transmit infectious diseases.
19. If the bleeding problem is severe enough, the competitor should not be permitted to continue, not only from the standpoint of possible disease transmission, but also for the health and safety of the injured athlete.

NOTE: During the match each coach will be responsible for cleaning their own wrestler, and the home team is responsible for cleaning the mat using the guidelines set forth in the National Federation Rule book. NOTE: It is recommended that coaches monitor daily weigh-ins with weight loss not to exceed 3 pounds per week.

Adopted Contest Rules

Time of Bouts:

20. First period shall be one (1) minute.
21. Second and third periods shall be two (2) minutes.

No wrestler may represent his/her school in more than one (1) weight class in any meet or compete in more than four (4) full-length matches in tournament or championship play in any one (1) day.

22. A minimum of forty-five (45) minutes of rest between matches shall be observed.

A contestant shall not wrestle more than one (1) weight class above the class for which his/her actual stripped weight, at the end of the weigh in, qualifies him/her.

Other Sports

If your school chooses to participate in any sport that is not listed in this manual, it is recommended that you follow NFHS rules for that sport. Students participating in other interscholastic sports not listed in this manual must meet eligibility guidelines.

Penalty for an Ejection

NC Administrative Code 16 NCAC 06E.0204 Interscholastic Athletics is mandated and not recommended. It is a minimum standard for middle schools to enforce. The following ejection guidelines are expressed in NCAC 06E.0204 and are the minimum standards for middle schools.

Any athlete, coach, or school official in grades 6-12 who is ejected from any athletic contest shall be penalized as follows:

1. for the first offense, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
2. for a second offense, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended from participating in the next two games at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
3. for a third offense, the person shall be suspended for one calendar year.
4. a coach who is suspended shall not coach any team for any grade level during the period of suspension.

Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season. If no member of the school's coaching staff is present to assume an ejected coach's duties, the contest shall be terminated by a forfeit.

Recommendation for Additional Ejection Penalties

The LEA which has jurisdiction over the school may impose additional penalties. LEAs or conferences that adopt additional penalties should have penalties published prior to the first game in the first sport of the school year. Officials should be instructed to notify the principal of the school from which an ejection has occurred for the following to be enforced.

This policy applies to all persons involved in athletic contest, including student athletes, coaches, managers, and game administrators. The examples below include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest.

1. Fighting includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - a. an altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hitting, punching and/or kicking;
 - b. an attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, or feet;
 - c. an attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made;
 - d. an attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate;
 - e. leaving the bench area to participate in a fight (contact or no contact);
 - f. biting observed or determined by an official;

- g. taunting, baiting, or spitting toward an official or opponent;
- h. profanity directed toward an official or opponent;
- i. obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate or instigate; and
- j. disrespectfully addressing (physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career) an official.

Recommendations for Penalty Code

Enforcement of the Rules and Regulations

Penalty Code

The LEA or the conference in which the school is a member (if a school participates in a conference that involves more than one local board of education) shall adopt and enforce a penalty code. This code should be published and distributed to each athletic and administrative member of your school prior to the first game of the first season. (The following penalty code has been developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in the event that a locally developed penalty code is absent.)

Violations of these regulations may result in a reprimand, probation, suspension, forfeiture of games, and/or ineligibility.

A coach found guilty of conduct inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may be

- suspended and placed on probation.
- suspended from directing a team.

If a coach or school official is ejected from a game or if a coach or school official removes his/her team from a contest before the termination of the contest, the coach or school official will be placed on probation until an investigation is made by the LEA or adopted conference. The schools involved shall immediately report in writing to the conference president and the local superintendent.

A student found guilty of misconduct may be

- placed on probation;
- suspended from participation in a sport or sports for a period of time.

An official found guilty of misconduct may be

- placed on probation;
- suspended from participation in a sport or sports for a period of time.

If team members not participating in a game come onto the playing surface during an event or immediately thereafter to engage in conflict, that team shall be placed on probation and may not participate until a decision is rendered by the LEA or conference.

Once a school becomes a member of a conference, a unanimous vote of all other conference members is required to remove that school from the conference. Such removal may not take place until the year following the unanimous vote.

Definitions of Probation and Suspension

If a school or individual is placed on probation, the school or the individual is put on a trial period for a specific time.

At the end of this trial period, the LEA or the conference of which the school is a member shall review the school or individual's conduct and behavior and advise the school or individual of their status.

During the probationary period, a school or individual may participate in all interscholastic activities unless otherwise stipulated by the governing authority.

If, while on probation, a school or individual is found guilty of a second violation, the school shall be barred from participation and the individual shall be barred from participating at the discretion of the LEA or conference of which the school is a member.

A school or individual may be suspended in a particular sport or in all sports.

Appendices

Appendix A

Links

Please use the following links for the most current information on these resources.

1. NCHSAA Sport Pre-Participation Examination Forms:
<https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety>
2. Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act Forms:
<https://www.nchsaa.org/parents-students/health-safety/concussion-awareness>
3. Checklist for a Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Harassment:
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/checklist.html>
4. U.S. Department of Education – Athletic Equity (Title IX) Resources:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/pro-students/issues/sex-issue04.html>

Appendix B

Resource Contacts

1. An electronic copy of the Middle/Junior High School Athletic Manual is available for free download at:
<https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/k-12-standards-curriculum-and-instruction/programs-and-initiatives/nc-healthy-schools/athletics>
If you would like to speak with a DPI staff person regarding middle school athletics, contact the K-12 Program Areas Section at 984-236-2816.
2. National Federation of State High School Associations Website: www.nfhs.org
Phone: (317) 972-6900 Fax: (317) 822-5700
3. North Carolina High School Athletic Association Website: www.nchsaa.org
Phone: (919) 240-7401
4. North Carolina Athletic Directors Association Website: www.ncada.net
5. National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association Website:
<http://niaaa.org/>
6. North Carolina Coaches Association Website: www.nccoach.org
Phone: (336) 379-9095 Fax: (336) 379-0874
7. North Carolina Athletic Trainers Association Website:
<http://www.ncathletictrainer.org/>
8. NC Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation Dance and Sport Management Website: <http://www.ncaahperd-sm.org/>

Appendix C

Wrestling Championship Tournament Bracket

