



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

2023 FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES, RULES REMINDERS and POINTS OF EMPHASIS (includes rationale and comments)

NFHS FOOTBALL RULES

Each state high school association adopting these NFHS football rules is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations for contests involving its member schools. Any person having questions about the interpretation of NFHS football rules should contact the football rules interpreter designated by the respective state high school association.

The NFHS is the sole and exclusive source of model interpretations of NFHS football rules. State rules interpreters may contact the NFHS for model football rules interpretations. No other model football rules interpretations should be considered.

RULES CHANGES

<p>Uniform Adornments Towels</p> <p>Rule 1- 5-3a(5)a 4, 5 (NEW)</p>	<p>RULE 1 – SECTION 5 PLAYER EQUIPMENT</p> <p>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:</p> <p>a. The following items related to the Game Uniform: ...</p> <p>5. Uniform adornments, with the exception of:</p> <p>(a) One moisture-absorbing solid-colored towel that:</p> <p><u>(1) is not ball- or penalty flag-colored;</u></p> <p><u>(2) is no less than 4 inches in width and 12 inches in length;</u></p> <p><u>(3) is no greater than 18 inches in width and 36 inches in length;</u></p> <p><u>(4) has no more than one visible manufacturer's logo/trademark reference that does not exceed 2¼ square inches and does not exceed 2¼ inches in any dimension; and</u></p> <p><u>(5) has no more than one school logo/trademark reference that does not exceed 2¼ square inches and does not exceed 2¼ inches in any dimension. ...</u></p> <p>❖ Rationale for Change:</p> <p>Player towels may contain one manufacturer's logo and/or one school logo neither exceeding 2¼ square inches. Towels must be a solid color but now do not have to be the same solid color for each player. Towels may not be ball- or penalty-flag colored.</p> <p>❖ Case Book: See SITUATION 3.5.10L</p>
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<p>Player out of bounds Rule 2-29-1</p>	<p>RULE 2 – SECTION 29 OUT OF BOUNDS</p> <p>ART. 1 . . . A player or other person is out of bounds when any part of the person is touching anything, other than another player or game official that is on or outside the sideline or end line, <u>and that player remains out of bounds until returning to the field with any body part touching the field and no body part touching out of bounds.</u></p> <p>❖ <u>Rationale for Change:</u> This change clarifies when a player is inbounds after being out of bounds. There is no change to any foul or subsequent penalty provisions, or any rules related to illegal participation or the provisions regarding eligibility to catch a pass.</p> <p>❖ <u>Case Book:</u> See SITUATIONS 7.5.4C, 9.6.2A, 9.6.2B, 9.6.2C</p>
<p>Defenseless Receivers Rule 2-32-16d(NEW), 9-4-3g</p>	<p>RULE 2 – SECTION 32 PLAYER DESIGNATIONS</p> <p>ART. 16 . . . A defenseless player is a player who, because of his physical position and focus of concentration, is especially vulnerable to injury. A player who initiates contact against a defenseless player is responsible for making legal contact. When in question, a player is defenseless. Examples of defenseless players include, but are not limited to:</p> <p>a. A passer;</p> <p>b. A receiver attempting to catch a pass who has not had time to clearly become a runner;</p> <p>c. The intended receiver of a pass in the action during and immediately following an interception or potential interception;</p> <p>d. <u>A receiver in (b) and (c) above, including the person intercepting the pass, who is forcefully contacted by an opponent and that contact is not:</u></p> <p><u>1. Incidental contact as a result of making a play on the ball;</u></p> <p><u>2. Initiated with open hands; or</u></p> <p><u>3. An attempt to tackle by wrapping arm(s) around the receiver.</u></p> <p>e. A runner already in the grasp of a tackler and whose forward progress has been stopped;</p> <p>f. A kickoff or punt returner attempting to catch or recover a kick, or one who has completed a catch or recovery and has not had time to protect himself or has not clearly become a runner;</p> <p>g. A player on the ground including a runner who has obviously given himself up and is sliding feet-first;</p> <p>h. A player obviously out of the play or not in the immediate vicinity of the runner; and</p> <p>i. A player who receives a blindside block with forceful contact not initiated with open hands.</p> <p>RULE 9 – SECTION 4 ILLEGAL PERSONAL CONTACT</p> <p>ART. 3 . . . No player or nonplayer shall: ...</p> <p>g. Make any other contact with an opponent, including a defenseless player <u>(as in 2-32-16)</u>, which is deemed unnecessary or excessive and which incites roughness. ...</p> <p>❖ <u>Rationale for Change:</u> This change adds to the list of criteria to help identify players who should be defined as defenseless receivers related to application of unnecessary or excessive contact. This clarification should help game officials and coaches by defining allowable contact against defenseless receivers.</p> <p>❖ <u>Case Book:</u> See SITUATIONS 2.32.16 COMMENT, 9.4.3 COMMENT</p>

