



BULLETIN



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BOARD CONDUCTS FIRST MEETING OF 2026-27; ELECTS OFFICERS

Brian Nadeau, superintendent at Ellsworth, presided over the first meeting of the 2026-27 Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) Board of Control today.

The Board of Control conducted its officer elections for 2026-27. Kurt Cohen, district administrator at Potosi, was elected president-elect. Bryan Davis, superintendent of the Oshkosh Area School District, was elected treasurer. In addition, Ty Breitlow, superintendent at Lomira; Katrice Cotton, superintendent at Brown Deer; and Tarrynce Robinson, superintendent of the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District, were introduced as new members.

The Board voted to impose a one-year moratorium on the licensed officials' rating system after recent data from the WIAA Officials Center indicated that the current post-contest rating system has significant participation deficiencies. The pause in the rating system will allow WIAA leadership and advisory committees to review and potentially modify the process. An interim system will be established for member schools to submit specific inquiries and feedback as needed.

Another action item approved by the Board grants a conference realignment fast track for girls wrestling. Schools in the Wisconsin Valley and Great Northern Conferences will combine to form the Northern Girls Wrestling Conference beginning in 2026-27. The new league members are Antigo, D.C. Everest, Lakeland, Marshfield, Medford, Merrill, Mosinee, Rhinelander, Stevens Point Area Senior High, Tomahawk, Wausau East, Wausau West and Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln.

Other action items approved by the Board include development of the 2026-27 operational budget; committee and employee handbooks; various membership guides, including the 2026-27 Media, Medical and Sports Officials Policies Reference Guides; annual renewal of the WIAA's membership and voting delegate appointment with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS); and general monthly financial reports.

The executive staff presented the Board with a summary of WIAA Foundation activities, the recent launch of the redesigned WIAA website, and ongoing efforts to recruit and retain officials. The Board also received a recap of the New Athletic Director Workshop, an update on the Calendar & Contact Committee's efforts, and a report on a survey of the Classification Committee's work. Additional discussions included planning for fall Area Meetings and distributing annual correspondence to state legislators and school administrators.

Senior Paige Murphy of Lakeside Lutheran High School, the 2026-27 president of the Student-Athlete Leadership Team, presented a report to the Board of Control on the team's activities and goals. In addition, Kraus-Anderson presented a report on a facility condition assessment conducted for the WIAA executive office building.

The Board was informed of the executive staff's extensive representation at the national level through service on NFHS boards and committees. Executive Director Stephanie Hauser is a member of the Board of Directors, serves as president-elect, and is also a member of the Education Committee. Associate Director Mel Dow is a member of the Summer Meeting Planning Committee; Assistant Director Jake Beschta is a member of the Football Rules Committee; Assistant Director Melissa Gehring serves on the Track & Field and Cross Country Rules Committee; LeVar Ridgeway will begin a term on the Soccer Rules Committee; and Technology Coordinator Mark Gutknecht is a member of the Technology Committee.

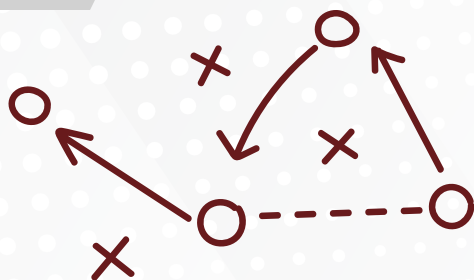
The Board was also informed that the national anthem will be played before each game within a session for consistency across all State Tournaments. Exceptions may be made when time constraints affect the tournament schedule.

Paul Manriquez of the Department of Public Instruction, Dan Rossmiller of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and Tara Rose of the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association presented liaison reports to the Board. ■



STRATEGIC PLAN

Process to Provide Direction



"More Than a Game" written by Matt Otte during the 1990s gives newspaper reports on the creation of the WIAA back in December of 1896.

Consider a mental image of school leaders meeting in the clubroom at the Plankinton House Hotel in Milwaukee. Men dressed in suits and ties crowded into a haze-filled room (the property featured men's smoking/cigar and social rooms).

When the meeting adjourned prior to New Year's Eve, the WIAA was born. The first of its kind in the country.

While shifts in societal and cultural norms have required the membership to adapt to remain relevant in the 21st century, the fundamental philosophy of education-based athletics and the purpose of the Association remain unwavering.

The process of developing a five-year strategic plan for the WIAA began with a membership survey in September 2025 – believed to be the first of its kind – developed and administered by the Donovan Group to identify the executive staff's strengths, challenges and priorities in serving its members.

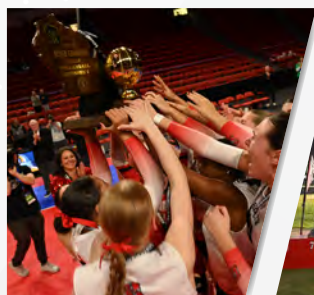
It took some gumption for the Association to ask its members to assess its service, knowing it would have to accept whatever

the results revealed. Encouragingly, the results were quite favorable, while also providing constructive feedback on areas for refinement.

Among the areas receiving the membership's strongest approval were communication and transparency, staff responsiveness, and financial stability and fiscal responsibility. Areas identified needing additional attention were understanding of rules, clarifying the governance process, mitigating perceived inequities among member schools and addressing homeschool participation challenges.

Equipped with the results of the survey, members of the Executive Staff and the Board of Control convened for a series of meetings facilitated by Joe Schroeder, the deputy director of the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, to identify strategic goals and ultimately develop the plan. The goals provide data-informed, purposeful direction for the WIAA mission, vision, organization pillars and priorities to guide its work and service.

Tasked with modernizing a 1930s purpose statement on why the WIAA exists, the group consolidated many of the Association's reasons for existence – which were determined in that smokey room at the Plankinton House Hotel – into





a concise mission statement: “Striving for excellence and consistent standards through education-based athletics.”

The group’s next step in developing the WIAA’s strategic plan was completing a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis. The membership survey highlighted the strengths and areas for growth. Opportunities identified were revenue development through the WIAA Foundation and web streaming rights fees. Threats shared were influence of outside groups challenging the membership’s autonomous governance, club sports, antagonistic mindsets and the nontraditional methods of education.

The final meeting of the group produced the Association’s vision statement. A comprehensive review of ideas inspired by the WIAA’s desired long-term vision resulted in the statement, “Inspiring champions for life,” reflecting how interscholastic sports develop champions not only in competition, but in all walks of life.

The final task for the Executive Staff and Board of Control group was to determine the four pillars of the organization’s strategic goals architecture: governance, engagement and

education, human resources, and finance and operations. The Board approved the four core pillars of the strategic plan at its March 2026 meeting, which included six foundational subcategories presented to the members at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

The Executive Staff is currently in the process of setting goals and objectives to organize and execute (O & E) the five-year plan. The process includes translating the strategic plan’s vision into action, encouraging staff collaboration to alleviate silos within the office and ensuring every initiative reflects the newly established mission and vision statements.

Much has changed since those school leaders gathered in a Milwaukee hotel room in 1896. The people around the table have changed and the landscape of education-based athletics continues to evolve, yet the charge remains much the same: to serve the membership and provide meaningful, education-based athletic opportunities. The strategic plan is the WIAA’s latest roadmap for carrying that purpose forward. ■





BOARD OF CONTROL APPROVES CHANGES TO WINTER SPORTS REGULATIONS

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Board of Control approved limited use of the shot clock in basketball in 2026-27 and acted on other recommendations from the Winter Coaches Advisory Committees affecting season regulations and membership policies at its June meeting.

Starting in 2026-27, schools will be permitted to use a 35-second shot clock for nonconference varsity boys and girls basketball games if there is mutual agreement between the teams, as permitted by NFHS rule adaptations. The Board also discussed full implementation of the clock in 2028-29, which would require approval by the membership at the Annual Meeting next April.

The Board approved basketball Tournament Procedures in the Season Regulations to adjust the enrollment cutlines for divisional placement in the five divisions, beginning with the 2027-28 season. In addition, the higher-seeded team will wear white jerseys and be designated the home team in all State Tournament games beginning next season.

Other changes to the Tournament Procedures eliminated two regulations. The first removes language limiting a player to only two halves when a one-half junior varsity game is followed by a two-half varsity game. The second removes a provision that prevents teams participating in the State Tournament from moving down to a smaller-school division the following year, even if their enrollment would have placed them in the smaller-school division.

The Board approved four recommendations impacting the wrestling Tournament Procedures in the Season Regulations. Dates for the girls regionals and sectionals will be moved ahead one week to Feb. 5 and Feb. 12, respectively, in 2027.

The details for the Girls Wrestling Team Tournament, beginning in 2026-27, were adopted. Sixty-four teams will compete in the Tournament Series with the top-two scoring teams from the individual regional tournament advancing to the sectional team tournament. The teams will be seeded at sectionals by applying the Team Tournament seeding formula to their individual regional lineup. Teams advance from the team sectional to the State Team Tournament to coincide with the Boys Team Tournament Friday and Saturday, March 5-6 at the La Crosse Center.

In addition, the sectional pairings of the Girls Wrestling Individual Tournament will be determined by using an annual regional rotation that will pair regional champions versus regional runners-up in all weight classes, which prevents student-athletes from the same two regionals from meeting in every sectional semifinal.

The third wrestling recommendation approved by the Board standardizes the seeding process for both the boys and girls individual

and team Tournament Series. The new language also clarifies how previous season's State Tournament results are applied for seeding the individual tournament. The fourth recommendation clarifies how the current season's State Individual Tournament results are applied for seeding the boys and girls team tournaments and how the wild cards for the boys State Team Tournament are determined using the State Tournament management program.

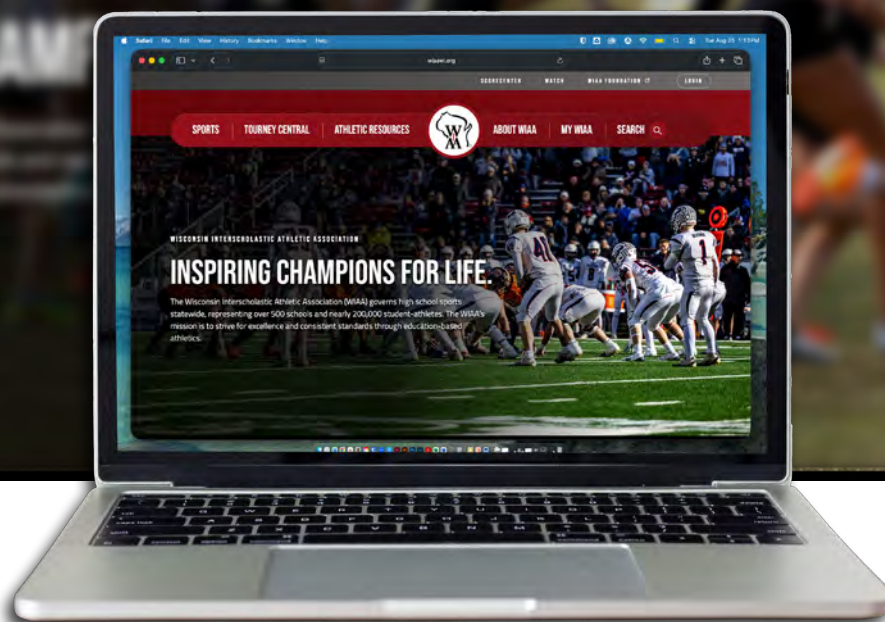
Two hockey Tournament Procedures rule changes were approved by the Board. The first alters the overtime process. If a game remains tied following an eight-minute, five-on-five sudden victory overtime period, the ice will be resurfaced followed by a 17-minute, five-on-five sudden victory overtime. If a winner is not determined, the ice will be resurfaced and a five-minute, four-on-four sudden victory period will be played with goalies switching ends. The second change will implement a four-official system for all sectional and State Tournament games.

The Board approved a new timeline for the conference realignment process. Beginning with the 2027-28 conference realignment cycle, non-football realignment will be conducted every four years. The football-only conference realignment cycle will remain on its current two-year schedule. In addition, the Board approved three fast-track conference realignment requests, effective in 2026-27. Rhinelander will transition from independent status in girls golf into the Wisconsin Valley Conference. Portage will move from independent status to the Badger Conference in girls golf, girls swimming & diving, and boys tennis. Lastly, Racine St. Catherine's will enter the Southeast Conference in girls golf after competing as an independent.

Other agenda action items approved by the Board included a resolution to continue spending until the 2026-27 budget is approved; winter season sports financial statements; the 2026 Annual Meeting minutes; the 2026-27 calendar dates and the general fund financial statements and payments for May.

Other meeting discussion and report topics included the recently completed spring sports tournaments; continued work of the Calendar & Contact Ad Hoc Committee; June Jam and Summer Slam events; activities of the Student-Athlete Leadership Team; ongoing efforts to recruit and retain licensed officials, discussions of the Classification Committee; potential changes to the conference realignment process; an update on the progress of the WIAA Foundation; and a reminder of the New Athletic Directors' Workshop on July 20.

Luke Francois and Todd Fergot, representing the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association, presented a proposal to the Board in support of expanding the State Boys and Girls Basketball Tournaments. The Board also received liaison reports by Dan Rossmiller of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and Kyle LeMieux of the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association. ■



WIAA Launches Website & Member Dashboard

The WIAA launched its refreshed website on Thursday, July 16, and the new Member Dashboard on Monday, July 27.

The website redesign focuses on enhancing efficiency and improving the user experience, which is in direct response to feedback and testing by WIAA members and users. The goal of the website and dashboard is to provide athletic directors, administrators and coaches with quick access to the information and resources they need while reducing reliance on email for routine information and tasks.

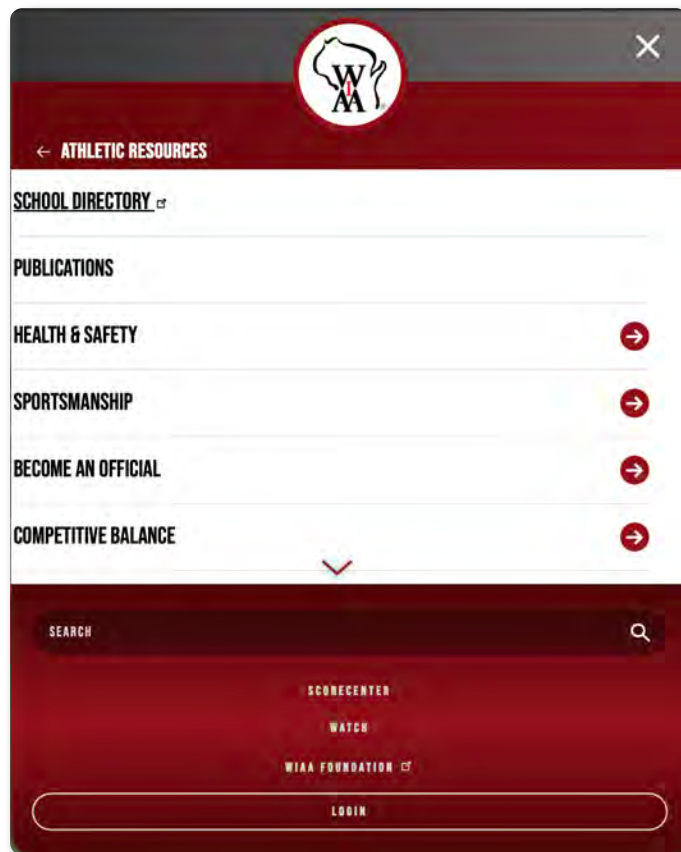
The Member Dashboard provides a central hub for WIAA deadlines, sport and tournament dates, score reporting, results confirmation, and monitoring coaches' compliance with rules video and exam requirements, with additional enhancements planned for the future.

Two videos are available to provide brief introductions and overviews of the new WIAA website and Member Dashboard:

WIAA website overview (https://us06web.zoom.us/join/E4EOCwjoQl69d-egK1-2gw?utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz-8JnMirCijh7pbbv4hKV9hRU9Qk_xkrm5AmHN1UY44Jk2jKGgqbtmDSKy2KYq4MxGVNyoD)

WIAA Member Dashboard overview (https://us06web.zoom.us/join/neRRC3hDSm61zsBWN1AEnA?utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz-8JnMirCijh7pbbv4hKV9hRU9Qk_xkrm5AmHN1UY44Jk2jKGgqbtmDSKy2KYq4MxGVNyoD)

Athletic directors, coaches and administrators can access the Member Dashboard by going directly to <https://member.wiaa.wi.org> or by visiting www.wiaa.wi.org and navigating: My WIAA > School Administrators > Member Dashboard and log in with your WIAA credentials. ■



Competitive Balance Classification Committee Deadlines

Fall

OCTOBER 1

Fall Sports Competitive Balance
Classification Application to Request
Up/Down and/or Appeal *OPENS*

Winter

FEBRUARY 1

Winter Sports Competitive Balance
Classification Application to Request
Up/Down and/or Appeal *OPENS*

Spring

MAY 1

Spring Sports Competitive Balance
Classification Application to Request
Up/Down and/or Appeal *OPENS*

DECEMBER 1

Fall Sports Competitive Balance
Classification Application to Request
Up/Down and/or Appeal *CLOSES*

APRIL 1

Winter Sports Competitive Balance
Classification Application to Request
Up/Down and/or Appeal *CLOSES*

JULY 1

Spring Sports Competitive Balance
Classification Application to Request
Up/Down and/or Appeal *CLOSES*

National Test Dates

Students participating in interscholastic sports often find conflicts between these events and college test dates. Listed below are the 2026-27 dates for ACT.

2026-2027 National Test Dates Schedule

Regular Registration		Late Registration
Test Date	Deadline	Deadline
September 19, 2026	August 14	September 1
October 17, 2026	September 11	September 29
December 12, 2026	November 6	November 29
February 27, 2027	January 22	February 9
April 10, 2027	March 5	March 23
June 12, 2027	May 7	May 25
July 10, 2027	June 4	June 22



ANNUAL MEETING

April 23, 2027



SentryWorld Fieldhouse

601 Michigan Ave, N

Stevens Point, WI 54481

Due to construction at the Sentry Theater we have relocated to SentryWorld, located directly behind Sentry Insurance

CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT UPDATE



This year, the conference realignment task force will focus on proposals initiated by the membership for **11-player and 8-player football**. Any changes made through this cycle of conference realignment will take effect in the fall of 2028.

If your school or conference has a realignment plan for consideration, an application must be initiated by completing a Conference Realignment Declaration form by Oct. 1, 2026. Applications would then need to be completed by Nov. 1, 2026 to be reviewed for completeness and accuracy by the final deadline of Nov. 15, 2026.

Fast track applications are accepted at any time prior to the start of the first affected season of play, however are not accepted for sports/teams/programs currently being realigned in the process. Therefore, during the 2026-27 school year, only fast track applications for all sports other than football will be accepted. It's important to note that for an application to be considered a fast track all impacted schools in all affected conferences must be in agreement with the change(s). This "100 percent agreement" must be documented, showing the support of each individual school, and needs to be included with the application.

As the process continues to evolve, we want to thank athletic administrators, commissioners, officials, coaches, and the members of the Task Force for their continued efforts, along with their patience and flexibility, that make this undertaking possible. More information will be available at the 2026 Area Meetings. ■



OSTERTAG RETIRES

FROM ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT ROLE AT WIAA

Candace Ostertag, a sport administrative assistant at the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association retired on June 6 after more than 14 years with the organization.

Ostertag joined the staff in 2012, serving as an assistant to three sport directors, including Deb (Hauser) Dinkel, who retired in 2017; Kate Peterson Abiad from 2017-22; and then Melissa Gehring since August 2022.

She has assisted in the administration of various sports during her tenure, including basketball, soccer, track & field and volleyball. In addition, she has provided staff support for the Sports Advisory Committee, the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association, the New AD Workshop, licensed officials and conference realignment.

"Candace's dedication to the WIAA and to our member schools has been invaluable," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "We congratulate her on an outstanding career and thank her for her immense contributions across the state. Her enthusiasm for education-based athletics will certainly be missed by all." ■

BAIERL JOINS WIAA STAFF

AS ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Addison Baierl was named the administrative assistant for Assistant Director Melissa Gehring at the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association and began her duties June 8.

Baierl brings experience in athletic administration, coaching and program supervision to her new role. Most recently, she worked in the University of Wisconsin-Platteville Athletics Department while serving as an assistant coach for the women's basketball program.

As an athletics department assistant, Baierl supported daily operations, team travel, student-athlete volunteer initiatives, concessions improvements, event setup and game-day operations. As an assistant coach, she prepared opponent scouting reports, supported player workouts, served as an academic coach, developed leadership sessions and recruited prospective student-athletes.

Previously, Baierl served as a program supervisor with the Marshfield Parks and Recreation Department for three summers, coordinating instructors, curriculum and the fall soccer program. She also interned with the City of Platteville Park & Recreation Department, working with youth and adult programming and leading Senior Center fitness classes.

"We welcome Addison Baierl to the WIAA team and look forward to the positive impact she will make. Her dedication and enthusiasm for education-based athletics shone brightly during our hiring process," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "The combination of talents she brings to our staff as a student-athlete, coach and athletic administration assistant makes her an incredible addition to our staff!"

Baierl will assist with athletic-related services for cross country, girls basketball, volleyball and track & field, as well as conference realignment and work with the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association.

She graduated from UW-Platteville in May 2025 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health and Human Performance, with an emphasis in Health Promotion/Wellness and minors in Coaching and Sport Management. A five-year member and three-year captain of the women's basketball team, she also served on the Pioneer Student Athletic Advisory Committee and Team Leadership Group.

Baierl is a 2020 graduate of Columbus Catholic High School in Marshfield, Wis., where she was a three-time all-conference basketball selection and earned all-state honors in 2019-20. ■



TODD CLARK TO RETIRE

FROM COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR POST

Todd Clark, director of communications with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, will retire from his role on the executive staff Friday, Jan. 15, 2027.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to work alongside my colleagues on the WIAA staff and everyone I've worked with in serving the membership, media and corporate partners," Clark said. "There are so many life-enriching experiences I've enjoyed both as a student-athlete and during my career that truly embrace the importance and significance of education-based sports."

During his more than 26 years in the position, Clark's responsibilities have included overseeing all aspects of sports information for the association: internal and external communications, media relations, corporate marketing and sponsorships, advertising, tournament records and sportsmanship. He also assisted with website maintenance as well as Tournament Series electronic qualification and seeding. Additionally, he has managed the WIAA Award of Excellence and Spirit of Sport programs, coordinated the production of all print publications, and contributed editorial content for the *WIAA Bulletin*.

"Todd has been a reassuringly familiar face and a deeply trusted partner to our WIAA staff, member schools, media partners and many more for several decades, and he will be deeply missed upon his retirement in January," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "His unique ability to connect with people and build lasting relationships across the state has left an indelible mark in the association's rich history. We are incredibly grateful to have him remain with us through the upcoming fall season, ensuring a smooth transition and allowing us to celebrate his remarkable legacy a bit longer."

