

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc.

2021 Football Preseason Bulletin

Rules, Revisions, and Interpretations



PIAA Officials' Staff:

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August 2021

Statewide Rules Interpreter

Dave Blair

2021 PIAA OFFICIALS' CONVENTION

PIAA is proud to announce that the 2021 PIAA Officials' Convention will be held with a Virtual Format using three separate time periods to attend.

- Fall Sports will be held during the month of August 2021
- Winter Sports will be held during the month of November 2021
- Spring Sports will be held during the month of February 2022

PIAA feels that by holding three, separate individual convention sessions officials may be more inclined to use the convention as a starting point for their upcoming sports season. In addition, the virtual format will allow all officials to become better educated in each of their sports by attending from any location they choose.

REGISTRATION FOR THE FALL SESSION OF THE 26TH PIAA OFFICIALS' CONVENTION IS NOW OPEN

Please use this link: [PIAA Officials' Profile Log in Link](#) to log in to your profile and register for the Fall Sports session which will begin on August 1, 2021.

Some of the highlights of the convention sessions may include:

- Officials will have the ability to choose from a list of General Session recordings which may include subjects such as Supplemental Disqualification, conversations with accomplished professional officials, interviews with students on how athletics affects their lives and other similar topics.
- Officials may also choose from a variety of sport specific session recordings related to each sport in which they are registered.
- With your \$50.00 registration, each official attending (2) General Sessions and (3) Sport Specific Sessions will gain "Convention Attendance Credit" for that specific sport which is good for (3) years as it relates to inter-district playoff eligibility.
- Multiple sport officials can attend each of their sport conventions for the single \$50.00 registration fee and will only have to attend (2) General Sessions once per registration.
- Officials will also receive a \$25.00 coupon to purchase their officiating equipment from Officially Sports as a convention attendance gift which is provided at the conclusion of an official's first registered convention period. Officials get one \$25 coupon per registration.

Stay tuned as more information becomes available. Please check the PIAA website often for convention updates. Sessions are added as presenters finish up their recordings.

2021 NFHS FOOTBALL RULE CHANGES

2-17-2c (NEW), 2-17-4:

- Further clarified action in the free-blocking zone.
- Comment on the Rule: Blocking below the waist now requires the block to begin immediately following the snap.

2021 NFHS FOOTBALL EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-5-1b

2-10-1

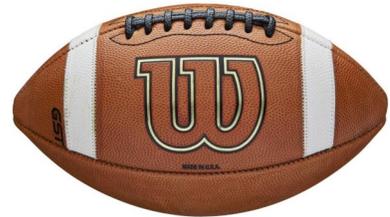
2-10-2

3-5-1

9-4-4 Penalty

Nine, Eight, and Six-Player Rules Differences—General

Six-Player Rules Differences - Rules 2 and 7



2021 PIAA ADOPTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

- Adopt the 2021 NFHS Football Rules book.
- Modify the 2021 NFHS Football Rules book to allow football teams, on a pilot program through the 2021-22 school year, upon mutual agreement between them, and for sub-varsity contests only, to allow for modification of timing and playing rules. Sub-varsity games do not play overtime, only varsity contests.
- Request that college and professional football Contest sites mark their fields in accordance with Rule 1-2-3e, inbounds lines. If that is not possible, it is permissible to use college or professional fields with inbounds lines marked at the distance specified by their respective codes.
- Adopt Rule 1-3-1 NOTE, specifications for the ball to be used in Contests involving only players below the 9th grade.
- Adopt Rule 1-3-7, authorizing the use of supplementary equipment to aid in Contest administration.
- Modify Rule 3-5-10b (Concussion Rule), to clarify that “an appropriate health-care professional” is a licensed physician of medicine or osteopathic medicine (MD or DO).
- Adopt Rule 3-1-1 NOTE, the Resolving Tied Games (10-Yard Line Overtime) Procedure for use during senior high school varsity football Regular Season and Postseason Contests, as set forth in the NFHS Football Rules Book.
- Adopt Rule 3-1-2, running clock, at all levels (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition, upon completion of the first half and one Team gains a 35-point differential over its opponent, the clock shall be stopped only when an official's time-out is taken, a charged time-out is granted, a period ends, or a score occurs.

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2021 POINTS OF EMPHASIS**Sportsmanship**

When considering sportsmanship, many may first think only of the game participants (athletes and coaches) within the timeframe of the game. However, proper sportsmanship also includes the pregame warm-up period, postgame handshake activity, spectator behavior (both students and adults), parents of athletes, public-address announcements and announcers, and bands. All of the above constituents have a role in promoting good sportsmanship.

Players and coaches are the most visible in their displays of sportsmanship. Their behavior sets the tone for fans, game officials and others. As recognizable personalities, it is an expectation that coaches model good behavior. Players must represent their schools and communities as ambassadors of good sporting behavior beginning with pregame activities and concluding with end-of-game activities.