<p>Intentional Grounding Exception change Rule 7-5-2d EXCEPTION 2a, c (NEW), TABLE 7-5-2d EXCEPTION 2a, c (NEW), TABLE 7-5(1) EXCEPTION 2a, c (NEW)</p>	<p>RULE 7 – SECTION 5 FORWARD-PASS CLASSIFICATION</p> <p>ART. 2 . . . An illegal forward pass is a foul. Illegal forward passes include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A pass after team possession has changed during the down. A pass from beyond the neutral zone. A second and subsequent forward pass(es) thrown during a down. A pass intentionally thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible offensive receiver, or thrown incomplete to save loss of yardage or to conserve time. <p>EXCEPTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It is legal for a player positioned directly behind the snapper to conserve time by intentionally throwing the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving the snap that has neither been muffed nor touched the ground. It is legal for a player to conserve yardage by intentionally throwing an incomplete forward pass <u>if all of the following conditions are met:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The passer has <u>possessed the ball</u> beyond the lateral boundary of the free-blocking zone as established at the snap; The pass reaches the neutral zone, including the extension beyond the sideline; <u>and</u> <u>The passer is the only player to possess the ball after the snap ends.</u> <p>❖ <u>Rationale for Change:</u></p> <p>This change permits the exception for intentional grounding to the first and only player to possess the ball after the snap ends.</p> <p>❖ <u>Case Book:</u> See SITUATION 7.5.2D</p>
<p>Removed “Intentional” from Pass Interference</p> <p>TABLE 7-5 2c (DELETED), 7-5 PENALTY</p>	<p>RULE 7 – SECTION 5 FORWARD-PASS CLASSIFICATION</p> <p>TABLE 7-5 – SUMMARY OF FOULS THAT CAN OCCUR DURING FORWARD PASS PLAYS AND THEIR PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT SPOTS ...</p> <p>2. Forward Pass Interference (7-5-10)</p> <p>Restrictions apply only to a legal pass, untouched by B in or behind the neutral zone which crosses the neutral zone and interference may occur only beyond the neutral zone.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A hinders B. (Restriction begins with the snap.) B hinders A. (Restriction begins when the pass is thrown.) <p>❖ <u>Rationale for Change:</u></p> <p>By removing “intentional” from pass interference, this change puts the rule in line with how it is already enforced which is a 15-yard penalty.</p>

Basic Spot Penalty
Enforcement
Rule 10-4, TABLE
10-4 (NEW), 10-6
(DELETED)

RULE 10 – SECTION 4 BASIC SPOTS

TABLE 10-4 - SUMMARY OF MANY FOULS THAT CAN OCCUR DURING RUNNING PLAYS AND THEIR PENALTIES AND BASIC SPOTS UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED BY RULE

Enforcement provisions apply to all player fouls, and the committee philosophy is based on the fact that a team is given the advantage of the distance which is gained without the assistance of a foul. All fouls are penalized from the basic spot unless the spot is otherwise specified by rule.

The type of play has significance if a foul occurs. If a foul does occur, the game officials must know the type of play as defined in 2-33, as this will aid in determining the basic spot of enforcement when the spot is otherwise specified by rule. Recent changes to 10-4 specify the data needed by the game official regarding the spot of the foul and the result of the play to help guide penalty enforcement.

RULE 10 – SECTION 4 BASIC SPOTS

ART. 1 . . . If a foul occurs during a down, the basic spot is determined by the action that occurs during the down. This is the basic spot for penalty enforcement.

