

4.5 FOOTBALL

4.5.1 General:

- (a) Football Calendar:
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| 1st Practice | August 2 | 2nd Round | November 12 |
| 1st Scrimmage | August 11 | 2nd Round | November 19 |
| 1st Play Date | Week of August 20 | 3rd Round | November 26 |
| Playoff Seeding | October 30 | Regional Round | December 3 |
| 1st Round | November 5 | State Championship | December 11 |
- (b) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Payment of Officials, Eligibility Sheets, Ejections, Playoff Declaration, Unpaid Fines, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under General Requirements for Interscholastic Activities (4.1).
- (c) Preseason Scrimmages: Reference 4.1.5
- (d) Date of First Contest: Week of August 20.
- (e) Health and Safety Guidelines: Reference General Requirements for Interscholastic Athletic Activities for a listing of Guidelines (4.1.22) and Health and Safety Guidelines (2.3) for all the information.
- (f) Number or Regular Season Contests: No more than one may be scheduled per week. Total, 10 games. An individual is limited to only one game per day, per week (exception: “eight-quarter” rule).
- (g) Schedules: Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate regional supervisor by May 15.
- (h) Suspended Game Rule: The NCHSAA plays by the suspended game rule (see 2.2.7 (c) (1)).
- (i) Mercy Rule: Once the score reaches a 42 point differential, or more, at halftime or any point thereafter, the game will resort to a running clock or will be terminated by mutual agreement.
- (j) Junior Varsity Tiebreaker: Junior varsity football teams may break ties in games if both coaches mutually agree prior to the game.
- (k) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming: Reference 4.1.25.
- (l) Required Equipment: Schools must provide yardage clip for down and distance chains. Balls must have the authenticating NFHS ball mark. NOTE: NCHSAA approved balls are required for all playoff events beginning with the 2020-2021 athletic season. The NCHSAA strongly recommends their adoption for regular season play.
- (m) Uniformed Police Officer: Reference 2.5.3 (a).
- (n) Restraining Barriers: At all varsity football games there shall be restraining barriers on both sides of the field.
- (1) These barriers shall run the entire length of the field and shall be at least five yards (preferably more) from the sidelines.
 - (2) The restraining barrier may be a fence, cable or strong rope.
 - (3) No one is permitted within these barriers except coaches, players and persons officially connected with a team.
 - (4) It is highly recommended that all schools completely surround their football field with a substantial four-foot restraining fence, constructed a minimum of five yards from any sidelines or end line.
- (o) Eight Quarter Participation: In emergency or “lack of depth” situations, freshman and/or sophomore (9th and 10th graders only in 3A & 4A; 1A & 2A schools may use 9th, 10th or 11th graders) junior varsity football players will be allowed a maximum of 8 quarters per season of “on the field” play as a varsity football player. Note: Anytime a player participates in 8 quarters of Varsity competition, that player is no longer eligible to be an 8-quarter player. If the 8 quarter limit is reached during a contest, that player is immediately ineligible for further participation in that contest.
- (1) This is an allowable exemption from the rule counting dressing for a game as participation in a varsity contest and will enable a junior varsity player (9th/10th graders only) to be available for emergency or lack of depth participation in the varsity contest.
 - (2) The intent of the rule is to give coaches some alternatives for junior varsity players (9th/10th graders only) to continue to gain value game experience at the junior varsity level and still be available as a backup player in the varsity game. The following conditions must be met:
 - (i) A maximum of ten (10) players may be 8-quartered during the regular season
 - (ii) Such players must be pre-determined prior to dressing for participation — completion of the 8 Quarter Pre-Approval Form containing signatures of a licensed athletic trainer or medical doctor, principal, athletic director, and parent/legal custodian. (If a designated player or players participated in the junior varsity contest, medical information shall include evidence that player(s) is adequately hydrated and void of injury that would render player(s) unfit to play.) The form must be filed at the school and with the conference president on the day of the scheduled game.
 - (iii) Following the game, a status report on the designated players must be completed

which shall include the names of all freshman and sophomore junior varsity football player(s) designated and dressed as emergency players and report the number of quarter(s) in which each athlete actually played. Any portion of a quarter equals a quarter played. If a player dresses out but does not play, record as "0" quarters played. Form must be signed by coach, athletic director and principal and submitted on line to the NCHSAA by the first school day after the varsity contest.