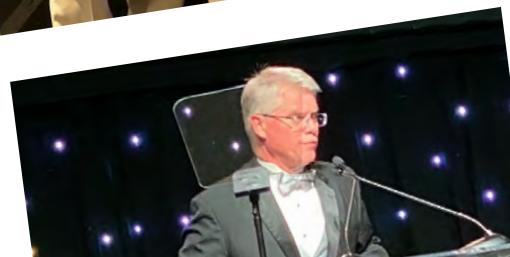
At the national level, Clark served on the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Records Committee from 2007 to 2010 and on the NFHS Annual Summer Meeting Advisory Committee from 2009 to 2010. In 2012, he received an NFHS citation for his outstanding contributions to high school sports. Clark also served on the NFHS Network Leadership Circle, completed a term on the Heart of the Arts Selection Committee and was a member of the NFHS Spirit of Sport Committee from 2018 to 2020. He has presented on a variety of topics at the NFHS Summer Meetings and at the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Doug Chickering – WIAA Sports Workshops.

He received the Association Friend Award presented by the Wisconsin Association of School Councils in 2007 and was the emcee of the 2022 NFHS Hall of Fame ceremony in San Antonio, Texas, and the WIAA Scholar-Athlete Ceremonies in 2025 and 2026.

Clark joined the executive staff after serving nine years as the sports information director at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse from 1991-2000. Prior to the UW-La Crosse position, Clark was a sports information director assistant at Southern Illinois-Carbondale from 1990-1991.

Other related experience included serving as a venue media chief at the 1990 U.S. Olympic Festival, and as the official scorer for the NCAA Division III Baseball Championships from 2000-2001.

Clark earned a bachelor of arts degree in journalism and communication arts from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1985. He received a master of special studies degree in sports administration from St. Cloud State University in 1993. ■





JIM STRICK

TO BECOME NEXT COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR AT WIAA

Jim Strick has been named the next Communications Director for the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA).

Strick, currently Communications Director for the Neenah Joint School District, will join the WIAA on Sept. 28 and work alongside current director Todd Clark through Clark's retirement on Jan. 15, 2027.

"This is a pivotal time for education-based athletics, and I am excited for the opportunity to help tell the stories and enhance the value of athletics participation," Strick said. "Some of the best memories for many of us across Wisconsin center around our high school athletics experiences, and it's an honor to be a part of that."

Strick brings 29 years of communications and athletics experience to the role. He has led communications for the Neenah district since 2013, serving as its spokesperson and media contact while overseeing public relations, digital platforms and Hall of Fame events. He previously served three years as the district's activities director.

He has also served as communications director for the Fox Valley Association for 13 years, including the past two as co-commissioner. In 2025, he was named Wisconsin School Communicator of the Year by the Wisconsin School Public Relations Association.

"We are thrilled to welcome Jim to the WIAA team," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "He brings an extensive and well-rounded background as a school communications director, athletic director, conference commissioner, and more."

Strick has extensive WIAA event experience, serving as the public address announcer for nearly 100 State Tournaments in multiple sports and as an official statistician and scorer. He received the National Federation of State High School Associations Award for Outstanding Service in Wisconsin in 2026.

His collegiate experience includes communications roles at the University of Minnesota, UW-Stevens Point and St. Norbert College. He also worked as a sports reporter for The Post-Crescent and served as a media contact for skiing events at the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City.

A Combined Locks native and Kimberly High School graduate, Strick earned a bachelor's degree in communications from St. Norbert College and an MBA from UW-Oshkosh. He and his wife, Nikki, have two sons, Quinn and Carter. ■

DOW INDUCTED INTO WISCONSIN CHAPTER OF NATIONAL WRESTLING HALL OF FAME

Mel Dow, associate director of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, was one of nine individuals inducted into the Wisconsin chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame on Sunday, May 17, at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells.

Dow was recognized for lifetime service to wrestling. The award honors individuals with at least 20 years of dedication to developing leadership and citizenship in youth through the sport.

He has served as the WIAA sport director for wrestling since joining the executive staff in August 2021. He is credited with helping grow girls wrestling participation in Wisconsin, planning and implementing the State Girls Individual Wrestling Tournament in 2022 and planning the launch of the State Girls Team Tournament in 2027.

He also helped guide the restructuring of the wrestling tournament series in 2026, the expansion of the State Boys Team Tournament to eight teams in Divisions 2 and 3, and the move of the state tournament to the La Crosse Center in 2026.

In addition to wrestling, Dow's staff responsibilities since joining the WIAA has also included overseeing baseball, cross country, girls golf, and boys and girls tennis, as well as managing the administrative responsibilities related to eligibility, coaching contact, camps, out-of-season participation, foreign students and sanctioning requests. He also serves as staff liaison to the Sports Advisory Committee, 7% Committee, Sports Medical Advisory Committee and several coaches advisory committees.

Outside the WIAA, Dow has held leadership roles with several wrestling organizations. He served nearly 20 years as a developmental camp director and team leader for USA Wrestling national teams, including at the Pan American Games and World Championships. Dow has been a member of the Wisconsin Wrestling Federation board since 2000 and served as Cadet National Team coach from 2000-10 and kids director from 2000-22. He also has served as president, awards chairman and public relations director for the Wisconsin Wrestling Coaches Association.

Dow wrestled as a youth and at Prairie du Chien High School before competing at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. While at UW-La Crosse, he founded and coached Wisconsin's first visually impaired national wrestling team in 1996-97 and later served as an assistant wrestling coach in 1999-2000.

After graduating, Dow worked as a physical education teacher and assistant coach in football, wrestling and track and field at Rampart High School in Colorado Springs, Colo., from 1997-99. He later spent 11 years at Prairie du Chien High School teaching physical education and adaptive physical education while serving as head wrestling coach and assistant coach in football and track and field. From 2010-21, Dow served as athletics and activities director in the Stoughton School District.

Among his honors, Dow was named Wisconsin Wrestling Coaches Association District 5 Coach of the Year in 2005, USA Wrestling Kids Person of the Year in 2012 and Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association Athletic Director of the Year in 2021. ■





2025-26 WIAA AWARD OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED



The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association salutes the 29 schools that fulfilled criteria to be named recipients of the Award of Excellence in 2025-26.

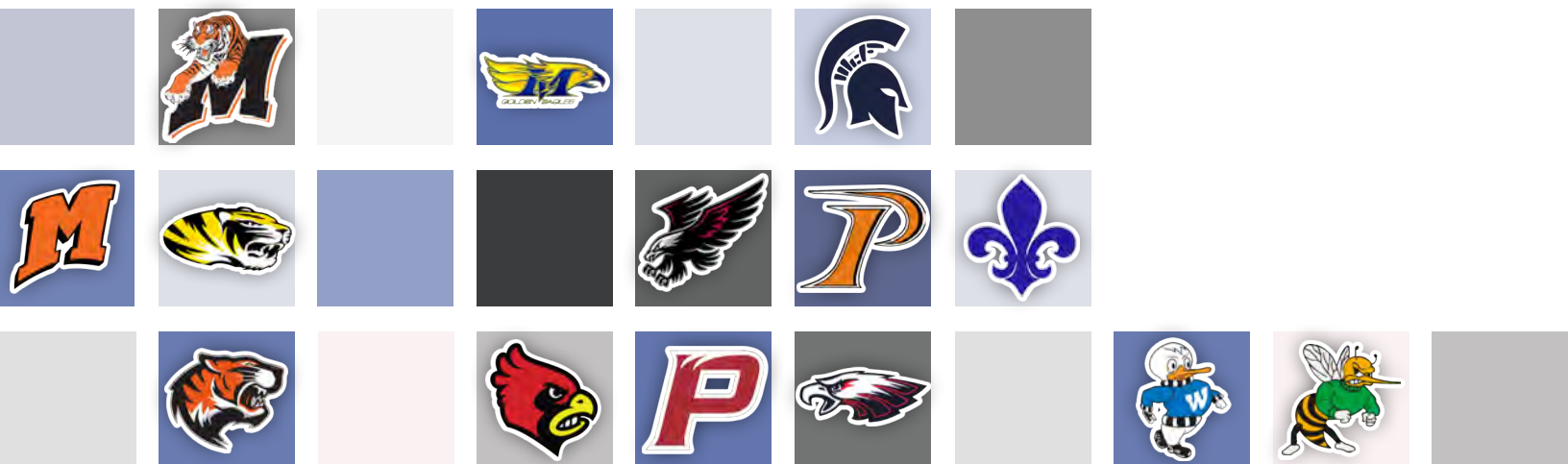
The award promotes and recognizes the efforts and achievements of schools in the areas of sportsmanship, ethics, integrity, leadership, character and administrative accomplishment.

The recipients of the Award of Excellence, presented to high schools that have verified they have met each of the award's criteria are:

Adams-Friendship
Arcadia
Ashland
Barron
Chilton
Cuba City
Elkhorn
Ellsworth
Germantown
Hilbert

Janesville Parker
Lake Holcombe
Lakeside Lutheran
Little Chute
Loyal
Marshfield
Mauston
McFarland
Mishicot
Northwestern

Owen-Withee
Portage
St. Croix Falls
Stratford
Sun Prairie East
The Prairie School
Unity
Watertown
Wauzeka-Steuben



SPRING TOURNAMENT SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED



The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, in partnership with Rural Mutual Insurance Company, has selected the team Sportsmanship Award winners for the 2026 Spring State Team Tournaments.

The winners of the prestigious award are Fox Valley Lutheran in softball, Holmen in girls soccer, Hudson in boys team tennis and St. Croix Falls in baseball. There were no recipients of the award in boys or girls lacrosse.

Fox Valley Lutheran received positive evaluations for the sportsmanship displayed by players, coaches and spectators at the 50th State Softball Tournament held in Madison on June 10-13. It's the third time the Foxes have earned the honor overall and for the first time in softball. They also received sportsmanship awards for football in 2001 and in boys soccer in 2009. The third-seeded Foxes captured the Division 2 title with a 9-1 victory over Pewaukee in the championship game after defeating Turner 8-0 in the semifinals. The schools and communities receiving honorable mention include Appleton North, Athens, Blair-Taylor, Grantsburg, Hamilton, New Holstein, Pewaukee, Spooner, Stevens Point Area Senior High, Turner and Union Grove.

The sportsmanship displayed by Holmen at the State Girls Soccer Tournament at Uihlein Soccer Park in Milwaukee on June 18-20 prompted its selection as the WIAA/Rural Mutual Insurance Sportsmanship Award recipient for the first time in girls soccer and for the fifth time overall. The Vikings' prior selections were for softball in 1999, gymnastics in 2007, and wrestling in both 2021 and 2025. As the fourth seed in Division 1, Holmen battled top-seeded Brookfield Central to a scoreless tie at the end of regulation before falling 1-0 in double overtime of their State semifinal game. Honorable mention for the award was extended to Aquinas, Brookfield Central and Rice Lake.

Hudson demonstrated respectful conduct and positive spectator support at the State Boys Team Tennis Tournament held at Nielsen Tennis Stadium in Madison on June 12-13. The seventh-seeded Raiders fell 7-0 to second-seeded Whitefish Bay in the

Division 1 semifinals. It's the first time the Raiders have been named as the recipient of the award in boys tennis and fifth across all sports. They were recognized for their sportsmanship in girls soccer in 1996, boys soccer in 1998, gymnastics in 2018 and girls basketball in 2021. Altoona and Neenah received honorable mention for the award.

St. Croix Falls was selected as the award recipient for the State Baseball Tournament held in Grand Chute and Appleton on June 15-18. It's the second time the Saints have received the award. They were also recognized with the award for baseball in 2022. As the top seed in the Division 3 bracket, positive sportsmanship evaluations followed a 6-5 loss to fourth-seeded Dodgeville in the semifinals. Columbus Catholic, Kenosha St. Joseph Catholic, Loyal, Potosi/Cassville and River Falls received honorable mention for the award.

The WIAA/Rural Mutual Insurance Sportsmanship Award is presented to one school program and community—or communities in the case of cooperative programs—that demonstrates outstanding sportsmanship in WIAA team tournaments. Award winners are determined by the conduct and sportsmanship displayed by athletes, coaches, cheer and support groups, mascots, bands and spectators. Additional consideration is given for the effort of school administrators and chaperones to ensure support for their teams is positive and showcases the highest ideals of sportsmanship.

The selection process includes evaluations from contest officials, tournament management, as well as security personnel, crowd control and ushers, and WIAA staff members. Rural Mutual Insurance began sponsoring the Sportsmanship Award program back in 1965. ■

 **Rural Mutual**
Insurance Company

FOURTEEN STUDENT-ATHLETES TO JOIN 2026-27 WIAA LEADERSHIP TEAM



The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association has selected 14 high school student-athletes entering their junior year to serve a two-year term on the Student-Athlete Leadership Team, which expands to 30 members in 2026-27.

Student-Athletes throughout the state expressed interest in serving on the team by submitting an application form and a short introductory video. The WIAA received 177 applications this spring. The number of representatives from each district is determined by a percentage of member schools in each of the seven districts, as well as three new at-large positions.

Owen Anderson, a junior from Arcadia who was appointed to the WIAA team for 2026-27, will also serve as the first Wisconsin student-athlete to serve on the National Federation of State High School Associations National Student Advisory Council, beginning his term in 2026-27.

The purpose of the Student-Athlete Leadership Team is to serve as ambassadors for their peers and the WIAA while learning more about the sports industry. Their involvement provides a student-athlete voice in the WIAA and will assist in supporting, educating and advancing the purpose of interscholastic athletics. The Leadership Team engages in an advisory role without rule-making authority, but their input is conveyed at the various levels of the committee process.

Additional benefits include instilling leadership skills, compiling diverse ideas and perspective from different areas of the state, and learning more about the many career opportunities in sports professions. Team members also obtain a better understanding of how the WIAA functions and creates the interest and growth of student-athlete leadership groups at local schools.

Members on the team will engage in four meetings per year, attend WIAA State Tournaments each season, plan and participate in the Fall Area Meetings, as well as organize and participate in a biennial WIAA Leadership Conference.

The following are the names and school affiliations of the 2026-27 Student-Athlete Leadership Team.

Student-Athlete	Year	School
Owen Anderson*	Jr.	Arcadia
Kasey Been*	Jr.	St. Croix Central
Marcus Benjamin*	Jr.	Weyauwega-Fremont
Jackson Brazer	Sr.	Elkhorn
Pierce Briley	Sr.	Greenfield
Kendra Brom*	Jr.	Dodgeville
Ryley Darr	Sr.	Northland Pines
Macy DeRosa	Sr.	Cedarburg
Brooke Dyer	Sr.	Brookfield Central
Isabella Ganoung	Sr.	Evansville
Portia Hah	Sr.	Southern Door
Benjamin Hartwig*	Jr.	Athens
Evan Henderson	Sr.	Union Grove
Claire Higgins	Sr.	St. Mary Catholic
Maxwell Jaeger	Sr.	Menomonie
Austin Jarmuz	Sr.	University School of Milwaukee
Olivia Korish	Sr.	Turtle Lake
Tierney Lenz*	Jr.	Badger
Sawyer Lorier	Sr.	Port Washington
Izzy Malloy*	Jr.	Neenah
Emmaleigh Meier*	Jr.	The Prairie School
Alec Miller*	Jr.	Marathon
Paige Murphy	Sr.	Lakeside Lutheran
Sanjara Musafir*	Jr.	Aquinas
Aurora Olson*	Jr.	Washburn
Heidi Olson*	Jr.	Monticello
A'Miracle Smith*	Jr.	Dominican
Hope Soper	Sr.	Gillett
Jenna Stoltenburg*	Jr.	Ellsworth
Laynie Vaughan	Sr.	Wautoma

* New appointment for 2026-27 ■

STATE HOCKEY TOURNAMENTS RELOCATE TO LEGACY20 ARENA AT DEFOREST YARDS

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association announced the move of the Boys and Girls State Hockey Tournaments to LEGACY20 Arena at DeForest Yards, effective in 2027.

"Moving State Hockey to the brand-new LEGACY20 at DeForest Yards Arena marks an exhilarating new chapter for WIAA State Hockey, bringing a world-class facility to our teams and fans," WIAA Executive Director Stephanie Hauser said. "We are thrilled that the incredible team that we've worked with the past four years from Bob Suter's LEGACY20 Arena is managing this new venue, ensuring the exceptional dedication and support foundational to the success of this championship event."

The WIAA and LEGACY20 Arena at DeForest Yards agreed to a three-year term, extending through the 2029 State Tournament. The venue is scheduled for completion this summer with the Madison Capitols of the United States Hockey League also relocating to the facility for the 2026-27 season.

The venue will have a seating capacity of 3,000 and is equipped with two 200' x 85' ice surfaces. The main surface will be indoors and used for the State Tournament games, and the second surface will be a covered outdoor ice surface that will operate as an arena during winter months. The facility will feature a state-of-the-art sound and lighting systems, and a new scoreboard and a high-definition video board.

The arena also has suites intended for media broadcasting and work areas, administrative operations and partnership groups, as well as 12 locker rooms, four concession stands for the indoor ice facility.

"We are thrilled to host the WIAA Boys & Girls State Hockey Tournaments, and we believe LEGACY20 Arena at DeForest Yards will provide a great atmosphere for the players and coaches," said Andrew Joudrey, president and CEO of the LEGACY20 Operations. "With a capacity of 3,000, blended between bucket seating, viewing decks and suites, the venue will offer a first-class hospitality experience for the fans."

"Additionally, the arena boasts state-of-the-art AV capability, including a new 15'x25' video-board, and upgraded amenities to maximize the game day experience for everyone," he said. "We trust that with our management and great partnership with the WIAA, we will deliver a memorable State Tournament."

The 2027 Boys and Girls State Hockey Tournaments are scheduled for Thursday-Saturday, March 4-6. The State Tournaments competition time schedules will remain the same with the change in venue.

The Boys State Hockey Tournament was held at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum at the Alliant Energy Center from the inception of the event



in 1971 until 2022. The only exceptions during that span was in 1974 and 1975 when it was held in Green Bay and in 2021 when the State Tournament was held in Wisconsin Rapids during the COVID-19 pandemic. The State Tournament relocated to the Bob Suter's LEGACY20 Arena (formerly named the Capitol Ice Arena) in Middleton from 2023-26. The Girls State Hockey Tournament has been held in conjunction with the boys tournament since the sport was added in 2002.

"WIAA championships are a legacy tradition for high school teams throughout Wisconsin, and we're happy hockey players will be able to continue to experience that tradition in Madison and Dane County for years to come," said Jamie Patrick, the executive vice president of sales & sports strategy for the Madison Area Sports Commission. "We are elated at the opportunity to continue building on that legacy and growing hockey at the new premier venue. LEGACY20 Arena at DeForest Yards where it will be good for the players, good for more fans and good for Dane County. ■"



NFHS Courses at NFHSLearn.com



The Collapsed Student *Free*

High school coaches understand the value of preparation. You dedicate countless hours to planning practices and competitions to help your student-athletes succeed both on and off the field.

Despite that preparation, serious injuries and life-threatening medical emergencies can happen during sports and activities. Whether caused by a known medical condition, the environment, or an unexpected event, coaches may be the first to respond.

This course prepares you to act with confidence. You'll learn how to develop and practice an Emergency Action Plan, assign team responsibilities, and recognize the three H's—Heart, Heat, and Head—that are associated with potentially life-threatening emergencies.

When an athlete collapses, you'll know what to do, who to call, and how to respond quickly and effectively until additional help arrives.



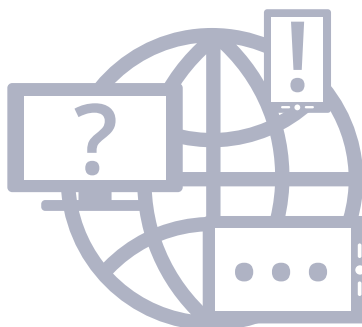
Title IX *Free*

Over 3.4 million girls participate in High School Athletics every year. This participation is fueled by the flagship legislation for girls' participation, Title IX. The NFHS has developed this Title IX course to help interscholastic professionals know the history and impact of Title IX and understand the responsibilities of a school and staff pertaining to girls athletic programs. This course discusses the standards at which Title IX compliance is evaluated and breaks down the factors involved in supporting girls programs.



Understanding Vaping and E-Cigarettes *Free*

Vaping is the act of inhaling an aerosol created by an e-cigarette or similar device. The term "vaping" misleads the user into thinking they are inhaling a vapor and something potentially safe or at least harmless. This is just one reason why the NFHS, with support from the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General, has created Understanding Vaping and E-cigarettes. This course helps dispel such misconceptions and highlights specific risks such as nicotine addiction for youth who try vaping and e-cigarettes. ■





OFFICIALS REGISTRATION

This year brings a significant update to how we manage our licensing of officials. To provide a more streamlined experience, the WIAA is moving its licensing platform from the WIAA Officials Center to ArbiterSports. This shift allows you to manage your licensing, testing, and rules videos all in one centralized location for officials. Registering in Arbiter is the only way to be licensed and considered "Active" to officiate High School sports across Wisconsin during the 2026-27 school year.

What You Need to Know and Have Prepared

- **The New Portal:** You will now register directly through Arbiter via the WIAA website. If you are an existing official, your records and years of service have already been linked to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Photo Requirement:** While the registration process remains straightforward, there is one new requirement: you must upload a photo of yourself to complete your registration. Please have a digital photo ready to upload when you begin the process.
 - [How-To-Change a Photo](#)
 - The photo requirement has been a request from membership schools. It gives them an idea of who is coming to their facilities and provides better service to you when you arrive on site.
- **Arbiter Pay:** Is not part of the officials registration process. Officials do not provide banking information while registering as an official.
- **Registration closes** the first day of the tournament series for that sport as registration will then open the following day for the next season.
- **To guarantee physical copies of the rule books** you must register by the dates for the following season. Rules materials will still be provided, but you may receive electronic copies instead.
 - **July 1 - Fall Sports**
 - **October 1 - Winter Sports**
 - **January 1 - Spring Sports**

All conference commissioners and athletic directors will have access to the Arbiter list of officials, regardless of what scheduling platform they have chosen. For more information regarding this transition and additional information please visit our website: [Online Licensing | WIAA](#). ■



Unlock Your 2026-27 NFHS Network Officials Pass!



As a registered Wisconsin official, your hard work keeps high school sports running smoothly. Now, you can take advantage of an exclusive perk designed specifically for you: 50 percent off an annual NFHS Network Pass!

For just \$49.99 (regularly \$99.99), you get full, 24/7 access to an entire year of live and on-demand high school events across the country—plus exclusive features to help you review and celebrate game action.

What Your Pass Includes

- **Full 24/7 Access:** Watch live games and a decade of archived on-demand content from Aug. 1, 2026, through July 31, 2027.
- **NFHS Network Console Access:** Easily clip and save highlights directly from streamed events to review game tape, build customized highlight reels, or share memorable plays.

How to Get Your Pass

1. **Access the Linked Flier:** Click "Take Advantage Now!".
Please note: Pass code requests open starting Aug. 1, 2026
2. **Submit Your Request:** Fill out the quick request form. Your details will be routed directly to the NFHS Network team.
3. **Verification & Code Delivery:** The NFHS Network team will verify your active registration status with our state office. Once confirmed, your unique discount code and setup instructions will be emailed straight to your inbox!

Note: Please allow a couple of business days for verification and code processing.

Don't miss out on half-price access to a full year of high school sports coverage. Grab your pass and start streaming! ■

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BY DONATING TO THE WIAA FOUNDATION

Enhancing & Supporting Education-Based Athletics



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The WIAA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax-deductible.