ART. 2 . . . The basic spot is the previous spot unless 8-5-2c applies for:

- a. A foul which occurs simultaneously with the snap or free kick.
- b. A foul which occurs during a loose ball play, as defined in 10-3-1. See 10-5-5 for special enforcement on roughing the passer. See 10-5-1b for special enforcement on kick-catching interference.
- c. A foul which occurs during a down in which a legal kick occurs and an inadvertent whistle ends the down prior to possession by either team.
- d. A foul by A or B when the run or related run ends behind the line of scrimmage where there is no change of possession;
- e. A foul by A that occurs behind the line of scrimmage when the run or related run ends beyond the line of scrimmage;
- f. A foul by A that occurs beyond the line of scrimmage when the run or related run ends behind the line of scrimmage; and
- g. A foul by A or B when the run or related run ends behind the line of scrimmage before a change of possession. ...

ART. 4 . . . The basic spot is the spot of the foul for:

- a. Illegal batting or illegal kicking when the foul occurs behind the end of the run or related run;
- b. Illegal participation as in 9-6-4a and 9-6-4g;
- c. An illegal forward pass as in 7-5-2c and intentional grounding as in 7-5-2d;
- d. A foul by the team in possession that occurs behind the end of the run or related run following a change of possession;
- e. When A commits any foul in his end zone for which the penalty is accepted (8-5-2c); and
- f. A foul by A that occurs beyond the line of scrimmage during a running play as defined in 10-3-2 when:
 1. The run or related run ends beyond the line of scrimmage; and
 2. The foul occurs behind the end of the run or related run.

ART. 5 . . . The basic spot is the succeeding spot for:

- a. An unsportsmanlike foul.
- b. A dead-ball foul.
- c. A nonplayer foul.

	<p>d. When the final result is a touchback.</p> <p><u>e. A foul by B when the run or related run ends beyond the line of scrimmage;</u></p> <p><u>f. A foul that occurs beyond the end of the run or related run following a change of possession; and</u></p> <p><u>g. A foul by A that occurs beyond the line of scrimmage during a running play as defined in 10-3-2 when:</u></p> <p><u>1. The run or related run ends beyond the line of scrimmage; and</u></p> <p><u>2. The foul occurs in advance of the end of the run or related run.</u></p> <p>NOTE: The succeeding spot may, at the option of the offended team, be the subsequent kickoff as in 8-2-2, 8-2-3, 8-2-4 and 8-2-5. ...</p> <p>ART. 8 . . . <u>The basic spot is the spot where the related run ends for a foul which occurs during a running play as defined in 10-3-2 unless the provisions of 10-4-2 through 10-4-7, or 10-5 apply.</u></p> <p>❖ <u>Rationale for Change:</u></p> <p>This change restructures and clarifies the amendments to Rule 10 to eliminate the excessive penalty enforcements for offensive fouls that occur behind the line of scrimmage. This revision stipulates the basic spot for enforcement of fouls behind the line of scrimmage is the previous spot rather than the spot of the foul unless otherwise specified by rule. Current penalties for illegal kicking, batting and participation fouls, and provisions for offensive fouls occurring in the end zone that may result in a safety remain intact.</p>
<p>Handing the Ball Forward (Six-Player) Rule 7g (NEW)</p>	<p>SIX-PLAYER</p> <p>GENERAL: Eleven-player rules are used for six-player football with these listed modifications. ...</p> <p>RULE 7: ...</p> <p><u>g. A direct forward handoff may be made during a scrimmage down before a change of possession, provided both players are in or behind the neutral zone unless it is to the snapper. ...</u></p> <p>❖ <u>Rationale for Change:</u></p> <p>The change allows the ball to be handed forward on a running play, including to the guards/ends, while prohibiting handing the ball to the snapper provided both players are behind the neutral zone.</p>

EDITORIAL CHANGES

<p>1-1-7, 1-1-9, 1-3-2, 1-3-7 NOTE, TABLE 1-7 (6), 9-5-1, 9-8-1, RESOLVING TIED GAMES – 3-1</p>	<p>Changed the words “contest(s)” to “games(s)”.</p>
<p>TABLE 1-7</p>	<p>Removed the state association accommodation reference.</p>
<p>1-8 (NEW)</p>	<p>Created a new SECTION 8 for State Association Accommodations.</p>
<p>3-6-1B(1)</p>	<p>Added further clarification that game officials need to be in position when the ball is marked ready for play.</p>

Table 7-5(1) d exception 2	Corrected a misspelling.
FOOTBALL FUNDAMENTALS - 11-2	Grammar correction.
FOOTBALL FUNDAMENTALS – X-3	Clarified basic spot per Rule 10-4.
FOOTBALL FUNDAMENTALS – X-5	Updated the total number of illegal passes.
NINE, EIGHT, and SIX-PLAYER RULES DIFFERENCES – RULES 2 and 7	Revised the rules differences based off of 2023 NFHS Football Rules Changes.
PENALTY SUMMARY	Updated the rules references for “Delay of Game” and removed the penalty reference for “Intentional Pass Interference.”
Index	Updated the Index with new rules references.

RULES REMINDERS

Game Balls Rule 1-3-3	<p>RULE 1 – SECTION 3 GAME EQUIPMENT ... ART. 3 . . . The referee shall decide whether the ball meets specifications, and the referee or any other game official may order the ball changed between downs.</p> <p>❖ Rationale for Change: 2022 Rule Change - Any game official may order the ball changed between downs.</p> <p>❖ Case Book: See SITUATIONS 1.3.3A, 1.3.3B</p>
Jersey Numbers Rule 1-4-3, Figure 1-4-2, Rule 1-5-1c(1), Rule 7-2-5b, EXCEPTIONS, Rule 7-5-6a	<p>RULE 1 – SECTION 4 PLAYER DESIGNATIONS ... ART. 3 . . . Each player shall be numbered 0 through 99 inclusive. Any number preceded by the digit zero is illegal. See 7-2-5.</p> <p>RULE 1 – SECTION 5 PLAYER EQUIPMENT ... 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: ...</p> <p>c. Numbers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>RULE 7 – SECTION 2 FORMATION/POSITION, NUMBERSING AND ACTION AT THE SNAP ... ART. 5 . . . Player formation and numbering requirements include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. No more than four A players may be backs and only one A player b. At the snap, at least five A players on their line of scrimmage must be numbered 50-79. <p>EXCEPTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On first, second or third down, when A sets or shifts into a scrimmage-kick formation as in 2-14-2a, the snapper may be a player numbered 0 to 49 or 80 to 99. If Team A has the snapper in the game under this exception, Team A shall have four players wearing numbers 50-79 on its line of scrimmage. The snapper in the game under this exception must be between the ends and is an ineligible forward-pass receiver during that down unless the pass is touched by B (7-5-6b).

	<p>2. On fourth down or during a kick try, when A sets or shifts into a scrimmage-kick formation, any A player numbered 0 to 49 or 80 to 99 may take the position of any A player numbered 50 to 79. A player in the game under this exception must assume an initial position on his line of scrimmage between the ends and he remains an ineligible forward-pass receiver during that down unless the pass is touched by B (7-5-6b).</p> <p>RULE 7 – SECTION 5 FORWARD-PASS CLASSIFICATION ...</p> <p>ART. 6 . . . Pass eligibility rules apply only to a legal forward pass. The following players are eligible pass receivers:</p> <p>a. All A players eligible by position and number including those who, at the time of the snap, are on the ends of their scrimmage line or legally behind the line (possible total of six) and are numbered 0-49 or 80-99. (7-2-5b EXCEPTION 2)</p> <p>❖ Rationale for Change: 2022 Rule Change - The single digit number "0" is now a legal number.</p> <p>❖ Case Book: See SITUATION 1.4.3</p>
<p>CHOP BLOCK Rule 2-3-8</p>	<p>RULE 2 – SECTION 3 BLOCKING ...</p> <p>ART. 8 . . . Chop block is a combination block by two or more teammates against an opponent other than the runner, with or without delay, where one of the blocks is below the waist and one of the blocks is above the waist.</p> <p>❖ Rationale for Change: 2022 Rule Change - A chop block has been redefined as an illegal combination block where contact is made above and below the waist.</p> <p>❖ Case Book: See SITUATION 9.3.2F</p>
<p>GAME CLOCK OPTION Rule 3-4-7</p>	<p>RULE 3 – SECTION 4 STARTING AND STOPPING THE GAME CLOCK ...</p> <p>ART. 7 . . . When a foul is committed with less than two minutes remaining in either half, the offended team will have the option to start the game clock on the snap.</p> <p>❖ Rationale for Change: 2022 Rule Change - Changed the offended team's game clock options following a foul committed with less than two minutes remaining in either half.</p> <p>❖ Case Book: See SITUATIONS 3.4.7A, 3.4.7C, 3.4.7D</p>
<p>PLAY CLOCK 3-6-1a(1)e EXCEPTION 2 (NEW)</p>	<p>RULE 3 – SECTION 6 PLAY CLOCK, BALL READY FOR PLAY AND DELAY ...</p> <p>ART. 1 . . . Play clock and ready-for-play:</p> <p>a. Play clock:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25 seconds will be on the play clock and start on the ready-for-play signal: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Prior to a try following a score; (b) To start a period or overtime series; (c) Following administration of an inadvertent whistle; (d) Following a charged time-out; (e) Following an official's time-out as in 3-5-7 or 3-5-10. <p>EXCEPTIONS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3-5-7b; 2. 3-5-7e, 3-5-7i or 3-5-10 if related to a defensive player. <p>❖ Rationale for Change: 2022 Rule Change - Added a new exception to the play clock administration following a foul committed only by the defensive team.</p>

<p>FOOTBALL JERSEY NUMBERS 1-5-1c(3)</p>	<p>RULE 1 – SECTION 5 – PLAYER EQUIPMENT</p> <p>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: ...</p> <p>c. Numbers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 1½-inches wide. 4. The color and style of the number shall be the same on the front and back. 5. Through the 2023 season, the body of the number (the continuous horizontal bars and vertical strokes) shall be either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a continuous color(s) contrasting with the jersey color; or (b) the same solid color(s) as the jersey with a minimum of one border that is at least ¼-inch in width of a single solid contrasting color. 6. Effective with the 2024 season, 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. <p>❖ Comment on Slide:</p> <p>Rule change in 2019. The purpose of numbers on jerseys is to provide clear identification of players. In order to enhance the ability to easily identify players, the committee has clarified the size requirements for jersey numbers through the 2023 season. The committee also added a new requirement that, effective in the 2024 season, jersey numbers must be a single solid color that clearly contrasts with the body color of the jersey.</p>
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POINTS OF EMPHASIS

<p>HELPING THE RUNNER</p>	<p>Rule changes have been made at higher levels of football allowing offensive teams to pile in behind and directly push the runner. Because of these changes, we are now seeing similar plays at the high school level. As guardians of the game, it is imperative that all stakeholders work together to remove “helping the runner” from our high school game.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The NFHS Football Rules Committee’s main focus is risk minimization, followed closely by assurance of a balance between offensive and defensive rules. Because the players on defense must guard against the pass, they are not able to counter the advantages created by “helping the runner” formations. Allowing teams to help the runner by illegal techniques swings the balance heavily in favor of the offense.</p> <p>Football game officials need to change their view of “helping the runner” to a risk issue (clipping, chop block) and remove it from the “pioneer call” category and refocus on</p>
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	<p>ending plays when forward progress is stopped. Pushing the pile is legal; direct contact and pushing, pulling, lifting of the runner is not.</p> <p>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.”</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Removing “helping the runner” from high school football will at times be met with resistance. School administrative support of football game officials, re-focus of coaches and education of players will lead to a smooth transition. All those directly involved in our great game must stay committed to trying to minimize risk to all players and maintaining the balance between offensive and defensive play.</p>
<p>COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COACHES AND GAME OFFICIALS</p>	<p>Coaches and game officials must demonstrate respect for one another. This mutual appreciation is the foundation of appropriate and professional communication. Football is an emotional game. Coaches and game officials must realize that competition often leads to intense interactions on the field. Both must work together and strive to manage verbal and nonverbal exchanges in ways that avoid escalating conflict.</p> <p>Game officials must recognize their role in the game: to provide a service to the coaches and student-athletes in an unemotional and impartial manner. Game officials must always be respectful and maintain a calm demeanor in their comments to coaches, especially when tension is high. Game officials must avoid the urge to argue with coaches who disagree with their decisions. Coaches may ask questions, and game officials should make every effort to be approachable, actively listen, and provide correct and complete answers as soon as possible. Game officials should aim to be direct and concise in their communication of essential information.</p> <p>When emotions are running especially high, game officials should de-escalate tensions and demonstrate empathy and understanding of the coach’s perspective. Game officials must anticipate circumstances where coaches may become upset and pre-emptively diffuse the situation. A game official should never threaten the coach with consequences for their behavior, nor should a game official become defensive. If a coach exhibits inappropriate behavior and “crosses a line,” the game official may choose to penalize the coach for unsportsmanlike conduct. However, throwing a flag should be a last resort. A better approach is to clearly and calmly tell the coach that the comments or behavior are unacceptable, and that it’s difficult to focus on the on-field action if the coach continues to distract the game official.</p> <p>Coaches model acceptable and unacceptable behavior for their student-athletes. If coaches disrespect game officials and make derogatory comments, players will behave in the same way. Coaches should win with grace and lose with dignity. Coaches must understand that the football field is an extension of the classroom and must exhibit proper conduct. This includes respecting the decisions of game officials even when they disagree, and handling differences of opinion in a civil and dignified manner. Dialogue with game officials should be constructive and respectful, not confrontational. Handling disagreements in a business-like manner teaches players good sportsmanship, which is a perennial focus of the NFHS.</p>

	<p>Coaches and game officials have a professional responsibility to demonstrate respect for one another and communicate appropriately. Coaches and game officials love the game and desire to positively impact young people. Proper communication during competition teaches players a valuable life lesson about conflict resolution. Coaches and game officials must demonstrate respect for one another. This mutual appreciation is the foundation of appropriate and professional communication.</p>
<p>GAME MANAGEMENT</p>	<p>Each school community must take pride in hosting an athletic contest or event. Proper advance planning is key to an orderly, secure, safe and enjoyable activity. Planning begins with clearly defined tasks for game administration and event personnel. Beginning with the arrival of players, game officials and spectators, each school must have a purposeful plan to address any and all expected issues, as well as the unforeseen.</p> <p>Preparation begins with clear and concise communication between the host and the competing school regarding the logistics of arrival and departure. Meeting and greeting the visiting team is certainly the beginning of good sportsmanship. Clearly communicated information, such as parking information, location of ticket booths and entry gates, when given to the visitors is another step in assuring a great experience for all participants.</p> <p>Game officials should be afforded the same communication considerations given the visiting school community. Host administration must provide accurate information for the officiating crew so as to ease any pre-game apprehension or uncertainty. Clear, concise communication is of utmost importance. Having assigned personnel to greet game officials and address all their pre-game and post-game needs is a bare minimum for the host school. Security of game officials must be an absolute priority. Make sure the locker room is properly supervised and access is limited to proper personnel only.</p> <p>During the game, security of game personnel begins with ensuring that the sideline is properly secured and the playing field is restricted to essential game personnel. For safety and security reasons, essential game personnel would include game participants, reporters, photographers and game administration. All other, non-essential personnel should be located in the bleachers. All non-participants on the event level should be credentialed and restricted to being no closer than 2 yards from the sideline. Game officials are responsible for securing the team boxes and coaches' area. Sideline management begins with the consistent enforcement of game rules pertaining to the restricted area and the team box. The restricted area is designated to make the sidelines safe for all participants and to give game officials ample space to work. Game administration should be alert to requests of game officials in addressing problems beyond the team box and coaches' area.</p> <p>The conduct of non-participants is the domain of game and school administration. Expectations for the behavior of spectators and other attendees should be clearly, and repeatedly, communicated to all attendees. The reading of a sportsmanship script before the game is one method of communicating expectations. Good sportsmanship must become part of the culture of any school community. Behavior not acceptable in the school's hallways should not be acceptable on the courts or playing fields.</p> <p>Appropriate conduct of the public-address announcer is vital to the game atmosphere. The public address announcer must be the first line of sportsmanship and must exemplify expected and acceptable conduct. The goal of the public-address announcer is to inform and not entertain. Giving play-by-play of game action and/ or critiquing game officials is unacceptable. The public-address announcer must be positive and respectful to all involved in the game.</p> <p>MINIMAL GAME ADMINISTRATION EXPECTATIONS</p>

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearly communicated event itinerary• Required field markings and game equipment• Clock operator(s)• Line-to-gain crew• Game Official accommodations• Visiting team accommodations• Support personnel• Medical personnel• Security personnel• Hospitality for game personnel and administration, inclusive of game officials |
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