Game officials generally do not assume control until taking the field approximately 30 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff. Therefore, coaching staffs and game administrators must be vigilant and responsible for ensuring proper sportsmanship during this time. Once the contest begins, school administrators are responsible for the proper conduct of all spectators. This may take the form of reading a sportsmanship public-address announcement prior to the contest and remaining vigilant for possible issues during the contest. Student bodies and spectators in general should be reminded that any behaviors conducted at the expense of the opponents is unacceptable and will be addressed accordingly.

Public-address announcers are responsible for delivering pertinent game-related information – not to be a play-by-play person or cheerleader. Taking liberties with biased and/or inflammatory announcements must not be tolerated. Their purpose is not to editorialize the quality of play or incite the home crowd in any way.

Working with the band/music director, the school administration must set proper guidelines and ensure compliance regarding when live or recorded music may be utilized.

Good sportsmanship does not occur on its own. Only with specific planning and coordination by all constituents is good sportsmanship achievable. Good sportsmanship is about respect. Good sports win with humility, lose with grace and do both with dignity.

Intentional Grounding

Due to the growing prevalence of televised football, one of the most misunderstood rules at the high school level is intentional grounding. Under NFHS rules, intentional grounding is a foul whenever a legal forward pass is thrown into an area not occupied by an eligible receiver, or when a pass is thrown to prevent a loss of yardage or to conserve time. The only exception to this rule is when the passer intentionally throws the ball forward to the ground immediately after receiving the snap.

Under NFHS rules, it is a foul if there was no eligible receiver in the area of the pass, regardless of the passer's position on the field. Across the country, we are seeing more high school quarterbacks throw the ball away to avoid a sack when outside the pocket, thinking this is legal based on what is seen on television. High school referees need to be aware of these situations and, with the help of the line judge and linesman, make the correct call under NFHS football rules. This is a foul that should be called after the game officials have gathered and discussed the play. When a foul does occur, the penalty flag needs to be thrown by the referee. The penalty is 5 yards from the spot of the foul and a loss of down.

2021 POINTS OF EMPHASIS CONTINUED

Ineligible Downfield and Line of Scrimmage Formation

In order for the offensive team to have a legal scrimmage formation at the snap (assuming the numbering exception is not being used), at least five Team A players, numbered 50-79, must be on the line of scrimmage. Also, no more than four Team A players may be backs. Only one player may not be on the line but still penetrate the vertical plane through the waistline of his nearest teammate who is on the line. This player must be in position to receive a hand-to-hand snap, but does not have to actually receive it. By rule, he is the only player allowed to be positioned in "no man's land" at the snap. All other players not on the line must be clearly positioned as backs.

Some clarification was recently provided in identifying when an ineligible Team A player is illegally downfield on a pass play. By rule, ineligible Team A players may not advance beyond the expanded neutral zone on a legal forward pass play before a legal forward pass that crosses the neutral zone is in flight. The neutral zone expands 2 yards behind the defensive line of scrimmage following the snap. The position of the ineligible Team A player at the moment of the legal pass is the only factor in determining if the player is illegally downfield. When identifying Team A players who are illegally downfield, it is important to make sure that the Team A player is clearly beyond the expanded neutral zone (2 yards) at the moment that the pass is in flight. Players can travel multiple yards in a quick period of time. These players can be legally within the expanded neutral zone when the pass is thrown but beyond as the pass moves downfield. If B touches the pass in or behind the neutral zone, this restriction is terminated.

RECOMMENDATION OF A WRITTEN CONTRACT

PIAA member schools should enter into written (paper or electronic) contracts with the officials retained by the schools or assigned by an assignor to officiate regular season contests. The terms of such contracts must not violate the PIAA Constitution and By-Laws, Policies and Procedures and Rules and Regulations. Registered sports officials are independent contractors and therefore, are NOT employees of PIAA, the school, or the assignor.

VIOLATION OR CANCELLATION OF AN OFFICIAL'S CONTRACT BY A PIAA MEMBER SCHOOL

If a PIAA member school violates or cancels a contract with an official, the District Committee or the Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions, may require a school so violating or so canceling to pay to the offended official the fee or fees for the Contest or Contests which have been provided in the official contract. The failure of a PIAA member school to live up to the terms of the contract is considered a violation of the Constitution and By-Laws of PIAA

Comment: It has been brought to our attention on numerous occasions that officials have lost assignments or games because a school or assignor has "double booked" the contest. Officials are reminded that unless there is a written contract executed between the parties, they have no claim to any type of reimbursement from the offending school(s). Many schools have made a "good faith" effort to the officials to get them an additional assignment in the future or offer a scrimmage to pick up the lost fees. However, officially, without a written, signed, properly executed contract between the official(s) and the school(s), there is no recourse for the officials. In this day of technology it is not very hard for assignors, or schools, to execute these contracts. This is part of an assignor's responsibility. Officials should request contracts from their assignors or schools for both parties protection.



PIAA BY-LAWS—DISQUALIFICATIONS: ARTICLE XIII, SECTION 8**Section 8. Disqualification From Next Contest(s).****A. General Rule. Preamble**

Sportsmanship is a core principle in interscholastic athletics. Actions which are unethical and/or intended to demean, embarrass, intimidate or injure opposing contestants, Teams, spectators and/or officials are considered unsportsmanlike and will not be tolerated since they are contrary to the purposes of PIAA and convey lessons incompatible with the reason why high school sports exist.