GIRLS GOLF STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

University Ridge, Madison

Monday, Oct. 12

Starting Hole	Division	Starting Times
Hole 1	Division 1	8:00–8:40 a.m.
Hole 1	Division 2	8:50–10:20 a.m.
Hole 10	Division 1	8:00–10:20 a.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 13

Hole 1 — Division 1 Teams

8:00–8:40 a.m.

Teams #5–#1 Players (4-somes)

8:50–9:30 a.m.

Teams #5–#1 Players (4-somes)

9:40–10:20 a.m.

Teams #5–#1 Players (4-somes)

Hole 10

8:00–8:40 a.m.

Division 1 Individuals (4-somes/3-somes)

8:50 a.m.

Division 2 Team #5 Players (3-some)

9:00–10:20 a.m.

Division 2 Teams #4–#1 Players + 1 Individual (3-somes)



GIRLS INDIVIDUAL & TEAM TENNIS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Nielsen Stadium, Madison

Individual Championships

Thursday, Oct. 15

10:30 a.m. - Play will involve all first round matches

Friday, Oct. 16

9:00 a.m. - Competition continues through quarterfinals of singles and doubles

Saturday, Oct. 17

8:30 a.m. - Consolation Semifinals

9:00 a.m. - Championship Semifinals

Team Tournament Series

Friday, Oct. 23

Division 1 Quarterfinals - 4:00 p.m.

Match 1 - #1 Seed vs #8 Seed

Match 2 - #4 Seed vs #5 Seed

Match 3 - #3 Seed vs #6 Seed

Match 4 - #2 Seed vs #7 Seed

Saturday, Oct. 24

Division 2 Semifinals - 9:00 a.m.

Match 1 - #1 Seed VS #4 Seed

Match 2 - #2 Seed VS #3 Seed

Division 1 Semifinals - 9:00 a.m.

Match 5 - Winner of Match 1 vs Winner of Match 2

Match 6 - Winner of Match 3 vs Winner of Match 4

Division 2 Championship Match

Match 3 - Winner of Match 1 vs Winner of Match 2

Division 1 Championship Match

Match 7 - Winner of Match 5 vs Winner of Match 6



BOYS & GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY STATE MEET

Ridges Golf Course, Wisconsin Rapids

Saturday, Oct. 31, 2026

Girls' Competition

Division 3 - Noon
Division 2 - 12:40 p.m.
Division 1 - 1:20 p.m.

Boys' Competition

Division 3 - 2:00 p.m.
Division 2 - 2:35 p.m.
Division 1 - 3:10 p.m.



BOYS & GIRLS VOLLEYBALL STATE TOURNAMENT

Resch Center, Green Bay

Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 4-7, 2026

SESSION 1

Wednesday, Nov. 4 | 4:00 p.m.
Boys Quarterfinals
#2 Seed vs. #7 Seed
#3 Seed vs. #6 Seed

Wednesday, Nov. 4 | 7:00 p.m.
Boys Quarterfinals
#4 Seed vs. #5 Seed
#1 Seed vs. #8 Seed

SESSION 2

Thursday, Nov. 5 | 9:00 a.m.
Girls Division 5 Semifinals
#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

SESSION 3

Thursday, Nov. 5 | 11:30 a.m.
Girls Division 4 Semifinals
#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

SESSION 4

Thursday, Nov. 5 | 2:00 p.m.
Boys Semifinals
Upper Bracket Winners
Lower Bracket Winners

SESSION 5

Thursday, Nov. 5 | 5:00 p.m.
Girls Division 1 Quarterfinals
#2 Seed vs. #7 Seed
#3 Seed vs. #6 Seed

SESSION 6

Thursday, Nov. 5 | 7:30 p.m.
Girls Division 1 Quarterfinals
#4 Seed vs. #5 Seed
#1 Seed vs. #8 Seed

SESSION 7

Friday, Nov. 6 | 8:00 a.m.
Girls Division 3 Semifinals
#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

SESSION 8

Friday, Nov. 6 | 10:30 a.m.
Girls Division 2 Semifinals
#1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
#2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

SESSION 9

Friday, Nov. 6 | 1:00 p.m.
Girls Division 1 Semifinals
Upper Bracket Winners
Lower Bracket Winners

SESSION 10

Friday, Nov. 6 | 7:30 p.m.
Boys Championship

SESSION 11

Saturday, Nov. 7
9:00 a.m. | Girls Division 5 Championship
11:30 a.m. | Girls Division 4 Championship

SESSION 12

Saturday, Nov. 7
2:30 p.m. | Girls Division 3 Championship
5:00 p.m. | Girls Division 2 Championship
7:30 p.m. | Girls Division 1 Championship



BOYS SOCCER STATE TOURNAMENT

Southeast Sales Powersports Stadium at Uihlein Soccer Park, Milwaukee

Thursday-Saturday, Nov. 5-7, 2026

Thursday, Nov. 5

Division 2 Semifinals

11:00 a.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
1:30 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

Division 1 Semifinals

4:30 p.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
7:00 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

Friday, Nov. 6

Division 4 Semifinals

11:00 a.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
1:30 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

Division 3 Semifinals

4:30 p.m. #1 Seed vs. #4 Seed
7:00 p.m. #2 Seed vs. #3 Seed

Saturday, Nov. 7

Division 2 Semifinals

11:00 a.m. Division 2 Championship
1:30 p.m. Division 1 Championship
4:30 p.m. Division 4 Championship
7:00 p.m. Division 3 Championship



GIRLS SWIMMING AND DIVING STATE MEET

Waukesha South High School Natatorium, Waukesha

Friday-Saturday, Nov. 13-14, 2026

Friday, Nov. 13

Division 2

11:30 a.m. - Doors open for spectators
12:30 p.m. - Diving Competition Begins
4:30 p.m. - Doors open for spectators
5:30 p.m. - Swimming Timed Finals

Saturday, Nov. 14

Division 1

8:30 a.m. - Doors open for spectators
9:30 a.m. - Diving Competition Begins
1:30 p.m. - Doors open for spectators
2:30 p.m. - Swimming Timed Finals





8-PLAYER FOOTBALL STATE TOURNAMENT

South Wood County Stadium, Wisconsin Rapids

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026 | 1:00 p.m.



FOOTBALL STATE TOURNAMENT

Camp Randall Stadium, Madison

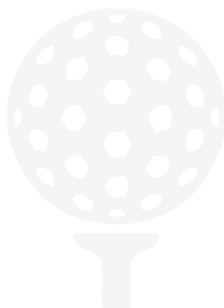
Thursday & Friday, Nov. 19 & 20, 2026

Thursday, Nov. 19

- 10:00 a.m. – Division 7
- 1:00 p.m. – Division 6
- 4:00 p.m. – Division 5
- 7:00 p.m. – Division 4

Friday, Nov. 20

- 10:00 a.m. – Division 3
- 1:00 p.m. – Division 2
- 4:00 p.m. – Division 1



CROSS COUNTRY RULE CHANGES



3-8-6:

Expands the acceptable calibers and provides flexibility for starting devices.

Rationale:

Due to increased cost and limited availability .32 caliber blanks. Expanding the acceptable calibers provides flexibility for meet management while maintaining the safety and functionality required for starting devices.

4-6-5:

Permits an appropriate health care professional, designated by the games committee, to evaluate a downed competitor without resulting in disqualification.

Rationale:

The change permits the games committee to designate an appropriate health care professional to evaluate a downed competitor on the course without resulting in disqualification provided no assistance is given in progressing along the course. It prioritizes athlete safety by permitting on-course evaluation while preserving the integrity of the competition.

4-6-6c (NEW):

Clarifies athletes are not permitted to wear any type of audio or video recording devices during a race, trial, or while in restricted areas.

Rationale:

No athlete participating in a meet is permitted to wear any type of audio or video device to record or transmit in a race, trial or in restricted areas. This language aligns with other NFHS rules books. ■



VOLLEYBALL RULE CHANGES

4-2-1a, 4-2-1(3) (NEW), 4-2-2:

Libero uniform bottoms may be any color and no longer must match the team uniform bottoms.

Rationale:

Allows more flexibility in the libero uniform bottoms while ensuring that the libero uniform top continues to contrast with their teammates.

5-5-3b(21):

The second referee will provide a double whistle warning between sets at two minutes, 30 seconds (4:30 when intermission is used) instead of 2 minutes, 45 seconds.

Rationale:

Improves pace of play between sets by notifying teams earlier to make their way onto the court for the officials to administer lineup checks before the final audio signal and resumption of play.

6-4-2, 10-4-3a, 10-4-3d:

A team may designate up to two liberos, but only one libero can be in the game at a time. When a team designates two liberos and one is injured/ill, a new libero may be re-designated. When a team designates two liberos and one is disqualified; the team must continue with one libero.

Rationale:

Allows more student-athletes to participate by creating an additional opportunity for coaches without having to utilize a substitution.

6-4 PENALTIES 1c (NEW), 12-2-8b NOTE (NEW):

If non-playing teammate(s) (bench players) enter the court during play it is illegal alignment. It remains a conduct violation if a coach or team attendant (anyone not in uniform) enters the court while the ball is in play.

Rationale:

More appropriately assesses illegal alignment (loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent) to non-playing teammates who enter the court while the ball is in play. A player who enters the court during play may still receive a conduct violation if they engage in disconcerting acts, disrespectful language, etc. This penalty realignment allows officials to appropriately penalize teams based on participant actions.

6-5-1:

Players on the serving team are not permitted to raise their hands above their heads during service until the ball has passed beyond the net.

Rationale:

Discourages player positioning during the serve that prevents the receiving team from viewing service contact and/or the flight of the ball and assists officials when evaluating the existence of screening. This change aligns with all other volleyball rules codes.

9-2-1 NOTE 1 (NEW):

Players shall not wear any audio or video devices during the match.

Rationale:

Clarifies the prohibition of electronic communication with and by players during the match and aligns with other NFHS rules codes.

12-2-8m (NEW):

It is an unsporting conduct violation if coaches, non-playing teammates or team attendants use props on the bench during celebrations.

Rationale:

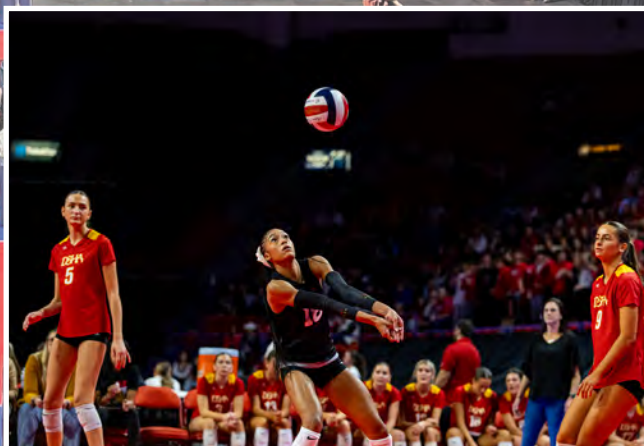
Clarifies appropriate bench conduct for consistent enforcement by eliminating the use of props in bench celebrations while promoting sportsmanship and preventing disruption and potential safety concerns.

2026-27 Volleyball Editorial Changes

1-5-1, 5-2-1b, 5-4-3c(1), 5-4-4a, 7-1-1a, 7-1-1 PENALTIES 3, 7-1-2a, 7-1-4 PENALTIES 1, 9-9-1h

2026-27 Volleyball Points of Emphasis

1. Host Management Best Practices
2. Electronic Devices
3. Bench Personnel – Non-Playing Teammates
4. NFHS Authenticating Mark ■



SOCCER RULE CHANGES

4-1-4c:

Clarifies that dark socks must be worn by the home team.

Rationale:

The two teams must wear colors that distinguish them from each other. The addition of the word dark in the home team sock clarifies that only the visiting team may wear white socks.

4-2-7d,e (NEW):

Offers guidance on appropriate tooth and mouth protector elements.

Rationale:

The overall purpose and function of the tooth and mouth protector is to protect the teeth, the mouth, and lips if it has a lip guard. Items that are added or included on the tooth and mouth protector that do not serve a purpose or function in the protection of the teeth or mouth should not be allowed. Also, items that are a part of the tooth and mouth protector that are a health risk to the individual wearing it should not be allowed.

4-2-11a thru c NOTE 2 (NEW):

Prohibits players from wearing audio or video devices while participating in a match.

Rationale:

No athlete participating in a match is permitted to wear any type of audio or video device to record, transmit, or live stream. This language aligns with other NFHS rules books. The use of electronic communication devices with players on the field is still prohibited. State associations may further restrict electronic devices.

5-3-1f-j:

Change updates the officiating procedures for issuing yellow and red cards by removing the term carded in favor of consistent terminology already used in the rules book; cautioned and ejected.

Rationale:

This aligns terminology by removing the term “carded” and using language found within the rules book. Explicitly defining that cautions correspond to yellow cards and ejections correspond to red cards provide clarity. Repeated or redundant language has been reorganized into new sub articles to improve readability and consistency across the rule. Additionally, the revision clarifies that any player who is shown a card, yellow or red, must still leave the field of play and that officials are responsible for directing the player to do so.

8-1-2:

Clarifies when a kickoff should be retaken, specifically when not all players are on their half of the field.

Rationale:

This change provides clarity on the differing restarts regarding kickoff offenses. This change explicitly addresses situations when the kickoff should be retaken because players were not properly positioned on their half of the field.



12-1-2c:

Emphasizes the importance of goalkeeper safety when in possession of the ball and improves clarity for consistent officiating purposes.

Rationale:

Overall, this change aligns the rule with consistent officiating practice, removes redundancies and improves clarity without materially altering when a charge is or is not permitted. The change consolidates language referring to the goalkeeper controlling the ball with their hands, where the simplified language refers to the full, shared definition referenced in a later section. This change emphasizes the core safety concept that remains unchanged: the goalkeeper in possession of the ball with their hands cannot be charged or challenged.

12-2-3:

Adds biting to direct free kick fouls.

Rationale:

Incorporates biting into direct free kick fouls.

12-3-1 thru 3:

Extends goalkeeper possession limit and adjusts the penalty when the time limit is exceeded.

Rationale:

Reorganizes goalkeeper restrictions, extends goalkeeper possession limit from six to eight seconds and changes the penalty from indirect free kick at the point of infraction to a corner kick. It brings the rule in line with the spirit of the game and gives officials clearer authority and makes the punishment less severe when the goalkeeper clearly exceeds the time limit.

12-3-5:

Clarifies considerations of dangerous play.

Rationale:

Adds clarifying language to the considerations for dangerous play that include actions that prevent a nearby opponent from playing the ball for fear of injury.

12-3-6 & 7 (NEW):

Offers flexibility for officials when addressing verbal offenses by categorizing them as indirect free kick fouls.

Rationale:

By including "other verbal offenses" as an indirect free kick foul, this also gives more flexibility for officials when disciplining verbal offenses: they are now considered fouls at a minimum and may rise to the level of misconduct depending on the circumstances. New Article 7 then addresses any other reason for which play is stopped for misconduct; play is restarted with an indirect free kick.

12-6-1b (1-4) (NEW):

Adds language to provide additional guidance regarding DOGSO.

Rationale:

This change clarifies and simplifies the language surrounding DOGSO ejections by removing redundant wording, eliminating references to "attempted" DOGSO, since intent is not part of the decision, and aligns with previous rule wording within Rule 12. The updated structure provides four clear categories for denying a goal or obvious opportunity.

13-1 thru 3:

Reorganizes free kick restart procedures into distinct categories, clarifying when, where, and how free kicks are awarded and taken, while incorporating guidance for situations involving outside agents, off-field offenses, thrown objects, and unauthorized field entry or exit.

Rationale:

The revision of Rule 13 clarifies the procedures for restarts on free kicks by breaking the rule into distinct categories, outlining when and where free kicks are awarded, and detailing how they should be taken. It also specifies the correct restart locations and provides guidance for officials on managing these situations. Additionally, the update incorporates restart procedures for scenarios involving outside agents, offenses occurring off the field, thrown objects, individuals entering the field illegally, players leaving the field without permission, and offenses that occur outside the field of play.

Rule 14:

Encroachment is now penalized only when it clearly impacts the kick outcome, and goalkeepers receive a warning for a first offense rather than an immediate caution. Deceptive movements and stutter-stepping remain permitted during the run-up, but feinting after the approach is completed is prohibited.

Rationale:

The rewrite ensures that encroachment is now only penalized if the offense has a clear impact on the penalty kick. Goalkeepers will now receive a warning for a first offense rather than an immediate caution, acknowledging that such infractions often stem from mis-anticipation. Regarding the kicker, the revisions continue to allow for deceptive movements and stutter-stepping during the run-up; however, the change strictly prohibits feinting once the approach to the ball is completed. Finally, in rare instances where both the kicker and goalkeeper offend simultaneously, the kicker is penalized, as their illegal feinting is typically the catalyst for the goalkeeper's infraction. The penalty chart is also updated and reformatted for clarity. ■



SWIMMING & DIVING RULE CHANGES



3-3-4b(2):

Bonded or taped seams on suits are permitted by rule.

Rationale:

The NFHS suit specifications mirror the requirements established by World Aquatics, which is the testing agency that certifies suit construction. Testing protocols consider bonded or taped seams as compliant when measuring permeability to air and water.

3-5-1, 3-5-2:

No competitor shall wear any audio (microphone) or video (camera) device during the race or dive.

Rationale:

The change clearly defines additional types of electronic devices that are prohibited.

8-2-3g, 8-2-4e:

During the finish of the butterfly and freestyle, once some part of the swimmer's head has passed the 5-yard/5-meter mark immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged.

Rationale:

Aligns with national trends of the sport.

9-4-2 NOTE:

By state association adoption states may alter the number of dives for it's state championship series of meets.

Rationale:

Reducing the number of dives could expand participation opportunities in this event and help increase future diving participation numbers in general.

9-4-2h NOTES:

By state association adoption, the number of qualifiers advancing to the semi-final session may be increased.

Rationale:

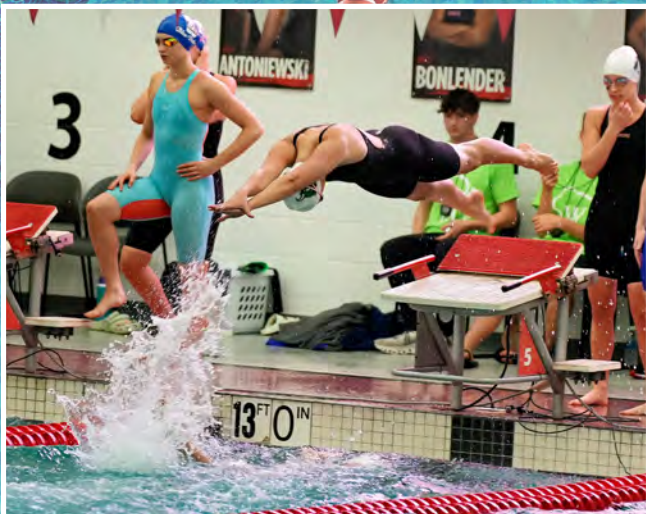
Permits flexibility based on specific needs of the state association.

2026-27 Swimming and Diving Editorial Changes

1-4-2, 3-2-2 PENALTY 1, 3-2-3 & PENALTY 1, 3-2-4 & PENALTY, 3-2-6, 3-2-7, 3-6-1, 4-1-8, 5-2-1, 5-4-4 NOTE, 9-5-2 NOTE, 9-6-1, 9-6-5, 9-7-4, 9-7-5, State Association Adoption Chart, APPENDIX D

2026-27 Swimming and Diving Points of Emphasis

1. Relay Judging Platforms
2. Exiting the Pool
3. The Meet Referee's Authority
4. Backstroke Flags
5. Appropriate Conditions for a Re-Swim ■



FOOTBALL RULE CHANGES

Prohibition on Slapping the Head Now Applies to All Players in High School Football

In an ongoing focus on minimizing risk of injury in high school sports, the NFHS Football Rules Committee strengthened a rule related to illegal personal contact. Both revisions recommended by the committee were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The Football Rules Committee is composed of one member from each NFHS member state association that uses NFHS playing rules, along with representatives from the NFHS Coaches Association and NFHS Officials Association.

Previously, Rule 9-4-7 stated that defensive players could not use the hand(s) to slap the blocker's head. This year, the Football Rules Committee approved language to apply the prohibition equally to the offense and defense.

"By eliminating the words 'defense' and 'blocker's' from the rule prohibiting slapping an opponent's head, the prohibition now applies to all players," said Bob Colgate, NFHS director of sports and sports medicine and liaison to the Football Rules Committee.

The other revision approved by the committee for the 2026 NFHS Football Rules Book concerns play cards worn primarily by quarterbacks. Previously, play cards could be worn only on the wrist or arm. This year, the committee approved wearing the play cards on the belt as well.

"The Football Rules Committee added the belt to the choices for players as the belt poses no health risk issue to the player and poses no danger to the opponent," Colgate said.

"From a rules perspective I believe the committee feels like the high school football game is in pretty good shape," said Steve Roberts, chair of the NFHS Football Rules Committee and associate executive director of the Arkansas Activities Association. "The two proposals that passed do not present significant changes to the game but do clarify and add options to enhance the overall value of the sport to all participants."

The four points of emphasis identified by the committee for the 2026 season are Flagrant and Unsportsmanlike Fouls, Helping the Runner, Sideline Management and Control, and Identification of the NFHS Authenticating Mark on Game Balls.

In addition to the two major rules revisions noted above and several editorial changes, two rules changes approved in 2025 will become effective during the next two seasons.

Last year, the committee approved two new additional requirements in Rule 1-5-1d(5) for tooth and mouth protectors, which are required in high school football. Effective in 2026, tooth and mouth protectors



a) shall not include any attachment(s) that do not serve a purpose and function in protecting the teeth or mouth, and b) shall not include anything that is a health or risk issue and could pose danger to themselves or other players.

A new item was added to Rule 1-5-2d regarding a change in arm sleeve specifications. The new language, effective with the 2027 season, states that "arm sleeves, whether attached to a shirt or unattached, manufactured to enhance contact with the football or opponent, must meet the SFIA specification at the time of manufacture. Arm sleeves must have a permanent, exact replica of the SFIA arm sleeve seal (meets SFIA specification), that must be visible and appear legibly on the exterior of the arm sleeve."

The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), in working with football arm sleeve manufacturers and the NFHS, has developed the new football arm sleeve performance specifications to be effective with the 2027 season. The new specifications closely align with the current NFHS rules for football gloves.

A complete listing of the football rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on "Sports" at the top of the home page and select "Football" and then "Rules." The print version of the 2026 Football Rules Book will be available for purchase in late April at www.NFHS.com, and the digital version will be available in April via NFHS Digital at www.NFHS.org.

According to the 2024-25 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, 11-player football is the most popular high school sport for boys with 1,029,588 participants in 14,269 schools nationwide.

In addition, there were 35,097 boys who participated in 6-, 8- and 9-player football, along with 4,969 girls in all four versions of the game for a grand total of 1,069,654. ■

FOOTBALL 2026 NFHS JERSEY & PANT RULES

RULE 1-4-3:

ART. 3 . . . Each player shall be numbered 0 through 99 inclusive. Any number preceded by the digit zero is illegal. See 7-2-5.

