



North Carolina Department of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

**2025-2026**  
**MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**  
**ATHLETIC MANUAL**



**OFFICE OF ATHLETICS**  
NC 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 manual 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 PSUs 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 manual 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

Maurice "Mo" Green, Superintendent  
Department of Public Instruction

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# **SECTION 1: INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS<sup>1</sup>**

This manual governs the administration of interscholastic athletics for all public school units in North Carolina in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(12) and Chapter 115C, Article 29E of the North Carolina General Statutes. Public school units and administering organizations may establish additional policies, rules, and regulations not inconsistent with State Board of Education Policy, the North Carolina Administrative Code, and the General Statutes.

The State Board of Education (“SBE”) recognizes the value of athletic activities to the educational experience of students in North Carolina public schools. When effectively planned, organized, administered, supervised, and evaluated, athletic activities can better serve the interests and needs of young people than any other channel. For this reason, it is important that school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members identify appropriate educational objectives and plan athletic programs in keeping with the overall purposes of K-12 education.

Underlying every phase of a school’s athletic program should be a primary concern for the student-athlete as a person, student, and a member of society. At all times, emphasis should be placed upon increasing levels of maturity, both physical and emotional; fostering integrity, both personal and social; and promoting responsibility, both for oneself and for all involved in the athletic program. Any play between organized teams or individuals from different schools is defined as an “interscholastic athletic activity” and shall be subject to SBE rules and policies governing such activities.

## **1.1 Definitions<sup>2</sup>**

- 1.1.1 “Aggrieved party” means a student, coach, participating school, PSU, or other party that is directly and adversely affected by a final decision of a rule administrator that applies or enforces the policies of the SBE related to interscholastic athletics. Such rules and policies include a determination of ineligibility under ATHL-005, a finding of undue influence or a recruiting violation under ATHL-009, or a penalty imposed under ATHL-012. If a student is affected, the student’s parent shall be allowed to appeal the final decision pursuant to ATHL-013.
- 1.1.2 “Bona fide purpose” means for a purpose not primarily related to participation in interscholastic athletics.
- 1.1.3 “Final decision” means a written decision of a rule administrator regarding the application or enforcement of rules under SBE policies on interscholastic athletics to a set of facts or circumstances. A ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules

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1 SBE Policy ATHL-001, July 2025

2 SBE Policy ATHL-001, July 2025

during an athletic competition, as recorded by the referee or official in the game record maintained by the rule administrator, that results in the ejection or suspension of a player or coach shall be deemed a final decision upon exhaustion of any available mechanisms for review under the rule administrator's internal policies and procedures.

- 1.1.4 "Immediate family member" means a spouse, parent, legal guardian, or custodian, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, half-sibling, or step-sibling. The term applies to any such relationship whether by blood, adoption, or marriage.
- 1.1.5 "Initial entry" means:
  - a. A student's first day of attendance at a participating school in which the student is enrolled as recorded by that school; or
  - b. The first day on which a student practices or otherwise participates as a member of an interscholastic athletics team at a participating school.
- 1.1.6 "Interscholastic athletics" or "interscholastic athletic activity" means any extracurricular athletic activity that:
  - a. Involves students in any Grades 6 through 12;
  - b. Is sponsored by an individual school, PSU, or administering organization; and
  - c. Includes students from more than one school or PSU.
- 1.1.7 "Local superintendent" means the superintendent of a local school administrative unit, as provided in Chapter 115C, Article 18 of the General Statutes, or the staff member with the highest decision-making authority for a PSU, if there is no superintendent.
- 1.1.8 "Parent" means the parent or legal guardian of a student participating or seeking to participate in interscholastic athletics activities.
- 1.1.9 "Participating school" means a middle school or junior high school that elects to participate in interscholastic athletic activities.
- 1.1.10 "Principal" means a school administrator employed as the principal of a school, as provided in Chapter 115C, Article 19 of the General Statutes, or the staff member with the highest decision-making authority at a school, if there is no principal.
- 1.1.11 "Rule administrator" means a local superintendent or his or her authorized designee, when administering and enforcing the rules provided by this Section at the middle and junior high school level.

## **SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS<sup>3</sup>**

### **2.1 Administration**

- 2.1.1 The North Carolina State Superintendent of Public Instruction (“Superintendent”) shall be responsible for general oversight of interscholastic athletic activities at participating middle and junior high schools. The local superintendent or his or her authorized designees shall apply and enforce SBE policies governing interscholastic athletics for participating middle and junior high schools under the jurisdiction of a PSU. The local superintendent or his or her authorized designee may also waive any student participation rule as applied to a specific student enrolled at a middle or junior high school under the jurisdiction of the PSU, in accordance with SBE Policy ATHL-005, Section 11.
- 2.1.2 Any person seeking to inquire about or report a violation of any rule enforced by a rule administrator shall direct the initial inquiry or report to the appropriate rule administrator in accordance with the policies and procedures adopted by the rule administrator.
- 2.1.3 For any question or dispute involving the enforcement of any SBE policy governing interscholastic athletics, other than a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, the relevant rule administrator shall render a final decision within 10 business days. The rule administrator's final decision shall contain:
- a. Findings of fact.
  - b. Conclusions of law, including a citation to and copy of any rules related to the decision.
  - c. A description of any penalties imposed.
  - d. Instructions on how the aggrieved party may file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent and a notice that the appeal must be filed within five days after receipt of the final decision.
- 2.1.4 An aggrieved party seeking to appeal a final decision with the Superintendent shall do so in accordance with SBE Policy ATHL-013.
- 2.1.5 Nothing in this Section shall be construed as restricting the independent authority of a PSU to further limit or regulate student participation in interscholastic athletics or other extracurricular activities in accordance with local policies adopted by the governing body of the PSU. Limitations or regulations imposed under local policies shall not be subject to appeal under SBE Policy ATHL-013.

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<sup>3</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-002, July 2025

## **SECTION 3: ELIGIBILITY**

Only students in grades six through eight may participate in middle school interscholastic athletic competition. **Sixth grade students are ineligible to participate in tackle football.**

Only students in grades seven through nine may participate in junior high school interscholastic athletic competition.

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

- a. the school organization pattern
- b. the decision of the PSU to allow sixth grade participation

### **3.1 Student Participation Rules<sup>4</sup>**

3.1.1 A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a North Carolina public school unless the student has satisfied the eligibility requirements set forth in ATHL-005. PSUs are authorized to determine whether and to what extent students under their jurisdiction may participate in interscholastic athletics, not inconsistent with the requirements of ATHL-005.

#### **3.1.2 Verification of Eligibility**

- a. Each PSU shall require the principal of a participating school to sign and date a list of eligible students for each sport. The PSU shall maintain a copy of the most current list in the principal's office and the office of the local superintendent.
  - i. 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.
  - ii. All eligible students shall be included, and all information must be complete and accurate when certified by the principal.
  - iii. It is recommended to keep these lists on file for at least three years.
  - iv. A player shall not dress for a contest or scrimmage when he or she is not eligible to participate in the game.
  - v. 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.

#### **3.1.3 Residency Requirements**

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<sup>4</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-005, July 2025

- a. A student's primary residence shall be determined as follows:
  - i. If both of the student's parents live together, the residence of both parents.
  - ii. If the student's parents are separated or divorced, the residence of the parent to whom a court of competent jurisdiction has awarded primary custody of the student. If no custody order has been entered, the student and the student's parents shall designate one parent's residence as the primary residence and communicate that designation to the participating school prior to participation in interscholastic athletic activities. The designated primary residence shall be one that would otherwise render the student eligible to attend that school in accordance with state law and the policies of the governing body of the PSU.
  - iii. If the student has only one living parent, the residence of that parent.
  - iv. If a student lives with an individual to whom a court of competent jurisdiction has awarded legal guardianship of the student, the residence of that individual.
  - v. If a student has been emancipated in accordance with Chapter 7B, Article 35 of the General Statutes, the student's residence at the time of emancipation.
  - vi. If a student is a foreign national participating in a foreign exchange program authorized by federal and state law, the residence to which the student is assigned by the program or host PSU.
- b. A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics following a change in primary residence unless the change was made for a bona fide purpose and with the intent that it be permanent.
- c. Notwithstanding Section 3.1.3.b and absent a transfer between participating schools as provided in Section 3.1.5, a student shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a participating school in which the student is enrolled if the student has attended any school within the jurisdiction of the same PSU as the participating school for the two preceding semesters.