1. Mandatory Disqualification. One Game Suspension Any Coach and/or contestant who, while Coaching or competing for a PIAA member school, is ejected from a Contest by a state high school association recognized and/or registered official in that sport for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct is disqualified from Coaching and/or participating for the remainder of the day and in all Contests on the next Contest day of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition from which the Coach and/or contestant was previously disqualified. For a Coach, participation in the next Contest includes any contact by the Coach with members of the Team, including other Coaches, between the time that the Team arrives at the Contest site and the conclusion of the last Contest of the day. The Principal must direct the Coach not to attend all of the Contest(s).

2. Supplemental Disqualification. Two Game Suspension Any Coach and/or contestant who, is ejected from a Contest by a state high school association recognized and/or registered official and a component of the ejection is **confronting, contacting or addressing a Coach, contestant or official using foul or vulgar language, ethnic or racially insensitive comments or physical contact** will be disqualified from competition for the remainder of the day and for the next two (2) Contests including all Contests on the next two (2) Contest days of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition from which the Coach and/or contestant was previously disqualified. For the purposes of this provision, the jurisdiction of the official(s) to apply and enforce this rule begins upon the official's arrival at the Contest site and ends when the official (or the last of the team of officials) leaves the Contest site. The Contest site is defined as premises on which the competition surface is located and includes the entirety of the premises and parking areas.

When the Supplemental Disqualification implicates a contestant, and in addition to the two (2) Contests disqualification, the contestant may not return to competition representing the contestant's school until the contestant completes the NFHS Sportsmanship program at NFHSLearn (online) and provides a certification of completion of this program to the student's Principal and the Principal submits the certification to the PIAA District Sport Chairman. A Coach disqualified under this provision may not return to competition representing the Coach's school until the Coach completes the NFHS Sportsmanship program and Teaching and Modeling Behavior program at NFHSLearn (online) and provides a certification of completion of these two programs to the Coach's Principal and the Principal submits the certification to the PIAA District Sport Chairman.

A disqualification under B. above supersedes a disqualification under A. above. A PIAA District Committee may, at its discretion, convene a hearing to address any and all disqualifications and may provide additional penalties as warranted by the circumstances.

EXAMPLES OF DISQUALIFICATION PROVISION OF ARTICLE XIII, SECTION 8

The Supplemental Ejection is not designed for violations of "Rules of the Game" The one game sit out penalty still remains for those actions that do not fit the Supplemental Ejection policy. PIAA Board of Directors has given officials an additional tool to use, if warranted, to curb bad behavior. This could aid in the recruitment and retention of officials. Officials should not concern themselves with the penalty. School administration will handle that.

A few examples:

- **Situation:** After the basketball game has concluded and the officials are in the locker room, varsity head coach Jones begins to bang on the door and use profanity toward the officials.
 - **Ruling:** The coach's actions would merit a Supplemental Disqualification. The crew chief must file the Supplemental Disqualification report within 24 hours on Coach Jones who must sit out the next two varsity contests. The crew chief must also make contact with Coach Jones' athletic director immediately or immediately after leaving the contest site to inform them that the Supplemental Disqualification was issued on Coach Jones.
- **Situation:** During a junior varsity soccer game a player from team ABC commits a handball violation in the box.
 - **Ruling:** The referee properly issues a red card and escorts the player to the sideline. The referee also informs the coach of the reason for ejection. The referee must file the Disqualification Report within 24 hours and the player must sit out the next junior varsity contest.. This is a standard one game sit out disqualification penalty.
- **Situation:** In the third inning of a baseball game the head coach disagrees with a safe/out call and charges onto the field while yelling profanities at the umpire.
 - **Ruling:** The umpire must eject the head coach and inform them that they are being assessed a Supplemental Disqualification. The crew chief must file the Supplemental Disqualification report within 24 hours on Coach Smith who must sit out the next two junior varsity contests.
- **Situation:** During the boys varsity soccer match, Player A1 is taken down with a legal tackle by Player B1. Player A1 feels that a foul should have been called and jumps from the ground and yells at the nearest official saying, "Hey Ref, you suck."
 - **Ruling:** The official must immediately issue a red card and eject Player A1. The official must then inform Player A1's head coach of the ejection and the fact that it is a Supplemental Disqualification due to the foul language directed at the official. The ejecting official must file the Supplemental Disqualification report within 24 hours on the player who must sit out the next two varsity contests.
- **Situation:** After the volleyball match has concluded and the officials are walking through the school lobby to get to their cars a parent confronts the officials and uses profanity toward them.
 - **Ruling:** The officials must not engage the parent in discussion and should continue to their vehicle, if possible. Upon reaching their vehicles the crew chief must immediately contact the host school's athletic director and inform them of what occurred. The officials do not retain jurisdiction under the Supplemental Disqualification in this instance. It does not apply to fans, only coaches and contestants. School athletic administrators must take action to prevent this type of occurrence in the future.
- **Situation:** After the varsity football game has ended and the officials are gathering at the 40 yard line to proceed to the locker room, the head coach rushes on to the field and confronts the crew about calls made that evening. The coach while using foul and abusive language contacts one of the officials.
 - **Ruling:** The crew chief must inform the head coach that he is being assessed a Supplemental Disqualification for his actions. The crew chief must file the Supplemental Disqualification report within 24 hours on the head coach who must sit out the next two varsity contests.