RULE 1-5-1:

ART. 1 . . . Mandatory Equipment. Each player shall participate while wearing the following pieces of properly fitted equipment, which shall be professionally manufactured and not altered to decrease protection:

b. Jersey:

1. A jersey, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, and which shall be long enough to reach the top of the pants and shall be tucked in if longer. It must completely cover the shoulder pads and all pads worn above the waist on the torso.
2. Players of the visiting team shall wear jerseys, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, that meet the following criteria:
 - (a) The body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey) shall all be white.
 - (b) The body of the jersey shall contain only the listed allowable adornments and accessory patterns in a color(s) that contrasts to white:
 - (1) as the jersey number(s) required in 1-5-1c or as the school's nickname, school logo, school mascot, school name and/or player name within the body and/or on the shoulders,
 - (2) either as a decorative stripe placed during production that follows the curve of the raglan sleeve or following the shoulder seam in traditional yoke construction, not to exceed 1 inch at any point within the body of the jersey; or as decorative stripe(s) added in the shoulder area after production, not to exceed 1 inch per stripe and total size of combined stripes not to exceed 3.5 inches,
 - (3) within the collar, a maximum of 1 inch in width, and/or
 - (4) as a side seam (insert connecting the back of the jersey to the front), a maximum of 4 inches in width but any non-white color may not appear within the body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey). The exception to (4) would be what is stated in (2) above.

NOTE: One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on the uniform without compromising its integrity.

- (c) The visiting team is responsible for avoidance of similarity of colors, but if there is doubt, the referee may require players of the home team to change jerseys.
3. Players of the home team shall wear jerseys, unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, that meet the following criteria:
 - (a) The body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey) may not include white, except as stated below.

(b) The jerseys of the home team shall all be the same dark color(s) that clearly contrasts to white. If white appears in the body of the jersey of the home team, it may only appear:

- (1) as the jersey number(s) required in 1-5-1c or as the school's nickname, school logo, school mascot, school name and/or player name within the body and/or on the shoulders,
- (2) either as a decorative stripe placed during production that follows the curve of the raglan sleeve or following the shoulder seam in traditional yoke construction, not to exceed 1 inch at any point within the body of the jersey; or as decorative stripe(s) added in the shoulder area after production, not to exceed 1 inch per stripe and total size of combined stripes not to exceed 3.5 inches,
- (3) within the collar, a maximum of 1 inch in width, and/or
- (4) as a side seam (insert connecting the back of the jersey to the front), a maximum of 4 inches in width but any white color may not appear within the body of the jersey (inside the shoulders, inclusive of the yoke of the jersey or the shoulders, below the collar, and to the bottom of the jersey). The exception to (4) would be what is stated in (2) above.

NOTE: One American flag, not to exceed 2 inches by 3 inches, may be worn or occupy space on each item of uniform apparel. By state association adoption, to allow for special occasions, commemorative or memorial patches, not to exceed 4 square inches, may be worn on the uniform without compromising its integrity.

(c) The visiting team is responsible for avoidance of similarity of colors, but if there is doubt, the referee may require players of the home team to change jerseys.

c. Numbers:

1. The numbers shall be clearly visible and legible using Arabic numbers 0-99 inclusive and shall be on the front and back of the jersey.
2. The numbers, inclusive of any border(s), shall be centered horizontally at least 8 inches and 10 inches high on front and back, respectively.
3. The entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) exclusive of any border(s) shall be approximately 1 1/2-inches wide.
4. The color and style of the number shall be the same on the front and back.
5. The entire body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) shall be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.

d. Pads and Protective Equipment – The following pads and protective equipment are required of all players:

1. Hip pads and tailbone protector which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production.
 2. Knee pads which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production, which are worn over the knee and under the pants and shall be at least 1/2 inch thick or 3/8 inch thick if made of shock absorbing material.
 3. Shoulder pads and hard surface auxiliary attachments, which shall be fully covered by a jersey.
 4. Thigh guards which are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production.
- e. Pants - which completely cover the knees, thigh guards and knee pads and any portion of any knee brace that does not extend below the pants.

RULE 1-5-3:

ART. 3 . . . Illegal Equipment. No player shall participate while wearing illegal equipment. This applies to any equipment, which in the opinion of the umpire is dangerous, confusing or inappropriate. Illegal equipment shall always include but is not limited to:

a. The following items related to the Game Uniform:

1. Jerseys and pants that have:
 - (a) A visible logo/trademark or reference exceeding 2 1/4 square inches and exceeding 2 1/4 inches in any dimension.
 - (b) More than one manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference on the outside of either item. (The same size restriction shall apply to either the manufacturer's logo/trademark or reference).
 - (c) Sizing, garment care or other nonlogo labels on the outside of either item.
3. Tear-away jerseys or jerseys that have been altered in any manner that produces a knot-like protrusion or creates a tear-away jersey.
4. Any transverse stripe on the sleeve below the elbow.

c. The following items related to Other Illegal Equipment:

1. Ball-colored helmets, jerseys, patches, exterior arm covers/pads, undershirts or gloves.
6. Jerseys, undershirts or exterior arm covers/pads manufactured to enhance contact with the football or opponent (through 2026). Effective 2027, jerseys or pads manufactured to enhance contact with the football or opponent.
10. Equipment not worn as intended by the manufacturer. ■

2026 FOOTBALL

Points of Emphasis



FLAGRANT AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE FOULS

In high school football, flagrant fouls and unsportsmanlike fouls are serious rule violations that threaten player safety and the integrity of the game. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) places a strong emphasis on sportsmanship and risk minimization because players are still developing physically and emotionally. Game officials play a critical role in identifying and penalizing these fouls to ensure the game is played fairly, safely, and with respect for all participants.

Flagrant fouls are the most severe type of personal foul in high school football. These actions involve intentional, reckless or excessively violent behavior that shows a clear disregard for the safety of others. Flagrant fouls are fouls so severe or extreme that they place an opponent in danger of serious injury. They may also involve violations that are extremely or persistently vulgar or abusive. Examples include fighting, maliciously targeting the head or neck area, striking an opponent, or delivering a violent illegal blindside block or late hit. When a flagrant foul occurs, the penalty is 15 yards and automatic disqualification of the offending player. Removing players who commit flagrant fouls helps prevent serious injuries and stops situations from escalating into further violence.

In high school football (NFHS rules), unsportsmanlike fouls are non-contact fouls that violate standards of fair play, respect and sportsmanship, while personal fouls are fouls that involve illegal personal contact. Unsportsmanlike fouls are penalized even if they don't directly affect the play, and while they may not be physically violent, they harm the tone of the game. Common examples include:

- taunting,
- threatening gestures or posturing,
- racist comments,
- trash talking,
- excessive or choreographed celebrations,
- aggressively spiking, spinning or throwing the ball high into the air,
- using profanity,
- spitting,
- arguing with game officials, or
- throwing equipment.

Unsportsmanlike fouls can be committed by players, coaches or other team personnel. Each unsportsmanlike foul results in a 15-yard penalty, and a player who commits two such fouls in one game is disqualified.

Game officials must consistently penalize both flagrant and unsportsmanlike fouls to maintain control of the game. When these actions go unpunished, players may feel emboldened to act more aggressively or disrespectfully, increasing the risk of fights and injuries. Proper enforcement sends a clear message that dangerous or unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated, helping to keep emotions in check and the game orderly.

Penalizing flagrant and unsportsmanlike fouls is important because high school football is about more than winning; it is about teaching values such as respect, discipline, and responsibility. By enforcing these rules, game officials protect players, promote good sportsmanship, and set a positive example for young athletes. Consistent enforcement helps ensure that high school football remains a safe, competitive and educational experience for everyone involved.

HELPING THE RUNNER

Collegiate and professional football rules allow offensive players to pile in behind and directly push the runner. The "tush push" is an example of such a play often used at those levels. Although direct contact with the runner is illegal under NFHS rules, these plays are becoming more common in the high school game. As guardians of the game, it is imperative that all stakeholders work together to remove "illegally helping the runner" from our high school game.

Administrators, coaches and football game officials all have a responsibility to know, respect and teach/enforce the NFHS rules of high school football. Football is a vigorous, physical contact game and, for this reason, much attention is given to minimizing risk of injury to all players. Each respective rules code (NFL, NCAA and NFHS) has rules that coincide with the physical development of competing athletes and their goals for the game.

The NFHS Football Rules Committee focuses on minimizing risk and supporting a balance between offensive and defensive rules. Illegally helping the runner to assist forward progress presents a risk of injury to the runner and others. The additional momentum to a particular offensive player, as opposed to the pile, swings the balance toward the offense in a manner not intended by the rules. Football game officials should be aware of ruling plays dead when a runner's forward progress is clearly stopped, and they should penalize actions by offensive teammates who directly contact the runner and push, pull or lift the runner forward in a clear and obvious attempt to keep the runner's progress moving forward.

Of course, not all contact with the runner is illegal. Game officials should observe and judge an offensive teammate's actions and the runner's progress to determine whether a foul for illegally helping the runner is warranted. Although a foul can occur on any play, game officials should especially be alert for this type of action on short-yardage plays near the goal line and line to gain. Remember, pushing the pile is legal; direct contact while pushing, pulling, lifting of the runner to assist forward progress is not.

The NFHS Coaches Code of Ethics states: "Coaches shall master the contest rules and shall teach the rules to their team members. Coaches shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules. Coaches have a tremendous influence, for good or ill, on the education of the student, and thus shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character."

If school administrators/athletic directors truly believe that activities are an extension of the classroom, they must be actively involved with programs they supervise and redirect coaches when they observe them teaching prohibited tactics.

Removing “illegally helping the runner” from high school football will, at times, be met with resistance, especially considering the visibility of this type of play at other levels of the game. School administrative support of football game officials, re-focus of coaches and education of players will lead to a smooth transition. All stakeholders must remain committed to trying to minimize risk to all players and maintain the balance between offensive and defensive play.

SIDELINE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Sideline management has become a recurring “point of emphasis” because it improves game safety by keeping game officials, players, coaching staff and other team personnel clear of the active game play areas. It promotes good sportsmanship and professionalism across all levels of play and also prevents unnecessary delays and confrontations that can impact game flow and fairness.

The sideline includes the team area and any restricted zones around the field where players and coaches stand during the game. Game officials expect this area to be organized and kept clear of unnecessary personnel. Coaches must remain in the designated team area when interacting with game officials, especially for rule discussions. Leaving that area to step onto the field or challenge calls results in an automatic unsportsmanlike conduct foul. Coaches are generally only allowed to step toward the sideline (into the working area, often a marked 2-yard border) to call offensive or defensive signals after play has stopped.

Game officials are instructed to strictly enforce NFHS Football Rules when the following behaviors are observed:

- Coaches or team personnel entering the field of play to dispute rulings or address game officials outside the coaching area.
- Prolonged or excessive celebrations or demonstrations that carry onto the field.
- Failing to maintain professional behavior. Coaches and team personnel are expected to set a standard for sportsmanship.
- Game officials shall call fouls for violations of sideline control when they are observed.
- Infractions such as approaching game officials with devices (e.g., to view or review video).

The following is a summary checklist for coaches/teams to follow during a game:

- Remain inside your team area for game official discussions.
- Only move toward the sideline after play is dead, and for signal/play calling.
- Keep non-essential personnel and spectators off the field level.
- Avoid approaching game officials during play or with electronic/video devices.
- Set a professional, sportsmanlike example for the entirety of the contest.

To minimize the risk of all involved, non-players (including substitutes, athletic trainers and coaches) must remain in their team box and out of any restricted areas, especially while the ball is live. Non-players may never be on the field while the ball is live and may only be on the field when the ball is dead in very limited situations. In the excitement of the game, it is not uncommon for substitutes and other non-players to move closer to the sideline beyond their team box area. This inevitably causes coaches to move up into restricted areas and closer to the field - often impeding game officials in their essential duties. Crowding at the sideline puts players, non-players, coaches and game officials in danger of severe injury. Game officials and coaches must be aware of this problem and take the necessary steps to prevent and correct these occurrences. Coaches, substitutes, athletic trainers and others affiliated with the team may be in their team’s area, which is out-of-bounds and between

the 25-yard lines (unless otherwise approved to be adjusted by state association adopted policy). Their movements and positions are limited by this designated area. The coaches’ area extends at least a 2-yard depth out-of-bounds from the sideline. A maximum of three coaches – and only coaches – may be in this area when the ball is dead between plays. However, all coaches must leave this area when the ball is about to become live, such as when the snapper is approaching the ball, and no one may be in this area while the ball is live. The team box area is outside the field, beyond the restricted area and between the 25-yard lines. All coaches and non-players associated with the team may be in this area. A nonplayer may not be outside of this area unless to become a player or return as a replaced player.

When nonplayers are outside of the team box area, or anyone is in the restricted area while the ball is live, game officials will give a sideline warning to the team involved. A second offense results in a 5-yard penalty. All subsequent offenses result in 15-yard penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct fouls, which are charged to the head coach. If a game official unintentionally contacts a coach or other nonplayer in the restricted area while the ball is live, the team is assessed a 15-yard penalty for a nonplayer, illegal personal contact foul. As a nonplayer foul, the penalty is enforced from the succeeding spot. A second such offense would result in the head coach’s disqualification. Unlike a foul for sideline interference (non-contact, Rule 9-8-1k or 9-8-3), no warning or 5-yard penalty is required in this situation.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE NFHS AUTHENTICATING MARK ON GAME BALLS

The NFHS Authenticating Mark ensures easy identification of inflated and non-inflated balls used in interscholastic competition for which the NFHS writes playing rules. All such balls are required to display the NFHS Authenticating Mark.

The use of conforming equipment is essential to the integrity of contests played under the NFHS rules. This mark helps to promote a level playing field by ensuring consistency in the equipment being used. The mark allows for the development of more sophisticated standards in balls and clearly communicates to administrators, coaches, and game officials that these standards are being met.

Non-compliance with these requirements will be reported to the state association for potential penalties, following the contest. Administrators and coaches play a pivotal role in making sure all inflated and non-inflated balls meet these specifications. They must instill the importance of proper equipment use through consistent reinforcement during the pre-competition certification meeting and throughout the season. Game officials must also remain vigilant and report any non-compliant balls to the state association office. ■





NFHS GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOOTBALL GAME AND PLAY CLOCK OPERATORS

GENERAL

- A. The game and play clock operators are integral members of the officiating crew and game administration. Unfair advantages occur when either the clock is not started or stopped correctly by rule. Great care must be exercised to ensure excessive time lag does not occur in starting or stopping the clocks.
- B. The game and play clock operators must be separate individuals and neither should be tasked with operating the scoreboard.
- C. Both clock operators should meet with the Referee and the game officials responsible for timing the game, either on the field or in the game official's locker room at the time specified by the state association. The following shall be discussed:
 1. The sequence of pre-game and halftime activities, the time when kickoff will occur, and the length of the halftime intermission.
 2. A complete review of the starting and stopping of the clocks in accordance with the playing rules, to include overtime and the running clock procedure (if applicable).
 3. The procedure for communication with the operator(s) during the game and adjustment of the clock, if necessary.
- (b) When a forward pass hits the ground.
- (c) When a runner is tackled clearly beyond the line-to-gain (first down) stake.
- (d) When it is obvious the runner has gone out of bounds. If there is any doubt, the game clock operator should wait for the signal.
- (e) Following a fourth-down play.
- (f) At the end of a play where a flag has been thrown.

GAME CLOCK

- D. The game clock should be started with a countdown to game time as soon as the facility is opened. At least a 60-minute countdown is desirable.
- E. The halftime intermission will start on the back judge's or Referee's signal which is given after the players leave the field. The operator will reset the game clock to three minutes for the warm-up period immediately when the halftime intermission expires and start it without any signal by the officiating crew.
- F. If the game clock malfunctions, the operator may give the game officials the official time. The game official responsible for timing will then pick up the correct time on their stopwatch. Should the game clock be subsequently repaired, its use may be resumed at the Referee's discretion.
- G. Game Procedures:
 1. On all free kicks (kickoffs), the nearest game official(s) will signal the legal touching of the ball by winding the game clock. The game clock does not start on first touching by Team K, kicks into the end zone or kicks that go out of bounds untouched.
 2. The game clock operator should react to game clock-stopping events without waiting for a signal (e.g., a pass that is clearly incomplete). If there is any question as to what occurred (e.g. it is uncertain if the runner stepped out of bounds), the game clock operator should wait for a signal.
The primary game clock-stopping events are:
 - (a) Following a touchdown, field goal, touchback or safety.
3. After the game clock has been stopped, the referee may start it on the ready-for-play signal. If no ready-for-play signal is given, the game clock operator will start it on a legal snap. If the referee erroneously starts the game clock at the ready, the signal should be honored.
4. After a first down is awarded to Team A where the ball becomes dead inbounds, the referee will start the game clock when the ball is spotted but will not blow their whistle. This is known as the "silent wind" and the game clock operator should be prepared to quickly start the game clock as soon as the ball is spotted. Usually, the game clock will be stopped for only 3-5 seconds.
5. If the game clock is erroneously stopped, the referee may start the game clock before the ready-for-play signal.
6. The game clock operator must record the time of all game clock stoppages so if the game clock erroneously runs on a false start when the game clock is stopped, it can be immediately corrected by the game clock operator without instruction from the Referee.
7. The try (extra point) that follows a touchdown is not a timed down.
8. At the end of a quarter, the game clock should not be reset until the referee declares the period over by facing the press box and holding the ball over their head. If the period is extended for an untimed down, the game clock is kept at 0:00 until all untimed plays are completed and the period is declared to be over.
9. Any game official may signal a time-out; therefore, the game clock operator should be alert to stop the game clock, especially toward the end of a half.
- H. Overtime Procedures:
 1. If the game is tied at the end of the fourth quarter, the overtime procedure prescribed by the state association shall be used.
 2. The game clock operator will put three minutes (3:00) on the game clock and start it on the referee's signal. When the three-minute intermission expires, the game clock shall be turned off.

3. If subsequent overtime periods are necessary, there is a two-minute intermission between periods. These will be timed by the back judge. There is no need to put this time on the game clock as most teams will be ready to play before the two minutes expire.

PLAY CLOCK

I. After a play, the play clock starts at 40 seconds unless there is an administrative stoppage. The play clock should be started when a down ends by rule, but if there is any doubt, the play clock operator should wait for the appropriate signal which will be either S3 (time-out), S7 (dead ball – one arm straight up) or S10 (incomplete pass).

J. When a legal snap occurs, the play clock is immediately set to 40 seconds. If the play clock is still running after the play starts, it can be reset to 40 seconds during the play. There is plenty of time to reset it to 25 at the end of the down, if necessary, since a 25-second play clock is used only after an administrative stoppage.

K. If the 40-second play clock runs below 20 seconds and the football has not yet been set on the ground ready for the next down, the play clock operator must be alert for the referee to reset (pump-up) the clock to 25 seconds. The referee's signal for this is a pumping motion with one hand up (pushing the sky). The same pumping motion with both hands indicates that the play clock will be reset to 40 seconds.

L. The following situations result in a 25-second play clock (exceptions noted):

1. Any foul occurs** (40 seconds if only a defensive player);
2. Play is stopped for an injured player** (40 seconds if only a defensive player);
3. Play is stopped to address an equipment issue** (40 seconds if only a defensive player);
4. Any down that involves a score;
5. Either team is granted a time-out;
6. Any down that includes a legal kick followed by a new series;
7. A measurement for a first down;
8. Team possession changes during or after a down;
9. The beginning of any period;
10. An inadvertent whistle occurs; and
11. There is an untimed down.

**** - If both teams have any combination of #2 and/or #3, the 25-second play clock is used.**

M. The play clock shall be turned off (or set to 40) whenever it would start with more time than what is remaining in any quarter and the

game clock is running or would start on the ready-for-play signal. The reason for this is to avoid confusion over the amount of time remaining to snap the ball.

EXAMPLE 1: A running play ends inbounds with 12 seconds remaining in the quarter and there is a flag on the play. After disposition of the penalty, the game clock will start on the ready and the offense will have 12 seconds to put the ball in play. The quarterback should not be able to view a play clock that starts at 25 seconds.

EXAMPLE 2: A running play ends inbounds on first down with 38 seconds remaining in the quarter. The game clock keeps running, but a 40-second play clock does not start. The second-down play is an incomplete pass which stops the game clock with 17 seconds remaining and there is a flag on the play for offensive holding. After disposition of the penalty, the game clock will start on the snap. A 25-second play clock will start because the game clock is not running.

N. If the play count is interrupted, whether it is because of a malfunction or for an official's discretionary time-out, it must be reset to 25 seconds. It is not reset to 40 seconds unless there is an administrative stoppage and the rule mandates 40 seconds (e.g., defensive foul). The play clock will never resume at an interrupted count. When a malfunction occurs, the game clock must also be stopped and will restart on the snap.

O. If the play clock does not start on time, it should be started as soon as it is noticed. The Back Judge will have a backup clock. If the play clock continues to malfunction, the Referee may direct that it be turned off. The play clock count will then be kept on the field with the back judge signaling the last ten seconds of the count.

P. If the play clock gets to zero prior to the snap or free kick and a foul for delay of game is called, it is left at zero until the penalty is enforced, then reset. If there is no flag, immediately reset the play clock to 40 seconds.

Q. The play clock is used during overtime.

R. If a running clock rule applies, it is recommended the visible play clocks be turned off. ■

PLAY CLOCK/GAME CLOCK PROCEDURES

Event	Play Clock	Game Clock	Covering Official's Signal [^]	Referee's Signal
Dead Ball Inbounds	40	Running	S7	None
Dead Ball Out of Bounds	40	Snap	S3	None
Incomplete Pass	40	Snap	S10	None
Team A Awarded 1st Down	40	Signal	S3	Wind
Penalty Administration *	40/25	Ready	S3	Wind
Charged Team Time-out	25	Snap	S3	Chop
Injury / Helmet Off / Equipment Issues *	40/25	Ready	S3	Wind
Measurement	25	Ready	S3	Wind
Double Change of Possession – Team A Snaps	40	Ready	S7	Wind
Change of Possession - Team B Snaps	25	Snap	S3	Chop
Touchdown	25	N/A	S3	Chop
Try, Field Goal, Safety	25	Varies **	Varies **	Chop
Start of Each Period	25	Snap	Varies	Chop
Legal Kick	25	Snap	S3	Chop
Start of Overtime Period	25	N/A	N/A	Chop
Other Administrative Stoppages ***	25	Ready	S3	Wind

* See Rule 3-6-1a(1)e Exceptions for Defensive Injuries, Equipment Issues and Fouls (Set to 25 if both teams cause the stoppage)

** The Game Clock Will Start on the Legal Touch of a Free Kick

*** Includes Inadvertent Whistle and Period Extension

[^] See the Current NFHS Football Rules Book for the NFHS Official Football Signals



Preventing Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS) in High School Linemen

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) Task Force

THE PROBLEM:

- Exertional heat stroke (EHS) is the No. 1 cause of preventable death in youth, high school and collegiate football players, with an average of nearly three deaths per season.
- 100 percent of high school and collegiate EHS football deaths occur during sustained, high-intensity conditioning sessions, usually within the first week of practice, with 97 percent of those fatalities being linemen.
- Recommended guidelines for EHS (uniform reduction, WetBulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) scales, acclimatization periods, hydration, etc.) - although still important - have been insufficient in preventing fatality, as these do not account for the intensity of exertion nor linemen at risk.
- Linemen's physiological response to exertion and environmental heat differs from other players as they heat up faster and cool down slower, contributing to their increased risk for EHS.