- (iv) Anytime a JV player (9th/10th graders only) must be used as a starter on the varsity team, that player is not eligible to be used as an eight-quarter player in the following week.
- (v) \$500 fine for failure to submit follow-up form to NCHSAA.
- (vi) If your school's JV Football game is:
 - (1) Cancelled - you may not use the 8-quarter rule for Friday's varsity football game. If a JV player (9th and 10th graders only) participates in the varsity game, it will count towards the maximum allowed 11 games per for an individual; therefore no 8-quarter paperwork would need to be filed.
 - (2) Postponed - you may use the 8-quarter rule for the Friday varsity football game. Submit 8-quarter paperwork as usual.
- (vii) No player may dress to participate in more than two football contests in a calendar week (Monday - Saturday)
- (3) Upon submission of sufficient documentation, teams may regain an Eight-Quarter position due to season-ending injury, catastrophic event, or transfer. Requires NCHSAA approval.

4.5.2 Skill Development Guidelines:

- (a) Sports Season Note: See 2.2.14 and 2.2.15 for details on sports season concept. Football helmets and shoulder pads are permitted during skill development.
 - (1) During the entire time period between the end of football season and up through the first five days of practice for the next season, absolutely no live action contact and/or thudding is allowed. A limited amount of time is provide for "bump" workouts as detailed in 4.5.3 (b)(4).
- (b) During the spring skill development period for football, between April 15th and the last ten (10) student days of second semester, "Bump" may be used for a maximum of 60 minutes total (Limitations of up to 15 minutes per day).
 - (i) Outside the period outlined in 4.5.2 (b), absolutely no "body-to-body contact", live action, wrapping, or thudding is allowed (see 4.5.3.b.4).
- (c) A licensed athletic trainer or first responder must be physically present if any protective equipment (helmets and/or shoulder pads) is worn by student-athletes participating in football skill development during the school year.
- (d) A licensed athletic trainer or first responder must physically attend all summer football 7-on-7 events and must be physically present at all times in any competition area in which contests are being held.
 - (i) If a single field is divided for the purposes of holding multiple contests/scrimmages simultaneously, each of the divided sections must have a licensed athletic trainer or first responder responsible for that section of contest area.

4.5.3 Practice and Conditioning:

- (a) State Medical Requirements: The member school's licensed athletic trainer or first responder must physically attend all football practices and both home and away games, unless excused by the superintendent in writing due to an emergency.
- (b) Definitions:
 - (1) Practice: That period of time a participant engages in a coach-supervised, school-approved, sport or conditioning-related physical activity; each practice should last no more than 3 hours. Warm-up, stretching, conditioning/weight room activities are included as part of the 3-hour practice time. Practices are timed from the time the players report to the field until they leave the field.
 - (2) Required Practice: A player must participate in at least eight (8) separate days of team football practice (not military training, summer track, etc.) before participating in a football contest or scrimmage with outside competition (exception: athletes from other sports who play only as kickers). Three of these practices must be in full pads and include body to body contact.
 - (i) If an athlete misses five (5) or more consecutive days of practice, they must participate in at least three (3) separate days of practice before returning to competition.
 - (3) Contact Practice: The time when players may "hit" or have body to body contact; these drills may begin the day following the five (5) days used for acclimatization and physical conditioning; the use of all football protective equipment is required.