#### **3.1.4 Enrollment Requirements**

- a. A student enrolled in a school supervised by a local board of education shall only participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of the school to which the student is assigned under G.S. 115C-366.
- b. A student enrolled in a charter school, regional school, or school operated by the University of North Carolina shall meet all the enrollment criteria for that school and attend that school. A student who attends one of these schools shall not participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of that school unless the student's primary residence is within either:
  - i. the county in which the school is located, or
  - ii. 25 miles of the school as determined by the relevant rule administrator.

- c. A local board of education may by policy allow a person who is enrolled in Grade 6 through 12 in a home school, as defined in G.S. 115C-563(a), and whose primary residence is within the board's jurisdiction to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a participating school under the board's jurisdiction, provided that the board either agrees to cover any such person whom it allows to participate under its catastrophic athletic accident insurance policy or verifies that the person is independently covered by catastrophic accident insurance.
- d. 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.
  - i. If there is no local policy, "regularly enrolled" is defined as enrolled for at least one-half of the "minimum load."

### **3.1.5 Transfer Requirements**

- a. A student who transfers from one participating school to another participating school within the same PSU shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following the student's enrollment in the new school, unless the governing body of the PSU has adopted a policy allowing immediate eligibility for students who are assigned by the PSU to a different school within the same PSU.
- b. A student who transfers from a participating school in one PSU to a participating school in a different PSU shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following the student's enrollment in the new school, unless the governing bodies of both PSUs agree that the transfer was for a bona fide purpose.
- c. A student who receives priority enrollment as the child of a full-time employee of a charter school pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.45(f)(3) shall not be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for that charter school if the Department of Public Instruction determines that the parent's employment was a fraudulent basis for the student's priority enrollment. A student determined to be ineligible under this provision shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following discovery of the violation.
- d. For purposes of this Section, if a student transfers from a public school to a nonpublic school, including a home school as defined in G.S. 115C-563(a), and within 365 calendar days transfers to a different public school, the transfer from the nonpublic school shall be treated as a transfer from a public school.
- e. No student shall participate in more than one season of interscholastic athletics per year in the same sport, regardless of the school on behalf of which the student participated.

### **3.1.6 Scholastic Requirements**

- a. To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics, a student must be in good academic standing. A student shall be deemed to be in good academic standing under the following circumstances:
  - i. The student attended at least 85 percent of the total number of instructional days in the PSU during the previous semester;
  - ii. The student passed at least 70 percent of the courses taken in the preceding semester; and
  - iii. The student is making sufficient progress toward meeting the academic and curricular requirements of the PSU and the State Board of Education to be promoted to the next grade level or to graduate within the next calendar year.
- b. 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. If a student meets all local and State Board academic eligibility requirements at the end of the semester, the student may resume participation in interscholastic athletics for the following semester.
- c. For the purpose of determining good academic standing during the fall semester, a student may count any course that the student passed in a summer school session toward the total number of courses passed in the preceding spring semester. The summer school course shall not affect the total number of courses attempted in the preceding spring semester.
- d. A student who is promoted from Grade 5 to Grade 6 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements set forth in this Paragraph to participate in the first semester of Grade 6.
- e. 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.
- f. A student that is "academically eligible" or "academically ineligible" at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester.
- g. It is recommended the student be in school the day of a contest.

### 3.1.7 Age Requirements

- a. Each PSU shall determine the age of a student participating in interscholastic athletics based on a preponderance of the evidence known to the PSU.
- b. A student who is ineligible to participate at one grade level due to age shall be eligible to participate at the next higher grade level only, provided that a student:
  - i. Shall be eligible to participate at the middle school level for no more than six consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's initial entry into Grade 6.
  - ii. Shall be eligible to participate at the high school level for no more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's initial entry into Grade 9.

- iii. Shall not participate on a middle school team if the student becomes 15 years of age before August 31 of that school year.
- iv. Shall not participate on a junior high school team if the student becomes 16 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
- v. Shall not participate on a high school team if the student becomes 19 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
- c. A student in Grade 6 shall not participate in tackle football.

### **3.1.8 Biological Requirements**

- a. All teams participating in interscholastic or intramural athletic activities shall comply with the following:
  - i. Each team shall be expressly designated by the biological sex of the team
  - ii. participants as one of the following:
    - iii. Males, men, or boys.
    - iv. Females, women, or girls.
    - v. Coed or mixed.
  - vi. Athletic teams designated for females, women, or girls shall not be open to students of the male sex.
  - vii. For purposes of this Section, a student's sex shall be recognized based solely on the student's reproductive biology and genetics at birth.

### **3.1.9 Medical Requirements**

- a. To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics, a student shall receive a medical examination every 395 days by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- b. 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-physicals/>.

### **3.1.10 Criminal History**

- a. A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics after pleading guilty or "no contest" to, or being convicted of, a felony under the laws of North Carolina, the United States, or any other state.
- b. Prior to deeming the student ineligible, the relevant rule administrator shall obtain a certified copy of a criminal record reflecting the conviction and verify that the student is the same individual identified in the criminal record.

### 3.1.11 Waivers

- a. A rule administrator shall, in an individual student's case, waive any eligibility requirement contained in these Rules if it finds by a preponderance of the evidence that enforcing the requirement:
  - i. Fails to promote academic progress, health, safety, and fair play;
  - ii. 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
  - iii. Prevents the reasonable accommodation of a student's disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

## 3.2 Amateur Rules<sup>5</sup>

3.2.1 A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics after any of the following:

- a. 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.
- b. Receiving remuneration as a participant in an athletic contest, except that the student may accept a gift, merchandise, or other thing of value, provided that:
  - i. The value does not exceed two hundred-fifty dollars (\$250.00) per student per season;
  - ii. The item is totally consumable and nontransferable, or labeled in a permanent manner (e.g., an engraved or monogrammed item); and
  - iii. The item is approved by the principal of the student's school and the local superintendent.
- c. Entering into an NIL agreement, unless the student has complied with the requirements of SBE Policy ATHL-008.

3.2.2 A student shall not be deemed ineligible under this Section for any of the following:

- a. Payment by an administering organization, PSU, or athletic booster club affiliated with the student's school or PSU for essential expenses arising from a specific interscholastic athletic contest in which the student participates. Essential expenses shall include the reasonable cost of meals, lodging, and transportation.
- b. Receipt of a nominal, standard fee or salary for instructing, supervising, or officiating an organized youth sports program, recreational activities, playground, or camp, whether or not affiliated with a PSU.
- c. Receipt of an Operation Gold Grant from the United States Olympic Committee.

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<sup>5</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-007, July 2025

### **3.3 Name, Image, And Likeness<sup>6</sup>**

#### **3.3.1 Definitions**

- a. "Compensation" means anything of value to the student or an immediate family member of the student, including cash, in-kind gifts, discounts, and other tangible benefits.
- b. "Name, image, or likeness" or "NIL" means the use of a student's name, image, or likeness for commercial purposes and in exchange for compensation to the student or an immediate family member of the student.
- c. "NIL agreement" means any formal agreement or contract to use a student's name, image, or likeness for commercial purposes and in exchange for compensation to the student or an immediate family member of the student.
- d. "School administrators" includes the principal and athletic director of the student's school, the local superintendent, the chairperson of the PSU governing body, and the head coach of any sport in which the student participates during the terms of an NIL agreement.

