

NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION



HANDBOOK





2026-2027 HANDBOOK OF THE

NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

NCHSAA OFFICE

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The NCHSAA office is usually open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. when our member schools are in session. Staff members will usually stagger their schedules to attempt to cover the office at all times, with lunch hours scheduled for office personnel between 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Mark Garrett
Superintendent
Henderson Co. Schools

Welcome to the 2026-2027 North Carolina High School Athletic Association Handbook and to another exciting year of education-based athletics across our state.

I am both honored and humbled to serve as President of the NCHSAA. High school athletics have long been one of the greatest extensions of the classroom, providing experiences that shape young people in ways few other opportunities can. It is a privilege to work alongside the educators, coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers, and community members who make those experiences possible for students across our state.

The success of education-based athletics will never be determined solely by the games we play, but by the example we set. This year, I challenge each of us to *Set the Standard*.

We set the standard through our character. Every decision we make and every interaction we have should reflect the values of education-based athletics.

Sportsmanship, integrity, respect, and accountability are not ideals reserved for student-athletes; they are expectations for all of us. Whether we serve as principals, athletic directors, coaches, officials, parents, or student-athletes, our actions define the culture of our programs and shape the lessons young people carry with them long after the final score.

We set the standard through our commitment to education-based athletics. Winning championships is exciting, but the true value of high school sports is found in the lifelong lessons they teach. Athletics challenge students to work as a team, overcome adversity, lead with humility, and persevere through both success and disappointment. These experiences prepare young people to become responsible citizens, capable leaders, and individuals of character in every walk of life.

We also set the standard through service. The NCHSAA is a member-governed organization, and its strength depends on the active involvement of its member schools. Every principal, athletic director, coach, official, committee member, board member, and school representative who contributes time, perspective, and expertise helps shape the future of our Association. I encourage every member school to engage in the work of the NCHSAA because the best decisions are made when the voices, perspectives, and experiences of our membership guide the way forward.

Finally, we set the standard by remembering why we are here. Every policy we adopt, every contest we administer, and every decision we make should ultimately serve one purpose: creating meaningful opportunities for students to learn, compete, and grow. When we keep students at the center of our work, excellence naturally follows.

Thank you for your dedication to the student-athletes of North Carolina and to the values that have made the NCHSAA one of the nation's premier state associations. Together, let us Set the Standard through our leadership, our service, and our example. Let's do this for our schools, our communities, and, most importantly, our students. When we keep students at the center of our work, excellence will always follow.

I wish each of you a successful, rewarding, and memorable 2026-2027 school year.

Respectfully,



Mark Garrett, President NCHSAA

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER



Que Tucker
NCHSAA Commissioner
2015-2026

Just as in previous years, this handbook represents policies, rules, regulations, as well as a means by which we strive to ensure a level playing field for the sports and programs we oversee. Best wishes for a great 2026-2027!

As I write this final introduction to the NCHSAA Handbook as Commissioner, I do so with deep gratitude and great optimism for the future of this association. Serving the member schools, student-athletes, coaches, administrators, officials, and communities of North Carolina has been one of the greatest privileges of my professional life.

Throughout my tenure, I have been continually inspired by the passion, integrity, and resilience of those who make interscholastic athletics such a meaningful part of the educational experience. Together, we have celebrated remarkable achievements, navigated significant challenges, and remained committed to providing opportunities that help young people grow as students, athletes, and leaders.

The NCHSAA has always been about more than competition. It is about character, sportsmanship, teamwork, and the life lessons that extend far beyond the playing field, court, pool, or track. Every decision made should reflect our responsibility to keep at the center of everything we do the health, safety and development of student-athletes.

I am especially grateful to our Boards of Directors, current and former staff, member school leaders, coaches, officials, corporate partners, and so many volunteers whose dedication has strengthened this association and ensured its continued success. The accomplishments we have shared are the result of working together and an unwavering commitment to serving students.

As I conclude my service as Commissioner, I leave with confidence in the future of the NCHSAA. The challenges facing education and athletics will continue to evolve, but so must the dedication and commitment of those charged to lead. I encourage everyone connected to our association to continue embracing change while remaining rooted in the values that have guided the NCHSAA for more than a century.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you. The relationships I have built, the memories we have created, and the impact we have made together will remain with me always. It has truly been an honor to serve as the Commissioner of the NCHSAA!

I wish the entire NCHSAA family continued success as you inspire future generations of student-athletes. I challenge you to uphold the traditions that make our association one of the nation's finest.

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature of Que Tucker in black ink.

Que Tucker
NCHSAA Commissioner

NCHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Garrett , Henderson County Schools	President
Andy McCormick , Moore County School	Vice President
Stephen Gainey , Randolph County Schools	Past President
Brad Alford , N.C. High School Athletic Association	Commissioner

Sam Jones , West Stokes High School	June 30, 2027
Allen Plaster , Page High School	June 30, 2027
John F. Milliner-Williams , Northampton High School	June 30, 2027
Henry Rice , Pamlico County Schools	June 30, 2027
Matt McLean , Pinecrest High School	June 30, 2027
Dana Ayers , Jackson County Public Schools	June 30, 2028
Jamie King , Sampson County Schools	June 30, 2028
Eddie Doll , James B. Hunt High School	June 30, 2028
Ericia Turner , Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools	June 30, 2029
Brett Lamb , Highlands School	June 30, 2029
Tracey Slade-Nixon , Northside (Pinetown) High School	June 30, 2030
Asim McGill , Martin County Schools	June 30, 2030
Eric Bracy , Cumberland County Schools	June 30, 2030
Kelly Withers , Rowan-Salisbury Schools	June 30, 2030
David Johnson , Wilkes County Schools	June 30, 2030
Matt Stover , Catawba County Schools	June 30, 2030

Joe Franks , N.C. Coaches Association	Affiliate Member
Wendell Hall , N.C. State School Board Association	Affiliate Member
TBD , N.C. Department of Public Instruction	Affiliate Member
Elbert Lassiter , North State Football Officials Association	Affiliate Member
Roy Turner , N.C. Athletic Directors Association	Affiliate Member

BOARD COORDINATOR

Kim Newman

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Andy McCormick	Mark Garrett	Matt Stover
Jamie King	Ericia Turner	Brett Lamb
	Brad Alford	

BOARD COMMITTEES

Finance/Personnel

Chair: Andy McCormick
 Vice Chair: Jamie King
 Committee: Matt McLean
 Eric Bracy

Staff Advisors: Brad Alford
 Karen DeHart
 Tavares Toomer

Policy

Chair: Allen Plaster
 Vice Chair: Sam Jones
 Committee: Tracey Slade-Nixon
 Matt Stover
 Roy Turner

Sports

Chair: Henry Rice
 Vice Chair: Dana Ayers
 Committee: Brett Lamb
 Asim McGill
 Eddie Doll
 Joe Franks

Staff Advisors: Rhonda Dreibelbis

Review/Officiating

Chair: John Williams
 Vice Chair: Ericia Turner
 Committee: Stephen Gainey
 Kelly Withers
 David Johnson
 Elbert Lassiter

Staff Advisor: Eddie Simmons

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Region

Co-Chair

Co-Chair

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

Member

Marc Payne, Retired, Ashe County High School

Dylan Johnson, Wilkes Central High School

Charles Simmons, Retired, Hertford High School

Darren Hulen, Lakewood High School

Angie Miller, Nash County Schools

Michael Baker, Retired, Fairmont High School

Kelly Moyer, River Mill Academy

Tim Niedermeier, Monroe High School

Amber Reddick, Freedom High School

Travise Pitman, Mitchell High School

Committee Coordinator: Kim Newman

Staff Advisor: Brad Alford

ADVISORS/CONSULTANTS

Russell James

Michele Wood

Kinsey Davis

Kelly Margolis Dagger

Randolph Cloud

Reginald Holley

Blackman and Sloop

Risk Management

Claims Contact

Senior Client Manager (*Marsh & McLennan Agency, LLC*)

General Counsel (*Ellis & Winters, LLP*)

Legislative Liaison

Legislative Liaison

Certified Public Accountants

NCHSAA Handbook - Introduction

This official Handbook of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc. contains the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, rules and regulations and general information of the Association.

The NCHSAA administers high school athletics pursuant to a memorandum of understanding with the State Board of Education. Therefore, the contents of this Handbook are subject to change as necessary to account for changes in the law and the decisions of the State Board of Education.

It is vital that each school administrator becomes very familiar with the contents of this book. It is also more important than ever that each coach involved with high school athletics utilizes the Handbook. Much of the information necessary for coaches to run effective and efficient programs is contained in the Handbook. Therefore, it is vital that each coach have a copy of this publication, and also have access to the NCHSAA web site for certain updates.

Sometimes changes are made in regulations or policies after the book is published, and it is the responsibility of member schools to make sure they are aware of the most current information.

A complete knowledge, understanding and conformity to minimum NCHSAA policies will assure every member school that its interscholastic program is being conducted in a fair and equitable manner, and ensures that the athletic program is of educational and lasting value.

Each NCHSAA member institution has a responsibility to educate student-athletes, coaches, and other appropriate persons on state association legislation that could affect them. Furthermore, the member school should monitor its compliance with state association rules and regulations. All member schools, administrators, coaches, student-athletes and other representatives of member schools are deemed to know and understand all NCHSAA rules and regulations. Ignorance of any rule or regulation is not considered to be sufficient cause for setting aside the effect of any rule or regulation.

The HANDBOOK is published annually and copies are provided to superintendents, principals and athletic directors of member schools. Additional copies are available at a cost of \$10.00 per copy.

For the most up-to-date information on brackets in various sports, including conference playoff berths, seeding priorities and qualifiers, consult the NCHSAA Website at www.nchsaa.org. Forms and other NCHSAA information is also available on the website.

Other Publications

NCHSAA Directory information for each member school is available through the NCHSAA Website under the "For Schools" menu.

The NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL **RECORD BOOK** is available online at <http://www.nchsaa.org/record-books>.

Special Deadlines and Dates

September 1	Verify/Update School Information in DragonFly
September 6	Regional Meeting Registration
November 1	B.O.D. Agenda Items Due (Winter Meeting)
November 1	Hall of Fame Nominations Due
December 1	Payment of Membership Dues
April 1	B.O.D. Agenda Items Due (Spring Meeting)

Commitment to Excellence

The NCHSAA and its member schools are committed to creating an environment in all Association programs which fosters respect for individuals of all ability levels and appreciation of racial, gender, and ethnic differences.

In compliance with federal law, including the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, N.C. Public Schools administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. Inquiries or complaints should be directed to:

**Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction
6301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6301
Telephone 984-236-2100**

The mission of the NCHSAA is to provide governance and leadership for interscholastic athletic programs in North Carolina that support and enrich the educational experience of students.

NCHSAA CORE VALUES

Sportsmanship - following the rules of the game, respecting the judgment of referees and officials, treating opponents with respect, respecting one's opponent and graciousness in winning or losing.

Integrity - consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes - the truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions. Soundness of moral character. Adherence to moral and ethical principles.

Fair Play - a shared interpretation of the rules, the equal treatment of all concerned, sticking to the agreed rules, not using unfair advantages.

Honesty - uprightness and fairness, truthfulness, sincerity or frankness, freedom from deceit or fraud. To consistently seek and speak the truth.

Respect - a positive feeling of esteem for a person or other entity and specific actions and conduct representative of that esteem.

Equity - fairness, just and right, equitable treatment of all, dealing fairly and equally with all concerned.

Fair Competition - competitors within a competition should have similar performance potential and performance strength.

Education and Development of Student-Athletes - participation in athletics should aid in the physiological and psychological development of the student-athlete.

Regional Meetings

NCHSAA Regional Meetings are designed to provide a better understanding of the interscholastic athletic program on the senior high school level.

These meetings can serve as an invaluable aid in directing, planning and administering the school's athletic program. Superintendents, principals, and one school staff member responsible for the athletic program are urged to attend the meeting in their region.

Regional meetings include sessions on key issues and possible changes in Association regulations, an opportunity to voice opinions and take straw votes on items, and chances to honor outstanding people on the regional level by voting for awards in a number of categories. In addition, regional award winners are honored at these meetings.

A social time is customarily held from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m., immediately followed by the meeting. Lunch is at approx. 12:00 noon.

2026 Schedule

Region	Date	Site	Chairperson
6	Sept. 21	Cabarrus Arena Concord	Ericia Turner, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
8	Sept. 22	Buncombe County Schools Asheville	Dana Ayers, Jackson County Public Schools
7	Sept. 23	Stone Performing Arts Building Wilkesboro	Matt Stover, Catawba County Schools
5	Sept. 24	Piedmont Hall Greensboro Coliseum Complex	Stephen Gainey, Randolph County Schools
4	Sept. 28	Cumberland Ed. Center Cumberland County Schools Fayetteville	Andy McCormick, Moore County Schools
2	Sept. 29	Duplin Commons Kenansville	Henry Rice, Pamlico County High School
1	Sept. 30	ECU Murphy Center Harvey Hall Greenville	Tracey Slade-Nixon, Northside (Pinetown) High School
3	Oct. 1	Hope Community Church Raleigh	John Williams, Northampton High School

Regional Meeting Coordinator: Kim Newman, (919) 240-7364, kim@nchsaa.org

NCHSAA Regional Meeting Map



ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

The undersigned, being above the age of eighteen (18) years, does hereby make and acknowledge these Articles of Incorporation for the purpose of forming a nonprofit corporation under and by virtue of the laws of the State of North Carolina.

ARTICLE ONE

Name. The name of the association shall be NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

ARTICLE TWO

Duration. The period of duration of the corporation shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE THREE

Purposes. Whereas athletic activities play a recognized and valuable role in high school education in North Carolina, and whereas the coordination of these activities among the several high schools has been found to be of special benefit to high school education in North Carolina, the purposes for which this corporation are formed are educational in nature, and, though limited by the scope and meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1954, the purposes include:

- (a) To stimulate, control and direct high school athletics among its members or between its members and other teams in North Carolina.
- (b) To maintain a high standard for high school games, contests, athletics and all other sports activities by and among its members in North Carolina.
- (c) To give and grant to its members and to others, so far as empowered by law, the privilege to hold contests, competitions, and exhibitions under its auspices or otherwise, in accordance with its prescribed rules and regulations, and subject to conditions as it may lawfully impose.
- (d) To enact and establish rules and regulations governing such contests, competitions, exhibitions and athletic participations, and to determine and define awards and prizes for such contests, and to determine and define breaches and infractions of its rules and regulations.
- (e) To educate and train members and persons regarding all adopted rules and regulations governing athletic participation and competition by and among its members and regarding rules for particular sports and games.
- (f) To exercise disciplinary authority so far as is lawful over all members and representatives of members engaged in contests, competitions, exhibitions and athletic activities, to the end that games, contests, sports and athletics of every kind may be subject to clean, sportsmanlike, dignified competition.
- (g) To promote the physical and moral well-being of all athletes representing its members.
- (h) To educate public opinion regarding high school athletics by and among its members.
- (i) By all lawful means to elevate, improve and promote games, contests, physical exercises, athletics, exhibitions and all sports by and among its members.
- (j) To acquire, hold title to, sell, exchange, lease, alien, build structures upon or otherwise to deal in real property for the purpose of maintaining premises where the hereinabove stated purposes can be pursued.
- (k) To apply for, solicit, receive, hold and disburse grants, funds and other property to be used in furtherance of the purposes stated herein.

ARTICLE FOUR

Membership. Any North Carolina public or non-boarding parochial high school is eligible for membership provided it is accredited by the State Department of Public Instruction, and provided that the high school adopts and maintains the following code for participation in high school athletics:

"Competitive athletics cannot be justified as a part of the school program unless it contributes to a wholesome rounding out of the personality of the participants and the spectators. We shall therefore insist on hard but clean play resulting in honest victory without conceit or honest defeat without bitterness.

Realizing that eligibility rules are made to help relationships between schools, we agree to live up to the spirit as well as the letter of the regulations set by the association.

We shall see that the control of the policies and operations of high school athletics remains with the legally constituted governing body and is delegated by this body to the school officials. If desirable, the superintendent can assign responsibility to the principal, and the principal to the athletic coach, who will be a full-fledged faculty member.

We shall always put first the best interest of the students and shall insist on careful, adequate protective equipment, and coaches who know training rules and practice, and will not permit students to play when the students' best interests indicate that they should not play."

The Association shall have the power to fix by resolution of the Board of Directors such membership fees and charges as it deems appropriate from time to time for the support of the organization.

ARTICLE FIVE

Directors. The Board of Directors of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc., shall consist of twenty (20) members including the Immediate Past President, President, Vice-President and Commissioner of the association, plus ten (10) principals of member schools or superintendents of systems including member schools, plus six (6) athletic directors or coaches of member schools; the Directors shall be chosen as provided in the Bylaws of the Association. Editor's Note: The names and addresses of the initial members of the Board of Directors are on file with the North Carolina Secretary of State.

The business and affairs of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc., shall be managed by the Board of Directors in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws.

ARTICLE SIX

Powers. This Association shall have those powers which are necessary and convenient to the execution of the purposes hereinabove provided.

Provided, however, that no part of the net earnings of the Association shall inure to the benefit of any member, director, officer of the Association or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Association affecting one or more of its purposes), and no member, director, or officer of the Association or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets on dissolution of the Association. No substantial part of the activities of the Association shall constitute the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation or participating in or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the Association shall not conduct or carry on any activities not permitted to be conducted or carried on by an organization exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended.

ARTICLE SEVEN

Dissolution. Upon the dissolution of the Association, the Directors shall pay or make provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Association, and the balance of all money and other property remaining received by the Association from any source shall be used or distributed exclusively for purposes within the intent of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code as the same now exists or as it may be amended from time to time, or the Board of Directors may distribute all the remaining assets to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for charitable, educational or benevolent purposes as shall at that time qualify as an exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provisions of any future United States statute.

Or, the Board of Directors may elect, upon dissolution of the Association, to sell the assets of the Association and to distribute the proceeds from such sale as provided in the preceding paragraph.

ARTICLE EIGHT

The initial registered office of the Association shall be located at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Orange County, North Carolina; the initial registered address of the association shall be Craige Mobile Park Offices, Manning Drive, Chapel Hill, Orange County, North Carolina 27514; and the name of the initial registered agent at such address shall be Simon F. Terrell. (NOTE: The present registered address of the association is 222 Finley Golf Course Road, Chapel Hill, Orange County, North Carolina 27517; and the name of the present registered agent is Marilyn Q. Tucker.)

ARTICLE NINE

The name of the incorporator is Robert Epting, whose address is 214 West Rosemary Street, Chapel Hill, Orange County, North Carolina, 27517.

BYLAWS

Articles of Incorporation of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc., having been filed with the Secretary of State of North Carolina, now, therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, that the BYLAWS of the Association be and hereby are enacted as follows:

I. PURPOSES

The purposes for which this corporation is organized are:

- (a) To stimulate, control and direct high school athletics among its members or between its members and other teams in North Carolina.
- (b) To maintain a high standard for high school games, contests, athletics and all other sports activities by and among its members in North Carolina.
- (c) To give and grant to its members and to others, so far as empowered by law, the privilege to hold contests, competitions, and exhibitions under its auspices or otherwise, in accordance with its prescribed rules and regulations, and subject to such conditions as it may lawfully impose.
- (d) To enact and establish rules and regulations governing such contests, competitions, exhibitions and athletic participations, and to determine and define awards and prizes for such contests, and to determine and define breaches and infractions of its rules and regulations.
- (e) To educate and train members and persons regarding all adopted rules and regulations governing athletic participation and competition by and among its members and regarding rules for particular sports and games.
- (f) To exercise disciplinary authority so far as is lawful over all members and representatives of members engaged in contests, competitions, exhibitions and athletic activities, to the end that games, contests, sports and athletics of every kind may be subject to clean, sportsmanlike, dignified competition.
- (g) To promote the physical and moral well-being of all athletes representing its members.
- (h) To educate public opinion regarding high school athletics by and among its members.
- (i) By all lawful means to elevate, improve and promote games, contests, physical exercises, athletics, exhibitions and all sports by and among its members.
- (j) To acquire, hold title to, sell, exchange, lease, alien, build structures upon or otherwise to deal in real property for the purpose of maintaining premises where the hereinabove stated purposes can be pursued.
- (k) To apply for, solicit, receive, hold and disburse grants, funds and other property to be used in furtherance of the purposes stated herein.

II. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Association shall be governed by a Board of Directors consisting of twenty (20) persons selected as follows:

- 1. *Selection of Directors.*
 - a. The President and Vice-President, chosen at the annual meeting of the Association, the Commissioner and Immediate Past President of the Association shall be members of the Board of Directors by virtue of their election to those respective offices. The President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, and Commissioner shall be officers of the Board of Directors and are not designated to represent any geographic area.
 - b. Sixteen non-officer members of the Board of Directors shall be elected to represent the educational districts defined by G.S. 115C-65. As the terms of current members of the Board of Directors expire, non-officer members shall be elected so as to cause each educational district to be represented by two non-officer members of the Board of Directors.
 - c. Ten of the non-officer members of the Board of Directors shall be chosen from among the principals of member schools and/or the superintendents of systems including member schools.
 - d. Six of the non-officer members of the Board of Directors shall be chosen from among the coaches of member schools or athletic directors of member schools or systems including member schools.
 - e. Provided, however, that after the terms of the current members of the Board of Directors expire, the Board of Directors shall at all times consist of at least one representative from each classification and at least two representatives from each educational district.
 - f. Successor members of the Board of Directors shall be chosen in each annual meeting of the Association to replace the current members as their terms expire. The term of each new Director so elected shall be four

years. When any Director shall fail to serve completely the Director's term of office, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to name a successor to fill the office until the next annual meeting of the Association.

g. When a member of the Board of Directors with two years or more remaining on that member's term transfers to another position (and thus no longer fulfills Bylaw II.1.c, d) or to another educational district (and thus alters the equal representation of educational districts among non-officer members of the Board of Directors required by Bylaw II.1.b), that Director's office is declared vacant and the office is filled from the accepted procedure to elect a representative from the vacant position or educational district.

(Approved March 2025, 348-6, as to subparts a, b, c, d, f, and g; approved March 2025, 351-3, as to subpart e)

2. *Meetings of Directors.* Regular meetings of the Directors of the Association shall be held at times appointed by the President, provided that notice of such meetings is given each Director not less than three days prior to each meeting.

Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by or at the request of not less than four members of the Board of Directors. Notice of such meetings shall be given to each Director at least three days prior to the meeting by the Commissioner or the President of the Association.

Agenda items for Board meetings should be in to the NCHSAA no later than November 1 for the winter meeting and April 1 for the spring meeting.

3. *Quorum.* A quorum shall consist of eleven (11) members of the Board of Directors at all meetings of the Board, and action may be taken by a majority of the quorum. (Approved December 2017, 329-8)

4. *Powers.* The Board of Directors shall be empowered to make, subject to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of this Association, the rules and regulations of the Association which shall govern the various athletic activities and contests sanctioned or carried out under the auspices of this Association, which rules and regulations shall be prepared and distributed to member schools and systems as early as practicable annually.

The Board of Directors shall exercise, through such persons or committees as it sees fit, which persons or committees shall include in any event the President and Commissioner of the Association, supervisory powers over the various athletic activities and contests sanctioned or carried out under the auspices of this Association to insure proper compliance with the rules and regulations of the Association.

The Board of Directors shall have the power to create such new offices and committees as it finds convenient or necessary from time to time.

The Board of Directors, through the Commissioner, shall call conferences of faculty managers to arrange schedules for the various athletic activities and contests sanctioned or carried on under the auspices of the Association, and the Board of Directors shall have final authority to determine schedules between teams which cannot agree to game schedules in any season.

The Board of Directors shall have the authority to review the interpretations of the Commissioner and the Executive Committee regarding the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Association, and its decision in these matters shall be final.

The initial Board of Directors and the dates for expiration of their terms are on file with the North Carolina Secretary of State.

5. *The Executive Committee*

Composition. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Commissioner and four other members of the Board of Directors. The four Director members of the Executive Committee shall be chosen by the President from Directors nominated by all the Directors from each classification of schools; provided, however, that one such Director member of the Executive Committee shall be chosen from each classification of schools, and further provided, that two of the Director members of the Executive Committee shall be school administrators and two shall be coaches or athletic directors.

Powers. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act on behalf of the Association as directed by the Board of Directors.

III. OFFICERS

The officers of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc., shall consist of a President, a Vice-President and a Commissioner.

1. *Election of Officers.* The President and Vice-President shall be elected annually at the annual meeting. Only superintendents of school systems or principals of member schools shall be eligible to serve as President or Vice-President.

The Commissioner shall be elected and his or her annual salary set by the Board of Directors. The term of his or her office shall be four years.

2. *President.* The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association, all meetings of the Board of Directors and all meetings of the Executive Committee, at all meetings of committees in charge of various contests, and shall discharge all other duties of the presiding officer. It shall be the duty of the President to call meetings of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee from time to time as the business of the Association requires their attention.

In the event that the office of President is vacated during the term of the President, the office of President shall be filled by the Vice-President for the remainder of the unexpired term.

3. *Vice-President.* The Vice-President shall preside and perform all the duties of the President in the absence of the President, and shall undertake such other duties as the President or Board of Directors may prescribe. In the event that the office of Vice-President is vacated during the term of the Vice-President, the Board of Directors shall have the power to name one of its members as Vice-President for the remainder of the unexpired term.

4. *Commissioner.* The Commissioner shall be a full-time employee of the Association, and shall serve as the managing business agent of the Association. In addition, the Commissioner shall be charged with initially receiving and processing all applications for membership in this Association, all inquiries, requests or correspondence regarding contests.

The Commissioner shall call conferences for the preparation of various contest schedules, and he or she shall preside over these conferences. The Commissioner shall keep the official records of all meetings of the Association and the Board of Directors and he or she shall have charge of all funds of the Association for which he or she shall render an annual accounting to the Association at its annual meeting.

The Commissioner shall be bonded in a sum not less than \$10,000.

IV. ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Association shall be held at a time designated by the Board of Directors. The annual meeting shall receive the reports of the Commissioner, hold elections for members of the Board of Directors and for officers, and transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

The principal shall be regarded as the constituted authority of each member school. The principal may appoint any member of the school's faculty to represent him or her at the annual meeting of the Association. The principal's authority in this respect shall be subject only to the authority of the superintendent of the principal's administrative unit.

Each member school represented at the annual meeting shall have one vote on Association business. Those present at the annual meeting shall constitute a quorum.

V. FINANCE

Except as otherwise provided by law, the Board of Directors shall have the power to determine membership fees and other charges for Association members.

Should the Association disband, its remaining funds and assets shall first be used to satisfy outstanding obligations including employment and purchase contracts, and any remaining funds shall be disbursed to member schools on an equitable basis as determined by the Board of Directors, provided that no distribution inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation may be made. If insufficient funds exist for the satisfaction of Association obligations, members of the Association may be assessed by the Board of Directors in a total amount sufficient to satisfy the said obligations.

VI. CLASSIFICATIONS

For purposes of athletic competition, the number of classifications shall be based on the total number of member schools, with no classification exceeding sixty-four schools.

When at least 25% of the total number of member schools participate in a sport, that sport shall be sanctioned by the NCHSAA and shall culminate in a state championship. When less than half of the schools in a classification participate, those schools shall be grouped with schools from the next largest classification(s) not having 50% participation in that sport to create a state playoff bracket culminating in a multi-class state championship. If only one classification has less than 50% of schools participating in a sport, the schools in that classification shall have a reduced playoff bracket by one round. If that is not possible, then the schools of that classification shall be placed in the state playoffs of the next highest classification. (Approved March 2025, 340-14)

The initial classification plan using this format will be effective with the 2025-2026 school year and shall solely use the ADM figures averaging the daily membership in grades 9,10, 11 and 12 for the first month as submitted to the State Department of Public Instruction. The classification and alignment plan shall be adopted by the Board of Directors every four years and will be effective for a four-year period.

Schools may request reclassification in the second year of the alignment period by following the process published by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall distribute to all member schools and systems annually the process and criteria for classification and alignment, the process for requesting reclassification in the second year of the alignment period, and the process for requesting reconsideration of the classification and alignment decisions of the Association. (Approved March 2025, 347-7)

VII. AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws shall be submitted to the Commissioner's office no later than the November 1 prior to the annual meeting. In order to be considered, the proposed change must have been submitted and endorsed by the superintendents or principals of at least six member schools or systems with member schools.

If the proposed change is properly submitted to the Commissioner, the Commissioner shall distribute a copy of the proposed change with explanations as appropriate and a ballot to each member school, and the Commissioner shall set a reasonable deadline for the return of the ballots prior to the annual meeting.

An affirmative vote of not less than three-fourths of the ballots timely returned by member schools, as long as such ballots are returned by a majority of member schools, shall be necessary for a change in the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws. Majority shall mean fifty percent of the then-existing member schools plus one. The Commissioner shall report the results of the vote at the annual meeting, and shall cause such additional documents to be prepared as to formally notice the amendment or amendments. (Approved March 2025, 341-13)

1. The Board of Directors may update the Registered Agent in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws should the Registered Agent or managing business agent's position, often the Commissioner, become incapacitated or leave office. (Approved December 2017, 335-2)

VIII. PENALTIES

Except as provided by law, the Board of Directors, upon the relation of the Commissioner or any of the members of the Association, shall have the duty and authority to authorize the investigation of and to punish member schools or their representatives for any violations of the rules and regulations of the Association. The Board shall take care that due notice of alleged violations and an opportunity to appear and respond to the allegations is afforded each member or representative of a member accused of violations of Association rules or regulations prior to its determination upon the allegations.

The Board of Directors shall distribute to all member schools and systems annually the process for reporting suspected violations of the rules and regulations of the Association, the potential penalties for violations of rules and regulations, and the process for appealing decisions of the Association with respect to the application of the rules and regulations and the imposition of penalties.

IX. EFFECTIVE DATE

These Bylaws shall become effective upon their ratification by at least three-fourths of the members present at the annual meeting of the Association.

Or, these Bylaws shall become effective upon ratification by affirmative vote of three-fourths of those responding to a special ballot to be prepared and mailed by the Commissioner of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc. APPROVED by vote of 258-1 in special balloting of all members of the Association on October 11, 1976.

By a special ballot vote of all members in December 2017 (332-5), the date and voting method for amendments to the Articles and Bylaws will be noted next to the amended provision.

By a special ballot vote of 427 member schools on March 11, 2022 (347-9), the Bylaws were suspended until brought into compliance with the Memorandum of Understanding which was entered into on March 14, 2022.

The Membership APPROVED amendments to these Bylaws to allow the NCHSAA to comply with the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding to operate as a designated organization of the State Board of Education in oversight of interscholastic athletics in the state. Amendments were approved by vote of 377-8 of 427 total members, in a special balloting on May 13, 2022 to take effect July 1, 2022.

The Membership APPROVED amendments to these Bylaws, with votes as noted herein, on March 31, 2025.

National Federation of State High School Associations

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), of which the NCHSAA is a member, had its beginnings in 1920 and now consists of the 50 individual state high school athletic and activities associations and the association of the District of Columbia. Also affiliated are eight interscholastic organizations from Canadian provinces.

The activities of the NFHS are based on the belief that strong state and national high school athletic organizations are necessary to protect the activity and athletic interests of the high schools, to promote an ever increasing growth of a type of interscholastic athletics which is educational in both objective and method and which can be justified as an integral part of the high school curriculum, and to protect high school students from exploitation for purposes having no educational implications.

The NFHS is both a service and regulatory organization and offers a number of services. The NFHS is involved in rules-writing activity, developing playing rules in various high school sports to the point that the circulation of NFHS rules publications now exceeds three million. In addition, the NFHS provides aids for rules-training programs for officials, maintains national interscholastic records and publishes a record book, supervises the National High School Sports Hall of Fame, and has initiated a chemical health program, among its many services.

NFHS offices are located in Indianapolis, Indiana, with a mailing address of P.O. Box 690, Indianapolis, IN 46206, and the phone number is (317) 972-6900.



SECTION 1: STUDENT REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

1.1 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING/DEFINITIONS

The NCHSAA administers high school athletics among public school units pursuant to a memorandum of understanding ("MOU") with the Superintendent of Public Instruction ("Superintendent" or "State Superintendent"), in accordance with state law. Pursuant to that MOU, the NCHSAA shall apply, enforce, and administer all rules adopted by the State Board of Education ("State Board Rules") to govern interscholastic athletics at the high school level, codified at Title 16, Subchapter 6E, Section .0200 of the North Carolina Administrative Code, without alteration or expansion. The State Board Rules are encompassed in the State Board of Education's ATHL Policy Series ("State Board Policies"), which the NCHSAA applies. The State Board Rules and Policies are available in full at no cost on the NCHSAA website, and the State Board Policies relevant to the NCHSAA's administration of high school athletics are set forth below with commentary (Application Notes) on how the NCHSAA applies, enforces, and administers the State Board Policies. The Application Notes (whether included in this Section 1 or other sections of the Handbook) are binding on all member schools and failure to comply with an Application Note will be deemed failure to comply with the associated State Board Rule and Policy provision.

1.1.1 For purposes of the State Board Policies, the following definitions (from ATHL-001, Section 1 Definitions) apply:

- a. "Administering organization" means a nonprofit organization that has entered into and is in compliance with a memorandum of understanding with the State Superintendent to administer and enforce the adopted rules and requirements for interscholastic athletics at the high school level, as required by Chapter 115C, Article 17 of the General Statutes.
- b. "Administrative rules" means rules that govern classifications of schools into divisions and conferences, administration of games, and requirements for coaching, officiating, sportsmanship, and scheduling of seasons.
- c. "Aggrieved party" means a student, coach, participating school, PSU, or other party that is directly and adversely affected by a final decision of an administrator enforcing a student participation rule, penalty rule, or gameplay rule. If a student is affected, the student's parent shall be allowed to appeal the final decision pursuant to ATHL-013.
- d. "Bona fide purpose" means for a purpose not primarily related to participation in interscholastic athletics.
- e. "Final decision" means a written decision of a rule administrator regarding the application or enforcement of rules under SBE policies on interscholastic athletics to a set of facts or circumstances. A ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, as recorded by the referee or official in the game record maintained by the rule administrator, that results in the ejection or suspension of a player or coach shall be deemed a final decision upon exhaustion of any available mechanisms for review under the rule administrator's internal policies and procedures.
- f. "Gameplay rules" means rules adopted in accordance with the requirements of the governing organization for each sport, including the requirements of the National Federation of State High School Associations.
- g. "Immediate family member" means a spouse, parent, legal guardian, or custodian, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, half-sibling, or step-sibling. The term applies to any such relationship whether by blood, adoption, or marriage.
- h. "Initial entry" means:
 - i. A student's first day of attendance at a participating school in which the student is enrolled as recorded by that school; or
 - ii. The first day on which a student practices or otherwise participates as a member of an interscholastic athletics team at a participating school.
- i. "Interscholastic athletics" or "interscholastic athletic activity" means any extracurricular athletic activity that:
 - i. Involves students in any Grades 6 through 12;
 - ii. Is sponsored by an individual school, PSU, or administering organization; and
 - iii. Includes students from more than one school or PSU.
- j. "Local superintendent" means the superintendent of a local school administrative unit, as provided in Chapter 115C, Article 18 of the General Statutes, or the staff member with the highest decision making authority for a PSU, if there is no superintendent.
- k. "Parent" means the parent or legal guardian of a student participating or seeking to participate in interscholastic athletics activities.
- l. "Participating school" means a middle school, junior high school, or high school that elects to participate in interscholastic athletic activities.
- m. "Penalty rules" means rules that establish a system of demerits for infractions of student participation rules and gameplay rules which may result in reprimands, probations, suspensions,

forfeitures of contests, forfeitures of titles, and disqualifications but shall not result in monetary penalties of any kind.

- n. "Principal" means a school administrator employed as the principal of a school, as provided in Chapter 115C, Article 19 of the General Statutes, or the staff member with the highest decision-making authority at a school, if there is no principal.
- o. "Rule administrator" means any of the following:
 - i. An administering organization, when administering and enforcing the rules provided by this Section at the high school level.
 - ii. A local superintendent or his or her authorized designee, when administering enforcing the rules provided by this Section at the middle and junior high school level.
 - iii. The Superintendent of Public Instruction, if necessary pursuant to SBE Policy ATHL- 002, Section 6.
- p. "Student health and safety rules" means rules that govern requirements to ensure student health and safety during participation in interscholastic athletic activities, including rules related to concussions and emergency action plans as required by G.S. 115C-407.57 and G.S. 115C-407.58.
- q. "Student participation rules" means rules that govern student eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletic activities.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.1.1. The defined terms in ATHL-001, Section 1 apply to this Handbook and the NCHSAA rules unless otherwise specified or narrowed herein.

- (a) Because the NCHSAA only administers high school athletics among its member schools, as used in this Handbook and the NCHSAA rules, the following terms have a narrower meaning:
 - (i) "Administering organization" means the NCHSAA.
 - (ii) "Rule administrator" or "administrator" means the NCHSAA.
 - (iii) "Interscholastic athletics" or "interscholastic athletic activity" means any extracurricular athletic activity that involves high school students, is sponsored by a membership entity, and includes students from more than one membership entity.
 - (iv) "Participating school" means a high school that elects to participate in interscholastic athletic activities as a member of the NCHSAA, also known as a "member school."
[See Rule 1.1.2(d)].
- (b) The NCHSAA does not currently have internal policies and procedures allowing the NCHSAA to review a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition. Therefore, for NCHSAA contests, a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, as recorded by the referee or official in the game record maintained by the NCHSAA, that results in the ejection or suspension of a player or coach is a final decision of the NCHSAA. Any PSU Aggrieved Party(ies) (as defined in Application Note 1.4.2(a)) may appeal such ruling, as with any other final decision, in accordance with ATHL-013. If the appeal involves an urgent matter, such as the suspension of a student affecting an upcoming contest, the appealing party is encouraged to bring timing considerations to the attention of the Superintendent in the appeal.

1.1.2 For the purposes of this Handbook and NCHSAA rules, the following additional definitions apply:

- (a) "High school" means a public school or non-boarding parochial school offering education in Grades 9 through 12 or 10 through 12.
- (b) "Initial entry" means the earlier of the two events specified in ATHL-001, Section 1.fh(e.g., if a student participates in preseason football workouts prior to the beginning of the ninth grade academic year, this will be deemed the student's initial entry at this member school).
- (c) "Membership entity" is (a) a member non-boarding parochial school, or (b) a public school unit (PSU), as defined by NC General Statute 115C-5, that includes one or more member schools.
- (d) "Member school," also known as a "participating school" is any school that is a member of the NCHSAA.
- (e) "Public school unit" or "PSU" is defined in G.S. 115C-5(7a).
- (f) "Student" means a person enrolled in Grades 9 through 12 in any member school.

1.1.3 A membership entity may have policies in any of these areas or others that are more restrictive than the NCHSAA or State Board of Education ("SBE") requirements. However, the membership entity may not have a policy for eligibility that is less restrictive.

1.1.4 All member schools must conform to the rules contained herein.

- (a) The NCHSAA is not an agency of the State of North Carolina. The NCHSAA has been designated by the Superintendent as an administering organization.
- (b) Member schools are required to comply with all NCHSAA rules, as well as the State Board Rules and Policies.

1.1.5 Complaints and Non-Retaliation - The NCHSAA shall not retaliate against any participating school, the employees or students of those schools, or any other person for reporting, in good faith, to the NCHSAA, SBE, Superintendent, or any government entity any concerns about the NCHSAA's administration of high school interscholastic athletics, includ-

ing the following: suspected violations of laws or rules; circumstances giving rise to a substantial and specific danger to student or school personnel health and safety; fraud; misappropriation of resources; or gross mismanagement or abuse of authority. A PSU, participating school, PSU employee, or student seeking to report allegations of intimidation or harassment by the NCHSAA shall submit a report with the Superintendent. The report shall be in writing and include a detailed description of the factual basis for the allegations. The NCHSAA will be given an opportunity to respond and/or address concerns or complaints submitted to the Superintendent. The application of a penalty rule that is appealable to the appeals board (defined in ATHL-013, Section 1), whether or not challenged on appeal, shall not be considered retaliation.

1.1.6 Schools may sponsor teams in other sports not listed in the Handbook (e.g., gymnastics, weightlifting, women's field hockey, etc.); however, all students, regardless of the sport, must be certified as eligible prior to dressing or participating in any interscholastic contest. Even though such sports are not sanctioned by the NCHSAA, member schools should work, wherever possible, to adhere to the ideals and guidelines established by the NCHSAA for its member schools in sports which it sanctions. The need to promote sportsmanship, to protect instructional time, or the physiological needs of maturing teens should not disappear simply because it is not a sport sanctioned by the NCHSAA. For reclassification to additional championships, the number of schools offering teams in a sport must meet the constitutional requirement [See Bylaw VI] for two years before a championship will be implemented. Official data for sanctioning purposes will be collected by the NCHSAA.

1.2 ELIGIBILITY The NCHSAA applies, enforces, and administers ATHL-005 Student Participation Rules ("State Board Participation Policy"), the subparts of which are each set forth below and in NCHSAA Rule 1.3 with the NCHSAA's Application Notes.

1.2.1 ATHL-005, Section 1 - Student Participation in Interscholastic Athletics. A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a North Carolina public school unless the student has satisfied the eligibility requirements set forth in this Policy. PSUs are authorized to determine whether and to what extent students under their jurisdiction may participate in interscholastic athletics, not inconsistent with the requirements of this Policy.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.1. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 1 apply to students at all membership entities.

- (a) A student shall not participate in high school interscholastic athletics on behalf of any member school unless the student has satisfied the eligibility requirements set forth in the State Board Participation Policy. Membership entities are authorized to determine whether and to what extent students under their jurisdiction may participate in interscholastic athletics, not inconsistent with the requirements of the State Board Participation Policy.
- (b) By joining the NCHSAA, all member schools and their membership entities agree that no member school shall allow any student to participate in interscholastic athletic activities, including practices or contests of any kind, unless and until the member school has obtained a copy of the NCHSAA Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form for the applicable school year signed by the student and the student's parent or legal custodian.
 - (1) The Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form is available on the NCHSAA's web site.
 - (2) By signing the Master Eligibility Sheet, the principal certifies that the principal has on file a signed Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form for each student-athlete listed on the Master Eligibility Sheet.
 - (3) The member school must maintain a copy (electronic is sufficient) of each student's signed Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form for at least seven years after the applicable school year.
 - (4) Upon the NCHSAA's request, the member school must provide a copy of any student's signed Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form.
 - (5) If the student, or the student's parent or legal custodian, revokes all or part of the Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form after signing, the student shall no longer be eligible to participate, except that revoking authorization to use the student-athlete's name, image, likeness, and athletic-related information will not affect eligibility.
- (c) A student shall not dress for a game or scrimmage when he or she is not eligible to participate in the game.
 - (1) Dressing and being in the designated team area shall be interpreted as participating in the game.
Exception: Football, Eight Quarter Rule and Basketball, Five-Quarter Rule. Athletes who are disqualified or ejected during a contest will remain in the team area for supervision. [See Rule 3.3.8(f)].
 - (2) Ineligible players are not allowed to participate in practice, but this does not apply to summer workouts or skill development. [See Application Note 1.2.2(d)].
- (d) School uniforms and equipment (including transportation) may not be used for any outside organization competition or by athletes performing "unattached" during the academic school year, inclu-

sive of weekends, holidays, workdays, etc. except:

- (1) During the summer, outside the dead periods, school uniforms may be worn for school-related activities.
- (2) Students may be allowed to wear school uniforms, including protective equipment, in outside organization competition, so long as the student has exhausted athletic eligibility in that sport and received permission from the member school. Approval from the governing board of the membership entity is strongly recommended.

1.2.2 ATHL-005, Section 2 - Verification of Eligibility [Master Eligibility Sheet]. Each PSU shall require the principal of a participating school to sign and date a list of eligible students for each sport. The PSU shall maintain a copy of the most current list in the principal's office and the office of the superintendent.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.2. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 2 apply to students at all membership entities. All students must be eligible prior to dressing or participating in any interscholastic contest, whether or not the NCHSAA sponsors a championship in that sport. Each member school's principal shall sign and date a list of eligible students for each sport (a "Master Eligibility Sheet"), subject to the following:

- (a) No student shall be listed on the Master Eligibility Sheet unless and until the principal or the principal's designee has determined that the student meets all eligibility criteria and documents substantiating eligibility are on file with the school. Such documents shall be available for inspection until the student's eligibility has ended.
- (b) The Master Eligibility Sheet shall be used for each sport and shall list all players, varsity and junior varsity, participating in that sport. A copy shall be on file at the school prior to the first regular season contest. PSUs must maintain a copy of the most current Master Eligibility Sheet in both the office of the member school's principal and the office of the PSU's superintendent. Any other membership entity must maintain a copy of the most current Master Eligibility Sheet in the office of the member school's principal.
- (c) Master Eligibility Sheets are not required to be filed with the NCHSAA but must be made available upon request. It is required that Master Eligibility Sheets be shared among conference schools in each sport.
- (d) Ineligible players are NOT allowed to participate in practice, but this does not apply to summer workouts or skill development.
- (e) When completing Master Eligibility Sheets, if a student's primary residence is not within the boundary provided in ATHL-005, Section 4.b and Application Note 1.2.4, please make all required entries and enter one of the following eligibility criteria on the second page:
 - (1) Any student proposed for a contest is eligible at the school to which the local board of education assigns them within the unit of primary residence, within this state, subject to the transfer rules in ATHL-005, Section 5 and Application Note 1.2.5.
 - (2) When two boards of education within North Carolina, by mutual agreement, assign a student to a different school, and if applicable, the governing authorities of each PSU mutually agree to waive ineligibility pursuant to the transfer rules in ATHL-005, Section 5 and Application Note 1.2.5.
 - (3) If applicable, legal documents signed by a judge (ward of court) or social service (orphanage/foster home) are required to be submitted along with eligibility forms pertaining to the student.
 - (4) Foreign exchange students. [See ATHL-005, Section 3.a.vi] and Application Note 1.2.3.
 - (5) The NCHSAA has approved or has been required by the decision of the appeals board (defined in ATHL-013, Section 1) to approve a request to waive the residency requirement, including for a student enrolled under the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act who is not eligible based on Application Note 1.2.2 (e)(1)-(4).
- (f) It shall be the responsibility of the principal, or his or her designee, to see that no ineligible student-athlete participates. Schools should use the eligibility checklist developed by the NCHSAA and it is recommended that the eligibility presentation be made available for athletes, guidance counselors, other administrators, and parents, especially at the preseason meeting.

1.2.3 ATHL-005, Section 3 - Residency Requirements

- a. For purposes of this Section, a student's primary residence shall be determined as follows:
 - i. If both of the student's parents live together, the residence of both parents.
 - ii. If the student's parents are separated or divorced, the residence of the parent to whom a court of competent jurisdiction has awarded primary custody of the student. If no custody order has been entered, the student and the student's parents shall designate one parent's residence as the primary residence and communicate that designation to the participating school prior to participation in interscholastic athletic activities. The designated primary residence shall be one that would otherwise render the student eligible to attend that school

- iii. in accordance with state law and the policies of the governing body of the PSU.
- iv. If the student has only one living parent, the residence of that parent.
- v. If a student lives with an individual to whom a court of competent jurisdiction has awarded legal guardianship of the student, the residence of that individual.
- vi. If a student has been emancipated in accordance with Chapter 7B, Article 35 of the General Statutes, the student's residence at the time of emancipation.
- vi. If a student is a foreign national participating in a foreign exchange program authorized by federal and state law, the residence to which the student is assigned by the program or host PSU.
- b. A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics following a change in primary residence unless the change was made for a bona fide purpose and with the intent that it be permanent. The relevant administering organization shall resolve, by a preponderance of the evidence, any disputes regarding a high school student's primary residence or whether a change in a student's primary residence was for a bona fide purpose.
- c. Notwithstanding Section 3.b and absent a transfer between participating schools as provided in Section 5, a student shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a participating school in which the student is enrolled if the student has attended any school within the jurisdiction of the same PSU as the participating school for the two preceding semesters.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.3. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 3 apply to students at all membership entities. Upon initial entry, a student-athlete is eligible to participate at a particular member school as set forth in ATHL-005, Section 4 and Application Note 1.2.4. This rule governs the determination of the student's primary residence and changes in primary residence.

- (a) It is the obligation of the school to know the residence status of each student-athlete and to require compliance with these rules.
- (b) Foreign exchange students may participate according to ATHL-005, Section 3.a.vi only if they satisfy all other eligibility requirements, including but not limited to, the prohibition on participation after graduation or eligibility for graduation from high school. Foreign students who are not part of an organized and recognized foreign exchange program may apply for a waiver of the residence rule.
- (c) Determination of what constitutes a change of residence made for a bona fide purpose and with the intent that it be permanent depends upon the facts of each case. In general, in order for a change of residence to be considered made for a bona fide purpose and with the intent that it be permanent, at least the following facts must exist, although the existence of these facts does not necessarily establish a bona fide purpose/intended permanency:
 - (1) The original residence must be abandoned as a residence; that is sold, rented, or disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as residence by any member of the family.
 - (2) The entire family must make the change and take with them the household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstances.
 - (3) Change of schools must be contemporaneous with the change in residence.
 Other evidence as to whether the change of residence was intended to be permanent and whether it was made for athletic purposes may impact this determination.
- (d) When a student residing with one parent moves to the residence of the other parent absent a change in the custody order applicable to the student, the change of residence will not be considered made for a bona fide purpose. Absent such a change in the custody order, a student moving from the residence of one parent to another parent is subject to the provisions of ATHL-005, Section 5, unless a waiver is obtained.
- (e) A student who resides out-of-state but attends a member high school could be eligible if:
 - (1) The student attends a member non-boarding parochial school or is a member of a parochial church and submits an authorized pastor verification form.
 - (2) The out-of-state student-athlete is attending a member school as an employee benefit because a parent is working at the school, in which case the school must request a waiver of the residence rule with appropriate documentation as a result of the employee status.
- (f) In no case will any exception be made to the following principles:
 - (1) A student may not participate at a second school in the same sport during the same sport season, except in the event of a change of primary residence for a bona fide purpose and with the intent that it be permanent.
 - (2) Documents purporting to establish guardianship or custody issued by a notary public, an attorney, a clerk of court, or any entity other than a court of record with competent jurisdiction will not be accepted.
- (g) At the request of a member school or upon learning of a potential violation of this rule, the NCHSAA will resolve, by a preponderance of the evidence, any disputes regarding a student's primary res-

idence or whether a change in the student's primary residence was made for a bona fide purpose and with the intent that it be permanent.