Final Point:

- **Question:** On the new 2 game DQ is it going to be the officials' decision if it's a 2 game DQ or the PIAA's after reviewing the report?
 - **Answer:** As with the previous 1 game DQ, it is always the decision of the official to eject but the actions of the player or coach will be the deciding factor whether the Supplemental DQ is used.
- The official really has no decision to make. If the actions are what is listed in the Supplemental Disqualification then the penalty is 2 games, the decision will be made for them by the actions of the offender.
- The official will not have the ability to choose between the two different disqualifications. The choice will be made for them.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Officials should use O2O devices to improve communication within the crew. Too often it is used for "Non game" chitchat. Remember that the channels are NOT private and others can and will be listening. Officials should be careful and not say anything you would not want heard by players, coaches, or fans. Uses include, passing players number or fouls to crew members, helping officials get information to the coach or official on opposite side of the field.
- Marking Balls; While marking game balls is customary in pregame, officials that approve balls and place a crew ID mark should use caution NOT to make the mark in such a way that is "OVER DONE". The use of a broad tipped sharpie should be avoided. A more proper marker should be a ball point pen or "FINE" tipped sharpie. These balls are often used for several games thus a crew specific mark should not be so large as to be a distraction on the ball. Something as simple as the R's initials works well, avoid the use of dates, ie. 9-21-21.
- Clapping of hands, signal calling; While it is legal to use the clapping of hands for the Quarterback in calling for the snap, officials, especially the R should be aware of the player that uses an exaggerated clapping of the hands. This could occur in short yardage situations or critical times in the game. We should treat the over exaggerated clap as we do with the head bob. When this occurs, the offense should be penalized for a False Start.



EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS FOR OFFICIALS CHAPTERS

Officials' chapter officers should be aware of emergency exits, AED devices, and other emergency items in the event a chapter member needs medical assistance or emergency action needs to be taken during a chapter or mandatory rules meeting.

POLICY REGARDING THE USE OF EYE SHADE

The use of eye shade must be worn as a single, solid stroke under the eye. There shall be no numbers, words, logos, symbols or other detail located in the eye shade. The eye shade shall not extend below the cheek bone and extend no further than the width of the eye socket. Players having eye shade that does not meet the standard are to remove it or comply with the PIAA interpretation before participation in the game. If the players do not comply, the officials may impose unsportsmanlike conduct type penalties as determined by their respective rules code.

PIAA CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY FOR ALL SPORTS

PIAA has a written policy regarding conflict of interest. This policy is in all of our post regular season officiating contracts and is contained in the PIAA Athletic Officials' Manual for all officials to view.

An official will remove themselves from a contest if they find that they have any personal association with any of the competitors or coaches on any team, with the competitors' school, or with the competitors' community, such as being a relative of a competitor, or being an employee or a relative of a competitor in the competitors school district, or a resident of the competitors' community.

COMMENT: Officials accepting assignments for contest at their local school where they live, or have a relative competing, place themselves in a compromising position in the performance of their duties as a registered official. Every decision and judgment is open to criticism and places the official in a compromising position where it brings into question the integrity and actions of the official. This is an indefensible position for the official and assignments of this nature are not to be taken or accepted by PIAA registered sports' officials. Extreme cases of emergency and situations that may be completely unavoidable are the only exceptions to this policy.



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If you are in need of updating your officiating supplies, please be reminded that Officially Sports is the official vendor of PIAA Sport Officials' Uniforms. Please give them your consideration for any purchases regarding officials' supplies. If interested, you may provide them with your email address to send you their catalog, seasonal specials and discounted items that may be of interest and service to your avocation of sports' officiating. Officially Sports may be contacted via email at sales@officiallysports.com, by calling 800-934-4555.

www.officiallysports.com

2021 PIAA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Heat Acclimatization	Monday, August 9
First Practice Date.....	Monday, August 16
First Inter-School/Scrimmage Date.....	Saturday, August 21
First Regular Season Play Date	Friday, September 3
August 27 or 28 optional start dates	
Last Regular Season Contest Date	Monday, November 8
District Championship Deadline.....	Saturday, November 13
PIAA Football Championships:	
First Round.....	Friday, November 19 & Saturday, November 20
Quarterfinals.....	Friday, November 26 & Saturday, November 27
Semi-Finals	Friday, December 3 & Saturday, December 4
PIAA Football Championship Finals	
HERSHEYPark Stadium, Hershey.....	December 9, 10, & 11
Thursday 1A & 4A, Friday 2A & 5A, Saturday 3A & 6A	