- (4) Football Drill Categories
- (i) Non-live Action (Allowed at any time outside of established dead periods and Sundays)
 - (1) Level 0 (Air) - Players run a drill unopposed without contact
 - (2) Level 1 (Bags) - Players run a drill against a hand-held bag or another soft-contact surface.
 - (3) Level 2 (Control) - Players run a drill at coach-assigned speed with one player the predetermined "winner" by the coach and contact remains above the waist with players staying on their feet.
 - (ii) Restricted Non-Live Action (Limitations in place for off-season skill development)
 - (1) Level 3 (Bump) - Players run a drill at competitive speed with no wrapping up of a ball carrier. There is no predetermined "winner" and contact remains above the waist with players staying on their feet and a quick whistle ending the drill.
 - (i) Allowed during the spring skill development period for football (between April 15th and the last ten (10) student days of second semester. May be used for a maximum of 60 minutes total during this period and a limit of 15 minutes per day.
 - (ii) Allowed during in-season practices once acclimatization mandates are met with no daily or weekly time limitations.
 - (iii) Live Action (Allowed during in-season practices once acclimatization mandates are met)
 - (1) Level 4 (Full Live Action Contact) - Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are allowed to be taken to the ground.
- (5) Scrimmage: Informal sports contest or practice match engaged in for practice purposes; may occur on Day 9 of the pre-season period. During this time, players may engage in hitting.
- (6) Walk-Through: A teaching opportunity with the athlete not wearing protective equipment (e.g. helmets, shoulder pads, catcher's gear, shin guards) or using other sport-related equipment. The walk-through is not part of the 3 hour practice period, can last no more than 1 hour per day, and does not include conditioning or weight room activities. In football, a one (1) hour maximum walk-through is permitted during the 1st twelve (12) days of pre-season practice.
- (7) Cool Down Period: The three (3) hour time period between the end of (1) one practice or walk-through and the beginning of the next practice or walk-through. During this time, athletes should rest in a cool environment—helmets off, not in direct sunlight—with no sport or conditioning related activity permitted (e.g. speed or agility drills, strength training, conditioning, or walk-through). Treatment with the athletic trainer is permissible.
- (c) Conditioning Requirements: The first five (5) days of practice are required to be used for physical conditioning according to the following provisions: The NCHSAA emphasizes the importance of these regulations for safety.
- (1) On the first two (2) days, headgear, non-padded shorts and football shoes constitute acceptable dress. On days three (3), four (4) and five (5), shoulder pads may be added, but absolutely no body-to-body contact is permitted (see Penalty Code for Violations 3.3.2.e.1). Practice during the first five-day period shall be limited to three (3) hours, including flex time (stretching) and breaks. On day six (6), full uniforms may be worn, and body-to-body contact is allowed.
 - (2) This conditioning period may include calisthenics, kicking, throwing, running and similar exercises. Arm shields, tackling or blocking dummies, charging sleds or similar devices may also be used during these five days. Squad meetings, skull sessions, film study and the like are allowed during the five-day period.
 - (3) All football players, with the exception of soccer players who play only as kickers must follow the preceding conditioning requirements. Any student, who is late coming out for the team, must still undergo five (5) days of physical conditioning as outlined prior to beginning regular practice and workouts.
- (d) Practice Options: There are set practice options that can be utilized during the football preseason period:
- (1) Option A - One, three hour practice (which includes "flex time").
 - (2) Option B - One, three hour practice, followed by a mandatory three hour cool down period, followed by a one hour walk-through.
 - (3) Option C (Double Practice) - One three-hour, or two-hour practice, followed by a mandatory three-hour cool down period, followed by a two-hour, or three-hour practice (Maximum of

five hours of practice time per 24-hour period).

- (i) Option C days must be followed by Option A, Option B, or off-day
 - (ii) Under no circumstances may you have back-to-back Option C days
 - (iii) Under no circumstances can the two-hour session of Option C contain any body-to-body contact (Live Action and/or Thud).
- (4) The mandatory cool-down period must be held in an air-conditioned environment.
- (e) Practice Schedule: Listed are the various options available for each preseason practice day:
- (1) August 2 - August 6 (excluding Sunday): Option A or Option B
 - (2) August 7 (1st Day of Contact) - August 14 (or first day of school, whichever comes first): Option A, Option B, or Option C (refer to practice options for stipulations)
 - (i) After the preseason conditioning requirements are met, an individual is limited to 15 minutes of live action contact per day.
 - (3) August 16 - End of Season: Option A ONLY (One 3 hour practice, which includes flex time)
 - (i) Once the regular season begins, individuals are limited to a maximum of 15 minutes of live action contact-per week.

4.5.4 **Playoffs (Brackets, Reporting, Seeding, Other Playoff Information):**

- (a) Playoff Brackets: Will be posted on NCHSAA Website after seeding is complete. (See 4.1.17 - 4.1.20)
- (b) Ties in Standings:
 - (1) The team leading in conference standings at the end of the season will be declared conference champion.
 - (2) In the event two or more teams tie for a playoff position, the approved tiebreaking procedure shall be used (see 4.1.12).
 - (3) Any conference ties for football playoff berths must be broken and results reported to the NCHSAA by 6 a.m. on Saturday after the last regular season games.
- (c) Reporting Playoff Qualifiers: Every effort should be made to play the final regular season game as scheduled.
 - (1) Postponements should also be reported to the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Saturday is the makeup day in the event of inclement weather on Friday (game time no later than 1 p.m.).
 - (3) There will be no other exceptions because of the importance of the seeding process. The conference president must report the berths, conference standings and overall records as required by the NCHSAA by 11:30 p.m. on the 11th playing date.
 - (4) Preliminary brackets will be posted as soon as they are completed. Any corrections should be reported to the NCHSAA within one hour after posting.
 - (5) Final brackets will be posted thereafter.
 - (6) Failure to comply with the initial reporting procedure will result in a \$400 fine to the conference.
 - (7) Check NCHSAA website for additional information.
- (d) Qualifiers: See 4.1.18 (Playoff Berths/Qualification)
- (e) Submission of Incorrect Record: Once the seeding process is completed and the brackets have been finalized, if a team has submitted an incorrect record, and the seed is affected, that team will be removed from the bracket and no other team will be substituted in or added to the playoffs. Note: Incorrect records can be changed during the NCHSAA designated "window of opportunity." Reference 3.3.3.d, 3.3.3.e, and 3.3.3.f.
- (f) Competing Schools: It is the duty of the competing schools to confer with respect to the wishes of their school. The principal of the host school should contact by telephone the principal of the other school within 24 hours after knowledge of the playoff. Arrangements must be made for designated school representatives to meet to discuss arrangements and fix responsibility for various details. All financial arrangements must be made prior to the contest.
- (g) Rescheduling Other Sports: Games in other sports may be rescheduled when participation in the football playoffs would affect those games (e.g., early-season men's basketball games if the football team is involved in playoffs).
- (h) Required Playoff Information: Fact sheet, roster forms, two-deep depth chart forms and other required information for football playoff qualifiers may be found on the NCHSAA website. Note deadlines for submission of material. This is mandatory for playoff qualifiers.

4.5.5 **Playoffs (General Requirements, Officials, Press Conference, Sites):**

- (a) Minimum Seating Requirements are as Follows: Class 1A — host 1000, visitors 500; Class 2A – host 1450, visitors 750; Class 3A – host 2000, visitors 1000; Class 4A — host 2500, visitors 1500.
 - (1) The Executive Committee has authority to move a playoff game when the circumstances are perceived to warrant such action even if the host school meets the minimum seating requirements.
 - (2) If additional seating is required to meet the above standards, the expense shall be that of the host school. A \$1000 penalty shall be imposed on schools failing to meet seating requirements.
 - (3) If the visiting team has a complaint regarding the playing facility, it shall be registered by noon

on the Monday preceding the game. In the event of such a complaint, the President of the Board of Directors shall have the authority to appoint a committee of three members of the Board to investigate the facilities. This committee shall be vested with the full authority to set the site for the game.

- (4) If a neutral site is selected, the representatives of the two playing schools shall meet with a representative of the school furnishing the neutral field to agree on game management.
- (b) Game time is set for 7:30 p.m.
- (c) Game ball–The Wilson GST Football (WTF1003B) or GST Prime Football (WTF1103) are the official balls of the NCHSAA championship and playoffs (with NFHS authenticating ball mark).
- (d) Selection of Officials:
 - (1) For the first two rounds of the state playoffs, officials are to be assigned by the regional supervisor of the higher seeded team.
 - (2) The NCHSAA Supervisor of Officials will assign a regional supervisor to assign crews to games in the quarterfinals and NCHSAA regionals.
 - (3) Clock operators may be assigned starting with the second round, but this is strictly optional for schools. Clock Operators are the responsibility of the host school for playoffs; however, use of a Clock Operator is not an allowable game expense.
 - (4) The Supervisor of Officials will assign crews to all state championship games. A seven-man crew will be used in the championship games.
- (e) Championship Press Conference: A press conference and information session preceding the football championships will be held on Monday, December 6, 2021.
 - (1) All regional champions who qualify for the state finals are asked to bring their superintendent, principal, athletic director, head football coach and members of the media who cover their team.
 - (2) This information session/press conference is mandatory; at least one of the aforementioned personnel from the school must be in attendance.
 - (3) Failure to comply will include a fine and forfeiture of complimentary tickets/VIP passes for the event.
- (f) State Championships: The state championships are scheduled for December 10-11, 2021, and sites and times will be announced on the NCHSAA Website. The Western teams will be designated as home.

4.5.6 **Financial Arrangements:**

- (a) Rate of expense reimbursement for visiting team: first round, second round, and third round
 - (1) 0-75 miles one-way school receives meal reimbursement (\$6 x 45 people=\$270)
 - (2) 76-149 miles one-way school receives meal reimbursement (\$6 x 45 people=\$270), plus mileage (.75/mile, round trip)
 - (3) 150 plus miles one-way school receives meal reimbursement (\$6 x 45 people=\$270), plus mileage (.75/mile, round trip), plus motel (\$8x45=\$360)
NOTE: Schools must provide motel receipts to the home team to receive allowance.
 - (4) If over 300 miles one way, contact NCHSAA for approval of allowable expenses.
- (b) First Round, Second Round, Third Round, and Fourth Round Games
 - (1) Game report–The principal of the host school, or appointed game manager, will forward a copy of the financial report and ticket accountability form to the North Carolina High School Athletic Association within 10 days after the contest. Forms are available in each school's Home Campus portal.
 - (2) Division of receipts–the Association is to receive 15 percent of the gross gate. After paying expenses, the competing teams are to divide the remainder equally.
 - (3) The host school will get concession and program rights. No charge is to be made by the host school for field use, lights, lining off the field, etc., if the field is school-owned or is owned by the board of education. Any use of a neutral facility must be approved by the NCHSAA.
 - (4) Admission to games–The price is \$8.00.
- (c) Regional Games
 - (1) Game report–The principal of the host school, or appointed game manager, will forward a copy of the financial report and ticket accountability form to the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, within 10 days after the contest. Forms are in each school's Home Campus portal.
 - (2) Division of receipts–In the regional games, the Association is to receive 25 percent of the gross gate. After paying expenses, the competing teams are to divide the remainder equally.
 - (3) In the regional games, the host-school will get concession and program rights. No charge is to be made by the host school for field use, lights, lining off the field, etc., if the field is school-owned or is owned by the board of education. Any use of a neutral facility must be approved by the NCHSAA.

- (4) Rate of expense reimbursement: see 4.5.6.a.
 - (5) Admission to games—\$10.00 at gate (includes one-dollar surcharge for Endowment).
 - (6) Regional awards—Team plaques will be presented to the regional champion and regional runner-up.
- (d) **Championship Games**
- (1) Championship games will be held under the direction of the NCHSAA; this is to include approval of game sites.
 - (2) Team expenses—For neutral site championships, both teams receive travel and lodging, if applicable.
 - (i) If the distance is over 75 miles (one way), the visiting team will be allowed a meal for those dressed, up to 45 persons. Meal allowance consists of \$5.00 for each person for breakfast, \$6.00 for lunch, \$8.00 for dinner.
 - (ii) Motel expenses will be allowed for one night if visiting team is more than 150 miles from playoff site. Two nights will be allowed if over 300 miles. Schools will pay their motel bill, and the NCHSAA will reimburse the schools up to an \$11.00 rate per person, for up to 45 persons.
 - (3) Division of receipts—In the championship games, after the game and team expenses have been deducted, the Association will receive 60 percent of the net receipts and the participating teams will divide the remainder.
 - (4) Admission to games—\$15.00 at the gate (includes one-dollar surcharge for Endowment).
 - (5) Awards—The winning and runner-up teams will receive plaques. Members of the winning and runner-up teams will also receive individual awards. (70 medals for 1A and 2A, 80 medals for 3A, and 90 medals for 4A)

4.6 GOLF

4.6.1 General:

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Payment of Officials, Eligibility Sheets, Ejections, Playoff Declaration, Unpaid Fines, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under General Requirements for Interscholastic Activities (4.1).
- (b) Date of First Practice: August 2 (women); February 14 (men).
- (c) Preseason Scrimmages: Reference 4.1.5
- (d) Date of First Match: August 16 (women); February 28 (men).
- (e) Number of Regular Season Contests: No more than three matches may be scheduled per week. Individuals are limited to one contest a day.
- (f) Women's Participation: Women can only participate in ONE season per year.
 - (1) If no women's team is available, then women may play on the men's team in the spring.
 - (2) If the player chooses to enter the women's regional, or play as an individual during the fall season, she may not play on the men's team in the spring.
- (g) Health and Safety Guidelines: Reference General Requirements for Interscholastic Athletic Activities for a listing of Guidelines (4.1.22) and Health and Safety Guidelines (2.3) for all the information.
- (h) Coaching: The NCHSAA will allow TWO designated coaches from each school to coach during the regional and state championships. It is a conference option during the regular season. The following regulations must be followed:
 - (1) The TWO coaches who are allowed to give advice must be identified during the match via armband, neck tag or other identification measure.
 - (2) The two designated coach may give advice, of a short and quick duration, from the tee to the greens and the walk between holes. NOTE: Coaches may not provide continuous coaching while walking with a player. Once finished, coaches must return immediately to the cart path.
 - (3) Any violation of the coaching rule can result in a two-stroke penalty and may cause the coach to lose his privilege to communicate with players the remainder of the event during the round/rounds.
 - (4) Prior to any stroke, the coach must step back from the player.
 - (5) Coaches may not be on the tee box or enter onto the green(s) at any time.
 - (6) Use of radios, walkie-talkies, cell phones and other electronic devices by players or coaches is not allowed. All cell phones must be turned to silent. Violation results in disqualification. A cell phone with a range finder application is illegal.
 - (7) Use of USGA approved range finders is permitted at any time (except for cell phone applications).
 - (i) Yardage measuring devices and information may be shared among players.
 - (ii) A player may obtain distance information by using a device that measures distance only.
 - (iii) If, during a round, a player uses a distance-measuring device that is designed to gauge or measure other conditions that might affect play (e.g. Slope/gradient, wind speed,