1.2.4 ATHL-005, Section 4 - Enrollment Requirements

- a. A student enrolled in a school supervised by a local board of education shall only participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of the school to which the student is assigned under G.S. 115C-366.
- b. A student enrolled in a charter school, regional school, or school operated by the University of North Carolina shall meet all the enrollment criteria for that school and attend that school. A student who attends one of these schools shall not participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of that school unless the student's primary residence is within either:
 - i. the county in which the school is located, or
 - ii. twenty-five miles of the school as determined by the relevant rule administrator.
- c. A local board of education may by policy allow a person who is enrolled in Grade 6 through 12 in a home school, as defined in G.S. 115C-563(a), and whose primary residence is within the board's jurisdiction to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a participating school under the board's jurisdiction, provided that the board either agrees to cover any such person whom it allows to participate under its catastrophic athletic accident insurance policy or verifies that the person is independently covered by catastrophic accident insurance.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.4. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 4 apply to students at all membership entities. A student may participate in athletics at any member school upon initial entry into ninth grade provided the student meets applicable NCHSAA, membership entity, and SBE eligibility requirements. Initial entry is defined in Rule 1.1.1 (ATHL-001, Section 1. f and Rule 1.1.2 above.)

- (a) To participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of a member non-boarding parochial school, the student must meet all enrollment criteria for that member school and attend that member school, and shall not participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of the member school unless the student's primary residence is within either:
 - (1) The county in which the member school is located; or
 - (2) A 25-mile radius of the member school as determined by the NCHSAA.
- (b) Notwithstanding Application Note 1.2.4(a), there will be no boundary limitation if the student is a member of a parochial church affiliated with a non-boarding parochial member school and submits an authorized pastor verification form.
- (c) To document a home school student's eligibility, a member school allowing a home school student to participate pursuant to ATHL-005, Section 4.c must obtain the following:
 - (1) Documentation from the Division of Non-Public Education must be presented upon initial dual enrollment, i.e., attendance, immunization, transcript, school number.
 - (2) Documentation of the home school student's communication of athletic intent at a member school supervised by the local board of education with jurisdiction over the address of the student's primary residence (with such communication made by informing the principal at least ten (10) days prior to the first practice date of each sports season).
 - (3) Documentation that the home school student has followed the enrollment and assignment procedures/policies established by the local board of education for that member school.
 - (4) Documentation of insurance, through either (A) a statement that the local board of education agrees to cover the home school student under its catastrophic athletic accident insurance policy or (B) a copy of an independent insurance policy establishing that the home school student is covered by catastrophic accident insurance for participate in interscholastic athletics.
- (d) Alternative or extended day school students who meet all other eligibility requirements may participate in athletics for the school to which they would normally be assigned if local policy allows it, provided the alternative/extended day school has no athletic program.
 - (1) The alternative schools referenced here are those operated by the school system itself.
 - (2) The principal of the school at which the students play shall be responsible for certifying their eligibility and shall have on file all records necessary to verify eligibility.
 - (3) Each such student shall be identified on the Master Eligibility Sheet, which shall be accompanied by a letter from the principal stating that these designated students meet all eligibility requirements.
 - (4) The principal and coach shall have the same authority in player selection and application of team rules and regulations with alternative school students as with those enrolled in the regular school program.

1.2.5 ATHL-005, Section 5 - Transfer Requirements

- a. After a student's initial entry into Grade 9, and absent a change in residence for a bona fide purpose

as provided in Section 3.b:

- i. A student who transfers from one participating school to another participating school within the same PSU shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following the student's enrollment in the new school, unless the governing body of the PSU has adopted a policy allowing immediate eligibility for students who are assigned by the PSU to a different school within the same PSU.
- ii. A student who transfers from a participating school in one PSU to a participating school in a different PSU shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following the student's enrollment in the new school, unless the governing bodies of both PSUs agree that the transfer was for a bona fide purpose.
- iii. If the governing bodies of the PSU disagree that a transfer by a high school student was for a bona fide purpose, the relevant administering organization shall resolve the dispute by a preponderance of the evidence. If the administering organization finds that the transfer was for a bona fide purpose, it may waive the 365-day period of ineligibility in accordance with Paragraph 11 of this Policy and shall notify both PSUs of its decision in writing.
- b. After a student's initial entry into Grade 9, if a student transfers to a new school within 365 calendar days after that school hires a coach for an interscholastic athletics team who was previously employed as a coach for an equivalent sport by the school from which the student is transferring, the student shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for that sport for 365 calendar days following the student's enrollment in the new school. An administering organization may waive this restriction for a high school student if it determines by a preponderance of the evidence that the student's transfer was for a bona fide purpose.
- c. A student who receives priority enrollment as the child of a full-time employee of a charter school pursuant to G.S. 115C-218.45(f)(3) shall not be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for that charter school if the Department of Public Instruction determines that the parent's employment was a fraudulent basis for the student's priority enrollment. A student determined to be ineligible under this provision shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following discovery of the violation.
- d. For purposes of this Section, if a student transfers from a public school to a nonpublic school, including a home school as defined in G.S. 115C-563(a), and within 365 calendar days transfers to a different public school, the transfer from the nonpublic school shall be treated as a transfer from a public school.
- e. A student who transfers to the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics is exempt from the requirements of this Paragraph upon initial entry into that school.
- f. No student shall participate in more than one season of interscholastic athletics per year in the same sport, regardless of the school on behalf of which the student participated.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.5. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 5 apply to students at all membership entities. Therefore, a student who transfers from a school in one membership entity to a school in a different membership entity shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for 365 calendar days following the student's enrollment in the new school, except by mutual agreement of the governing authorities of each membership entity.

- (a) If a student's transfer triggers the 365-day ineligibility period and there is no mutual agreement of the governing authorities of each membership entity, any membership entity wishing to have a student participate (the "transferee" or "receiving" membership entity), must apply to the NCHSAA for a waiver. See Rule 1.3 for information about applying for a waiver.
- (b) Any transferee or receiving membership entity wishing to have a student participate when the student is rendered ineligible by ATHL-005, Section 5.b must apply to the NCHSAA for a waiver. See Rule 1.3 for information about applying for a waiver.
- (c) When a student transfers pursuant to ATHL-005, Section 5.a, and the receiving membership entity wishes to have the student participate in interscholastic athletic activities during the 365 calendar days after transfer, the receiving membership entity shall send a transfer request (on the form provided by the NCHSAA) to the transferor membership entity. In response to the transfer request, the transferor membership entity may (1) agree that the student can participate in all sports, or (2) decline to agree that the student can participate in all sports, specifying the sport or sports for which the request is declined and the reason for declining. The transferor membership entity must return the signed transfer request (whether it agrees or declines to agree) to the receiving membership entity within five business days of receiving the transfer request. Any transferor membership entity that fails to timely respond to a transfer request forfeits its right to receive and respond to a waiver request under Application Note 1.2.5(d).
- (d) When a membership entity seeks a waiver of the transfer rules, the NCHSAA will provide a copy of

the waiver request and supporting documentation to the transferor school before ruling on the waiver request. The transferor school will have the opportunity to provide information relevant to the waiver request within the time allotted by the NCHSAA. The transferor school will receive a copy of the NCHSAA's ruling on the waiver request.

- (e) In any case where the membership entity has applied for waiver, the student remains ineligible and may not participate in practices or contests until the NCHSAA has approved or has been required by the decision of the appeals board (defined in ATHL-013, Section 1) to approve the waiver request.
- (f) ATHL-005, Section 5.f provides that "[n]o student shall participate in more than one season of inter scholastic athletics per year in the same sport, regardless of the school on behalf of which the student participated." ATHL-005, Section 7.b.ii provides that a student "[s]hall be eligible to participate at the high school level for no more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's initial entry into Grade 9." The combined effect of these rules is that no student-athlete may participate in a high school contest if the student has taken part in contests during four separate seasons in that sport.
- (g) For students at all membership entities, enforcement of the season limit in ATHL-005, Section 5.f and the eight-semester limit in ATHL-005, Section 7.b.ii begins upon the student's initial entry into ninth grade. Initial entry is defined in Rule 1.1.1 (ATHL-001, Section 1.f and Rule 1.1.2 above.)
- (h) The season limit in ATHL-005, Section 5.f encompasses any season in which the student played on a team for any school at the high school level, member or non-member, within or outside North Carolina.

1.2.6 ATHL-005, Section 6 - Scholastic Requirements

- a. To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics, a student must be in good academic standing. For purposes of this Policy, a student shall be deemed to be in good academic standing under the following circumstances:
 - i. The student attended at least 85 percent of the total number of instructional days in the PSU during the previous semester, excluding absences qualifying as excused under SBE Policy ATND-000 [as defined in 16 NCAC 06E .0102];
 - ii. The student passed at least 70 percent of the courses taken in the preceding semester; and
 - iii. The student is making sufficient progress toward meeting the academic and curricular requirements of the PSU and the State Board of Education to be promoted to the next grade level or to graduate within the next calendar year.
- b. For the purpose of determining good academic standing during the fall semester, a student may count any course that the student passed in a summer school session toward the total number of courses passed in the preceding spring semester. The summer school course shall not affect the total number of courses attempted in the preceding spring semester.
- c. A student who is promoted from Grade 5 to Grade 6 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements set forth in this Paragraph to participate in the first semester of Grade 6.
- d. A student who is promoted from Grade 8 to Grade 9 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements set forth in this Paragraph to participate in the first semester of Grade 9.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.6. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 6 apply to students at all membership entities.

- (a) Other than a home school student, a student shall be deemed to be in good academic standing under the following circumstances at any membership entity:
 - (1) The student attended at least 85 percent of the total number of instructional days in the membership entity during the previous semester; excluding absences qualifying as excused under SBE Policy ATND-000 (as defined in 16 NCAC 06E .0102);
 - (2) The student passed at least 70 percent of the courses taken in the preceding semester; and
 - (3) The student is making sufficient progress toward meeting the academic and curricular requirements of the membership entity and, if applicable, the State Board of Education to be promoted to the next grade level or to graduate within the next calendar year.
- (b) Consistent with 16 NCAC 06E .0102(a), membership entities shall excuse the temporary absence of a student upon a showing of satisfactory evidence of one of the following bases:
 - (1) Illness or injury prevents the student from being physically able to attend school.
 - (2) The local health officer or the State Board of Health orders the isolation of the student.
 - (3) The student is absent due to the death of a member of the immediate family.
 - (4) The student has a medical or dental appointment.
 - (5) The student is a party to or is under subpoena as a witness in the proceedings of a court or administrative tribunal.
 - (6) The student is absent due to a religious observance in accordance with local school board policy.
 - (7) The student obtains prior approval to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity,

such as travel.

- (c) Consistent with 16 NCAC 06E .0102(b), membership entities may excuse temporary or occasional absences for other reasons in accordance with the policies of the governing board of the membership entity, provided that the student has been in attendance for at least one-half of the school day.
- (d) Excused absences do not count for purposes of the attendance requirement. Therefore, no member school should apply for a waiver of the attendance requirement if the student meets the attendance requirement when excused absences are not counted.
- (e) A home school student is in good academic standing for purposes of this rule and application note if:
 - (1) The student passed all courses in which the student was enrolled at the member school in the preceding semester; and
 - (2) The student is on grade level according to a nationally standardized achievement test(s) indicating grade level.
- (f) At the end of the first semester, a superintendent or principal has eight days (excluding Saturday and Sunday) to check grades of students, removing such students immediately upon knowledge of ineligibility and no later than the completion of the eight-day period and restore eligibility to any debarred player after he or she has qualified at the end of a semester.
 - (1) Any student who has his or her eligibility restored may participate the day following the completion of the semester of the ineligibility.
 - (2) The purpose of the eight-day period is to allow schools ample time to check grades. A player should be removed before the eight-day period is up if the school has knowledge and has verified that the student is ineligible.
- (g) A student not academically eligible at the beginning of the semester is not eligible at any time during the semester.
Exception - A student who receives an incomplete which causes him or her to fail to meet minimum scholastic requirements or is awaiting a final grade due to any state-mandated testing is ineligible until the course is satisfactorily completed, and eligibility is restored immediately upon satisfactory completion.

1.2.7 ATHL-005, Section 7 - Age Requirements

- a. Each PSU shall determine the age of a student participating in interscholastic athletics based on a preponderance of the evidence known to the PSU.
- b. A student who is ineligible to participate at one grade level due to age shall be eligible to participate at the next higher grade level only, provided that a student:
 - i. [Not Applicable]
 - ii. Shall be eligible to participate at the high school level for no more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the student's initial entry into Grade 9.
 - iii. [Not Applicable]
 - iv. Shall not participate on a junior high school team if the student becomes 16 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
 - v. Shall not participate on a high school team if the student becomes 19 years of age on or before August 31 of that school year.
- c. [Not Applicable]

NOTE: The NCHSAA has omitted sections that are not applicable to high schools.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.7. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 7 (except the omitted portion) apply to students at all membership entities. Therefore, each membership entity shall determine the age of a student participating in interscholastic athletics based on a preponderance of the evidence known to the membership entity.

- (a) The member school's principal shall have on file evidence of the legal birth date of each student-athlete.
- (b) For purposes of the membership entity's determination of the student-athlete's age, evidence of the legal birth date may be established by a copy of the birth certificate or from other information sufficient to establish age by a preponderance of the evidence, including but not limited to a record from the State Bureau of Vital Statistics, Raleigh; a record from the county register of deeds office; an infant baptismal record; a recording from the attending doctor's registry or cash book if specific; a news item at the time of birth from the local newspaper; or an official register sheet from the first grade; or, for a foreign-born student, a birth date as shown on a passport.
- (c) An eighth grade student who is over-age for middle school competition may be eligible for high school participation, subject to other eligibility requirements.
- (d) For students at all membership entities, enforcement of the eight-semester limit in ATHL-005, Section 7.b.ii begins upon the student's initial entry into ninth grade. Initial entry is defined in Rule 1.1.1 (ATHL-001, Section 1.f) and Rule 1.1.2 above. Consistent with that definition, if an overage seventh or eighth grade student participates in athletics at the high school level, the eight-semester

limit begins to run when the student first participates at the high school level and thus prior to the ninth grade year. For student-athletes who skip the ninth grade and advance directly to the tenth from the eighth, the year prior to entering the tenth grade is considered the year of first entry into ninth grade for athletics.

- (e) The eight-semester limit encompasses any semester in which the student played on a team for any school at the high school level, member or non-member, within or outside North Carolina.
- (f) The principal of every member school shall have evidence of the date of each player's initial entry into ninth grade. The North Carolina cumulative record is sufficient evidence if ATHL-001, Section 1.f.i applies.

1.2.8 ATHL-005, Section 8 - Biological Requirements. All students participating in interscholastic athletics shall comply with the biological participation requirements as provided in G.S. 115C-407.59.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.8.

- (a) G.S. 115C-407.59 provides the following biological participation requirements for "all teams participating in interscholastic or intramural athletic activities":
 - (1) Each team shall be expressly designated by the biological sex of the team participants as one of the following:
 - A. Males, men, or boys.
 - B. Females, women, or girls.
 - C. Coed or mixed.
 - (2) Athletic teams designated for females, women, or girls shall not be open to students of the male sex.
 - (3) For purposes of this sub-subdivision, a student's sex shall be recognized based solely on the student's reproductive biology and genetics at birth.
- (b) Pursuant to G.S. 115C-407.59(f) and the MOU, the SBE, and not the NCHSAA, shall monitor compliance with G.S. 115C-407.59. Therefore, all questions and concerns about compliance with G.S. 115C-407.59 and ATHL-005, Section 8 must be directed to the SBE.

1.2.9 ATHL-005, Section 9 - Medical Requirements. To be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics, a student shall receive a medical examination every 395 days by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, subject to the provisions of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.9. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 9 apply to students at all membership entities.

- (a) In order to be eligible for participation in practice or in interscholastic athletic contests, a student at any membership entity must undergo a preparticipation medical examination and submit a completed MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY FORM to the member school. The NCHSAA provides a SPORT PREPARTICIPATION EVALUATION (PPE) FORM. The PPE includes the HISTORY FORM, the PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FORM, and the MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY FORM. The current NCHSAA PPE FORM can be found on the NCHSAA website.
- (b) The PPE History Form is intended to be completed and signed by the student-athlete and parent or legal custodian. The completed and signed PPE History Form is intended to be presented to the examining licensed medical professional (physician licensed to practice medicine (MD/DO), nurse practitioner or physician assistant) for their review prior to a physical examination [See Application Note 1.2.9(c)].
- (c) Upon review of the PPE History Form and completing the Physical Examination Form, the licensed medical professional will complete and sign the Medical Eligibility Form.
- (d) To participate in out-of-season and summer workouts, a student-athlete must have an up-to-date MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY FORM on file with the member school.
- (e) To participate in out-of-season and summer workouts, a student-athlete must have a signed Gfeller-Waller Concussion Statement on file with the member school.
- (f) Student-athletes absent from athletic practice for five (5) or more days due to illness shall receive a medical release signed by either a physician licensed to practice medicine or his/her designee (nurse practitioner, physician's assistant) before readmittance to practice or contests. It is recommended that schools use the ILLNESS RETURN TO PLAY FORM: MEDICAL CLEARANCE RELEASING THE STUDENT-ATHLETE TO RESUME FULL PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS AFTER AN ILLNESS which can be found by going to <https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety> and clicking on "for schools."
- (g) Student-athletes absent from athletic practice for five (5) or more days due to injury shall receive a medical release signed by either a physician licensed to practice medicine or his/her designee (nurse practitioner, physician's assistant, or licensed athletic trainer) before readmittance to practice or contests. It is recommended that schools use the INJURY RETURN TO PLAY FORM: MEDICAL CLEARANCE RELEASING THE STUDENT-ATHLETE TO RESUME FULL PARTICIPATION IN ATHLET-

ICS AFTER AN INJURY which can be found by going to <https://www.nchsaa.org/health-and-safety> and clicking on “for schools.”

NOTE: A student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion is required to follow the concussion return to play protocol and is required to have the CONCUSSION RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL FORM completed by a licensed health care provider before readmittance to practice or contests [See Rule 2.3.1].

- (h) It is recommended that student-athletes be covered by adequate medical and accident insurance, and that medical aid be immediately available at all times.
- (i) Schools should have medical release forms on site at athletic events in the event medical treatment is required.

1.2.10 ATHL-005, Section 10 - Criminal History [Felony Conviction]. A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics after pleading guilty or “no contest” to, or being convicted of, a felony under the laws of North Carolina, the United States, or any other state. Prior to deeming the student ineligible, an administering organization shall receive a certified copy of a criminal record reflecting the plea or conviction and verify that the student is the same individual identified in the criminal record. If the student enters a deferred prosecution agreement, conditional discharge agreement, or similar diversionary program, the student shall remain ineligible during the probationary period imposed by the agreement.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.10. The requirements set forth in ATHL-005, Section 10 apply to students at all membership entities.

- (a) Upon a student-athlete’s conviction of a felony, the member school shall (before the next athletic contest in which the student would participate) notify the NCHSAA and, as promptly as possible, provide the NCHSAA with a certified copy of a criminal record reflecting the conviction.
- (b) Ineligibility under this rule shall be immediate and shall prohibit participation in the NCHSAA sports program from the date of conviction through the end of the student’s high school career.
- (c) Pending appellate or other post-conviction review of the conviction does not affect the student’s immediate ineligibility. If the felony conviction is overturned on appeal or post-conviction review, the member school shall notify the NCHSAA and the student’s eligibility may be restored, subject to meeting other eligibility requirements.
- (d) A “felony” is any crime designated as a felony by the jurisdiction of conviction.
- (e) A “plea” or “conviction,” for the purpose of this rule, includes the entry of:
 - (1) A plea of guilty; or
 - (2) A plea of no contest, *nolo contendere*, *Alford* Plea or the equivalent;
 - (3) A verdict or finding of guilty by a jury, judge, magistrate, or other duly constituted, established, and recognized adjudicating body, tribunal, or official, either civilian or military; or
 - (4) A diversionary disposition, such as deferred prosecution, but only if the court record demonstrates that such disposition required a judicial determination of guilt or an admission of guilt in open court.
- (f) A person is “convicted” for the purposes of this rule if any event identified under Application Note 1.2.10(e) occurs in any jurisdiction, including the courts of North Carolina, the United States, an other state, the armed services of the United States, or another country. For avoidance of doubt, a conviction may occur, rendering a student immediately ineligible, although the sentence has not yet been imposed.
- (g) Adjudication of juvenile delinquency, regardless of the offense, is not conviction of a felony.

1.2.11 Amateur Rules. The NCHSAA enforces and applies ATHL-007 Amateur Rules (the “State Board Amateur Policy”), which provides:

- 1. A student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics after any of the following:
 - a. Graduation, except that the student may continue to participate in playoff and state championship contests in spring sports after graduation.
 - b. Signing a professional athletic contract, except that the student may continue to participate in any sport for which the student has not signed a professional contract.
 - c. Receiving remuneration as a participant in an athletic contest, except that the student may accept a gift, merchandise, or other thing of value, provided that:
 - i. The value does not exceed two hundred-fifty dollars (\$250.00) per student per season;
 - ii. The item is totally consumable and nontransferable, or labeled in a permanent manner (e.g., an engraved or monogrammed item); and
 - iii. The item is approved by the principal of the student’s school and the local superintendent.
 - d. Participating on an all-star team or in an all-star game or bowl game that is not sanctioned by the administering organization of which the student’s school is a member, provided that

- e. the student shall be ineligible only for that sport.
- e. Entering into an NIL agreement, unless the student has complied with the requirements of SBE Policy ATHL-008.
- 2. A student shall not be deemed ineligible under this Policy for any of the following:
 - a. Payment by an administering organization, PSU, or athletic booster club affiliated with the student's school or PSU for essential expenses arising from a specific interscholastic athletic contest in which the student participates. Essential expenses shall include the reasonable cost of meals, lodging, and transportation.
 - b. Receipt of a nominal, standard fee or salary for instructing, supervising, or officiating an organized youth sports program, recreational activities, playground, or camp, whether or not affiliated with a PSU.
 - c. Receipt of an Operation Gold Grant from the United States Olympic Committee.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.11. The requirements set forth in ATHL-007 apply to students at all membership entities. Enforcement of ATHL-007 by the NCHSAA begins with a student's initial entry in the ninth grade.

- (a) Pursuant to ATHL-007, Section 1.a, a student who has played on a college team is ineligible to play on a high school team. A regularly enrolled high school student who is taking courses for advance credit (e.g., community college course, college courses) is not rendered ineligible for high school competition.
- (b) For a student at a member non-boarding parochial school, ATHL-007, Section 1.c.iii is satisfied if the governing authority of the membership entity approves the item.
- (c) Receiving items in connection with participation in interscholastic athletics constitutes receiving remuneration for purposes of ATHL-007, Section 1.c.
- (d) No student can circumvent the State Board Amateur Policy or this application note by using a false name. Competing under a false name is an implicit violation of the State Board Amateur Policy and will result in ineligibility.
- (e) A team or camp group may accept a gift, merchandise, trophy, etc., without violating the State Board Amateur Rule, provided the item meets the following conditions:
 - (1) Available to every member of the team; and,
 - (2) Totally consumable and nontransferable (e.g., meals, trips, etc.).
- (f) A member school that has any connection with the presentation of a forbidden award, including but not limited to assisting in the selection of the person to receive the award, permitting the award to be given at a school function, or holding the award for a student until he or she has graduated, violates the State Board Amateur Policy and this application note and shall be subject to penalty.
- (g) An all-star/bowl game is defined as (i) any contest where admission is charged, either directly or indirectly, and; (ii) one or both teams is composed of players selected from two or more regularly constituted teams.
- (h) Teams authorized to participate in benefit/fundraisers (student/faculty game, alumni game, etc.) must be composed exclusively of players from the same high school. Outside the sports season, an existing team may not play an outside team in a benefit game and may not be coached by their coaching staff members. A benefit game played during the sports season must count as an official contest.

1.2.12 National Governing Body Sanctioned Events - Participation in activities or events sanctioned by a national governing body is permissible at any time. See NCHSAA website for list of national governing bodies.

1.2.13 Name, Image, and Likeness - The NCHSAA enforces and applies ATHL-008 Name, Image, and Likeness which provides:

- 1. Definitions - As used in this Policy, the following definitions apply:
 - a. "Compensation" means anything of value to the student or an immediate family member of the student, including cash, in-kind gifts, discounts, and other tangible benefits.
 - b. "Name, image, or likeness" or "NIL" means the use of a student's name, image, or likeness for commercial purposes and in exchange for compensation to the student or an immediate family member of the student.
 - c. "NIL agreement" means a formal agreement or contract to use a student's name, image, or likeness for commercial purposes and in exchange for compensation to the student or an immediate family member of the student; or an agency contract, as defined by G.S. 78C-86(1).
 - d. "School administrators" includes the principal and athletic director of the student's school, the local superintendent, the chairperson of the PSU governing body, and the head coach of any sport in which the student participates during the terms of an NIL agreement.
- 2. Restrictions on NIL Agreements - A student participating in interscholastic athletics may enter an

NIL agreement subject to the following restrictions:

- a. The NIL agreement shall not condition the receipt, type, or extent of any compensation on the extent or quality of the student's athletic performance.
- b. If the student is under 18 years of age, the student's parent or legal guardian shall be a party to the NIL agreement.
- c. The NIL agreement shall hold the following parties harmless from any liability related to, or arising from the NIL agreement:
 - d. The governing body of the PSU in which the student is enrolled, as well as its officers and employees.
 - e. Any administering organization with which the PSU is affiliated, as well as its officers and employees.
 - f. The State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction, as well as their officers and employees.
 - g. The NIL agreement shall otherwise comply with state and federal law.
3. Disclosure Requirements - The student shall disclose the NIL agreement to school administrators in accordance with the following procedures:
 - a. No later than 10 business days prior to the execution of a proposed NIL agreement or an amendment to an existing NIL agreement, the student shall provide a complete and unredacted copy of the proposed NIL agreement or amendment to school administrators.
 - b. No later than five business days after the execution or amendment of the NIL agreement, the student shall provide a complete and unredacted copy of the executed NIL agreement or amendment to school administrators.
 - c. No later than 10 business days prior to a student's entry into an NIL agreement, the student shall complete the NIL education course offered by the NFHS. If the student is under 18 years of age, the student's parent or legal guardian shall also complete the course. Those persons required to complete the course shall provide school administrators with a certificate of completion from the NFHS.
4. Permitted NIL Activities - A student participating in interscholastic athletics may enter into an NIL agreement to use the student's name, image, or likeness in any of the following ways:
 - a. Public appearances or commercials.
 - b. Autograph signings.
 - c. Athletic camps and clinics.
 - d. Sale of non-fungible tokens ("NFTs").
 - e. Product or service endorsements.
 - f. Promotional activities, including in-person events and social media advertisements.
 - g. Any other commercial activities that are intended to promote a product or service offered by, increase the profits of, or otherwise generate financial benefits for a party to the NIL agreement from the use of the student's name, image, or likeness.
5. Prohibited NIL Activities - No student engaged in an NIL agreement-related activity shall do any of the following:
 - a. Make any reference to a school, PSU, conference, or administering organization.
 - b. Receive compensation for the use of intellectual property of any school, PSU, conference, administering organization, or the NFHS. Intellectual property includes the name, uniform, mascot, mark, or logo of the entity that owns the intellectual property.
 - c. Appear in the uniform of the student's school or the school's sports team, or otherwise display the intellectual property of any school, PSU, conference, administering organization, or the NFHS.
 - d. No student shall endorse or promote the goods or services of any third-party entity with which the student has entered an NIL agreement during interscholastic athletic competition or other school-based activities or events. This restriction applies to the wearing of apparel displaying the mark, logo, brand, or other identifying insignia of the third-party entity, unless it is part of the standard uniform for the school or sport.
6. Prohibited Promotions - No student participating in interscholastic athletics shall enter into an NIL agreement or otherwise use the student's name, image, or likeness to promote any of the following:
 - a. An adult establishment, as defined in G.S. 14-202.10(2), or adult entertainment services.
 - b. Alcohol or alcoholic products.
 - c. Tobacco, vaping or other electronic smoking devices, or other nicotine products.
 - d. Cannabis or cannabis products.
 - e. Controlled substances, as defined in G.S. 90-87(5).
 - f. Opioids or prescription pharmaceuticals.
 - g. Weapons, firearms, or ammunition.

- h. Casinos or gambling, including sports betting.
- i. Activities that would disrupt the operations of a school or PSU.
- 7. Reporting Requirements - The athletic director of a participating school shall submit a current copy of any executed or amended NIL agreement involving a student at the school to any administering organizations of which the student's school is a member within 30 days of the disclosure of the executed or amended NIL agreement by the student. The administering organization shall maintain accurate records of all NIL agreements received and provide a summary report of all NIL agreements to the State Board of Education no later than June 30 of each year.
- 8. Recruitment and Agency Restrictions - No athletic director, coach, other employee of a PSU, member of a PSU governing body, representative of an athletic booster club, or representative of an NIL collective shall use the promise of an NIL agreement to recruit a student to attend a specific participating school or participate in a specific sport. No athletic director, coach, other employee of a PSU, member of a PSU governing body, representative of an athletic booster club, or representative of an NIL collective shall act as a student's agent or marketing representative or otherwise facilitate an NIL agreement between a student and a third party. If the relevant administering organization finds a violation of this Paragraph by a preponderance of the evidence, the administering organization shall impose penalties consistent with its regulations and with SBE Policy ATHL-012. A "representative" of an athletic booster club or NIL collective shall include an officer or any person authorized to conduct business on behalf of the organization.
- 9. Applicability - This Policy shall apply to any NIL agreement that a student or the student's parent or legal guardian execute during the time the student is enrolled in a PSU, even if the benefits of said agreement do not accrue to the student or an immediate family member of the student until after the student has graduated.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.2.13. The requirements set forth in ATHL-008 apply to students at all membership entities.

- (a) For a student at a member non-boarding parochial school, "school administrators" includes the governing authority of the non-boarding parochial school.
- (b) An NIL agreement entered into by a student at a non-boarding parochial school shall comply with ATHL-008, Section 2.c-f if it holds the following parties harmless from any liability related to, or arising from the NIL agreement:
 - (1) The governing authority of the membership entity in which the student is enrolled, as well as its officers and employees;
 - (2) The NCHSAA, as well as its officers and employees;
 - (3) The State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction, as well as their officers and employees.
- (c) No student engaged in an NIL agreement-related activity shall do any of the following
 - (1) Make any reference to a membership entity.
 - (2) Receive compensation for the use of intellectual property of any membership entity.
 - (3) Display the intellectual property of any membership entity.
- (d) The recruitment and agency restrictions of ATHL-008, Section 8 shall apply to employees of all membership entities.
- (e) ATHL-008 shall apply to any NIL agreement that a student or the student's parent or legal guardian execute during the time the student is enrolled in a membership entity, even if the benefits of said agreement do not accrue to the student or an immediate family member of the student until after the student has graduated.

1.3 WAIVER OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1.3.1 ATHL-005, Section 11 - Waivers [Waiver of Eligibility Requirements]. A rule administrator shall, in an individual student's case, waive any eligibility requirement contained in this Policy if it finds by a preponderance of the evidence that enforcing the requirement:

- a. Fails to promote academic progress, health, safety, and fair play;
- b. Works an undue hardship on a student who has lost eligibility due to circumstances that made participation impossible, such as prolonged illness or injury; or
- c. Prevents the reasonable accommodation of a student's disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.3.1. The waiver rule set forth in ATHL-005, Section 11 applies to students at all membership entities. The member school, on behalf of the membership entity, must request a waiver following the procedures set forth in NCHSAA Rule 1.3.2. The membership entity may seek waiver of any eligibility requirement contained in ATHL-005 or in the NCHSAA Application Notes to the provisions of that rule.

- (a) Requests for a waiver must be made by the student's membership entity prior to any participation by the student under circumstances that would constitute ineligibility. Examples of requests that

may, but will not necessarily, justify a waiver:

- (1) Homeless or unaccompanied minor (i.e. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
 - (2) Parents or court appointed custodian/guardian residing outside North Carolina
 - (3) Students aged 19 on or before August 31st of an academic year
 - (4) Students exhausting 8-semesters of eligibility
 - (5) Students not eligible academically due to an extended illness
- (b) Ignorance of the eligibility rule on the part of school personnel, the student or their parents shall not be considered sufficient cause for granting a waiver of any part of the eligibility rule.
- (c) Ordinary cases of ineligibility shall not be considered undue hardships warranting waiver of the eligibility rule under ATHL-005, Section 11.b, which generally applies when the conditions that cause the student to fail to meet the eligibility rule were beyond the control of the school, the student, and their parents. Injury, illness, or accident that causes the student to fail to meet one of the basic eligibility requirements is a possible cause for waiver under ATHL-005, Section 11.b. The appropriate time for the membership entity to apply for a waiver under ATHL-005, Section 11.b is when the hardship situation is discovered, not after the student has completed eight consecutive semesters.
- (d) Inability to participate in athletics due to illness, injury, or other medical causes, standing alone, shall not be considered an undue hardship warranting waiver under ATHL-005, Section 11.b. Requests for waiver may be considered in those cases where the ineligibility exists because the student was unable to attend, or was prohibited from attending, school due to illness, injury, or medical treatment.
- (e) A membership entity seeking a waiver of ATHL-005, Section 5.a.ii should explain why a waiver is warranted under ATHL-005, Section 11. In general, a waiver of ATHL-005, Section 5.a.ii will not be appropriate if the student transferred schools for a purpose primarily related to participation in interscholastic athletics; however, in such cases, the NCHSAA may waive the enforcement of ATHL-005, Section 5.a.ii in part and determine that no waiver shall apply as to the sport or sports that motivated the student's transfer.

1.3.2 Waiver Procedure - The following procedures apply to the filing of requests for waivers of any eligibility requirement.

- (a) Requests will go initially to the Commissioner for action by the NCHSAA. The appropriate form is on the NCHSAA website and must be filled out in its entirety for consideration. The school, as the NCHSAA member, must apply for any waiver. For purposes of this rule, schools shall act under the governing authority of their membership entity.
- (1) Each request must be made in writing by the school principal, with the approval of the superintendent, and should contain all the facts pertaining to the request, including sufficient information to make it possible to reach a decision without further investigation. All correspondence and documents pertinent to the request must be submitted for review simultaneously with the request, including a copy of the student's scholastic and attendance data since initial entry in the ninth grade. In cases involving medical questions, the request for waiver must be accompanied by the statement(s) of one or more qualified medical expert(s) explaining the medical aspect of the request.
 - (2) The principal shall state in the request which part of the waiver rule, ATHL-005, Section 11.a, b or c is being invoked and why. In cases involving a waiver request under ATHL-005, Section 11.a, the principal shall explain why, in the view of the school and its administrators, enforcing the eligibility requirement at issue would fail to promote academic progress, health, safety, and fair play. In cases involving a waiver request under ATHL-005, Section 11.b, the principal shall explain the undue hardship at issue and how it impacted the student's eligibility. In cases involving medical questions, the request for waiver must be accompanied by the statement(s) of one or more qualified medical expert(s) explaining the medical aspect of the request. In cases involving a disability accommodation under ATHL-005, Section 11.c, the principal shall explain what accommodation has been made and why enforcing the eligibility requirement at issue would be inconsistent with that accommodation.
- NOTE: It is the responsibility of the school submitting the waiver request to have any documents translated that might be in a language other than English, and to include both the original document and the translation with the request.
- (b) The NCHSAA will issue its final decision on the waiver request in accordance with Rule 1.4.1. A PSU wishing to appeal the decision by the NCHSAA on a request for a waiver may appeal to the appeals board (defined in ATHL-013, Section 1) as provided by law. The current procedure for appeals to the appeals board is available in Rule 1.4 and on the website of the NCHSAA. Any member non-

boarding parochial school wishing to appeal may appeal as set forth in 1.4.3.

- (c) The decision of the appeals board (defined in ATHL-013, Section 1) on a PSU's appeal is final.
- (d) The decision of the NCHSAA Executive Committee or Board of Directors on any non-boarding parochial school's appeal is final.

1.4 FINAL DECISIONS AND APPEALS

1.4.1 Final Decision of NCHSAA

- (a) If the NCHSAA determines that a student, membership entity, or other party has violated any SBE policy on interscholastic athletics or any policies or procedures promulgated by the NCHSAA under the authority delegated by ATHL-002 (including as extended to all membership entities), the NCHSAA shall render a final decision within 10 business days. If this final decision is given orally then, as soon as is reasonably possible thereafter, this final decision must be reduced to writing. The final decision shall contain:
 - i. Findings of fact.
 - ii. Conclusions of law, including a citation to and copy of any rules related to the decision.
 - iii. A description of any penalties imposed.
 - iv. Instructions on how the aggrieved party may file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent and a notice that the appeal must be filed within five days after receipt of the final decision.
- (b) Rule 1.4.1(a) does not apply to a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition. The NCHSAA does not currently have internal policies and procedures allowing the NCHSAA to review a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition. Therefore, for NCHSAA contests, a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, as recorded by the referee or official in the game record maintained by the NCHSAA, that results in the ejection or suspension of a player or coach is a final decision of the NCHSAA.
- (c) If the NCHSAA finds that a member school committed a rule violation and imposes a penalty, the NCHSAA, in its discretion, may notify another member school that reported the suspected violation of the finding and penalty.

1.4.2 Appeals Process for PSU Aggrieved Parties – Any PSU Aggrieved Party(ies) (as defined in Application Note 1.4.2(a)), seeking to appeal a final decision set forth in NCHSAA Rule 1.4.1(a) to the Superintendent shall do so in accordance with ATHL-013 Appeals. The NCHSAA shall coordinate and administer the process for appeals as established by ATHL-013, which provides:

1. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (“Superintendent”) shall appoint an independent interscholastic athletics appeals board (“appeals board”) to hear and act upon appeals from a final decision of a rule administrator enforcing a student participation rule, penalty rule, or gameplay rule.
2. The jurisdiction of the appeals board shall be limited to final decisions concerning the application or enforcement of SBE policies in the ATHL Policy Series and their corresponding administrative rules, codified at Title 16, Subchapter 6E, Section .0200 of the North Carolina Administrative Code. The appeals board shall have no jurisdiction over appeals that concern the application or enforcement of a policy, rule, or law, including local policies of a public school unit, that are outside the scope of those policies and rules.
3. An aggrieved party may file an appeal with the Superintendent within five days after receipt of the final decision by completing an appeal form provided by the Superintendent. The aggrieved party shall submit the following information required by the form:
 - a. The name of the aggrieved party’s participating school and PSU.
 - b. The name, address, and phone number of the aggrieved party. If the aggrieved party is a school or PSU, the aggrieved party shall also provide the name, address, phone number, and title of an employee who will serve as the official representative of the school or PSU during the appeal.
 - c. The names, email addresses, and phone numbers of the principal and local superintendent.
 - d. The names of any students affected by the final decision and the sports in which the student participates.
 - e. A description of the facts underlying the final decision.
 - f. A description of the final decision, the date it was issued, and the name, email, and phone number of the rule administrator or staff member thereof who issued the final decision.
 - g. An argument explaining why the aggrieved party believes the rule administrator's final decision was erroneous for one or both of the reasons provided in Section 8 of this Policy.
 - h. If applicable, the date of any imminent interscholastic athletic activity that the final decision may affect.
 - i. Any relevant documents or other evidence that the aggrieved party deems relevant to the appeal and that the aggrieved party provided to the rule administrator for consideration

- prior to the final decision.
4. The Superintendent, or the Superintendent's authorized designee, shall review the appeal form and determine whether the appeals board has jurisdiction over the appeal. The Superintendent or designee may dismiss the appeal for any of the following reasons:
 - a. The appeals board lacks jurisdiction over the appeal, as provided in Section 2 of this Policy.
 - b. The party filing the appeal is not an "aggrieved party" as defined in SBE Policy ATHL-001 or otherwise lacks standing to appeal.
 - c. The relevant rule administrator has not yet issued a final decision.
 - d. The appeal is not timely.
 - e. The aggrieved party has failed to provide all the information required by Section 3, except that the Superintendent or designee shall provide notice of any deficiencies to the aggrieved party and a reasonable opportunity to correct the deficiency.
 5. The rule administrator may file a response to the aggrieved party's submissions within five days. The panel may shorten the time for filing the rule administrator's response if the decision affects a student's or coach's eligibility to participate in an intervening interscholastic athletic activity.
 6. All parties shall simultaneously provide copies of all records submitted as part of the appeal to the other parties involved. If the aggrieved party is a student, parent, or coach, the parties shall also provide copies of the documents and forms to the local superintendent and principal with jurisdiction over the aggrieved party.
 7. The Superintendent or designee shall appoint panels of no fewer than three members of the appeals board to hear and decide individual appeals on behalf of the appeals board.
 - a. The panel may conduct a live hearing in person or via teleconference. Any hearing so conducted shall be recorded.
 - b. The aggrieved party shall have up to 30 minutes to present its appeal, explain why the rule administrator's final decision was erroneous for one or both of the reasons provided in Section 9, and respond to questions from the panel.
 - c. The rule administrator shall have up to 30 minutes to respond to the appeal, explain its final decision, and respond to questions from members of the panel.
 - d. Any other parties whose participation in the hearing has been deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee shall have up to 15 minutes to present additional relevant information and answer questions from the panel.
 - e. The panel chair may modify the order of presentations or allow additional time for either or both parties if the panel chair determines, in his or her sole discretion, that it is necessary to ensure a fair hearing of the facts and relevant law.
 - f. Neither direct questioning nor cross examination of one party by another party shall be permitted.
 - g. Profanity, ad hominem attacks against other parties, and statements of an excessively aggressive or hostile nature shall not be permitted.
 - h. The panel chair shall enforce the provisions of this Section and may dismiss from the hearing any individuals or parties who violate any of those provisions. The panel may also postpone the hearing if the panel chair determines, in his or her sole discretion, that it is necessary to ensure a fair hearing of the facts and relevant law.
 8. No later than 30 days after the Superintendent's receipt of the appeal, the panel shall issue its judgment.
 9. The panel shall affirm the rule administrator's final decision unless majority of the panel determines that the final decision either:
 - a. Erroneously applies SBE policies or other applicable laws; or
 - b. Is not supported by the evidence, based on the following standards of review:
 - i. For a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, the panel shall affirm the referee or official's ruling and uphold the resulting penalty unless the aggrieved party presents clear and convincing evidence to contradict the ruling.
 - ii. For a final decision of a rule administrator regarding the application of any other SBE policy, the panel shall affirm the final decision unless the aggrieved party demonstrates that the final decision was not supported by substantial evidence, as defined in G.S. 150B-2(8c).
 10. The panel may also remand the final decision to the rule administrator for reconsideration in light of new information or evidence that was not provided to the rule administrator prior to its final decision, if there is an intervening change in any relevant law, or if the panel determines that additional information is necessary to inform its judgment. The panel shall not consider informa-

11. tion or evidence presented that was not presented to the rule administrator in the first instance. The Superintendent or designee may stay a determination of ineligibility, or a penalty imposed by the rule administrator, pending the judgment of the appeals board if the Superintendent or designee determines that:
 - a. The aggrieved party has demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits of the appeal; and
 - b. The aggrieved party is likely to suffer irreparable harm or loss of opportunity if the stay is not granted.
12. The panel's judgment shall be deemed a final agency decision and not subject to further appeal to the Superintendent or State Board of Education.

NCHSAA Application Note 1.4.2. The process for appeals set forth in ATHL-013 applies only to PSU Aggrieved Parties.

- (a) "PSU Aggrieved Party(ies)" means an aggrieved party defined by ATHL-001, Section 1.b that is a PSU or is under the jurisdiction of a PSU. "PSU Aggrieved Party(ies)" does not include a student or coach at a member non-boarding parochial school, a member non-boarding parochial school, or any other person or entity not under the jurisdiction of a PSU.
- (b) A PSU Aggrieved Party may appeal a final decision of the NCHSAA only by following the procedures set forth in ATHL-013.
- (c) The appeal procedures set forth in ATHL-013 are also available on the NCHSAA's website.
- (d) The NCHSAA does not currently have internal policies and procedures allowing the NCHSAA to review a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition. Therefore, for NCHSAA contests, a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, as recorded by the referee or official in the game record maintained by the NCHSAA, that results in the ejection or suspension of a player or coach is a final decision of the NCHSAA. Any PSU Aggrieved Party(ies) may appeal such ruling, as with any other final decision, in accordance with ATHL-013.
- (e) The Superintendent has the authority to stay an ineligibility determination or penalty if the PSU Aggrieved Party makes the showing described in ATHL-013, Section 11. Any PSU Aggrieved Party who believes that an appeal involves an urgent matter, such as the suspension of a student affecting an upcoming contest, should bring timing considerations to the attention of the Superintendent in the appeal and should request a stay.
- (f) When a matter is remanded to the NCHSAA through the process set forth in ATHL-013, the NCHSAA will take further action consistent with the reason for remand. The NCHSAA may request that the party or parties involved submit additional information. The NCHSAA will then render a final decision after remand. Such final decision shall be subject to the same appeal rights and procedures as the original final decision of the NCHSAA.

1.4.3 Appeals Process for Final Decisions With Respect to Non-Boarding Parochial Schools - Final decisions of the NCHSAA with respect to non-boarding parochial schools may not be appealed to the appeals board as set forth in Rule 1.4.2. However, it is the NCHSAA's intent to afford member non-boarding parochial schools and associated aggrieved parties a substantially equivalent appeals process. Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Parties may appeal a final decision of the NCHSAA only by following the procedure in this rule.

- (a) "Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party(ies)" means a student at a non-boarding parochial school, a coach at a non-boarding parochial school, a member non-boarding parochial school, or other party that is directly and adversely affected by a final decision of the NCHSAA with respect to a non-boarding parochial school. A PSU Aggrieved Party is not a Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party. If a student is affected, the student's parent shall be allowed to appeal the final decision.
- (b) A Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party may file an appeal with the NCHSAA within five days after receipt of the final decision by sending the appeal to the Commissioner of the NCHSAA by email.
- (c) A Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party's appeal shall meet the requirements of ATHL-013, Section 3.a-i, except that any reference in that policy to "PSU" or "local superintendent" shall not apply.
- (d) The NCHSAA may dismiss the appeal if (1) it is not from a final decision, as defined in Rule 1.4.1, (2) the filing party is not a Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party, (3) the appeal is not timely, or (4) the appeal does not contain the information required by Rule 1.4.3(d) (except that the NCHSAA shall provide notice and a reasonable opportunity to correct such deficiency in information).
- (e) The procedures in ATHL-013, Section 5 shall apply except that the Commissioner of the NCHSAA (or designee) may file the response, and the Executive Committee may shorten the time for filing.

- (f) The procedures in ATHL-013, Section 6 shall apply except that no party shall be required to provide information to a "local superintendent."
- (g) No later than 30 days after the Commissioner's receipt of the appeal, the appeal shall be decided either (i) by the Executive Committee, or (ii) by the Board of Directors, if referred by the Executive Committee to the Board of Directors.
- (h) The Executive Committee or the Board of Directors, whichever decides the appeal, shall affirm the decision of the Commissioner or designee unless a majority of the body hearing the appeal determines that the final decision either:
 - (1) Erroneously applies State Board Policies, NCHSAA rules, or other applicable laws; or
 - (2) Is not supported by the evidence, based on the following standards of review:
 - (i) For a ruling by a referee or official enforcing gameplay rules during an athletic competition, the body hearing the appeal shall affirm the referee or official's ruling and uphold the resulting penalty unless the Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party presents clear and convincing evidence to contradict the ruling.
 - (ii) For a final decision of the NCHSAA regarding the application of any other SBE policy (as extended to all membership entities), the body hearing the appeal shall affirm the final decision unless the Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party demonstrates that the final decision was not supported by substantial evidence, as defined in G.S. 150B-2(8c).
- (i) In the alternative, the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors, whichever decides the appeal, may also remand the final decision to the Commissioner for reconsideration in light of new information or evidence that was not provided to the Commissioner prior to the final decision, if there is an intervening change in any relevant law, or if the body hearing the appeal determines that additional information is necessary to inform its judgment. The body hearing the appeal shall not consider information or evidence presented that was not presented to the Commissioner in the first instance.
- (j) The Executive Committee or the Board of Directors may conduct a live hearing in person or via teleconference. Any hearing so conducted shall be recorded.
- (k) The Executive Committee may stay a determination of ineligibility or a penalty imposed by the NCHSAA pending the final decision of the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors if the Executive Committee determines that (1) the Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party has demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits of the appeal; and (2) the Non-Boarding Parochial School Aggrieved Party is likely to suffer irreparable harm or loss of opportunity if the stay is not granted.
- (l) A decision of the Executive Committee will be final, or, if the appeal is referred to the Board of Directors, a decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

1.5 RECRUITING/UNDUE INFLUENCE - The NCHSAA applies and enforces ATHL-009 LIMITATIONS ON RECRUITING AND UNDUE INFLUENCE, which provides:

- 1. No student, coach, professional educator, or other employee of a PSU or administering organization shall subject a student to undue influence for the purpose of inducing or causing the student to transfer from one participating school to another to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of the receiving school.
- 2. For purposes of this Policy, "undue influence" means communication or conduct undertaken for the purpose and intent of soliciting or encouraging a student to enroll in a participating school, including the following:
 - a. Initiating or arranging communication or contact in any form, including letters, email, or phone calls, with the student or an immediate family member of the student.
 - b. Visiting or entertaining the student or an immediate family member of the student.
 - c. Providing or arranging for transportation for the student or an immediate family member of the student to visit a participating school or meet with anyone associated with the participating school.
 - d. Communicating to a student or an immediate family member of the student, either implicitly or explicitly, that a participating school's athletic program or sports team is superior to that of another participating school, or that it would be advantageous for the student to participate in athletics at a specific participating school. Such communication may be oral, written, or audiovisual in format.
- 3. A party alleging undue influence shall direct the initial inquiry or report to the appropriate administering organization in accordance with the procedures adopted by the administering organization. The party alleging undue influence bears the burden of proving undue influence by a preponderance of the evidence.