SOLUTIONS:

- Establish a paradigm shift on how to train and condition football linemen.
- Training and conditioning should be position-specific, with a gradual and paced progression in intensity and duration, particularly during the first week of any new conditioning or preseason program.

- Continue to implement well-established guidelines for heat acclimatization, hydration, WBGT scales with appropriate practice modifications to reduce the risk of exertional heat illness.
- Encourage preseason strength and conditioning to enhance player preparedness.
- Linemen are excluded from certain preseason performance testing, such as mile runs, serial sprints, etc., during the first few weeks of practice as several deaths have occurred in this setting. Post-practice sprinting puts linemen at greater risk for exertional heat illness.
- Exertion drills are never used as punishment as this accounts for 37 percent of football EHS deaths.
- A struggling athlete is immediately withdrawn from training and conditioning for evaluation and treatment.
- Coaches' written plan for training and conditioning workouts include types of drills that match how linemen play the game, with appropriate work/rest ratios, intensity and duration, with focus on skill development.
- Rehearse the EHS Emergency Action Plan (EAP) with rapid cooling protocols.
- EHS is predominantly exertional rather than environmental; therefore, control exercise intensity, particularly in linemen, to prevent EHS.

REFERENCES:

Anderson SA, et al. Preventing Exertional Heat Stroke in Football: Time for a Paradigm Shift. Sports Health. 2025 May-Jun 14;17(3):484-490. doi: A 10.1177/19417381241260045 ■



NFHS General Instructions for Football Line-to-Gain Crews

A four-person line-to-gain crew is preferable, consisting of an operator for the down indicator, two holding the stakes, and a clip person. The person responsible for the clip may also be requested to record penalties. No one on the line-to-gain crew should double as a ball person or any other function. If the line-to-gain crew consists of only three members, the person working the down indicator can perform most of the duties involving the clip while the person holding the trailing stake temporarily holds the down indicator (or vice versa). It is strongly recommended that the members of the line-to-gain crew be adults and wear distinctive vests or jackets, and/or hats furnished by home or game management.

The line-to-gain crew is part of the officiating crew and must remain impartial. They must be prepared to hustle and to follow any instructions from the head line judge. They should be reminded that they are not allowed to cheer, criticize the game officials, make any remarks relating to players and coaches, nor express opinions concerning any ruling or calls made by the game officials. They are not to communicate with the visiting team and may not use cell phones or other electronic devices while on the line-to-gain crew. Any problems or situations the line-to-gain crew encounters while performing their job is to be brought to the head line judge's attention. They are to be reminded it is the head line judge's responsibility to resolve the situation, not theirs. If members of the line-to-gain crew are unable/unwilling to perform their duties, the Referee and the home team coach/athletic director should be informed.

PREGAME DUTIES

The line-to-gain crew shall meet the head line judge on the sideline opposite the press box at least 15 minutes before game time and also five minutes prior to the second-half kickoff. If an unofficial auxiliary down indicator is used, the operator shall meet the line judge on the press box side at the same time.

The head line judge shall make certain that the official line-to-gain equipment has been placed opposite the press box or on the designated sideline and that all are in good working order and conform to the rules. The line judge shall make certain that the unofficial auxiliary down indicator is in good working order and is placed on the opposite side of the field from the official line-to-gain crew.

GAME PROCEDURES

For kickoffs, the line-to-gain crew should be positioned well out of bounds near the receiving team's 30-yard line or near the 50-yard line for a free kick following a safety.

When a first down is declared, the head line judge goes to the sideline and marks the spot for the down indicator with his downfield heel. The line-to-gain crew shall move as quickly as possible to their next position, with the rear stake set behind the down indicator.

After the chains are set, the chain must be clipped at the intersection of the sideline and the 5-yard line nearest the trailing stake. Once the chain is clipped, it must be moved approximately six feet off of the sideline. The clip is a safety valve. If the chains are moved either in error or for safety reasons, the clip provides a reference point for the exact chain location.

Once the chains are moved away from the sideline, the down indicator is also moved six feet away from the sideline and is placed in front of the trailing stake so that the game officials' view of the down indicator is not obstructed. The lead holder is responsible to ensure the chain is taut at all times. When the trailing stake is set behind the box, the trailing stake holder should step firmly on the chain; that ensures the chain will be taut and that the trailing stake will not be displaced when the lead stake is pulled.



Following each down, the down indicator must be set at the location specified by the head line judge (the foremost point of the ball) and the down indicator should be changed to indicate the next down, as directed by the head line judge.

On plays going out of bounds near the chains on the line-to-gain crew's sideline, the line-to-gain crew shall drop the chains and down indicator in order to ensure player safety.

The line-to-gain crew shall not move or change the number of the down until signaled to do so by the head line judge. On long gains or after a change of possession, the head line judge shall wait for the referee's signal before directing the chains to move. It is permissible for the head line judge to allow the line-to-gain crew to move on direct signal from the referee. If the line-to-gain crew sees a flag and the Head line judge instructs them to move, they should notify the head line judge of the flag.

The line-to-gain crew shall not be allowed to slow the pace of play. If the line-to-gain crew is not ready once the umpire has spotted the



ball, the head line judge shall drop a bean bag to spot the location where the down indicator should be placed, and play should proceed.

Whenever the line-to-gain becomes the goal line, only the down indicator is required. The head line judge should provide a bean bag to the down indicator holder to be placed at the spot for reference in the event the down indicator is moved. The chains are no longer needed and are to be laid down safely out of the way. Only the down indicator shall be used during try attempts.

During measurements, the down indicator shall be placed on the sideline at the location of the front stake until either a new series is declared, or the chain is returned to its previous position.

Between the first and second periods and the third and fourth periods, the head line judge shall grasp the chain at the clip, the line-to-gain crew shall reverse direction and shall carry the chain to the location on the opposite side of the 50-yard line, as instructed by the head line judge. ■



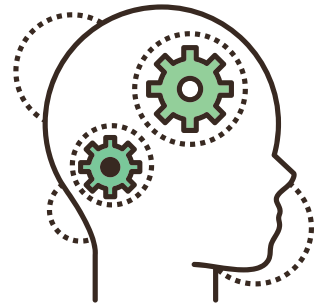
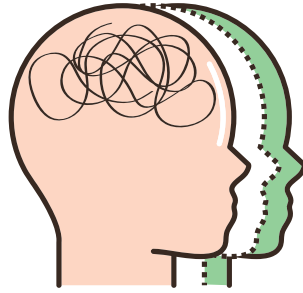
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MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL WELLNESS



General Information Involvement in sports can have a very positive effect on the mental health of high school student-athletes. However, mental illnesses, such as depression, anxiety, and others, occur in student-athletes just like they do in everyone else. Mental illness may not be detected in athletes as easily as in others, though. This is for a number of reasons, including:

- Athletes may have a tendency to deny signs of “weakness”.
- Athletes may be afraid of not being allowed to play.
- Athlete behaviors may resemble symptoms of mental illness, but can be chalked up to being a normal part of being a good athlete. This might include careful attention to diet, which may actually be part of an eating disorder.

How and Why Mental Illness Occurs in Athletes

Mental illness in student-athletes may relate directly to the athlete's sport, or it may have nothing to do with the sport. There are three possible relationships between the student-athlete's sport and their mental illness:

- The illness is caused or worsened by the sport (for example, a student-athlete who develops an eating disorder directly related to wanting to be thin for their sport)
- The student-athlete chooses the sport as a way to cope with the mental illness (for example, the student-athlete with anxiety who finds that running helps them to feel less anxious)
- The sport and the mental illness are completely coincidental and have nothing to do with each other

Unique Risk Factors for Mental Illness in Athletes

While student-athletes are probably at similar risk for most mental illnesses compared to the general population, there are several unique factors that may especially put athletes at risk for these conditions. These include:

- Injuries (including musculoskeletal injuries and concussion)
- Lack of balance in life (no free time, including time with friends)
- Pressure of competition
- Overtraining (training too hard for too long without enough time for recovery)
- Failure in sport
- Harassment and discrimination related to personal characteristics such as race/ethnicity or sexual orientation
- Coaching styles that do not match up with how the student-athlete performs best

Depression

Like most other mental illnesses, depression probably occurs in athletes at the same rate as in the general population. Symptoms of depression include (and note a person does not need ALL of these symptoms in order to have depression):

- Feeling sad, down, hopeless or tearful on most days
- Feeling irritable on most days (this can be especially common in adolescent depression)
- Not looking forward to or enjoying things that used to make the person happy
- Feeling worthless
- Lower energy than usual
- Worse concentration than usual
- Appetite changes (either much lower or much higher than usual)
- Sleep changes (either trouble falling or staying asleep or sleeping more than usual)
- Thoughts of death or dying, including suicidal thoughts

On rare occasion, someone who has times of feeling depressed may have a condition called bipolar disorder. This is a disorder in which they not only may have times of depression, but they also have times of abnormally elevated mood (called mania or hypomania). In mania or hypomania, they have multiple days or weeks on end of feeling euphoric, not needing very much sleep and still feeling rested and very energetic (this is different than simple insomnia in which they wish they could sleep but can't), feelings of being better than everyone around them, talking much more quickly than usual, engaging in uncharacteristically risky behaviors without thinking through the consequences, engaging in much more activity than usual, seeming more sexual than usual, and reckless spending of relatively large amounts of money (note a person does not need ALL of these symptoms in order to have mania or hypomania). Importantly, this is not just feeling better than they feel compared to when they are depressed. It is a dramatic state of elevated mood in which people around them notice they are not their usual selves, and the behaviors and symptoms create problems in their lives.

Student-athletes with depression, bipolar disorder, or any number of other psychiatric disorders may be at risk for suicide. High school student-athletes do not appear to be at any greater risk of suicide than their non-athlete peers.

Anxiety

Anxiety may also occur in student-athletes at the same rates as in the general population. Some symptoms of anxiety are similar to those of depression. It is possible that athletes can have both depression and anxiety. Symptoms of anxiety may include (and note a person does not need ALL of these symptoms in order to have anxiety):

- Worry about many things (for example, sports, school, friends, family, day to day obligations) in a way that feels difficult to control and happening on most days
- Trouble sleeping (especially falling asleep)
- Lower energy than usual
- Worse concentration than usual
- Muscle tension

- Feeling fidgety or restless
- Feeling irritable much of the time

There are also specific types of anxiety that can occur, including:

Social anxiety disorder:

This is a condition in which someone has significant fear and anxiety about being negatively judged and evaluated by others. People with this condition may be viewed as extremely shy or unfriendly, but in actuality, these people would like to be able to make friends. They dislike being the center of attention and being observed while doing something, and this can make it hard for some people to participate in certain sports, especially individual sports.

Panic disorder:

This is a condition in which someone has sudden, severe attacks of intense anxiety and fear lasting several minutes. They usually involve physical symptoms such as feeling short of breath, feeling one's heart beat hard in the chest, or feeling dizzy. Sometimes the symptoms can feel similar to how people feel when they exercise intensely, and that can make an athlete with panic disorder start to avoid their sport out of fear that exercise will bring on an actual panic attack.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD):

This is a condition in which someone has repeated, unwanted thoughts that come into their mind that they have difficulty controlling (obsessions) and/or physical or mental behaviors that they feel must be performed over and over (compulsions). Examples include intense fear of germs and associated washing of hands over and over, or ordering things "just so" or symmetrically to an extreme degree. OCD is different than superstitious rituals, which are usually harmless. Rituals are common among athletes, and examples include wearing the same pair of socks for every game or eating the same meal before each race. Full-blown OCD may be more common in athletes than in non-athletes.

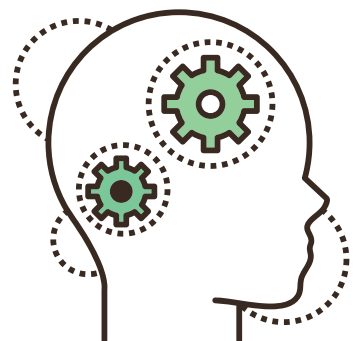
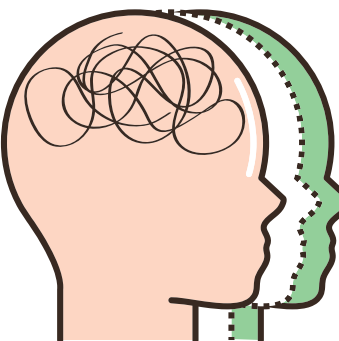
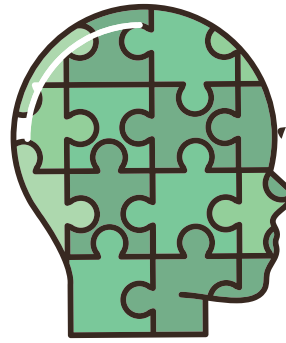
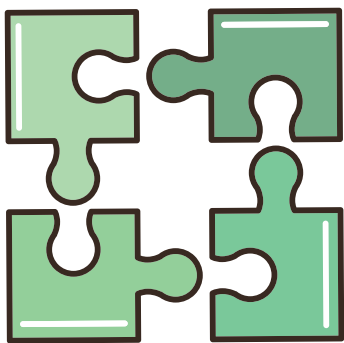
Post-traumatic stress disorder:

This is a condition in which someone has suffered any sort of trauma (for example, physical, verbal, or sexual abuse, assault, major accidents or illnesses). Associated with that trauma, they have symptoms that may include: nightmares or flashbacks about it, avoidance of anything that reminds them of the trauma, increased startle response, and any of a number of symptoms of depression and anxiety. Traumas unique to athletes may include "out of

the ordinary" sport-specific adverse events, such as severe injuries (especially if they involve threats to physical integrity), witnessing of lethal accidents, loss of a crucial game where the athlete feels they are to blame, public cheating scandal, or teammate suicide. The more a student identifies themselves as "athlete" to the exclusion of other sources of identity, the more traumatic a major injury may feel to them.

Treatment and Resources

- Student-athletes with mental health concerns may reach out to any of a number of people, including coaches, athletic trainers, team physicians, parents, school nurses, school counselors, or others. In emergency situations such as when someone is suicidal, any of these contacts should ensure the athlete gets emergency treatment, such as in the emergency department. Additionally, student-athletes (and anyone else) in the U.S. may call or text 988 to access the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, through which they will be able to talk to/message with a trained counselor.
- For non-emergency issues, student-athletes should be referred to health care providers who are familiar with mental illness if it is suspected that they might be suffering from such a condition. These providers include pediatricians, family medicine physicians, internal medicine physicians, sports medicine physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, or other counselors/therapists. Early signs that an athlete might be suffering from mental illness include changes in personality, demeanor, interactions with peers, and general behavior.
- Treatment may include talk therapy (psychotherapy), medications, or changes in the environment. The athlete will usually be allowed to continue to participate in the sport. However, if the sport itself is significantly contributing to the symptoms, then a break from sport may be necessary.
- The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has a course for student-athletes and anyone responsible for their care and well-being titled "Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention" that is available here: nfhslearn.com/courses/student-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention. ■



Amateur Status Still at the Heart of High School Sports

The popularity and interest in sports is the caveat for professional athletes to be widely targeted for product and service endorsements hoping to commercialize on an individual's exploits and popularity.

Unfortunately, familiarity with the concept of these endorsements and those hoping to capitalize on the notoriety of high school athletes are all too frequently adopted by local or regional businesses and organizations.

School administrators, coaches, parents, student-athletes, businesses and organizations must all be aware of amateur status provisions and its impact on high school students' athletic eligibility.

The member schools of the WIAA have approved the amateur status provisions listed in its Rules of Eligibility, which are made available to schools in the membership Handbook and the Rules at a Glance information provided each year, as well as to anyone who has access to the Internet on the WIAA Web site (www.wiaawi.org).

The membership's regulations state that a student shall be an amateur in all sports sponsored by the Association in order to compete in any sport. It also states all students shall become ineligible for all further participation in the school's interscholastic program for violation of any of the amateur status provisions. With high school career-ending ramifications, amateur status regulations must be understood and carefully monitored. Student-athletes are in violation of the members' amateur status rules if they:

- 1) *...accept, receive and/or direct to another, reimbursement or award in any form of salary, cash, merchandise of any kind or amount, or share of game or season proceeds for achievement in athletics. A student may not receive such merchandise items as shirts, jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, jerseys, warm-ups, equipment, balls, duffel bags, backpacks, watches, rings, billfolds, coupons, gift certificates, e.g., regardless of their value.*
- 2) *...sign a contract or agreement for services as a participating athlete.*
- 3) *...play in any contest (school or nonschool) under a name other than his/her own name.*

With the recent passing of Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) opportunities, member rules do not restrict the right of any student to participate in NIL commercial endorsements provided there is no school team, school, Conference or WIAA affiliation. Prohibited NIL activities are:

- a. The student shall not appear in the uniform of the student's school and does not utilize the marks, logos, etc. of the school team, school, Conference or WIAA as part of any endorsement.
- b. The student shall not promote activities nor products associated with the following: gaming/gambling; alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cannabis, or related products; banned or illegal substances; adult entertainment products or services; weapons (i.e. firearms)
- c. The compensation is not contingent on specific athletic performance or achievement (i.e. financial incentives based on points scored).
- d. The compensation is not provided by the school or persons associated with school as an inducement to attend a particular school ("recruiting") or to remain enrolled at a particular school.
Note: Definition of Persons Associated With School include, but are not limited to; current or former coaches, current or former athletes, parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver of current or former student/athletes (exception of one's own parent), booster club members, alumni, spouses or relatives of coaches, teachers and other employees, coaches who become employed, active applicants for coaching positions, and persons who are employed by companies or organizations that have donated monetarily, athletic supplies, equipment or apparel to that school.
- e. The NIL activities do not interfere with a student-athlete's academic obligations
- f. A student does not miss athletic practice, competition, travel, or other team obligations in order to participate in NIL opportunities.
- g. A student can not utilize representation or contract an agent. High schools or its employees are not allowed to help facilitate deals for student-athletes

Amateur status penalties may be reduced upon request of a school on the basis of documented extenuating circumstances, when accompanied by evidence of complete restitution made by the athlete if the circumstance is applicable.

Student-athletes, as well as parents, are required to read and sign the Athletic Eligibility Information Bulletin, acknowledging their familiarity with the membership's rules and regulations. The consent of the student-athlete and the student-athlete's parents should be required before any third party (recruiters, club teams, fitness centers, businesses and organizations) uses a student-athlete in any form of publicity.

There have been instances whereby a business or organization--without knowledge or permission of the school or individual--uses the likeness of student-athletes in order to capitalize on the student-athlete's popularity, which creates a violation. The most heart-wrenching application of the member's rules and subsequent sanctions on the school or individual for a violation occurs when a business or organization exploits a student-athlete without the student-athlete, parent or school having knowledge of the action.

The three most common considerations of a student having been identified as a student-athlete are by text or spoken word, by apparel and by props. Apparel does not necessarily apply to just the school's uniform to convey the student is an athlete. The advice and best practice the Executive Staff can offer is to use young adults such as recent graduates who have no high school eligibility remaining.

A second option, but less preferred, is to use younger/pre-high school students who may not yet be subject to WIAA membership provisions.

Another best practice recommendation is to simply use actors; students who are not athletes at all. That provides far greater liberties. It is considered best practice because of the numerous experiences the membership has encountered where one promotion stimulates another with a neighboring business that does not consider the precautions nor does it understand or have knowledge of the membership's amateur status regulations.

Compliance and familiarization of amateur status rules--and the consequences of violations--requires continued efforts by the membership to educate student-athletes and their parents.

Keep in mind, while student-athletes may be reimbursed for actual costs associated with transportation, food, lodging and entry fees for competition, the family may not crowd source to raise money for those same costs.

In addition, the athlete and family must pay all costs associated with camps, clinics and specialized training. Athletes may not receive discounts. The rule states:

It is not permissible for any person or organization, except the student or parents to pay for any of the cost or fee of any kind of nonschool activity involving specialized training or similar instruction. Students must pay 100 percent of any expenses, including transportation, to any nonschool (out-of-season) camps, clinics, or specialized training. Schools are reminded that free and/or reduced rate opportunities afforded to select individuals can impact on amateur status (pg. 32 of the Senior High Handbook) ■

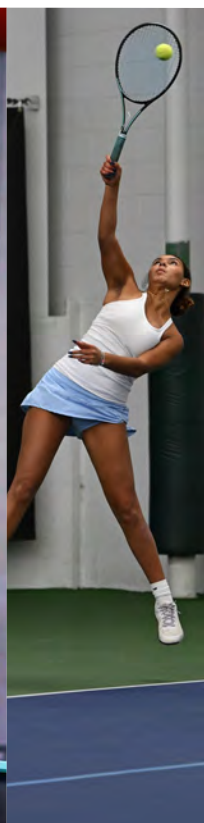
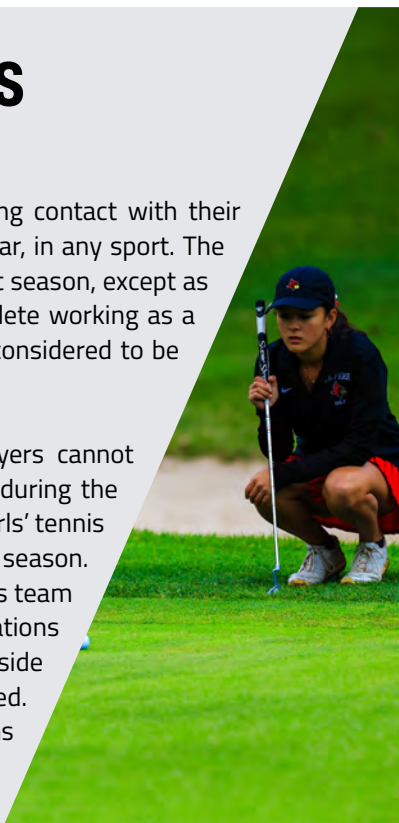


Split-Season Sports

(Golf, Soccer, Swimming, Tennis)

WIAA rules prevent coaches from having coaching contact with their athletes outside the season, during the school year, in any sport. The rules further prevent schools from offering a sport season, except as outlined in the WIAA Season Regulations. An athlete working as a clinician, under the direction of his/her coach, is considered to be coaching contact.

This means, for example, that boys' tennis players cannot as assistant coaches, clinicians, instructors, etc., during the tennis season, in the school program. Obviously, girls' tennis are similarly restricted during the boys' tennis season. tennis players cannot practice with the girls' tennis team the boys' tennis season is defined in Season Regulations school cannot make opportunities available outside Again, girls' tennis players are similarly restricted. soccer, and golf are other sports with split seasons rules apply. ■



Open Gyms

Coaches and schools cannot be involved in out-of-season practice for athletes.

However, open gyms do not violate WIAA rules if they are conducted according to the following guidelines:

1. The open gym is made known and available to all students in the designated population of that school that is interested in attending. Open gyms may be gender specific. It is also acceptable to include adults from the community. Schools may conduct "open gyms" in any activity. **It is not acceptable to include athletes from another school, public or nonpublic.**

2. There is **no instruction** during the open gym **by a coach or anyone else.**

3. Coaches may supervise open gyms, but they may not instruct, organize drills, etc. Coaches can also recreate with students in school sponsored, open gym settings that are purely recreational in nature, i.e., there is no instruction by the coach or anyone, sport skill demonstration, organized drills or resemblance of a practice being conducted.