#### **3.3.2 Restrictions on NIL Agreements**

- a. A student participating in interscholastic athletics may enter an NIL agreement subject to the following restrictions:
  - i. The NIL agreement shall not condition the receipt, type, or extent of any compensation on the extent or quality of the student's athletic performance.
  - ii. If the student is under 18 years of age, the student's parent or legal guardian shall be a party to the NIL agreement.
  - iii. The NIL agreement shall hold the following parties harmless from any liability related to, or arising from the NIL agreement:
    - iv. The governing body of the PSU in which the student is enrolled, as well as its officers and employees.
    - v. The State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction, as well as their officers and employees.
    - vi. The NIL agreement shall otherwise comply with state and federal law.

#### **3.3.3 Disclosure Requirements**

- a. The student shall disclose the NIL agreement to school administrators in accordance with the following procedures:

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<sup>6</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-008, July 2025

- i. No later than 10 business days prior to the execution of a proposed NIL agreement or an amendment to an existing NIL agreement, the student shall provide a complete and unredacted copy of the proposed NIL agreement or amendment to school administrators.
- ii. No later than five business days after the execution or amendment of the NIL agreement, the student shall provide a complete and unredacted copy of the executed NIL agreement or amendment to school administrators.
- iii. No later than 10 business days prior to a student's entry into an NIL agreement, the student shall complete the NIL education course offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations ("NFHS"). If the student is under 18 years of age, the student's parent or legal guardian shall also complete the course. Those persons required to complete the course shall provide school administrators with a certificate of completion from the NFHS.

#### **3.3.4 Permitted NIL Activities**

- a. A student participating in interscholastic athletics may enter into an NIL agreement to use the student's name, image, or likeness in any of the following ways:
  - i. Public appearances or commercials.
  - ii. Autograph signings.
  - iii. Athletic camps and clinics.
  - iv. Sale of non-fungible tokens ("NFTs").
  - v. Product or service endorsements.
  - vi. Promotional activities, including in-person events and social media advertisements.
  - vii. Any other commercial activities that are intended to promote a product or service offered by, increase the profits of, or otherwise generate financial benefits for a party to the NIL agreement from the use of the student's name, image, or likeness.

#### **3.3.5 Prohibited NIL Activities**

- a. No student engaged in an NIL agreement-related activity shall do any of the following:
  - i. Make any reference to a school, PSU, conference, or administering organization.
  - ii. Receive compensation for the use of intellectual property of any school, PSU, conference, administering organization, or the NFHS. Intellectual property includes the name, uniform, mascot, mark, or logo of the entity that owns the intellectual property.

- iii. Appear in the uniform of the student's school or the school's sports team, or otherwise display the intellectual property of any school, PSU, conference, administering organization, or the NFHS.
- iv. No student shall endorse or promote the goods or services of any third-party entity with which the student has entered an NIL agreement during interscholastic athletic competition or other school-based activities or events. This restriction applies to the wearing of apparel displaying the mark, logo, brand, or other identifying insignia of the third-party entity, unless it is part of the standard uniform for the school or sport.

### **3.3.6 Prohibited Promotions**

- a. No student participating in interscholastic athletics shall enter into an NIL agreement or otherwise use the student's name, image, or likeness to promote any of the following:
  - i. An adult establishment, as defined in G.S. 14-202.10(2), or adult entertainment services.
  - ii. Alcohol or alcoholic products.
  - iii. Tobacco, vaping or other electronic smoking devices, or other nicotine products.
  - iv. Cannabis or cannabis products.
  - v. Controlled substances, as defined in G.S. 90-87(5).
  - vi. Opioids or prescription pharmaceuticals.
  - vii. Weapons, firearms, or ammunition.
  - viii. Casinos or gambling, including sports betting.
  - ix. Activities that would disrupt the operations of a school or PSU.

### **3.3.7 Reporting Requirements**

- a. The athletic director of a participating school middle/junior high school shall submit a current copy of any executed or amended NIL agreement involving a student at the school to the Department of Public Instruction's Office of Athletics within 30 days of the disclosure of the executed or amended NIL agreement by the student. The Office of Athletics shall maintain accurate records of all NIL agreements received and provide a summary report of all NIL agreements to the State Board of Education no later than June 30 of each year.

### **3.3.8 Recruitment and Agency Restrictions**

- a. No athletic director, coach, other employee of a PSU, representative of an athletic booster club, or representative of an NIL collective shall use the promise of an NIL agreement to recruit a student to attend a specific participating school or participate

in a specific sport. No athletic director, coach, other employee of a PSU, representative of an athletic booster club, or representative of an NIL collective shall act as a student's agent or marketing representative or otherwise facilitate an NIL agreement between a student and a third party. If the rule administrator finds a violation of this Paragraph by a preponderance of the evidence, the rule administrator shall impose penalties consistent with its regulations and with SBE Policy ATHL-012.

### **3.3.9 Applicability**

- a. This shall apply to any NIL agreement that a student or the student's parent or legal guardian execute during the time the student is enrolled in a PSU, even if the benefits of said agreement do not accrue to the student or an immediate family member of the student until after the student has graduated.

## **SECTION 4: LIMITATIONS ON RECRUITING AND UNDUE INFLUENCE<sup>7</sup>**

No student, coach, professional educator, or other employee of a PSU or administering organization shall subject a student to undue influence for the purpose of inducing or causing the student to transfer from one participating school to another to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of the receiving school.

“Undue influence” means communication or conduct undertaken for the purpose and intent of soliciting or encouraging a student to enroll in a participating school, including the following:

- a. Initiating or arranging communication or contact in any form, including letters, email, or phone calls, with the student or an immediate family member of the student.
- b. Visiting or entertaining the student or an immediate family member of the student.
- c. Providing or arranging for transportation for the student or an immediate family member of the student to visit a participating school or meet with anyone associated with the participating school.
- d. Communicating to a student or an immediate family member of the student, either implicitly or explicitly, that a participating school’s athletic program or sports team is superior to that of another participating school, or that it would be advantageous for the student to participate in athletics at a specific participating school. Such communication may be oral, written, or audiovisual in format.

A party alleging undue influence shall direct the initial inquiry or report to the appropriate rule administrator in accordance with the procedures adopted by the rule administrator. The party alleging undue influence bears the burden of proving undue influence by a preponderance of the evidence.

If the rule administrator finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the accused party has engaged in undue influence, the rule administrator shall impose penalties consistent with its regulations and with SBE Policy ATHL-012.

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<sup>7</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-009, July 2025

## **SECTION 5: PENALTIES**

The PSU or the conference of which the school is a member (if a school participates in a conference that involves more than one PSU) shall adopt and enforce a penalty code. This code should be published and distributed to each athletic and administrative member of each school prior to the first game of the first season.

PSUs or conferences that adopt additional penalties should have penalties published prior to the first game in the first sport of the school year.

### **5.1 Penalty Rules<sup>8</sup>**

5.1.1 A rule administrator shall impose at least the following penalties on a student, coach, or school official in Grades 6 through 12 who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest:

- a. For the first offense, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game in that sport;
- b. For a second offense, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended from participating in the next two games in that sport;
- c. For a third offense, the person shall be suspended from participation in interscholastic athletics for one calendar year;
- d. A coach who is suspended shall not coach any team for any grade level during the period of suspension.

5.1.2 Penalties shall be cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season. If no member of the participating school's coaching staff is present to assume the duties of a head coach who has been ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest, the contest shall be terminated by forfeit.

5.1.3 The PSU that has jurisdiction over a participating school may impose penalties in addition to those imposed by an administering organization.

### **5.2 Recommendations for Ejections**

5.2.1 Officials will be instructed to notify the principal of the school from which an ejection has occurred for the purpose of enforcing the penalty rules in Section 5.1.

5.2.2 Ejection criteria apply to all persons involved in athletic contest, including student athletes, coaches, managers, and game administrators. The examples below include behavior or conduct which may result in an ejection from a contest.

- a. Fighting includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:

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<sup>8</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-012, July 2025

- i. an altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hitting, punching and/or kicking;
- ii. an attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, or feet;
- iii. an attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made;
- iv. an attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate;
- v. leaving the bench area to participate in a fight (contact or no contact);
- vi. biting observed or determined by an official;
- vii. taunting, baiting, or spitting toward an official or opponent;
- viii. profanity directed toward an official or opponent;
- ix. obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate or instigate; and
- x. disrespectfully addressing an official (physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career).

### **5.3 Recommendations for Penalty Code**

The following penalty code has been developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction if a locally developed penalty code is absent.

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

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

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

5.3.2 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 PSU or adopted conference. The schools involved shall immediately report in writing to the conference president and the local superintendent.

5.3.3 A student found guilty of misconduct may be

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

5.3.4 An official found guilty of misconduct may be

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

- 5.3.5 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 PSU or conference.
- 5.3.6 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 school year following the unanimous vote.
- 5.3.7 Definitions of Probation and Suspension
- a. If a school or individual is placed on probation, the school or the individual is put on a trial period for a specific time.
    - i. At the end of this trial period, the PSU 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.
    - ii. During the probationary period, a school or individual may participate in all interscholastic athletic activities unless otherwise stipulated by the governing authority.
    - iii. 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 PSU or conference of which the school is a member.
  - b. A school or individual may be suspended in a particular sport or in all sports.

## **5.4 Other Penalties**

### 5.4.1 Forfeit

- a. Using an ineligible player.
- b. Exceeding the daily, weekly, or season contest limit.
- c. Refusing to complete a postponed or suspended contest.
- d. Violating the baseball pitching limit.
- e. Coach is not present to assume supervision requirements.

## **SECTION 6: APPEALS<sup>9</sup>**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (“Superintendent”) shall appoint an independent interscholastic athletics appeals board (“appeals board”) to hear and act upon appeals from a final decision of a rule administrator regarding the application or enforcement of SBE policies and corresponding administrative rules governing interscholastic athletics.

The jurisdiction of the appeals board shall be limited to final decisions concerning the application or enforcement of SBE policies in the ATHL Policy Series and their corresponding administrative rules, codified at Title 16, Subchapter 6E, Section .0200 of the North Carolina Administrative Code. The appeals board shall have no jurisdiction over appeals that concern the application or enforcement of a policy, rule, or law, including local policies of a public school unit, that are outside the scope of those policies and rules.

An aggrieved party may file an appeal with the Superintendent within five days after receipt of the final decision by completing an appeal form provided by the Superintendent. The aggrieved party shall submit the following information required by the form:

- a. The name of the aggrieved party’s participating school and PSU.
- b. The name, address, and phone number of the aggrieved party. If the aggrieved party is a school or PSU, the aggrieved party shall also provide the name, address, phone number, and title of an employee who will serve as the official representative of the school or PSU during the appeal.
- c. The names, email addresses, and phone numbers of the principal and local superintendent.
- d. The names of any students affected by the final decision and the sports in which the student participates.
- e. A description of the facts underlying the final decision.
- f. A description of the final decision, the date it was issued, and the name, email, and phone number of the rule administrator or staff member thereof who issued the final decision.
- g. An argument explaining why the aggrieved party believes the rule administrator's final decision was erroneous for one or both of the reasons provided in Section 6.8.
- h. If applicable, the date of any imminent interscholastic athletic activity that the final decision may affect.
- i. Any relevant documents or other evidence that the aggrieved party deems relevant to the appeal and that the aggrieved party provided to the rule administrator for consideration prior to the final decision.

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<sup>9</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-013, July 2025

The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's authorized designee, shall review the appeal form and determine whether the appeals board has jurisdiction over the appeal. The Superintendent or designee may dismiss the appeal for any of the following reasons:

- a. The appeals board lacks jurisdiction over the appeal, as provided in Section 6.2.
- b. The party filing the appeal is not an "aggrieved party" as defined in SBE Policy ATHL-001 or otherwise lacks standing to appeal.
- c. The relevant rule administrator has not yet issued a final decision.
- d. The appeal is not timely.
- e. The aggrieved party has failed to provide all the information required by 6.3, except that the Superintendent or designee shall provide notice of any deficiencies to the aggrieved party and a reasonable opportunity to correct the deficiency.

The rule administrator may file a response to the aggrieved party's submissions within five days. The panel may shorten the time for filing the rule administrator's response if the decision affects a student's or coach's eligibility to participate in an intervening interscholastic athletic activity.

All parties shall simultaneously provide copies of all records submitted as part of the appeal to the other parties involved. If the aggrieved party is a student, parent, or coach, the parties shall also provide copies of the documents and forms to the local superintendent and principal with jurisdiction over the aggrieved party.

The Superintendent or designee shall appoint panels of no fewer than three members of the appeals board to hear and decide individual appeals on behalf of the appeals board.

- a. The panel may conduct a live hearing in person or via teleconference. Any hearing so conducted shall be recorded.
- b. The rule administrator shall speak first and have up to 30 minutes to explain its final decision and respond to questions from members of the panel.
- c. The aggrieved party or shall have up to 30 minutes to respond to the rule administrator's final decision, explain why the rule administrator's final decision was erroneous for one or both of the reasons provided in Section 6.8, and respond to questions from the panel.
- d. Any other parties whose participation in the hearing has been deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee shall have up to 15 minutes to present additional relevant information and answer questions from the panel.
- e. The panel chair may modify the order of presentations or extend time for either or both parties if the panel chair determines, in his or her sole discretion, that it is necessary to ensure a fair hearing of the facts and relevant law.
- f. Neither direct questioning nor cross examination of one party by another party shall be permitted.

- g. Profanity, ad hominem attacks against other parties, and statements of an excessively aggressive or hostile nature shall not be permitted.
- h. The panel chair shall enforce the provisions of this Section and may dismiss from the hearing any individuals or parties who violate any of those provisions. The panel may also postpone the hearing if the panel chair determines, in his or her sole discretion, that it is necessary to ensure a fair hearing of the facts and relevant law.

The panel shall affirm the rule administrator's final decision unless a majority of the panel determines that the final decision either:

- a. Erroneously applies SBE policies or other applicable laws; or
- b. Is not supported by the evidence, based on the following standards of review:
  - i. For a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, the panel shall affirm the referee or official's ruling and uphold the resulting penalty unless the aggrieved party presents clear and convincing evidence to contradict the ruling.
  - ii. For a final decision of a rule administrator regarding the application of any other SBE policy, the panel shall affirm the final decision unless the aggrieved party demonstrates that the final decision was not supported by substantial evidence, as defined in G.S. 150B-2(8c).

The panel may also remand the final decision to the rule administrator for reconsideration in light of new information or evidence that was not provided to the rule administrator prior to its final decision, if there is an intervening change in any relevant law, or if the panel determines that additional information is necessary to inform its judgment. The panel shall not consider information or evidence presented that was not presented to the rule administrator in the first instance.

The Superintendent or designee may stay a determination of ineligibility, or a penalty imposed by the rule administrator, pending the judgment of the appeals board if the Superintendent or designee determines that:

- a. The aggrieved party has demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits of the appeal; and
- b. The aggrieved party is likely to suffer irreparable harm or loss of opportunity if the stay is not granted.

The panel's judgment shall be deemed a final agency decision and not subject to further appeal to the Superintendent or State Board of Education.

## **SECTION 7: HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **7.1 Student Health and Safety<sup>10</sup>**

- 7.1.1 A concussion is defined as a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in loss of consciousness.
- 7.1.2 A rule administrator shall, on an annual basis, provide a concussion and head injury information sheet to all coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, first responders (SBE Policy ATHL-016), volunteers, and students who participate in interscholastic athletic activities, and the parents or legal guardians of those students. The information shall include:
- a. The definitions and symptoms of concussions and head injuries;
  - b. A description of the physiology and the potential short-term and long-term effects of concussions and other head injuries;
  - c. The medical return-to-play protocol for post-concussion participation in interscholastic athletic activities; and
  - d. Any other information deemed necessary by the PSU.
- 7.1.3 School employees, first responders, volunteers, and students shall sign the information sheet and return it to the coach before participating in interscholastic athletic activities, including tryouts, practices, or competition. Parents shall sign the information sheet and return it to the coach before a child may participate in any such interscholastic athletic activities. The signed sheets shall be maintained in accordance with SBE Policy ATHL-005.
- 7.1.4 If a coach, athletic director, school nurse, athletic trainer, or first responder (as defined SBE Policy ATHL-016) determines that a student participating in an interscholastic athletic activity is exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with concussion, the student shall be removed from the activity at the time and shall not be allowed to return to play or practice that day. A student removed from play for exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with concussion shall not return to play or practice on a subsequent day until the student is evaluated by and receives written clearance for such participation from one of the following:
- a. A physician licensed under Chapter 90, Article 1 of the General Statutes with training in concussion management;

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<sup>10</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-015, July 2025

- b. A neuropsychologist licensed under Chapter 90, Article 18A of the General Statutes with training in concussion management and working in consultation with a physician licensed under Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes;
- c. An athletic trainer licensed under Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes;
- d. A physician assistant, consistent with the limitations of G.S. 90-18.1; or
- e. A nurse practitioner, consistent with the limitations of G.S. 90-18.2.

7.1.5 Each participating school shall develop a venue-specific emergency action plan to deal with serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the patient may deteriorate rapidly. The plan must be:

- a. In writing;
- b. Reviewed by an athletic trainer licensed under Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes;
- c. Approved by the principal of the school;
- d. Distributed to all appropriate personnel;
- e. Posted conspicuously for community and parental awareness at all athletic-sponsored 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.

7.1.6 Each participating school's emergency management plan shall include:

- a. A delineation of roles;
- b. Methods of communication;
- c. Available emergency equipment; and
- d. Access to and plan for emergency transport.

7.1.7 Each school shall maintain complete and accurate records of its compliance with the requirements of this Section.

#### 7.1.8 **Insurance**

- a. G.S. 115C-407.65(b) requires public school units to purchase catastrophic insurance for high school interscholastic athletic activities in accordance with G.S. 58-31A-60. PSUs should consider expanding these policies to cover middle/junior high school interscholastic athletic activities or purchasing separate coverage.
- b. Parents and legal guardians of student-athletes should consider additional private medical insurance options at their own expense.

#### 7.1.9 **Medical Release Forms**

- c. Schools should have medical release forms on site at athletic events in the event medical treatment is required.

#### 7.1.10 Pre-Participation

- a. To be eligible for participation in practice or in interscholastic athletic contests, a student at any participating school must undergo a pre-participation medical examination and submit a completed Medical Eligibility Form to the participating school. The Pre-Participation Evaluation (“PPE”) Form includes the History Form, the Physical Examination Form, and the Medical Eligibility Form. The current NCHSAA PPE Form can be found on the NCHSAA website.
  - i. The PPE History Form is intended to be completed and signed by the student-athlete and parent or legal custodian. The completed and signed PPE History Form is intended to be presented to the examining licensed medical professional (physician licensed to practice medicine (MD/DO), nurse practitioner or physician assistant) for their review prior to a physical examination [See Application Note 1.2.9(c)].
  - ii. The student-athlete must also receive a physical examination once every 395 days by a physician licensed to practice medicine (MD/DO), nurse practitioner, or physician assistant and be cleared to play. Upon review of the PPE History Form and completing the Physical Examination Form, the licensed medical professional will complete and sign the Medical Eligibility Form.
- b. To be eligible for practice or participation in any interscholastic athletic contests:
  - i. A rule administrator shall provide student-athletes with the Gfeller-Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
  - ii. Students shall read, initial, sign, and return to the coach the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet before beginning participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.
  - iii. A rule administrator shall provide parent/legal guardians with the Gfeller-Waller NCHSAA Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet.
  - iv. Parent/legal guardians shall read, initial, sign, and return to the coach the Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Information Sheet before the student begins participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.
  - v. A rule administrator shall provide school representatives (parent/coach/volunteer/school nurse/athletic directors/first responders) with the Gfeller-Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet.

- vi. All above adults shall read, initial and return to the coach the Gfeller-Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet before the student begins participation in practice or participating in interscholastic athletic contests.
- c. To participate in out-of-season and summer workouts, a student-athlete must have an up-to-date Medical Eligibility Form on file with the member school.
- d. To participate in out-of-season and summer workouts, a student-athlete must have a signed Gfeller-Waller Concussion Statement on file with the member school.

#### **7.1.11 Return to Play**

- a. Student-athletes absent from athletic practice for five or more days due to illness shall receive a medical release signed by either a physician licensed to practice medicine or his/her designee (nurse practitioner, physician's assistant) before readmittance to practice or contests.
  - i. It is recommended that schools use the Illness Return To Play Form: Medical Clearance Releasing The Student-Athlete To Resume Full Participation In Athletics After An Illness which can be found by going to <https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety> and clicking on "Forms."
- b. Student-athletes absent from athletic practice for five or more days due to injury shall receive a medical release signed by either a physician licensed to practice medicine or his/her designee (nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or licensed athletic trainer) before readmittance to practice or contests.
  - i. It is recommended that schools use the Injury Return To Play Form: Medical Clearance Releasing The Student-Athlete To Resume Full Participation In Athletics After An Injury which can be found by going to <https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety> and clicking on "Forms."
  - ii. A student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion is required to follow the concussion return to play protocol and is required to have the Concussion Return To Play Protocol Form completed by a licensed health care provider before readmittance to practice or contests.
  - iii. If a student misses five or more consecutive days of practice due to injury or illness, they must participate in at least three separate days of practice before returning to competition.
    - 1. Students absent for other reasons e.g., funeral, quarantine, school suspension are not subject to this rule.

## **7.2 Athletic Trainers<sup>11</sup>**

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<sup>11</sup> SBE Policy ATHL-016, July 2025

7.2.1 The State Board of Education encourages public school units to have a licensed athletic trainer or first responder available for all athletic events, practices, and activities in every sport at every middle, junior high, and high schools under the PSU's jurisdiction.

### **7.3 Inclement/Hot Weather Guidelines**

7.3.1 All outdoor sports should follow the Inclement/Hot Weather/Lightning Guidelines found at <https://www.nchsaa.org/handbook>

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

### **7.4 General Guidelines for Sports Hygiene, Skin Infections and Communicable Diseases<sup>12</sup>**

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee ("SMAC") has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

#### **7.4.1 Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports**

- a. Shower immediately after every competition and practice, using liquid soap and not a shared bar soap.
- b. Wash all workout clothing after each practice, washing in hot water and drying on a high heat setting.
- c. Clean and/or wash all personal gear (knee pads, head gear, braces, etc.) and gym bags at least weekly.
- d. Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- e. Refrain from full body and/or cosmetic shaving of head, chest, arms, legs, abdomen, and groin.
- f. Students should clean hands with an alcohol-based gel or soap and water before and after every practice and contest to decrease bacterial load on the hands.

#### **7.4.2 Infectious Skin Diseases**

- a. Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:
  - i. Students must notify a parent/guardian and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional must evaluate all concerning skin lesions before returning to practices or competition.

- ii. If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of the infection. All shared equipment shall be properly cleaned/disinfected prior to use.
- iii. Coaches, officials, and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or local guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

### **7.4.3 Blood-borne Infectious Diseases**

- a. Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:
  - i. A student who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on a uniform, or has blood on their body, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.
  - ii. Athletic trainers or other caregivers must wear gloves and use Universal Precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
  - iii. In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
  - iv. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
  - v. Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

### **7.4.4 Other Communicable Diseases**

- a. Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:
  - i. Make certain that students, coaching staff, and medical staff are current on all required vaccinations (MMR, Hepatitis B, Chickenpox, etc.) and strongly encourage yearly influenza vaccinations.
  - ii. During times of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

7.4.5 For more detailed information, refer to the "Blood-Borne Pathogens," "Infectious Mononucleosis" and "Skin Conditions and Infections" sections contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

## **7.5 Tobacco**

7.5.1 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.

## **SECTION 8: RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **8.1 Athletic Administrators**

- 8.1.1 School administrators are responsible for adequate supervision of athletic contests to secure safety and proper conduct of athletes, coaches, fans, and officials.
- 8.1.2 It is recommended that officials be escorted to safety at the end of every game.

### **8.2 Head Coaches**

- 8.2.1 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.
  - a. 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.
  - b. Any person paid or employed as a principal shall not coach interscholastic athletic teams.
  - c. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of assistant coaches, players, and bench personnel.
  - d. It is recommended that the head coach attend a rules clinic in the sport he/she coaches.
  - e. It is recommended that all coaches, paid and volunteer, take the following free NFHS courses annually at <https://nfhslearn.com> .
    - i. Concussion in Sports
    - ii. Sudden Cardiac Arrest
    - iii. Heat Illness Prevention
    - iv. The Collapsed Athlete
    - v. Sportsmanship

### **8.3 Composite Teams**

- 8.3.1 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.
- 8.3.2 Ninth graders can be divided so that some play with the seventh and eighth grades at the middle school as a junior high school team. Others play at the senior high level, depending upon local policy.
  - a. Once a student begins practicing with a high school team, he/she may not, later, move down to the junior high school team.

- b. 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.

## **8.4 Sundays**

8.4.1 There shall be no Sunday participation during the school year.

- a. This includes practices, scrimmages, contests, off-season skill development, and open facilities.
- b. This includes the assembling of members of athletic squads for purposes of viewing films, chalk talks, or other matters pertaining to coaching.

## **8.5 Practices**

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

- a. No individual or team practice may begin until after the last regularly scheduled instructional period.
- b. No authorized practice may occur during the workday for teachers during the ten-month teaching calendar.
- c. Coaches may not use their vacation or leave time to hold a practice during the teacher workday.
- d. Exception: Due to inclement weather only, a superintendent may give permission for schools in his/her unit to practice prior to the end of a workday.

8.5.2 Team practice in any sport is prohibited prior to the start of the sports season and after the sports season ends during the school year.

8.5.3 This rule also applies to non-faculty coaches.

## **8.6 Scrimmages**

8.6.1 One pre-season scrimmage is permitted.

- a. The scrimmage does not count as one of the regular season contests.
- b. The scrimmage must be against another school.
- c. Dressing and sitting in the team bench area shall be interpreted as playing in a scrimmage.

## **8.7 Contests**

8.7.1 There shall be no contest during the regular school day.

8.7.2 Dressing and sitting in the team bench area shall be interpreted as playing in a contest.

### **8.7.3 Starting Time**

- a. Evening contests and/or games shall start no later than 7:00 p.m. when followed by a school day.
- b. Exception: Tournaments.

#### **8.7.4 Rules**

- a. Interscholastic contests shall use the rules set forth by:
  - i. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
  - ii. The Rules of Golf as approved by the United States Golf Association (USGA) and The Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A)
  - iii. The United States Tennis Association (USTA) Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations
- b. Exception: Modifications permitted in Section 9.

#### **8.7.5 Filming and Videotaping**

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

#### **8.7.6 Out-of-State Competition**

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

### **8.8 Postponed Contests**

8.8.1 A contest not started for any reason will be treated as a postponed contest.

8.8.2 All postponed contests due to emergency reasons (e.g. inclement weather, epidemics, mid-term exams, etc.) may be rescheduled.

- a. A single postponed contest may be rescheduled and played in any week.
  - i. See Section 9 for sport specific limitations.
  - ii. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.

8.8.3 Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date, excluding Sunday.

8.8.4 Saturday will not be used as a makeup day, unless mutually agreed upon by the principals of the two schools involved.

8.8.5 If any postponed 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.

8.8.6 If one team does not want to make up a postponed contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.

## **8.9 Suspended Contests**

8.9.1 A started contest stopped for any reason (i.e., mechanical failure, artificial lights, water systems, etc.), where a winner cannot be determined, will be treated as a suspended contest.

8.9.2 If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools.

- a. A single suspended contest may be resumed in any week.
  - i. See Section 9 for sport specific limitations.
  - ii. This decision should be made by the principals of both schools in conjunction with conference officers.
- b. The contest will be continued from the point of suspension.
- c. In a situation where a team does not want to make up a suspended contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.
- d. If any suspended 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.
- e. If one team does not want to make up a suspended contest, the contest will be forfeited to the opponent.

## **8.10 Sports Seasons**

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

- i. Fall - Practice may begin no earlier than 10 school days prior to the first day of school for students in the fall semester to November 15
- ii. Winter - October 15 to March 1
- iii. Spring - February 1 to the end of the spring semester

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

8.10.3 No student shall participate in more than one season of interscholastic athletics per year in the same sport, regardless of the school on behalf of which the student participated.

8.10.4 No sport may be played in more than one season.

## **8.11 Off-Season**

8.11.1 Skill development sessions are allowed but shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport.

- a. 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.
- b. At no time may a coach require skill development sessions as a measure of potential or continued participation on a team for any student.
- c. The primary focus of off-season skill development should be on individual student athletes, not team.
- d. Skill development sessions are not restricted in the number of participants on a daily basis.
- e. There are no restrictions on the number of coaches who may work with the athletes.
- f. Skill development sessions are open only to students enrolled at that school.
- g. Any team practice or game environment, including scrimmages, created in an off-season skill development session is prohibited during the students' school calendar year.
- h. Team practice in any sport is prohibited outside of the sports season during the school year.
- i. For safety purposes, school administrators or other school personnel should be present as supervisors during any skill development session or open facility.
- j. Sixth, seventh and eighth graders are not permitted to participate in high school skill development sessions during the school year.

8.11.2 Any individual who coaches at a middle/junior high 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.

- a. Coaches coaching an outside team either during the sports season or outside the sports season, but during the school year, must still abide by the number restrictions, one less than a team.
  - i. A coach may not coach any students from his or her school on an outside team during another sports tryout period.
- b. Number of participants from one school, on any outside team on a given day.
  - i. Baseball - no more than 8
  - ii. Basketball - no more than 4
  - iii. Cross Country - no more than 4
  - iv. Football - no more than 10
  - v. Golf - no more than 3
  - vi. Lacrosse (men) - no more than 9
  - vii. Lacrosse (women) - no more than 11
  - viii. Softball - no more than 8

- ix. Soccer - no more than 10
- x. Tennis - no more than 4
- xi. Track - no more than 6
- xii. Volleyball - no more than 5
- xiii. Wrestling - no more than 8

## **8.12 Open Facilities**

8.12.1 Open facility is permitted year-round during the academic year, Monday through Saturday.

- a. Schools may use the facilities for students in their building prior to or after the school day.
- b. It shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport.
- c. Open facility must be voluntary and open to all students.
- d. To participate, students must have a current and valid sports pre-participation and medical examination form.
- e. At no time may a coach require an open facility as a measure of potential or continued participation on a team for any student.
- f. Sixth, seventh and eighth graders are not permitted to participate in high school open facility during the school year.

## **8.13 Summer**

8.13.1 Once the students' school calendar year ends, non-mandatory teacher workdays are governed by local policy.

8.13.2 During the summer, coaches are free to work with individual or multiple players from their schools or their feeder schools, conduct practices, etc.

- a. Summer workouts must be voluntary and open to all students.
- b. To participate, students must have a current and valid sports pre-participation and medical examination form.

8.13.3 Once practice for the fall sports season begins, skill development restrictions are in place.

## **8.14 Weight Training and Conditioning**

8.14.1 Weight training and conditioning programs are permitted for all eligible students.

- a. School administrators are responsible for providing adequate supervision of the weight training sessions and their intended purposes.

- b. Coaches shall verify that every student participating in weight training or conditioning has a valid Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form.

8.14.2 Must be voluntary and open to all students.

8.14.3 Personnel knowledgeable of weight training and conditioning should always be on hand to observe and ensure proper techniques and practices are followed.

8.14.4 If high school weight rooms or other athletic facilities are used or shared with middle/junior high schools, the middle/junior high school student athletes shall not use such facilities at the same time as the high school student athletes.

## **8.15 Officiating**

8.15.1 Officials are recommended to be obtained through a NCHSAA Regional Supervisor.

- a. Complaints about officiating are to be filed with the assignor.
- b. Under no circumstances shall a game be played when officials are taken from the audience of spectators or from school personnel.
  - i. Exception: In an emergency, NCHSAA certified officials may be used when permission is acquired from the office of the local superintendent of the home team or host school.
- c. To eliminate any real or perceived conflict of interest, assignors should not officiate in the sport which they are responsible for assigning.
- d. Officials should be instructed to inform school officials when ejections occur.
- e. It is recommended that officials be escorted to safety at the end of play in all games.

## **8.16 All-Star Teams/Games**

8.16.1 Participation on any all-star team or in any all-star game in which a student is representing the Middle School is prohibited.

8.16.2 Students are prohibited from wearing any school uniform, 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.

## **8.17 Cheerleading**

8.17.1 Cheerleading is an activity that is under the control of the PSU and conference.

## **SECTION 9: SPORTS**

### **9.1 Baseball**

#### **9.1.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than:
  - i. Two per week if two single contests, on two separate days.
  - ii. Three per week, must play one single contest and one doubleheader.
  - iii. Three per week, during tournament play.
  - iv. Three per week, under any circumstance, including rescheduled postponed contests or the resumption of suspended contests.
- b. One doubleheader is permitted per week.
  - i. When playing a doubleheader, contests are limited to five innings each, except to break a tie.
- c. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

#### **9.1.2 Pitching Limitation**

- a. A player is limited to pitching 10 innings Monday through Saturday.
  - i. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.

#### **9.1.3 Coaching Equipment**

- a. Coaches are required to wear a skull style or NOCSAE certified helmet when coaching in the coach's box during a contest.

#### **9.1.4 Contest Equipment**

- a. By conference adoption:
  - i. Schools may modify distances.
  - ii. Schools should decide on a bat size for conference play.

#### **9.1.5 Mercy Rule**

- a. By mutual agreement of the competing schools, or by conference adoption:
  - i. The contest is terminated if a team is ahead by 15 runs after three innings, or ahead by 10 runs after five innings.

#### **9.1.6 Postponed and Suspended Contests**

- a. Under no circumstance can more than three contests may be played in a week including rescheduled postponed contests or the resumption of suspended contests.

- b. See 8.7
- c. If more than four innings have been played and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.
- d. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools.
  - i. 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.

#### **9.1.7 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.
- b. Three contests in a week are permitted.

## **9.2 Basketball**

### **9.2.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week during tournament play.
  - iv. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

### **9.2.2 Contest Equipment**

- a. A legal-sized girls' ball shall be used for girls contests.
- b. By conference adoption:
  - i. A legal-size girls' or boys' ball may be used for boys contests.

### **9.2.3 Length of Quarters**

- a. Middle school contests shall be played using six-minute quarters.
- b. Junior high school contests may be played using eight-minute quarters.

### **9.2.4 Mercy Rule**

- a. By mutual agreement of the competing schools, or by conference adoption:
  - i. There is a continuous "running" clock when a team has a 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.

#### **9.2.5 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.
- b. Three contests in a week are permitted.

### **9.3 Cross County**

#### **9.3.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship meet.

#### **9.3.2 Course Distance**

- a. The maximum course distance is two miles.

#### **9.3.3 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one championship meet.

### **9.4 Football**

#### **9.4.1 Sixth grade students are not eligible for tackle football.**

#### **9.4.2 Acclimatization/Physical Conditioning**

- a. 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.
- b. It is recommended that athletes do daily weigh-ins to monitor weight loss.
- c. The first five days of practice shall be devoted entirely to physical conditioning/acclimatization activities.
  - i. Only one practice per day may be conducted and shall not exceed two hours in length.
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. During the first two days, helmets, t-shirts, shorts, and football shoes constitute acceptable dress, and no other football attire shall be worn.

- iv. The first two days of this conditioning week are limited to calisthenics, kicking, throwing, running, and similar exercises.
- v. On days three, four, and five, complete football attire may be worn, but absolutely no body-to-body contact is permitted.
- vi. Arm shields may be used, but tackling or blocking dummies, charging sleds, or similar devices may not be used until days three, four, and five.
- d. Contact activities may begin no earlier than the sixth day of practice (i.e., the day after the required physical conditioning phase of practice has been completed).
  - i. Only one practice per day may be conducted and shall not exceed two hours in length.
- e. A player shall have participated in a minimum of eight separate days of team practice, three of which shall be in full pads and included body-to-body contact, before participating in a football scrimmage or contest with outside competition.
  - i. The exception to this rule is athletes from other sports who play only as kickers.
  - ii. There are no other exceptions; to fulfill this requirement, these must be football practices.

#### **9.4.3 Number of Regular Season Contests - 7**

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. One per week.
  - iii. Two per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to one additional contest may be played in lieu of a postseason championship contest.

#### **9.4.4 Length of Quarters**

- a. Middle school contests shall be played using eight-minute quarters.
- b. Junior high school contests may be played using ten-minute quarters.

#### **9.4.5 Contest Equipment**

- a. A legal-size youth ball may be used.
- b. It is recommended that EMS be available on game days.

#### **9.4.6 Mercy Rule**

- a. By mutual agreement of the competing schools, or by conference adoption:
  - i. There is a continuous “running” clock when a team has a 28-point advantage over its opponent at half time or thereafter. The clock would only stop for

timeouts by coaches, 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.

#### **9.4.7 Tied Games**

- a. A tie at the end of regulation may be resolved by the method of the 10-yard line overtime procedures as set forth by the NFHS Football Rules Book.

#### **9.4.8 Suspended Game**

- a. See 8.7
- b. If the game has reached at least half-time and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.
- c. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools.
  - i. 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.

#### **9.4.9 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one championship contest.

#### **9.4.10 Off-Season and Summer**

- a. During the entire 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.
  - i. This regulation applies to workouts, combines, practices on/off campus, and summer camps.

### **9.5 Golf**

#### **9.5.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

#### **9.5.2 Regular Season Round**

- a. Contests are limited to nine holes.

### 9.5.3 Postseason

- a. A school may participate in one championship tournament.
- b. A championship round may be 18 holes

## 9.6 Lacrosse

### 9.6.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week, during tournament play.
  - iv. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

### 9.6.2 Postseason

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.
- b. Three contests in a week are permitted.

## 9.7 Soccer

### 9.7.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

### 9.7.2 Length of Halves

- a. Contests shall be played in two 30-minute halves.

### 9.7.3 Tied Games

- a. If a tie score exists at the end of regulation play during the regular season (conference or non-conference), with prior mutual consent of the teams, play will continue with two overtime periods of five minutes each.

- i. If a tie score exists at the end of the second overtime period, the contest shall be considered a tie for both teams.

#### **9.7.4 Suspended Game**

- a. See 8.7
- b. If the contest is suspended in the first half, even if one team is ahead, the contest is to pick up from the point of interruption unless coaches agree to end the contest.
- c. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools.
  - i. 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.
- d. If the contest is suspended at half time or beyond, the contest is over.
  - i. If the score is tied when the contest is suspended, then the contest ends in a tie.
  - ii. If one team is ahead when the contest is suspended, then that team is the winner.

#### **9.7.5 Mercy Rule**

- a. By mutual agreement of the competing schools, or by conference adoption:
  - i. When a team leads by seven goals at halftime or thereafter, the game shall be terminated.

#### **9.7.6 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.
  - i. Three contests in a week are permitted.
  - ii. The NFHS Soccer Rules Tie-Breaking Procedure may be used to resolve tied contests.

### **9.8 Softball**

#### **9.8.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than:
  - i. Two per week if two single contests, on two separate days.
  - ii. Three per week, must play one single contest and one doubleheader.
  - iii. Three per week, during tournament play.
  - iv. Four per week, must play two doubleheaders.
  - v. Four per week, under any circumstance, including rescheduled postponed contests or the resumption of suspended contests.

- b. Two doubleheaders are permitted per week.
  - i. When playing a doubleheader, contests are limited to five innings each, except to break a tie.
- c. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

#### **9.8.2 Coaching Equipment**

- a. Coaches are required to wear a skull style or NOCSAE certified helmet when coaching in the coach's box during a contest.

