

SECTION V– Football

Article 1 Operating Structure

- 1.1 Eligible Grades: Each member school may form teams composed of 7th and 8th grade students.
- 1.2 Roster Size: Each school may have unlimited players in the program.
- 1.3 Levels: Varsity, JV (Teams may form more than one JV team).
- 1.4 Divisions: 2 divisions, consisting of 5 teams in each division. District athletic office will create divisions for a 2-year cycle using the prior season's final team standings. Division A will include teams 1,4,5,8,10. Division B will include teams 2,3,6,7,9.
- 1.5 Scheduling: The district athletic office will create a schedule consisting of 4 games within the division, and 1 cross-divisional game. Cross-divisional games hold no bearing as to a team's standing within their division. Each team will also compete in 2 post-season box bracketed games in either the gold or the silver bracket. Scheduling will take place on a two-year cycle with the second year flipping home/away games.

Article 2 Event Administration

- 2.1 Competition Day Locations: Tuesdays or Wednesdays, V/JV, Same location- stacked games.
- 2.2 Start Times: 3:30 pm unless games at Timnath or Wellington which will be a 4:00 pm start.
- 2.3 Warm-up Time: 30 minutes for Varsity/JV teams prior to the start of the varsity game.

During warm-ups before the game and at halftime there shall be a division of the field, and neither team shall enter the other team's portion of the field. That division shall be as follows:

- Before the game: each team shall occupy the space from their own 45-yard line to the end line of their goal line. Neither team shall occupy the area between the 45-yard lines.
 - EXCEPTION: When kicking, each team shall have the area between the opponent's 45-yard line and kicking team's end zone in the side zone area on the same side of the field as their bench. Kickers shall kick toward their end zone.
 - Re-entering the field before the game and at halftime: each team shall have the portion of the field between their bench and the near edge of each goal post - i.e., field divided lengthwise.
- 2.4 Contest Length: Four 8 minute quarters
 - 2.5 Time between Contests: 5 minutes
 - 2.6 Overtime Rules: 4 plays from the 10 yard line, up to two times. Teams will begin running alternating two-point conversion attempts if the game reaches a third overtime. Each team is granted one timeout for each of the first two overtimes.

- 2.7 Mercy Rule: 33 point margin will begin a running clock and only in the 2nd half.
- 2.8 Event Staff: clock operator (1), chain crew (3)

Article 3 Additional Sport Specific Considerations

- 3.1 No coaches on the field during games
- 3.2 Teams will have three 1-minute timeouts per half.
- 3.3 Halftime is 10 minutes in length.
- 3.4 Acclimation period - 3 days helmets only, 4th day is full pads no player-to-player contact, 5th day full contact is allowed.

During the initial **three** calendar days of required, in-season football practice only football shoes, jerseys, and helmets may be worn by players as permissible equipment. No pads or other components of regular football uniforms may be worn. Additionally, there shall be no activity which includes physical contact between players or blocking or tackling exercises.

On the **fourth** day of required, in-season football practice athletes may wear a full uniform including all protective equipment. No player to player contact is permitted.

On the **fifth** day of required, in-season football practice full contact is allowed.

All athletes must progress through the acclimation period in one day increments and must advance in day order sequentially from day 1 – day 5. A school may not hold a second session in one day to advance through the period more quickly or to make up for an absence. Each athlete must be tracked through the acclimation period individually to assure that **all athletes have four days of acclimation** accumulated prior to player-to-player contact.

- 3.5 Filming is allowed when your team is playing in the game - no filming of other opponents games or practices.

Article 4 Championship/Playoffs

- 4.1 Postseason seeding will be based on overall record during the regular season.
- 4.2 Championship format will consist of 2-game bracket competition. Medals will be awarded to the 1st and 2nd place team members.

ARTICLE I - Governing Rules/Levels Specific to Football

Section 1 The current edition of the NFHS Football Rules Book shall be the official rulebook for the league contests and the championship game.

- 1.1 Each school has the opportunity to form one team per level.
- 1.2 Each school will also have the opportunity to have athletes compete at the sub-varsity level.