OFFICIALS' UNIFORM

1. The PIAA Official's Emblem must be worn on the upper left sleeve of the official's standard shirt when officiating in all PIAA sponsored games.
2. All PIAA-registered officials must wear identical uniforms during a contest.
3. Required uniform for football officials:
 - **Hat** - Black fitted baseball cap with white piping. The referee shall wear a solid white fitted baseball cap.
 - **Shirt** – Black-and-white vertically striped, long or short-sleeve knit shirt shall be worn. The shirts shall have either 1-inch stripes or a state association adopted shirt with a maximum of 2 ¼ - inch stripes, a black knit cuff, and Byron collar. All games officials are to wear the same type shirt.
 - **Belt** - Black leather, if worn, 1¼ to 2 inches wide.
 - **Pants** - Black – Tailored black pant with white stripe on outside of leg only. Knickers are precluded from the official uniform.
 - **Shoes** - Solid Black or Predominantly Black with some white, cleaned, and shined.
 - **Jacket** - Black and white vertically striped jacket (not to be worn during the game).
 - **Lanyard** - Black.
 - **Whistle** - Black finger style (recommended). Turtleneck - Black or white (if needed).

Notes:

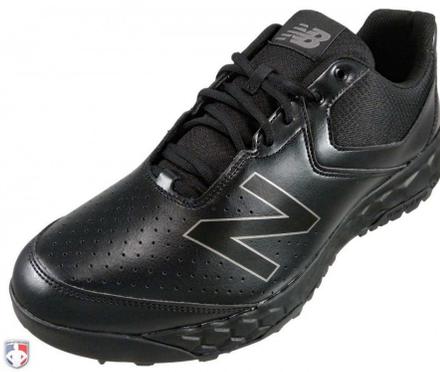
- As a result of a motion made during the June 2021 meeting of the Officials' Council, District 3 Male Officials' Representative Bill McHale made a motion to allow white on shoes worn by all PIAA registered officials. This motion was approved by the Officials' Council and brought to the PIAA Board of Directors for a vote on July 14, 2021. On that date, the Board of Directors, in an effort to provide officials with additional opportunities to purchase comfortable shoes, approved this motion unanimously.
- Solid black shorts are permitted for sub-varsity contests only, provided all officials dress alike.

The wearing of jewelry (except wedding bands and medical-alert bracelets) and wrist watches (except as a required timing device) is prohibited. Smoking and/or tobacco chewing is prohibited.

PIAA sports' officials may display an American flag (maximum size 2 by 3 inches) on the right sleeve of their uniform shirt approximately three inches down from the shoulder seam. This will be the same position the PIAA official patch is displayed on the left sleeve.

Examples of PIAA Approved Officials Footwear

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GUIDELINES ON HANDLING PRACTICES AND CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING OR THUNDER DISTURBANCES

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or 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 your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

PROACTIVE PLANNING

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. 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:
 - a. 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.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. 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.
 - b. 30-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed* prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning* after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
 - d. When independently validated 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.
4. Review the lightning safety policy annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel and train all personnel.
5. Inform student-athletes and their parents of the lightning policy at start of the season.

Revised and Approved January 2021

OFFICIAL COIN TOSS MECHANICS

OVERTIME PROCEDURE

When the official coin toss is held prior to the game's ceremonial coin toss, it is recommended to have the official coin toss, in the home team end zone or mid-field, 30 minutes prior to contest with the Head Coaches and Captains' of each team. Officials are to read the PIAA Sportsmanship Message at this time and get legally equipped confirmation from each head coach.

Give the visiting speaking captain their option of taking heads or tails before the coin is tossed. Once you have the result of the toss, give the winner of the toss their options. After the winner of the toss selects their option, give the other team their options of which way they want to kick.

After Halftime – Eliminate ceremonial toss to press box and just go to each respective sideline and give instructions to line-up for kickoff based on your pre-game coin toss decisions.

1. 3 Minute Intermission
 - a. Communication vital.
 - b. One time-out per-overtime period.
 - c. Penalty carryover.
2. Coin Toss
 - a. Visitor's choice in 1st overtime. (rotate in subsequent OT).
 1. Offense vs. Defense.
 2. Choice of end of field to put ball in play only one end will be utilized during the two sets of downs to insure equal game condition and conserve time.
3. 10-yardline to begin series
4. NO CLOCK
5. Series ends when A scores --- OR with Team B possession.
 - a. Try attempted by A.
 - b. Try attempted by B unless winner is determined.
 - c. If defense scores either safety or TD game is over.
6. Line-to-gain.....is always the goal line.

2021 DISTRICT RULES INTERPRETERS

1	Gerald DiGiovanni	footballassignor@yahoo.com
2	Charles R. Suppon	csuppon@wwwsd.org
3	William J. McHale	bmchale@comcast.net
4	Carey S. Latsha	clatsha@gmail.com
5	Michael K. Price	mkprice24@aol.com
6	Brian D. Schmidt	bschmidt@hflenz.com
7	David M. Barry	dbarry6@comcast.net
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10	Joseph P. Lombardi	jlombardi@necastro.com
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12	Mark T. Warner	mark.warner@wellsfargo.com

PROPER PENALTY ADMINISTRATION**1. PHILOSOPHY-**

A. First and foremost, officials need to adopt a philosophy regarding the calling of fouls. Something which has worked for countless officials is the axiom known as **MIBT. Make It Be There!** Excellence in officiating demands this type of thinking concerning fouls.