4. There is no organized competition, such as established teams participating in round-robin competition, etc.

5. A member school is permitted to supervise conditioning programs under the open gym provisions, which may include weight lifting, speed, agility, and/or fitness. The program must be limited to non-sport and non-sportskill-specific instruction. Basic "instruction" e.g., safe lifting, safe spotting, training regimen and rationale, are permitted. No sport implements and/or sport specific movement/drills should be part of the open gym or weight room. These conditioning programs must be made known and accessible to all

interested students and must be voluntary.

Schools and coaches must clearly understand that the philosophy of the open gym is that youngsters from that school may attend, for wholesome recreation, or for purposes of improving their skills if they choose, but it's something they do on their own. It would be a violation of WIAA rules to mandate attendance at open gyms, or to provide incentives for athletes to attend open gyms, or to limit participation based on athletic status, or to allow athletes from other schools to come and work out or compete against your school's athletes. (BL – Art. II and RE – Art. VI, Sect. 2). ■

Disordered Eating/ Relative Energy Deficiency IN SPORT



The Basics

Disordered eating in student-athletes includes a wide range of eating concerns. These range from the student-athlete who inadvertently is not eating enough to fuel their body for sport simply out of not realizing how high their caloric needs are, all the way to the extreme of a full blown eating disorder and associated complications. Eating disorders include anorexia nervosa (being significantly underweight with distorted body image and intense fear of gaining weight) and bulimia nervosa (recurrent episodes of bingeing—rapidly eating very large amounts of food well beyond the point of comfortably full and in a manner that feels out of control—and purging—self-induced vomiting, laxative or diuretic use, excessive exercise beyond that recommended by coaches in order to compensate for food eaten, or times of fasting to compensate for binges). Student-athletes may underfuel because of wanting to try to achieve a competitive advantage in sport, meet appearance standards for sport or for society, or for other reasons. Ultimately, under-fueling is not a sustainable way to achieve success in sport, and athletic performance will suffer if disordered eating continues. Student-athletes may find themselves on a slippery slope in which a desire to “eat healthy” turns into food restriction and rigid dieting in the hopes of improving athletic performance.

Risk Factors

Risk factors for disordered eating in sport include the following:

- Participation in sports in which lean body physique is felt by some to be advantageous (e.g., cross country, track)
- Participation in sports in which artistic quality, in addition to technical skill, is felt to be important (e.g., gymnastics)
- Anxiety or depression
- Family members with disordered eating
- Perfectionism

Complications

Complications that may result from disordered eating in sport include:

- Changes in menstrual cycles (either not starting menstruation at all by the expected age, no longer getting menstrual cycles, or getting menstrual cycles less often, lighter, or for a shorter duration than usual)
- Low bone mineral density, which can result in stress fractures or other bone stress injuries and eventual osteoporosis
- Abnormal levels of electrolytes such as potassium
- Dehydration
- Problems with the cardiovascular system (heart and blood vessels)
- Mental health conditions and suicide
- Weakened immune system
- Changes in metabolism

Note that some people reference the term “Female Athlete Triad”, which is becoming outdated. However, the idea still applies that the three elements of the Triad, disordered eating, menstrual cycle changes, and lowered bone mineral density, can occur in athletes who are not eating enough calories to fuel their activity levels.

A newer term being used is RED-S (Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport). The International Olympic Committee has used the “RED-S” terminology since 2014. This term is preferred over Female Athlete Triad in recognition of the fact that student-athletes across genders can suffer from inadequate intake, disordered eating, or full-blown eating disorders (though it is a

more common problem in females). Additionally, the RED-S term conveys that there are more than just three issues when it comes to underfueling in sport.

Treatment

The ultimate treatment for disordered eating in sport is increased caloric intake. Any athlete suffering from signs and symptoms of disordered eating should be referred for professional help to a sports medicine physician, pediatrician, family medicine physician, internal medicine physician, psychiatrist, psychologist/therapist/counselor, and/or registered dietitian. Disordered eating is a serious concern that can have life-threatening consequences if unaddressed.

In the meantime, parents and coaches can be helpful via the following:

- Educate athletes on the energy demands of their sport.
- Create an environment that supports eating at least three meals and one to two snacks daily. Talk about having a regular breakfast, full lunch at school, and a pre-practice snack to provide energy for training.

Signs and Symptoms of Disordered Eating in Student-Athletes

- Significant or sudden weight loss, gain, or fluctuations (or failure to gain expected weight in a child/adolescent who is still growing). Importantly, student-athletes with eating disorders can present in all sizes.
- Fatigue
- Cold intolerance
- Unexpected athletic performance decline
- Bowel changes (constipation or diarrhea)
- Trouble concentrating (e.g., on school work or coaches’ instructions)
- Dizziness
- Chest pain or heart palpitations ■

Resources

1. Sample Training Day Menu
2. NCAA Nutrition, Sleep and Performance Educational Resources <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2016/8/4/nutrition-sleep-and-performance-educational-resources.aspx>

Eligibility Waivers for Foreign Exchange Students

The residence and transfer rules establish eligibility for students. When a student from a foreign country comes to experience the American educational system and American culture, they do not meet the residence or transfer rules. Therefore, they must receive a waiver requested by the school before competing at any level of competition. A transfer/residency requirement: also prohibits foreign students, other than students who are participants in an established foreign exchange program accepted for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), from displacing other students from athletic opportunities.

WIAA member schools have the following requirements in the Rules of Eligibility for Foreign Exchange Students:

Article II - Residence and Transfer

Section 4 – Foreign Exchange Students

A. This provision applies to students participating in foreign exchange programs. Foreign students attending a member school, but not participating in an exchange program, may receive consideration under Section 5, waivers and/or nonvarsity eligibility in accordance with Section 1B and 2B of this Article.

- 1) The residence requirement may be waived for one year, upon request, for students involved in foreign exchange programs that have received a 'Full' listing status by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). For students who are "directly placed" through an exchange program, students who are placed through an exchange program not affiliated with CSIET, or students who will not be in attendance for at least one



complete semester from start to finish, eligibility will be limited to nonvarsity competition.

Note 1: The foreign exchange program must assign students to host families by a method that ensures that no student, school or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic or other purposes. The foreign exchange student may not be selected or placed on any basis related to his/her athletic interests or abilities. Direct placement refers to a pre-existing relationship with a family, school and/or community which affects the student's placement.

Note 2: All foreign students must have a physical conducted in the United States prior to participating in practice or competition.

- 2) Foreign exchange students who transfer after attending one day of school and/or one athletic practice are ineligible for varsity competition at the new school unless approval is granted by the Board of Control in accordance with the waiver provisions described in Section 5 of this Article.
- 3) Foreign students attending and residing at member residential schools are exempt from the residence requirements.

Note: Transfer provisions apply identically to all students, both foreign and domestic. If a foreign exchange student has already used the one-year experience at any time, the transfer and residency rule will apply to a succeeding placement.

The Foreign Exchange Student Form is electronic and can be found online by administrators after logging into the web site. It is located under Schools – Forms Directory.

Foreign Student Eligibility Verification Form (Online Form)

- AD fills out form and submits
- AD receives confirmation on-screen that the WIAA office has received the submitted form and an email confirmation will be sent for school records.
- The form is routed to the WIAA office.
- AD will receive an email with the final eligibility status indicated and may view the form online with the office action indicated.

Students who have utilized the Foreign Exchange waiver and decide to remain in the country and at the school for more education will have restricted eligibility based on the transfer rule.

Keep in mind that international students are not the same as Foreign Exchange Program students. International students are treated the same as domestic students where residency and transfer rules apply. ■

Nonschool Participation

During the School Year



The WIAA membership has several rules in the Rules of Eligibility which affect the non-school participation of WIAA member athletes during the school year.

NONSCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN-SEASON

The first rule, during the season of the sport: It is the philosophy of this Association that a student owes loyalty and allegiance to the school and team of which he/she is a member during the season of a given sport. Athletes may compete in not more than two nonschool competitions with prior school approval during each regular sport season. The contest(s) will not count against the individual maximum for the athlete in that sport. Nonschool competition will not be allowed during the respective WIAA tournament series in a sport. A student becomes ineligible in a sport for the remainder of the season for competing in more than two nonschool games, meets, or contests in the same sport during the season of practice and competition established by the school. (ROE, page 34, Art VI, Sect 1, Par A and WIAA Rules at a Glance III - Students - D)

WIAA rules do not prevent athletes from practicing with non-school teams or from receiving private skills instruction during the school season. However, they may not participate in any nonschool competitions or races, including scrimmages, against other teams. This restriction applies to normal non-school games as well as "gimmicks," such as reduced numbers competition (3-on-3 basketball, 6-player soccer, 3-on-3 soccer, 7-on-7 football, etc.), fun runs (including "banditing"), etc. During the season, athletes may participate in a skills contest with approval of the school. Specific skill contests (punt, pass, and kick, shooting contests e.g., free throws, 3-point, drive, chip and putt) isolate separate skills outside of the traditional competition setting. The skill contest may not include physical contact or extreme fatigue as the actual sport competition. Fun runs are not considered skills contests. There can be no school coach involvement. All other eligibility rules including amateur status apply. Additionally, a student who was a member of a school team during the previous

year may not delay reporting for the school team beyond the school's official opening day of practice in order to continue non-school training or competition. (RE – Art. VI)

NONSCHOOL PARTICIPATION OUT-OF-SEASON

A second rule during the school year is the preseason assembly rule: It is the philosophy of this Association that athletes should not be unreasonably restricted. Subsequently, students may voluntarily assemble at any time without school and/or school coach involvement. (ROE, page 34, Art VI, Sect 1, Par A)

The third part of the rule is the All-Star competition rule: A student becomes ineligible in a sport for a maximum of one year from date of last offense for participating in an all-star game or similar activity. (ROE, Page 35, Art VI, Sect 3, Par B)

Athletes

In the rule, "Subsequently, students may voluntarily assemble at any time without school and/or school coach involvement." Students may assemble out-of-season in any manner they choose during the school year and during the summer. However, their high school coaches and high schools may not be involved. The assembly must be open to any and all along with being voluntary.

Coaches

The fundamental rule with coaching contact has not changed. Returning coaches may not have coaching contact with any athletes they will be coaching the following school season during restricted times (except their own children). There is no coaching contact allowed out of season during the school year. "Coaches" include head coaches, assistant coaches, volunteer coaches, and coaches who may be coaching the next year. Coach involvement does include organizing, determining nonschool rosters, providing instruction, coaching at the contest, etc.

In-Season

The rule now allows any student to compete in up to two non-school competitions of the same sport during the regular season with school approval. But no approval shall be provided during the WIAA tournament. The rule has been directed at students participating in non-school games, meets, or contests. Non-school competitions shall be counted in the same manner as provided in the season regulations of a given sport. The sports of tennis, volleyball, and wrestling provide team tournaments. All other sports count contests, meets, or games on an individual basis. Non-school competitions do not count against a student's individual maximum allowed competitions as part of a school team. ■





School Involvement in Out-of-Season Activity

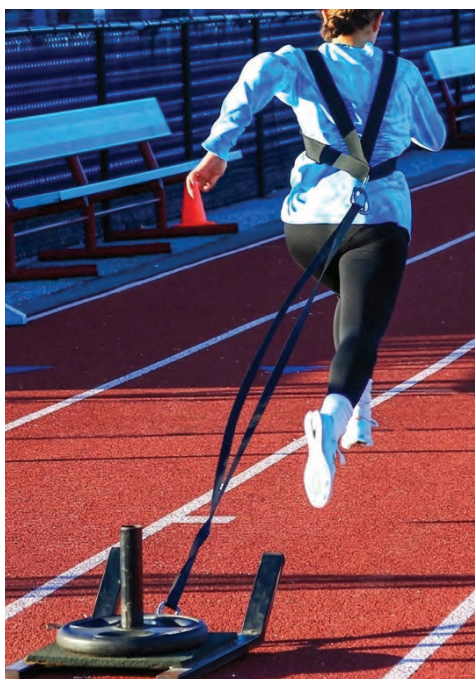
A reminder that schools cannot be involved in conducting out-of-season competition during the school year or during the summer. This means a school cannot conduct 3-on-3 basketball tournaments, co-educational volleyball tournaments, softball tournaments, etc., outside the designated school season for that particular sport. The one exception is in the summertime during the Board of Control approved sanctioned school contact period. This does not prevent outside organizations, such as recreation departments which are not a part of the school, service clubs, etc., from renting school facilities and conducting these types of competitions, but the school itself cannot be directly involved.

A further reminder that the WIAA has a rule which states "A school may not conduct intramural programs which involve athletes with past status on a school team (varsity, junior varsity, sophomore, freshman), except during the established school season of a sport." A school cannot, for example, conduct intramural volleyball during the spring, with girls' volleyball players participating. It wouldn't make any difference how many were on a given team, or whether it was co-ed volleyball, if girls' volleyball players were involved, it would be a violation.

WIAA rules do not prevent students from participating in nonschool out-of-season competitions. However, school facilities cannot be used for students to practice for these competitions, unless a nonschool group or organization has made arrangements through normal procedures, to use these facilities.

WIAA Bylaws state that schools, including their administrators, athletic director and coaches, shall not become involved directly or indirectly with the coaching, management, direction, and/or promotion of any kind of all-star game or similar contest involving students with remaining WIAA high school eligibility in any sport, if such all-star games or similar contests are held during the established school year.

Note: Coaches are prohibited from having coaching contact outside the designated sport season with any eligible student-athlete while school is in session.



• Summer School Classes:

WIAA Bylaw, Article II, Section 2, A., 2), indicates "A school may not assemble athletes or prospective athletes in physical education classes, or some other manner, for purposes of teaching fundamentals, techniques, plays, etc., except during the designated school season of a sport." This includes the summer period. The exception is in the summertime during the Board of Control approved sanctioned school contact period June 1 through June 30 and July 7 and July 31*. *Sanctioned school coach contact ends July 24, 2027 for 11-player football.

• Conditioning Programs:

This same Bylaw has another provision, indicating "A school may not organize conditioning programs limited to students with athletic team status, or to prospective athletes, except during the designated school season of a sport." Off-season weight-training programs are fine, as long as they are not sport specific. If a weight-training program is conducted, and is available to anyone interested, and the activities that go on are not sport specific, then it is acceptable under WIAA guidelines. There cannot, however, be incentives put in place to encourage athletes to be involved in these offseason programs. For example, it is not appropriate to indicate that any football player attending a given number of weight-training programs, will receive a T-shirt. It is also unacceptable for schools to provide a T-shirt to a basketball player, who attempts so many shots during the off-season. Another example of unacceptable incentives would be to include off-season activities into the determination of who gets to start during the season, or who gets to play, or for participation in these activities to be included in eligibility for a letter in that particular sport. Off-season programs must be voluntary. Administration should be aware of programming in disguise of nonschool programming that their high school coaches are involved in.

• Captains Practices:

WIAA Rules of Eligibility allow students to voluntarily assemble during the school year and in the summertime without school and/or coach involvement. These assemblies may sometimes be referred to as "captains practices." ■



Head Injuries and Concussion **WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!**

BACKGROUND

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal function of the brain. All concussions are brain injuries. The WIAA recommends avoiding the use of nicknames like “ding” or “bell ringer” to describe concussion as those terms minimize the seriousness of concussion.

A concussion is most commonly caused by a direct blow to the head, but can also be caused by a blow to the body. Even what appears to be a mild blow to the head or body can result in a concussion. It is important to know that loss of consciousness is not required to have a concussion. In fact, less than 10% of athletes lose consciousness.

A concussion is a complex physiologic event that causes problems with brain functioning (energy use and communication between nerves), but does not cause swelling or bleeding that affects brain structure. Therefore, CT/CAT scan and MRI are usually normal in athletes with concussion. Imaging studies are not indicated for most concussions, but may be needed in some instances to rule out more severe injuries, like brain bleeds.

Research has shown that concussion in the adolescent age range takes longer than previously thought to recover, with 20-30 percent of high school athletes taking over 4 weeks to fully recover. Athletes must be fully recovered before considering medical clearance to return to full participation.

There are unique concerns surrounding concussion in high school sports:

1. Adolescents get concussions more often than collegiate and professional athletes
2. Adolescents take longer than adults to heal from concussion
3. Most high schools may not have access to a team physician or an athletic trainer for all of their teams & activities, thus the responsibility for identifying a possible concussion falls on athletes, coaches and parents
4. High school players may try to hide symptoms or be reluctant to admit their symptoms due to fear of removal from play

High school injury surveillance research has shown the following sports have higher risk of concussion: football, boys & girls soccer, boys & girls ice hockey, boys & girls lacrosse, boys & girls wrestling, girls field hockey, competitive cheer, and girls basketball.

Noticeable in this data is that the risk for girls is higher than boys in the same sports; in fact, soccer & basketball carry twice the risk for concussion in girls than boys. It is unclear why girls appear to have a higher risk of concussion.

Most importantly, concussion can happen to anyone in any sport. Concussions also occur away from organized school sports: physical education class, on the playground, while skiing or snowboarding, and when involved in a motor vehicle collision. Coaches and athletic trainers need to be aware of non-sport injuries and how they affect participation.

Everyone involved with high school athletics must be alert for potential injuries on the field and be able to recognize signs and symptoms of concussion. While coaches are not expected to make a diagnosis of concussion, coaches are expected to be aware of possible injuries and understand that their athletes may have a concussion. **Any athlete with a suspected concussion should be held out of all activity until medically cleared by a healthcare provider.** It is important for athletes and coaches to communicate possible injuries to the athletic trainer, parents, and teachers.

Schools should educate their athletes, coaches and parents in the preseason about the seriousness of concussion and the importance of athletes honestly reporting their symptoms and injuries. This education should also include information on the school policy (supported by state law and WIAA guidance) on the steps an athlete with a concussion must complete to return to participation. The information is best delivered at preseason meetings, but also reinforced throughout the season.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Signs are what can be seen by others, like clumsiness / stumbling off the field. Symptoms are what the injured player feels, like a headache. Remember, athletes should report their symptoms, but they may not unless they are directly asked about how they feel. Even then, it is important to consider that athletes may not be telling the truth.

These are some SIGNS of concussion
(what others can see in an injured athlete):

- Dazed or stunned appearance
- Change in the level of consciousness or awareness
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Unsure of score, game, opponent
- Clumsy
- Answers more slowly than usual
- Shows behavior changes
- Loss of consciousness
- Asks repetitive questions or memory concerns

Concussion SYMPTOMS are often categorized into four main areas:

1. **Physical**
This describes how they feel: headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, tired and loss of consciousness (which is uncommon in concussion). Vision and balance problems are also recognized as potential signs and symptoms of a concussion.
2. **Thinking or Cognitive**
Poor memory and concentration, responds to questions more slowly and asks repetitive questions. Concussion can cause an altered state of awareness and thinking.
3. **Emotions**
A concussion can make a person more irritable or sad and cause mood swings.

4. Sleep

Concussions frequently cause trouble falling asleep and may wake athletes up overnight, which can make them more fatigued throughout the day.

Injured athletes can exhibit many or just a few of the signs and/or symptoms of concussion. However, if a player exhibits any signs or symptoms of concussion, the responsibility is simple: remove them from participation. A student-athlete should never return to play on the same day. **"When in doubt sit them out."**

It is important to notify a parent or guardian of any student-athlete with a suspected concussion. All student-athletes with a concussion must be evaluated and receive written medical clearance by an appropriate health care provider before returning to practice (including conditioning and weight lifting) or competition.

Some injured student-athletes may require emergency care & necessitate the activation of the Emergency Medical System (911). If you are uncomfortable with the athlete on the sideline or unable to ensure they are going home to a safe environment, it is reasonable to activate EMS/911. The following are other examples to activate EMS:

1. Loss of consciousness, as this may indicate more severe head injury
2. Concern for cervical spine injury
3. Worsening symptoms
4. Decreasing level of alertness
5. Unusually drowsy
6. Severe or worsening headaches
7. Seizures
8. Vomiting
9. Difficulty breathing

MANAGEMENT

If you suspect a player may have a concussion, that student-athlete should be immediately removed from play. The injured student-athlete should be kept out of play until they are cleared to return by an appropriate health care provider. If the athlete has a concussion, that athlete should never be allowed to return to activity (conditioning, practice or competition) that day. Student-athletes with a concussion should never be allowed to return to activity while they still have symptoms.

A player with a concussion must be carefully observed throughout the practice or competition to be sure they are not feeling worse. Even though the athlete is not playing, never send a concussed athlete to the locker room alone, as the athlete might not have the wherewithal to understand and report worsening symptoms. Do not allow the injured athlete to drive themselves home.

Most concussions are temporary and will completely resolve without causing residual or long-term problems. About 20-30 percent of high school athletes will take longer than a month to recover. This prolonged recovery is commonly known as Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS). Common PCS symptoms include headache, difficulty concentrating, poor memory, mood changes and sleep disturbances. This prolonged recovery often leads to academic troubles, family and social difficulties.

Allowing an injured athlete to return too quickly increases the risk for repeat concussion. Repeat head injury while still recovering from a concussion may cause Second Impact Syndrome. This is a rare phenomenon occurring in young athletes that leads to rapid brain swelling, brain damage and potentially death (50% of cases).

Repeat concussions may increase the chance of long-term problems, such as decreased brain function, persistent symptoms and potentially chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a disorder that causes early degeneration of the brain. It is felt that these long-term complications are very rare in high school athletes, and the risk can

be minimized by proper reporting and care of every concussion. The development of CTE is still an unclear pathway that requires more research.

RETURN TO LEARN

A major concern in high school student-athletes is that concussion can negatively affect school performance and grades. Symptoms (headache, nausea, etc.), poor short-term memory, poor concentration and organization may temporarily turn a good student into a problem student. The best way to address this is to decrease the academic workload, and potentially taking time off from school or attending partial days (although time missed should almost always be less than 5 days). Injured athletes should be allowed extra time to complete homework and tests, and they should be given written instructions for homework. New information should be presented slowly and repeated. Injured athletes will need time to catch up and may benefit from tutoring. If an athlete develops worsening symptoms at school, he/she should be allowed to visit the school nurse or take a rest break in a quiet area. The school and coaches should maintain regular contact with the injured athlete's teachers and parents to update progress.

All injured students should be removed from PE class until medically cleared.

In conjunction with Children's Wisconsin, Healthy Kids Learn More developed a free "Return to Learn" educational webinar to help schools and teachers improve their academic care of students with a concussion and create school-based return to learn plans.

<https://www.healthykidslearnmore.com/Healthy-Kids-Learn-More/Course-Topics/Concussion/Return-to-Learn>

Student-athletes with a concussion must return to full speed academics without accommodations before returning to sports (practice and competition).

OTHER TREATMENT STRATEGIES

Relative rest remains an essential component of concussion treatment. It is helpful for parents to decrease stimulation at home by limiting video games, but a reduction (not elimination) of screen time (phone, computer, tablet, TV) may be helpful. "Cocoon therapy," or avoiding all brain stimulation, has been shown to negatively impact recovery and is no longer a recommended treatment style.

Physical activity may be beneficial for recovery of injured student-athletes. However, high-level activity (weight lifting, practice level training and conditioning) should still be avoided. Simple physical exertion, like walking or gentle stationary biking, that does not worsen symptoms may be done for short periods of time. Any post-injury exercise plan should be authorized and overseen by an appropriate health care provider.