#### **9.8.3 Contest Equipment**

- a. A legal-size (12") ball shall be used.
- b. By conference adoption, schools may:
  - i. Modify the distance.
  - ii. Establish pitching limitations for conference play.

#### **9.8.4 Mercy Rule**

- a. By mutual agreement of the competing schools, or by conference adoption:
  - i. The contest is terminated if a team is ahead by 15 runs after three innings, or 10 after five innings.

#### **9.8.5 Suspended Game**

- a. See 8.7
- b. If more than four innings have been played and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.
- c. If the contest is to be completed, it may be resumed at another date/time by mutual agreement of the principals of both schools.
  - i. 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.

#### **9.8.6 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.
- b. Three contests in a week are permitted.

### **9.9 Tennis**

#### **9.9.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than:

- i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week, during tournament play.
  - iv. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

### 9.9.2 Postseason

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.

## 9.10 Track & Field

### 9.10.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14

- a. No more than:
  - i. One per day.
  - ii. Two per week.
  - iii. Three per week if, and only if, at least one is a rescheduled postponed contest or the resumption of a suspended contest.
- b. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship meet.

### 9.10.2 Events

- a. A student-athlete is limited to a maximum of three events.
- b. The maximum distance is two miles.
- c. The order of events in tables 1 and 2 was developed as a guide to arrange track and field competition that will best meet the needs of middle/junior high school students.
  - i. It is recommended that this order of events be followed unless an alternative order is established by mutual agreement of the administrators of the competing teams prior to the day of competition.
- d. Field events should be started before the running program, in order to be completed prior to the final running event.

*Table 1: Track Events*

<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
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 2: Field Events*

<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>
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 3: Hurdle Specifications*

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

### 9.10.3 Specifications for Implements Used in Events

- a. The discus shall:
  - i. Weigh 2 lbs., 3.27 oz. (1 kg).
  - ii. Have the following minimum and maximum dimensions: Diameter 7-1/8 in – 7-1/8 in. (180 mm - 182 mm).
  - iii. Have a 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).
  - iv. Have a core of 2 in. (50 mm).

- b. The shot, for boys, shall:
  - i. Consist of a solid sphere of any metal not softer than brass, weighing 4.0 kg (8 lbs. 13 oz.).
  - ii. Have a diameter of at least 3-3/4 in., but not more than 4-1/4 in. (95- 108 mm).
- c. The shot, for girls, shall:
  - i. The shot for girls shall consist of a solid sphere of any metal not softer than brass, weighing 2.74 kg (6 lbs.)
  - ii. Have a diameter of at least 3-1/4 in. but not more than 4 in.
- d. The scratch line in long jump should be approximately 8 ft from the edge of the landing pit.
- e. Other equipment will be similar to that used at the high school level.

#### 9.10.4 Postseason

- a. A school may participate in one championship meet.

### 9.11 Volleyball

#### 9.11.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14

- a. No more than:
  - i. Two per week if two single contests, on two separate days.
  - ii. Three per week, must play one single contest and one doubleheader.
  - iii. Three per week, during tournament play.
  - iv. Four per week, must play two doubleheaders.
  - v. Four per week, under any circumstance, including rescheduled postponed contests or the resumption of suspended contests.
- b. Two doubleheaders are permitted per week.
  - i. When playing a doubleheader, contests must be best two of three sets.
- c. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

#### 9.11.2 Scoring

- a. Rally scoring must be used.
- b. By conference adoption:
  - i. In regular season and tournament play, matches shall be decided by the best two out of three sets, or three out of five sets.

#### 9.12.3 Contest Equipment

- a. By conference adoption:

- i. The net may be lowered to a minimum height of 6 ft, 4 in.

#### **9.11.4 Postseason**

- a. A school may participate in one single elimination championship tournament.
- b. Three contests in a week are permitted.

### **9.12 Wrestling**

#### **9.12.1 Number of Regular Season Contests - 14**

- a. No more than two per day.
  - i. A minimum of 30 minutes of rest between matches is required.
- b. Any one of the following combinations is allowed during a week:
  - i. One dual (one match)
  - ii. One tri (two matches)
  - iii. One dual and one tri (three matches)
  - iv. Two duals (two matches)
  - v. Two tris (four matches)
- c. No more than four matches per week, under any circumstance, including rescheduled postponed contests or the resumption of suspended contests.
- d. All matches during a tri meet shall count toward the athlete's total number of 14.
- e. Up to two additional contests may be played in lieu of a postseason championship tournament.

#### **9.12.2 Weight Classes**

- a. Boys (Pounds)
  - i. 76, 83, 90, 98, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 144, 150, 157, 165, 175, 190, 215, and heavyweight.
  - ii. The maximum weight for the heavyweight contestants will be 250.
  - iii. The minimum weight for the heavyweight class is 196.
  - iv. The minimum weight for a 90-pound weight class contestant is 75.
  - v. The minimum weight for an 83-pound weight class contestant is 68.
  - vi. The minimum weight for a 76-pound weight class contestant is 61.
- b. Girls (Pounds)
  - i. 70, 77, 84, 92, 100, 107, 114, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 165, 185, 235
- c. A wrestler shall not represent his/her school in more than one weight class in any meet.

- d. A contestant shall not wrestle more than one weight class above the class for which his/her actual weight, at the time of weigh in, qualifies him/her.
- e. A two-pound growth allowance will be allowed after December 25th each year.
- f. The use of artificial weight loss devices/measures is prohibited.
- g. It is recommended that coaches monitor daily weigh-ins with weight loss not to exceed 3 pounds per week.

### 9.12.3 Sanitation and Safety

- a. All mats must be cleaned with a 10% bleach solution or isopropyl alcohol solution prior to the first match, and each time blood gets on the mat.
- b. A bucket or squeeze bottle with a 10% bleach solution or isopropyl alcohol solution and rubber gloves should be placed at each mat for cleaning purposes.
- c. This same solution should be used to wipe any blood off an opponent's skin.
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 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 NFHS Wrestling Rules.

### 9.12.4 Time of Bouts

- a. First period shall be one minute.
- b. Second and third periods shall be two minutes.

### 9.12.5 Postseason

- a. A school may participate in one championship tournament, not to exceed an eight-person bracket.
  - i. See Section 10.
  - ii. Third and fourth place may be determined in tournament play using the wrestle back format.
- b. A wrestler shall not compete in more than four matches in any one day.
- c. A minimum of 30 minutes of rest between matches is required.

## 9.13 Other Sports

9.13.1 Schools may choose to participate in any sport not listed in this manual.

9.13.2 It is recommended that schools follow NFHS Rules.

9.13.3 Students participating in other interscholastic sports not listed in this manual must meet eligibility guidelines.

## **SECTION 10: RESOURCES**

### **10.1 Organizations**

- 10.1.1 [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction](#) (DPI)
- 10.1.2 [National Federation of State High school Associations](#) (NFHS)
- 10.1.3 [National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association](#) (NIAAA)
- 10.1.4 [North Carolina High School Athletic Association](#) (NCHSAA)
- 10.1.5 [Carolina Athletic Association for Schools of Choice](#) (CAA4SC)
- 10.1.6 [North Carolina Athletic Directors Association](#) (NCADA)
- 10.1.7 [North Carolina Coaches Association](#) (NCCA)
- 10.1.8 [North Carolina Athletic Trainers Association](#) (NCATA)
- 10.1.9 [North Carolina Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation Dance and Sports Management](#) (NCAAHPERD-SM or NC SHAPE)

### **10.2 Health & Safety**

- 10.2.1 [NCHSAA Health & Safety](#)
- 10.2.2 [Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act](#)
- 10.2.3 [United States Department of Education](#) (Harassment, Bullying, and Retaliation)

### **10.3 Title IX**

- 10.3.1 [United States Department of Education](#) (Protecting Students)

### **10.4 Brackets**

- 10.4.1 Eight-Team/Person Double Elimination Bracket