B. In conjunction with #1 listed above, officials need to be certain a foul affects the play. Was an advantage gained or was player safety compromised? These questions should precede throwing any flag.

C. Officials need to call fouls (or not call them) consistently throughout a given contest. For example, an illegal motion foul called in the first quarter must be called the same way in the 4th quarter. A “close” non-call on pass interference in the 2nd quarter must be ruled a no-call on a “close” call in the 4th quarter.

2. MECHANICS-

A. When any official detects a live ball foul, he must do three things:

- ⇒ Continue to officiate until the ball is dead.
- ⇒ Stop the clock when the ball becomes dead, and
- ⇒ Sound his whistle to get the attention of the Referee and the other officials

B. When reporting to the Referee, it is sound officiating to do the following:

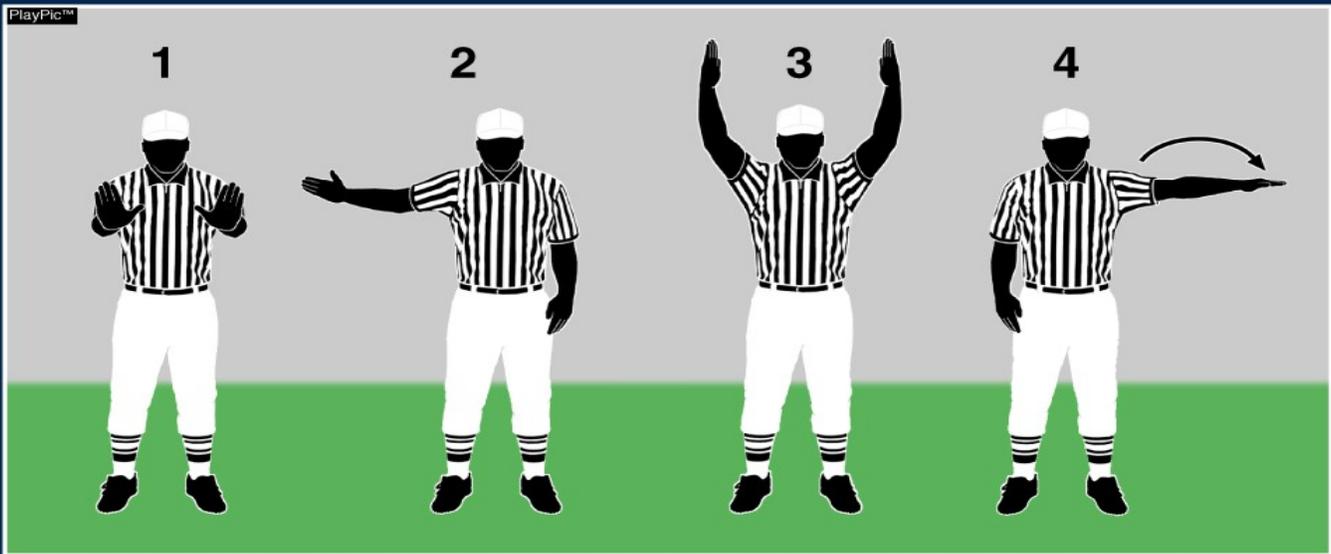
- ⇒ **SLOW DOWN**—there is no rush
- ⇒ Communicate—What, Who, When, and Where to the Referee
- ⇒ Know what the enforcement should be. (Do not put this solely on the Referee. If you called a foul, you are primarily responsible to see that it is properly enforced).

C. When possible, throw your flag about shoulder height at the exact spot (if applicable).

The only exception to this would be a dead ball late hit foul, which occurs on the sideline area. In these cases, the flag should be thrown high into the air so that everyone knows a foul has been observed.

3. REMINDERS-1) Take your time when making your decision as to whether a foul has been committed. 2) If you need to get together with the other officials-GET TOGETHER. 3) Review penalty administration in your pre-game conference.



PROPER PENALTY ADMINISTRATION CONTINUED

1. Signaling Sequence for Penalties Enforced on Subsequent Kickoff.
Signaling Sequence for Penalties Enforced on the Subsequent Kickoff.
2. Coin toss:
 - 3-2-1: At the coin toss in the center of the field the visiting-team's captain shall be given the privilege of choosing heads or tails before the coin is tossed.
 - The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of defense or offense first, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play or this set of downs.
 - The loser will have his choice of the other options. The referee will indicate the winner of the toss by placing a hand on his shoulder.
 - To indicate which team will go on offense, the referee will have that captain face the goal toward which his team will advance and indicate this with the first-down signal.
 - The other team captain will face the offensive captain with his back toward the goal he will defend.

The NFHS Officials Manual Committee has approved a new procedure to be used on scoring plays involving a penalty by the opponent of the scoring team. The following is the procedure that is to be used by the referee:

- 1 and 2. Referee gives preliminary penalty signal and indicates offending team.
- The referee then obtains the captain's choice.
- 1 and 2. Referee gives penalty signal and indicates offending team again.
- If penalty is accepted and is to be enforced on the subsequent kickoff, the Referee indicates that the score counts.
- If penalty will be enforced on the subsequent kickoff, the Referee should indicate by pointing to midfield.