- 1.3 Competition at the Varsity level will include 4, 8-minute quarters. The timing during the 4, 8-minute quarters will be conducted per NFHS, except in the event of the **33-point mercy rule** being enforced.
- 1.4 If a team leads by **33 or more points**, a running clock will be in place for the duration of the contest (even if the team that is behind cuts the margin to less than 33 points). The only reasons the clock will stop once the mercy rule is in effect are for **timeouts, injuries and intermissions**.
- 1.5 A junior varsity contest will be played whenever numbers allow an opportunity for junior varsity players or varsity players that did not receive considerable playing time in the varsity contest. Varsity starters may not play in the JV contest unless required to conduct the game and with the mutual agreement of both coaches.
- 1.6 The JV contest will commence immediately following the completion of the varsity contest (within five minutes). The five-minute period will allow coaches to prepare for the contest and allow for any athletes that have not played in the varsity contest to warm up if needed. The officials shall call for captains immediately for the coin toss.
- 1.7 The JV contest will follow all NFHS rules during play including having kickoffs, punts, etc.
- 1.8 JV contests will use a running clock consisting of four 12 minute quarters. With the last 2 minutes of each half will use normal stoppage procedures (ball out of bounds, first down, etc.)
- 1.9 In the event of a tie **in the varsity game only**, the ten-yard line tiebreaker system will be used in all regular season contests.
- If the score at the end of regulation play is tied, there will be a timeout. The captains of the two squads will meet at midfield, with the officials, for a flip of the coin.
 - The winner of the toss will have the option to defend a goal or to determine possession.
 - Then, each team will have the opportunity to score from the 10-yard line. The team which outscores the other in the “overtime” session will be the winner, following the rules of football.
 - If a second (or additional) overtime period is needed, a 2-point conversion **MUST** be attempted by the team scoring a touchdown. This process continues until the tie is broken.
- 1.10 The top **two** teams from each group will advance to the Gold bracket for two games. The remaining 3 teams in each division will form the Silver bracket and compete in two games. All teams will play **seven** games (5 regular season and 2 post-season contests). This format will be used for both varsity and JV teams.
- 1.11 Junior Varsity contests will take place after each Varsity contest throughout the entire season to allow 7 games for the JV level. Teams that advance to the championship final will be given an option to schedule their JV game prior to the final. **A school could schedule additional junior varsity contests (not to exceed the 7 game maximum games allowed) to make up for contests that cannot be played throughout the year due to a lack of numbers.**
- 1.12 If **two** teams are tied for **any place** within the group standings, the team that won the head-to-head game during the regular season will be declared the higher seed of the respective group. The team that lost the head-to-head game during the season will be declared the lower seed.
- 1.13 If **three (or more)** teams are tied for the **1st position** within a group, the tie shall be broken as follows:

- When possible, teams will be removed from the tie using the record in games involving the tied teams only. If there is a difference when comparing the records of the three teams in games between the tied team only (i.e. 2-0, 1-1, 1-1), the tie could be broken with this step. The 2-0 team would secure higher seed and head-to-head would be used to determine the seeding for the 1-1 teams. If the three records using games amongst tied teams are all 1-1, proceed to comparing results of all games.
- If only two teams remain using this procedure, head-to-head results will be used to break the remaining tie(s).
- If more than two teams remain tied the results will be compared from the top of the standings through the bottom of the standings to attempt to remove a team or teams from the tie. An example is illustrated on the next page.
- If the previous step fails to remove a team from the tie, a coin flip will be held to establish seeds. A coin flip will be used for the tie that will not move any of the tied teams to another division based on the result of the coin flip. Three coins will be used during coin flip with each of the tied teams represented by a coin. The coins will be tossed and compared until one of the coins is different from the other two. The school represented by this coin will be designated as the highest seed among the three teams. The tie between the two remaining schools shall be broken by comparing the head-to-head result between the two tied teams during the regular season.

Example A -

Seed after

Group A	Wins	Losses	Place	Tiebreaker
Team 1	3	1	T1st	Coin Flip = 1st
Team 5	3	1	T1st	2nd (Head-to-head over team #4)
Team 4	3	1	T1st	3rd
Team 3	1	3	4th	4th
Team 2	0	4	5th	5th

Regular Season Results:

TEAM	1	2	3	4	5
1	XXX	34-33	22-10	6-7	50-0
2	33-34	XXX	13-14	20-32	6-44
3	10-22	14-13	XXX	42-44	30-32
4	7-6	32-20	44-42	XXX	6-8
5	0-50	44-6	32-30	8-6	XXX

In breaking the tie illustrated in the example on the previous page applying 1.14 (3-way tie), the tiebreaker procedure would proceed as follows:

- The first step is to compare results between teams #1, #4 and #5 only.
- The result of the games between the three tied teams only finds that the teams all finished 1-1 against each other.
- A coin flip would be conducted to seed the three teams.

1.14 If **three (or more)** teams are tied for the **2nd or 3rd position** within a group, the tie shall be broken as follows:

- When possible, teams will be removed from the tie using the record in games involving the tied teams only. If there is a difference when comparing the records of the three teams in games between the tied team only (i.e. 2-0, 1-1, 1-1), the tie could be broken with this step. The 2-0 team would secure higher seed and head-to-head would be used to determine the seeding for the 1-1 teams. If the three records using games amongst tied teams are all 1-1, proceed to comparing results of all games.
- If only two teams remain using this procedure, head-to-head results will be used to break the remaining tie(s).
- If more than two teams remain tied the results will be compared from the top of the standings through the bottom of the standings to attempt to remove a team or teams from the tie.
- If the previous step fails to remove a team from the tie, a coin flip will be held to establish. Three coins will be used during coin flip with each of the tied teams represented by a coin. The coins will be tossed and compared until one of the coins is different from the other two. The school represented by this coin will be designated as the highest seed. The tie between the two remaining schools shall be broken by comparing the head-to-head result between the two tied teams during the regular season or results against common opponents.

Section 2 The District Athletic office will serve as the League Commissioner and will coordinate all schedules, facility use, sport meetings, hiring of Championship Game Director(s), maintain standings, and will rule/act on all matters relative to the Football and League Constitution on behalf of member schools.

Questions/Answers regarding first days of practice:

Q: Are sleds, dummies and hand shields permitted during the first three required practices of the in-season period?

A: Yes

Q: Is it considered contact if one player holds a dummy which is blocked by another player?

A: No

Q: If our school has held a pre-season camp, can this count as the acclimation period?

A: No

Q – Justin attends day 1, is absent day 2, and returns for day 3. What is his status?

A – Justin is formally on day 2 of the acclimation period when he returns on day 3 and is restricted to only those activities and equipment noted for day 2.

Q – Justin attends day 1, is absent day 2 and 3, and returns for day 4. What is his status?

A - Justin is formally on day 2 of the acclimation period when he returns day 3 and is restricted to only those activities and equipment noted for day 2.

Q – During one week my school has one game and four practices, how would I apply the contact limitation rule to this scenario?

A – Based on the scenario described, your school would have 2 days and 60 minutes of full contact left for this week.

Q – During one week of the football schedule, our school plays two games. How would I apply the contact limitation rule to this scenario?

A - Based on the scenario described, your school would have 1 day and 30 minutes of full contact left for this week.

Q – In the above scenario, what if the second contest was a sudden death contest played to resolve a tie in the final standings.

A - Based on the scenario described, your school would have 1 day and 30 minutes of full contact remaining for this week. Each game day regardless of length, counts 30 minutes towards the minute limitation.

1.5 Violations of the acclimation period or the contact limitation will result in a forfeit being recorded for the offending team. Further sanctions may be imposed against the offending coaching staff.

1.6 When an athlete has been absent for more than 10 consecutive days, it is recommended that the coaching staff require an appropriate acclimation period prior to returning to full contact and competition. It is up to the discretion of the building athletic director to determine the length and nature of the acclimation period based on circumstances of the absence.