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

NCHSAA Application Note 1.5. The rule set forth in ATHL-009 applies to all membership entities. Therefore, no student, coach, professional educator, other employee, or agent of any membership entity or the NCHSAA shall subject a student to undue influence by any other student, coach, principal, local superintendent, other membership entity agent or employee for the purpose of inducing or causing the student to transfer from one participating school to another to participate in interscholastic athletics on behalf of the receiving school.

- (a) Allegations of undue influence that are substantiated will be processed as infractions under the penalty code.
- (b) The prohibition on undue influence is intended to apply broadly. Therefore, for purposes of ATHL-009 and this application note, “coach” means any individual who coaches at an NCHSAA member school, head or assistant, paid or non-paid, faculty or non-faculty, parent volunteer, etc., as well as any other person formally or informally associated with a school’s athletic program.

SECTION 2: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM

2.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1.1 Organization of School - For athletic purposes in determining eligibility membership entities may set their own semester dates prior to the opening of school, and a copy of the calendar indicating these dates must be sent to the NCHSAA along with the filing of the school’s first eligibility list.

2.1.2 High School Definition - A high school is composed of grades 9-12 inclusive.

- (a) No student can be approved for practice or an athletic contest unless he or she is a regularly enrolled member of those grades at the school submitting his or her eligibility.
Exception: An eighth grade student who is over-age or specialty school students under certain conditions, as indicated elsewhere in these rules.
- (b) Students on teams below the ninth grade shall not play or practice against interscholastic athletic teams, which have members in or above the ninth grade. This includes skill development during the academic school year calendar, inclusive of all weekends, holidays, work days, etc. [See Rule 2.2.14(d) (10)].
- (c) No membership entity may use students of two or more of its regularly constituted high schools, which offer an athletic program, to form a “composite team.” A PSU, by local policy, may choose to assign its specialty school students, who meet all other eligibility requirements, to participate in athletics at a regularly constituted high school provided the specialty school does not have an athletic program. Specialty schools in a PSU could include schools with special courses of study, early or mid- dle colleges, STEM/STEAM schools, magnet schools, virtual schools, etc. and these schools may or may not be housed on campus.

NOTE: The enrollment of that specialty school must be counted for realignment and classification purposes when other students are assigned to regularly constituted high schools.

Example: Member school A’s Average Daily Membership (ADM) is 500. The ADM for the Middle College is 200. Member school A has 5 students participating in athletics who are actually enrolled in the PSU governed Middle College. PSU policy allows any student enrolled in the Middle College to participate in athletics at the base school; therefore, for realignment and football subdividing purposes, Member School A, which is the base school for the middle college, must add 200 students to its own ADM count, making the ADM 700. If students at the middle college are assigned to more than one school, the ADM number—200—of the middle college is divided between/ among those member schools, based on those assignments.

- (d) If any school district or unit shall have been officially enlarged (e.g., a city unit), students residing in the newly added territory shall be eligible for approval just as though the new territory had previously been a part of the district or unit.
- (e) A single gender student body shall have its enrollment doubled for classification purposes;

2.1.3 Non-Boarding Parochial Schools - Non-boarding parochial schools, in addition to subscribing to the rules of the NCHSAA, must also agree to adhere to the following rules:

- (a) Student-athletes shall not be given scholarship aid or other financial consideration with the exception of need-based aid as determined by an independent agency.
- (b) All non-boarding parochial schools shall provide full disclosure of financial aid data upon request, within guidelines of privacy laws.

2.1.4 Enrollment Date - Any school that desires to renew membership in the NCHSAA must sign and submit a membership renewal agreement by September 1 and pay their membership dues before December 1. Any school that has not paid membership dues is not eligible for playoffs beginning with the winter sports season until all dues are paid.

- (a) To join the NCHSAA, an eligible school must pay a \$1000 application fee and fill out the appropriate application form.
- (b) The NCHSAA may send a delegation to make a site visit after the application is received.
- (c) New members may be approved at either the winter or spring Board meetings; deadlines are November 1 to be considered at the winter Board meeting or April 1 to be considered at the spring Board meeting. New memberships will take effect July 1. All schools which join the NCHSAA are required to attend an orientation session.
- (d) All schools shall have enrollment policies and procedures available to the NCHSAA upon request.

2.1.5 Membership Dues - A check in the amount of \$1.00 per pupil for all students enrolled at the high school should accompany the invoice for dues.

- (a) Enrollment shall be determined by total enrollment of students at the end of the first school month of the present school year. Each school should use the number provided in their membership portal in calculating its payment.
- (b) Deadline for payment is December 1.

2.1.6 Coaching - In most cases, the head coach of an interscholastic athletic team should be a bona fide member of the faculty and as such shall be responsible for the supervision of athletic teams during all practices, games, and trips.

- (a) Local superintendents may employ non-faculty persons as head coaches for varsity or junior varsity teams, with the concurrence of the local board of education.
- (b) Individuals authorized to coach in this manner are required to know and follow the rules of the NCHSAA, SBE, and NCDPI, including the sports season rule.
- (c) In extenuating circumstances and upon the written request of a school's principal, the NCHSAA may authorize parents to accompany individual participants in lieu of the coach at state-sponsored play-offs.
- (d) Unsupervised athletes may not participate in state playoff events.

2.1.7 Coaching Requirements

- (a) All coaches, paid and volunteer, are required to take the "Fundamentals of Coaching" certification course prior to the first play date of the sport he or she coaches in order to coach an NCHSAA team. The course can be accessed online at nfhslearn.com.
- (b) All coaches, paid and volunteer, must annually take the NFHS "Concussions in Sports" course or an equivalent concussion curriculum prior to the first date of practice in their sport.
- (c) CrashCourse Concussion Video Reviewing Requirement- All coaches, athletes, and parents are required to view "CrashCourse" Concussion Video prior to participation each season.
- (d) The pole vault head coach is required to take the NFHS "Coaching Pole Vault" course prior to the first date of practice in their sport.
- (e) The head cheerleading coach is required to maintain safety certification through the NFHS and USA Cheer's "Cheer and Dance Safety Certification" course once every four years. Fundamentals of Coaching is optional.
- (f) All coaches, paid and volunteer, must be CPR/AED certified prior to first practice date. CPR/AED courses that satisfy this requirement should include some hands-on, in-person skill presentation and evaluation, regardless if part of the course is online or entirely in-person. It is recommended that all coaches of each sport/activity staff take and pass the NFHS First Aid for Coaches course and be present at all contests and practices.
- (g) The head coach must complete the corresponding NCHSAA state rules clinics in all sanctioned sports.
 - (1) If the requirement for clinic completion is not met prior to the first play date in the sport, the coach is ineligible to coach in contests until he or she is compliant, absent showing cause as currently occurs.
 - (2) Head coach coaching in a contest prior to satisfying the rules clinic attendance requirement is a violation of NCHSAA rules that may result in a penalty. If coach in question coaches in subsequent games without satisfying requirement, NCHSAA has authority to suspend the coach for the same number of contests they coached while being non-compliant.
- (h) Any person paid or employed, as a principal or assistant principal shall not coach interscholastic athletic teams.

2.1.8 Athletic Director Requirements

- (a) All Athletic Directors are required to complete the NFHS Learn course "After School Security" or NIAAA LTC 631: Emergency Management of Interscholastic Athletic Events as a one-time requirement. Completion must be prior to July 31, 2025 or within 30 days of hire.
- (b) It is recommended that all Game Day Administrators complete the NFHS Learn course "After School Security" or NIAAA LTC 631: Emergency Management of Interscholastic Athletic Events as a one-time requirement.

2.1.9 Middle School Rules and Regulations - All questions relative to middle school rules and regulations must be directed to the NCDPI, www.dpi.nc.gov.

2.2 GAME AND SPORT ADMINISTRATION - SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

2.2.1 Game Rules - All high schools participating in interscholastic athletics shall use the game rules as set forth by the NFHS.

NOTE: Golf and tennis shall use USGA and USTA rules respectively, except where local modifications apply.

2.2.2 Athletic Contracts - A standard contract is recommended for use in all sports for non-conference competition (with two-year terms for football and basketball). The standard contract template may be found on the NCHSAA website.

- (a) All provisions of the contract must be fulfilled by both parties unless canceled by mutual agreement.
- (b) The NCHSAA has no responsibility for enforcing oral contracts.

2.2.3 Facilities

- (a) Court and Field Diagrams - The NCHSAA has adopted the playing rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations for most sponsored sports.
 - (1) Diagrams for the court or field for each sport are contained in the respective rulebooks.
 - (2) The National Federation also publishes a Court and Field Diagram Guide covering all sports.
 - (3) A copy of rule books for individual sports or of the comprehensive guide may be obtained directly from the National Federation.
- (b) Lighting Standards - The NCHSAA has adopted standards for the lighting of events sponsored by the NCHSAA or any member school.
 - (1) These standards incorporate the most current data available regarding the lighting, electrical and structural issues that apply to the installation and maintenance of safe, effective lighting systems.
 - (2) These standards were developed by a Standards Advisory Committee made up of experienced engineers, architects, electrical contractors, attorneys and insurance underwriters.
 - (3) They are divided into recommended minimums and desirable features. The minimums establish criteria which are important to the safe conduct of sponsored activities. The desirable features are intended to provide guidelines for lighting systems that give added values of durability, energy-efficiency, environmental sensitivity and cost effectiveness.
 - (4) NCHSAA playoff events are intended to be held at sites that meet the minimum standards.
 - (5) A copy of the revised lighting standards may be viewed on the NCHSAA website.
 - (6) Member schools are encouraged to complete a SYSTEM OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST form annually to ensure that electrical and structural components of facility lighting systems are up to code with NEC (National Electric Code) and IBC (International Building Code) standards.
- (c) Drone Policy - The use of drones is prohibited within the confines of stadiums, fields and arenas during NCHSAA contests. This policy includes not only the restricted playing area of the venue(s), but also the physical confines of the entire stadium, field, arena and structure. The policy extends to pre- and post-game activities.
- (d) NCHSAA Hosting of Playoffs and Championships - During the playoffs, the NCHSAA has the right to require host teams to find an adequate facility based on expected attendance or quality of venue. In order to host NCHSAA Playoffs (Recommended for regular season) in any sport, member schools' facilities must:
 - (1) Have measures in place that ensure the safety and protection of the well-being of all participants and spectators;
 - (2) Maintain seating for participants and spectators, with one-third (1/3) of the available seating reserved for the visiting team's spectators. These specifications are recommended for regular season games in all sports, with the exception of football, which provides its own minimum seating regulations;
 - (3) Comply with requirements mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);
 - (4) Have restroom facilities available for both spectators and participants;
 - (5) Provide areas for teams and game officials to dress for competition;
 - (6) Be conducive to the charging of admission; and
 - (7) Show, upon request, that facility lighting meets minimum NCHSAA lighting standards [See Rule 2.2.3(b)] and the NCHSAA website.

2.2.4 Starting Time

- (a) Regular Season Contest - The starting time for all regular season games in all sports shall be determined by the home team, within certain limits.
 - (1) A contest may not usually begin until after the last regularly scheduled instructional period.
 - (2) Recommended starting time in regular season is no earlier than 5:00 pm for baseball,

- lacrosse, softball, volleyball and soccer.
- (3) Unless otherwise noted, if an event is held on campus or on school property, the host team is considered the "home" team.
- (4) Unless otherwise noted, if an event is held off campus (golf course, etc.), the host team is designated the home team.
 - (i) The contest may begin before the last regularly scheduled period if a "host" team is involved, but schools are still urged to minimize loss of school time.
 - (ii) This rule is designed to be used only if the operator of the facility dictates an early starting time to the host school.
- (b) Playoff Contest - Playoff contests are under the auspices of the NCHSAA.
 - (1) Monday-Friday - Contests are set for 7:00 p.m.
 - (i) Teams may play at 6:00 p.m. if mutually agreed upon.
 - (ii) Game time will be 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way
 - (iii) Any deviation from this must be approved by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Saturday - Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon.
 - (i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - (ii) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
 - (3) Schools may play earlier than the playoff date designated on the bracket by mutual agreement.

2.2.5 Practice Time - There shall be no athletic practice during the regular school day. This means no individual or team practice may begin until after the last regularly scheduled instructional period.

- (a) A practice with an outside team during the sport season is a violation.
- (b) No authorized practice, contest, or workouts may occur during the work day for teachers during the ten-month teaching calendar, and coaches may not use their vacation or leave time to hold a practice during the teacher work day.
Exception: If a superintendent gives permission for schools in his/her unit to practice prior to the end of a work day due to inclement weather only.
- (c) On the day following the end of the academic school year calendar, non-mandatory teacher work days are governed by local policy. This rule also applies to non-faculty coaches.
- (d) Team practice in any sport is prohibited after the sports season ends until the first day following the final student day of the school year.

2.2.6 Sunday Participation - No participation under the auspices of the NCHSAA may be staged on Sunday, except for certain cases approved by the NCHSAA in playoffs and championships.

NOTE: There shall be no Sunday practice, conditioning or skill development in any sport. This includes the assembling of athletic squads (full teams or selected individuals) for purposes of viewing films, chalk talks, or other materials pertaining to the coaching of the team.

2.2.7 Postponed and Suspended Games - Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (bad weather, epidemics, heating system failure, mid-term exams, or unavoidable mishaps) may be rescheduled and played.

- (a) No more than three contests may be played in a single week even with postponements and rescheduling [See weekly limits below and exceptions for volleyball, baseball, tennis, basketball and softball].
- (b) Postponed games will be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date; During the regular season, Saturday will not be used as a makeup day unless mutually agreed upon by the two schools involved, with the exception of the 11th playing date in football [See Rule 4.5.4 (c) 2].
 - (1) Unless approved by the NCHSAA, a postponed game may not be played after the reporting deadline for playoffs.
 - (2) When a playoff game is postponed and then rescheduled, the principals of both schools, along with the NCHSAA, should be involved with the decision.
 - (3) Saturdays must be used as makeup days for playoffs.
- (c) NCHSAA uses the suspended game rule in all sports where appropriate.
 - (1) If a contest is suspended at any point, it is resumed from the point of interruption unless the teams mutually agree to terminate the game with the existing score [See Baseball 4.2.1(n), Lacrosse 4.7.1(l), Soccer 4.8.1(l) and Softball 4.9.1(l) for specific applications in those sports].
 - (2) A suspended game may be continued in another week and not count against the weekly limitations.

2.2.8 Tie Games - All tie games shall count one-half game won and one-half game lost whenever a conference champion is determined by percentage standings.

2.2.9 Unplayed and Forfeited Games - If a conference school plays a part of its schedule, and then withdraws from competition leaving unplayed games, the NCHSAA shall have power, at its discretion, to declare official forfeitures of all unplayed conference games. A contract should be in place for all non-conference games. The contract should stipulate the remedy for any unplayed contest. Absent a signed contract, no forfeiture shall be awarded

without mutual agreement.

2.2.10 Weekly/Player Limits - Student-athletes must always stay within the daily, weekly and seasonal limitations of their prescribed sports.

- (a) Both teams and individual players are subject to the daily, weekly and seasonal limitations for each sport.
- (b) See Section 4 for any sport-specific exceptions.

2.2.11 Season Limitations - All regular season contests and conference tournaments must be completed before the playoff reporting date.

- (a) The season ends for all sports with the reporting deadline or when defeated in the state playoffs.
NOTE: A conference tournament, if held, may be held at any time during the regular season. It does not have to be a culminating event for the regular season unless specified by conference by-laws. Exceptions for postponed contests which have a bearing on conference standings (for awards, Wells Fargo points, etc.) or which are important money games for the schools involved may be requested through the NCHSAA.
- (b) The opening date for practice, the authorized date for the first game, and the number of regular season contests allowed for each sport are specified under individual sports headings.

2.2.12 Split Squads - A varsity team may not be divided or split for athletic purposes, with the exception of cross country, indoor track and field, track and field, and wrestling.

- (a) There may be JV teams, ninth-grade teams, etc.
- (b) This rule does not prevent a junior varsity player from playing with the varsity and vice versa, provided he or she does not exceed specified participation limitations.

2.2.13 Unattached and Unaffiliated Athletes

- (a) Unattached - An athlete is unattached if the athlete is not representing his/her high school team in that competition. In order to be unattached by the technical definition of the term, the athlete must be a member of a team, such as an outside club team, but for whatever reason is not representing his/her high school team in the specific competition. Unattached athletes must assume all liability and all expenses for themselves, including transportation, and cannot wear school uniforms in the competition. The NCHSAA does not regulate unattached student-athletes; it is up to the discretion of the meet director to decide whether to admit unattached student-athletes. Performances while competing unattached cannot be used to qualify for NCHSAA regional or state meets.
- (b) Unaffiliated - A student-athlete is unaffiliated if he or she does not have a team or does not belong to a governing body. This means that no one is currently monitoring his or her eligibility. Home-schooled student-athletes who do not belong to an association of some kind (such as Forsyth Home Educators) are considered unaffiliated, and are not recognized by the NCHSAA.

2.2.14 Sports Seasons - The sports season for a school is defined as that period of time which begins with the opening date of practice (as called for by each individual school) and goes through the reporting deadline or a team's final playoff game in a particular sport.

- (a) By defining the length of each sport's season, an attempt has been made to provide balance to the athletic calendar so that students have an opportunity to compete in a variety of sports throughout the school year.
- (b) Any competition with outside teams in an Off-Season Skill Development Session is prohibited during the academic school year calendar, inclusive of all weekends, holidays, work days, etc.
- (c) On a given day, a student-athlete is limited to 2 hours of skills development or weight training/conditioning during the academic school year calendar, inclusive of all weekends, holidays, work days, etc. Skill development sessions are not to exceed 2 hours in duration including flex time (stretching), meetings, video review and breaks.
- (d) Skill Development Sessions are allowed, but shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport.
 - (1) Dead Periods - Sessions are not allowed during the following periods:
 - (i) July 29 - August 18, 2026
 - (ii) November 2 (October 26, Non-Football Schools) - November 22, 2026
 - (iii) Last five (5) student days of the First Semester
 - (iv) February 15 - March 7, 2027
 - (v) Last ten (10) student days of the Second Semester
 - (vi) July 5 - July 11, 2027
 - (vii) July 19 - July 25, 2027
 - (2) The weight room must also be closed during the last five student days of the first semester and the last ten student days of second semester.
 - (3) All skill development sessions must be voluntary and open to all students with a current and valid pre-participation physical examination [See Rule 1.2.9].
 - (4) At no time may a coach require of any student off-season skill development sessions as a measure of continued participation on a team. Any coach who promotes the idea that taking

part in off-season practice is required is blatantly out of compliance with the intent and purpose of this rule.

- (5) Student accident insurance is strongly recommended for all those involved in athletics, in-season and out-of-season.
- (6) Skill development sessions are not restricted in the number of participants on a daily basis.
- (7) There is no restriction on the number of coaches who may work with the athletes.
- (8) Football Specific Requirements
 - (i) Licensed athletic trainer or first responder must be present if any protective equipment (helmets or shoulder pads) is worn during the school year.
 - (ii) No body-to-body contact, live action, wrapping, or thudding is allowed [See Rule 4.5.3(b)(4)]
 - (iii) A gameday administrator and a licensed athletic trainer or first responder must be present for any 7-on-7 competition.
- (9) Skill development sessions are open only to students enrolled at that school.
- (10) Eighth graders are not permitted to participate in skill development sessions on high school campuses [See Rule 2.1.2(b)].
- (11) Facilities may be used for out-of-season athletic play on a strictly voluntary basis, open to all students and required of none.
- (12) For safety purposes, school administrators or other school personnel should be present as supervisors during any skill development session.
- (e) Any individual who coaches at an NCHSAA member high school, head or assistant, paid or non-paid, faculty or non-faculty, parent volunteer, etc., must abide by the skill development, out-of-season workout rules.
 - (1) If a high school coach, regardless of the sport he or she coaches at the high school, also coaches an outside team (non-school or club team) outside the sports season but during the school year, and has any students from the high school on that outside team, the coach is prohibited from working with any of those students during a dead period.
 - (2) Coaches coaching an outside team either during the sports season or outside the sports season, but during the school year, must still abide by the numbers restrictions below (one less than a team).
 - (3) NUMBER OF ATHLETES FROM ONE SCHOOL, ON ANY OUTSIDE TEAM ON A GIVEN DAY

Football	no more than 10	Flag Football	no more than 6
Golf	no more than 3	Softball	no more than 8
Basketball	no more than 4	Wrestling	no more than 8
Baseball	no more than 8	Track	no more than 6
Volleyball	no more than 5	Cross Country	no more than 4
Tennis	no more than 4	Swimming	no more than 6
Soccer	no more than 10		
Lacrosse	no more than 9 (men)	Lacrosse	no more than 11(women)
 - (4) Students who have exhausted their eligibility in a particular sport will not count toward the numbers restrictions as listed above (one less than a team).
- (f) The sports in season should always take precedence for facility use etc., over those not in season, in keeping with the philosophy of the sports season concept.
- (g) Principals, superintendents and athletic directors are responsible for ensuring the entire concept of the sports season is followed without exception [See Rule 3.3.6 (d)(23)].

2.2.15 Summer Rules - During the summer, coaches are free to work with individual or multiple players, from their school or their feeder schools, conduct practices, or participate in organized league play, etc. Once practice for the fall sports season begins, skill development restrictions are in place.

- (a) In order to participate in summer work-outs, students must have a current and valid pre-participation physical examination.
- (b) At no time may a coach require of any student off-season skill development sessions as a measure of continued participation on a team. Any coach who promotes the idea that taking part in off-season practice is required is blatantly out of compliance with the intent and purpose of this rule.
- (c) During the "Summer Dead Periods" no NCHSAA member school-sponsored activities may be organized or conducted by any NCHSAA coach or school staff member (whether full-time, part-time, or volunteer) that involve students at NCHSAA member schools. School-sponsored activities include any of the following (i.e. these activities MAY NOT be done):
 - (1) Activities, other than Third-Party Outings and Bona Fide Competitions (both as defined below), conducted (1) at any NCHSAA member school; or (2) at any location if the activity is organized or controlled by an NCHSAA member school, coach or staff member (whether full-time, part-time

or volunteer) (e.g., summer skills development or camps, open facilities, conditioning exercises, laps around the school track, etc.);

(2) Activities at any location where attendance by students is deemed mandatory, whether actual or perceived (e.g., coach organizes an event away from school property and states, suggests or implies in any way that any students not attending will suffer consequences of any kind, whether this means making a team, enjoying playing time, becoming team captain, etc.);

(d) Examples of activities that would be considered “non-school-sponsored activities” and may be permitted:

(1) Third-Party Outings: Coach or staff member takes students to a third-party camp at a non-NCHSAA member school (e.g., college-sponsored summer skills or team camp, etc.) where attendance by students is NOT deemed mandatory, whether actual or perceived (as described above);

(2) Bona Fide Competitions: An organized league is conducted through a bona fide third party organization where (1) the organization purchases appropriate liability insurance and pays for all game-related expenses (e.g., facilities, staffing, etc.); (2) students are not required to attend or participate; (3) student transportation is not provided by NCHSAA member school vehicles; and (4) students use their own equipment.

2.2.16 Weight Training and Conditioning - During the academic year, a program of weight training is permitted at any time, with the exception of the last five student days of the first semester and the last ten student days of the second semester.

(a) Personnel knowledgeable in this area should be on hand at all times to observe the proper techniques are followed in the weight training and conditioning workouts.

(b) All weight training and conditioning should be open to all and required of none.

(c) Sports specific equipment cannot be used during weight training/conditioning sessions [See Rule 2.2.14 and 2.2.15].

2.2.17 Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming - Filming, videotaping or video streaming of a contest or scrimmage by nonparticipating schools, in any sport, is considered unsportsmanlike conduct, unless agreed upon by competing teams.

NOTE: Filming, videotaping or video streaming for baseball and softball may not be done beyond either first base or third base.

2.2.18 Radio-TV Fees - Member schools retain the broadcast rights to their regular season contests. Member schools are encouraged to make their own arrangements with media outlets for broadcasts of any kind during the regular season. The NCHSAA holds the broadcast rights to all postseason competition. The Association requires a Post Season Broadcast Request Form be submitted by the Outlet to be approved for broadcasting playoff contests.

(a) For a live audio-only broadcast (radio or internet streaming) of any single playoff contest in football and basketball, the fee is set at \$100.00, AM, FM or internet audio stream. For all other sports the fee is \$50.00.

(1) Since the NCHSAA holds the rights to postseason play, no station can be denied the opportunity to broadcast a playoff contest by a member school without approval of the Association.

(2) Provided the outlet is in good standing with the NCHSAA and the Member School, meaning all required broadcast fees have been paid for any game broadcast and there have been no disciplinary actions outlined by the NCHSAA or member school for a broadcast outlet, a host athletic director may consider a station to be approved to conduct an audio-only/radio broadcast of a playoff contest even without written notice of approval from the NCHSAA.

This automatic approval does not include any outlet seeking a video broadcast.

(b) Any broadcast aired on multiple outlets, over the air or cable, is subject to the appropriate fee for each outlet or cable system airing the contest.

(c) All broadcast fees for post-season broadcasts are payable to the host institution or for contests hosted by the NCHSAA at neutral sites, to the NCHSAA prior to the beginning of the contest.

(d) A live telecast (over-the-air, cable or satellite) of a playoff game must be approved by the NCHSAA and the holder of television rights, if any, which the Association has granted.

(e) All telecasts, live or delayed, of any state championship game must be approved by the NCHSAA.

(f) NCHSAA Broadcast Rights Fee Chart can be found in the resources section of the handbook page 130.

2.2.19 Travel Checks - Travel checks will be issued to participating schools in all individual sports after the conclusion of the NCHSAA fiscal year.

2.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.3.1 State Board Health and Safety Policy. The NCHSAA applies and enforces ATHL-015 Student Health and Safety 2.3.1 (the “State Board Health and Safety Policy”). The State Board Health and Safety Policy provides:

1. For purposes of this Policy, a concussion is defined as a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in loss of consciousness.

2. An administering organization shall, on an annual basis, provide a concussion and head injury information sheet to all coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, first responders (SBE Policy ATHL-016), volunteers, and students who participate in interscholastic athletic activities, and the parents or legal guardians of those students. The information shall include:
 - a. The definitions and symptoms of concussions and head injuries;
 - b. A description of the physiology and the potential short-term and long-term effects of concussions and other head injuries;
 - c. The medical return-to-play protocol for post-concussion participation in interscholastic athletic activities; and
 - d. Any other information deemed necessary by the PSU.
3. School employees, first responders, volunteers, and students shall sign the information sheet and return it to the coach before participating in interscholastic athletic activities, including tryouts, practices, or competition. Parents shall sign the information sheet and return it to the coach before a child may participate in any such interscholastic athletic activities. The signed sheets shall be maintained in accordance with SBE Policy ATHL-005.
4. If a coach, athletic director, school nurse, athletic trainer, or first responder (as defined SBE Policy ATHL-016) determines that a student participating in an interscholastic athletic activity is exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with concussion, the student shall be removed from the activity at the time and shall not be allowed to return to play or practice that day. A student removed from play for exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with concussion shall not return to play or practice on a subsequent day until the student is evaluated by and receives written clearance for such participation from one of the following:
 - a. A physician licensed under Chapter 90, Article 1 of the General Statutes with training in concussion management;
 - b. A neuropsychologist licensed under Chapter 90, Article 18A of the General Statutes with training in concussion management and working in consultation with a physician licensed under Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes;
 - c. An athletic trainer licensed under Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes;
 - d. A physician assistant, consistent with the limitations of G.S. 90-18.1; or
 - e. A nurse practitioner, consistent with the limitations of G.S. 90-18.2; or
 - f. A physical therapist, licensed under Chapter 90, Article 18E of the General Statutes.
5. Each participating school shall develop a venue-specific emergency action plan to deal with serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the patient may deteriorate rapidly. The plan must be:
 - a. In writing;
 - b. Reviewed by an athletic trainer licensed under Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes;
 - c. Approved by the principal of the school;
 - d. Distributed to all appropriate personnel;
 - e. Posted conspicuously for community and parental awareness at all athletic-sponsored venues; and
 - f. Reviewed and rehearsed annually by all licensed athletic trainers, first responders, coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, and volunteers for interscholastic athletic activities.
6. Each participating school's emergency management plan shall include:
 - a. A delineation of roles;
 - b. Methods of communication;
 - c. Available emergency equipment; and
 - d. Access to and plan for emergency transport.
7. Each school shall maintain complete and accurate records of its compliance with the requirements of this Policy.

NCHSAA Application Note 2.3.1. The requirements set forth in ATHL-015 apply to all membership entities.

- (a) In 2011, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted the Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act ("Gfeller-Waller Act") to protect the safety of student-athletes in North Carolina. The Gfeller-Waller Act had three major areas of focus: concussion education, post-concussion protocol implementation, and venue specific emergency action plan development and implementation. The substance of the Gfeller-Waller Act, as revised by later legislation, is now codified at G.S. §§ 115C-407.57 and 115C-407.58. These provisions are the basis for the State Board Health and Safety Policy.
- (b) Following an injury, a student-athlete must be evaluated by one of the licensed health care providers listed in ATHL-015, Section 4, as provided in the State Board Health and Safety Policy. Before a

student-athlete resumes full participation in athletics, the student-athlete is required to have completed a return to play protocol. The student-athlete must have remained free of all clinical signs and symptoms at rest and with both full cognitive and full exertional/physical stress through stage 5. The student-athlete must have a Return to Play Protocol form signed by the individual who monitored the return to play protocol, a licensed health care provider, and the student's parent or legal custodian. In addition, the NCHSAA strongly recommends that:

- (1) The health care provider referred to in ATHL-015, Section 4 have expertise and training in concussion management;
 - (2) A licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) sign the LHCP Concussion Evaluation Recommendations form or the Return to Play Protocol form.
 - (3) A health care provider referred to in ATHL-015, Section 4.d or e consult with their supervising physician before signing the Return to Play Protocol form, consistent with state law on supervision of such providers.
- (c) Pursuant to Session Law 2025-49, the General Assembly declared that a physical therapist, licensed under Article 18E of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes, can evaluate a student exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with concussion and provide written clearance for participation. ATHL-015, Section 4, implements the session law. While physical therapists are now legally authorized to participate in the concussion clearance process, concussion management remains a specialized area of care that requires specific education, training, and clinical experience. Session Law 2025-49 does not expressly require evaluation by a physical therapist with that specialized experience. The NCHSAA recommends that schools encourage student-athletes and parents, when selecting a provider for a concussion evaluation, to verify that the provider has formal education or continuing education specific to concussion care..
- (d) The NCHSAA website (Health and Safety Section) has additional information on concussion education, post-concussion protocol implementation, and venue-specific emergency action plan development and implementation.

2.3.2 Health and Safety Personnel. The NCHSAA requires all membership entities to comply with ATHL-016 ATHLETIC TRAINERS, which provides:

1. Each public school unit shall designate for each high school within its jurisdiction either a licensed athletic trainer who is qualified pursuant to Chapter 90, Article 34 of the General Statutes or a first responder. These persons may be employed on a full-time or part-time basis or may serve as a volunteer.
2. If not a licensed athletic trainer, a first responder shall:
 - a. Complete and maintain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation as certified by an organization such as the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association;
 - b. Complete and maintain certification in first aid as certified by an organization such as the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association;
 - c. Complete and maintain training in concussion management as offered by an organization such as the NFHS;
 - d. Have completed and continue to maintain continuing education in injury prevention and management as offered by an organization such as the State National Federation of High School Associations; and
 - e. Complete 10 hours total of staff development each school year specific to first aid and injury recognition and prevention. The 10 hours may include hours necessary for recertifications or renewals.
3. The licensed athletic trainer or first responder shall not have concurrent coaching responsibilities during the time in which the person is working as a licensed athletic trainer or first responder.
4. A licensed athletic trainer or first responder shall attend all practices and games for football and all matches and tournaments for wrestling, unless excused by the local superintendent due to emergency.
5. The State Board of Education encourages public school units to have a licensed athletic trainer or first responder available for all other athletic events, practices, and activities in every sport at every middle, junior high, and high schools under the PSU's jurisdiction.
6. Each PSU shall monitor school athletic trainer's or the first responder's compliance with this Policy.

NCHSAA Application Note 2.3.2. The requirements set forth in ATHL-016 apply to all membership entities.

Each membership entity must monitor its member schools' athletic trainers' or first responders' compliance with the rule.

- (a) Licensed Athletic Trainers (LAT) - In North Carolina an LAT is an individual who is licensed under Article 34 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes entitling them to perform the functions and duties of an athletic trainer. In order to be compliant as an LAT at an NCHSAA member school an individual must provide their active NCBATE license number, complete the Gfeller-Waller Athletic Personnel

Concussion Statement Form and sign an attestation statement.

- (1) Athletic training encompasses the prevention, examination, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of emergent, acute, or chronic injuries and medical conditions. Athletic training is recognized by the American Medical Association (AMA), Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as an allied health care profession.
 - (2) Athletic trainers are highly qualified, multi-skilled health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to provide preventative services, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions. Athletic trainers work under the direction of a physician as prescribed by state licensure statutes. In North Carolina, an athletic trainer is a person who, under a written protocol with a physician licensed under Article 1 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes and filed with the North Carolina Medical Board, carries out the practice of care, prevention, and rehabilitation of injuries incurred by athletes, and who, in carrying out these functions, may use physical modalities, including heat, light, sound, cold, electricity, or mechanical devices related to rehabilitation and treatment.
- (b) First Responders (FR) – If not an LAT, an FR must meet the requirements of ATHL-016, Section 2. The NCHSAA recommends that the courses taken to satisfy those requirements include some hands-on, in-person skill presentation and evaluation, regardless if part of the course is online or entirely in-person.
- (1) Any certification required for an FR must not lapse while the person is serving in the role of FR.
 - (2) FRs must renew their training consistent with the terms of any course or certification taken to satisfy the requirements of ATHL-016, Section 2. For example, the NFHS “Concussion in Sports” course is valid for 365 days, and must not lapse while the person is serving in the role of FR, but must be taken annually before the first practice date of the school year.
 - (3) Original documentation of annually completed continuing education (CE), including current and expired CPR/AED and First Aid cards, must be retained as proof of eligibility to serve as a FR.
 - (4) A first suggested option to satisfy the 10-hour CE requirement in ATHL-016, Section 2.e is attending the Athletic Injury Management Courses offered in conjunction with the North Carolina Coaches Association (NCCA) Summer Clinic. If a FR is unable to attend the NCCA Summer Clinic the NCHSAA recommends two additional options to satisfy this requirement.
 - (A) A second CE option is taking online courses offered by the NFHS:
 - *Emergency Action Planning in Athletics
 - *ACL Injury Prevention
 - *Appearance and Performance Enhancing Drugs and Substance
 - *Heat Illness Prevention
 - *Introduction to Pitch Smart
 - *Sports Nutrition
 - *Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention
 - *Sudden Cardiac Arrest
 - *The Collapsed Athlete
 - *Understanding Vaping and E-Cigarettes.
 - (B) Courses offered by the Gatorade Sport Science Institute is a third CE option that is also on-line based.
- NOTE:** CE courses are valid for 365 days from date of completion, unless otherwise indicated, and must not lapse while serving in the role as a FR.
- (5) The NCHSAA’s expectation is that the FR should provide the same care that any reasonable and prudent individual would consistent with their training in the same situation. In all instances, the FR should provide only the type of emergency care for which the FR is trained.
 - (6) “Games,” as used in ATHL-016, Section 4, includes home and away games.
 - (A) A licensed athletic trainer or a first responder must be physically present if any protective equipment (helmets or shoulder pads) is worn by student-athletes participating in football skill development during the school year.
 - (B) 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 contest are being held.
- NOTE:** 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.

- (7) A licensed athletic trainer or first responder must be in attendance at all wrestling matches.
- (8) A licensed athletic trainer or a first responder must be physically present at all times in any competition area in which wrestling matches are being held.

Ex. - Wrestling in the Auxiliary Gym and Main Gym at the same time would require two licensed athletic trainers or first responders or a combination of one of each.

NOTE: Failure of a member school to meet an athletic event medical care requirement, as listed on previous page, is a violation of NCHSAA rules and may result in a penalty. [See Rule 3.3.6(d)(7)].

2.3.3 Fundamentals of Heat Illness Prevention and Management for All Sports

- (a) The vast majority of serious heat illness occurs during the first week of practice/training. Acclimatization should consist of gradually increasing the amount of time of environmental exposure (heat and humidity) while progressively increasing physical exertion and training activities. The key to appropriate acclimatization is to:
 - (1) Begin with shorter, less intense practices and training activities, with longer recovery intervals between bouts of activity;
 - (2) Minimize protective gear during first several practices, and introduce additional uniform and protective gear progressively over successive days. (e.g. in football, helmets only, no shoulder pads); and,
 - (3) Emphasize instruction over conditioning during the first several practices.
- (b) Keep each athlete's individual level of conditioning and medical status in mind and adjust activity accordingly. These factors directly affect exertional heat illness risk. For example, there is an increased risk of heat injury if the athlete is obese, unfit, has been recently ill (particularly gastrointestinal illness), has a previous history of exertional heat illness, has Sickle Cell Trait, or is using certain medications. Players at risk should be identified from their pre-participation examination.
- (c) High temperatures and high humidity are potentially dangerous for athletes. In these conditions, lower the intensity of practices and increase the frequency and duration of rest breaks*, and consider reducing uniform and protective equipment. Also, be sure to monitor all players more closely as conditions are increasingly warm/humid, especially if there is a change in weather from the previous few days. [*Provide a shaded area for rest breaks]
- (d) Athletes should begin practices and training activities adequately hydrated.

WBGT Index and Athletic Activity Chart

WBGT Index (F)	Athletic Activity Guidelines
Less than 80	Unlimited activity with primary cautions for new or unconditioned athletes or extreme exertion; schedule mandatory rest/water breaks (5 min water/rest break every 30 min)
80 - 84.9	Normal practice for athletes; closely monitor new or unconditioned athletes and all athletes during extreme exertion. Schedule mandatory rest /water breaks. (5 min water/rest break every 25 min)
85 - 87.9	New or unconditioned athletes should have reduced intensity practice and modifications in clothing. Well-conditioned athletes should have more frequent rest breaks and hydration as well as cautious monitoring for symptoms of heat illness. Schedule frequent mandatory rest/water breaks. (5 min water/rest break every 20 min) Have cold or ice immersion pool on site for practice.
88 - 89.9	All athletes must be under constant observation and supervision. Remove pads and equipment. Schedule frequent mandatory rest/water breaks. (5 min water/rest break every 15 min) Have cold or ice immersion pool on site for practice.
90 or above	Suspend all practices; Competition may continue with mandatory water breaks as designated by gameday administrator.

- (e) Recognize early signs of distress and developing exertional heat illness (weakness, nausea/vomiting, paleness, headache, light-headedness). Promptly remove from activity, and treat appropriately. First aid should not be delayed.
- (f) Recognize more serious signs of exertional heat illness (clumsiness, confusion, stumbling, collapse, obvious behavioral changes and/or other central nervous system problems), immediately stop activity, begin rapid cooling, and activate the Emergency Medical System.
- (g) All schools should have a heat illness prevention and management policy for all sanctioned activities and this policy must be followed.
- (h) Pursuant to the State Board Health and Safety Policy, a venue-specific emergency action plan (EAP) with clearly defined written and practiced procedures must be developed and in place ahead of time.
- (i) Prior to the season, all coaches, athletic training personnel and first responders working with the team should review the signs and symptoms of heat illness and the EAP for their school.
- (j) A Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) chart should be available at practices and contests.
- (k) Supplies to assess WBGT (or alternatively, heat and humidity on site), to assess core temperature, and to provide for rapid cooling should be on-site for all practices and games as environmental conditions require.

2.3.4 Acclimatization (Football)

- (a) Days 1–5 are the first formal practices. No more than 1 practice occurs per day.
- (b) Total practice time should not exceed 3 hours in any 1 day.
- (c) 1-hour maximum walk-through is permitted on days 1–5, however there must be a minimum 3 hour break in a cool environment between practice and walk-through (or vice versa).
- (d) During days 1–2 of first formal practices, a helmet should be the only protective equipment permitted (if applicable). During days 3–5, only helmets and shoulder pads should be worn (if applicable). Beginning on day 6, all protective equipment may be worn and full contact may begin.
 - (1) On days 3–5, contact with blocking sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated.
 - (2) 100% live action drills should begin no earlier than day 6.
- (e) Day 6–14, double-practice days must be followed by a single-practice day. On single-practice days, 1 walk-through is permitted, separated from the practice by at least 3 hours of continuous rest. When a double-practice day is followed by a rest day, another double practice day is permitted after the rest day.
- (f) On a double-practice day, neither practice should exceed 3 hours in duration, and no more than 5 total hours of practice in the day. During the 2 hour practice, there can be NO live action. Warm-up, stretching, cool-down, walk-through, conditioning and weight-room activities are included as part of the practice time. The 2 practices should be separated by at least 3 continuous hours in a cool environment.
- (g) Because the risk of exertional heat illnesses during the preseason heat-acclimatization period is high, we strongly recommend that an athletic trainer be on site before, during and after all practices. (Adapted from Korey Stringer Institute, 2015)

2.3.5 Prevention of Heat Illness

- (a) WBGT considers the combined effects of air temperature, humidity, and solar radiation on the human body. WBGT should be measured (using a scientifically approved device) for all sports when student-athletes may be at risk for exertional heat illness (EHI).
WBGT should be accessed every hour beginning 30 minutes before the beginning of practice.
- (b) As WBGT increases, minimize clothing and equipment.
- (c) Provide unlimited drinking opportunities during hotter practices. NEVER withhold water from athletes.
- (d) Pre- and post-practice weigh-ins SHOULD be conducted.

NOTE: An athlete who is not within 3% of the previous pre-practice weight should be withheld from practice. These athletes should be counseled on the importance of re-hydrating. Pre- and post-practice weigh-ins are recommended for all sports participating during periods of high heat and humidity.

- (e) If WBGT is at 90 or above suspend practice; contests may continue but must include mandatory breaks as directed by gameday administrator.

2.3.6 Recognition of Heat Illness

- (a) Heat Exhaustion
 - (1) The clinical criteria for heat exhaustion generally include the following:
 - (i) Athlete has obvious difficulty continuing with exercise
 - (ii) Body temperature is usually 101 to 104°F (38.3 to 40.0°C) at the time of collapse or need to discontinue activity.
 - (iii) No significant dysfunction of the central nervous system is present (e.g., seizure, altered consciousness, persistent delirium)
 - (2) If any central nervous system dysfunction develops, such as mild confusion, it resolves quickly with rest and cooling.

- (3) Patients with heat exhaustion may also manifest:
 - (i) Tachycardia (very fast heart rate) and hypotension (low blood pressure)
 - (ii) Extreme weakness
 - (iii) Dehydration and electrolyte losses
 - (iv) Ataxia (loss of muscle control) and coordination problems, syncope (passing out), light-headedness
 - (v) Profuse sweating, pallor (paleness), “prickly heat” sensations
 - (vi) Headache
 - (vii) Abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
 - (viii) Persistent muscle cramps
- (b) Heat Stroke
 - (1) The two main criteria for diagnosing exertional heat stroke:
 - (i) Rectal temperature above 104°F (40°C), measured immediately following collapse during strenuous activity.
 - (ii) Central Nervous System dysfunction with possible symptoms and signs: disorientation, headache, irrational behavior, irritability, emotional instability, confusion, altered consciousness, coma, or seizure.
 - (2) Most patients are tachycardic and hypotensive.
 - (3) Patients with heat stroke may also exhibit:
 - (i) Hyperventilation
 - (ii) Dizziness
 - (iii) Nausea
 - (iv) Vomiting
 - (v) Diarrhea
 - (vi) Weakness
 - (vii) Profuse sweating
 - (viii) Dehydration
 - (ix) Dry mouth
 - (x) Thirst
 - (xi) Muscle cramps
 - (xii) Loss of muscle function
 - (xiii) Ataxia
 - (4) Absence of sweating with heat stroke is not typical and usually indicates additional medical issues.

2.3.7 Management of Heat Illness

- (a) A primary goal of management of heat illness is to reduce core body temperature as quickly as possible. When exertional heat stroke is suspected, immediately initiate cooling, and then activate emergency medical system. **Remember: “Cool First, Transport Second”.**
- (b) Remove all equipment and excess clothing
- (c) If appropriate medical staff is present, assess athlete’s rectal temperature
- (d) Immerse the athlete in a tub of cold water (the colder the better). Water temperature should be between 35 to 60°F (2 to 15°C); ice water is ideal but even tepid water is helpful. Maintain an appropriately cool water temperature. Stir the water vigorously during cooling.
- (e) Monitor vital signs (rectal temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure) and mental status continually. Maintain patient safety.
- (f) Cease cooling when rectal temperature reaches 101 to 102°F (38.3 to 38.9°C)
- (g) If an immersion pool is unavailable or in cases of heat exhaustion, use these cooling methods:
 - (1) Place icepacks at head, neck, axillae and groin.
 - (2) Bathe face and trunk with iced or tepid water.
 - (3) Fan athlete to help the cooling process.
 - (4) Move athlete to a shaded or air conditioned area if available near the practice site.

2.3.8 CrashCourse Concussion Video Viewing Requirement - All coaches, athletes, and parents are required to view the "CrashCourse" Concussion Video prior to participation in each season.

2.3.9 Cardiac Safety Program - All NCHSAA member schools must have a Cardiac Safety Program to include the following components

- (a) An appropriate number of AEDs on campus relative to athletic facilities
- (b) An AED maintenance program

2.3.10 Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances: These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible for sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred

sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include the NCHSAA and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

- (a) Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
- (b) Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas and determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to a designated safer area.

NOTE: A designated safer place is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.

- (c) Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - (1) When thunder is heard or lightning is seen*, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for at least 30 minutes and vacate the outdoor activity to the previously designated safer location immediately.
 - (2) 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is seen* prior to resuming play.
 - (3) Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
 - (4) When lightning-detection devices or mobile phone apps are available, this technology could be used to assist in making a decision to suspend play if a lightning strike is noted to be within 10 miles of the event location. However, you should never depend on the reliability of these devices and, thus, hearing thunder or seeing lightning* should always take precedence over information from a mobile app or lightning detection device.
- *At night, under certain atmospheric conditions, lightning flashes may be seen from distant storms. In these cases, it may be safe to continue an event. If no thunder can be heard and the flashes are low on the horizon, the storm may not pose a threat. Independently verified lightning detection information would help eliminate any uncertainty.
- (d) Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches, and game personnel and train all personnel.
- (e) Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at the start of the season.

2.3.11 Tobacco Products, Alcoholic Beverages, and Controlled Substances - The NCHSAA emphatically opposes the use of tobacco (including e-cigarettes/vapor cigarettes), alcohol and other drugs by student-athletes, coaches (including volunteer coaches) and officials.

- (a) Participants, coaches and other team representatives and officials, including chain crew, official scorers and timers, should not use any tobacco product, alcoholic beverage or controlled substance at a game site; violation of the policy will result in ejection from the contest.
- (b) Member schools are encouraged to make all school property, vehicles including charter buses used by participants, and particularly game sites, tobacco-free and alcohol-free zones. They are also encouraged to cooperate fully with police agencies in the enforcement of the criminal laws prohibiting the sale or use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and controlled substances to minors.
- (c) In order to minimize health and safety risks to North Carolina's student-athletes, maintain ethical standards as well as reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never knowingly supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance enhancing purposes.

2.3.12 Performance Enhancing Substances - The NCHSAA supports and endorses the stance of the NFHS in terms of performance-enhancing substances: - "In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes."

2.3.13 Infectious Disease Policy - The NCHSAA has adopted the NFHS Guidelines in an effort to minimize the possibility of transmission of any infectious disease during a high school athletic practice or contest. Each school is strongly encouraged to develop its own action plan for the prevention of the transmission of infectious diseases.

- (a) Communicable Disease and Skin Infection Procedures
While the risk for blood-borne infectious diseases, such as HIV/Hepatitis B, remains low in sports, proper precautions are needed to reduce the risk of spreading diseases. Along with these issues are skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment.
- (b) Universal Hygiene Protocol for All Sports
 - (1) Shower immediately after all competition and practice
 - (2) Wash all workout clothing after practice
 - (3) Wash personal gear, such as knee pads, periodically
 - (4) Don't share towels or personal hygiene products with others
 - (5) Refrain from (full body) cosmetic shaving
- (c) Infectious Skin Diseases - Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include

- (1) Notify guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any lesion before competition or practice. Athlete must have a healthcare provider evaluate lesion before returning to competition.
- (2) If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, consider evaluating other team members or potential spread of the infectious agent.
- (3) Follow NFHS or NCHSAA guidelines on "time until return to competition." Allowance of participation with a covered lesion can occur if approved by healthcare provider and in accordance with NFHS or NCHSAA guidelines.
- (d) Blood-Borne Infectious Diseases - Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include
 - (1) Bleeding must be stopped immediately and all wounds covered. All blood-soaked clothing must be removed before continuing competition or practice. Contaminated clothing must be cleaned before using again.
 - (2) Athletic trainers or caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
 - (3) Immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
 - (4) Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves for cleaning.
 - (5) Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and evaluated by medical provider immediately.