VISORS

Officials are reminded that visors being worn by players during competition are now legal by NFHS football rules provided they meet two criteria as detailed in Rule 1-5-3,c-4. An eye shield attached to the helmet that is (a) constructed of a molded rigid material or (b) is clear without the presence of any tint. This alleviates the paperwork from principals signing off on the use of these items for their players and the officials having to review them before the contest.

COMMON SENSE OFFICIATING

With all the dialogue of concussions and the prevention of injuries, officials are requested to use prudent judgment in the handling of players who appear injured during playing action. If a player exhibits any signs of a concussion, or is injured in any manner, officials should do their due diligence in requesting the team’s coaching staff or team medical personnel evaluate the player(s) involved. This is priority communication between the officials and the coaching staff. Please ensure that any player who appears injured must be evaluated by the team’s medical personnel. Safety of players is priority one and before we remove any player from a contest, make sure the team’s medical personnel are involved with the decision making.

FIFTH QUARTER

Officials are not authorized to remain on the field in an officiating capacity if schools agree to play extended quarters. This is contrary to authorized playing time for junior high and senior high competition. This type of action may place officials in liability jeopardy since these type of activities violate the standard of play for length of games/quarters in the NFHS football rules book and the PIAA By-laws.

SPLASH SHIELDS

The Schutt Sports “Splash Shield” as shown will be permissible for competition and is compliant with current 2020 NFHS Football Rule 1-5-3c(4) as long as it is clear and has no tint.

The NFHS is not endorsing or mandating this product.



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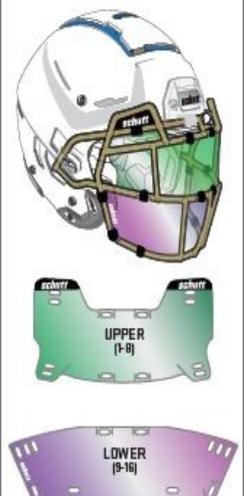


ATTACHMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Follow the icons in numerical order to properly attach SPLASH SHIELD to your faceguard.



CORRECT ORIENTATION



Colored shields represent correct placement.
Green-Upper shield Purple-Lower shield

PIAA SPORTSMANSHIP MESSAGE

****This message shall be read to the head coach and captains prior to each contest officiated by a registered PIAA official. This message shall be enforced by contest officials and its enforcement shall include a strict and swift enforcement when unsportsmanlike actions involve demeaning remarks or actions that may be related to the racial or ethnic background of any party.****

PIAA requires all registered sports' officials to enforce the sportsmanship rules for coaches and contestants. Actions meant to demean opposing contestants, teams, spectators, and officials are not in the highest ideals of interscholastic education and will not be tolerated. Let today's contest reflect mutual respect. Coaches please certify to the contest official(s) that your contestants are legally equipped and uniformed according to NFHS rules and PIAA adoptions. Good luck in today's contest.

The proper procedure is head coaches and captains MUST attend the pre-game reading of the sportsmanship message. Coaches must certify to the contest officials their team is legally equipped and in compliance with NFHS Football Rules. The reading of this message will have the coaches verbally confirm aloud their teams' adherence to compliance with equipment and safety rules. This confirmation is not only the adherence to contest rules, but also assists in alleviating the legal liability concerns for the officials if the teams subsequently violate the proper equipment provisions of the contest rules.

UNIVERSAL HYGIENE PROTOCOL FOR ALL SPORTS

- Shower immediately after every competition and practice.
- Wash all workout clothing after each practice.
- Wash personal gear (knee pads and braces) weekly.
- Do not share towels or personal hygiene products (razors) with others.
- Refrain from full body (chest, arms, abdomen) cosmetic shaving.



SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AND FOOTBALL HELMET WARNING STATEMENT

Athletes who participate in the sport of football accept the risk of injuries. However, athletes also have the right to assume that those who are responsible for the conduct of the sport, i.e., administrators, coaches and athletic trainers, have taken reasonable precautions to minimize the risk of significant injury. Refinements in the playing rules, the development of risk minimization guidelines and the establishment of equipment standards have helped to reduce significant injuries. However, to legislate safety via the rules book and equipment standards are never a complete answer. All who are involved with participation in the sport of football share in the responsibility of minimizing the sport's inherent risks?

The coach is responsible for pregame verification that in addition to other required equipment, all players have a helmet which met National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards when manufactured and each helmet has an exterior warning label. While important, the fact the athletes are wearing certified helmets is only the first step. The athletes involved must be aware of all the basic principles of head and neck injury prevention.

Helmet Warning Statement

Since 1985 the NOCSAE football helmet standard has required a warning label on the outside of the helmet to inform each player of these risks and responsibilities. The warning label must use language that conveys the following information:

WARNING

NO HELMET CAN PREVENT ALL HEAD OR ANY NECK INJURIES A PLAYER MIGHT RECEIVE WHILE PARTICIPATING IN FOOTBALL.