A student-athlete's concussion can interfere with work and social events (movies, dances, attending games, etc.). Good hydration and dietary habits and good sleep habits (8-10 hours per night) are important parts of the recovery process. There are no medications or supplements that help speed the recovery process.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

Neuropsychological testing has become more commonplace in concussion evaluation as a means to provide an objective measure of brain function. Testing is currently done using computerized neuropsychological testing (example: ImPACT, Sway) or through a more detailed pen and paper test administered by a neuropsychologist. It is only a tool to help ensure safe return to activity and not as the only piece of the decision making process.

If neuropsychological testing is available, ideally a baseline or pre-injury test is completed prior to the season. This baseline should be

done in a quiet environment when the athlete is well rested. It is felt that baseline testing should be repeated every one to two years for the developing adolescent brain. Multi-modal baseline evaluation assessing baseline symptoms, cognitive functioning, visual tracking, reaction time, and balance are ideal.

If there is no baseline available, the injured student-athlete's computerized test scores can be compared to age established norms. This requires a provider experienced in the use and interpretation of computerized testing. The WIAA feels that neuropsychological testing can be a useful tool with regard to concussion management, but research does not support mandating computerized baseline evaluations.

RETURN TO PLAY

In order to resume activity, the student-athlete must be symptom free and off any pain control or headache medications that they were not taking prior to the concussion. The athlete should be carrying a full academic load without any significant accommodations for 1-2 days. Finally, per Wis. law, the student-athlete must have written medical clearance from an appropriate health care provider.

The program details below are guidelines for returning concussed student-athletes to exercise and participate in activities. Student-athletes with multiple concussions and/or prolonged symptoms often require a prolonged or different return to activity program which should be managed by a physician with experience in treating concussion.

The program allows for a gradual increase in heart rate/physical exertion, coordination, and then allows contact. Student-athletes should progress no faster than one stage per 24 hours. If symptoms return, while working through the program, the athlete should stop activity and notify their healthcare provider before progressing to the next level.

Stage One: Daily activities that do not increase symptoms (gradual reintroduction of school, work and walking). This may be started within a few days of the injury.

Stage Two: Light aerobic exercise: slow to medium pace jogging, stationary cycling. No resistance training. No increase in symptoms. This stage allows for increased heart rate - begin with <55% of max HR, but if tolerating, can progress to <70% of max HR.

Stage Three: Sport-specific exercise: moderate to higher intensity running or skating drills, but no activities with risk of head impact. This allows for increased heart rate and agility/movement. No increase in symptoms.

Stages 4-6: should only begin after the resolution of any symptoms, abnormalities in cognitive function, and any other clinical finding related to the current concussion. Student-athletes should remain symptom-free during and after physical exertion.

Stage Four: Non-contact training: Higher intensity aerobic fitness, and noncontact/non-collision team training drills (e.g., passing drills). May begin progressive resistance training. This increases coordination and thinking during sport.

Stage Five: Full contact practice. Written medical clearance is required to resume contact or high-risk activity, allowing the athlete to participate fully in normal training activities. This restores confidence and allows coaches to assess functional skills.

Stage Six: Full clearance / Normal game play.

PREVENTION/RISK REDUCTION

There is nothing that truly prevents concussion. Education and recognition of concussion are the keys in reducing the risk of problems with concussion.

Wisconsin State Concussion Law (Act 172) was passed in 2011. This law mandates distribution of preseason educational information sheets to be signed by coaches, athletes and parents. It also recommends immediate removal of any athlete with a suspected concussion and no same day return to play. Finally, all injured athletes require written medical clearance from an appropriate health care professional. Research has indicated that the state law has helped improve education and awareness of concussion.

Proper equipment fit and use may reduce the risk of concussion. Proper maintenance and reconditioning of equipment is important.

- Mouthguards have been shown to decrease dental injuries, but have not been shown to reduce risk of concussion.
- Soccer headgear has been shown not to reduce the risk of concussion.
- Helmets are useful in preventing facial injuries and skull fractures; however, helmets have not been reliably shown to decrease concussion rates.

- Virginia Tech University has created a helmet rating system for the Varsity Football age range. Helmets with lower scores may be less protective, but research is still needed to prove risk reduction.

<https://www.helmet.beam.vt.edu/varsity-football-helmet-ratings.html>

- The NFL has also created a helmet rating system for NFL aged players, which may not correlate with high school student-athletes. Research is still needed to prove true risk reduction.

<https://www.nfl.com/playerhealthandsafety/equipment-and-innovation/equipment-testing/helmet-laboratory-testing-performance-results>

- Third party “add-on” equipment for helmets (external padding or strips applied to the outside of the helmet) have not shown a decrease in concussion risk, and any add-on may void the helmet warranty.

Proper technique for hitting/initiating contact is vital. For example, student-athletes that lower their head while making a football tackle have a significantly higher risk for concussion and neck injuries. Athletes should never lead with their head or helmet.

Rule changes and proper enforcement of rules have been shown to reduce concussion rates. WIAA limitations in contact football practices have reduced concussion rates since implementation. All schools should have an Emergency Action Plan for each team and practice / competition area. This plan can be used for any medical emergency from a concussion to a neck injury to anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction). Ideally, these plans are reviewed annually.

The WIAA encourages every member school to promote concussion education and bring about a positive change in culture by discussing concussion with all teachers, coaches, athletes and parents. We recommend a preseason discussion with athletes and families to set expectations for what will happen if a student has a suspected concussion, including the steps the student must go through to return to play. Coaches should use in-season concussions as “teachable moments” to remind teammates about the importance of reporting their injuries and supporting their injured teammate through the recovery process. ■

Further reading and additional materials can be obtained at no charge through these resources:

www.nfhslearn.com (Concussion in Sports Course)

www.cdc.gov (Heads Up Tool Kit)

www.healthykidslearnmore.com (Concussion Return to Learn Course)

Concussion Insurance

The HeadStrong Concussion Insurance Program was specifically developed to insure student athletes from the high cost of concussion treatment and neurological follow up.

The insurance only covers athletes in WIAA recognized sports (Baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, volleyball, and wrestling for boys; and basketball, cross country, golf, gymnastics, hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, volleyball and wrestling for girls) at WIAA member schools. It does not cover open gyms, cheer, dance, or club sports.

The student athlete has ‘first dollar’ coverage (zero deductible) for concussion assessment and treatment.

Coverage is secondary/excess to any other valid and collectable insurance but will become the primary payor, if no other insurance is available.

Program Highlights Include:

- \$25,000 Accident Medical Concussion Coverage (includes neurological follow-up)
- \$0 deductible and no Co-pays
- \$5,000 Accidental Death + Dismemberment
- Tele-med Services, when needed
- No restrictions on specific doctors
- No referrals needed for treatment
- No internal limits
- No specific procedure maximums
- Neurological follow up care when medically necessary and billed at U&C.

Provide/distribute widely - the [WIAA Program Guide](#) and the [FAQ's](#) along with the instruction to see the AD if there's a need to file a claim or have additional questions. The school may hand out to every athlete/family that brought in their physical card/alternate year card and/or parental permission and code forms.

Ask your trainer and/or coach to let you know immediately of any instance of possible concussion. When there is a reported injury and the need to file a claim, then get the athlete/family the [Dear Provider letter](#), the [HeadStrong Claims](#) form and Alternate Insurance form. In addition, provide the Who to Contact info and How to File a Claim are included in the [Program Guide](#).

A school administrator must sign the claim form on the bottom “Insured Representative” to verify the incident happened at a WIAA event/practice.

None of the forms need to come back to or through the WIAA office. It works directly through school AD/administration (to sign the form) to the family, to the carrier. **Note: Information and forms are available to schools on the AD Resource page of the WIAA website.** ■

The WIAA



Transfer Rule

Simplifying The Transfer Rule

A transfer made necessary by a total and complete change of residence of the parent(s) – unrestricted.

Transfers with no change of residence of the parent(s) at the beginning of:

9th grade – unrestricted

10th grade – unrestricted

11th grade – nonvarsity for calendar year

12th grade – nonvarsity for calendar year

Transfers with no change of residence of the parent(s) during the school year:

9th grade – nonvarsity for remainder of year

10th grade – nonvarsity for calendar year

11th grade – nonvarsity for calendar year

12th grade – nonvarsity for calendar year

*Provided the student meets residency requirements

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association is governed by its member schools. Rules and policies of the Association are developed, promulgated and implemented by the membership either through membership vote for constitutional issues or through a membership-elected committee structure for sport seasons regulations. Therefore, ownership of the membership's rules and regulations, as well as the responsibility of compliance with them, lies with each member school.

Association Bylaws, which outline the provisions of membership in the Association, and the Rules of Eligibility appear in the WIAA Handbook. WIAA rules and regulations are established by a membership vote at the membership meeting. The Annual Meeting is held in the spring of the year when amendments are presented. The interpretation and enforcement of the rules and regulations are the responsibility of the WIAA executive office and Board of Control.

The members of the WIAA have established seven Articles that outline requirements for student eligibility. This overview document focuses primarily on addressing some of the most common questions of the membership with respect to the transfer provisions of the Association.

Student-athlete eligibility for all levels of WIAA interscholastic competition is governed by WIAA Rules. A full-time student may be afforded up to eight consecutive semesters of interscholastic eligibility upon entry into Grade 9.

WHY DO THE WIAA MEMBER SCHOOLS HAVE A TRANSFER RULE?

The WIAA transfer rule is not a recruiting rule. It is a transfer rule that is applied when a student who has established eligibility at any school and who transfers to a WIAA member school. A transfer/residency requirement: assists in the prevention of students switching schools in conjunction with the change of athletic season for athletic purposes; impairs recruitment, and reduces the opportunity for undue influence to be exerted by persons seeking to benefit from a student-athlete's prowess.

A transfer/residency requirement: promotes stability and harmony among member schools by maintaining the amateur standing of high school athletics; by not letting individuals other than enrolled students participate, and by upholding the principle that a student should attend the high school in the district where the student's parent(s) reside. It also helps prevent the displacement of the athletes who have attended the high school for the previous two years and worked to improve their skills as well as their team.

A transfer/residency requirement: also prohibits foreign students, other than students who are participants in an established foreign exchange program accepted

for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), from displacing other students from athletic opportunities.

A recruiting/undue influence prohibition discourages exploitation of students; prevents overemphasis of athletics; gives average student-athletes more opportunity to participate; discourages adults from jeopardizing a student's eligibility, and prevents misuse of athletic programs. The WIAA membership rule pertaining to recruiting states: No eligibility will be granted for a student whose residence within a school's attendance boundaries, with or without parents, or whose attendance at a school has been the result of undue influence (special consideration due to athletic ability or potential) on the part of any person, whether or not connected with the school.

WHAT IS THE WIAA TRANSFER RULE?

For the purpose of this rule, attendance at one day of school and /or attendance at one athletic practice shall determine 'beginning of school year.' Transferring schools at any time may result in restrictions being imposed on eligibility, or in some cases a denial of eligibility.

"A student who transfers from any school into a member school will be subject to the transfer rules for one year, unless the transfer is made necessary by a total change in residence by parent(s)." (ROE II-3-A-1 & 3)

If a family entirely moves from one school community to another and the transfer is necessary due to this move, the student will more than likely have unrestricted eligibility. When a transfer takes place during a semester, the eligibility begins after five calendar days (ROE II-3-A-9).

Students will establish eligibility at a WIAA member school at the beginning of 9th or 10th grade. Keep in mind, the residence rule also determines eligibility. Public school students are eligible in the district their parents reside and nonpublic school students are eligible when they live with their parent(s).

The transfer rule states: Students entering 9th and/or 10th grade at the beginning of the school year and who are within the first four consecutive semesters of high school will be afforded unrestricted eligibility provided all other rules governing student eligibility are met (ROE II-3-A-2).

Once eligibility is established at the beginning of 9th grade, a transfer without a total and complete move during 9th grade would restrict the ninth grade student to nonvarsity competition for the remainder of the school year at the new school (ROE II-3-A-4). At the beginning of 10th grade, the student attains unrestricted eligibility.

Again, the student who meets the residence rules and who transfers is unrestricted at the beginning of 10th grade (ROE II-3-A-2). A student who transfers during the 10th grade without a total and complete change of residence of the parent(s), will be restricted to nonvarsity for one calendar year (365 days).

In addition, a student transferring at the beginning of 11th and 12th grade is restricted to nonvarsity opportunities for one calendar year, provided the student meets the residence rule. The rule states: 10th, 11th or 12th grade students who transfer after the beginning of the school year and with



written consent from both schools directly involved shall be restricted to non-varsity opportunities for one calendar year (365 days beginning with first day of attendance at the new school). (ROE – II-3-A-5)

In the event of divorce or legal separation, whether pending or final, residence at the beginning of the school year shall determine eligibility for students entering 9th and/or 10th grade. At the beginning of 11th grade or thereafter, a student would be restricted to nonvarsity for one calendar year. (ROE – II-3-A-7) .

WAIVERS AND EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

The WIAA's residence and transfer rules continue to retain a waiver provision, which may be provided at the request of a member school in situations where extenuating circumstances can be documented.

The residence and transfer requirement may be waived according to the following provisions (ROE – II-5-A):

1. After a student has not participated and/or has been restricted to nonvarsity competition for one calendar year because parents do not live within that school's attendance boundaries, they become automatically eligible under this Section regardless of parents residence and for as long as enrollment is continuous (uninterrupted) in that school.
2. The residence and transfer requirement may be waived, if requested in advance of competition, by a member school on behalf of one of its students and upon presentation of documentation detailing extenuating circumstances. Such documentation must include communications from (a) parents, (b) person(s) with whom student is living within requesting school's attendance boundaries and (c) school officials within whose attendance boundaries parents reside. Depending upon the nature of extenuating circumstances, eligibility may be limited to nonvarsity competition in situations involving transfer after the beginning of 10th grade.
3. In cases associated with Section 1, A, (2) and (4), Section 2, A, (1) and Section 3, A, (1) of this Article, first-time 9th grade students will be permitted one transfer upon appropriate petition to the Board of Control if the student has attended no more than three days of practice and/or has attended no more than three days of school.

Extenuating circumstance is defined as an unforeseeable, unavoidable and uncorrectable act, condition or event that results in severe burden and/or involuntary change, that mitigates the rule.

In considering a waiver request based on extenuating circumstances, the element of events outside a student or family's control vs. choices/ decisions/ actions which contain knowable/predictable outcomes or consequences, is always an integral part of the review. Denial is made when it appears this student's situation has come about largely as a result of choices, decisions and/or actions made by the student or his/her family and/or when there is no evidence or documentation to support a given request. It is important to provide documentation that clearly demonstrates an involuntary transfer rather than a transfer by choice.

Required documentation to be sent as one complete package:

- EVTS (Eligibility Verification of Transfer Student) form - exchanged between schools and WIAA - may serve as documentation from "sending" school.
- "Sending" family – explaining circumstances leading to transfer
- "Receiving" family – documenting acceptance, school enrollment, residence, and meeting graduation requirement
- Receiving/requesting school – student transcripts
- Supplemental documentation that can be helpful when requesting a transfer/residence waiver includes: medical, law enforcement/courts, foster care, HHS, military, e.g.

If and when a student would transfer and become a full-time student at the new school, then the family should schedule to meet with the school athletic director to discuss the circumstances of the transfer.

The athletic director will make the initial evaluation on whether the circumstances meet the member's definition of extenuating circumstances and whether they find the reasons compelling, thus making them willing to advocate for their new student by filing a waiver to the WIAA office.

WIAA TRANSFER RULE – HISTORY

When the original WIAA Constitution was written in 1896, the Constitution included: Pupils enrolled for the first time shall not be excluded from any contest because of absence during the previous term. But a student entering from another secondary school shall not be allowed to compete unless he has done the work required in section one, as a resident student for at least one term. (Otte, 1997, p. 8)

In 1898, the transfer rule was removed and transfers must not have been a problem as in the previous two years.

In 1928, the WIAA membership adopted the following language: "except as noted, below, any boy who has been certified as a member of a high school athletic team shall be ineligible to compete for a different high school." The exception related to boys whose parents moved as well as to boys in free tuition districts. (Otte, 1997, p. 198)

In 1950, "The Board felt that ... a free tuition student should be permitted to choose his school for athletics as freely as he chooses it for purely educational subjects" (Otte, 1997, p. 229). It does not matter why the transfer took place whether academics or athletics.

In 1961, the Board produced a new procedure for guardianship cases (Otte, 1997, p. 315). Both schools and parents would have to "provide evidence supporting need for guardianship. Betterment of home life will be the basic criteria for approval." Evidence of "physical residence in the district" also would be required. (Otte, 1997, p. 316)

In 1966, the Board added extenuating circumstances waivers. The membership passed "boys who transfer for any reason (or no particular reason at all) would be eligible automatically after sitting out one calendar year." The members passed the amendment and a minority were fearful boys who would be taking advantage of the permissiveness by transferring early and giving up a year of nonvarsity eligibility. (Otte, 1997, p. 306)

1978 changes allowed non-resident students to be eligible for non-varsity competition during their year of ineligibility. The transfer rule now applied to varsity only. (Otte, 1997, p. 347)

In 1989, Chapter 220 and Open Enrollment concerns were addressed (Otte, 1997, p. 451).

Editorial changes stated the student must be enrolled by the third Monday of September to be eligible for the rest of the year and parents who had a home in one district and an apartment in another district "may be required to provide evidence of a total move." (Otte, 1997, p. 416)

In 1990, the transfer rule addressed divorced families – Allowing student of divorced or separated parents automatic eligibility in district of residence of either custodial parent at the beginning of any school year. (Otte, 1997, p. 418)

In 1992, the membership approved a revision which "declared a student ineligible for a year if he/she or parents falsified "records or information furnished a school" and clarified that students transferring from

non-WIAA schools, like those coming from WIAA schools, carried their ineligibility status with them. (Otte, 1997, p. 418)

In 2006, the membership approved the removal of practice and competition at any level for transfers after the fourth consecutive semester (10th grade). The rule established eligibility at the beginning of 9th and 10th grades. If a transfer happened during 9th grade, the student is restricted for the remainder of the school year. If the student transferred during 10th grade, the student has non-varsity eligibility for 365 calendar days. Betterment was removed from extenuating circumstances. The rule went into effect in 2008. A student who transferred after 10th grade could not practice or compete at any level.

In 2010, the membership allowed practice for the transfer after the fourth consecutive semester, but the student cannot compete at any level.

In 2016, the membership allowed nonvarsity competition for one year for a student who transfers at the beginning of or during 11th grade.

At the 2018 WIAA Annual Meeting the member schools voted to extend non-varsity eligibility to eleventh grade students not residing in the district that their parents reside.

In 2019, the WIAA membership passed an exception for a student who transfers into a member school without ever participating in a try-out, practice, scrimmage, or contest on a team sponsored by a school or club in a WIAA recognized sport while attending classes at any school in grades 9- 12 is unrestricted.

At the 2023 WIAA Annual Meeting the member schools voted to allow nonvarsity eligibility for seniors who transfer.

Otte, M. (1997). More Than a Game. Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association. Amherst, WI: Palmer. ■



WIAA Position Statement: Performance Enhancing Supplements

Note: This policy statement is related to use of dietary supplements. For information on steroid use, see the WIAA information addressing APEDS and Drugs in Sports.

The WIAA strongly opposes the use of supplements by high school student-athletes for performance enhancement due to the lack of published scientific research that documents the benefits and/or risks of supplement use, particularly in adolescents. Supplements should only be used on the advice of one's health care provider for health-related reasons, not for the purpose of gaining a possible competitive advantage. School personnel and coaches should never recommend, endorse, or encourage the use of any supplement, drug, or medication for performance enhancement to a student-athlete.

Products typically promoted as performance enhancing include: dietary or nutritional supplements, ergogenic aids, health supplements or sport supplements. While some mainstream supplements are made by responsible manufacturers, a growing number of products contain dangerous and hidden ingredients, including steroids and pro-hormones. In making a decision to use a supplement, several factors should be considered.

Evaluating Supplements for Discouraged or Banned Substances:

Supplements are not regulated like drugs, food or medication. Supplement companies do not have to follow the same "truth in labeling" regulations as for food or medication. Supplement labels are not required to list all the ingredients in the product and can omit listing ingredients that are in a bottle. A growing number of products contain dangerous and undisclosed ingredients, including steroids, stimulants and dangerous drugs. Proprietary ingredients are a "company secret" and do not have to be listed on the label. To minimize the risk of taking a supplement that contains a banned ingredient, visit the NFS Certified for Sport website <http://www.nsf-sport.com/> or Informed Choice <http://www.informed-choice.org/> for a listing of supplements that have been tested for purity and potency.

Health Consequences:

Supplement products have been known to be contaminated with banned or harmful ingredients. Taking supplements with dangerous hidden drugs such as designer steroids has been a known cause of liver injury, stroke, kidney failure, and pulmonary embolism. Supplement products with hidden stimulants can cause irregular heart rhythm, increased blood pressure, stroke and even death.

Contamination:

Supplements can accidentally contain banned or discouraged ingredients due to cross-contamination when manufacturing equipment isn't cleaned properly between batches of products. In other cases manufacturers will spike a product with stimulants or pro-hormones without listing them on the label to deceive the student-athletes that the product will cause big gains while claiming the product is "all natural" or "legal."

Sources of information:

Supplement store staff or company distributors get paid by selling a product. They are well trained to sell the most popular product with the biggest profit margin. The staff generally may not have training in nutrition, biochemistry or pharmacology. In addition, they may not know or understand WIAA rules/regulations of supplement use by student-athletes. A supplement/product that is "legal" for the company to sell to the student-athlete, however, may not be allowed for an student-athlete to use.

Testimonials from professional athletes:

Supplement companies frequently advertise their products with testimonials from professional athletes or well known sports figures. These testimonials are not proof that a supplement works. Athletes who are paid to endorse a

product are generally at the end of their career and did not use the supplement when they were young and training to become successful.

Pre-Workout Boosters:

These products claim to provide increased energy and endurance for a workout. Supplements in this category generally contain several sources of stimulants – many not listed on the label – that affect the heart and blood pressure and can cause serious health consequences. In addition, this category of products has a history of containing hidden banned supplements, including illegal pro-hormones and steroids. Use of pre-workout boosters has caused many athletes to fail drug tests, be suspended from competition, and has been related to several deaths.

Protein Powders:

Most diets supply adequate protein. However, in cases where student-athletes can't eat enough food or when protein needs are higher than normal, limited supplementation may be needed. In these cases, a physician or sport dietitian consultation may be helpful. If extra protein is needed, read labels carefully. Protein powders may contain discouraged or banned ingredients not listed on the label. A 2007 study by Informed Choice Labs randomly selected 50 protein powders off the shelves of well-known supplement stores. They found that 25 percent of the powders contained anabolic steroids. In addition, 11 percent of the protein powders tested positive for stimulants not listed on the label. Look for labels that list protein as the first ingredient, have few added ingredients and do not claim to be "mass builders".

The primary reason student-athletes choose to use supplements are to gain mass and weight, get stronger, reduce body fat, and have more energy. Student athletes who want to improve athletic performance should focus on good training strategies, a good diet, and proven recovery strategies that stress the 4 "R's": rest, refuel, rehydrate, and repair. In the vast majority of cases, a few changes to the student-athlete eating habits will lead to muscle growth, fat loss, improved strength and faster recovery

For a copy of the WIAA Performance Enhancing Supplement and Banned Substances Policy visit

<http://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/performanceenhancers.pdf>

National Institutes of Health Center for Complementary and Integrative Health.

<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/supplements/wiseuse.htm>

True Sport Nutrition Guide

<https://truesport.org/wp-content/uploads/TSNutritionGuide.pdf>

NSF Certified for Sport

<http://www.nsf-sport.com/>

USADA Dietary Supplement and Safety Education

<http://www.usada.org/substances/supplement-411>

Informed Choice

<http://www.informed-choice.org/>

Drug Free Sport

<http://www.drugfreesport.com/>

American College of Sport Medicine – Protein Intake for Optimal Muscle Maintenance

[protein-intake-for-optimal-muscle-maintenance.pdf \(acsm.org\)](http://protein-intake-for-optimal-muscle-maintenance.pdf (acsm.org))

National Federation of High School Sports Supplement Position Statement

[dietary-supplements-position-statement-2015.pdf \(nfhs.org\)](http://dietary-supplements-position-statement-2015.pdf (nfhs.org)) ■

Who May Participate *On Public School Teams?*

- Full-time public school students who attend the school in grades 9-12 and receive 100 percent of their educational programming from that member school.
- A Home-based Private Education (home school) student who resides in the school district and meets the state law definition of Home-based Private Education student. The law states: "(3g) HOME-BASED PRIVATE EDUCATION PROGRAM. "Homebased private educational program" means a program of educational instruction provided to a child by the child's parent or guardian or by a person designated by the parent or guardian. An instructional program provided to more than one family unit does not constitute a home-based private educational program."

How to verify a student meets the state law:

- Make sure the student is enrolled in home school via the DPI form PI-1206 online before participating.
- Make sure the student resides in your district (driver's license, utility bill, etc.).
- Make sure the student is not attending any other school, virtual or in person.

If your district has multiple high schools, utilize the same method that you use for placement of full-time students attending your schools. Coaches should not recruit home school children. If approached, coaches should direct families to the school athletic director or principal. Home school families should approach your district with a request.

The student must meet the required rules on the same basis and to the same extent that all other full-time students at the school must provide:

- Physical, Code of Conduct, WIAA rules, Emergency Locator, and Concussion Law

Determine how you will verify home school grades when your students receive their grades (ie: grade checks and quarter/semester grade reports).

General Questions to ask and to assess:

- Did the student attend a school?
- Is the student a transfer student?
- Are there prior academic or discipline issues that need to be addressed with suspensions?
- Is the student currently enrolled in any classes through a private school?

A homeschooled student may take up to two classes during any semester from a public school.

Note: Students open-enrolled to a virtual/ online school are not considered homebased/homeschool students (educated by the family as a single unit). ■



Interstate Competition Reminders Online Form

WIAA Bylaws prohibit member schools from competing against school teams that are not members of their respective state associations. They also limit the number of events member schools may schedule in non-bordering states to one competition, event and/or scrimmage per team each school season. Schools may schedule any number of events in bordering states within season game maximum limitations. Bylaws also provide that competition which involves out-of-state teams may require additional WIAA and/or National Federation sanctioning.

1. WIAA approval is required for:
 - a. Any interstate competition and/or event (other than scheduled conference events) in which four or more schools participate, including events hosted by WIAA member schools.
 - b. Any interstate competition which involves schools from three or more states, including events hosted by WIAA member schools.
2. No approval is required:
 - a. **If only one adjacent state and a total of no more than three schools are involved.**
 - b. **If only one other school is involved.**
3. Except for events held in bordering states (MN, IL, MI and IA), no approval shall be provided for more than one out-of-state competition, event and/or scrimmage per team each school season.
4. No approval shall be granted for any tournament, meet, or other contest to qualify for and/or determine a national high school championship but such championships involving schools for visually handicapped or deaf students are exempt from this provision.
5. Both schools must count the contest in the same manner (scrimmage or contest). One school may not count it as a scrimmage while the other school counts it as a contest.

Interstate competition approval does not need to be a difficult process. But the WIAA office will need certain basic information to process your request. When considering playing a school from another state look over elements governing interstate competition as outlined on p. 24-25 of the Senior High Handbook; Bylaw Art. II, Sect. 5, H (these are the fundamental elements we need to know in order to approve, or tell you no approval is needed.) You can also forward the following questions to the event sponsor:

- Dates of event.
- Who is sponsoring the event and where the event will be held.
- Does this event require NFHS sanctions? (found in 5H-1 & 2, p. 24-25)
- If so, has the event received sanctioning?
- If a basketball tournament, are there more than 8 teams in your bracket?
- Are all schools you will compete against 9-12 high schools? (no post secondary/prep academies)
- Are all schools you will compete against **full members** of their state association?

Please use the Interstate Competition Request Form provided on the WIAA web site for this purpose when requesting approval.
www.wiaawi.org/media/25706 ■

DATES TO KEEP IN MIND

for 2026-2027 School Year

2026

September 5	ACT Test
September 7	Labor Day
September 8	Boys Lacrosse - Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
September 8	Girls Lacrosse - Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
September 10	Baseball Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
September 10	District 3 Area Meeting
September 11	Rosh Hashanah
September 15	District 6 Area Meeting
September 16	District 1 Area Meeting
September 17	District 2 Area Meeting
September 18	Board of Control Meeting
September 18	Girls Soccer Criteria for Approved Site List Due
September 18	Boys Soccer Criteria for Approved Site List Due
September 20	Yom Kippur
September 22	District 5 Area Meeting
September 23	Girls Golf Entries Due
September 23	District 4 Area Meeting
September 24	District 7 Area Meeting
September 29	Fall Tournament Central Launch
September 30	Sports Advisory Committee Meeting
September 30	Girls Golf Regionals
October 1	Conference Realignment Initial Application Deadline
October 1	Fall Cooperative Team Application Deadline for 2027-28 & 2028-29
October 1	Spring Tournament Participation Deadline for NEW teams 2027-28
October 1	Falls Sports Competitive Balance Classification Application to Request Up/Down and/or Appeal Opens
October 1	Tournament Participation and Co-op Team Application for Football 8-Player and 11-Player 2028-29 & 2029-30 Deadline
October 1	Girls Tennis Entries Deadline
October 1	Superintendent/Principal Zoom Meetings
October 4	Fall Sports Officials Appreciation Week
October 5	Girls Golf Sectionals
October 5	Girls Tennis Subsectionals
October 7	Girls Tennis Sectionals
October 7	Girls Golf - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
October 9	11-Player Deadline for Changes/Additions to Approved Site List
October 9	8-Player Deadline for Changes/Additions to Approved Site List
October 9	8-Player Football Seeding
October 9	8-Player Latest Day for Final Competition
October 9	Girls Tennis Request Special Qualifiers Due
October 9	Girls Tennis Seed Meeting & Team Tennis Seeding Zoom Meeting
October 9	Boys Cross Country - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
October 9	Girls Cross Country- State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due

October 10	8-Player Football Playoff Brackets Released
October 11	Boys Soccer Seeding Meetings
October 12	Girls Golf State
October 12	Columbus Day
October 12	Boys Volleyball Appeal Meetings
October 12	Girls Volleyball Appeal Meetings
October 15	Advisory Council Meeting
October 15	8-Player Football Playoffs - Level 1
October 15	Girls Tennis Individual State
October 16	11-Player Football Seeding
October 16	11-Player Latest Day for Final Competition
October 17	11-Player Football Playoff Brackets Released
October 17	ACT Test
October 17	Winter Sports Rules Book Mailing (Digital/Paper)
October 19	Boys Wrestling Earliest Day for Skinfold Measurements
October 19	Girls Wrestling Earliest Day for Skinfold Measurements
October 20	Boys Cross Country Entries Due
October 20	Girls Cross Country Entries Due
October 20	Boys Soccer Regionals D1-4
October 20	Girls Volleyball Regionals D2-5
October 20	2026-27 Basketball Exam Part 1
October 20	2026-27 Basketball Exam Part 2
October 20	2026-27 Gymnastics Exam
October 20	2026-27 Hockey Exam
October 20	2026-27 Wrestling Exam Part 1
October 20	2026-27 Wrestling Exam Part 2
October 21	Boys Golf Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
October 21	Girls Golf Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
October 21	Boys Volleyball Regionals (if needed)
October 21	Basketball Rules Video
October 21	Gymnastics Rules Video
October 21	Hockey Rules Video
October 21	Wrestling Rules Video
October 21	Assistant Wrestling Referee
October 22	Boys Soccer Regionals D3-4
October 22	Girls Volleyball Regionals D1-5
October 23	Boys Cross Country Sectionals
October 23	Girls Cross Country Sectionals
October 23	11-Player Football Playoffs - Level 1
October 23	8-Player Football Playoffs - Level 2
October 23	Girls Tennis Team State
October 23	Boys Volleyball Regionals
October 24	Boys Soccer Regionals D1-4
October 24	Girls Volleyball Regionals D1-5
October 27	Boys Volleyball Sectionals
October 29	Board of Control Meeting

February 1	Winter Sports Competitive Balance Classification Application to Request Up/Down and/or Appeal Opens
February 1	Winter Tournament Participation Deadline for NEW teams 2027-28
February 3	Board of Control Meeting
February 4	Winter Tournament Central Launch
February 5	Girls Wrestling Regionals
February 7	Boys Hockey Seeding Meetings
February 7	Girls Hockey Seeding Meetings
February 8	Middle Level Council Meeting
February 9	Student Athletic Leadership Team (SALT) Online Application Available
February 9	Boys Swimming & Diving Entries Due
February 10	Ash Wednesday
February 12	Boys Swimming & Diving - Diving Sectionals
February 12	Girls Wrestling Individual Sectionals
February 12	Boys Swim & Dive - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 13	ACT Test
February 13	Boys Swimming & Diving - Swimming Sectionals
February 13	Boys Wrestling Individual Sectional
February 14	Girls Basketball Playoff Brackets Released
February 15	President's Day
February 15	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections - WIAA Office Announces Vacancies
February 16	Boys Hockey Regionals
February 16	Girls Hockey Regionals
February 18	Conference Realignment Task Force Meeting (if needed)
February 18	Boys Hockey Regionals
February 18	Girls Hockey Regionals
February 19	Boys Swimming & Diving State
February 19	Girls Wrestling Team Sectionals
February 19	2027 Baseball Exam Part 1
February 19	2027 Baseball Exam Part 2
February 19	2027 Boys Lacrosse
February 19	2027 Girls Lacrosse
February 19	2027 Track & Field Exam
February 19	2027 Golf Exam
February 19	2027 Tennis Exam
February 19	Boys Individual Wrestling - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 19	Girls Individual Wrestling - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 20	Boys Wrestling Team Sectionals
February 22	Girls Basketball 3-Point Challenge Stats Due
February 23	Girls Basketball Regionals
February 23	Boys Hockey Sectionals
February 23	Girls Hockey Sectionals
February 23	Golf Rules Video
February 23	Softball Rules Video
February 23	Track and Field Rules Video
February 23	Boys Lacrosse Rules Video
February 23	Girls Lacrosse Rules Video
February 23	Baseball Rules Video
February 23	Tennis Rules Video
February 23	Gymnastics Sectional Entries Due
February 25	Gymnastics Sectionals
February 25	Boys Wrestling Individual State
February 25	Girls Wrestling Individual State
February 26	Girls Basketball Regionals
February 26	Boys Hockey Sectionals
February 26	Girls Hockey Sectionals

February 26	Gymnastics - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 26	Boys Hockey - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 26	Girls Hockey - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 26	Boys Team Wrestling - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 26	Girls Team Wrestling - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
February 28	Boys Hockey State Qualifier Seed Meeting
February 28	Girls Hockey State Qualifier Seed Meeting
February 28	Winter Sports Classification Appeal Open
March 1	Boys Basketball 3-Point Challenge Stats Due
March 1	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections - Deadline to Announce Candidacy
March 2	Boys Basketball Regionals
March 2	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections - Candidates Verified
March 3	State Gymnastics Coaches Meeting (Zoom)
March 4	Girls Basketball Sectionals
March 4	Boys Hockey State
March 4	Girls Hockey State
March 5	Boys Basketball Regionals
March 5	Gymnastics State
March 5	Scholar/Athlete Online Application Due
March 5	Boys Wrestling Team State
March 5	Girls Wrestling Team State
March 5	2027 Softball Exam
March 5	Girls Basketball - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
March 6	Girls Basketball Sectionals
March 6	Girls Hockey State
March 7	Girls Basketball State Qualifiers Meeting
March 7	Girls Basketball State Media Conference (Zoom)
March 8	Boys Track & Field Earliest Day for Practice
March 8	Boys Track & Field Week 36 Pole Vault Weight Verification Form Due
March 8	Girls Track & Field Earliest Day for Practice
March 8	Girls Track & Field Week 36 Pole Vault Weight Verification Form Due
March 9	Board of Control Meeting
March 11	Boys Basketball Sectionals
March 11	Girls Basketball State
March 12	Boys Basketball - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
March 13	Boys Basketball Sectionals
March 14	Boys Basketball State Qualifiers Meeting
March 14	Boys Basketball State Media Conference (Zoom)
March 15	Boys Lacrosse Earliest Day for Practice
March 15	Girls Lacrosse Earliest Day for Practice
March 15	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections - Primary Ballot Distributed
March 15	Softball Earliest Day for Practice
March 16	Boys Track & Field Earliest Day for First Competition
March 16	Girls Track & Field Earliest Day for First Competition
March 17	St. Patrick's Day
March 18	Boys Basketball State
March 21	Palm Sunday
March 22	Baseball Earliest Day for Practice
March 22	Girls Soccer Earliest Day for Practice
March 23	Boys Lacrosse Earliest Day of First Competition
March 23	Girls Lacrosse Earliest Day of First Competition
March 23	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections - Primary Ballot Deadline
March 23	Softball Earliest Day for First Competition

March 26	Good Friday
March 28	Easter
March 29	Boys Basketball Seeding Committee Meeting
March 29	Girls Basketball Seeding Committee Meeting
March 29	Boys Golf Earliest Day for Practice
March 29	Boys Tennis Earliest Day for Practice
March 30	Baseball Earliest Day for First Competition
March 30	Boys Hockey Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
March 30	Girls Hockey Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
March 30	Girls Soccer Earliest Day for First Competition
March 31	Boys Wrestling Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
March 31	Girls Wrestling Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
March 31	Student Athletic Leadership Team (SALT)
	Online Application Due
April 1	Boys Golf Earliest Day for First Competition
April 1	Winter Sports Competitive Balance Classification
	Application to Request Up/Down and/or Appeal Closes
April 1	Spring Sports Request Down/Up & Form Opens
April 1	Superintendent/Principal Zoom Meetings
April 2	Boys Tennis Earliest Day for Competition
April 4	Spring Sports Officials Appreciation Week
April 6	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections -
	General Election Ballot Distributed
April 7	Classification Committee Meeting
April 10	ACT Test
April 13	Conference Realignment Task Force Meeting (if needed)
April 14	Boys Wrestling Minimum Weight Committee Meeting
April 14	Girls Wrestling Minimum Weight Committee Meeting
April 15	Gymnastics Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
April 20	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections -
	General Election Deadline
April 21	Board of Control Meeting
April 23	Board of Control and Advisory Council Elections -
	Results Announced
April 23	Annual Meeting
April 26	Boys Track & Field Wheelchair Tournament Series
	Verification Form Due
April 26	Girls Track & Field Wheelchair Tournament Series
	Verification Form Due
April 28	Boys Basketball Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
April 28	Girls Basketball Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
May 1	11-Player Football Fall 2028 Football Schedule
May 1	8-Player Football Fall 2028 Football Schedule
May 1	Spring Cooperative Team Application Deadline for
	2027-28 & 2028-29
May 1	Spring Sports Competitive Balance Classification
	Application to Request Up/Down and/or Appeal Opens
May 1	Spring Tournament Participation Deadline for 2027-28
May 2	Scholar Athlete Banquet
May 3	Boys Track Week 44 Pole Vault Weight Verification Form Due
May 3	Girls Track Week 44 Pole Vault Weight Verification Form Due
May 7	Medical Advisory Committee Meeting
May 7	Sportsmanship Committee Meeting
May 9	Mother's Day
May 12	Softball Seeding Meetings - D2-5
May 14	Board of Control Meeting
May 16	Boys Lacrosse Seeding Meetings
May 16	Girls Lacrosse Seeding Meetings
May 17	Sports Advisory Committee Meeting

May 17	Softball Seeding Meetings - D1
May 19	Boys Golf Entries Due
May 19	Spring Tournament Central Launch
May 20	Softball Regionals D2-5
May 20	Boys Tennis Entries Due
May 21	Boys Track & Field Entries Due
May 21	Girls Track & Field Entries Due
May 23	Girls Soccer Seeding Meetings
May 24	Boys Tennis Subsectionals
May 24	Boys Track & Field Regionals - D1
May 24	Girls Track & Field Regionals - D1
May 25	Boys Golf Regionals
May 25	Boys Lacrosse Regional (if needed)
May 25	Girls Lacrosse Regional (if needed)
May 25	Softball Regionals D1-5
May 25	Boys Track & Field Regionals - D2/D3
May 25	Girls Track & Field Regionals - D2/D3
May 26	Boys Tennis Sectionals
May 27	Baseball Regionals D2-4
May 27	Girls Lacrosse Regionals
May 27	Softball Regionals D1-5
May 27	Boys Track & Field Sectionals - D1
May 27	Girls Track & Field Sectionals - D1
May 28	Boys Lacrosse Regionals
May 28	Boys Tennis Special Qualifiers Requests
May 28	Boys Track & Field Sectionals -D2/D3
May 28	Girls Track & Field Sectionals -D2/D3
May 28	Boys Track & Field - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
May 28	Girls Track & Field - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
May 29	Boys Tennis Seeding Meeting & Team Tennis Seeding Zoom Meeting
May 30	Spring Sports Classification Appeal Open
May 31	Memorial Day
June 1	Baseball Regionals D2-4
June 1	Baseball Regionals D1
June 1	Boys Golf Sectionals
June 1	Boys Lacrosse Regionals
June 1	Girls Lacrosse Regionals
June 1	Girls Soccer Regionals D1-2
June 1	Softball Sectionals
June 2	Advisory Council Meeting
June 2	Boys Golf - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
June 3	Baseball Regionals D1
June 3	Boys Lacrosse Sectionals
June 3	Girls Lacrosse Sectionals
June 3	Girls Soccer Regionals D3-4
June 3	Softball Sectionals
June 3	Boys Tennis Individual State
June 4	Boys Track & Field State
June 4	Girls Track & Field State
June 4	State Softball Headshot Submission Form Due
June 4	Baseball - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
June 4	Softball - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
June 4	Boys Lacrosse - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
June 4	Girls Lacrosse - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
June 5	Boys Lacrosse Sectionals
June 5	Girls Lacrosse Sectionals
June 5	Girls Soccer Regionals D1-4
June 5	Softball State Qualifier Seeding Meeting
June 7	Boys Golf State

June 7	State Girls Lacrosse Headshot Submission Form Due
June 7	State Boys Lacrosse Headshot Submission Form
June 8	Baseball Sectionals
June 9	Softball State
June 9	State Baseball Headshot Submission Form Due
June 10	Girls Soccer Sectionals
June 11	Girls Soccer - State Rosters, Results and Statistics Due
June 12	Boys Lacrosse State
June 12	Girls Lacrosse State
June 12	ACT Test
June 12	Girls Soccer Sectionals
June 13	Girls Soccer State Qualifiers Seeding Meeting
June 14, 2027	Baseball State
June 14, 2027	Boys Basketball Brackets Released
June 14, 2027	Flag Day
June 15, 2027	11-Player Non-Conference Football Deadline
June 15, 2027	8-Player Non-Conference Football Deadline
June 17, 2027	Girls Basketball Summer Slam
June 17, 2027	Softball Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
June 17, 2027	Girls Soccer State

June 19, 2027	Juneteenth
June 20, 2027	Father's Day
June 21, 2027	Boys Track & Field Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
June 21, 2027	Girls Track & Field Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting
June 22, 2027	Board of Control Meeting
June 25, 2027	Boys Basketball June Jam
June 30, 2027	Award of Excellence Application Due
July 1, 2027	Spring Sports Competitive Balance Classification Application to Request Up/Down and/or Appeal Closes
July 1, 2027	Conference Realignment Application Open
July 4, 2027	Independence Day
July 6, 2027	Classification Committee Meeting
July 10, 2027	ACT Test
July 19, 2027	New AD Workshop
July 21, 2027	Media Advisory Committee Meeting
July 24, 2027	Last Day of unrestricted school/coach contact for Football (11-Player & 8-Player)
July 30, 2027	Last Day of unrestricted school/coach contact for all sports except football

Contacting WIAA Office

715-344-8580

Stephanie Hauser

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- Ad Hoc Committees, Annual & Area Meetings, Board of Control & Advisory Council
- Classification Committee, Legislative, NFHS Awards, Other Unlisted WIAA Policy Matters
- Contractual Interpretations (with Todd Clark)
- Legal Issues (with Mel Dow)
- WIAA Foundation (with Kassie Mortimer)

Mel Dow

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- Baseball, Golf (Girls), Wrestling
- Coach-Athlete Contact, Eligibility, Foreign Students
- Minimum Weight Committee, Sanction Requests, Sports Advisory, Sports Medicine
- Legal Issues (with Stephanie Hauser)

Jake Beschta

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- Football (11-player), Golf (Boys), Hockey, Softball
- Calendar & Contact Ad Hoc, New AD Workshop, Scholar Athlete
- Conference Alignment (with Melissa Gehring)

Todd Clark

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- Award of Excellence, Bulletin, Communications, Media Advisory, Media & Credentialing
- Publications, Records & Statistics, Sportsmanship
- Contractual Interpretations (with Stephanie Hauser)
- Sponsorships (with Megan Loken)
- Student Leadership Summit (with LeVar Ridgeway)
- WIAA Logo Use & Licensing (with Megan Loken)

Melissa Gehring

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- Basketball (Girls), Cross Country, Track & Field, Volleyball
- Spirit of Sport, WADA Liaison
- Conference Alignment (with Jake Beschta)

Kassie Mortimer

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- Business Services, Human Resources, School Enrollments
- Tournament Finances, Tournament Ticketing
- WIAA Foundation (with Stephanie Hauser)

LeVar Ridgeway

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- Basketball (Boys), Cheer & Spirit Groups, Soccer, Swimming & Diving
- Junior High/Middle Level Regulations, Student Leadership
- Student Leadership Summit (with Todd Clark)

Chad Schultz

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- Football (8-player), Gymnastics, Lacrosse, Tennis
- Coaches Advisory, Coaches Education & Conduct
- Conference Commissioners, Officials Advisory, Officials Conduct & Resources
- Officials Licensing (with Bobby Blom)

Bobby Blom

(bblom@wiaawi.org) | Ext. 1183)

- Officials Licensing (with Chad Schultz)
- School Directory
- Website Technical Support

Megan Loken

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- Apparel & Merchandising, Marketing, Social Media
- Sponsorships (with Todd Clark)
- WIAA Logo Use & Licensing (with Todd Clark)

Kristin Peterson

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- Elections

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- Cooperative Teams