2.3.14 Catastrophic Insurance (Mandatory)

- (a) All schools are required to participate in a catastrophic insurance program administered by the Office of State Fire Marshall, NC Department of Insurance.
- (b) Participating schools shall purchase catastrophic insurance for high school interscholastic athletic activities as provided in Part II of Article 31A of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes (SL 2021-184).
- (c) The NCHSAA shall provide information to member schools about the availability of such insurance through the Office of State Fire Marshall, NC Department of Insurance.

2.3.15 Hazing - The NCHSAA encourages coaches and other school personnel to create and vigorously enforce rules against hazing and similar practices.

- (a) Hazing is defined as deliberately subjecting another student to physical injury as part of an initiation, or as a prerequisite for membership, into any organized school group, including any athletic team or other similar group; and is against State law. (G.S. 14-35).
- (b) Regardless of a student's willingness to participate, hazing and other humiliating activities expected of a student to belong to a team or group have many negative consequences. It obstructs the development of good citizens, escalates the risks of participation, negates positive contributions, and destroys respect for self, others and a "wholesome athletic environment."

2.3.16 Pre-game Emergency Action Plan Review - The NCHSAA strongly recommends that gameday administrators, officials and other pertinent school personnel meet prior to any contest to review the EAP. The NCHSAA has provided a Pre-game EAP Review Card that is a template to assist administrators and officials in identifying key personnel and topics of coverage for Pre-game EAP Review Meetings.

2.4 GAMEDAY ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A gameday administrator is required and shall be the host school's representative with oversight of all aspects of the athletic contest relative to facilities, health and safety, hospitality and emergency management coordination, etc.

2.4.1 Gameday Administrator Designation - A gameday administrator shall be the athletic director of the host school of an athletic event.

- (a) If the athletic director is unavailable, he/she should designate a staff member to be the gameday administrator.
- (b) If no additional personnel are available during the contest, the head coach of the home team shall be the gameday administrator.
- (c) A gameday administrator is required for all 7-on-7 events in football.

2.4.2 Gameday Administrator Duties Relative to Health and Safety - The gameday administrator is ultimately responsible for ensuring the health and safety of all individuals within the venue at an NCHSAA contest. The following are expectations for gameday administrators relative to their responsibility for oversight of the health and safety of individuals within the contest venue:

- (a) Convene and supervise the Pre-game Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Review prior to the event beginning. Persons who should attend include the following: gameday administrator, lead official, and any licensed athletic trainer (LAT)/first responder (FR) from competing schools (if required to be present at the event).
- (b) Establish what means of communication will be used during the event (e.g., cell phone, radio, voice, hand signals).
- (c) Identify individual(s) responsible for monitoring environmental and facility/field conditions (e.g., thunder and lightning/WBGT, field/facility).

- (d) Identify individual(s) designated to notify lead official regarding unsafe environmental or field/facility conditions (e.g., thunder and lightning/WBGT, field/facility).
- (e) The gameday administrator is required to be on field/court at ALL TIMES during event. The gameday administrator must be available and able to communicate immediately, in "real time."

2.4.3 Gameday Administrator Pre-Contest Duties - The gameday administrator is recommended to develop a written operational plan for each home event. Additionally the gameday administrator should perform the following tasks prior to the contest:

- (a) Review of the venue-specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
- (b) Pre-event meeting with on-site medical professional covering the venue's Inclement Weather Policy, Heat and Humidity concerns, and catastrophic injury protocols.
- (c) Meet with the on-site administrator from the opposing team when the visiting team arrives. If there is no on-site administrator, meet with the opposing head coach.
- (d) Evaluate the type and use of pre-game music, making certain it is appropriate for all ages and is void of profane and inappropriate language.
- (e) Examine and secure ingress and egress points for both spectators and participating teams.
- (f) Arrange for on-site parking of visitor's automobiles and buses, providing continual supervision and security for visiting teams and administrators.
- (g) Evaluate location of spectator seating and team locker rooms. Teams should not enter or leave the floor in front of an opponent's seating area.
- (h) Review the venue-specific EAP with any law enforcement and security staff.
- (i) Provide for adequate security/law enforcement supervision:
 - (1) Should be located both inside and outside the venue.
 - (2) Security should be present in and around the spectator seating area(s).
 - (3) Give specific instructions to personnel regarding their responsibilities.
 - (4) Security should be readily identifiable by the public.
 - (5) Video security: Maintain copies of all contests in case it is needed.
- (j) Ensure a distinct separation of spectators in the stands. Seating for home and visiting spectators should be adequate and in accordance with NCHSAA guidelines. Spectators should remain on their side of the field or venue throughout the contest.
- (k) Ensure any spectator who is not exhibiting proper sporting behavior should be addressed or removed immediately.
- (l) Ensure the public address (PA) announcer has read and understood the NCHSAA Code of Conduct and Expectations for a PA Announcer. It is the expectation that poor sporting behavior is addressed immediately as it occurs.

NOTE: The public address (PA) announcer is crucial to the positive atmosphere of an athletic event. What is said and how it is presented can have great influence on crowd behavior, both positively and negatively.

- (m) Assign school personnel to meet the visiting team when they arrive and escort them to their locker room or sideline. Personnel should provide security measures to protect visitor's clothing and valuables during the contest.
- (n) Should provide reserved parking for medical personnel and game officials. Game officials should be escorted to and from their vehicles at all contests.
- (o) Conduct a pre-contest check of facilities including the condition of the field or court for hazardous issues and cleanliness while making certain field/court markings are compliant with NFHS rule code.
- (p) Should confirm that playoff contests are using the correct game ball, when applicable, based on the current NCHSAA adopted ball list.
- (q) Physicians or licensed athletic trainers (LATs) should be available when possible. If no physician or LAT is available, a first responder should be on-site.
- (r) Conduct a pre-game meeting with game officials, on-site medical personnel, and head coaches of both teams to review policies and procedures, including:
 - (1) Inclement Weather Policy including NFHS/NCHSAA Lightning Policy.
 - (2) Heat and Humidity Guidelines
 - (3) Venue Specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP) including Catastrophic Injury Protocols and team egress from field to safety.

2.4.4 Gameday Administrator Duties During a Contest - Gameday administrators should remain present at contests, staying constantly visible and aware of the activities within the venue. BE PREVENTIVE IN YOUR OBSERVATIONS AND ACTIONS!

- (a) Utilize radio communications with staff personnel assigned to the contest, keeping lines of communication open with the visiting school representative.
- (b) Periodically check with designated personnel on any issues observed.
- (c) Crowd Control: Gameday administrators have a critical role in ensuring proper crowd behavior

throughout the contest. The gameday administrator is responsible for:

- (1) Conflict resolution, including removing or having individuals removed from the venue, if necessary.
- (2) Communicating with student section group leader(s) about appropriate behavior and providing correction as needed.
- (3) Providing supervision during game breaks and halftime to keep spectators off the playing area and away from game officials and opposing team members.

2.4.5 Gameday Administrator Duties After a Contest - The gameday administrator should ensure that all aspects of security, safety and hospitality are completed following the contest. These duties include:

- (a) Ensure that post-game handshakes take place unless conditions exist that require the gameday administrator and coaches cancel this activity.
- (b) Use public address (PA) announcer to direct and guide spectators to exits and not access the playing area or locker rooms.
- (c) Ensure that security or law enforcement remain on-site and present until all spectators have left the facility.
- (d) Provide and escort for the officials to the locker room and to their vehicles after they have left the locker room.
- (e) Provide continuous security for locker room or post-game staging areas.
- (f) Secure access to team buses from spectators and opposing coaches. Team buses should leave the area immediately after the game.
- (g) Administrators from both schools should confer before leaving the venue to ensure all details have received adequate attention.

2.4.6 Guidelines for Police and Security - The following are recommendations for police and security officials at NCHSAA contests.

- (a) Police and security should arrive in sufficient time prior to the contest and report to the gameday administrator.

NOTE: Any police traveling with the visiting team shall notify the host school prior to the contest and identify themselves to the gameday administrator upon arrival.

- (b) Security should be requested to assist in controlling the following areas:
 - (1) Non-students seated in student sections.
 - (2) Fan/seating area observation
 - (3) Identification of fans who are contributing to negative behavior - verbal or physical.

2.5 Sportsmanship

THE QUALITY OF RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR CHARACTERIZED BY A SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY AND A GENUINE CONCERN FOR OPPONENTS, OFFICIALS AND TEAMMATES

- (a) Students and spectators should:
 - (1) Realize you represent the school as does a member of a team; therefore, you have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others
 - (2) Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team
 - (3) Remember that the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contest
 - (4) Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat
 - (5) Respect the judgment and integrity of game officials
- (b) Student-athletes are expected to sign the sportsmanship pledge, and coaches are expected to sign the code of conduct for coaches.

2.5.1 Social Media Policy - The NCHSAA recognizes, encourages and supports its student-athletes', coaches' and officials' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of social media. Social media applies, without limitation, to any web-based and mobile technologies, in use now or developed in the future, that enables individuals or entities to disseminate or receive information, communicate, or otherwise interact. The Association believes that student-athletes, coaches, and officials are role models, and their use of social media should conform to standards consistent with sportsmanlike conduct. Please remember that everything you post is public information, and derogatory, defamatory and otherwise inappropriate social media commentary may result in the imposition of penalties.

2.5.2 NCHSAA Sports Wagering Position Statement - The NCHSAA opposes all forms of legal and illegal sports wagering which has the potential to undermine the integrity of sports contests and jeopardizes the welfare of student-athletes and education-based athletics.

2.5.3 Conduct at Games - The NCHSAA has the power to penalize the school and its officials, the coach, bench personnel, and the individual student-athletes in case sportsmanship is not observed. The penalty is to be decided according to the seriousness of the incidents involved.

- (a) Police protection - A law enforcement officer in uniform shall be present at all high school varsity football and basketball games and is recommended for soccer, lacrosse and baseball games, with member schools using their own best judgment as to when and if police are needed in those sports.
- (b) School management is required to provide escort for officials off the field when law enforcement is not there; and the NCHSAA has the authority to require schools to provide law enforcement officer in uniform at games where it deems necessary.
- (c) Code of sportsmanship
 - (1) It is recognized that public school interscholastic athletic events should be conducted in such a manner that good sportsmanship prevails at all times.
 - (2) It is therefore necessary that superintendents, principals and coaches be individually and collectively responsible for taking every possible step to provide the physical arrangements necessary to conduct such events and to promote good sportsmanship at every athletic event.
 - (3) These steps should include the provision of such things as safe and adequate facilities for participants, spectators, and officials; the best possible officials for the events; and adequate control of spectators, participants, and pre-game and post-game activities.
 - (4) Every effort should be made to promote a climate of wholesome competition.
- (d) When a situation develops which indicates negligence on the part of school personnel to provide conditions which meet minimum standards for the conduct of an athletic event, or when there is evidence of poor sportsmanship, the superintendent and principal of each school involved shall be expected to investigate and take necessary corrective action.
- (e) When the school or schools involved fail to take adequate action, the NCHSAA will investigate the situation and take the action it deems appropriate.

2.5.4 Guidelines for Student-Athletes - Education-based athletics is an extension of the classroom. It is difficult to learn the lessons expected through high school athletics in an environment that is lacking good behavior, sportsmanship, and respect for all. Participation in education-based athletics is a privilege and student-athletes should be aware that their behavior, both positive and negative, reflects not only on themselves but also on their school, their community, and their family. Therefore, the following are expectations coaches and administrators should ensure student-athletes abide by:

- (a) Student-athletes shall refrain from exhibiting surprise or irritation towards a call of an official. Neither verbal nor physical responses are not acceptable behavior.
- (b) Student-athletes should not communicate with spectators within the contest venue, before, during or after the contest.
- (c) Unsportsmanlike gesturing or verbal comments should be properly penalized with the student-athlete being removed, disqualified, or ejected from the contest.
- (d) Substitutes on the bench should not be unsporting towards the student-athletes, opposing team, spectators, or game officials.

2.5.5 Guidelines for Cheerleaders - Cheerleaders play an important role in creating better relations between opposing supporters and make positive contributions to good spectator reaction at an athletic contest. Cheerleaders are to set the example for all spectators for how they should behave in support of their team. The following are expectations pertaining to cheerleaders at NCHSAA contests:

- (a) All cheers shall be positive, not antagonizing.
- (b) Cheerleaders should remain silent when the opponent's cheerleaders are performing and during free throws at basketball contests.
- (c) "Battling" between opposing cheerleading squads is prohibited.

2.5.6 Guidelines for Coaches - Coaches influence not only the conduct of student-athletes under their supervision, but also the behavior of many spectators. They also are a reflection on the school, community and administration. Therefore, the following are expectations for coaches during NCHSAA contests:

- (a) Coaches must be businesslike and professional at all times.
- (b) Coaches must ensure the post-game handshake is a positive end to any contest.
- (c) Coaches shall control all of their student-athletes - removing a participant who is creating trouble verbally or physically.
- (d) Head coaches are ultimately responsible for all personnel in the bench area.
- (e) At no time is it acceptable for a student-athlete or bench personnel to leave the bench area. Coaches are responsible for enforcing this policy.

2.5.7 Code of Conduct for Coaches

- (a) The coach is required to review the NCHSAA power point presentation on eligibility rules prior to the season in which they coach.
- (b) The coach has tremendous influence upon student-athletes and shall never place winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.
- (c) The coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct with the student-

athlete, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public.

- (d) The coach shall discipline student-athletes who display unacceptable behavior.
- (e) The coach shall know the game rules and be responsible for their interpretation to team members. Additionally, the coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- (f) The coach shall promote and work in harmony with the entire interscholastic program of the school.
- (g) The coach shall respect and support contest officials by avoiding conduct which will incite student-athletes or spectators against the officials.
- (h) The coach shall actively promote good sportsmanship of spectators by working closely with administrators, cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, and booster clubs.
- (i) The coach shall meet and exchange greetings with the opposing coach before and after contests to set and maintain a positive tone for the event.
- (j) The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, while stressing the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

2.5.8 Inappropriate Behavior/Misconduct

- (a) One of the goals of the NCHSAA is to provide a positive experience and safe environment for student-athletes. Therefore, adults, coaches, officials, staffs, and volunteers should maintain professionalism and avoid any appearance of impropriety in their relationships with students. Coaches, in particular, should recognize the influence, power, and position of trust they have with students and should use this only in a student's best interest.
- (b) Any incident regarding misconduct should be reported promptly to the appropriate authorities. The NCHSAA encourages personnel to create and enforce guidelines against inappropriate behavior and misconduct. Please refer to membership entity policies for more specifics.

SECTION 3: STATE NCHSAA ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO MEMBER SCHOOLS

3.1 STATE GAME AND SPORT ADMINISTRATION

3.1.1 Executive Committee [See Bylaw II.5]

- (a) The Executive Committee shall have the authority to rule on all situations which are not specifically covered in the rules or are not deemed in the best interest of an individual school of the Association.
- (b) The Executive Committee shall have the power to consider all complaints and protests arising in connection with contests and to make such disposal of each as the conditions may appear to warrant.
- (c) The Executive Committee may not, however, entertain a complaint relating to an alleged error of judgment on the part of any official employed to officiate in any game.
- (d) No conference shall administer disciplinary action in excess of that provided by the rules of the NCHSAA. All disciplinary action by conferences shall be subject to review by the NCHSAA.
- (e) Should the Commissioner become permanently disabled or die in office, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to conduct the affairs of the Association while naming a Search and Screening Committee to fill the vacancy.

3.1.2 Conferences - The Executive Committee shall have the authority at the midpoint of realignment to require a conference to accept a school into its membership where it is impractical for that school to belong to any other conference. [See Bylaw VI]

- (a) Conference changes will be considered during the winter meeting of the Board of Directors following the completion of the normal two-year football contract period.
 - (1) Non-conference football contracts shall not be made until the winter meeting of the Board of Directors the year contracts expire.
 - (2) When a conference change is desired or indicated, a school must submit a letter of intent to the Commissioner prior to that winter meeting of the Board of Directors. Copies of the letter must be sent to the president of the conference in which the school holds membership and to the president of the conference in which membership is desired.
 - (3) The requested change must receive the approval of the Board of Directors.
 - (4) A school requesting a change in conferences must meet the terms of any existing athletic contracts, unless the contract is terminated by mutual agreement.
- (b) A conference must have at least five members fielding a team in a sport in order to be guaranteed a position in the playoffs for that sport.
- (c) The NCHSAA is responsible for setting up the playoff program and for designating the number of participating teams from each conference.
- (d) Conference Membership for New NCHSAA Member Schools - Before any member school applying for initial membership into the NCHSAA may be placed into an existing conference, it must satisfy both of the following criteria:

- (1) The member school must field an established minimum number of sports each year as follows: Six per school: three boys and three girls - including at least two in the fall; at least two in the winter, and at least two in the spring, with at least one male and female sport for each season. Junior varsity sports will count towards these minimums if a member school is unable to field varsity teams. AND
- (2) Unless otherwise accepted for membership by an existing conference, the member school must play as an independent member of the NCHSAA until placement by the NCHSAA into an existing conference at the earlier of
 - (i) the beginning of the first year in a normal four-year alignment cycle; or
 - (ii) the beginning of the third year in a normal four-year alignment cycle.

NOTE: Independent NCHSAA member schools are eligible for individual sport post-season only, based on the sport.

- (e) The intent of this policy is to allow new member schools and existing conferences to mutually agree on membership at any time during the four-year normal alignment cycle. In order to minimize disruptions of existing conferences and their member schools during the normal two-year contract period, the Board will only place new member schools satisfying both of the above criteria into existing or new conferences every two years during each four-year alignment cycle.

3.1.3 **Athletic Passes** - Each member school will be issued four passes and each central office two. An additional pass is provided for the chairperson of the local board of education. These passes may be signed for and picked up at regional meetings.

3.1.4 **Admission to State Playoffs** - Superintendents, high school principals, assistant superintendents and assistant principals who are responsible for athletics will be issued special non-transferable passes by the NCHSAA for admission to state-sponsored playoffs. Sport-specific passes for NCHSAA contest officials, NCCA passes and media passes will be recognized for card-holder only and are non-transferable.

3.2 **CONDUCT AND UNSPORTING BEHAVIOR**

3.2.1 It is the expectation of the NCHSAA that good sportsmanship is observed in all athletic contests by all parties who participate in or observe the activity. The NCHSAA may penalize a school, coach, student, parent/guardian, or spectator for unsportsmanlike behavior. Please note the NCHSAA may penalize a school for unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of its spectators. Some specific penalties will be found below; however, the NCHSAA may take any action it deems justified in response to unsporting behavior.

- (a) Schools - A school engaged in infractions inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may be
 - (1) reprimanded,
 - (2) placed on probation for a period not to exceed 365 days with or without playoff privileges,
 - (3) have its home games taken away for a period of time not to exceed 365 days, or
 - (4) suspended from participation in a sport or sports for a period of 365 days.

NOTE: If any school should fail to comply with the rulings of the NCHSAA, the games played or scheduled by that school in that particular sport shall be canceled for that season and shall be eliminated in determining the winner of that conference affected. Furthermore, that school so affected will not be allowed to take part in the contests sponsored by the Association for a period of 365 days and shall be readmitted only by approval of the Board of Directors and three-fourths vote at the annual meeting.
- (b) Coaches - A coach engaged in conduct inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may be:
 - (1) reprimanded; or
 - (2) placed on probation for a period not to exceed 365 days with or without playoff privileges; or
 - (3) suspended from directing a team for a period of time not to exceed 365 days.

NOTE: A Coach must apply for reinstatement if (3) occurs.
- (c) Students - A student engaged in conduct inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may be:
 - (1) reprimanded; or
 - (2) on probation for a period not to exceed 365 days; or
 - (3) suspended from participation in a sport or sports for a period up to 365 days.
- (d) Spectators - A spectator engaged in conduct inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program may:
 - (1) be placed on spectator probation; or
 - (2) be banned from attending school contests for a period of time not to exceed 365 days from the date of the infraction; or
 - (3) cause the school to be penalized. In incidents involving criminal misconduct such as assaults, school officials in conjunction with the victims assaulted are instructed to press charges in a court of law. If charges are not filed, the school is still responsible for handling the misconduct.
 - (4) not approach or contact game officials in any way to question the judgment or decision of an official.

NOTE: Schools are responsible and may be disciplined for the conduct of their spectators. Any assault upon, or intimidation of, a game official by a spectator is per se unsportsmanlike con-

duct by the school and may be dealt with as such.

3.3 PENALTY CODE, PENALTIES, and RESTITUTION RULE

3.3.1 **Penalty Code** - The NCHSAA has the power to penalize the school, officials, the coach, parents/guardians, spectators, and the individual student-athletes for violation of State Board Rules or NCHSAA rules. Some specific penalties will be found below; however, the NCHSAA may take any action it deems justified as it relates to the infraction involved.

3.3.2 **Cooperation in Investigations** - The NCHSAA expects and requires all member schools and their personnel to cooperate fully in the NCHSAA's investigation of any suspected rule violation, waiver request, or other matter related to the administration of high school athletics.

- (a) Upon request from the NCHSAA, member schools and their personnel must provide accurate and complete information to aid an investigation. If the member school or its personnel are aware of other relevant information in addition to what the NCHSAA specifically requested, they must also offer to provide that information to the NCHSAA.
- (b) When questioned or interviewed by the NCHSAA, member schools and their personnel must be honest, forthright, complete, and non-evasive in their answers. Member schools and their personnel should respond to questions in the spirit of candor, transparency, fair play, and self-reflection.
- (c) It is a violation of this rule for a member school or its personnel to knowingly make false statements to the NCHSAA, to refuse or fail to provide information requested by the NCHSAA in an investigation, to alter, falsify, or destroy such information, to provide the NCHSAA with misleading, incomplete, inaccurate, or fabricated information, or to otherwise respond to requests or inquiries from the NCHSAA in a way that is false, deceitful, or evasive. The NCHSAA considers such conduct unsportsmanlike. The NCHSAA may penalize a member school and its personnel for engaging in or condoning such behavior, even if the NCHSAA finds no underlying rule violation in its investigation. Such penalties for conduct during an investigation shall be in addition to any penalty the NCHSAA may impose if it finds an underlying rule violation.

3.3.3 **Sanctions** - Any prescribed remedy for a violation of Association rules as defined below:

- (a) Remediation – any action(s) required with the intent of correcting individual behavior or athletic program deficiencies (e.g., NFHS coursework, trainings, etc.)
- (b) Reprimand – a formal, written warning outlining a finding of infraction(s) and detailing the prescribed sanctions for such incident. The number of accumulated reprimands for a school or individual will reset to zero on August 1.
- (c) Probation – a sanction placed by the Association in response to a violation or incident in which an individual, team, or school that has been found in violation of Association rules. The period of probation shall not exceed 365 days.
- (d) Forfeiture (Team) – an official action taken when the violation of a rule requires the offending team to receive automatic losses for all contests played during the period indicated.
- (e) Forfeiture (Individual) – an official action taken when the violation of a rule requires the offending individual(s) to lose any individual matches or points earned in all contests played during the period indicated.
- (f) Suspension – a sanction constituting a temporary withholding of the privilege of participation in inter-scholastic athletic activities (practices or games) and NCHSAA programs for a student-athlete, coach, administrator, official, or school. A suspension may carry over from one academic year to the next.

3.3.4 **Unreconciled Payments and Sanctions**

- (a) Payments - Schools that fail to reconcile outstanding balances to the NCHSAA or other member schools are not eligible to compete in the playoffs in succeeding sports seasons.
NOTE: Any unpaid balances not paid by the end of the fiscal year (June 30) will carry over to the following school year making all teams at said school ineligible for playoffs until all balances are paid in full.
- (b) Sanctions - Any school, team, or individual that fails to complete the requirements for a violation is ineligible to compete or coach until all requirements are completed.

3.3.5 **Maximum Sanction for Infraction Levels** - If a school, team, coach, or individual is a repeat offender, already on probation, or is found to have committed violations of a willful nature, the level of an infraction may be increased by the NCHSAA. The Commissioner shall notify the school and the involved parties in writing of the findings and of the level of violations that occurred. Any increase in the level of a violation deemed appropriate by the Commissioner must be noted in the violation notice along with the reasoning for an increase. If the membership entity appeals the final decision of the NCHSAA as set forth in Rule 1.4, the appeal may include a challenge to the level of a violation in cases where the Commissioner has deemed an increase necessary.

- (a) Level 1 – Reprimand
- (b) Level 2 – Probation
- (c) Level 3 – Forfeiture

(d) Level 4 – Suspension

NOTE: Any infraction at a given level may include sanctions from the previous level(s).

3.3.6 **Penalty Code** - The following list is meant as a guide. It is not all-inclusive.

(a) **Level 1 Infractions** - Reprimand (Three Level 1 infractions result in automatic probation)

- (1) Late required document
- (2) Failure of school official to attend a required meeting
- (3) Failure to comply with reporting playoff advancement
- (4) Failure to wear legal uniforms
- (5) Use of unauthorized equipment or balls in a contest
- (6) Failure to provide required visitor's seating during playoffs
- (7) Failure of an individual designated as an athletic trainer/first responder to annually complete the NCHSAA Athletic Trainer/First Responder Compliance Form
- (8) School personnel criticizing officials via media

(b) **Level 2 Infractions** - Probation (Two Level 2 infractions may result in forfeitures or suspensions)

- (1) Failure to comply with reporting schedules and results for any seeding process (could lead to playoff penalties)
- (2) Removal of or damage to required contest equipment (ex. goal posts, nets, bases, goals, etc.)
- (3) Use of non-registered or non-qualified officials or regional supervisors
- (4) Failure to provide an escort for the officials
- (5) Failure to provide uniformed law enforcement officer, if required

(c) **Level 3 Infractions** - Forfeiture (Two Level 3 infractions may result in suspension of head coach)

- (1) Student-athlete does not meet the residence requirement
- (2) Student-athlete does not meet the local attendance requirement
- (3) Student-athlete does not meet the scholastic requirement, including local promotion standards
- (4) Student-athlete participates after the eighth semester
- (5) Student-athlete does not meet the age requirement
- (6) Student-athlete exceeds the maximum number of seasons
- (7) Student-athlete dresses for a contest while ineligible
- (8) Student-athlete exceeds the daily, weekly, or seasonal limitation of contests
- (9) Student-athlete participates in a contest after being ejected
- (10) Student-athlete participates after being convicted of a felony
- (11) Student-athlete does not satisfy 8-quarter eligibility criteria
- (12) Violation of the transfer policy
- (13) Practice or participation of a student-athlete not currently enrolled in the school (9-12)
- (14) Failure to submit appropriate forms for 8-quarter rule in football
- (15) Failure to submit weigh-in form on Trackwrestling
- (16) Failure to meet the mandatory weigh-in procedure in wrestling
- (17) Wrestling below certified minimum weight or violation of weight loss guidelines
- (18) Removing a team from the competition area prior to the completion of the contest
- (19) Participating in or hosting an unsanctioned competition.

(d) **Level 4 Infractions** - Suspension (Two Level 4 infractions within an athletic program or by a team may result in playoff sanctions; e.g., suspension from playoffs, loss of home contests during playoffs, etc.)

- (1) Unpaid invoices or balances
- (2) Failure of head coach to complete required rules clinic
- (3) Failure of coaches to complete educational requirements prior to first practice date
- (4) Failure of coaches to complete educational requirements prior to coaching in a contest
- (5) Failure of a team to participate in the playoffs once brackets have been finalized
- (6) Failure to properly enter all students on the certified minimum weight form
- (7) Failure of a member school to meet athletic event medical requirements for football and wrestling [See Rule 2.3.2 (4)]
- (8) Participation in a scrimmage before taking part in the required number of practice days in football
- (9) Violation of the pitch count requirements (automatic forfeiture of contest)
- (10) Violation of the football conditioning policy
- (11) Student-athlete does not have an up-to-date medical examination
- (12) Returning a student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion to practice or play without a completed RETURN TO PLAY form
- (13) Failure to post a venue specific emergency action plan (EAP)
- (14) Failure to have an emergency action plan (EAP) for athletic programs
- (15) Failure to have documentation of a signed CONCUSSION INFORMATION FORM
- (16) Failure of an Athletic Director to complete the NFHS Learn course "After School Security" or

NIAAA LTC 631: Emergency Management of Interscholastic Athletic Events.

- (17) A coach who participates or is present at a contest after being ejected
- (18) Individuals leaving the bench area and coming on to the playing area when there is not a fight
- (19) Individual involved in a fight before or after a contest
- (20) Individuals leaving the bench area and coming on to the playing area without authorization during a fight
- (21) A team conducting an unauthorized practice
- (22) A team conducting an unauthorized assembly
- (23) A team or coach that violates the sports season concept
- (24) A team participating in an unauthorized contest (automatic forfeiture of contest)
- (25) A team that exceeds the daily, weekly, or seasonal limitation of games/contests (automatic forfeiture of any contest played once the limit has been reached)
- (26) Conduct and unsporting behavior inconsistent with a wholesome athletic program.

3.3.7 **Sportsmanship/Ejection Policy** - This policy applies to all persons involved in an athletic contest, including student-athletes, coaches, managers and game administrators. The NCHSAA may review video, when available, to invoke ejections or sanctions not reported by game officials. Video clips must be presented to the NCHSAA office for committee review within two (2) business days of the contest. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest:

- (a) Fighting, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - (1) An altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hitting, punching or kicking;
 - (2) An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, feet, or equipment;
 - (3) An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made;
 - (4) An attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate;
- (b) Leaving the bench area - coming on to the playing area without authorization;
- (c) Flagrant contact, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - (1) Maliciously running over the catcher/fielder without attempt to avoid contact
 - (2) Excessive contact out-of-bounds or away from playing action that is unwarranted and extreme in nature
 - (3) Tackling/taking down a player dangerously in a malicious manner
 - (4) Illegally hitting or cross-checking an opponent in an excessive manner with the stick in lacrosse;
- (d) Biting observed or determined by an official;
- (e) Taunting, bat-flipping, baiting or spitting toward an opponent or official;
- (f) Profanity, inappropriate language, racial/ethnic slurs, sexist, or homophobic language;
- (g) Obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate or instigate;
- (h) Disrespectfully addressing an official (physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career); or,
- (i) Use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or other controlled substances.

3.3.8 **Penalties for an Ejection**

- (a) Ejections during scrimmages
 - (1) Coach or student-athlete is suspended from the remainder of the scrimmage - this is inclusive of multiple scrimmage events on the same day (jamboree).
 - (2) Student-athlete must complete the NFHS "Sportsmanship" course before being eligible to compete in next scrimmage or contest.
 - (3) Coach must complete the NFHS "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course for any student-athlete or coach ejection during the scrimmage.
- (b) Ejection Penalty - In compliance with ATHL - 012, a membership entity shall impose at least the following penalties on a student, coach, or school official who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest:
 - (1) For the first ejection, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
 - (2) For a second ejection, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended for the next two games at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
 - (3) For a third ejection, the person shall be suspended for 365 days from the date of the report to the NCHSAA and
 - (4) A coach who is suspended shall not coach any team for any grade level during the period of suspension.
 - (5) Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season. If a member of the school's coaching staff is not present to assume an ejected coach's duties, the contest shall be terminated by a forfeit.
- (c) Penalties are not cumulative academic year to academic year with the exception of 3.3.8 (b)(3).

- (d) Ejected student-athletes may practice during their suspensions but may not play.
- (e) Ejected coaches may not be on the premises for a contest. The coach must leave the premises (press box, bleachers, adjacent field, etc.) and must not have any type of contact with the team.
- (f) Student-athletes who are disqualified or ejected during a contest will remain in the team area for supervision.
- (g) Anytime a student-athlete or coach is ejected from a contest, he or she does not participate or coach the remainder of that day.
- (h) The coach is not permitted to be at the game site during his or her suspension, but the student-athlete is allowed at the game site.
- (i) Any student-athlete or administrator who is ejected from a contest is required to complete the NFHS "Sportsmanship" course before being eligible to return to competition. Any coach who is ejected from a contest must take the NFHS "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course before being eligible to return to competition.
- (j) If a team has student-athletes ejected due to fighting, the head coach must take the NFHS Learning Course "Teaching and Modeling Behavior". It must be completed before coaching in the next game.
- (k) Soccer Yellow Card Tracking and Ejections [See Rule 4.8.1(j)]
- (l) In Wrestling, Track, Tennis, Golf, Cross Country and Swimming, any individual ejected from an individual event or individual tournament may not participate for the remainder of the event (entire day(s) of competition or tournament) from which he or she was ejected. Additionally, the individual may not participate in the next scheduled event at that level.

NCHSAA Application Note 3.3.8. As used in Rule 3.3.8(b)(1)-(3), "first ejection" means the first ejection in any sport during that academic year; "second ejection" means the second ejection in any sport during that academic year, inclusive of all ejections previously received in the same academic year; and "third ejection" means the third ejection in any sport during that academic year, inclusive of all ejections previously received in the same academic year. For example, if a student, coach, or school official is ejected from one contest in soccer and, later in the same academic year, is ejected from contest in basketball, and still later in the same academic year, is ejected from a track meet, the ejection from the soccer game is the first ejection, from the basketball game is the second ejection, and from the track meet is the third ejection.

3.3.9 Ineligible Student-Athlete Procedure

- (a) Any high school where an ineligible student-athlete participates in an athletic contest shall forfeit all contests in which the student participated.
 - (1) In addition, the student-athlete will be dropped from the team until their eligibility has been restored.
 - (2) The team may participate in playoffs if, despite the inclusion of the forfeited contests as a loss in its season record, it would otherwise qualify.
 - (3) The team shall not participate in playoffs if, after the brackets have been finalized, forfeited contests cause an adjustment in its record and seed.
- (b) A school which knowingly uses an ineligible student-athlete shall drop the player from the team, forfeit all games in which the student-athlete participated, and will be ineligible for the playoffs in that sport. The school may also be debarred from taking part in the contests of the NCHSAA for one year.
- (c) A team which participates in the playoffs while using an ineligible student-athlete must return its awards to the NCHSAA. The revenue from said playoff games must also be returned to the NCHSAA for distribution to the impacted schools during the playoffs. Its finish in the playoffs shall be vacated, even if the playoffs have concluded.
 - (1) Once the seeding process is completed and the brackets have been finalized, if a team or individual is disqualified, no other team or individual will be substituted in or added to the playoff brackets, even if there is an incorrect or an adjusted record.
 - (2) If a winning team is disqualified at the conclusion of the first round and prior to the second round, the losing team will advance. Otherwise, if a disqualification occurs after the second round or after the playoffs have concluded, that place or position remains vacant.
- (d) If documented proof of a student-athlete's eligibility is found to have been falsified by the student-athlete or his or her parents or legal custodian, and this could not be determined by reasonable scrutiny of the school, then the student-athlete shall be dropped from the team for the remainder of the season but the team's record and playoff privileges will not be affected.
 - (1) In cases of conflicting, blemished, altered or illegible records, the onus rests with school officials to determine the correct information. Documents which should be checked by school officials would include, but not be limited to, all permanent records on file in the school office such as cumulative records, transcripts, and teacher's grading records, but do not include report cards or other non-controlled records. If there are conflicts or discrepancies found, they must be examined and resolved by school officials. Negligence, or failure to make a good faith effort to determine the accuracy of a student-athlete's records on the part of school officials

- would require all contests in which the ineligible student-athlete participated to be forfeited.
- (2) The student-athlete will be ineligible for 365 days from the date of notification to the NCHSAA. This would also include summer workouts or team camps in the summer.

3.3.10 Restitution Rule - A member school shall be assessed the full cost including, but not limited to, court costs, counsel fees and actual expenses, of any litigation instituted by, or on behalf of, the school, its staff, coach(es), team(s), or participant(s), that unsuccessfully challenges a rule, by-law or article of incorporation of the Association or any decision of the Commissioner or Board of Directors.

- (a) A member school shall likewise be assessed such costs resulting from any unsuccessful litigation brought against the Association when the school is made a necessary co-defendant or a third-party defendant in the litigation.
- (b) Any member school that does not make full payment of such costs within sixty days of the assessment shall be prohibited from playoff participation in all sports. The restriction shall continue until the full amount plus interest at the statutory rate is paid.

3.3.11 Penalties that May be Imposed by the State Department of Public Instruction

- (a) **Participation Ban** — Violations of the State Board Rules, negligence or poor sportsmanship may result in forfeiture of the right of the school to participate in interscholastic athletics for a given period of time to be determined by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- (b) **Suspension of Accreditation** — If any school engages in athletic activities in violation of the rules and regulations and in such manner as to interfere with the required instructional services adopted by the State Board of Education for use in the public schools, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction shall notify such school to desist from further violation of these rules and regulations; and upon failure of such school to desist therefrom within such time as the State Superintendent may require, he may suspend the accreditation of said school until such time as the same may have been corrected.

3.3.12 Statute of Limitations - September 1 of the following school year is the deadline for all incidents, violations, etc., to be reported to the NCHSAA. For example, if an individual learns of a violation at any time during the 2026-2027 school year, such violation must be reported to the NCHSAA no later than September 1, 2027.

3.4 OFFICIATING

3.4.1 Sport by Sport Officials Information and Fees

- (a) **Officials** - Each school must use only NCHSAA-registered and eligible officials in all competition, and must work through an NCHSAA-approved regional supervisor of officials. This excludes Cross Country and Track and Field (USA Track and Field Certified), Golf (USGA Certified) and Tennis (USTA Certified).
- (1) **Baseball** - Two-person crew is mandatory for junior varsity and varsity contests. Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, four-person crews will be used.
- (2) **Basketball** - Three-person crew is mandatory for varsity contests.
- (3) **Cross Country** - It is strongly recommended to have a USA Track and Field Certified Official at Regional and State Championship Meets.
- (4) **Football** - Five-person crew is mandatory for varsity contests. Five person crew is recommended for junior varsity contests. Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, seven-person crews will be used.
- (5) **Flag Football** - Three-person crew is mandatory for varsity contests. Starting in the first round of the state playoffs, four-person crews will be used.
- (6) **Golf** - It is strongly recommended to have a USGA Certified Official at Regional and State Championship Matches.
- (7) **Lacrosse** - Two-person crew is mandatory for varsity contests. In the regular season three-person crews can be used, when requested. Starting in the first round of the state playoffs, three-person crews will be used.
- (8) **Soccer** - Three-person crew is mandatory for varsity contests.
- (9) **Softball** - Two-person crew is mandatory for varsity and junior-varsity contests. Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, three-person crews will be used.
- (10) **Swimming and Diving**
- (a) **Swimming** - A referee and two (2) stroke and turn judges are required for meets using six (6) or less lanes. A referee and three (3) stroke and turn judges are required for meets using more than six (6) lanes. Meets must have the proper number of officials in order for times to be used for regional entry. If a meet is using manual timing, and only one timer per lane is used, the meet may be conducted, but the times cannot be used for regional entry. Schools are responsible for helping recruit their own officials to register with the NCHSAA.
- (b) **Diving** - To serve on a diving judges panel, each person must complete the NFHS Judging Springboard Course on NFHS Learn on an annual basis; a high school coach

must pass the NCHSAA diving judge test; a USA diving official must be registered as a NCHSAA Official; and all other persons must be registered as a NCHSAA swimming official and pass the NCHSAA diving judge test.

- (11) Tennis - There will be USTA Certified Officials at the State Championship Matches.
- (12) Track - It is strongly recommended to have a USA Track and Field Certified Official at Regional and State Championship Meets.
- (13) Volleyball - Two-person crew is mandatory for varsity contests. Schools must use individuals capable of serving as Line Judges. In the regular season and the first two rounds of the state playoffs, when requested, Line Judges may be assigned by the Regional Supervisor. Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, four-person crews will be used.
- (14) Wrestling
 - (a) Regionals (Individual) - The number of officials that will be assigned will be determined by the number of mats being used. One (1) official per mat will be assigned, plus two (2) additional officials will be assigned. Example: If using four (4) mats, six (6) officials will be assigned.
 - (b) Dual Team - Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, two (2) officials will be assigned to each mat.
- (b) **Assigning Fees** - School assigning fees to Regional Supervisors is \$300.00 for varsity, \$150.00 for junior varsity, and \$100 for ninth grade sports. Assigning fees are to be paid within 30 days upon receipt of invoice. For regular season and invitational tournaments: 5-12 games, \$75.00; 13-25 games, \$100.00; 26-50 games, \$150.00; over 50 games, \$200.00.
- (c) **Scrimmage Fees** - There is a \$50 fee per hour (or any fraction of an hour) for officials per field/court/mat payable to the local association.
- (d) **Game Fees** - A bi-annual review of officiating fees will be done at the Winter Meeting of the NCHSAA Board of Directors.

(1) **Baseball**

Regular Season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Game	\$87.00	\$75.00
Tournaments (In-Season & Conference)	\$93.00	
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$93.00 Rounds 3-5 \$104.00 State Finals \$110.00	

NOTE: When baseball and softball contests are postponed and replayed under the suspended game rule, officials who work the continuation of the suspended contest are entitled to a half-game fee when completed in conjunction with a second game. Umpires are entitled to a full game fee when suspended game is only one being played.

(2) **Basketball**

Regular Season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Game	\$81.00	2-Person \$75.00 3-Person \$69.00
Tournaments (In-Season & Conference)	\$93.00	
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$93.00 Rounds 3-5 \$110.00 State Finals \$116.00	

(3) Football

Regular Season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Game	\$110.00	4-Person \$100.00 5-Person \$95.00
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$116.00 Rounds 3-5 \$122.00 State Finals \$128.00	
Clock Operator	\$93.00	

NOTE: If clock operator is requested through regional supervisor for regular season varsity game, the game fee is \$93.00.

(4) Flag Football

Regular Season	Varsity
Per Game	\$55.00
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$65.00 Rounds 3-5 \$75.00 State Finals \$81.00

NOTE: If clock operator is requested through regional supervisor for regular season varsity game, the game fee is \$55.00.

(5) Lacrosse

Regular season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Game	2-Person \$87.00 3-Person \$75.00	\$69.00
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$93.00 Rounds 3-5 \$104.00 State Finals \$110.00	

(6) Soccer

Regular season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Game	\$75.00	2-Person \$69.00 3-Person \$62.00
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$93.00 Rounds 3-5 \$104.00 State Finals \$110.00	

(7) Softball

Regular Season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Game	\$83.00	\$72.00
Tournaments (In-Season & Conference)	\$93.00	

Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$93.00 Rounds 3-5 \$104.00 State Finals \$110.00	
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NOTE: When baseball and softball contests are postponed and replayed under the suspended game rule, officials who work the continuation of the suspended contest are entitled to a half-game fee when completed in conjunction with a second game. Umpires are entitled to full game fee when suspended game is only one being played.

(8) Swimming and Diving

Regular Season	\$74.00
Regionals	\$79.00
State Championships	\$84.00

NOTE: For required number of swim officials at meets [See Rule 3.4.1 (a) (10)]

(9) Volleyball

Regular Season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Match	Best of 3 \$62.00 Best of 5 \$69.00	Best of 3 \$51.00 Best of 5 \$57.00
Line Judges (Regular Season)	\$62.00 (Best of 3) \$69.00 (Best of 5) When assigned by Regional Supervisor	
Tournaments (In-Season & Conference)	\$87.00	
Playoffs	Rounds 1-2 \$93.00 Rounds 3-5 \$104.00 State Finals \$110.00	
Line Judges (Playoffs)	\$87.00	

(10) Wrestling

Regular Season	Varsity	Non-Varsity
Per Match	\$81.00	\$69.00

NOTE: Preliminary matches consist of one two-minute and two one-minute periods. Fee is \$3.00 per match. Seven or more matches constitutes a full contest fee. There is a \$28 fee per hour (or any fraction of an hour) for officials per mat for scrimmages.

Wrestling Tournament Fees

One Day	\$72.00 fee per participating team, plus \$20.00 per official
Two Day	\$83.00 fee per participating team, plus \$20.00 per official
Dual Team Tournaments*	\$60.00 fee per dual match wrestled, plus \$20.00 per official

*(Also includes Triangular, Quadrangular, and Round Robin)

Dual Team Post Season Tournaments

Rounds 1-2	\$93.00 per match
Rounds 3-4	\$105.00 per match
State Finals	\$118.00

State Individual Tournament

Regional Tournament	\$153.00 per day, plus \$25.00 per diem (both days)
State Tournament	\$183.00 per day, plus \$25.00 per diem (both days)
	\$137.00 for Thursday round, plus \$25.00 per diem

3.4.2 Officiating Regulations

(a) Fees

- (1) Officials are paid per local fiscal policy as soon as possible by the member schools. Schools are responsible for paying officials. Regional supervisors cannot act as the fiduciary agent for schools in terms of paying officials.
- (2) Game fees will be paid as approved by the NCHSAA.
- (3) Postponed Games
 - (i) For games postponed after officials leave home, including contacting of officials via mobile phone while en route to school and officials do not travel all the way to the school or after officials arrive at game site: One-half game fee for the game is to be paid to each official.
 - (ii) Postponed game and neither regional supervisor nor officials are notified: Full game fee will be paid to each official.
 - (iii) When officials arrive on site for a contest and that contest is delayed one hour past the original start time, and the game is not played, the officials receive a full game fee.

(b) Suspended Games

- (1) Suspended games rescheduled and played from point of interruption: Officials receive the full game fee.
- (2) Baseball and softball games postponed and replayed under the suspended game rule: Officials who work the continuation of the suspended game are entitled to a full game fee. If the suspended game is played in conjunction with a second game: Officials shall be paid one-half game fee for the suspended game and a full game fee for the second game.

(c) Coaches

- (1) Coaches shall not approach the officials for complaints before, at halftime, or after the game.
- (2) Coaches entering an official's dressing room for the purpose of complaints are in violation of state regulations.
- (3) Officiating complaints are to be filed first with the regional supervisor making the assignment.
- (4) Coaches, principals and school officials are prohibited from making public statements in any media criticizing the officials [See Rule 3.3.6 (a) (8)].
- (5) Coaches in violation of the alcohol, tobacco or other drugs policy will be ejected from the contest

(d) Schools

- (1) Must use NCHSAA-registered officials working through an approved NCHSAA Regional Supervisor for varsity, junior varsity and ninth grade football, flag football, soccer, baseball, softball, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, swimming and diving, and lacrosse at events hosted by or contested at member schools.
- (2) Must provide a place to park for the officials.
- (3) Should greet the officials upon arrival.
- (4) Designate a game administrator for the contest. The game administrator must participate in pre-game coordination with the game officials. If no game administrator is available or identified, the head coach will be designated and recorded as the game administrator [See Rule 2.4.1].
- (5) Escort the officials to their dressing room.
- (6) Work toward improving dressing facilities for officials, especially in the area of privacy.
- (7) Provide the officials with an escort off the field and court (required in football, basketball and soccer). Schools should have a plan in place to ensure a safe and respectful exit for the game officials to a secure area.
- (8) Must have a plan to create alcohol/tobacco/other drug free zones around athletic events.
- (9) Must submit schedules to regional supervisors by approved deadlines.

- (e) **Officials**
- (1) Officials and Regional Supervisors will adhere to the Code of Ethics policy (on NCHSAA website - Officiating).
 - (2) Varsity football, flag football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, baseball, softball, swimming and diving, and lacrosse officials must be registered with the NCHSAA. Any person under the age of 18 or still in high school cannot be assigned to officiate NCHSAA contests.
 - (3) Officials are required to be dressed and on the field a minimum of 30 minutes prior to game time in football and on the court when the teams take the floor for warm-ups in basketball.
 - (4) When an official is reported as being late for a contest and is at fault, he or she shall be sanctioned by the Regional Supervisor.
 - (5) Game officials are required to obtain and record the name of the game administrator in charge of the event. If no game administrator is available or identified, the head coach will be designated and recorded as the game administrator.
 - (6) The referee is responsible for giving the visiting and the home coaches cards with the first and last names along with the position of each official working a varsity football game. In basketball, the officials are responsible for signing both scorebooks (home and visitor) in all men's and women's varsity contests.
 - (7) Officials must electronically file ejection report(s) in the NCHSAA's reporting platform within 24 hours of completion of the contest. Copies are sent electronically to the principal, athletic director and regional supervisor. In addition, officials should also report any unusual occurrences in a contest (teams leaving bench area, etc.) to the NCHSAA and the regional supervisor.
 - (8) Officials using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in and around an athletic event will be suspended.
 - (9) Penalties/sanctions of officials
 - (i) Review and sanctioning may be conducted by the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services
 - (ii) Appeals may be submitted to the Commissioner
 - (10) Grievance/Appeal Process For Contest Officials
 - (i) Follow the grievance policies and procedures in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the local officials association.
 - (ii) Written appeal to the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services
 - (iii) Written appeal to the Officiating and Review Committee of the NCHSAA Board of Directors
 - (iv) Written appeal to the NCHSAA Executive Committee
 - (v) Written appeal to full Board of Directors of the NCHSAA
 - (11) All officials must adhere to standards of professionalism, including but not limited to any code of ethics that may be promulgated from time to time by the NCHSAA. The NCHSAA may determine an official is ineligible to serve as an NCHSAA official on a temporary or permanent basis if the NCHSAA reasonably determines that initial or continued service as an NCHSAA official would be contrary to the letter or spirit of the NCHSAA's mission or purposes.
- (f) **Regional Supervisors**
- (1) A game assignment is to be received by each school prior to a regularly scheduled contest and before each rescheduled contest, time permitting.
 - (2) Shall supply schools with a composite list of officials, upon request.
 - (3) All Regional Supervisors must offer DragonFly as a payment option for assigning fees.
 - (4) For playoffs, tournaments, and all-star game assignments per sport: Each official during the current season must attend the NCHSAA state rules clinic and score an 80 or better on the annually-related sport exam administered through the NCHSAA.
NOTE: NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to regional and state championships games in the following sports: football, flag football, volleyball, soccer, basketball, wrestling, swimming and diving, baseball, softball and lacrosse. Neutral crews are to be used when possible in these sports in postseason play.
 - (5) Once the season begins, assignments are to be made by the Regional Supervisor based on the qualifications, merit of the officials, and any potential conflicts of interest.
 - (6) Preferential lists are not to be used.
 - (7) Each association must have a local Board of Directors (composed of officials and school personnel with at least one school administrator), education committee and grievance committee.
 - (8) Regional Supervisors must report any unusual occurrences in a contest, as reported by officials, to the NCHSAA.
 - (9) Regional Supervisors must use only NCHSAA-registered and eligible officials [See Rule 3.4.1 (a)].
 - (10) Booking fees regional supervisors charge officials may be no greater than \$80 in all sports except football and basketball. Football and Basketball fees can be no greater than \$105.00.
 - (11) Regional supervisors shall not officiate NCHSAA athletic contests in the sport they are assigning, except under emergency conditions. Approval to work emergency games must be given in writing by the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services prior to the game assignment.

3.4.3 Sport by Sport Regional Supervisors - For the most up-to-date information, visit www.nchsaa.org.

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3.5 **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

3.5.1 **Cheerleading** - Cheerleading is an activity that comes under the jurisdiction of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association in two areas – eligibility and health and safety guidelines (including Return to Play form, etc.). Head Cheerleading coaches are required to attend the annual rules meeting.

- (a) All information pertaining to cheerleading should be found in this section of the Handbook or online.
- (b) All NCHSAA member schools that sponsor cheerleading are required to follow NFHS Spirit Rules.
- (c) NFHS Spirit rulebooks are sent to athletic directors.
- (d) The head cheerleading coach is required to maintain safety certification through the NFHS and USA Cheer's "Cheer and Dance Safety Certification" course once every four years. Fundamentals of Coaching is not required.
- (e) Cheerleaders, both junior varsity and varsity, must have their eligibility certified in the same manner as other interscholastic student-athletes.
- (f) The Head Coach must attend one of the NCHSAA clinics [See Rule 3.3.6(d)(2)].
- (g) It is strongly recommended that, before a cheerleading squad uses NFHS spirit rules, that the coach or advisor for the cheerleaders consider their application with the training, experience and athletic ability of the student-athletes under supervision.
- (h) Please be aware that the membership entities may have more restrictive guidelines and regulations.
- (i) **Philosophy of Cheerleading** - Cheerleaders serve as a support group for the different interscholastic athletic teams within their schools.
 - (1) Cheerleaders should always strive to improve student morale, boost team spirit, and help a school achieve the most worthwhile objectives in its interscholastic program.
 - (2) Positive crowd and student body involvement, directed by the cheerleading squad in support of the school team, should be a major goal.

3.5.2 **Cheerleading Invitational**

- (a) Date - December 5, 2026
- (b) Site - Cabarrus Arena
- (c) Team Registration - Registration and other additional information is available at www.nchsaa.org.

3.5.3 **Scholar-Athlete Awards**

(a) **Team Awards** - A team is composed of the student-athletes in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 noted on the NCHSAA Master Eligibility List and certified for game/meet/match participation. The student-athletes must participate on the team at the high school **Varsity** level. The student-athlete must remain a member of the athletic team for the full/total designated sport season. Teams must meet the following minimum participation requirements: Swimming and Diving – 6, Women's Golf – 3, Men's Golf – 4, Women's Wrestling – 7, Men's Wrestling – 8, Track and Field – 2, Cross Country – 5 and Tennis – 4.

- (1) Any varsity team with an **UNWEIGHTED** 3.100 or higher composite grade average for the designated semester would be eligible to receive a team academic award.
 - (2) A team certificate will be awarded to each eligible school (for each of its eligible teams) and a team recognition certificate will be awarded to each member of an eligible team.
 - (3) In each sport approved by the NCHSAA, a team plaque will be awarded to the team (from those applications that are turned into the NCHSAA) in the state which has the highest team grade point average for the designated semester.
 - (4) Cheerleading, although not officially recognized as a "sport," is eligible for this program since eligibility must be certified and other requirements met. Cheerleaders will be part of the **FALL** semester and submitted for grades earned during that semester.
 - (5) For each team (men's and women's are considered separate teams) nomination, a separate team application form must be filled out. If four different teams from a school are nominated, then four different forms must be filled out. (The team GPA must be listed on the application.)
 - (6) All members of the team must be listed and their grade point average indicated, carried to three places, to be considered. Numerical grades (95.177, for example may not be used.)
 - (7) **Please note the deadlines: Fall/Winter- March 15 and Spring- July 15.** Applications for team awards which come in after the deadline will not be considered.
 - (8) Fall and winter sports awards will be based on grades earned for the first semester of the school year. Spring sports awards will be based on grades earned for the second semester of the school year.
- (b) **Individual Awards** - A student-athlete, participating as an individual representing their school.
- (1) Individuals who are members of athletic teams and who obtain a 3.500 or higher grade point average for the designated semester may receive an individual scholar athlete certificate regardless of the grade point average of his/her team. Managers and trainers are considered eligible for this Scholar-Athlete designation. *Weighted grades may be used for calculating individual GPA only.*

- (2) Awards will be based on grades earned for the designated semester using the same format as for team awards (fall and winter sports—first semester grades; spring sports—second semester grades).
- (3) Student-athletes may be eligible to receive an individual award for each sport in which they participate on a varsity level.
- (c) **Scholar-Athlete Team and Individual Grade Point Average** - The combined average of the grades based on the **Four Point Scale** (*Do not use Weighted Values for Calculating Averages For Team GPA's; Weighted Scale Grades may be used only for Individual Award purposes*).

GRADE POINT	VALUE
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1

- (1) Compute or calculate the grade point average to three (3) decimal places (i.e. 3.326). Again, do not submit an average of more than 4.000 since that would reflect weighted courses on your team nominations.
- (2) Nominations for fall and winter sports awards must be submitted by March 15. Nominations for spring awards must be submitted by July 15.
- (d) **Scholar-Athlete Submissions**
 - (1) Copies may be made, if necessary, to list additional athletes. This becomes your official list.
 - (2) All GPA's should be listed to three decimal places (i.e. 3.678). Do not list a GPA higher than 4.000, since that would reflect weighted courses, on averages used to complete an overall team average; an average higher than 4.000 could be used in the individual.
 - (3) This is a varsity award. Junior varsity athletes and teams are not eligible.
 - (4) The principal should sign the form and then any coach who has a scholar-athlete included on the list should also check the form and sign it.
 - (5) Please send ALL applications from one school under the same cover to facilitate awarding of certificates. Scholar-Athlete applications should be submitted by the official online form for consideration.

3.5.4 **Hall of Fame** - The North Carolina High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame is dedicated to preserving the colorful tradition of high school athletics in North Carolina. The Hall of Fame seeks to highlight the past in order to insure a promising future for the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. The recognition of past personalities and their significant contributions to our statewide organization will serve to provide models for future generations to emulate.

- (a) Candidates are judged on their long-term contributions to high school interscholastic athletics governed in the State of North Carolina by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association or the parent organizations, which gave rise to the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.
- (b) Hall of Fame nomination forms outlining the nomination procedure may be obtained from the NCHSAA office. Those selected to enter the Hall are honored at NCHSAA Day in the fall and are inducted at the spring Hall of Fame ceremonies.
- (c) Completed nomination forms must be in by November 1. The Selection Committee customarily meets in January each year.

All members of the NCHSAA Hall of Fame are listed by class in the Resources Section of the Handbook.

3.5.5 **Coaches Workshops** - Upon request, topical workshops can be provided for coaches and other athletic personnel at the local level or at central sites; usually requested by schools or the membership entity.

3.5.6 **Special Recognition Programs**

- (a) **Homer Thompson Eight Who Make a Difference Award** - Recognizes individuals who exemplify sportsmanship and serve as positive role models for students. Each member school is invited to nominate one male, one female or both who provides the kind of leadership and demeanor of which we can all be proud. This award is given to eight individuals in memory of the long-time Winston-Salem Parkland coach, Homer Thompson.
- (b) **Heart of a Champion** - Recognizes student-athletes who have participated in at least one varsity sport and remained ejection-free during the school year. They are recognized for overcoming adversity, demonstrating outstanding character, and going above and beyond what is expected to succeed. These students also exemplify outstanding citizenship and sportsmanship.
- (c) **Ejection-Free School Program** - Recognizes schools who were ejection-free throughout the school

year.

3.5.7 **Student Athlete Advisory Council** - The NCHSAA Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) was developed to serve as the voice for student-athletes who participate in NCHSAA programs. They discuss topics relevant to high school student-athletes and develop ways to maintain a positive athletic experience. Each council member is expected to exemplify leadership and sportsmanlike conduct while carrying out the NCHSAA Mission. Selected SAAC members will come from a diverse pool of rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors who meet the following minimum criteria:

- (a) Meet all eligibility standards as outlined in the NCHSAA Handbook
- (b) Possess leadership characteristics
- (c) Viewed as positive role models in the local community and at their high school
- (d) Capable of working with students from a variety of social groups
- (e) Exemplify the tenets of Student Programs and Sportsmanship (Character, Integrity, Citizenship and Respect)

Nomination and Selection: Efforts will be made to ensure that as many NCHSAA sports are represented as possible across the eight (8) regions. Each member school may submit one female and one male nomination per year. The NCHSAA will accept applications from February 1 - May 31 of each year. Final selections will be made by the middle of June.

3.5.8 **Student Leadership Conference** - The NCHSAA invites each of our member schools to attend the annual Student Leadership Conference (SLC) that is held in the spring semester. The goals of this conference are:

- (a) Develop an understanding of positive leadership while gaining the knowledge and skills to effectively lead.
- (b) Acquire an understanding of the importance of community service, positive values, sportsmanship, healthy lifestyles and self-evaluation.
- (c) Serve as leaders for their school, community and state.



SECTION 4: INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

4.1 **COMPETITION** - *This section is applicable to interscholastic athletic activities included in 4.2 – 4.14.*

4.1.1 **Mailings** - Rule books will be mailed to athletic directors prior to the beginning of regular season practice except for the sports of golf and tennis. All other information can be found in the athletic activities section of the Handbook or on the NCHSAA website.

4.1.2 **Classifications** - 1A - 8A for all sports except:

- (a) Women's Golf, Indoor Track, Men's Tennis, and Men's Wrestling (Individual) classes are 1A and 2A (combined), 3A-8A will stand alone.
- (b) Swimming and Diving - 1A through 3A (combined), 4A-8A will stand alone.
- (c) Lacrosse, Flag Football and Men's Volleyball 1A through 6A (combined), 7A and 8A will stand alone.
- (d) Women's Wrestling (Individual) 1A through 4A (combined), 5A-8A will stand alone.

4.1.3 **Organizational Meeting** - An organizational meeting for the purpose of discussing policies, academics, distributing physical forms and the like, or equipment issue prior to the opening date of practice is allowed, but no sports instruction would be permitted in that setting.

4.1.4 **Preseason Certification (ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY FORM)** - Each member school must submit its preseason certification information (ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY FORM) on the NCHSAA website. Dates for submission to NCHSAA are September 1 (fall), December 1 (winter), and March 15 (spring).

- (a) Certifies that all pre-season meetings have been conducted.
- (b) Certifies that student-athletes and their parents have signed the sportsmanship pledge, and also certifies that their student-athletes are eligible in all respects.
- (c) Certifies coaches have signed the "Code of Conduct for Coaches" and viewed the Eligibility Video.
- (d) Certifies that each school has an updated Emergency Action Plan.
- (e) Certifies all coaches, student-athletes, and parents have viewed the "CrashCourse" Concussion Video prior to participation.
- (f) Certifies athletic directors have completed their NFHS "After School Safety" course or completed the NIAAA LTC 631 "Emergency Management of Interscholastic Athletic Events"

4.1.5 **Preseason Scrimmages** - All sports at the high school are permitted two preseason scrimmages (JV and Varsity), with the exception of football, and this competition can be between two schools or with multiple schools. A "scrimmage" means any kind of practice game, match, or contest where designated teams compete against one another in any way. Every such practice game, match, or contest is a scrimmage regardless of whether the score is kept, officials are present, or the full number of players compete at any given time.

- (a) Cross country, golf, swimming, and tennis. No officials are required.
- (b) Football - Five (5) hours of preseason scrimmage time is allowed. Live kicking situations are allowable only when officials are present. These scrimmages cannot occur until at least 8 separate days of practice have been completed [See Rule 4.5.3(b)(5)]. NCHSAA-registered officials must be used for at least two hours of the allotted total of five and is recommended for use for all five hours. Scrimmages may be conducted between two (2) or multiple schools.

NOTE: Student-athletes must be given a minimum of 48 hours between scrimmages and 72 hours are recommended.

- (c) Two scrimmages may be held in the same preseason week, and the preseason scrimmages must be conducted as events open to the public (no closed scrimmages allowed).
- (d) Junior varsity teams may conduct stand alone scrimmages. Scrimmage limitations apply to the individual student athletes as well.
- (e) Scrimmages must be played prior to the first regular season contest.

NOTE: A scrimmage with an outside team during the regular season is a violation and must be counted as a regular contest and must not exceed daily, weekly, or seasonal limits.

- (f) For the sports of football, volleyball, soccer, basketball, wrestling, lacrosse, baseball and softball, officials must be used in at least one of the school's scrimmages so that there will be common exposure to rules situations.
- (g) Officials are to be assigned to work a maximum of two hours per scrimmage.
- (h) Admission may be charged.
- (i) Only eligible student-athletes may participate.
- (j) Non-school participants may assist the coaching staff in an instructional or demonstrational manner. But any scrimmage-type competition or activity between non-school participants and high school team members is regarded as a game, which is then subject to games-per-week, season limitations, and use of NCHSAA-registered officials.

4.1.6 **Eligibility Sheets** - Eligibility sheets should be kept on file at the local school; must be made available to the NCHSAA upon request and are required to be shared among conference members.

4.1.7 **Ejection Reports** - Officials must electronically file the required ejection report to the NCHSAA within 24

hours of the contest's completion. The NCHSAA will electronically send copies of the ejection report to the principal, athletic director and Regional Supervisor. Athletic directors are required to submit a confirmation email upon receipt of the ejection report. The confirmation must be submitted within 24 hours of receiving the ejection report. If the wrong student-athlete is identified, a correction can be made through the Regional Supervisors and the NCHSAA. For more on the Sportsmanship/Ejection Policy and Penalties, See 3.3.7 and 3.3.8.

- (a) For soccer, reference Yellow Card Tracking and Ejections, see 4.9.1(j).
- (b) For wrestling, in addition to the above, during a two day tournament, if a wrestler is ejected on Friday, this wrestler must miss Saturday of that tournament AND the next contest for a first ejection and the next two contests for a second ejection.

4.1.8 **Team Championships** - In sports where applicable, a team must have multiple entries in the event to achieve a team championship.

- (a) An individual may not earn a team title.
- (b) For reclassification purposes, a school must have a bona fide team to be counted toward the total of schools fielding teams in a classification.
- (c) A "team" is defined as "two or more student-athletes practicing and competing in a regularly scheduled school season."

4.1.9 **Competition Ball** - In playoff contests in which the NCHSAA provides a complimentary adopted game ball, that model of game ball must be used for the playoff contest. Noncompliance is subject to 3.3.6(a)(5). See adopted ball chart on the NCHSAA website.

4.1.10 **Competition** - [See Sanctioning Chart Page 121]

- (a) **One-On-One Out of State Opponents** - All contests between two (2) teams during the sports season, whether home or away including scrimmage and regular season involving a non-North Carolina school (not applying to foreign country teams), are approved, provided there is no loss of school time (unless the membership entity approves such a contest). No sanction required.
- (b) **Interstate Competition Requiring National Federation Sanction** - Interstate competition that meets at least one of the following requirements:
 - (1) Any interstate (including bordering states) or international event involving two (2) or more schools which is co-sponsored by or titled in the name of an organization outside the school community (e.g., a college/university, a theme park, an athletic shoe/apparel company, etc.).
 - (2) Event that involves non-bordering state(s) if more than five (5) states are involved.
 - (3) Event that involves non-bordering state(s) if more than eight (8) schools are involved.
 - (4) Any event involving two (2) or more schools that involves a team from a foreign country. The host school should complete the NFHS Sanction Application. Those would include any event(s) that involves international traveling teams that play multiple games in multiple states. (The exception to this rule are Canada and Mexico, which are considered "bordering states").
 - (5) For online registration, go to www.NFHS.org and click on Sanctioning.
- (c) **Border/Interstate Competition Requiring State Sanction Only** - Interstate competition when an event does not meet any of the National Federation Sanctioning requirements but involves at least one of the following:
 - (1) Event only involves state(s) that border North Carolina (GA, SC, TN and VA)
 - (2) Five (5) or fewer states participating when there is a non-bordering state involved.
 - (3) Eight (8) or fewer schools participating when there is a non-bordering state involved.
 - (4) See Border/Interstate Sanctioning Form on the NCHSAA website. Sanctioning for the above competitions must be made through the NCHSAA office a minimum of 30 days in advance of the proposed contest.

4.1.11 **Games with Non-Conference Opponents** - A game which has been scheduled with a non-conference opponent shall not be allowed to interfere with a conference game, conference tournament, tiebreaking game or playoff game. If such non-conference game shall conflict with the game, or games, necessary to break a conference tie, the school concerned shall:

- (a) Cancel its non-conference game; or
- (b) Mutually agree to break the tie amongst the tied teams per the Handbook procedure in 4.1.12
- (c) Accept the ruling of the NCHSAA.

4.1.12 **Tie-breaking Procedure** - All parts of this procedure are mandatory. The steps should be followed in the order as they appear in the procedure.

- (a) **Determining Conference Standings** - These rules apply for determining the final regular season standings in any sport in which a conference awards its conference championship on the basis of regular season competition.
 - (1) The conference standings shall be determined on the basis of the percentage of conference games won by each team at the end of the regular season, based on conference regulations

and subject to the tie-breaking procedure which follows. The team finishing in first place shall be recognized as the conference champion; if a tie exists for first place, then conference co-champions, tri-champions, etc., shall be declared.

- (2) If two or more teams have equal conference percentages at the end of the season, the team that has the edge in head-to-head competition will get the higher place in the standings. All conference games played against each other would count in the head-to-head competition.

The intent is to break the tie by using the tied teams.

Ex. 1 - If there is a four-way tie for first and Team A and Team B are 2-1 while Team C and Team D are 1-2, in games among the four of them, A and B would be tied for first by virtue of their 2-1, with C and D tied for third. Then look at head-to-head between the two (A and B) to break that tie, and then between the other two (C and D) to break that remaining tie.

Ex. 2 - Teams A, B and C are tied for fourth in the conference standings with identical records. In games among the three, A was 3-1, B was 2-2 and C was 1-3. The tie is broken; A is fourth, B is fifth and C sixth.

- (3) Any time throughout the whole procedure that a multiple tie is reduced to two teams, no matter what criteria is being used, use head-to-head conference competition between those remaining if possible.

- (b) **Determining Conference Tournament Seeding** - The following rules are used to seed conference tournaments on the basis of regular season standings. Use this section only to seed for conference tournaments and only after 4.1.11(a) is completed; if no conference tournament [See Rule 4.1.11(c)].

- (1) Seed the tournament on the basis of final regular season standings [See Rule 4.1.11(a)].

- (2) If two or more teams are tied, and the teams played any non-conference games against each other, the team with the better record in all head-to-head games get the higher conference seed. (If there is a multiple tie of three or more teams, one team must have beaten all the other teams for these non-conference games to be used). Note that use of these non-conference or tournament meetings prior to the conference tournament is ONLY for seeding in the conference tournament [See Rule 4.1.11(c)(5)].

Ex. - Team A and B split in regular season, but played one another in a non-conference game and A won. A would get the higher seed in the conference tournament. Say A and B were tied for fourth in an eight-team league and this occurred; A would get the higher seed in the tournament. However, the meeting in the conference tournament between A and B would be the tiebreaker between the two for determining NCHSAA playoff representatives [See Rule 4.1.11(c)(2)].

- (3) If there is still a tie for a tournament seed, it will be resolved by comparing how the tied teams fared against the rest of the conference until the tie is broken.

Ex. 1 - A and B finished with equal conference records and split during the regular season, thereby tying for third place in the standings. They did not play each other in a non-conference game. Go to the number one position in the conference and compare how A and B did against that team. Say the tie cannot be resolved there (both teams split with the number-one team), so go to the number two team. Team A lost twice to the number two but B split with the number-two team. Therefore B would be seeded third and A fourth (even though they finished tied for third in the final standings).

Ex. 2 - There is a four-way tie for first among A, B, C and D. Team A and B are each 2-1 while C and D are each 1-2 in games among the four. A and B are tied for the first seed, while C and D are tied for third seed. Now look at head to head competition between A and B to break that tie, and head to head between C and D to break the other remaining tie.

- (4) If the tie still exists, it will be broken by NCHSAA RPI.

- (c) **Determining NCHSAA Playoff Representatives** - Playoff berths for bracketed sports will awarded based on the final regular season standing, as determined by the Final RPI, or other designated platform (i.e. RankWrestling). All conference tournament games, if played, will count toward RPI. RPI values are presented on the website with four decimal places, in the event of a tie, the NCHSAA will examine as many decimal places as necessary to break the tie. Once the qualifying teams in each classification are determined, they will be divided into two regions of equal size (East and West) based on the longitude of each school. If an odd number of teams make the final bracket, a blind draw will determine the region of the school in the middle. Schools are then seeded based solely on the Final RPI.

4.1.13 Playoff Declaration - A school or individual has the option to “opt out” of the playoffs, provided they fill out the Playoff Declaration Form on the website, and submit it to the NCHSAA office prior to the reporting deadline for that specific sport. If the form is not submitted, then the school or individual will be considered and

may qualify for a playoff berth.

4.1.14 **Reporting Playoff Qualifiers** - Schools must submit their completed and accurate schedule and results into the designated reporting platform to be considered for playoff qualification for the sports of Baseball, Basketball, Football, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Dual Team Tennis, Volleyball, Wrestling.

(a) Failure to comply with the reporting procedure may result in a penalty.

(b) If a team qualifies for a playoff berth but is ineligible for further competition for any reason its position is vacated, after playoff brackets are finalized.

(c) Check the NCHSAA website for additional information.

4.1.15 **Submission of Incorrect Record** - Once the seeding process is completed and the brackets have been finalized, if a team has submitted an incorrect record a penalty may be assessed to the team or head coach.

4.1.16 **Playoff Ranking Formula** - A Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) formula will be used for qualifications in all team bracketed playoffs with the exception of dual team wrestling. $RPI = (.4 \times WP) + (.4 \times OWP) + (.2 \times OOWP)$ RPI values are displayed to four (4) decimal places, in the event of a tie, additional decimal places will be displayed until the tie is broken.

NOTE: Your head-to-head contests do not factor into your opponents' winning percentage when calculating your RPI.

(a) There will be no point differential considered for playoff qualification and seeding purposes.

NOTE: Out-of-State and In-State Non-NCHSAA Member Opponents - Out-of-State opponents from states that border North Carolina will be counted the same as in-state opponents provided they have a verified MaxPreps account and schedule.

(1) It is the responsibility of the NCHSAA member school to ensure that the data from their out-of-state opponent or non-NCHSAA member opponent is correctly listed on MaxPreps.

(2) Any out-of-state opponent from a state that does not directly border North Carolina will be calculated in the following manner:

(i) Opponent's direct winning percentage (i.e. .750) will count toward the formula, but each of their opponents will have a .500 winning percentage assigned.

4.1.17 **Bracket Sizes**

(a) Classifications 1A-7A will have 48 teams placed on a 64-team bracket (top eight teams in each region receive byes, additional byes will be awarded when necessary). Dual Team Wrestling will have 32-team brackets for 1A-7A.

(1) Brackets for 1A Championships will be reduced to 32-team brackets when necessary, additional byes may also be necessary in reduced brackets.

(b) The 8A Classification will have 24 teams placed on a 32-team bracket (top four teams in each region receive byes, additional byes will be awarded when necessary).

NOTE: Men's and Women's Lacrosse, Flag Football and Men's Volleyball will have a 1A-6A Playoff with 48 teams, a 7A Playoff with 48 teams and an 8A Playoff with 24 teams. Men's Tennis will have a 1A/2A bracket with 48 teams.

4.1.18 **Reporting Playoff Advancement**

(a) After schools have qualified for the playoffs, it is their responsibility to report advancement by the appropriate method and deadline as designated by the NCHSAA.

(b) Failure to report a playoff advancement may result in a penalty. Teams must report advancement no later than 6:00 a.m. the day following each win.

(c) Postponements should also be reported.

4.1.19 **Body Paint** - Face/body paint is prohibited during regular season or playoffs. This includes spectators and participants.

4.1.20 **Noisemakers** - Any noise-making objects are prohibited at indoor contests (cheerleaders may use non-electronic hand megaphones). Electronic noise-making objects are prohibited at outdoor contests.

4.1.21 **Uniform Code** - All uniforms worn in competition must comply with the NFHS Uniform Code. Uniforms may have the school name, nickname or official mascot on them. The intent of a nickname is to refer to a shortened version of the schools name or official mascot such as "Jags" for Jaguars or "Cards" for Cardinals. It is not intended to encompass local or community slang such as use of the word "the", directional references, street names, or anything that is not the official name of the school or official mascot.

4.2 BASEBALL

4.2.1 **General**

(a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].

(b) Date of First Practice - February 15

(c) Date of First Game - March 1

- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (e) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (f) Number of Regular Season Contests - Total 24 games
 - (1) No more than four per week, provided fourth single game is on a non-school day for both.
 - (2) Four games in three days is still permissible without using a non-school day (e.g. doubleheader on a school day).
 - (3) It is permissible for a student-athlete to participate in a junior varsity and varsity game in the same day; however, any student-athlete is still subject to the weekly and seasonal limitations (four games a week, not to exceed three days, total of 24).
 - (4) Team and individuals are limited to two games a day.
 - (5) Junior varsity conference tournament games must count toward the 24-game limit.
 - (6) Varsity conference tournament games do not count toward the 24-game limit.
- (g) Starting Time - During the regular season, a time no earlier than 5:00 p.m. is recommended unless facilities dictate otherwise, e.g. no lights.
- (h) Tournaments - Tournaments are governed by daily, weekly and seasonal limitations.
- (i) Equipment
 - (1) Balls must have the authenticating NFHS ball mark and the NOCSAE standard mark at the time of manufacture.
 - (2) The minus-three bat is the only allowable bat.
 - (i) The barrel of the minus-three bat is to be 2 5/8 inches.
 - (ii) All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be labeled with a silk screen or other permanent certification mark.
 - (iii) No BBCOR label, sticker, or decal will be accepted on any non-wood bat. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of one inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. To read: "BBCOR .50".
 - (3) Coaches must wear a skull cap style helmet or NOCSAE certified helmet when coaching in the Coaches Box during games.
- (j) Ten-Run Rule - The ten run rule has been adopted by the NCHSAA for baseball; if a team is ahead by 10 runs after five complete innings, the game is terminated.
- (k) Time Limit - In junior varsity baseball contests part of a JV/Varsity doubleheader, no new inning may begin after two hours of elapsed time.
- (l) Pitching Regulation
 - (1) A player is allowed 105 pitches per day provided he or she has met the required days of rest. Pitch count applies only to pitches thrown during an at bat.
 - (2) A pitcher can finish an at bat if he or she reaches 105 pitches during an at bat.
 - (3) The required rest periods are based on the following pitch windows:
 - (i) If a pitcher throws 76 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days rest are required before pitching again.
 - (ii) If a pitcher throws 61-75 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest are required before pitching again.
 - (iii) If a pitcher throws 46-60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest are required before pitching again.
 - (iv) If a pitcher throws 31-45 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest is required before pitching again.
 - (v) If a pitcher throws 1-30 pitches in a day, zero (0) calendar days of rest are required before pitching again.
 - (vi) Any pitcher appearing two (2) consecutive days, regardless of the number of pitches thrown, must rest one (1) calendar day.
 - (4) **State Championship Series Exception** - Pitchers may throw a maximum of 120 pitches during the State Championship Series. No rest periods apply to the State Championship Best-of-Three Series. Pitch count applies only to pitches during an at bat.
 - (5) Game Day Tracking Forms must be signed by opposing coaches, or designee, and kept on file. Counts must be updated on the team's MaxPreps page before 11:00 a.m. on the day following the contest.
 - (i) Head Coaches, or their designee, must communicate pitch counts between each inning. Failure to communicate between innings could result in a penalty for unsporting behavior if discrepancies arise.
 - (ii) In cases where there is a discrepancy between the home and visiting teams, the home team book will be used for official tracking. Intentional discrepancies in pitch records will

be deemed unsporting, evaluated on a per instance basis, and could result in penalties.

- (6) Pitch count rule is in effect for all players (JV and Varsity).
- (7) First Round Playoffs through Regionals: Pitch Count window and days of rest are required, including during the best-of-three series scheduled for Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.
- (m) Doubleheaders - Permitted when mutually agreed upon by teams involved.
 - (1) Doubleheaders are two back-to-back games, at the same level, with a reasonable (30 minutes) time between contests. [See Rule 4.2.1(f)(3) regarding players participating in JV and varsity contests in the same day]
 - (2) Split doubleheaders are also permissible (two separate opponents).
 - (3) By mutual agreement, two member schools may agree to play two five (5) inning games in a doubleheader.
- (n) Suspended Games - North Carolina has adopted the suspended game rule, mandatory in all regular season and state playoff games. A game called for any reason, where a winner cannot be determined will be treated as a suspended game.
 - (1) If the game is to be completed it will be continued from the point of interruption, with the lineup and batting order of each team the same as the lineup and batting order at the point of interruption, subject to the rules of the game.
 - (2) If more than 4 1/2 innings have been played and a winner can be determined, the game is over (including playoff games).
 - (3) After 5 innings, if the visiting team scores a tying or go ahead run in their top half of the inning and the home team does not have an opportunity to bat or complete its time at bat, the game is treated as a suspended game.
 - (4) If a game is called prior to the completion of a full inning after the fifth inning, the game becomes a suspended game in the following situation: the visiting team has scored one or more runs to tie the score or take the lead, and the home team has not tied the score or retaken the lead.
 - Ex. - The sixth inning begins with score H-6, V-5. Visitors score two runs in their half of the inning. Game is called because of rain with (a) two outs in the bottom of the sixth and the score H-6, V-7; or (b) following the completion of the home team's turn at bat with the score H-6, V-7. In (a) the game is suspended and resumed on the next possible date at the point of interruption. In (b) the game is official, with the final score H-6, V-7.
 - (5) A suspended game does not count against the weekly limitations in the week in which it is completed.
- (o) Rained-Out Games - If any rained-out baseball game which would affect the winning of a conference title is to be played, it shall be rescheduled on the same field (exception: suspended games do not have to be rescheduled on the same field, unless changed by mutual agreement of the two schools).
- (p) Postponed Games - Postponed games must be made up in order of postponement on the next possible date (excluding Sunday).
 - (1) In the regular season, Saturday will not be used as a make-up day unless mutually agreed upon by both teams.
 - (2) In the playoffs, Saturdays must be used. If one team will not play, the game is forfeited to the opponent.
- (q) Protest - Each conference is to establish a baseball protest committee. The committee's decision on any properly protested conference baseball game will be final.
- (r) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by January 15.
- (s) Uniformed Police Officer - [See Rule 2.5.3(a)].
- (t) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming - [See Rule 2.2.17].

4.2.2 Playoffs

- (a) Qualifiers/Seeding - [See Rule 4.1.12(c)]
- (b) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once seeding is complete.
- (c) Schedule

Reporting Deadline:	May 8, (11:59 p.m.)	Third Round	May 18
Seeding	May 10	Fourth Round	May 21
First Round	May 11	Regional	May 25 - 29
Second Round	May 14	State	June 2 - 5

 - (1) All games are single elimination, with the exception of the regional and state championship series, which are the best two out of three games.
 - (2) Competing teams should contact each other to work out details for their contest.
 - (3) Deadlines are set for completion of each round, but competing schools may play on an earlier date by mutual consent.

- (d) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to games.
 - (3) Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, four (4) person crews will be used.
 - (4) Assignments for regional and state championship games will be made by the NCHSAA office.
- (e) Game Times - On fields with lights, game time will be 7:00 p.m., unless mutually agreed upon to play at 6:00 p.m.
 - (1) Any other exceptions, such as field with no lights, must be approved by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Where the distance is more than 100 miles for the visiting team, game time will be 6:00 p.m.
 - (3) Saturday - Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon.
 - (i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - (ii) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
- (i) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (j) Protest Committee - The competing teams are required to coordinate a protest committee that includes a minimum of three school administrators prior to playing. The committee will act on any protest at the time it may occur and its decision is final.
NOTE: Parents are not allowed to serve on this committee.
- (k) Postponed Games - Must be rescheduled on the next day (except on Sunday). Both schools and the NCHSAA must be involved in the decision to postpone any playoff contest.
- (l) Team Expenses and Financial Arrangements -[See Resources on Page 121] In all rounds prior to the state championship, participating schools will divide the remainder equally after applying the following expense formula:
 - (1) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.
 - (2) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.
 - (3) All concession rights belong to the host school.
 - (4) Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net.
 - (5) The principal of the host school, or appointed game manager, must forward the financial report and ticket accountability form to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.
- (m) Ticket Accountability and Financial Forms - All forms can be found on the designated reporting platform.
- (n) Regional Awards - Team plaques will be presented to the regional champion and regional runner-up.\

4.2.3 **State Championship Series**

- (a) Dates - June 2-5
- (b) Required Information - Teams qualifying for the state championships must submit their roster and team information [See website] no later than Monday at noon prior to the state championship series.
- (c) Series - The state finals shall be a best two out of three game series. Game times and sites will be established by the NCHSAA. The higher seeded team will be designated as the home team for games 1 and 3. If equal seeds meet, the Eastern team will be designated as home for game 1, the Western team will be designated as home for game 2, and the NCHSAA will flip to determine the game 3 home team prior to game 1.
- (d) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]. May be amended due to weather. Each team will receive five complimentary passes and three School Administrator passes.
- (e) Protest Committee - [See Rule 4.2.2(j)].
- (f) Radio and TV Fee - [See Rule 2.2.18].
- (g) Gate Receipts - The net balance will be divided as follows: 67% to the competing teams and 33% to the NCHSAA.
- (h) Team Expenses - Travel and expenses for 18 players plus a coach and manager, shall be allowed at the rate designated by the NCHSAA [See Rule 4.3.3(b)].
- (i) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for the State Championship Series. See adopted ball list on www.nchsaa.org for official adopted game ball.
- (j) Awards - Plaques will be presented to the championship and runner-up team in all classes. Members

of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (a total of 25).

4.3 BASKETBALL

4.3.1 General

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - November 2 (October 19 for non-football playing schools).
- (c) Date of First Game - November 11 (October 28 for non-football playing schools).
- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (e) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than three per week. During any two weeks of the regular season, four games may be played, provided the fourth game is on a non-school day.
 - (1) Total, 24 games. A student-athlete is limited to one game a day. Junior varsity tournament games are part of the 24-game limit. Varsity Conference Tournament games are not.
 - (2) **Special Note for non-football playing schools** - Six additional basketball games may be played, for a total of 30. These games must be completed prior to the first playing date for football-playing schools. These six games will NOT count for seeding purposes.
- (f) Tournaments - Tournaments are governed by daily, weekly and seasonal game limitations.
- (g) Five Quarter Participation- Freshmen and Sophomores only are allowed to participate in five (5) quarters for basketball on the same day. Participation in up to five quarters of basketball on a single day will be considered participation in a single game toward the daily, weekly, and seasonal limitations for a student-athlete. A student-athlete is not allowed to participate in more than five quarters in one day and is not allowed to exceed the seasonal limitation of games. The five quarter rule does not apply to conference tournaments and state playoff games. Participation for any length of time in a quarter will constitute the student-athlete having played a full quarter. Overtime periods will be considered an extension of the previous quarter. The following conditions must be met:
 - (1) The NCHSAA Basketball Five Quarter Online Form must be accurately completed once the contest has concluded.
 - (2) Head coaches of both teams must verify their five quarter players with an electronic signature.
 - (3) The reporting form will be completed through the Game Schedule of the NCHSAA reporting platform.
 - (4) All 5 quarter players must be indicated as such in both scorebooks.
- (h) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (i) Required Equipment
 - (1) Red lights behind the backboard synchronized with the time clock buzzer are required.
 - (2) Balls must have the authenticating NFHS ball mark.
 - (3) If Precision Time System is available, it can be used.
- (j) Pep Bands - Organized music by a pep band at a basketball game is permissible only under the direct supervision of a school music director or other school personnel. The band may play only during dead-ball situations.
- (k) Cheerleaders - Cheerleaders must remain seated while the ball is in play, which includes after the free throw shooter is handed the ball. Cheerleaders may not come onto the floor during 30-second timeouts. The use of signage is allowed during timeouts. Cheerleaders may not battle.
 - (1) If on floor level (floor or first row of bleachers), cheerleaders must remain seated while the ball is in play, which includes after the free throw shooter is handed the ball.
 - (2) If on the second row of bleachers or higher, cheerleaders may stand to cheer while the ball is in play.
- (l) Net Removal - Nets may not be cut down or removed following a game at any time. [See Rule 3.3.6(b) (2)].
- (m) Postponed Games - Must be rescheduled on the next possible date (excluding Sunday). Both schools and the NCHSAA must be involved in the decision to postpone any playoff contest.
- (n) Suspended Games - The NCHSAA plays by the suspended game rule in all sports [See Rule 2.2.7(c)].
- (o) Mercy Rule - Once the score reaches a 35-point differential at halftime or thereafter, the game will resort to a running clock, including the administration of free throws or all other dead ball situations, except for timeouts called by a coach or official; the game can be terminated by mutual agreement.
- (p) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by September 30.
- (q) Uniformed Police Officer [See Rule 2.5.3(a)]
- (r) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming [See Rule 2.2.17].
- (s) Required Tournament Information - Fact sheet, roster forms for tournament play, requests for photo

and other information forms can be found on the NCHSAA website. Note deadlines for submission of material. This is mandatory for playoff qualifiers. Check NCHSAA website.

4.3.2 Playoffs

- (a) Conference Tournaments - Tournaments, if played, should end on the Friday night prior to the seeding date. Conference tournament games must be indicated as such in MaxPreps. Conference Tournament Games do count toward a team's final RPI.
- (b) Qualifiers/Seeding - [See Rule 4.1.12(c)]
- (c) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once seeding is complete.
- (d) Brackets and Schedule
 - (1) In all classifications, playoff games are played on the home court of the higher seed or at mutually agreed upon neutral sites.
 - (2) Game times are 7:00 p.m. for single games or 6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. for doubleheaders at a site. By mutual agreement a doubleheader may be played at 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. If travel is greater than 100 miles one-way, game times shall be 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. with the game involving the visiting team with the greatest travel distance being played at 6:00 p.m.
 - (3) By mutual agreement a game time of 6:00 p.m. is permissible.
 - (4) All games will be scheduled on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.
 - (5) Saturday: Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon.
 - (i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - (a) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
- (e) Schedule - Deadline for reporting qualifiers: February 19 (11:59 p.m.).

Seeding	February 20	Fourth Round	March 1
First round	February 23	Regionals	March 3 - 6
Second round	February 25	State Championships	March 10-13
Third round	February 27		
- (f) Uniform Color - The home team will wear white uniforms.
- (g) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to games.
 - (3) All games in the state playoffs will use three-person crews.
- (h) Banners - Banners, placards, and signs are prohibited during playoffs (permissible by cheerleaders during timeouts).
- (i) Financial Arrangements - [See Resources on Page 121] The principal of the host school or appointed game manager must complete the financial report and ticket accountability forms and submit to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.
- (j) Ticket Accountability and Financial Forms - All forms can be found on the designated reporting platform.
- (k) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (l) Team Expenses - [See Resources on Page 121] In all rounds prior to the regional championship, participating schools will divide the remainder equally after applying the following expense formula:
 - (1) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.
 - (2) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.
 - (3) All concession rights belong to the host school.
 - (4) Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net.
 - (5) The principal of the host school, or appointed game manager, must forward the financial report and ticket accountability form to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.
- (m) In playoff contests in which the NCHSAA provides a complimentary adopted game ball, that model of game ball must be used for the playoff contest. Noncompliance is subject to 3.3.6(a)(5).

4.3.3 Regional Championship - Winners of the fourth round games will participate in the Eastern or Western Championship game.

- (a) Uniform Colors - Higher seeded teams wear white jerseys.

- (b) Team Expenses - Travel will be computed by the NCHSAA, based on 75 cents per mile round-trip. Each team will be allowed expenses for a coach, assistant coach, manager and 12 players.
 - (1) Teams will be allowed \$5.00 for each person for breakfast, \$6.00 for lunch and \$8.00 for dinner. Hotel allowances and meal expenses will be authorized by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Teams within a radius of 150 miles will be allowed transportation to and from each game and a meal allowance.
 - (3) Teams outside a radius of 150 miles, will pay their lodging bill and the NCHSAA will reimburse the school up to \$11.00 dollars per person for a maximum of 15 people. Each school will be responsible for any damage which might occur in rooms occupied by team members (allowance based on four per room).
 - (4) Total expenses for the tournament are to be paid from gate receipts, and the net balance after expenses is to be divided with 33% to the NCHSAA and 67% to the competing teams.
- (c) Practice - No team shall practice in the venue where the game is played.
- (d) Entertainment - Music, etc., shall be planned and approved by the tournament director, and must meet NFHS and NCHSAA rules.
- (e) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (f) Game Ball - Practice balls will be furnished. The NCHSAA will provide game balls for regional championship games. See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org
- (g) Awards - Team plaques will be presented to the champion and runner-up teams.

4.3.4 **State Championships** - Winners of the regional championship games will participate in the State Championship game.

- (a) Uniform Colors - The Eastern champion will be the home team and shall wear white uniforms.
- (b) Team Expenses - Travel will be computed by the NCHSAA, based on 75 cents per mile round-trip. Each team will be allowed expenses for a coach, assistant coach, manager and 12 players.
 - (1) Teams will be allowed \$5.00 for each person for breakfast, \$6.00 for lunch and \$8.00 for dinner. Hotel allowances and meal expenses will be authorized by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Teams within a radius of 150 miles will be allowed transportation to and from each game and a meal allowance.
 - (3) Teams outside a radius of 150 miles, will pay their lodging bill and the NCHSAA will reimburse the school up to \$11.00 dollars per person for a maximum of 15 people. Each school will be responsible for any damage which might occur in rooms occupied by team members (allowance based on four per room).
 - (4) Total expenses for the tournament are to be paid from gate receipts, and the net balance after expenses is to be divided with 33% to the NCHSAA and 67% to the competing teams.
- (c) Practice - No team shall practice in the venue where the game is played.
- (d) Entertainment - Music, etc., shall be planned and approved by the tournament director, and must meet NFHS and NCHSAA rules.
- (e) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
NOTE: Each participating team will receive five complimentary passes and three school admin passes for the championships games.
- (f) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for state championship games See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org.
- (g) Awards - Team plaques, trophies and medals will be presented to the champion and runner-up teams.

4.4 **CROSS COUNTRY**

4.4.1 **General**

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - July 29
- (c) Date of First Contest - August 10
- (d) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than three may be scheduled per week. An student-athlete is limited to one contest a day (no season limit). If a cross country team participates in separate events on the same day, each meet will count towards the daily and weekly limitations for the student-athlete and team.
- (e) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (f) Practice Rule - Men and women runners may practice together, individually, or as a team; however, if the women run with or against men in any regular season meet, they are regarded as members of the men's team and are not eligible to compete in a women's cross country meet (regular season, regional or state). Separate men's and women's races may have the same starting times and may be over the same course if the meet director so chooses, provided the scoring is kept separately.

4.4.2 Regionals

- (a) Date: October 30-31
- (b) Regional Assignments - Regional assignments, along with the most current information about regional sites, dates and times, are posted on the NCHSAA website.
 - (1) Every school qualifies teams or individuals to regional meet (up to 7 athletes per gender).
 - (2) 1A-7A Classifications will have three regional meets (East, Central and West). 8A will have two regionals (East and West).
- (c) Entries: The regional directors should receive entries no later than 11:59 p.m., October 24.
 - (1) Regional directors, site information and entry instructions can be found on the cross country page of the NCHSAA website.
 - (2) There is a maximum entry of seven student-athletes per school.
 - (3) Late entries may be submitted to the NCHSAA and must be in by 3:00 p.m. the Monday prior to the regional. No entries after this deadline will be accepted.
Note - Use the form on the NCHSAA website.
- (d) Race Format - Men will run the first race, followed by the women. The prescribed course distance for both men and women is 5,000 meters.
- (e) Uniform - Each team member shall wear a uniform (jersey and trunks) that is compliant with NFHS regulations.
 - (1) A competitor shall wear the assigned contestant number, when numbers are used.
 - (2) For illegal uniforms, the competitor is disqualified from the event.
- (f) Coaches Meeting - Each regional site is responsible for conducting a coaches meeting prior to the start of the race to verify entries and announce substitutions. Failure to announce substitutions at the meeting may result in disqualification of the substitute runner.
- (g) Regional Site Determination - At the regional meet, a meeting of coaches must be held to select a site and a director for the upcoming season.
 - (1) This is a mandatory meeting that will be conducted by the current regional director.
 - (2) The current director will then notify the NCHSAA office within 10 days after the completion of the tournament, of the host school and director for the next season.
- (h) Supervision - All individuals participating in state playoff competition must be properly supervised or will not be allowed to participate. Coaches are responsible for seeing that team members remain at the site and are supervised at all times.
- (i) Qualifiers to State - Top 6 teams and top 7 individuals (not on those teams) from each regional advance to the State Championship. In Cross Country, 5 or more athletes constitute a team.
 - (1) Team scores will be based on a school's five best performers.
 - (2) Number of qualifying teams from each regional will be determined by the number of teams that participate in the regional.
 - (3) In addition, the top seven individuals not on a qualifying team will advance from each regional to the state.
 - (4) A school that qualifies a team may bring any seven eligible competitors to the state meet; however, there may be no substitutes among those who qualify as individuals.
 - (5) If a school does not finish in the top 6, but qualifies at least 5 individuals, that school will also be scored as a team for the state championship meet.
- (j) Awards - Regional champion and runner-up team plaques and awards for the top three individual finishers will be given.
- (k) Team Scores - Team points will be decided by the position each runner attains against other teams, not including individual runners.
NOTE: Individuals get credit for their finishes, but places are not counted against team scores.
- (l) Expenses - Each team will bear its own expenses to the regionals.

4.4.3 State Championships

- (a) Date and Site - The state championships will be held on November 6-7, at Ivey M. Redmon Park in Kernersville.
- (b) Coaches Meeting -
 - Friday, Nov. 6th @ 8:15 am (3A/4A) 1:00 pm (1A/2A)
 - Saturday Nov. 7th @ 8:15 am (7A/8A) 1:15 pm (5A/6A)
- (c) Team Scores - Same format as regional [See Rule 4.4.2 (k)].
- (d) Awards - The winning team and individuals will be given plaques, as will the runner-up team and individuals. Members of the winning and runner-up teams, and the individual third place finishers, will also receive medals.
- (e) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (f) Team Expenses - Teams will either split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) or travel will be reimbursed at the rate of five cents per mile for each qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of 35 cents, whichever revenue share method is higher for member schools.

4.5 **FOOTBALL**

4.5.1 **General**

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Football Calendar

1st Practice	July 29	2nd Round	November 13
1st Scrimmage	August 7	3rd Round	November 20
1st Play Date	Week of August 21	4th Round	November 27
Playoff Seeding	October 31	Regional Round	December 4
1st Round	November 6	State Championship	December 10-12
- (c) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (d) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (e) Number of 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).
 - (1) Under no circumstance can a player dress in more than two contests in a calendar week, inclusive of a postponed contest, a suspended game, and the eight-quarter rule.
 - (2) A minimum of 60 hours between the completion of one contest and the beginning of a new contest is required. There should not be contact practices between such rescheduled games.
- (f) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by May 15.
- (g) Suspended Game Rule - The NCHSAA plays by the suspended game rule [See Rule 2.2.7(c) (1)].
- (h) Mercy Rule - Once the score reaches a 35-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.
- (i) Junior Varsity Tiebreaker - Junior varsity football teams may break ties in games if both coaches mutually agree prior to the game.
- (j) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming [See Rule 2.2.17].
- (k) Required Equipment - Schools must provide yardage clip for down and distance chains. Balls must have the authenticating NFHS ball mark.
- (l) Uniformed Police Officer [See Rule 2.5.3(a)].
- (m) Restraining Barriers - At all football games there should 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, student-athletes 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.
- (n) Eight Quarter Participation - In emergency or "lack of depth" situations, junior varsity football student-athletes will be allowed a maximum of eight quarters per season of "on the field" play as a varsity football student-athlete.

NOTE: Anytime a student-athlete participates in eight quarters of varsity competition, that student-athlete is no longer eligible to be an eight-quarter player. If the eight quarter limit is reached during a contest, that student-athlete 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 student-athlete to be available for emergency or lack of depth participation in the varsity contest.
 - (2) The following conditions must be met:
 - (i) 1A-4A: 9th, 10th and 11th graders only
 - (ii) 5A-8A: 9th and 10th graders only
 - (iii) A maximum of ten (10) student-athletes may be eight-quartered during the regular season.
 - (iv) Student-athletes must be pre-determined prior to dressing for participation.
 - (A) The Eight Quarter Pre-Approval Form must be completed with signatures of a licensed athletic trainer or medical doctor, principal, athletic director, and parent/legal custodian.
 - (1) If a designated student-athlete or student-athletes participated in

the junior varsity contest, medical information shall include evidence that player(s) is (are) adequately hydrated and void of injury that would render player(s) unfit to play.

- (2) The form must be filed at the school and with the conference president on the day of the scheduled game.
- (v) Following the game, a status report on the designated student-athletes must be completed which shall include the names of all junior varsity football student-athletes designated and dressed as emergency players and report the number of quarter(s) in which each student-athlete actually played.
 - (A) Any portion of a quarter equals a quarter played.
 - (B) If a student-athlete dresses out but does not play, record as "0" quarters played
 - (C) The form must be signed by coach, athletic director and principal and submitted online to the NCHSAA by the first school day after the varsity contest.
- (vi) Anytime a JV student-athlete 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.
- (vii) Failure to submit follow-up form to NCHSAA may result in a penalty.
- (viii) If your school's JV Football game is:
 - (A) Canceled - you may not use the eight-quarter rule for Friday's varsity football game. If a JV student-athlete participates in the varsity game, it will count towards the maximum allowed 10 games per for an individual; therefore, no eight-quarter paperwork would need to be filed.
 - (B) Postponed - you may use the eight-quarter rule for the Friday varsity football game. Submit eight-quarter paperwork as usual.
- (ix) No student-athlete may dress to participate in more than two football contests in a calendar week (Monday - Saturday)
- (3) Upon submission of sufficient documentation, and approved by the NCHSAA, teams may regain an eight-quarter position due to season-ending injury, catastrophic event, or transfer.

4.5.2 Skill Development Guidelines

- (a) Sports Season Note - [See Rule 2.2.14 and 2.2.15] for details on sports season concept. Football helmets and shoulder pads are permitted during skill development.

NOTE: 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 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).

NOTE: Outside the period outlined in 4.5.2(b), absolutely no "body-to-body contact", live action, wrapping, or thudding is allowed [See Rule 4.5.3(b)(4)].
- (c) A licensed athletic trainer or first responder must be physically present if any protective equipment (helmets 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.

NOTE: 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.
- (e) The only equipment which may be worn outside of the sport season are helmets and shoulder pads. No football pants/girdles/pads may be worn during skill development or summer workout sessions.

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 student-athlete 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 student-athletes report to the field until they leave the field.
 - (2) Required Practice - A student-athlete 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: student-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 a student-athlete misses five (5) or more days of practice due to injury or illness, he/she must participate in at least three (3) separate days of practice before returning to competition.
- (3) Contact Practice - The time when student-athletes 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)
 - (A) Level 0 (Air) - Student-athletes run a drill unopposed without contact
 - (B) Level 1 (Bags) - Student-athletes run a drill against a hand-held bag or another soft-contact surface.
 - (C) Level 2 (Control) - Student-athletes run a drill at coach-assigned speed with one student-athlete the predetermined "winner" by the coach and contact remains above the waist with student-athletes staying on their feet.
 - (ii) Restricted Non-Live Action (Limitations in place for off-season skill development)
 - (A) Level 3 (Bump) - Student-athletes 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 student-athletes staying on their feet and a quick whistle ending the drill.
 - (B) 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.
 - (C) 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)
 - (A) Level 4 (Full Live Action Contact) - Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that student-athletes 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, student-athletes may engage in hitting.
- (6) Walk-Through - A teaching opportunity with the student-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 Rule 3.3.6 (d)(10)]. 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-athlete, 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, Thud, or Bump).
 - (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) July 29 - August 3 (excluding Sunday) - Option A or Option B
 - (2) August 4 (1st Day of Contact) - August 15 (or first day of school, whichever comes first): Option A, Option B, or Option C (refer to practice options for stipulations)
NOTE : After the preseason conditioning requirements are met, a student-athlete is limited to 15 minutes of live action contact per day.
 - (3) August 17 - End of Season: Option A ONLY (One 3 hour practice, which includes flex time)
NOTE: Once the regular season begins, student-athletes 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 Rule 4.1.12(c)]
- (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.
 - (3) 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 penalty.
 - (7) Check NCHSAA website for additional information.
- (d) Qualifiers [See Rule 4.1.12(c) Playoff Berths/Qualification]
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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).

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

- (a) Minimum Seating Requirements are as Follows - Class 1A and 2A — host 1000, visitors 500; Class 3A and 4A – host 1450, visitors 750; Class 5A and 6A – host 2000, visitors 1000; Class 7A and 8A — host 2500, visitors 1500.
 - (1) The NCHSAA 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.
 - (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 NCHSAA shall have the authority to appoint a committee 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 7:00 p.m.
- (c) Game ball - Balls must have the authenticating NFHS ball mark. In playoff contests in which the NCH-

SAA provides a complimentary adopted game ball, that model of game ball must be used for the play-off contest. Noncompliance is subject to 3.3.6(a)(5).

(d) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to games.
- (3) Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, seven-person crews will be used.
- (4) 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.

(e) Championship Press Conference - A press conference and information session preceding the football championships will be held on Monday, December 7.

- (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 penalty and possible forfeiture of complimentary tickets/admin passes for the event.

(f) State Championships - The state championships are scheduled for the week of December 7, and sites and times will be announced on the NCHSAA Website. The Eastern 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 and Second 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 the designated reporting platform.
- (2) Division of receipts - the Association is to receive 15% of the net gate. The competing teams are to divide the remainder equally.
- (3) The host school retains 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 - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]

(c) Third 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 the designated reporting platform.
- (2) Division of receipts - the Association is to receive 20% of the net gate. The competing teams are to divide the remainder equally.
- (3) The host school retains 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 - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]

(d) 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 the designated reporting platform.
- (2) Division of receipts - the Association is to receive 25% of the net gate. The competing teams

- are to divide the remainder equally.
- (3) The host school retains 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 - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (e) 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 the designated reporting platform.
 - (2) Division of receipts - In the regional games, the Association is to receive 33% of the net gate. The competing teams are to divide the remainder equally.
 - (3) In the regional games, the host-school retains 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 Rule 4.5.6(a)].
 - (5) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
 - (6) Regional awards - Team plaques will be presented to the regional champion and regional runner-up.
- (f) 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 33% of the net receipts and the participating teams will divide the remainder.
 - (4) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
 - (5) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for state championship games. See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org.
 - (6) 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-4A, 80 medals for 5A and 6A, and 90 medals for 7A and 8A)

4.6 FLAG FOOTBALL

4.6.1 General

- (a) Information on Classification, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint, and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Inter scholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1]
- (b) Flag Football Calendar

1st practice	August 31
1st Contest	September 9
Playoff Seeding	October 28
- (c) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (d) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (e) Conferences – Schools will compete in their regularly assigned conference unless it is necessary for a school to join another conference due to lack of flag football participation in their current assigned conference.
- (f) Number of Regular Season Contests: No more than four games may be scheduled per week provided the fourth single game is on a non-school day. No more than 18 games may be played in a season.
- (g) Teams and individuals are limited to no more than two contests per day.
- (h) Result Reporting – All game results should be reported in MaxPreps.
- (i) Starting Time- During the regular season, a time no earlier than 5:00 p.m. is recommended unless facilities dictate otherwise, e.g. no lights.
- (j) Tournaments- Tournaments are governed by daily, weekly, and seasonal limitations.

- (k) Equipment
 - (1) Balls must have the NFHS authenticating marks
 - (2) The Triple Threat belt has been adopted by the NCHSAA
- (l) Field Dimension- Per NCHSAA adoption the field size of 80 yards by 40 yards.
- (m) Mercy Rule – Per NCHSAA adoption, if a team is ahead by 19 or more points at the two-minute time out of the 4th quarter, the game clock will continue to run. Coaches can mutually agree to end a game early.
- (n) Overtime Rule- Per NCHSAA adoption, the overtime will begin with a coin toss. The designated visiting team will make the call. The winner of the toss will have the option of taking offense, defense, or playing towards a certain goal. The loser of the toss will have the second option. If additional overtime periods are needed, the teams will play the alternate possession from which they started.
 - (1) All overtime periods will be played toward the same goal. Both teams will have one opportunity on offense. The offense may choose to attempt a 1-point try from the 3-yard line or a 2-point try from the 10-yard line. After the try, the opposing team will have the same option. If the game is still tied, the process will be repeated until there is a winner declared.
 - (2) There will be no time outs during overtime. There will be a 1-minute timeout between additional overtime periods.
- (o) Halftime Intermission- Per NCHSAA adoption, the halftime intermission will be 10 minutes, unless coaches agree to shorten. To be extended, schools must request special permission from the NCHSAA.
- (p) Filming, Videotaping, or Video Streaming – [See Rule 2.2.17]

4.6.2 Playoffs

- (a) Qualifiers – [See Rule 4.1.12 (c) for selection criteria]
- (b) Playoff Brackets – Will be posted on the NCHSAA website once complete.
- (c) Schedule- Reporting deadline: October 27 (11:59 p.m.)
 Flag Football Calendar

Playoff Seeding	October 28	Regionals	November 11
1st /2nd Rounds	October 31	State Championships	November 14
3rd/4th Rounds	November 7		

 Deadlines are set for completion of each round, but competing schools may play on an earlier date by mutual consent.
- (d) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a regional supervisor to assign officials to games.
 - (3) All games in the state playoffs will use four-person crews.
- (e) Game Times – Game time for the Regionals will be 7:00 p.m. unless mutually agreed upon to play at 6:00 p.m.
 - (1) Where the distance is more than 100 miles for the visiting team, game time will be 6:00 p.m.
 - (2) Saturday (Rounds 1-4): Teams may play at any time mutually agreed upon.
 - (i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - (ii) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
- (f) Admission – [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (g) Team Expenses and Financial Arrangements
 - (1) Gate Receipts - [See Resources on Page 121]
 - (2) In all rounds prior to the state championship, participating schools will divide the remainder equally after applying the following expense formula:
 - (i) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.
 - (ii) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.
 - (iii) All concession rights belong to the host schools.
 - (iv) Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net 50-50.

- (v) The principal of the host school or appointed game manager will forward a copy of the financial report and ticket accountability form to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.
- (h) Ticket Accountability and Financial Forms - All forms can be found in the designated reporting platform.
- (i) Regional Awards - Team plaques will be presented to champion and runner-up.

4.6.3 State Championship

- (a) Dates and Sites - The date for the state championship will be November 14.
- (b) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (c) Radio and TV Fee [See Rule 2.2.18].
- (d) Gate Receipts - The net balance will be divided as follows: 67% to the competing teams and 33% to the NCHSAA.
- (e) Team Expenses - Travel and expenses for 20 student-athletes, plus a coach and manager, shall be allowed at a rate designated by the NCHSAA [See Rule 4.3.3 (b)]
- (f) Awards - Plaques, trophies and medals will be presented to the championship and runner-up teams. Members of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (25 per each team).
- (g) The Eastern team will be designated as the home team.
- (h) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for state championship games. See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org.

4.7 GOLF

4.7.1 General

- (a) Information on Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - July 29 (Women); February 15 (Men).
- (c) Date of First Match - August 10 (Women); March 1 (Men).
- (d) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than three matches may be scheduled per week. Student-athletes are limited to one contest a day.
- (e) Result reporting - During the regular season, all schedules and results must be recorded using iWanamaker. For matches and tournaments not using iWanamaker digital scoring, the director must manually enter the information within 48 hours.
- (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 student-athlete 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 - [See Rule 2.3]
- (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 coaches 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 student-athlete. 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/her privilege to communicate with student-athletes the remainder of the event during the round/rounds.
 - (4) Prior to any stroke, the coach must step back from the student-athlete.
 - (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 for communication is not allowed except for medical emergencies.
 - (7) Distance measuring devices are allowed under USGA Rule 4.3a. Yardage measuring devices and information may be shared among student-athletes.
 - (8) Others will not be allowed to give advice and must limit conversations to words of encouragement only. Any other types of conversations could be considered advice, which would result in a two-stroke penalty.
- (i) Pull Carts - Non-motorized pull carts are allowed at any time; however, courses may prohibit use of

- pull carts.
- (j) Student-athletes may not ride on any form of transportation during a stipulated round unless authorized by the NCHSAA.
- (k) Conditions of Competition - Please refer to the NCHSAA website for specific conditions of competition for playoffs.
- (l) Supervision - All student-athletes participating in playoff competition must be supervised. If not, they will be eliminated from competition. If anyone besides school personnel accompanies student-athletes, a letter from the principal must be sent to the NCHSAA authorizing this and a copy of the letter must be in hand at the tournament.
- (m) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming [See Rule 2.2.17].
- (n) Maximum Score Rule on a Hole - No student-athlete shall score more than triple bogey on any hole (6 on a par 3; 7 on a par 4; 8 on a par 5) during the regular season, regional, and championship play. Once a student-athlete has reached this threshold, they shall pick up their ball, record a triple bogey on the scorecard, and let the group complete the hole and move on to the next hole.

4.7.2 **Regional Playoffs**

- (a) Dates and Sites - Women's regional tournaments will be October 19 or 20. Men's regional tournaments will be May 3 or 4.
- (b) Regional Assignments - Regional assignments, along with the most current information about regional sites, dates and times, are posted on the NCHSAA website.
- (c) Playoff Entries - Schools qualifying for the regionals will be permitted to enter five student-athletes, and entries are to be submitted by 9:00 p.m. October 14 (women) and by 9:00 p.m. April 28 (men).
 - (1) Late entries may be submitted to the NCHSAA and must be in by 9:00 a.m. the Friday prior to the regional. Use the form on the NCHSAA website.
 - (2) Once entries have been submitted to the regional director, coaches can substitute any or all team members up to the start of the tournament. Individual qualifiers cannot be substituted
- (e) Women's Regional Qualifying
 - (1) 1A/2A will have a maximum of 72 players in the field in both regionals (East and West). The top 4 teams and top 52 individuals (not on qualifying teams) will qualify based on IWR 9-Hole Rankings.
 - (2) 3A through 8A will have a maximum of 48 players in the field. The top 3 teams and top 33 individuals (not on qualifying teams) will qualify based on IWR 9-Hole Rankings.
 - (i) No school may enter more than five players.
 - (ii) Schools with at least three individual qualifiers will also score as a team.
 - (3) Rankings -- The Regional Qualifiers will be ranked using the IWannamaker 9-hole rankings. Those rankings will be based on the best five scores. Teams and individuals with fewer than five scores are not eligible for qualification. Teams that qualify for the post-season can choose to bring players that have posted fewer than five scores.
- (f) Verification Process for Reporting Women's Scores - Please refer to the NCHSAA website for the template and instructions for reporting.
- (g) Men's Regional Qualifying
 - (1) 1A-7A will have a maximum of 48 players in the field in all three regionals (East, Central and West). The top 3 teams and top 33 individuals (not on qualifying teams) will qualify based on IWR 9-Hole Rankings.
 - (2) 8A will have a maximum of 48 players in the field in both regionals (East and West). The top 3 teams and top 33 individuals (not on qualifying teams) will qualify based on IWR 9-Hole Rankings.
 - (i) No school may enter more than five players
 - (ii) Schools with at least four individual qualifiers will also score as a team.
 - (3) The Regional Qualifiers will be ranked using the IWannamaker 9-hole rankings. Those rankings will be based on the best five scores. Teams and individuals with fewer than five scores are not eligible for qualification. Teams that qualify for the post-season can choose to bring players that have posted fewer than five scores.
- (h) Playing Rules
 - (1) Eighteen (18) holes stroke play
 - (2) Women on men's teams must play from men's tees.
 - (3) USGA rules shall prevail, except where modified by local course rules and approved by the games committee (check with the local pro for any unusual ground rules).
 - (4) A games committee must be established and decisions of the committee are final. There should be a minimum of three people knowledgeable about golf rules on the committee, preferably including the local course pro.

- (5) All spectators must stay on the cart paths.
- (6) Caddies are prohibited in the state playoffs, with the exception of those necessitated for physical handicap reasons (this does not include injuries).
- (i) Team Scores
 - (1) The four lowest men's individual scores from a five-player team will be totaled to determine the men's team score.
 - (2) The three lowest women's individual scores from a five-player team will be totaled to determine the women's team score.
- (j) Awards - Regional champion and runner-up plaque and awards for the individual medalist and runner-up will be given. Ties will be broken according to the tie-breaking procedure in the conditions of competition.
- (k) Expenses - Each team will bear its own travel expenses to the regional.
- (l) Regional Site Determination - At the regional, a meeting of coaches must be held to select a site and a director for the upcoming season.
 - (1) This is a mandatory meeting that will be conducted by the current regional director.
 - (2) The current director will then notify the NCHSAA office within 10 days after the completion of the tournament, of the host school and director for the next season.
- (m) Women's State Championship Qualifiers
 - (1) 1A/2A Championship will have a maximum field of 72 golfers
 - (i) Top 4 teams of 5 student-athletes each automatically qualify.
 - (ii) Top 16 individuals not on a qualifying team.
 - (iii) If a school does not finish in the top 4, but qualifies at least 3 (minimum team requirement) individuals, that school will also score at the state championship as a team.
 - (2) 3A through 7A Championships will have a maximum field of 48 golfers.
 - (i) Top 3 teams of 5 student-athletes each automatically qualify.
 - (ii) Top 9 individuals not on a qualifying team.
 - (iii) If a school does not finish in the top 3, but qualifies at least 3 individuals, that school will also score at the state championship as a team.
 - (3) 8A Championship will have a field of maximum 36 golfers
 - (i) Top 2 teams of 5 student-athletes each automatically qualify with the best 2 scores.
 - (ii) Top 8 individuals not on a qualifying team.
 - (iii) If a school does not finish in the top 2, but qualifies at least 3 individuals, that school will also score at the state championship as a team.
- (n) Men's State Championship Qualifiers
 - (1) 1A through 7A Championships will have a maximum field of 48 golfers.
 - (i) Top 2 teams of 5 student-athletes each automatically qualify.
 - (ii) Top 6 individuals not on a qualifying team.
 - (iii) If a school does not finish in the top 2, but qualifies at least 4 individuals (minimum team requirement), that school will also score at the state championship as a team.
 - (2) 8A Championship will have a field of maximum 36 golfers
 - (i) Top 2 teams of 5 student-athletes each automatically qualify.
 - (ii) Top 8 individuals not on a qualifying team.
 - (iii) If a school does not finish in the top 2, but qualifies at least 4 individuals, that school will also score at the state championship as a team.

4.7.3 State Championship

- (a) Dates and Sites - The women's state tournaments will be held in all classes on October 26-27. The men's state tournament will be May 10-11. Sites TBA *and will be posted on* NCHSAA website.
- (b) Pairings and Starting Times - The pairings will be made in the NCHSAA office. Tee times will not be available until Wednesday after 3:00 p.m. prior to the tournament.
- (c) Conditions of Competition - Please refer to the NCHSAA website for specific conditions of competition for state championship play.
- (d) Format - Thirty-six (36) holes, stroke play.
- (e) Team Scores
 - (1) The four lowest men's individual scores from a five-player team shall be totaled to determine the team score.
 - (2) The three lowest women's individual scores from a five player team will be totaled to determine the women's team score.
 - (3) Team members may be substituted for, but not after the round has begun.
- (f) Awards - The winning and runner-up teams and individuals will be given plaques. Individual awards

will be given to members of the winning and runner-up teams (6 women's and 6 men's medals) as well as the third-place individual.

- (g) Team Expenses - Teams will either split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) or travel will be reimbursed at the rate of five cents per mile for each qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of 35 cents, whichever revenue share method is higher for member schools.

4.8 **LACROSSE**

4.8.1 **General**

- (a) Information on Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - February 15
- (c) Date of First Game - March 1
- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (e) Health and Safety - [See Rule 2.3]
- (f) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than three per week may be scheduled.
 - (1) Teams are limited to 24 games.
 - (2) A student-athlete is limited to no more than one game per day.
 - (3) Junior varsity conference tournament games count toward the 24-game limit.
 - (4) Varsity conference tournament games do not count toward the 24-game limit.
- (g) Starting Time - A time no earlier than 5:00 p.m. is recommended, unless facilities dictate otherwise, e.g. no lights.
- (h) Tournaments - Tournaments are governed by daily, weekly and seasonal limitations.
- (i) Uniformed Police Officer [See Rule 2.5.3(a)].
- (j) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by January 15.
- (k) Uniform Changing - Not allowed in area of competition. Must use locker room facilities; disqualification may occur.
- (l) Suspended Game - See NFHS Rules Book(s)
- (m) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming - [See Rule 2.2.17].

4.8.2 **Playoffs**

- (a) Conferences - Any school not currently fielding a team but wishing to participate should contact the NCHSAA office no later than October 1. Schools should also notify the NCHSAA if they plan to drop programs by this date. The lacrosse conferences can be found on the NCHSAA website.
- (b) Failure to comply with the initial reporting procedure may result in a penalty to the conference.
- (c) Qualifiers - [See Rule 4.1.12(c) for selection criteria.]
- (d) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once complete.
- (e) Schedule - Reporting Deadline: May 5 (11:59 p.m.)

Seeding	May 6	Fourth round	May 21
First round	May 11	Regional round	May 26
Second round	May 14	State	May 28-29
Third round	May 18		

Deadlines are set for completion of each round, but competing schools may play on an earlier date by mutual consent.

- (f) Competing Schools - Competing teams should contact each other to work out details for their contest.
- (g) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a regional supervisor to assign officials to games.
 - (3) All games in the state playoffs will use three-person crews.
- (h) Game Times - Game time will be 7:00 p.m. unless mutually agreed upon to play at 6:00 p.m.
 - (1) Where the distance is more than 100 miles for the visiting team, game time will be 6:00 p.m.
 - (2) Saturday: Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon.
 - (i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - (ii) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
- (i) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (j) Team Expenses and Financial Arrangements

- (1) [See Resources on Page 121]
- (2) In all rounds prior to the state championship, participating schools will divide the remainder equally after applying the following expense formula:
 - (i) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.
 - (ii) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.
 - (iii) All concession rights belong to the host schools.
 - (iv) Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net 50-50.
 - (v) The principal of the host school or appointed game manager will forward a copy of the financial report and ticket accountability form to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.

(k) Ticket Accountability and Financial Forms - All forms can be found in the designated reporting platform.

(l) Regional Awards - Team plaques will be presented to champion and runner-up.

4.8.3 **State Championship**

- (a) Dates and Sites - The dates for the championship (men's and women's) are set for May 28-29. Site for the championship is TBA.
- (b) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (c) Radio and TV Fee [See Rule 2.2.18].
- (d) Gate Receipts - The net balance will be divided as follows: 67% to the competing teams and 33% to the NCHSAA.
- (e) Team Expenses - Travel and expenses for 20 student-athletes, plus a coach and manager, shall be allowed at the rate designated by the NCHSAA [See Rule 4.3.3(b)].
- (f) Awards - Plaques, trophies and medals will be presented to the championship and runner-up teams. Members of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (35 per each team). Participating teams must submit official rosters with staff by 10 a.m. May 27.
- (g) The Eastern teams will be designated as home.

4.9 **SOCCER**

4.9.1 **General**

- (a) Information on Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Conferences - Any school not currently fielding a team but wishing to participate should contact the NCHSAA office no later than March 1 in men's soccer and September 15 in women's soccer. Schools should also notify the NCHSAA if they plan to drop programs by these same dates. All soccer conferences can be found on the NCHSAA website.
- (c) Date of First Practice - July 29 (men) and February 15 (women).
- (d) Date of First Game - August 10 (men); March 1 (women).
- (e) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (f) Health and Safety - [See Rule 2.3]
- (g) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than three per week may be scheduled.
 - (1) Teams are limited to 24 games.
 - (2) A student-athlete is limited to no more than one game per day.
 - (3) Junior varsity conference tournament games count toward the 24-game limit.
 - (4) Varsity conference tournament games do not count toward 24-game limit, but do count toward final RPI.
- (h) Starting Time - A time no earlier than 5:00 p.m. is recommended, unless facilities dictate otherwise.
- (i) Tournaments - Tournaments are governed by daily, weekly and seasonal limitations.
- (j) Yellow Card Tracking and Ejections - Coaches and athletic directors are responsible for tracking yellow cards accumulated by their student-athletes and all team personnel, including coaches. Officials will enter all yellow and red cards received by student-athletes and coaches into the NCHSAA reporting platform within 24 hours following the conclusion of the contest.
 - (1) A red card is the equivalent of two yellow cards.
 - (2) Regular Season

- i. The accumulation of five yellow cards by the same person will result in a one-game suspension.
 - ii. The accumulation of every five yellow cards by the same person after the first five (10, 15, etc.) will result in a post-game ejection.

NOTE: School administrators are responsible for notifying the NCHSAA via email
- (3) Post Season
 - i. Yellow card tracking resets at zero for playoffs. Ejection count does not reset.
 - ii. The accumulation of three yellow cards by the same person will result in one-game suspension.
 - iii. The accumulation of every five yellow cards (5, 10, etc.) by the same person will result in a post-game ejection.

NOTE: School administrators are responsible for notifying the NCHSAA via email.
- (4) Penalties for an Ejection – (See 3.3.8(b))
 - i. Soccer Examples
 - 1. Player A receives one yellow card in each of the first five games on the schedule. Player A receives a one-game suspension, game 6. Next, Player A receives one yellow card in each of the next five games, games 7-11. Player A receives a post-game ejection (first ejection) and is suspended for one game, game 12. Then Player A receives one yellow card in each of the next five games, games 13-17. Player A receives a post-game ejection (second ejection) and is suspended for two games, games 18 and 19.
 - 2. Player B is ejected for fighting in game 2 on the schedule. This is Player B's first ejection and is suspended for one game, game 3. The red card equals two yellow cards. Then Player B is ejected for fighting in game 9. This is Player B's second ejection and is suspended for two games, games 10 and 11. The red card equals two yellow cards, now totaling four. Player B receives a yellow card in game 20. Yellow card total is now five. Player B receives a one-game suspension, game 21.
 - 3. Player C receives one yellow card in each of the first five games on the schedule. Player C receives a one-game suspension, game 6. Player C is ejected for fighting in game 17. This is Player C's first ejection and Player C receives a one-game suspension, game 18. The red card equals two yellow cards, now totaling seven. Regular season ends and tracking resets to zero. Player C receives one yellow card in each of the first three playoff games. Player C receives a one-game suspension, playoff game 4.
- (k) Nine-Goal Rule - If a goal differential of nine is reached by halftime or at any time in the second half, the game shall be terminated.
- (l) Suspended Game - If a game is suspended due to bad weather, light failure, etc.:
 - (1) If suspended in the first half, even if one team is ahead, the game is picked up from the point of interruption unless coaches agree to end it.
 - (2) If suspended at half time or beyond, the game is over. If the score is tied when the game is suspended, then the game ends in a tie. If one team is ahead when the game is suspended, then it is the winner.
- (m) Tie Games - If a tie score exists at the end of regulation play during each conference varsity game, there will be two complete 10-minute periods (not sudden victory). If the score is still tied at the conclusion of the two 10-minute overtime periods, the game will result in a tie.
 - (1) All regular season, non-conference games that are tied at the end of regulation will result in a tie.
 - (2) In non-conference tournament play and NCHSAA Playoffs, tied games must be resolved by the NFHS Tie-breaking Procedure, and those decisions count in a team's won-loss record. One goal is added to the winning team's score, and an asterisk may be placed by the team advancing to indicate advancement was the result of the progression format.
 - (3) Junior varsity teams do not play overtime periods
- (n) Junior Varsity Game Format - Two 35-minute halves with no overtime period.
- (o) Uniformed Police Officer - [See Rule 2.5.3(a)].
- (p) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by May 15 (men) and January 15 (women).
- (q) Uniform Changing - Not allowed in area of competition. Must use locker room facilities; disqualification may occur.
- (r) Equipment - The alternating dark and light color horizontal stripe socks ("bumblebee") are not legally recommended for regular season play and in playoff

rounds to ensure consistency and fair play.

(s) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming - [See Rule 2.2.17].

4.9.2 Playoffs

(a) Playoff Qualifiers - [See Rule 4.1.12(c) for selection criteria.]

(b) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once complete.

(c) Brackets and Schedule - In all classifications, games are played on the home field of the higher seed.

(d) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once seeding is complete.

(e) Schedule:	Men	Women
Reporting deadline	October 28, 11:59 p.m.	May 5, 11:59 p.m.
Seeding	October 29	May 6
First round	November 2	May 10
Second round	November 5	May 13
Third round	November 9	May 17
Fourth round	November 12	May 20
Regional	November 17	May 25
State Championship	November 19-21	May 27-29

(f) Competing Schools - Competing teams should contact each other to work out details for their contest.

(g) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to games.

(3) All games in the state playoffs will use three-person crews.

(h) Game Times - Game time will be 7:00 p.m., unless mutually agreed upon to play at 6 p.m.

(1) Where the distance is more than 100 miles for the visiting team, game time will be 6:00 p.m. Any other exceptions must be approved by the NCHSAA.

(2) Saturday - Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon.

(i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

(ii) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.

(3) Games may be played earlier than the assigned date above if mutually agreed upon.

(i) Postponed Games - Postponed games must be played the next day, including Saturday.

(j) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]

(k) Team Expenses and Financial Arrangements

(1) Gate Receipts - [See Resources on Page 121]

(2) In all rounds prior to the state championship, participating schools will divide the remainder equally after applying the following expense formula:

(i) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.

(ii) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.

(3) All concession rights are retained by the host schools.

(4) Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net 50-50.

(5) The principal of the host school or appointed game manager will forward a copy of the financial report and ticket accountability form to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.

(l) Ticket Accountability and Financial Forms - All forms can be found on the NCHSAA designated platform.

(m) Regional Awards - Team plaques will be presented to champion and runner-up.

(n) In playoff contests in which the NCHSAA provides a complimentary adopted game ball, that model of game ball must be used for the playoff contest. Noncompliance is subject to 3.3.6(a)(5).

4.9.3 State Championship

(a) Dates and Sites - Dates for the championships are set for November 19-21 (men); May 27-29 (women).

(b) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]. Each team will receive five complimentary passes and three School Administrator passes.

(c) Radio and TV Fee - [See Rule 2.2.18].

- (d) Gate Receipts - The net balance will be divided as follows: 67% to the competing teams and 33% to the NCHSAA.
- (e) Team Expenses - Travel and expenses for eighteen (18) players, one (1) coach and one (1) manager, shall be allowed at the rate designated by the NCHSAA [See Rule 4.3.3(b)].
- (f) Awards - Plaques will be presented to the championship and runner-up teams in all classes. Members of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (25 medals for women, 30 medals for men).
- (g) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for state championship games. See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org.
- (h) The Eastern teams will be designated as home.

4.10 SOFTBALL

4.10.1 General

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - February 15
- (c) Date of First Game - March 1
- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (e) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (f) Number of Regular Season Contests - Total 24 games
 - (1) No more than four per week, provided fourth single game is on a non-school day for both.
 - (2) Four games in three days is still permissible without using a non-school day (e.g. doubleheader on a school day).
 - (3) It is permissible for a student-athlete to participate in a junior varsity and varsity game in the same day; however, any student-athlete is still subject to the weekly and seasonal limitations (four games a week, not to exceed three days, total of 24).
 - (4) Teams and student-athletes are limited to two games on a school day. The limitation extends to four games, if on a non-school day.
 - (5) Junior varsity conference tournament games must count toward the 24-game limit.
 - (6) Varsity conference tournament games do not count toward the 24-game limit.
- (g) Starting Time - During the regular season, a time no earlier than 5:00 p.m. is recommended unless facilities dictate otherwise, e.g. no lights.
- (h) Tournaments - Tournaments are governed by daily, weekly and seasonal limitations.
- (i) Equipment
 - (1) Balls must have the authenticating NFHS ball mark. Teams shall use a 12-inch softball with a Co-efficient of Restitution not exceeding .47. Conferences are encouraged to adopt the same kind of softball for use throughout their league play.
 - (2) Bats must meet ASA or USA Softball bat performance standards and have a certifying stamp on each bat.
NOTE: Some bats which may have passed initial ASA or USA Softball performance standards, could now be considered illegal. Please check the following website for an up-to-date listing of non-approved bats: <https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>. It is recommended member schools perform bat checks throughout the season.
 - (3) Coaches must wear a skull cap style helmet or NOCSAE certified helmet when coaching in the Coaches Box during games.
- (j) Run Rule - A run rule has been adopted by the NCHSAA for softball
 - (1) If a team is ahead by 15 runs after three (3) complete innings, the game is terminated.
 - (2) If a team is ahead by 10 runs after five (5) complete innings, the game is terminated.
- (k) Doubleheaders - Permitted when mutually agreed upon by teams involved.
 - (1) Doubleheaders are two back-to-back games, at the same level, with a reasonable (30 minutes) time between contests.
 - (2) Split doubleheaders are also permissible (two separate opponents).
 - (3) By mutual agreement, two member schools may agree to play two five (5) inning games in a doubleheader.
- (l) Suspended Games - North Carolina has adopted the suspended game rule, mandatory in all regular season and state playoff games. A game called for any reason, where a winner cannot be determined will be treated as a suspended game.
 - (1) If the game is to be completed it will be continued from the point of suspension, with the lineup and batting order of each team the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of

suspension, subject to the rules of the game.

- (2) If more than 4 1/2 innings have been played and a winner can be determined, the game is over (including playoff games).
- (3) After 5 innings, if the visiting team scores a tying or go ahead run in their top half of the inning and the home team does not have an opportunity to bat or complete its time at bat, the game is treated as a suspended game.
- (4) If a game is called prior to the completion of a full inning after the fifth inning, the game becomes a suspended game in the following situation: the visiting team has scored one or more runs to tie the score or to take the lead, and the home team has not tied the score or retaken the lead.

NOTE: PLAY - The sixth inning begins with score H-6, V-5. Visitors score two runs in their half of the inning. Game is called because of rain with (a) two outs in the bottom of the sixth and the score H-6, V-7; or (b) following the completion of the home team's turn at bat with the score H-6, V-7.

RULING - In (a) the game is suspended and resumed on the next possible date at the point of interruption. In (b) the game is official, with the final score H-6, V-7.

- (5) A suspended game does not count against the weekly limitations in the week in which it is completed.
- (m) Rained-Out Games - If any rained-out softball game which would affect the winning of a conference title is to be played, it shall be rescheduled on the same field (exception: suspended games do not have to be rescheduled on the same field), unless changed by mutual agreement of the two schools.
- (n) Postponed Games - Postponed games must be made up in the order of postponement on the next possible date (Excluding Sunday).
 - (1) In the regular season, Saturday will not be used as a make-up day unless mutually agreed upon by both teams.
 - (2) In the playoffs, Saturdays must be used. If one team will not play, the game is forfeited to the opponent.
- (o) Protest - Each conference is to establish a softball protest committee. The committee's decision on any properly protested conference softball game will be final.
- (p) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by January 15.
- (q) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming [See Rule 2.2.17].

4.10.2 Playoffs

- (a) Playoff Qualifiers - [See Rule 4.1.12(c) for selection criteria.]
- (b) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once seeding is complete.
- (c) Schedule - Deadline for reporting qualifiers: May 9 (11:59 p.m.)

Seeding	May 10	Fourth Round	May 21
First Round	May 11	Regional	May 25-29
Second Round	May 14	State	June 2-5
Third Round	May 18		
- (1) All games are single elimination, with the exception of the regional and state championship series, which are the best two out of three games.
- (2) Competing teams should contact each other to work out details for their contest(s).
- (3) Deadlines are set for completion of each round, but competing schools may play on an earlier date by mutual consent.
- (d) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to games.
 - (3) Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, three person crews will be used.
 - (4) Assignments for regional and state championship games will be made by the NCHSAA office.
- (e) Game Times - On fields with lights, game time will be 7:00 p.m., unless mutually agreed upon to play at 6:00 p.m.
 - (1) Any other exceptions, such as field with no lights, must be approved by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Where the distance is more than 100 miles for the visiting team, game time will be 6:00 p.m.
 - (3) Saturday - Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon. If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
NOTE - Time should be between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
- (f) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (g) Protest Committee - The competing teams are required to coordinate a protest committee that includes a minimum of three school administrators prior to playing. The committee will act on any

protest at the time it may occur and its decision is final.

NOTE: Parents are not permitted to serve on this committee.

- (h) Postponed Games - Must be rescheduled on the next day (except on Sunday). Both schools and the NCHSAA must be involved in the decision to postpone any playoff contest.
- (i) Team Expenses and Financial Arrangements - [See Resources on Page 121] In all rounds prior to the state championship, participating schools will divide the remainder equally after applying the following expense formula:
 - (1) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.
 - (2) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.
 - (3) All concession rights are retained by the host school.
 - (4) Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net.
 - (5) The principal of the host school, or appointed game manager, must forward the financial report and ticket accountability form to the NCHSAA within 10 days after the contest.
- (k) Ticket Accountability and Financial Forms - All forms can be found on the designated reporting platform.
- (j) Regional Awards - Team plaques will be presented to the regional champion and regional runner-up.
- (l) In playoff contests in which the NCHSAA provides a complimentary adopted game ball, that model of game ball must be used for the playoff contest. Noncompliance is subject to 3.3.6(a)(5).

4.10.3 **State Championship Series**

- (a) Dates - June 2-5
- (b) Required Information - Teams qualifying for the state championships must submit their roster and team information no later than Monday at noon prior to the state championship series.
- (c) Series - The state finals shall be a best two out of three game series. Game times and sites will be established by the NCHSAA. The higher seeded team will be designated as the home team for games 1 and 3. If equal seeds meet, the Eastern team will be designated as home for game 1, the Western team will be designated as the home team for game 2, and the NCHSAA will flip to determine the game 3 home team prior to game 1.
- (d) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]. May be amended due to weather. Each team will receive five complimentary passes and three school administrator passes.
- (e) Protest Committee - [See Rule 4.10.2(g)]
- (f) Bats - Some bats which may have passed initial ASA or USA Softball performance standards, could be deemed illegal during bat checks prior to the state championships.
- (g) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for state championship series. See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org.
- (h) Radio and TV Fee - [See Rule 2.2.18]
- (i) Gate Receipts - The net balance will be divided as follows: 67% to the competing teams and 33% to the NCHSAA.
- (j) Team Expenses - Travel and expenses for 18 players plus a coach and manager, shall be allowed at the rate designated by the NCHSAA [See Rule 4.3.3.(b)].
- (k) Awards - Plaques will be presented to the championship and runner-up team in all classes. Members of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (a total of 25).

4.11 **SWIMMING AND DIVING**

4.11.1 **General**

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - November 2
- (c) Date of First Meet - November 11
- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4].
- (e) Schools are required to register with NCPrepSwimming by November 15; the cost is \$30.00 per year.
- (f) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than three may be scheduled per week. A student-athlete is limited to two contests per day.
- (g) Meet Results - Full regular season meet results shall be entered into NCPrepSwimming within 48 hours of the completion of the meet.

- (h) Participation Clarification - [See Rule 4.10.2(c)(1)(i)]
- (i) Outside Participation - Swimmers and divers may not choose to participate in outside competition and then join the school's regular season team for participation in the state playoffs.
 - (1) Once a school calls for practice and competition begins, the swimmer/diver must join and participate with the school team.
 - (2) A student-athlete may not swim in an outside competition and then join the school team at a later date (if the school has a regular season team).
- (j) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
- (k) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming [See Rule 2.2.17].
- (l) Diving Judges Panel - To serve on a diving judges panel:
 - (1) A high school coach must pass the NCHSAA diving judge test;
 - (2) A USA diving official must be registered as an NCHSAA Official;
 - (3) An official must complete the NFHS Judging Springboard Course on NFHS Learn on an annual basis;
 - (4) All other persons must be registered as an NCHSAA swimming official and pass the NCHSAA diving judge test.
- (m) Relay Meet - The following format has been adopted by the NCHSAA in accordance with the NFHS Order of Events. Qualifying times for events 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 19 and 20 are eligible for regional entry.
 - (1) (1,2) 50 Freestyle
 - (2) (3,4) 200 Medley Relay
 - (3) (5,6) 200 Freestyle Relay
 - (4) (7,8) 4x100 Individual Medley Relay
 - (5) (9,10) 200 Butterfly Relay
 - (6) (11,12) 400 Freestyle Relay (8x50)
 - (7) (13,14) 500 Freestyle Relay
 - (i) 50-100-200-100-50; or;
 - (ii) 200-150-100-50
 - (8) (15,16) 200 Backstroke Relay
 - (9) (17,18) 200 Breaststroke Relay
 - (10) (19,20) 400 Freestyle Relay (4x100)
- (n) Pentathlon meet - The following format has been adopted by the NCHSAA in accordance with NFHS Order of Events with unlimited entries. Qualifying times are eligible for regional entry.
 - (1) (1,2) 100 Backstroke
 - (2) (3,4) 100 Breaststroke
 - (3) (5,6) 100 Butterfly
 - (4) (7,8) 100 Freestyle
 - (5) (9,10) 200 Individual Medley
- (o) Equipment - Optional use of backstroke ledges are permitted through NCHSAA adoption.

4.11.2 Regional Information

- (a) Dates - January 28 - 30
 - (1) Diving competition is held the day before swimming, unless facilities allow otherwise or there are special circumstances.
 - (2) Regional assignments, along with the most current information about regional sites, dates and times, are posted on the NCHSAA website.
- (b) Qualifying Requirements
 - (1) Swimming and Diving - Individuals representing their school, where no team is fielded, may also qualify by competing during the regular season and times must be achieved in high school competition.
 - (2) Swimming
 - (i) If an individual (or relay team) has not recorded the minimum standard found on the NCHSAA website, the swimmer is not eligible for regional competition.
 - (ii) The top 24 times in each individual events and top 16 times in relays from qualifying entries advance to the regional meet.
 - (iii) Relay teams may not use aggregate or split times.
 - (iv) Qualifying times shall be achieved in competition on or after the earliest date of the first meet of the season.
 - (v) Only times achieved at meets with registered officials will be eligible for official entry into regionals.
 - (vi) Schools fielding a team must compete as a team during the regular season and times must be achieved in high school competition. The minimum participants to constitute

- a team is six.
- (3) Diving
 - (i) Divers must have successfully competed in at least one high school meet in order to enter regional competition. Successful completion is recording the minimum standard found on the NCHSAA website.
 - (ii) Coaches do not enter individuals in the diving competition unless they are capable of performing their safe six dives. Safety must be the utmost consideration in your decision.
- (c) Entries - Check the NCHSAA website for approved entry procedures and deadlines.
- (1) All schools must use NCPrepSwimming.com to upload and manage results for the official regional entry process for swimmers and divers.
 - (2) Coaches must fill out the contact information section completely.
 - (3) A student-athlete may enter a maximum of four events, no more than two of which may be individual events.
 - (4) A school may enter no more than four swimmers per individual event and no more than one team per relay.
 - (5) Each student-athlete is limited to 3 relays and 1 individual or 2 relays and 2 individual.
 - (6) The deadline for submission of playoff entries is Saturday, January 23, 2027, at 11:59 p.m.
 - (7) Late entries may be submitted to the NCHSAA and must be in by 3:00 p.m. the Monday prior to the regional. Use the form on the designated reporting platform.
 - (8) Changes from the submitted entry form are not permitted.
 - (9) Only one alternate may be entered per relay.
 - (10) When entering consideration times for regionals, this rule applies as well. Enter only the two events the swimmer has the best chance in which to qualify.
- (d) Competition
- (1) Swimming and Diving
 - (i) Student-athletes will be allowed to scratch from a preliminary competition event without penalty, if the scratch is delivered to the meet referee prior to the event being called.
 - (ii) Entry Lists - Entry lists for both regional and state competition will be posted on the NCHSAA website.
 - (2) Preliminary entry lists should be posted early in the week (alphabetical order, with times). Any questions can be addressed by the meet director.
 - (3) After that, the final lists should be posted by Wednesday morning (alphabetical order without times). No corrections can be made after that time.
 - (i) Scoring - Each regional competition shall be scored on the basis of the sixteen (16) place scoring and shall include all events competed during the regional competition, including diving, for the purpose of determining the regional team championship. Swimmers not achieving the regional automatic or consideration qualifying standard in the finals will not score in that event.
 - (ii) Order of Events - Women compete first, followed by the men, in each event except for diving where it changes each year. In regional competition there will be timed finals for all events. Schedules will be posted on the website.
 - (iii) Deck Changing - Deck changing is not allowed. Competitors must use locker room facilities, or be subject to disqualification.
 - (iv) Supervision - All student-athletes participating in playoff competition must be supervised. If not, they will be eliminated from competition. If anyone besides school personnel accompanies participants, a letter from the principal must be sent to the NCHSAA authorizing this and a copy of the letter must be in hand at the meet.
 - (v) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
 - (vi) Expenses - Each school will bear its own expenses to the regional meet.
 - (vii) Awards - The winning and runner-up team will receive plaques.
 - (4) Individual awards will be presented to the top three individuals in each event.
 - (5) Awards will be presented after the 50 freestyle, the 200 freestyle relay and at the end of the meet.
 - (6) Coaches should have their student-athletes prepared to receive their awards.
 - (7) Regional directors must present the awards as scheduled.
 - (8) Qualifiers to State Championship - Qualifying information for state championships, including times, can be found on the NCHSAA website. Qualifiers include:
 - (i) Top eight (8) fastest individual times and highest diving scores and top six (6) relays from each regional will automatically qualify. The fastest times and highest scores not already qualified will advance regardless of region until there is a maximum of 24 total individual qualifiers and 16 relay teams. All ties for the 8th place entry (in

- individual events) and 6th place (in relay events) will advance.
- (ii) In order to qualify for and advance to State Championships each swimmer or relay team must have achieved the Regional Qualifying standard (automatic or consideration).
 - (iii) Individuals or relay teams qualifying but not intending to participate in an event of the State Championship must notify the State Meet Director by 3:00 p.m. on Monday prior to the State Meet. Remaining alternates will not advance to State Championships after that time.
NOTE: If the student-athlete scratching is one of the top eight (8) individual or six (6) relay qualifiers from a regional competition, then the next student-athlete in line from that regional competition will be offered the opportunity to fill the position. If the student-athlete is one of the at-large qualifiers, then the next fastest qualifier across all regions will be offered the opportunity to fill the position.
 - (iv) Substitutions for relay participants who qualify to the state meet are allowed, irrespective of the number of events swum in the regional competition, but no substitutions in individual events may be made.
- (9) Swimming
NOTE: Relay Team Entries - All regionals and state championships will use same method for relay cards. [See Rule 4.11.3 (c)].
- (10) Diving - six dives, one required dive must be a twist. No degree of difficulty is required.
- (i) Two copies of the competitive dive sheets must be brought to the meet.
 - (ii) Divers must turn sheets in 30 minutes prior to warm-ups. Accuracy is responsibility of coach.
 - (iii) When diver is on the board, a coach may not coach them.
 - (iv) Any teams with divers participating should be prepared to provide table workers and judges at the meet. (Parents should not judge own child's competition).
 - (v) Two failed dives disqualifies the individual from competition.
 - (vi) Divers are disqualified if they do not make a legitimate attempt on each dive.
 - (vii) Format for all regionals will be posted on the NCHSAA website.

4.11.3 State Championship

- (a) Order of Events - The state competition will be a timed final format for all events.
- (b) Scoring - 16 places will be scored. No scoring in championship if swimmer does not swim qualifying times.
- (c) Relay Team Entries
 - (1) Cards will be in packet upon arrival.
 - (2) Turn in cards at coaches meeting; any changes need to be given to the admin before the completion of the relay.
 - (3) Pick-up relay cards after the break and return to the admin with or without any changes (can still make changes before completion of the relay).

Example

School: SUMMERFIELD ARCHER HIGH SCHOOL

1. Susie Chen 2. Nancy Carter 3. Joyce Hidalgo 4. Jamalia Baker Event: 400 Freestyle Relay

- (d) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]. Team members will be admitted upon identification by coach.
 - (1) Non-qualifiers are not allowed on deck.
 - (2) Parents not previously certified by the school administration, and properly submitted to the NCHSAA, as coaches will not be permitted on deck.
 - (3) If schools have assigned more than two coaches, a letter from the principal on official school letterhead must identify any additional coaches.
- (e) Awards - The winning and runner-up team will receive plaques.
 - (1) Individual awards will be presented to the top three individuals in each event and to members of the winning and runner-up teams (total of 20 individual medals).
 - (2) Awards will be presented after the 50 freestyle, the 200 freestyle relay and at the end of the meet.
 - (3) Coaches should have their swimmers prepared to receive their awards.
 - (4) Men's diving awards will be presented during the first awards presentation and women's during the second awards presentation.
- (f) Team Expenses - Teams will either split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) or travel will be reimbursed at the rate of five cents per mile for each qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of 35 cents, whichever revenue share method is higher for member schools.
- (g) State Diving Schedule:

8A & 5A	February 3, 2027
7A & 4A	February 4, 2027
1A/2A/3A & 6A	February 5, 2027

(h)	State Swimming Schedule:	8A & 5A	February 4, 2027
		7A & 4A	February 5, 2027
		1A/2A/3A & 6A	February 6, 2027

4.12 TENNIS

4.12.1 General

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - July 29 (Women) and February 15 (Men).
- (c) Date of First Match - August 10 (Women) and March 1 (Men).
- (d) Health and Safety Guidelines - [See Rule 2.3]
- (e) Number of Regular Season Contests - No more than four per week if one is on a non-school day. Four matches in three days are still permissible without using a non-school day if a double-header is included on one of the school days. A two-day individual tournament represents two matches. No more than two dual-team matches are allowed daily (weekly limit still applies). No season limit.
- (f) Sportsmanship - Ethical conduct of student-athletes and coaches shall be observed at all times. Student-athletes' behavior should be monitored throughout the season.
 - (1) Unsportsmanlike conduct, etc. by student-athletes will not be tolerated.
 - (2) If unsportsmanlike conduct occurs, the two competing coaches will deal with the offending student-athlete(s) in accordance with USTA Handbook of Rules and Regulations.
 - (3) For unsportsmanlike conduct/misconduct other than those meeting ejection criteria, first offense is point penalty; second offense is loss of game; third offense is default.
 - (4) Disqualification can occur at any time.
 - (5) The Code of Conduct penalties are cumulative through the entire event and follow a student-athlete or doubles team for the duration of the match or state tournament. Doubles teams accrue points, not individuals.
- (g) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming [See Rule 2.2.17].

4.12.2 Regular Season Rules and Regulations for Dual Team

- (a) Scoring - 1 point is scored for an individual or doubles team win. The first team to win five points wins the match.
 - (1) Singles matches are played first, followed by doubles.
 - (2) Doubles matches start 15 minutes following the conclusion of singles, if any doubles players competed in singles.
- (b) Team Composition - 6 singles competing in flights 1,2,3,4,5, and 6; and 3 doubles teams competing in flights 1, 2, and 3.
 - (1) A student-athlete may compete in both singles and doubles.
 - (2) Any school competing in the NCHSAA dual team tennis playoffs must have participated in an actual regular season schedule for the current year.
- (c) Default Match Format
 - (1) Singles - Two out of three sets in singles, using standard scoring. If players split sets in singles, a 10-point tiebreaker (first to 10, win by two) will be played to decide the outcome of that match. A three-minute break is allowed before the tiebreaker, and player(s) may NOT leave the court during this time to confer with their coach.
 - (2) Doubles - Doubles matches are played after singles competition and a 15-minute break and the format is an 8-game pro set, using standard scoring. At 8-all, the set tiebreaker (first to seven and win by two) will be played.
 - (3) If mutually agreed, the match may conclude as soon as one team wins by five points.
- (d) Alternate Regular Season Match Format - If both head coaches agree, any of the following modifications may be used in a regular season dual-team match.
 - (1) The use of 8-game pro sets in singles with a 7-point tiebreak at 8-all
 - (2) The use of 10-game pro sets in singles with a 7-point tiebreak at 10-all.
 - (3) The use of no-ad scoring in singles or doubles. (No-ad scoring may be in conjunction with the default format described in 4.12.2 (c), or in conjunction with the use of pro sets described in 4.12.2 (d)(1) and 4.12.2(d) (2) above).
- (e) Coaching Regulation - Coaching is allowed only after every odd-game (exception: not after game one) and only by the designated high school coaches (limit 2).
 - (1) The coaches may not enter the court. All coaching must be done from outside the fence. Only the designated high school coaches are permitted to coach.
 - (2) The 90-second period for coaching begins immediately following their last point, not when conversation begins.

- (3) Coaching is permitted to be continuous throughout the match as long as it does not interfere with play and only during the 90 second changeovers. The purpose of such coaching is solely to offer advice to the player and not in any way to distract or annoy the opponent.
- (4) All coaches must be compliant with Handbook Rule 2.1.7 to coach during a match.
- (f) Line-ups - Coaches shall exchange singles line-ups, no later than 15 minutes prior to the match using the **MANDATORY official regular season dual team line-up sheet**. Doubles line-ups must be shared prior to the start of doubles.
 - (1) Players shall be ranked in order of ability, the best player on the team playing at the #1 position, the second best at #2 and so on through all positions. This rule shall also apply to doubles play, with the strongest combination listed at #1 and so on.
 - (i) If a player is not available in singles, or a team is not available in doubles, all players/teams must move up in the lineup.
 - (ii) A team appearing with an insufficient number of players shall default matches at the bottom of the line-up (i.e. the six player team appearing with five players must default at the #6 singles position, and in doubles, at the #3 position).
 - (iii) Stacking the line-up is not allowed, is considered cheating, and may be punishable with penalties.
 - (iv) Players are only allowed to move one spot up or down in the singles line-up from their position in the previous match. Players may move up more than one position if players are unavailable.
 - (v) The positions paired at the number-one doubles positions (e.g., #1 and #3 = 4) must add up to an equal or lower number than those paired at the number two doubles (e.g., #2 and #4 = 6).
 - (vi) The number two doubles pairing must add up to an equal or lower number than those paired at #3 doubles (e.g., #5 and #6 = 11).
 - (vii) A number one singles player may NOT play at number three doubles.
 - (viii) Any player NOT in the top 6 will be considered a #7 player for the purpose of placement in doubles.
 - (2) Any change in the singles line-up must be in accordance with the regulations.
 - (3) A coach is permitted to substitute for a doubles team player provided it is a lower ranked player not already in the doubles line-up. The doubles team with a substituted player is NOT subject to the doubles pairing regulation only if the substitution was due to a legitimate injury/illness.
- (g) MaxPreps Data Entry - All rosters, individual results and team results, must be entered on the school's MaxPreps team page within 72 hours of completion of a match.

4.12.3 Playoffs (Dual Team)

- (a) Dates and Sites - All rounds of play through the regionals will be played at the home of the higher seed. The dual team state final match in all eight classifications for women and men will be held at the Burlington Tennis Center.
 - (1) The dual team playoff dates are as follows:

	Women's	Men's
Deadline for Reporting	October 8, 11:59 p.m.	April 22, 11:59 p.m.
Seeding	October 9	April 23
First Round	October 12	April 26
Second Round	October 14	April 28
Third Round	October 19	May 3
Fourth Round	October 21	May 5
Regional Round	October 27	May 11
State Championship	October 30-31	May 14-15
 - (2) Facilities and Equipment - The host school is responsible for providing the playing facilities (hard courts unless moved inside for rain or mutual agreement to play on soft courts). Matches must begin no earlier than 4:00 p.m. without permission of the NCHSAA. You must set up matches to be played on courts which have lights, or lighted courts must be available for use. Should two schools not mutually agree on a start time, the default time is 5:00 p.m.
- (b) Failure to comply with the initial reporting procedure will result in a penalty.
- (c) In the 1A Only Classification, the bracket will be reduced to 32 teams. In 1A/2A-7A the bracket will include 48 teams (on a 64-team bracket) and in the 8A Classification, there will be 24 teams (on a 32-team bracket.)
- (d) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once bracketing is complete.
- (e) Official Line-ups - All schools must submit dual team lineup sheets three weeks prior to the reporting deadline (Women - September 17; Men - April 1). Any appeals to those lineups must be submitted within five (5) business days to the NCHSAA. All appeals will be heard by an appeals committee com-

posed of high school coaches from all classifications selected by the NCHSAA and NCTCA. No further lineup changes will be allowed after this point. Schools must also update the final records of their student-athletes prior to the reporting deadline (Women - October 8; Men - April 22). Failure to submit lineups by the established deadline(s) will result in a penalty to the member school. The minimum participants to constitute a team is four.

- (1) Student-athletes must have played in 50% of the total team matches to be eligible for the playoffs unless there is an approved issue (injury or illness). Proof must be provided on the line-up sheet for any such injury or illness.
 - (2) Coaches shall exchange singles line-ups, no later than 15 minutes prior to the match using the **MANDATORY official post-season dual team line-up sheet**. Doubles line-ups must be shared prior to the start of doubles.
 - (3) Players shall be ranked in order of ability, the best player on the team playing at the #1 position, the second best at #2 and so on through all positions. This rule shall also apply to doubles play, with the strongest combination listed at #1 and so on.
 - (4) If a player is not available in singles, or a team is not available in doubles, all players/teams must move up in the lineup.
 - (5) A team appearing with an insufficient number of players shall default matches at the bottom of the line-up (i.e. the six player team appearing with five players must default at the #6 singles position, and in doubles, at the #3 position).
 - (6) Attempts of non-approved changes to the official line-up or stacking of the line-up is not allowed, is considered cheating, and may be punishable with penalties.
 - (7) The positions paired at the number-one doubles (e.g., #1 and #3 = 4) must add up to an equal or lower number than those paired at the number two doubles (e.g., #2 and #4 = 6). The number-two doubles pairing must add up to an equal or lower number than those paired at number-three doubles (e.g., #5 and #6 = 11).
 - (8) A number-one singles player may NOT play at number three doubles.
 - (9) Any player NOT in the top 6 will be considered a #7 player for the purpose of placement in doubles.
 - (10) A coach is permitted to substitute for a player in the doubles as long as it is a lower ranked player not already in the doubles line-up. Any doubles team with a player substituted without a legitimate injury or illness is still bound by the doubles pairing regulation.
 - (11) A doubles team with a substituted player is NOT subject to the doubles pairing regulation only if the substitution was due to a legitimate injury/illness.
 - (12) Full rosters, individual results, and team results are required to be entered into MaxPreps.
- (f) Format
- (1) Singles - Two out of three sets in singles, using standard scoring. If players split sets in singles, a 10-point tiebreaker (first to 10, win by two) will be played to decide the outcome of that match. A three-minute break is allowed before the tiebreaker, and player may NOT leave the court during this time to confer with their coach.
 - (2) Doubles - Doubles matches are played after singles competition and a 15-minute break and the format is an 8-game pro set, using standard scoring. At 8-all, the set tiebreaker (first to seven and win by two) will be played.
 - (3) If mutually agreed, the match may conclude as soon as one team wins by achieving five points.
- (g) Injury Time Outs - One injury time-out is permitted per match for each different injury, three minutes during match play (four minutes on a changeover).
- (1) Medical condition includes but is not limited to an injury, illness and heat-related condition or cramping.
 - (2) Play shall never be suspended, delayed or interfered with for the purpose of enabling a student-athlete to recover his or her strength, breath or physical condition.
 - (3) A blister is considered loss of condition, but a blood blister qualifies as an injury time-out. This is the USTA rule.
- (h) Coaching - Coaching is allowed only after every odd-game (exception: not after game one) and only by the designated high school coaches (limit 2).
- (1) The coaches may not enter the court. All coaching must be done from outside the fence. Only the designated high school coaches are permitted to coach.
 - (2) The 90-second period for coaching begins immediately following their last point, not when conversation begins.
 - (3) Coaching is permitted to be continuous throughout the match as long as it does not interfere with play and only during the 90 second changeovers. The purpose of such coaching is solely to offer advice to the student-athlete and not in any way to distract or annoy the opponent.
 - (4) All coaches must be compliant with Handbook Rule 2.1.7 to coach during a match.

- (i) Sportsmanship - [See Rule 4.12.1(f)]
 - (j) Expenses - Schools bear their own expenses.
 - (k) Awards - At the regionals, team plaques will be presented to the champion and runner-up.
- 4.12.4 Playoffs (Pre-Regionals and Regionals-Individual Competition)**
- (a) Dates - Pre-regional tournaments will be seeded on October 3 (Women) and April 17 (Men) and contested October 5 (Women), April 19 (Men).
Regional Tournaments will be held October 16-17 (Women) and April 30-May 1 (Men). Play on Fridays in regionals begins at 1:00 p.m. (coaches meeting 12:00 p.m.). The 2A-8A Classifications will have four Regionals; 1A will have two.
 - (b) Site Determination
 - (1) Pre-Regional sites and Directors will be determined by the NCHSTCA.
 - (2) At the regional meet a meeting of coaches must be held to select a Regional site and director for the upcoming season. This is a mandatory meeting that will be conducted by the current regional director, who will then notify the NCHSAA office within 10 days after the completion of the tournament.
 - (c) Assignments (Men's and Women's) - Pre-Regional/Regional assignments, along with the most current information about regional sites, dates and times, are posted on the NCHSAA website.
 - (d) Number of Entries - Conference Tournaments are not required to qualify for Pre-Regionals. Every school will send two doubles and two singles to a Pre-Regional to compete for the opportunity to advance to the Regional. If eight or fewer schools are in a region, a Pre-Regional is not required. From Pre-Regionals, 16 doubles and 16 singles will advance to the Regionals. The top two from each of the four Regionals will advance to the state tournament. The 1A Women (which has only two regions) advance the top four from each regional.
 - (e) Playoff Entries - The deadlines for playoff entries are October 12 (3:00 p.m.) for women and April 26 (3:00 p.m.) for men.
 - (1) Pre-Regionals/Regional entries can be found on the NCHSAA website. Any school planning to participate in tennis but not listed in the Pre-Regional/Regional assignments, should notify the NCHSAA.
 - (2) A student-athlete may qualify for either singles or doubles, but may not participate in both.
 - (f) Seeding and Pairings - Will be done under the direction of the tournament director, as determined by the regional seeding instructions posted on the NCHSAA tennis web page. All coaches should attend the seeding meetings at the respective Pre-Regionals/Regionals. Seeding meetings for top 4 places must be held during the week of the Regional tournament and results will be posted on the NCHSAA website.
 - (1) Criterion 1 - Head to head competition during the season; and,
 - (2) Criterion 2 - Records (not state USTA rankings) will be used for seeding players.
 - (g) Format - Two out of three sets in singles and doubles, with 10-minute break after split sets. The set tiebreaker will be used (1st to seven points, win by two) when score is 6-6 in set. Two minute break after first set.
 - (h) Tennis Balls - Each player and doubles team will supply their own tennis balls. The winner will keep the unopened can.
 - (i) Awards - Will be given to the singles and doubles winners and runners-up.
 - (j) Expenses - Schools will bear their own expenses to Pre-Regional and Regional tournaments.
 - (k) Qualifiers to Individual State Championships - The finalists in both singles and doubles will qualify from the regionals to the state events. In 1A Women, both finalist and semifinalist will qualify.
 - (1) These student-athletes must participate in the finals to advance (No Exceptions).
 - (2) Directors are asked to e-mail results to the state directors immediately after the completion of the regional tournament.
 - (3) Qualifiers to state championships are expected to compete.
- 4.12.5 Playoffs (State Championships-Individual Competition)**
- (a) Dates and Sites - October 23-24 (Women) and May 7-8 (Men). The sites will be posted on the NCHSAA website.
 - (b) Seeding and Pairings - In all classifications, matches will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Friday. Two rounds will be played on Friday and one round on Saturday. The USTA High School Digital platform will be used for managing the state individual tournament. [See NCHSAA website for pairings].
 - (1) All teams represented in the tournament shall be "claimed" by the head coach in Serve Tennis, and all players participating in the tournament shall be registered on the team's roster.
 - (c) A mandatory coaches meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m.
 - (d) Format - Two out of three sets in both singles and doubles, with 10-minute break after split sets. If tied 6-6 in a set, the set tiebreaker is used (first to seven, win by two). Two-minute break after first set.

- (e) Awards - Plaques will be presented to the winners and runners-up in singles and doubles.
 - (f) Expenses - Teams will either split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) or travel will be reimbursed at the rate of five cents per mile for each qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of 35 cents, whichever revenue share method is higher for member schools.
 - (g) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for the individual state championships.
- 4.12.6 Playoffs (State Championships - Dual Team)**
- (a) The dual team state final match in all eight classifications for women and men is October 30-31 for women and May 14-15 for Men.
 - (b) Coaches Meeting - 8:30 a.m. (1A, 3A, 5A, 7A); 12:00 p.m. (2A, 4A, 6A, 8A).
 - (c) Match Times - 9:00 a.m. (1A, 3A, 5A, 7A); 12:30 p.m. (2A, 4A, 6A, 8A).
 - (d) The Eastern teams will be the designated home team.
 - (e) Game Ball- The NCHSAA will provide game balls for the dual team state championship finals only.
NOTE: Each team is responsible for furnishing balls during preliminary rounds. The winners will keep the unopened cans; the loser keeps the used balls.
 - (f) Suspended Match - Shall resume at the point of interruption. If the delay was 30 minutes or more, a warm-up period not to exceed 10 minutes is allowed.
 - (g) Awards - At the state finals, team plaques will be presented to the champion and runner-up. Members of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual medals (total of 13 medals).

4.13 TRACK AND FIELD

4.13.1 General

- (a) Information on Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - Indoor Track November 2; Outdoor Track February 15.
- (c) Date of First Meet - Indoor Track November 11; Outdoor Track March 1.
- (d) Health and Safety - [See Rule 2.3]
- (e) Number of Regular Season Contests
 - (1) No more than three (3) meets may be scheduled per week for both indoor and outdoor.
 - (2) A student-athlete is limited to one meet per day, maximum of four events per meet. Any contestant who enters an event must participate.
 - (3) If a track team participates in separate events on the same day, each meet will count towards the daily and weekly limitations for the student-athlete and team.
- (f) Registering Meets and Meet Results - Regular season meets and results (indoors and outdoors) must be registered on nc.milesplit.com.
 - (1) Full meet results must be entered within 48 hours of the completion of the meet (both Indoor and Outdoor).
 - (2) All meet results must be completed on a platform that is compatible to MileSplit
 - (3) All hand-held times must be rounded up to the nearest tenth of a second.
- (g) Conversion Note - Do not convert times before submitting regional and state meet entries, indoor or outdoor, on nc.milesplit.com.
- (h) Unattached and Unaffiliated Athletes - [See Rule 2.2.13].
- (i) Contestants - When running "unattached", athletes are not permitted to represent the school or wear school-issued uniforms. Those results may not be used for NCHSAA qualifying standards. [See Rule 1.2.14]
- (j) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming - [See Rule 2.2.17].
- (k) Officials - Track officials may register with the NCHSAA, as do officials in certain other sports. The NCHSAA encourages each school to have at least one certified track official. In order to host a regional, a school must have at least one NFHS/NCHSAA certified official on staff [See Rule 3.4.1(a)(9)].

4.13.2 Regionals

- (a) Dates and Sites - There is no regional competition in indoor track. Regional competition for outdoor track will be held on May 7 or May 8.
- (b) Regional Site Determination -
 - (1) Indoor Track - There will be no regional championships in Indoor Track and Field. There will be seven state championships (1A/2A Combined). Top marks will qualify for the state championship meets.
 - (i.) For track events, all times must be submitted as Fully Automatic Time (FAT). Hand held times will not be considered.
 - (ii.) Coaches must enter athletes (3 per school, per event) into the meet by the set dead-

- line. All indoor entries must be submitted online on nc.milesplit.com.
- (iii.) No one may use times from the previous spring outdoor season to qualify to the state meet.
 - (iv.) After entries are submitted, the meet director will review the entries and the top entries in each event will be accepted into the meet. The number of entries will be as follows:
 - (A.) The top twelve (12) entries in relay events
 - (B.) The top twelve (12) entries in individual events
 - (C.) In the event of ties among submitted entries, those athletes will be allowed to compete as long as the total number does not exceed 16. Should there be 17 or more due to ties, the tied athletes will not be admitted, leaving fewer than 12 participants.
 - (v.) Late entries must be submitted to the NCHSAA by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, February 5th. Scratches are not permitted at the Indoor Championships
 - (vi.) After the declaration deadline, the list of entries will be adjusted to show the final accepted entries.
- (2) Outdoor Track and Field
- (i.) In the 1A-7A Classifications there will be three Regional Championships (East, Central and West).
 - (A.) The top 16 entries in each event will be accepted to the regional championships. All times and marks must be verified through Milesplit results and all times must be FAT.
 - (B.) The top four (4) finishers in each event at each regional will advance to the state championship. The next four (4) fastest times or marks (from final heats only) across all three regions on the day of regional competition will also advance to the state championship.
 - (ii.) In the 8A Classification there will be two Regional Championships (East and West)
 - (A.) The top 16 entries in each event will be accepted to the regional championships. All times and marks must be verified through Milesplit results and all times must be FAT.
 - (B.) The top six (6) finishers in each event at each regional will advance to the state championship. The next four (4) fastest times or marks (from final heats only) across both regions on the day of regional competition will also advance to the state championship.

At the regional meet, a meeting of coaches must be held to select a site and a director for the upcoming season. This is a mandatory meeting that will be conducted by the current regional director. The current director will then notify the NCHSAA office within ten (10) days after the completion of the tournament of the host school and director for the next season.

- (c) Individual Participation - A student-athlete may participate in a maximum of four events.
- (d) Regional Assignments - Regional assignments for outdoor track, along with the most current information about regional sites, dates and times, are posted on the NCHSAA website. Any school planning to field a track team and is not listed in the regional assignments should contact the NCHSAA.
- (e) Starting Heights-Pole Vault and High Jump - In regional and state meets (indoor and outdoor), the starting heights for competition for women's and men's pole vault as well as women's and men's high jump will be determined by the meet director.
- (f) Pole Vault - In regional and state meets, vaulters will be weighed to verify pole standards.
- (g) Regional Entries - All regional entries in outdoor track are to be made on nc.milesplit.com by Saturday, May 1, 9:00 p.m.
 - (1) Late entries may be submitted to the NCHSAA and must be in by 11:00 a.m. the Monday prior to the regional. Use the form on the NCHSAA website. No entries after this will be accepted to the regional.
 - (2) In indoor and outdoor track, only entries submitted through nc.milesplit.com will be accepted.
 - (3) Each school may enter a maximum of three competitors in each individual event and one team per relay event. Only one alternate may be entered per relay team.
 - (4) Disqualification: A regional entry who scratches after the meet begins or a student-athlete who qualifies through a regional and then scratches in a specific event in the state meet, is disqualified for the remainder of the meet.
- (h) Protest - Each regional meet has a Games Committee which will hear properly registered protests, or appoint a Jury of Appeals to hear such protests. The decision of the committee or jury, if appointed, in these matters is final.

- (i) Supervision - All student-athletes participating in state playoff competition at any level must be properly supervised. If not, they will be eliminated from competition.
 - (1) Coaches are responsible for seeing that their team members remain at the track site and do not interfere with normal school operations.
 - (2) If anyone besides school personnel accompanies student-athletes, a letter from the principal must be sent to the NCHSAA authorizing this and a copy of the letter must be on hand at the meet.
- (j) Team Championship - A team must have multiple entries (more than one entry) in order to win a team championship. The minimum participants to constitute a team is two.
- (k) Uniform - Each team member shall wear a uniform (jersey and trunks) that complies with NFHS regulations.
- (l) Awards - Plaques will be presented to the regional championship team and regional runner-up team, and individual awards will be given to the top three finishers in each event.
- (m) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (n) Expenses - Each school will bear its own expenses to regional competition.
- (o) Outdoor Track Qualifiers to State Meet - The top four finishers in each event (including relays) will qualify from the regionals to the state meet.
 - (1) Substitutes for qualifiers are not permitted, except for relays.
 - (2) All ties at regional level must be broken for advancement to state meet.
 - (3) Only student-athletes qualifying through regional meets may compete.

4.13.3 State Championships

- (a) Dates and Sites
 - (1) Indoor Track - February 9-12 at JDL Fast Track indoor facility in Winston-Salem.
 - (i.) February 9, 3A morning, 8A evening
 - (ii.) February 10, 4A morning, 7A evening
 - (iii.) February 11, 5A morning, 6A evening
 - (iv.) February 12, 1A/2A morning
 - (2) Outdoor Track - May 12-15 at Marcus T. Johnson Track at NC A&T University
 - (i.) May 12, 6A/8A
 - (ii.) May 13, 2A/4A
 - (iii.) May 14, 1A/3A
 - (iv.) May 15, 5A/7A
- (b) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]. The number of qualifiers will determine the number of coaches to be admitted.
- (c) Awards - A plaque will be presented to the winning and runner-up teams. Members of the winning team (10 individual medals for indoor track) and the top three individual finishers in each event will receive awards.
- (d) Expenses - Teams will either split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) or travel will be reimbursed at the rate of five cents per mile for each qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of 35 cents, whichever revenue share method is higher for member schools.
- (e) Protests - The state meet director will form a Games Committee to hear properly registered protests, or appoint a Jury of Appeals to hear such protests. The decision of the committee or jury, if appointed, in these matters is final.
- (f) Relay Cards - Each school competing in a relay at the state meet must submit a card at the beginning of the event listing all four names (first and last) of the competitors and the name of that event. These should be presented when reporting to the clerk of course and will be used to help determine numbers from each school for reimbursement purposes.
- (g) Order of Events and Scoring - Will be the same as published in the 2026-27 NFHS Track and Field Rules Book.

4.14 VOLLEYBALL

4.14.1 General

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - July 29 (Women); February 15 (Men)
- (c) Date of First Match - August 10 (Women); March 1 (Men)
- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (e) Health and Safety - [See Rule 2.3]
- (f) Number of Regular Season Contests - Total 22 matches (Women), 20 Matches (Men)

Matches (Women)	Matches (Men)	Tournaments Allowed
22 in a Season	20 in a Season	0
21 in a Season	19 in a Season	1
20 or Fewer in a Season	18 or Fewer in a Season	2
3-4 in a Week	3-4 in a Week	0
0-2 in a Week	0-2 in a Week	1

- (1) No more than 4 matches per week. If all four matches are on four separate days the fourth must be on a non-school day (Saturday). Schools may play 4 matches in 3 or fewer days (double-headers).
 - (2) No more than 4 matches per day can be played, inclusive of the best of three and best of five matches.
 - (3) RPI rankings will be determined based on matches played inclusive of best of three and best of five matches.
 - (4) Conference matches must be played in a best of five set format.
 - (5) Conference tournament matches must be played in a best of five set format.
 - (6) Playoff matches must be played in a best of five set format.
 - (7) Rally scoring will be used in all volleyball dual matches, regular season and playoffs (NFHS rules). The rally scoring format is 25-point sets (no cap) and 15-point deciding (no cap). This format also includes the let serve.
 - (8) It is permissible for a student-athlete to participate in a junior varsity and a varsity match in the same day; however, those student-athletes are still subject to the weekly and seasonal limitations.
 - (9) Teams are limited to a maximum of two (2) tournaments per year. Each tournament will count as one (1) contest on the schedule and is subject to the weekly limit allowance.
 - (10) Tournaments can be played over multiple days not to exceed 4 matches per day.
 - (11) Tournaments must be formatted so that teams are only playing the best of three, best of five, or both.
 - (12) Junior varsity matches will be two out of three sets, rally scoring (25-point games with no cap for all sets). A conference can choose to cap the third set of a JV Volleyball match at 15 points.
 - (13) Junior varsity conference tournament matches must count toward the 22-match limit.
 - (14) Varsity conference tournament matches do not count toward the 22-match limit but do count toward final RPI.
- (g) Starting Time - A time no earlier than 5:00 p.m. is recommended, unless facilities dictate otherwise.
- (h) Schedules - Schools are required to submit varsity and junior varsity schedules to their appropriate Regional Supervisor by May 15.
- (i) Filming, Videotaping and Video Streaming - [See Rule 2.2.17].
- (j) Equipment - Use of NCHSAA adopted balls is encouraged for regular season play to ensure consistency and fair play.

4.14.2 Playoffs

- (a) Qualifiers/Seeding - [See Rule 4.1.12(c)].
 - (b) Format - All conference tournament and playoff matches will be the best three out of five sets, rally scoring.
 - (c) Playoff Brackets - Will be posted on the NCHSAA Website once seeding is complete.
 - (d) Schedule - Deadline for Reporting: October 14, 11:59 p.m. (Women) May 5, 11:59 (Men)
- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------|
| | Women | Men |
| Seeding | October 15 | May 6 |
| First Round | October 17 | May 8 |
| Second Round | October 20 | May 11 |
| Third Round | October 22 | May 13 |
| Fourth Round | October 24 | May 15 |
| Regionals | October 27 | May 18 |
| State Championships | October 30-31 | May 22 |
- (1) Teams should contact each other to work out details for their playoff contest.
 - (2) Saturday matches may be played earlier if mutually agreed upon.
 - (3) Matches may be played earlier than the assigned date by mutual agreement.

- (e) Match Times - Match time will be 7:00 p.m., unless mutually agreed to play at 6:00 p.m. Where the distance is more than 100 miles for the visiting team, game time will be 6:00 p.m.
 - (1) Any other exceptions must be approved by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Saturday - Teams may play at any time if mutually agreed upon.
 - (i) If teams cannot mutually agree, the higher seeded team may choose a starting time between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
 - (ii) Between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. if the visiting team is over 100 miles one-way.
- (i) Postponed Games - Postponed matches must be played the next day, including Saturday.
- (j) 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) After the first two rounds of the state playoffs and through the state championship games, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor to assign officials to games.
 - (3) Starting in the third round of the state playoffs, four-person crews will be used.
- (k) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]. Admission must be charged until completion of the contest.
- (l) Team Expenses - Gate receipts and individual game expenses in the first round, second round, third round, fourth, and regional round are the responsibility of the competing teams. [See Resources on Page 121]
NOTE: Participating schools are responsible for dividing any deficit or net.
 - (5) So the overall expenses of conducting the contest may be evenly shared, the following expense formula must be used in all rounds prior to the state championship:
 - (i) For playoff contests where the distance between competing schools is 100 miles or less, the visiting school is responsible for its own transportation and meals. The host school will provide the playing facility and game balls at no charge. All game-related expenses, including officials' fees, are to be split between host and visiting schools and the NCHSAA.
 - (ii) When the distance between schools exceeds 100 miles (one way), the same cost-sharing arrangement applies with one exception: The cost of game officials only will be split between the NCHSAA and the host school.
 - (iii) All concession rights are retained by the host school.
- (m) Pep Bands, Banners, Placards, and Signs - Pep bands of participating schools are not permitted for playoffs. Note that banners, placards and signs are prohibited.
- (n) Regional Awards - Team plaques will be presented to the regional champion and regional runner-up.
- (o) Game Ball: In playoff contests in which the NCHSAA provides complimentary adopted game balls, that model of game ball must be used for the playoff contest. Noncompliance is subject to 3.3.6(a)(5).

4.14.3 State Championship

- (a) Date, Site, Format, and Home Team - State championships in all classes will be held on October 30-31 for women and May 22 for men. Competition is best three-of-five sets. The Eastern champion is the home team.
- (b) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121.] Each team will receive five complimentary passes and three school admin passes.
- (c) Awards - A plaque will be presented to the championship and runner-up teams. Members of the championship and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (a total of 20).
- (d) Gate Receipts - The net balance will be divided as follows, 67% to the competing teams and 33% to the NCHSAA.
- (e) Team Expenses - Travel and meal expenses will be allowed for 13 student-athletes plus a coach and a manager. [See Rule 4.3.3(b)].
- (f) Game Ball - The NCHSAA will provide game balls for state championship games. See current NCHSAA adopted game ball list on www.nchsaa.org.

4.15 WRESTLING

4.15.1 General

- (a) Information on Mailings, Classifications, Preseason Scrimmages, Eligibility Sheets, Ejection Reports, Playoff Declaration, NCHSAA Clinic Dates, Body Paint and Noisemakers are found under Competition for Interscholastic Activities [See Rule 4.1].
- (b) Date of First Practice - November 2.
 - (1) Practice cannot be held until the student-athletes attending practice have their minimum weights established.
 - (2) Hydration testing and skinfold measuring may begin no earlier than Monday, October 19.

- (c) Date of First Match - November 11.
- (d) Payment of Officials [See Rule 3.4]
- (e) Requirements
 - (1) A skinfold measurer/hydration tester must be certified and validated prior to the start of the wrestling season.
 - (2) Hydration and skinfold measurements: Data must be entered at the completion of measuring. An NCHSAA approved assessor **MUST** enter this information – not a coach.
 - (3) Match weigh-ins: Must be entered within 24 hours of match/tournament completion.
 - (4) Match weight form: Coaches are required to exchange this form at ALL matches and tournaments. This sheet will show the lowest weight at which each student-athlete may weigh-in at the next match and will also show the lowest weight class at which he/she may compete. All coaches should receive a copy of this sheet for matches.
 - (5) Schedule and match/tournament results: Schools are required to enter all match results within 24 hours of participating in a match or tournament.
 - (6) Random checks of all required information will be done by the NCHSAA. Failure to comply will result in penalties.
- (f) Health and Safety [See Rule 2.3]
 - (1) A licensed athletic trainer (LAT) or a first responder must be physically present at all times in any competition area in which wrestling matches are being held.
Example: Wrestling in the Auxiliary Gym and Main Gym at the same time would require two licensed athletic trainers or first responders or a combination of one of each.
 - (2) Skin checks must be performed by a licensed athletic trainer. If no licensed athletic trainer is present, the skin checks must be performed by a first responder and referee.
- (g) Number of Regular Season Matches
 - (1) Student-athletes are limited to 55 matches in a season (excluding conference tournament and postseason matches) and, by NFHS rules, may participate in a maximum of six matches per day.
 - (2) The following options are legal during any week (Monday-Saturday) of regular season competition providing there is no loss of school time.
 - 1. One Dual 4. One Quad
 - 2. Two Duals 5. One Tournament (see i and ii below)
 - 3. One Tri 6. One Dual, Tri, or Quad + One Multi-Team Event (see iii below)
 - (i) Tournaments may be either an Individual, or Dual Team format, lasting no more than two days.
 - (ii) Teams are allowed only 1 dual team tournament per season in which the team gets more than 6 matches.
 - (iii) A Multi-Team Event is defined as a Tri, Quad, Quint, or Tournament.
 - (3) Teams that do not qualify as a representative into the NCHSAA State Dual Team Championships may schedule two dual meets, or one tri-meet, the week of the dual team tournament.
 - (4) Teams that do not participate in the Dual Team Playoffs may compete in one (1) multi-team event on the Friday or Saturday immediately following playoff bracketing.
 - (5) During the week of the individual regional and state tournament, dual team matches are NOT allowed.
 - (6) If a team qualifies into the state dual team tournament and wrestles two matches, that team may not wrestle in any more matches that week.
NOTE: These match results will not count towards regional seeding records.
 - (7) Teams may allow varsity student-athletes from the same team to participate in two different tournaments on a given day.
 - (i) May not exceed other established weekly limitations.
 - (ii) Tournaments must be conducted on the same day.
 - (iii) Applies to Varsity only
 - (iv) Teams may use this provision a maximum of three (3) times per season.
 - (v) Teams must submit a request to the NCHSAA, which will be posted to the NCHSAA website
 - (vi) Teams may not participate in two dual team tournaments on the same day.
- (h) Inclement Weather and Postponements - Any postponed event may be rescheduled during any week of regular season competition provided that the given week does not exceed any of the 6 combinations above, plus 1 dual match. This only applies to postponed events. No additional exceptions are allowed.
- (i) NFHS Order of Competition - A random draw must be conducted immediately following the conclusion of weigh-ins to determine the first weight class that will be competed in dual matches.
 - (1) This begins with the regular season and continues through the individual state championships.
 - (2) The draw will take place immediately preceding the weigh-ins.

- (3) The referee or other authorized personnel shall supervise the draw.
- (j) Schedules - Both varsity and junior varsity schedules are due to the appropriate Regional Supervisor by September 30.
- (k) Weight Classes
 - (1) Men's Wrestling - 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 144, 150, 157, 165, 175, 190, 215, 285
 - (2) Women's Wrestling - 100, 107, 114, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 165, 185, 235
- (l) NFHS Weigh-in Regulations
 - (1) Student-athletes of the same gender shall have the opportunity to weigh in, shoulder-to-shoulder, a maximum of one hour before the time of a dual meet, or a team's first competition in multiple dual meet event is scheduled to begin.
 - (2) Student-athletes in an individual tournament shall weigh in at the tournament site a maximum of two hours before the first session of the day.
 - (3) When a preliminary meet is followed by a varsity meet, weigh-ins may, by mutual consent, precede the preliminary meet.
 - (4) For any event, all student-athletes shall be present in and remain in the designated weigh-in area at the time established by the meet administration.
 - (5) Student-athletes shall not leave the designated weigh-in area for any reason unless permission is granted by the meet administration.
 - (6) The weigh-in shall proceed through the weight classes beginning with the lowest weight class and end immediately upon the completion of the highest weight class.
 - (7) A student-athlete shall weigh in for only one weight class during the weigh-in period.
 - (8) If only one scale is available, a student-athlete may step on and off that scale two times to allow for mechanical inconsistencies in the scale.
 - (9) If multiple scales are available, a student-athlete may step on and off the first scale two times to allow for mechanical inconsistencies in the scale. If the contestant fails to make weight on the first scale, the student-athlete shall immediately step on each available scale one time in an attempt to make weight.
 - (10) During time off the scale(s), activities that promote dehydration are prohibited. The referee or the official, of the same gender, shall supervise the weigh-ins.
- (m) Rules Regarding Practice
 - (1) If a high school coach agrees to also coach a middle school team, he has to set up a separate practice.
 - (2) Any individual who coaches at an NCHSAA member high school, head or assistant, paid or non-paid, faculty or non-faculty, parent volunteer, etc., must abide by the skill development, out-of-season workout rules.
 - (3) If a high school coach also coaches a "freestyle" or "club" team, whether head or assistant, and has any students from his high school team on that outside team, he cannot work with any of those students during a dead period, and is limited to no more than 8 of them per day in an out-of-season workout.
 - (4) Schools that have individuals qualifying to the regional or state individual playoffs, once individual regional seeding is completed, may work out one-on-one against students-athletes from another school where competition is not available at their own school. The number is limited to one partner for each qualifier advancing.
 - (5) Any kind of scrimmage with an outside team during the sports season is a violation. Such unauthorized scrimmage will be counted in the member school(s)' record as a loss and will count toward the daily, weekly, and seasonal limits on contests. If an unauthorized scrimmage causes the school to exceed any of these limits, any contests over the limits will be forfeited. For example, if the weekly limit is three contests and a school plays three regular contests and one unauthorized scrimmage in the same week, the school will forfeit the last contest of the week and will receive a loss for the scrimmage.
- (n) Sanitary and Safety Measures
 - (1) All mats must be disinfected with a 10% bleach solution or isopropyl alcohol solution prior to the first match and each time blood gets on the mat.
 - (2) A bucket or squeeze bottle with a 10% bleach or isopropyl alcohol solution and rubber gloves should be placed at each mat for cleaning purposes. This same solution should be used to wipe any blood off an opponent's skin.
 - (3) It is important that any time there is blood present, even on uniforms, that it is treated with care regarding its ability to transmit infectious diseases.
 - (4) If the bleeding problem is severe enough, the student-athlete should not be permitted to continue, not only from the standpoint of possible disease transmission but also for the health and safety of the injured student-athlete.

- (5) During the match each coach will be responsible for cleaning his own wrestler, and the home team is responsible for cleaning the mat. (Refer to NFHS Rule Book).
 - (6) A form related to communicable skin disease is also available on the NCHSAA website.
 - (o) Filming, Videotaping or Video Streaming - [See Rule 2.2.17]
- 4.15.2 **Establishing Mandatory Certified Minimum Weight**
- (a) Part I – Register with the NWCA/TrackWrestling
 - (1) Schools are required to register with the NWCA/TrackWrestling by October 1; the cost is \$30.00 per year. Registration information can be found on the NCHSAA webpage under the wrestling section.
 - (2) All schools are required to enter hydration test results, skinfold measurements, official weigh-ins, season schedule, and match results into this system. Failure to do any of the listed may result in a penalty.
 - (3) Weigh-ins and match results must be entered within 24 hours.
 - (b) Part II – Hydration Testing
 - (1) Hydration testing may begin no earlier than October 19.
 - (2) Practice cannot be held until the student-athletes attending that practice have passed a hydration test and had their certified minimum weights established.
Ex. - If a school is not able to conduct testing until November 2, that school could not hold “mat” practice until that process has been completed.
 - (3) Student-athletes who are not eligible 1st semester when measuring is done, should not be measured until they gain their eligibility.
 - (4) A NCHSAA Certified Measurer must perform the official measurement of Urine Specific Gravity (USG) using chemical dipsticks or refractometer. Coaches are encouraged to monitor the student-athlete’s hydration status throughout the season (refractometer or urine color chart).
 - (5) Test of USG must be passed prior to Skinfold measurement:
 - (i) Trial 1
 USG of ≤ 1.025 ; skinfold measurement may be done.
 USG > 1.025 ; re-test no earlier than 24 hours, but no later than 72 hours
 - (ii) Trial 2
 USG of ≤ 1.025 ; skinfold measurement may be done.
 USG > 1.025 ; re-test no earlier than 24 hours, but no later than 72 hours
 - (iii) Trial 3
 USG of ≤ 1.025 ; skinfold measurement may be done.
 USG between 1.025 – 1.030; skinfold measurement to be done and student-athlete MUST move up one weight class from minimum weight
 USG > 1.030 student-athlete is ineligible for the season
 - (c) Part III - Skinfold Measurements to Determine Body Fat
 - (1) No student-athlete may practice until a certified minimum weight has been determined and no student-athlete may ever wrestle below their certified minimum weight.
 - (2) Certified minimum weight information must be entered into the NWCA website at the completion of measuring.
 - (i) Skinfold measurement must be done by the NCHSAA approved measurer. Lange or Baseline Calipers or BodPod must be used. The measurer cannot be a wrestling coach. Medical personnel, even if trained in skinfold measuring, do not automatically qualify. They should contact the NCHSAA to obtain information on becoming an approved measurer. Once a person is trained or approved by the NCHSAA, he or she does not have to attend a clinic on a yearly basis.
 NOTE: A clinic is offered each summer during the NCCA clinic in Greensboro.
 - (ii) Areas of measurements for males will be triceps, subscapular and abdominal. For females, triceps and subscapular. See Appeals section for information on requesting a 2nd skinfold measurement.
 - (iii) The Lohman/Brozek Equations, which were developed specifically for high school wrestlers, will be used to determine body fat, as well as the certified minimum weight class in which a wrestler will be allowed to participate.
 - (iv) Certified minimum weight with 3% error allowance will be used. This is the student-athlete’s lowest wrestling weight without filing an appeal. The NWCA system automatically applies this 3%.
 - (v) To be eligible to participate, a wrestler’s body fat cannot be below 7% for men, 19% for females. If initial testing indicates a wrestler’s body fat is below the minimum % allowed, the student-athlete will not be able to participate without written clearance

from a licensed physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, indicating that the athlete is naturally at this Sub-7%/19% level).

- (3) These written clearances must be approved by the NCHSAA prior to the student-athlete competing. Form is available on the NCHSAA designated reporting platform.
- (d) Growth Allowance - On December 25, the two-pound growth allowance will be in effect for all wrestlers.
- (e) Weight Class Certification - Wrestlers have until January 28th to certify the lowest weight class at which they would like to participate during the individual regional and state tournaments.
 - (1) Certification occurs when the wrestler has a certified weigh in at a competition. The weigh in does not have to meet scratch weight, but must be below the weight class including the two-pound allowance, if applicable at the time of weigh in.
 - (2) Wrestlers must be eligible to compete before their coach allows them to weigh-in for any weigh-in. Wrestlers weighing in and not eligible to compete will not be allowed to count the weigh-in, and the coach could be subject to further sanctions by the school and the NCHSAA.
 - (3) Even though a wrestler has certified their weight class for post-season competition, they must still abide by the weight loss guidelines and remain cognizant that their weight plan will allow them to descend back down to their certified weight class.
 - (4) After the weight class certification, the weight loss descent plan will remain in effect until the individual regionals.
 - (5) A wrestler cannot use the allowance to descend to a weight class lower than the established MWC on his weight loss plan.

NOTE: If a wrestler's minimum wrestling weight is 107.5 for the year and his MWC for the year is 113, he/she cannot use the two pound allowance to descend down to 106/108 because that wrestler was never eligible for that weight class based upon their initial assessment.
- (f) Monitoring Weight Loss and Certified Minimum Weight - Daily and Match weigh-ins are mandatory.
 - (1) Daily weigh-ins - Should be conducted by the coach. This information should be kept on scratch sheets and be available if requested by the NCHSAA.
 - (2) Match weigh-ins - Must be conducted and observed by all participating coaches in the match or tournament. Weigh-in data **MUST** be entered within 24 hours of match/tournament completion.
 - (3) All daily and match weigh-in sheets must be available for NCHSAA review.

4.15.3 Weight Loss Guidelines

- (a) All wrestlers losing weight are limited to an average weight loss of 1.5% per week throughout the season, beginning the Monday of the week their body composition is assessed.

NOTE: Weight loss as a result of fluid loss is normal for strenuous exercise, BUT a 97% rehydration should take place within a 24-hour period.
- (b) Failure to Meet Weight Guidelines
 - (1) If a wrestler's weight falls below allowed daily weight plan, he/she must compete at the weight class the daily weight plan certifies him/her, or the next highest weight class, even if the weight is substantially below the daily minimum wrestling weight.
 - (2) If a wrestler's weight falls below his/her established certified minimum weight, he/she is not eligible to practice or compete until he/she reaches his/her certified minimum weight.
 - (3) The penalty for wrestling below the established certified minimum weight is possible forfeitures, suspension and additional sanctions.
- (c) Appeals - Forms can be found on the NCHSAA website and must be completed by the school and submitted for approval to the NCHSAA within 14 days of wrestler's original measurements and prior to competing. After 14 days have passed or the wrestler competes, he/she is no longer eligible to appeal. There are two areas of appeals:
 - (1) Appeal to wrestle with body fat percentage below minimum established - If a wrestler's body fat is below the minimum established, 7% for males and 19% for females, permission can be granted for the wrestler to participate if approved by a physician and parents/custodians.
 - (2) Appeal of minimum weight - must be approved by NCHSAA but does not require written approval of physician or parents/custodians. In accordance with NCHSAA weight loss guidelines, a wrestler may appeal his/her initial skinfold measurements. This appeal process is not in place to give the wrestler an opportunity to lose additional weight and be re-measured in order to achieve a lower certified minimum weight. It is available if there is any question on the accuracy of the initial measurements. Some appeals may require an appeals committee approval.

Note - The following is a list of available options:

Option 1: Request school personnel re-compute initial calculations. If 2nd calculation is not accepted, the wrestler can request to be re-measured by the same skinfold measurer. The original weight will be used in the re-calculation. Only the skinfold measure-

ment will be retaken. Wrestler then chooses which measurement to accept.

Option 2: Wrestler does not ask for calculations to be re-computed, or for skinfold measurements to be retaken, but opts to be measured by means approved by the NCHSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (List found on NCHSAA website).

4.15.4 Regionals (Individual)

- (a) Dates
 - (1) Men's and Women's Regional - February 12-13
- (b) Regional Entry Form - Information will be submitted through the NCHSAA approved system.
- (c) Regional Entries and Seeding: - Entries are due to the regional director by 3:00 pm, Thursday, January 28.
 - (1) A school may enter only one student-athlete in each weight class.
 - (2) Any student-athlete listed on the regional entry form can compete at any weight class for which their certified minimum weight qualifies them.
 - (3) Late entries may be submitted to the NCHSAA and must be in by 3:00 p.m. Monday (women) and 9:00 a.m. Wednesday (men) the week of the dual team tournament. Use the form on the NCHSAA website. No entries after this will be accepted.
 - (4) The director will determine the percentage standing of each entry, based on the student-athlete's won-loss record for all varsity matches in which they participated.
 - (5) All regular-season varsity matches, including tournaments, wrestled prior to January 28 shall be used in determining the won-loss record.
 - (6) In cases where the student-athlete has participated in less than 15 matches, the number short of 15 shall count as losses for seeding percentages.
 - (7) Reporting a student-athlete's record incorrectly may disqualify that participant.
 - (8) Forfeits are counted toward the won-loss record, while byes are not.
 - (9) Regional seeding requirements and guidelines will be posted on the NCHSAA Wrestling page of the website.
 - (10) A tie for last place will be broken by:
 - (i) Previous head-to-head competition between those student-athletes, or if they did not meet during the season,
 - (ii) Whichever student-athlete wrestled more matches, or if there is no difference,
 - (iii) A preliminary match between the tied student-athletes.
 - (11) Once the tournament is seeded, no changes will be made.
- (d) Team Points - All bouts prior to filling the 16-line bracket shall be considered preliminary competition and will not receive advancement points.
- (e) Regional Assignments - Assignments, along with the most current information about regional sites and dates, are posted on the NCHSAA website.
- (f) Regional Site Determination - At the regional tournament, a meeting of coaches must be held to select a site and a director for the upcoming season.
 - (1) This is a mandatory meeting that will be conducted by the current regional director.
 - (2) The current director will then notify the NCHSAA office within 10 days after the completion of the tournament.
- (g) Qualifiers to State Tournament - The top four wrestlers in each weight class will qualify from both regionals to the state.
- (h) Admission [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (i) Officials
 - (1) Officials are to be assigned by the Regional Supervisor of the host school.
 - (2) The number of officials that will be assigned will be determined by the number of mats being used. One (1) official per mat will be assigned, plus two (2) additional officials will be assigned.
- (j) Expenses - Each school will bear its own expenses to the regionals.
- (k) Awards - Team plaques will be awarded to each regional champion and runner-up. Awards for individual champions, runner-up and third place in each weight class will be provided.

4.15.5 State Tournament Championships (Individual)

- (a) Dates and Sites - February 18-20. Site: First Horizon (Greensboro) Coliseum.
- (b) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121]
- (c) Awards - The championship and runner-up teams will receive plaques; individual awards will be presented to the top three finishers in each weight class. The minimum participants to constitute a team is seven for women and eight for men.
- (d) Expenses - Teams will either split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) or travel will be reimbursed at the rate of five cents per mile for each qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of 35 cents, whichever revenue share method is higher for member schools.

- (e) Officials - Officials will be assigned by the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services.
- 4.15.6 **Dual Team Wrestling Championships**
- (a) Playoff Qualifiers - RankWrestling Ratings will be used to determine qualifiers and seeding.
 - (b) Once qualifiers have been determined or the seeding process is completed, and teams have been placed in the brackets, at no time will another team be substituted in or added to the playoff brackets for a disqualified team. If a disqualification occurs after the playoffs have concluded, that place or position remains vacant.
 - (c) Dates and Sites - Sites for all classes will be determined by the NCHSAA after all qualifiers are reported.
 - (1) The first round and second rounds will be conducted on January 30.
 - (i) Rounds will be hosted at the site of the team with the highest berth (#1, #2, etc.)
 - (2) The third round and regional finals will be conducted on February 3.
 - (i) Default Match Time(s):
 - (A) 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
 - (B) Participating schools may mutually agree to submit a request to the NCHSAA for an earlier start time due to extenuating circumstances.
 - (ii) Rounds will be hosted by the team that creates the least amount of travel (total mileage) amongst the three (3) other schools participating in that region. In the event a team cannot host, the team with the second least amount of travel (total mileage) will host, and so on.
 - (3) The State Championship will be conducted on February 6, and hosted by the NCHSAA at a neutral facility (TBD).
 - (e) Admission - [See Ticket Pricing Chart page 121] Each team will receive five complimentary passes and three school admin passes.
 - (f) Expenses - Schools will bear their own travel expenses to the dual team tournament through the regional round. The host school will deduct allowable expenses. See financial form for allowable expense.
 - (g) Gate Receipts - [See Resources on Page 121]
 - (h) Match Weigh-ins - Must be conducted by official, unless mutually agreed to do otherwise.
 - (i) Officials -
 - (1) For all rounds of the state playoffs, including the state championships, the NCHSAA Director of Officiating Services will designate a Regional Supervisor, to assign officials for the meets.
 - (2) Starting of the third round of the state playoffs, two (2) officials will be assigned to each mat.
 - (j) NFHS Order of Competition - A random draw must be conducted immediately following the conclusion of weigh-ins by the official or other authorized person to determine the first weight class that will be competed in dual matches. This begins with the regular season and continues through the individual state championship.
 - (k) Awards - Team plaques will be given to the winner and runner-up teams at both the championship and regional levels. Members of the winning and runner-up teams will receive individual awards (maximum 30).
 - (l) Dual Meet Tie-breaking Procedure (Regular Season and Playoffs) - The tiebreaker in the National Federation rule book must be used in the event a tie score exists in any conference dual meet or conference tournament, or in any dual team playoff match.

V. Resources

NCHSAA/Member School Revenue Shares for Playoffs and Championships

Sport	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Regional Final	State Championship
64-Team Brackets	Schools: 85% NCHSAA: 15%		Schools: 80% NCHSAA: 20%	Schools: 75% NCHSAA: 25%	Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%	Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%
32-Team Brackets	Schools: 85% NCHSAA: 15%		Schools: 80% NCHSAA: 20%	See Regional Final	Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%	Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%
Dual Team Wrestling	Schools: 85% NCHSAA: 15%		Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%			Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%
Flag Football	Schools: 85% NCHSAA: 15%		Schools: 75% NCHSAA: 25%		Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%	Schools: 67% NCHSAA: 33%

INDIVIDUAL SPORTS

In individual sports (cross-country, indoor track, track and field, swimming/diving, golf, individual wrestling, and tennis) each team bears its own expenses to regionals. In state finals for individual sports, EITHER 1) teams will split a share of net ticket revenue (gross ticket revenue less event expenses) OR 2) travel will be reimbursed up to \$0.05 per mile per qualifier, including coach, up to a maximum of \$0.35, whichever revenue share method is higher for the member schools.

Playoff Ticket Prices (Subject to Additional Transaction/Processing Fees, Facility Convenience or Service Charge)

Round	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Regional Final	State Championship
FALL						
Cheerleading						\$15.00
Cross Country						\$15.00
Flag Football	\$10.00		\$12.00		\$12.00	\$15.00
Football	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$16.00	\$20.00
Men's Soccer	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$15.00
Women's Volleyball	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$15.00
WINTER						
Basketball	\$10.00 1 Game \$12.00 2 Games	\$10.00 1 Game \$12.00 2 Games	\$12.00 1 Game \$13.00 2 Games	\$12.00 1 Game \$13.00 2 Games	\$15.00	\$20.00
Indoor Track						\$15.00
Swimming and Diving					\$5.00 - Diving Only \$10.00 - Swimming Only	\$5.00 - Dive only \$15.00 - Swimming only
Wrestling-Dual Team	First and Second rounds - \$10.00		Regional Semifinal and Regional Final Rounds - \$12.00			\$15.00 (plus Ticketmaster fees)
Wrestling-Individual					\$10.00	Single Day - \$15.00 All Sessions - \$30.00 Finals only - \$10.00 (plus Ticketmaster fees)
SPRING						
Baseball and Softball	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00/Game	\$12.00 G1 \$15.00 G2 and G3 \$25.00 All Games
Lacrosse	\$10.00 1 Game \$12.00 2 Games	\$10.00 1 Game \$12.00 2 Games	\$12.00 1 Game \$13.00 2 Games	\$12.00 1 Game \$13.00 2 Games	\$12.00 1 Game \$13.00 2 Games	\$15.00
Track and Field					\$10.00	\$15.00
Men's Volleyball	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$15.00
Women's Soccer	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$15.00

Sanctioning Guidelines

Step 1: Determine participants (number of schools and/or states). LEFT SIDE (Can only be 1 box)

Step 2: Once participants have been determined, determine event type. TOP ROW

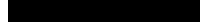
Step 3: Choose all applicable boxes for your event. (Could be multiple boxes)

Step 4: If at anytime the event matches to a red, the event must be NFHS sanctioned.

Step 5: If the event matches a striped box and no reds, the event must be NCHSAA Interstate sanctioned.

Step 6: If the event matches only yellow, the event does not need sanctioning.

	Only NC schools involved	Event only involves state(s) that border NC (GA, SC, TN and VA)	Event has at least 1 non-bordering state involved	International team or school involved	Event co-sponsored or titled in name of organization outside of school community (college/university, theme park, apparel company)
Only NC schools involved	Not Applicable				No Sanctioning Required
1 vs. 1	No Sanctioning Required	No Sanctioning Required	No Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required
6 or more states involved AND 9 or more schools involved	Not Applicable		NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required
6 or more states involved AND 8 or less schools involved	Not Applicable		NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required
5 or less states involved AND 9 or more schools involved	No Sanctioning Required	NCHSAA Interstate Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required
5 or less states involved AND 8 or less schools involved	No Sanctioning Required	NCHSAA Interstate Sanctioning Required	NCHSAA Interstate Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required	NFHS Sanctioning Required

	NFHS Sanctioning Required http://www.nfhs.org/sanctioning/
	NCHSAA Interstate Sanctioning Required
	No Sanctioning Required (Other state(s) may require sanctioning)
	Not Applicable

Scrimmages must be sanctioned if they meet the above criteria

Calendar Dates and Deadlines for 2026-2027

BASEBALL

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Seeding: May 10
First Round: May 11
Second Round: May 14
Third Round: May 18
Fourth Round: May 21
Regionals: May 25-29
State: June 2-5

BASKETBALL

Non-Football Schools

1st Practice: Oct. 19
1st Contest: Oct. 28

Football Schools

1st Practice: Nov. 2
1st Contest: Nov. 11
Seeding: Feb. 20
First Round: Feb. 23
Second Round: Feb. 25
Third Round: Feb. 27
Fourth Round: Mar. 1
Regional: Mar. 3-6
State: Mar. 10-13

CHEERLEADING

Invitational: Dec. 5

CROSS-COUNTRY

1st Practice: Jul. 29
1st Contest: Aug. 10
Reporting Deadline: Oct. 24, 11:59 p.m.
Regional: Oct. 30 or 31
State: Nov. 6-7

FLAG FOOTBALL

1st Practice: Aug. 31
1st Contest: Sept. 9
Seeding: Oct. 28
First/Second Round: Oct. 31
Third/Fourth Round: Nov. 7
Regionals: Nov. 11
State: Nov. 14

FOOTBALL

1st Practice: Jul. 29
1st Scrimmage: Aug. 7
1st Contest: Aug. 21
Seeding: Oct. 31
First Round: Nov. 6
Second Round: Nov. 13
Third Round: Nov. 20
Fourth Round: Nov. 27
Regional: Dec. 4
State: Dec. 10-12

INDOOR TRACK

1st Practice: Nov. 2
1st Contest: Nov. 11
Reporting Deadline: Feb. 4, 9:00 pm
State: Feb. 9-12

LACROSSE

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Seeding: May 6
First Round: May 11
Second Round: May 14
Third Round: May 18
Fourth Round: May 21
Regional: May 26
State: May 28-29

MEN'S GOLF

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Reporting Deadline: Apr. 28, 9:00 pm
Regionals: May 3 or 4
State: May 10-11

MEN'S SOCCER

1st Practice: Jul. 29
1st Contest: Aug. 10
Seeding: Oct. 29
First Round: Nov. 2
Second Round: Nov. 5
Third Round: Nov. 9
Fourth Round: Nov. 12
Regional: Nov. 17
State: Nov. 19-21

MEN'S TENNIS

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1

Individual
Reporting Deadline: Apr. 26, 3:00 pm
Pre-Regional: April 19
Regional: April 30-May
State: May 7-8

Dual Team

Seeding: Apr. 23
First Round: Apr. 26
Second Round: Apr. 28
Third Round: May 3
Fourth Round: May 5
Regional: May 11
State: May 14-15

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Seeding: May 6
First Round: May 8
Second Round: May 11
Third Round: May 13
Fourth Round: May 15
Regionals: May 18
States: May 22

SOFTBALL

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Seeding: May 10
First Round: May 11
Second Round: May 14
Third Round: May 18
Fourth Round: May 21
Regionals: May 25-29
State: June 2-5

SWIMMING and DIVING

1st Practice: Nov. 2
1st Contest: Nov. 11
Reporting Deadline: Jan. 23, 11:59 pm
Regional: Jan. 28 - 30
State: Feb. 3 - 6

TRACK and FIELD

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Reporting Deadline: May 1, 9:00 p.m.
Regionals: May 7-8
State: May 12-15

WOMEN'S GOLF

1st Practice: Jul. 29
1st Contest: Aug. 10
Reporting Deadline: Oct. 14, 9:00 pm
Regional: Oct. 19 or 20
State: Oct. 26-28

WOMEN'S SOCCER

1st Practice: Feb. 15
1st Contest: March 1
Seeding: May 6
First Round: May 10
Second Round: May 13
Third Round: May 17
Fourth Round: May 20
Regional: May 25
State: May 27-29

WOMEN'S TENNIS

1st Practice: Jul. 29
1st Contest: Aug. 10

Individual
Reporting Deadline: Oct. 12, 3:00 pm
Pre-Regional: Oct. 5
Regional: Oct. 16-17
State: Oct. 23-24

Dual Team

Bracketing: Oct. 9
First Round: Oct. 12
Second Round: Oct. 14
Third Round: Oct. 19
Fourth Round: Oct. 21
Regional: Oct. 27
State: Oct. 30-31

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

1st Practice: Jul. 29
1st Contest: Aug. 10
Seeding: Oct. 15
First Round: Oct. 17
Second Round: Oct. 20
Third Round: Oct. 22
Fourth Round: Oct. 24
Regional: Oct. 27
State: Oct. 30-31

WRESTLING

1st Practice: Nov. 2
1st Contest: Nov. 11

Dual Team
Seeding: Jan. 28
1st/2nd Round: Jan. 30
3rd/Regionals: Feb. 3
State: Feb. 5-6

Individual

Reporting Deadline: Jan. 28, 3:00 pm
Regional: Feb. 12-13
State: Feb. 18-20

DEAD PERIODS

FALL:
Jul. 29 - Aug. 18, 2026

WINTER:
Nov. 2 - Nov. 22, 2026
Last 5 student days of first semester

SPRING:
Feb. 15- Mar. 7, 2027
Last 10 student days of second semester

SUMMER:
July 5-July 11, 2027, July 19-25, 2027

1A Only Conferences

Atlantic 1A

Bear Grass Charter School - 1A
Cape Hatteras Secondary School - 1A
Columbia High School - 1A
Hobgood Charter School - 1A
Mattamuskeet School - 1A
Ocracoke School - 1A

Central Tar Heel 1A

Ascend Leadership Academy - 1A
Central Carolina Academy - 1A
Chatham Charter School - 1A
Clover Garden School - 1A
The Hawbridge School - 1A
River Mill Academy - 1A
Southern Wake Academy - 1A
Woods Charter School - 1A

Eastern Carolina 1A

North East Carolina Preparatory School - 1A
North Edgecombe High School - 1A
Rocky Mount Preparatory School - 1A
Sallie B. Howard High School - 1A
Washington County High School - 1A
Wilson Preparatory Academy - 1A

Independent 1A

Durham Charter - 1A
Eastern NC School for the Deaf - 1A
Macon Early College - 1A
North Carolina School for the Deaf - 1A
Onslow Early College - 1A
Revolution Academy - 1A
TMSA Charlotte - 1A

1A/2A Conferences

Carolina 1A/2A

East Bladen High School - 2A
East Columbus Junior-Senior High School - 1A
Hobbton High School - 2A
Lakewood High School - 2A
North Duplin Junior-Senior High School - 2A
Union High School - 2A
West Columbus High School - 2A

Coastal Plains 1A/2A

East Carteret High School - 2A
Jones Senior High School - 1A
Lejeune High School - 2A
Northside High School (Pinetown) - 1A
Pamlico County High School - 2A
Southside High School - 2A

Greater Triad 1A/2A

Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School - 2A
Chatham Central High School - 1A
North Stokes High School - 1A
South Davidson Middle and High School - 1A
South Stokes High School - 2A
The College Prep and Leadership Academy - 1A
Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy - 1A

Northwest Piedmont 1A/2A

Bethany Community School - 1A
Cornerstone Charter Academy - 2A
Millennium Charter Academy - 1A
Phoenix Academy - 1A
Piedmont Classical High School - 2A
The North Carolina Leadership Academy - 1A
Triad Math and Science Academy - 1A

Roanoke River 1A/2A

KIPP Pride High - 1A
Northampton County High School - 2A
Northwest Halifax Collegiate and Technical Academy - 2A
Southeast Collegiate Prep Academy - 1A
Warren County High School - 2A
Weldon STEM High School Career Academies - 1A

Smoky Mountain 1A/2A

Andrews High School - 1A
Blue Ridge Early College - 1A
Cherokee High School - 2A
Hayesville High School - 2A
Highlands School - 1A
Hiwassee Dam High School - 1A
Murphy High School - 2A
Nantahala School - 1A
Robbinsville High School - 1A
Rosman High School - 1A
Summit Charter Academy - 1A
Swain County High School - 2A
Tri-County Early College High School - 1A

Triangle North 1A/2A

Discovery Charter - 1A
Eno River Academy - 2A
Excelsior Classical Academy - 1A
Falls Lake Academy - 1A
Henderson Collegiate - 2A
Oxford Preparatory School - 1A
Vance Charter School - 1A

1A/2A/3A Conferences

Catawba River 1A/2A/3A

Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy - 1A
 Carolina International School - 1A
 Jackson Day School - 1A
 Mountain Island Charter School - 2A
 NCSSM - Morganton - 1A
 Piedmont Community Charter School - 3A
 Queen's Grant High School - 2A
 Sugar Creek Charter - 2A
 Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy - 1A

Diamond Nine 1A/2A/3A

East Wake Academy - 2A
 Franklin Academy - 2A
 Neuse Charter School - 1A
 NCSSM - Durham - 3A
 Raleigh Charter High School - 2A
 Research Triangle High School - 2A
 Roxboro Community School - 2A
 Triangle Math and Science Academy - 2A
 Voyager Academy - 2A

2A Only Conference

Albemarle (AAC) 2A

Bertie High School - 2A
 Camden County High School - 2A
 Gates County Senior High School - 2A
 John A. Holmes High School - 2A
 Manteo High School - 2A
 Perquimans County High School - 2A

2A Independent

Wilson's Mills High School - 2A

2A/3A Conferences

Eastern Plains 2A/3A

Ayden-Grifton High School - 3A
 Beddingfield High School - 3A
 Farmville Central High School - 3A
 Greene Central High School - 3A
 Kinston High School - 3A
 Tarboro High School - 2A

Swine Valley 2A/3A

Goldsboro High School - 3A
 James Kenan High School - 3A
 Midway High School - 3A
 Princeton High School - 3A
 Rosewood High School - 2A
 Spring Creek High School - 3A
 Wallace-Rose Hill High School - 3A

Western Highlands 2A/3A

Avery County High School - 2A
 Charles D. Owen High School - 3A
 Hendersonville High School - 3A
 Madison High School - 3A
 Mitchell High School - 2A
 Mountain Heritage High School - 3A
 Polk County High School - 3A

Yadkin Valley 2A/3A

Albemarle High School - 2A
 Gray Stone Day School - 2A
 North Rowan High School - 2A
 North Stanly High School - 3A
 South Stanly High School - 2A
 Union Academy - 3A

2A/3A/4A Conferences

Catawba Shores 2A/3A/4A

Bradford Preparatory School - 2A
 Christ the King Catholic High School - 2A
 Community School of Davidson - 2A
 Corvian Community School - 2A
 Lake Norman Charter School - 4A
 Langtree Charter Academy - 2A
 Lincoln Charter School - 4A
 Pine Lake Preparatory - 3A

Mountain Valley 2A/3A/4A

Alleghany High School - 2A
 Ashe County High School - 4A
 East Wilkes High School - 2A
 Elkin High School - 2A
 North Wilkes High School - 3A
 Starmount High School - 2A
 West Wilkes High School - 3A
 Wilkes Central High School - 4A

Quad County 2A/3A/4A

American Leadership Academy Johnston - 2A
 Bunn High School - 4A
 Louisburg Magnet High School - 3A
 Nash Central High School - 4A
 Roanoke Rapids High School - 4A
 Wake Preparatory Academy - 3A

Southern Piedmont 2A/3A/4A

Bessemer City High School - 3A
 Burns High School - 4A
 Cherryville High School - 2A
 East Gaston High School - 4A
 Highland School of Technology - 2A
 Lincolnnton High School - 3A
 Shelby High School - 3A
 Stuart W. Cramer High School - 4A
 West Lincoln High School - 3A

3A Only Conference

Central Carolina 3A

East Davidson High School - 3A
 Providence Grove High School - 3A
 Thomasville High School - 3A
 Trinity High School - 3A
 West Davidson High School - 3A
 Wheatmore High School - 3A

3A/4A Conferences

East Central 3A/4A

Clinton High School - 4A
 East Duplin High School - 4A
 Heide Trask Senior High School - 3A
 Pender High School - 3A
 South Lenoir High School - 3A
 Southwest Onslow High School - 4A

Four Rivers 3A/4A

Eastern Randolph High School - 3A
 Jordan-Matthews High School - 4A
 North Moore High School - 3A
 Northwood High School - 3A
 Southwestern Randolph High School - 4A
 Uwharrie Charter Academy - 4A

Northwest 3A/4A

East Surry High School - 3A
 Forbush High School - 4A
 Mount Airy High School - 3A
 North Surry High School - 4A
 Surry Central High School - 3A
 West Stokes High School - 4A

Western Piedmont 3A/4A

CHASE High School - 3A
 East Burke High School - 4A
 East Rutherford High School - 3A
 Hibriten High School - 4A
 Jimmy C. Draughn High School - 3A
 Robert L. Patton High School - 3A
 Rutherfordton-Spindale Central High School - 4A
 West Caldwell High School - 3A

3A/4A/5A Conferences

Mid-State 3A/4A/5A

Bartlett Yancey High School - 3A
 Carver High School - 4A
 Dalton L. McMichael High School - 3A
 John M. Morehead High School - 4A
 Reidsville High School - 4A
 Rockingham County High School - 5A
 Walkertown High School - 3A

Northeastern Coastal 3A/4A/5A

Currituck County High School - 5A
 First Flight High School - 4A
 Hertford County High School - 3A
 Martin County High School - 3A
 Northeastern High School - 3A
 Pasquotank County High School - 3A

Southeastern 3A/4A/5A

Fairmont High School - 4A
 Red Springs High School - 4A
 South Brunswick High School - 5A
 South Columbus High School - 3A
 West Bladen High School - 3A
 Whiteville High School - 3A

4A Only Conference

Three Rivers 4A

Eastern Wayne High School - 4A
 North Johnston High School - 4A
 North Lenoir High School - 4A
 North Pitt High School - 4A
 SouthWest Edgecombe High School - 4A
 Washington High School - 4A
 West Craven High School - 4A

4A/5A Conferences

Big Seven 4A/5A

Carrboro High School - 4A
 Cedar Ridge High School - 5A
 Durham School of the Arts - 5A
 J.F. Webb High School - 5A
 Orange High School - 5A
 Seaforth High School - 5A
 South Granville High School - 5A

Mountain Eight 4A/5A

Brevard High School - 4A
 East Henderson High School - 4A
 Franklin High School - 5A
 North Henderson High School - 5A
 Pisgah High School - 4A
 Smoky Mountain High School - 5A
 Tuscola High School - 4A
 West Henderson High School - 5A

PAC Seven 4A/5A

Central Davidson High School - 4A
 High Point Central High School - 5A
 Ledford Senior High School - 4A
 Lexington Senior High School - 4A
 Montgomery Central High School - 5A
 Randleman High School - 4A
 T. Wingate Andrews High School - 4A

Rocky River 4A/5A

Anson High School - 4A
Central Academy of Technology and Arts - 4A
Forest Hills High School - 5A
Monroe High School - 5A
Mount Pleasant High School - 4A
Parkwood High School - 5A
West Stanly High School - 4A

South Piedmont 4A/5A

Concord High School - 5A
East Rowan High School - 5A
Jay M. Robinson High School - 5A
Jesse C. Carson High School - 5A
Northwest Cabarrus High School - 5A
Salisbury High School - 4A
South Rowan High School - 4A
West Rowan High School - 5A

Western Foothills 4A/5A

Bandys High School - 4A
Bunker Hill High School - 4A
East Lincoln High School - 5A
Fred T. Foard High School - 4A
Hickory High School - 5A
Maiden High School - 4A
Newton-Conover High School - 4A
North Lincoln High School - 5A
West Iredell High School - 4A

4A/5A/6A Conference

Mid-Carolina 4A/5A/6A

Eastern Alamance High School - 5A
Graham High School - 4A
Hugh M. Cummings High School - 4A
Person High School - 5A
Southeast Alamance High School - 5A
Southern Alamance High School - 6A
Walter M. Williams High School - 6A
Western Alamance High School - 5A

5A/6A Conferences

Big East 5A/6A

Charles B. Aycock High School - 5A
Fike High School - 5A
James B. Hunt High School - 5A
Northern Nash High School - 6A
Rocky Mount High School - 5A
Southern Nash High School - 5A
Southern Wayne High School - 5A

Big South 5A/6A

Ashbrook High School - 6A
Crest High School - 5A
Forestview High School - 5A
Hunter Huss High School - 5A
Kings Mountain High School - 6A
North Gaston High School - 5A
South Point High School - 5A

Coastal 5A/6A

Croatan High School - 5A
Dixon High School - 5A
Havelock High School - 5A
Northside High School (Jacksonville) - 5A
Richlands High School - 5A
Swansboro High School - 6A
West Carteret High School - 5A

Eastern Sandhills 5A/6A

Douglas Byrd High School - 5A
E.E. Smith High School - 6A
Saint Pauls High School - 5A
Seventy-First High School - 6A
South View High School - 6A
Westover High School - 6A

Mountain 5A/6A

A.C. Reynolds High School - 6A
Asheville High School / SILSA - 6A
Clyde A. Erwin High School - 5A
Enka High School - 5A
North Buncombe High School - 5A
T.C. Roberson High School - 6A

Piedmont Triad 5A/6A

Mount Tabor High School - 6A
North Davidson High School - 5A
North Forsyth High School - 5A
Oak Grove High School - 5A
Robert B. Glenn High School - 6A
Simon G. Atkins Academic & Technology H.S. - 5A

TAAC Six 5A/6A

Asheboro High School - 6A
Eastern Guilford High School - 6A
Northeast Guilford High School - 5A
Northern Guilford High School - 6A
Southeast Guilford High School - 6A
Southern Guilford High School - 5A

6A Only Conference

Carolina Pines 6A

Harnett Central High School - 6A
 Lee County High School - 6A
 South Johnston High School - 6A
 Southern Lee High School - 6A
 Triton High School - 6A
 Union Pines High School - 6A
 West Johnston High School - 6A
 Western Harnett High School - 6A

6A/7A Conferences

Big Carolina 6A/7A

D.H. Conley High School - 7A
 Jacksonville High School - 6A
 Junius H. Rose High School - 6A
 New Bern High School - 7A
 South Central High School - 7A
 White Oak High School - 6A

Greater Metro (GMAC) 6A/7A

A.L. Brown High School - 7A
 Central Cabarrus High School - 6A
 Cox Mill High School - 7A
 Harding University High School - 6A
 Hickory Ridge High School - 7A
 Olympic High School - 6A
 Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology - 6A
 West Cabarrus High School - 7A

Metro 6A/7A

Ben L. Smith High School - 6A
 Grimsley Senior High School - 7A
 James B. Dudley High School - 6A
 Lucy Ragsdale High School - 6A
 Page High School - 7A
 Southwest Guilford High School - 7A
 Western Guilford High School - 6A

North Piedmont 6A/7A

Davie County High School - 7A
 Lake Norman High School - 7A
 Mooresville High School - 7A
 North Iredell High School - 6A
 South Iredell High School - 7A
 Statesville High School - 6A

Northern Six 6A/7A

East Wake High School - 7A
 Franklinton High School - 6A
 Heritage High School - 7A
 Knightdale High School - 7A
 Vance County High School - 6A
 Wake Forest High School - 7A

Northwestern 6A/7A

Alexander Central High School - 6A
 Freedom High School - 6A
 McDowell High School - 7A
 South Caldwell High School - 6A
 St. Stephens High School - 6A
 Watauga High School - 6A

Southern Carolina 6A/7A

Charlotte Catholic High School - 6A
 Cuthbertson High School - 7A
 Marvin Ridge High School - 7A
 Piedmont High School - 6A
 Porter Ridge High School - 7A
 Sun Valley High School - 6A
 Weddington High School - 7A

Tobacco Road 6A/7A

Chapel Hill High School - 7A
 East Chapel Hill High School - 6A
 Hillside High School - 7A
 Northern Durham High School - 6A
 Riverside High School - 7A
 Southern School of Energy and Sustainability - 7A

Tri-County 6A/7A

Cape Fear High School - 7A
 Gray's Creek High School - 6A
 Lumberton Senior High School - 7A
 Purnell Swett High School - 7A
 Scotland High School - 6A
 Terry Sanford High School - 6A

Triangle Six 6A/7A

Cardinal Gibbons High School - 7A
 Cary High School - 7A
 Felton Grove High School - 6A
 Holly Springs High School - 7A
 Middle Creek High School - 6A
 Sanderson High School - 7A

6A/7A/8A Conference

Carolina Coast 6A/7A/8A

Emsley A. Laney High School - 8A
 Eugene Ashley High School - 7A
 John T. Hoggard High School - 8A
 New Hanover High School - 7A
 North Brunswick High School - 7A
 Topsail High School - 7A
 West Brunswick High School - 6A

7A Only Conference

Greater Neuse River 7A

Clayton High School - 7A
Cleveland High School - 7A
Fuquay-Varina High School - 7A
Garner Magnet High School - 7A
Smithfield-Selma High School - 7A
South Garner High School - 7A
Southeast Raleigh High School - 7A

7A/8A Conferences

Central Piedmont 7A/8A

East Forsyth High School - 7A
Northwest Guilford High School - 8A
Parkland High School - 7A
Richard J. Reynolds High School - 7A
Ronald W. Reagan High School - 7A
West Forsyth High School - 8A

Greater Charlotte 7A/8A

Garinger High School - 8A
Hopewell High School - 7A
Myers Park High School - 8A
South Mecklenburg High School - 8A
West Mecklenburg High School - 7A
William Amos Hough High School - 8A

Meck Power Six 7A/8A

David W. Butler High School - 7A
Independence High School - 7A
Julius L. Chambers High School - 8A
Mallard Creek High School - 8A
North Mecklenburg High School - 7A
West Charlotte High School - 8A

Mid-South 7A/8A

Hoke County High School - 8A
Jack Britt High School - 7A
Overhills High School - 7A
Pine Forest High School - 7A
Pinecrest High School - 8A
Richmond Senior High School - 7A

Southwestern 7A/8A

Ardrey Kell High School - 8A
Ballantyne Ridge High School - 7A
East Mecklenburg High School - 8A
Palisades High School - 8A
Providence High School - 8A
Rocky River High School - 7A

8A Only Conferences

CAP 8A

Athens Drive Magnet High School - 8A
Corinth Holders High School - 8A
Leesville Road High School - 8A
Millbrook High School - 8A
Needham B. Broughton High School - 8A
Rolesville High School - 8A
Wakefield High School - 8A
William G. Enloe High School - 8A

Quad City Seven 8A

Apex Friendship High School - 8A
Apex High School - 8A
Charles E. Jordan High School - 8A
Green Hope High School - 8A
Green Level High School - 8A
Panther Creek High School - 8A
Willow Spring High School - 8A

Football Only

Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy - 1A
Mountain Island Charter School - 2A
Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy - 1A
Albemarle High School - 2A
North Rowan High School - 2A
North Stanly High School - 3A
South Stanly High School - 2A
Union Academy - 3A

NCHSAA Playoff Broadcast Rights Fee Chart

Based on the Association's partnership with the NFHS Network and Sinclair Broadcasting Group (SBG), the NCHSAA is pleased to offer broadcasters the opportunity to broadcast NCHSAA Playoff Contests. The Association requires all broadcasters to complete the NCHSAA's Post-Season Broadcast Request form to gain approval to broadcast playoff contests. Once the online form has been submitted, stations will receive notification of approval or denial. The station or outlet should pay the appropriate fee for the broadcast, as shown below. An athletic director may allow an audio-only/radio broadcast without prior NCHSAA Approval provided the outlet is in good standing with the school.

AUDIO-ONLY/RADIO (PLAYOFF RIGHTS FEES)

Football and Basketball	\$100.00 per game
All Other Sports	\$50.00 per game

Any NCHSAA Playoff event declined by the NFHS Network or the NCHSAA's Television Partner, SBG, is eligible for third-party video production and distribution at the rates listed below. Schools may elect to produce declined events for streaming on the NFHS Network and fees for those productions will be waived provided the event is EXCLUSIVELY distributed either live or on-demand through the NFHS Network's streaming and technology infrastructure. All fees are payable to the host school of the contest for inclusion on the financial report.

Network streaming software and access to the Network will be made available to Schools at no cost provided that the School utilizes both the consumer subscription and video player provided by NFHS Network.

FOOTBALL (VIDEO)

Internet Stream or Cable Community Access Channel	School or Neutral Site	Championship Site
Live	\$500.00 per game	\$1,000.00 per game
Delayed/On-Demand	\$250.00 per game	\$500.00 per game
Over-the-air Television Broadcast	School or Neutral Site	Championship Site
Live	\$1,500.00 per game	\$3,000.00 per game
Delayed/Video-on-Demand	\$750.00 per game	\$1,500.00 per game

BASKETBALL (VIDEO)

Internet Stream or Cable Community Access Channel	School or Neutral Site	Championship Site
Live	\$250.00 per game	\$750.00 per game
Delayed/On-Demand	\$150.00 per game	\$250.00 per game
Over-the-air Television Broadcast	School or Neutral Site	Championship Site
Live	\$1,000.00 per game	\$2,000.00 per game
Delayed/Video-on-Demand	\$500.00 per game	\$1,000.00 per game

ALL OTHER SPORTS (VIDEO)

Internet Stream or Cable Community Access Channel	School or Neutral Site	Championship Site
Live	\$150.00 per game	\$300.00 per game
Delayed/On-Demand	\$75.00 per game	\$150.00 per game
Over-the-air Television Broadcast	School or Neutral Site	Championship Site
Live	\$500.00 per game	\$1,500.00 per game
Delayed/Video-on-Demand	\$250.00 per game	\$750.00 per game

NCHSAA HALL OF FAME MEMBERS

CLASS OF 1987

Bob Jamieson, Greensboro
Leon Brogden, Wilmington
Dave Harris, Charlotte

CLASS OF 1988

L.J. "Hap" Perry, Chapel Hill
Tony Simeon, High Point
W.C. Clary, Winston-Salem

CLASS OF 1989

Russell Blunt, Durham
Lee Stone, Asheboro

CLASS OF 1990

Bill Eutsler, Rockingham
Harvey Reid, Jr., Wilson
Jay Robinson, Chapel Hill
Simon Terrell, Chapel Hill

CLASS OF 1991

Frank Mock, Kinston
Thell Overman, Wallace
Richard "Bud" Phillips, Greenville
Raymond Rhodes, Raleigh

CLASS OF 1992

Everett L. "Shu" Carlton, Gastonia
George J. Cushwa, Jr., Thomasville
Norman Harbin, Winston-Salem
James "Choppy" Wagner, Washington
Modelle Walsh, Robbinsville
Everett L. "Shorty" Waters, Jacksonville
Thomas H. "Toby" Webb, Albemarle
John "Jack" Young, Ahoskie

CLASS OF 1993

Donald Bonner, Rowland
Frank Barger, Hickory
George Whitfield, Hamlet

CLASS OF 1994

George "Buck" Hardee, Wilmington
Doris Howard, Fayetteville
Bruce Peterson, Asheville
Homer Thompson, Winston-Salem

CLASS OF 1995

Willie Bradshaw, Durham
Robert P. Colvin, Robbinsville
Joe Eblen, Asheville
A.B. "Gus" Purcell, Charlotte
George Wingfield, Reidsville

CLASS OF 1996

Paul Gay, Sanford
"Honey" Johnson, Elizabeth City
Glenn Nixon, Clayton
Bob Sawyer, Greensboro

CLASS OF 1997

Chuck Clements, Gastonia
Dr. Army Armstrong, Rocky Mount
David Lash, Winston-Salem
Larry Lindsey, Wake Forest

CLASS OF 1998

Gerald "Pearlie" Allen, Shelby
Norris "Pee Wee" Jones, Asheville
Bill Mayhew, Troutman
Craig Phillips, Middleburg
Mary Garber, Winston-Salem
Marvin D. "Red" Hoffman, Wilkesboro
Andy Miller, Asheville

CLASS OF 1999

Charles "Babe" Howell, Webster
Paul Jones, Kinston
Jerry McGee, Elizabeth City
Jim Mills, Raleigh
Joe Mills, Raleigh
Donna Norman, High Point
Bob Paroli, Fayetteville

CLASS OF 2000

Charles England, Lexington
Marion Kirby, Greensboro
Don Patrick, Newton
Hilda Worthington, Farmville

CLASS OF 2001

Jack Groce, Boone
Tom Northington, Greensboro
Walter Rogers, Roxboro
Wally Shelton, Mount Airy
John Swofford, Greensboro
Morris Walker, West Jefferson
Herb Young, Cary

CLASS OF 2002

Cliff Brookshire, Pisgah Forest
Andrea Cozart, High Point
Bill Friday, Chapel Hill
Herman Hines, Reidsville
Bob Lee, Southern Pines
Ray Oxendine, Pembroke

CLASS OF 2003

Gerald Austin, Greensboro
Pat Harrell, Hertford
Hoy Isaacs, Reidsville
Raymond "Buddy" Luper, Fayetteville
David Maynard, Burlington
Clarence Moore, Asheville
Presnell Mull, Lexington
Thomas Pryor, Edneyville
Stuart Tripp, Ayden

CLASS OF 2004

Mike Brown, Wilmington
John Clougherty, Raleigh
James "Rabbit" Fulghum, Snow Hill
Ed Peeler, Shelby
Ned Sampson, Pembroke
Dave Smith, Washington
Kathy Stefanou, Raleigh
Carroll Wright, Canton

CLASS OF 2005

Tim Brayboy, Cary
Jim Burch, Raleigh
Dick Knox, Chapel Hill
Tom McQuaid, Beaufort
Mike Raybon, Jamestown

CLASS OF 2006

Al Black, Spring Lake
Tommy Hunt, Durham
Pat Gainey, Taylorsville
Charlie Gregory, Randleman
Joan Riggs, Swansboro
Don Saine, Gastonia

CLASS OF 2007

Stuart Allen, Charlotte
Daryl Barnes, Lexington
Bob Brooks, Elizabeth City
Bill Carver, Fayetteville
Elton Hawley, Charlotte
Fred Landford, Hudson
Bill Rucker, Black Mountain
Ronald Scott, Bear Creek

CLASS OF 2008

Charlie Adams, Chapel Hill
Bill Bost, Catawba
Ken Browning, Durham
Richard Hicks, Durham
Mac Morris, Greensboro
Jan Stanley, Hendersonville
Tim Stevens, Raleigh
Billy Widgeon, Morehead City

CLASS OF 2009

Brad Faircloth, Greensboro
Gilbert Ferrell, Wilson
Bruce Hardin, Charlotte
Jim Maxwell, Durham
Vicki Peoples, Raleigh
Pete Stout, Salisbury
Carolyn Shannonhouse, Cary

CLASS OF 2010

Harvey Brooks, Princeton
Tunney Brooks, Lumberton
Tom Brown, Maiden
Bob Catapano, Raleigh
Joe Hunt, Hendersonville
Carolyn Rogers, Hertford
Que Tucker, Morrisville

CLASS OF 2011

Rosalie Bardin, Wilson
Sheila Boles, Wilmington
Jimmy Flemming, Creedmoor
John Frye, Cameron
Jerry Johnson, Goldsboro
Mike Matheson, Newton
John Morris, High Point
Tom Suiter, Raleigh

CLASS OF 2012

Donnie Baxter, Asheboro
Ronnie Chavis, Pembroke
Lawrence Dunn, Raleigh
Doug Henderson, Greensboro
Lindsay Page, Yanceyville
Larry Rhodes, Gastonia
Robert Steele, Salisbury
Jim Taylor, Shelby

CLASS OF 2013

Bobby Guthrie, Raleigh
Jack Huss, Rutherfordton
Lindsey Linker, Chapel Hill
Shelly Marsh, Smithfield
Cindi Simmons, Webster
Sam Story, Burlington
Ron Vincent, Greenville

CLASS OF 2014

Jack Holley, Teachey
Ralph Holloway, Morehead City
Joe Miller, Wilmington
Chris Norman, Shelby
Dave Odom, Winston-Salem
Moyer Smith, Chapel Hill
Rick Strunk, Carrboro
Jerry Winterton, Cary

CLASS OF 2015

Gil Bowman, Fayetteville
Mac Cumbo, Hendersonville
Suzanne Grayson, Kings Mountain
Bill Harrison, Fayetteville
Sherry Norris, Chapel Hill
Gloria Price, Charlotte
Tim Taft, Chapel Hill
Jimmy Tillman, Wilson

CLASS OF 2016

Donald Davis, Burlington
Herb Goins, High Point
Leroy Holden, Cornelius
Robert "Bob" Murphrey, Ayden
Bill Steed, Mocksville
Mike Silver, Old Fort
Ralph "Jug" Wilson, Glen Alpine
Marty P. Woods, Stoneville

CLASS OF 2017

James "Jim" Biggerstaff, Belmont
Allen Brown, Thomasville
David Elder, Hickory
Robert "Bob" McRae, Kings Mountain
Herb Sampsel, Statesville
Donnie Simpson, Elizabeth City

David "Dave" Thomas, Goldsboro
Earl Vaughan, Fayetteville

CLASS OF 2018

Jim Brett, Tarboro
Marsha Crump, Hickory
Bob Lewis, Clinton
Charles A. McCullough, Sr., Charlotte
D. Gordon Patrick, Morehead City
Phillip "Marc" Payne, West Jefferson
Robert "Bobby" Poss, Asheville
Colon Starrett, Thomasville

CLASS OF 2019

Delano "Cobby" Deans, Ayden
Stacy Lail, Jr., Rutherfordton
Terry Rogers, Morganton
Roland "Dixon" Sauls, Farmville
Woodrow "W.A." Wall, Sr., Reidsville
Gerald Whisenhunt, Goldsboro

CLASS OF 2020

Donald Clark, Snow Hill
Barbara Foxx, Sanford
Henry Jones, Cherryville
Norvell Lee, Goldsboro
Fred McDaniel, Wade
Ron Parson, Reidsville
David Rothwell, Statesville
Milt Sherman, Greenville

CLASS OF 2021

Susie DeWeese, Asheville
Jonathan McKee, Greensboro
Charlie Spivey, Sanford
Bob Vroom, Swansboro

CLASS OF 2022

Danny Anderson, Granite Falls
Harold Robinson, Williamston
Hal Stewart, Garner
Ruby Sutton, Wilmington

CLASS OF 2023

Rich Brenner, Greensboro
E.A. "Spike" Corbin, Wilmington
Boyce Deitz, Bryson City
David Gentry, Murphy
Sandra Langley, Pinetops
Nolan Respass, Williamston
Jimmy Teague, Reidsville
Mike Terrell, Farmville

CLASS OF 2024

Ada "Cheryl" Brewer, Robbins
Herk DeGraw, Greensboro
Mark Dreibelbis, Cary
Robert "Linwood" Hedgepeth, Whiteville
Larry McAfee, Charlotte
Julian "Mac" McKenzie, Danbury
DePaul Mittman, Greensboro
Roy Turner, Wilmington

CLASS OF 2025

Brad Allen, Lumberton
Thomas "Tommy" Cole, Burlington
Jerry Hunter, Beaulieuville
Tim Kelly, Trinity
Richard Prince, Denver
Steve Spivey, Raleigh
Doyle Whitfield, Dudley
Russell Woodward, Greensboro

CLASS OF 2026

Michael Baker, Fairmont
Zoe Bell, Charlotte
Patty Evers, Elizabethtown
Greg Frey, Woodstock, GA
Vicki Hamilton, Charlotte
Beecher "B.W." Holt, Bristol, TN
Leonardo "Leo" Lockhart, Kinston
Bobby Reynolds, Cherryville

NCHSAA Presidents

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PRESIDENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/UNIT</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PRESIDENT</u>	<u>SCHOOL/UNIT</u>
1946-47	C.R. Joyner	Winston-Salem	1999-00	Theresa Banks	Madison
1947-48	T.T. Hamilton	Wilmington	2000-01	Martha Land	Mount Tabor
1948-49	T.T. Hamilton	Wilmington	2001-02	Charles Long	D.H. Conley
1949-50	H.M. Kyzer	Hamlet	2002-03	William Harrison	Cumberland Co.
1950-51	H.M. Kyzer	Hamlet	2003-04	Ed Sadler	Gaston County
1951-52	F.L. Ashley	Gastonia	2004-05	Ralph Holloway	East Carteret
1952-53	F.L. Ashley	Gastonia	2005-06	Gene Moore	Cleveland County
1953-54	C. Reid Ross	Fayetteville	2006-07	Vann Pennell	South Brunswick
1954-55	H.J. Beeker	Snow Hill	2007-08	Diane Frost	Asheboro
1955-56	George Wingfield	Reidsville	2008-09	William Harrison	Cumberland Co.
1956-57	A.P. Routh	Greensboro	2009-11	Allison Sholar	Pender County
1957-58	L.S. Weaver	Durham	2011-12	Brooks Matthews	Triton
1958-59	Frank Mock, Jr.	Kinston	2012-13	Stewart Hobbs	Yadkin County
1959-60	Philip J. Weaver	Greensboro	2013-15	Bill Miller	Polk County
1960-61	C.E. Cooke	Durham	2015	Maurice "Mo" Green	Guilford County
1961-62	Fred C. Hobson	Yadkin County	2016-17	Rodney Shotwell	Rockingham Co.
1962-63	C. Reid Ross	Fayetteville	2017-18	Joe Poletti	East Carteret
1963-64	Hugh Tomberlin	Enka	2018-19	Sandy B. George	Mount Airy
1964-65	Edward Sanders	Garinger	2019-20	Brad Craddock	Glenn
1965-66	E.C. Sipe	Clinton	2020-21	Jerry Simmons	New Bern
1966-67	John Nettles	Salisbury	2021-22	Bobby Wilkins	Hendersonville
1967-68	Gerald D. James	Wayne County	2022-23	Rob Jackson	Carteret County
1968-69	C. Wayne Bradburn	Wilkesboro	2023-24	Chris Blanton	Watauga County
1969-70	R.E. Lee	Moore County	2024-26	Stephen Gainey	Randolph County
1970-71	J.M. Robinson	Cabarrus County	2026-27	Mark Garrett	Henderson County
1971-72	J.M. Harrington	Burlington			
1972-73	H.M. Arndt	Catawba County			
1973-74	R. Paul Buchanan	Jackson County			
1974-75	William H. Brown	Gaston County			
1975-76	J.M. Robinson	Cabarrus County			
1976-77	J.M. Robinson	Cabarrus County			
1977-78	Robert D. Deaton	R.J. Reynolds			
1978-79	J.J. Ray	Eastman			
1979-80	Arthur "Ott" Alford	Pitt County			
1980-81	Modeal Walsh	Graham County			
1981-82	Everett Waters	Onslow County			
1982-83	Jack L. Wallace	Bath			
1983-84	Jerry D. Paschal	Whiteville			
1984-85	Donald Bonner	Robeson County			
1985-86	Glenn Marlow	Henderson County			
1986-87	Robert Edwards	Madison County			
1987-88	Richard Murphy	Sanderson			
1988	Patrick Best	Goldsboro			
1988-90	J. Patrick Harrell	Dare County			
1990-91	Larry Ivey	Montgomery Co.			
1991-92	W.K. Morgan	Albemarle			
1992-94	Bennie Higgins	Greensboro			
1994-95	Richard Hicks	Hillside			
1995-97	William Steed	Davie County			
1997-98	Robert McRae	Kings Mountain			
1998-99	Travis Twiford	Nash-Rocky Mount			

History of the NCHSAA

- 1912 - Idea for a state high school athletic association was born
- 1913 - NCHSAA founded and first state playoffs conducted
- 1924 - First Annual Meeting Governing body expanded to include high school superintendents and principals. Membership recorded at 137 schools
- 1947 - New constitution adopted (forerunner of present organization)
- 1952 - State Board of Education recognizes important role played by NCHSAA and patterns its athletic rules after those of the Association
- 1959 - North Carolina Athletic Officials Association jointly sponsored by NCHSAA State Department of Public Instruction and the Western North Carolina High School Activities Association, is created. First Supervisor of Officials/Assistant Executive Secretary hired
- 1967 - Member schools of the North Carolina High School Athletic Conference (the organization for predominantly black schools) join NCHSAA
- 1968 - Girls' Advisory Committee appointed to be responsible for girl's athletic program
- 1971 - Statewide catastrophic insurance policy instituted
- 1973 - Association accepted responsibility for conference alignment
- 1976 - Plans begun for new NCHSAA office building. Association becomes incorporated as a 501 (c) 3 public charity
- 1977 - Western North Carolina High School Activities Association schools join NCHSAA
- 1978 - NCHSAA Headquarters completed and occupied
- 1979 - Simon F. Terrell Building officially dedicated
- 1986 - Start of the first NCHSAA drafted four-year alignment period
- 1988 - NCHSAA celebrates 75th anniversary
- 1990 - Concept of NCHSAA Endowment is approved
- 1991 - Student services program is begun - NCHSAA Endowment Fund is initiated
- 1994 - Wing is added to Simon F. Terrell Building
- 2005 - NCHSAA initiates student scholarship program through NCHSAA Endowed Funds
- 2010 - NCHSAA becomes unaffiliated with UNC, continuing its 501 (c) 3 status
- 2011 - NCHSAA disburses first annual distribution of funds to member schools from Endowed Funds
- 2013 - NCHSAA celebrates 100th anniversary
- 2015 - NCHSAA completes renovation of the Simon F. Terrell Building and selects Marilyn Que Tucker as first female commissioner of the organization
- 2019 - NCHSAA Initiates Education-Based Grant Program for member schools
- 2021 - \$5.7 million distributed to member schools from NCHSAA Endowed Funds, including \$4 M for COVID relief
- 2022 - NCHSAA signs first four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SBOE after passage of HB 91
- 2023 - NCHSAA Board approves creation of separate entity, the NCHSAA Foundation, to manage endowment funds
- 2024 - NCHSAA signs new four-year MOU with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction after passage of SB 452.
- 2025 - NCHSAA caps number of schools in a classification at 64, creating eight classifications for the 2025-26 year.

The North Carolina High School Athletic Association, Inc., was founded early in the 20th century. And even though the NCHSAA has witnessed dramatic growth in the scope of its programs and has had to deal with the changing face of education, one thing has remained constant: the Association's commitment to providing a wholesome athletic environment.

The Association is a voluntary, non-profit corporation which administers the state's interscholastic athletic program. Any North Carolina public or non-boarding parochial high school is eligible for membership, provided it is accredited by the State Department of Public Instruction and that the school adopts and maintains a prescribed code to guarantee fair competition.

University of North Carolina professor Dr. Louis Round Wilson spearheaded the founding of the NCHSAA. In 1912, he approached University president Dr. Francis P. Venable about starting a University Extension Division. After a year of heated debate, a total of \$600 was approved for this project, with one-third of that amount earmarked for the beginning of a high school athletic association which would help standardize regulations and ensure fairness. A university committee was to control the association's operation, which was part of the Extension Division.

State Championships were held in football and track in 1913 and several other sports were added to the program soon thereafter. As school administrators of the state desired more direct control of their organization, there was a move to change the way the Association operated. In 1947, a new constitution was adopted, by which the University was relieved from most financial obligations with the NCHSAA but continued to house the Association offices. The new constitution also provided for a Board of Directors as it is presently operating. In June of 2010, the NCHSAA became an independent organization no longer affiliated with the University.

The Association now has 450 member schools and certifies the eligibility of well over 200,000 athletes annually. Other organizations which have contributed greatly to high school athletics in the state have merged with the NCHSAA. Member schools of the North Carolina High School Athletic Conference, the organization for black high schools, joined the Association in 1967. The Western North Carolina High School Activities Association (WNCHSAA) joined the Association in 1977, leaving one primary body working with high school athletics in North Carolina.

Eight leaders have served the Association since its inception. Those officers, including their years as executive director include: E.R. Rankin (1924-1942); C.E. McIntosh (1943-1947); L.J. "Hap" Perry (1948-1966); Simon F. Terrell (1967-1984); Charles H. Adams (1984-2010); followed by commissioners Davis Whitfield (2010-2015), Marilyn Que Tucker (2015-2026) and Brad Alford (2026-Present).



NCHSAA



**NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC
ASSOCIATION**

TM