DO NOT USE THE HELMET TO BUTT, RAM OR SPEAR AN OPPOSING PLAYER. THIS IS IN VIOLATION OF THE FOOTBALL RULES AND SUCH USE CAN RESULT IN SEVERE HEAD OR NECK INJURIES, PARALYSIS OR DEATH TO YOU AND POSSIBLE INJURY TO YOUR OPPONENT.



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND SKIN INFECTION PROCEDURES

Proper precautions are needed to minimize the potential risk of the spread of communicable disease and skin infections during athletic competition. These conditions include skin infections that occur due to skin contact with competitors and equipment. The transmission of infections such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Herpes Gladiatorum, blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B, and other infectious diseases such as Influenza can often be greatly reduced through proper hygiene. The NFHS SMAC has outlined and listed below some general guidelines for the prevention of the spread of these diseases.

INFECTIOUS SKIN DISEASES

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these infectious agents include:

- Athletes must be told to notify a parent or guardian, athletic trainer and coach of any skin lesion prior to any competition or practice. An appropriate health-care professional should evaluate any skin lesion before returning to competition.
- If an outbreak occurs on a team, especially in a contact sport, all team members should be evaluated to help prevent the potential spread of infection.
- Coaches, officials and appropriate health-care professionals must follow NFHS or state/local guidelines on “time until return to competition.” Participation with a covered lesion may be considered if in accordance with NFHS, state or lock guidelines and the lesion is no longer contagious.

BLOOD-BORNE INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Strategies for reducing the potential exposure to these agents include following Universal Precautions such as:

- An athlete who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity (game or practice) until the bleeding is stopped, the wound is covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or the uniform is changed before returning to activity.
- Athletic trainers or other caregivers need to wear gloves and take other precautions to prevent blood or body fluid-splash from contaminating themselves or others.
- In the event of a blood or body fluid-splash, immediately wash contaminated skin or mucous membranes with soap and water.
- Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with disinfectant before returning to competition. Be sure to use gloves when cleaning.
- Any blood exposure or bites to the skin that break the surface must be reported and immediately evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional.

OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Means of reducing the potential exposure to these agents include:

- Appropriate vaccination of athletes, coaches and staff as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
- During time of outbreaks, follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as State and local Health Departments.

For more detailed information, refer to the Infectious Disease and Blood-borne Pathogens” and “Skin Disorders” sections contained in the NFHS



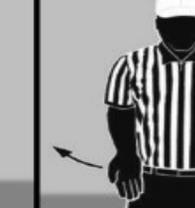


NFHS OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS

<p>1 Ball ready for play *Untimed down</p>	<p>2 Start clock</p>	<p>3 Time-out Discretionary or injury time-out (followed by tapping hands on chest)</p>		
<p>4 TV/radio time-out</p>	<p>5 Touchdown, Field goal, Point(s) after touchdown</p>	<p>6 Safety</p>	<p>7 Dead ball foul, Touchback (move side to side)</p>	
<p>8 First down</p>	<p>9 Loss of down</p>	<p>10 Incomplete forward pass Penalty declined No play, no score Toss option deferred</p>	<p>11 Legal touching of forward pass or scrimmage kick</p>	<p>12 Inadvertent whistle</p>
<p>13 Disregard flag</p>	<p>14 End of period</p>	<p>15 Sideline warning</p>	<p>16 First touching Illegal touching</p>	<p>17 Reset play clock to 25 seconds (Use both hands to have play clock reset to 40 seconds)</p>
<p>18 Encroachment</p>	<p>19 False start Illegal formation Free kick infraction</p>	<p>20 Illegal shift (2 hands) Illegal motion (1 hand)</p>	<p>21 Delay of game</p>	<p>22 Substitution infraction</p>



NFHS OFFICIAL FOOTBALL SIGNALS

<p>23 Disconcerting act</p> 	<p>24 Illegal helmet contact Targeting</p> 	<p>25 Illegal horse-collar tackle</p> 	<p>26 Illegal blindside block</p> 	<p>27 Unsportsmanlike conduct Noncontact foul</p> 
<p>28 Illegal participation</p> 	<p>29 Sideline interference (Face press box)</p> 	<p>30 Running into or Roughing kicker or holder</p> 	<p>31 Illegal batting/kicking (Followed by pointing toward toe for kicking)</p> 	<p>32 Invalid fair catch Illegal fair catch signal</p> 
<p>33 Forward pass interference Kick catching interference</p> 	<p>34 Roughing passer</p> 	<p>35 Illegal pass/forward handing (Face press box)</p> 	<p>36 Intentional grounding</p> 	<p>37 Ineligible downfield on pass</p> 
<p>38 Personal foul</p> 	<p>39 Clipping</p> 	<p>40 Blocking below waist</p> 	<p>41 Chop block</p> 	<p>42 Holding/ obstruction Illegal use of hands/arms</p> 
<p>43 Illegal block</p> 	<p>44 Helping runner Interlocked blocking</p> 	<p>45 Grasping face mask or helmet opening</p> 	<p>46 Tripping</p> 	<p>47 Disqualification</p> 

NOTES: