



Indiana Interscholastic Athletic  
Administrators Association

**Interschool  
Guidelines  
For  
Middle Level  
Sports**

**<http://www.iaaa.org/>**

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IIAAA

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## INDIANA INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION

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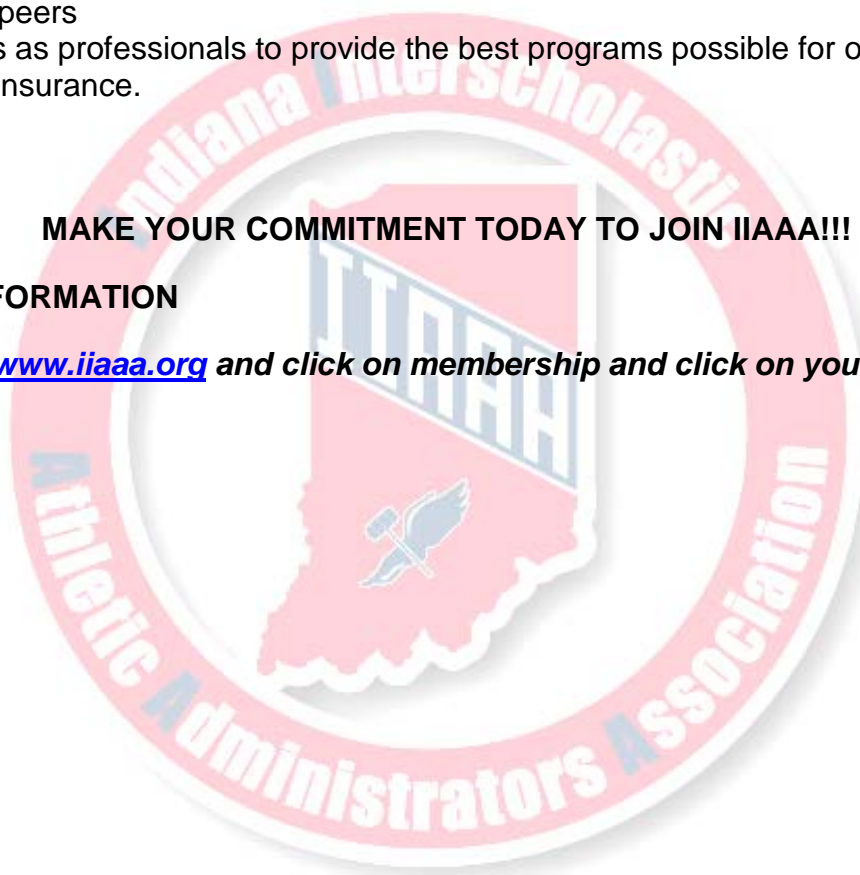
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4. Promotion of professionalism, new ideas, and new insights
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## FOREWORD

This publication has been prepared for those who administer the interschool athletic programs for middle level schools. On January 21, 1975, the IHSAA authorized the appointment of a committee to study and prepare guidelines for athletics in middle level schools. Many member schools had asked for guidance in the direction of a program adapted to the abilities of students at this level of competition. An understanding of the physiological and emotional development of early adolescents, the need for providing safety precautions, and the importance of protecting the best interests of students, prompted this request. The lack of specific limitations in number of contests, age of participants, etc., often resulted in abuses, inequities, inconsistencies and unfair competition. This Committee met frequently; conducted its study and received cooperation of a high percentage of school administrators. The following guidelines represent the judgment of the middle level representatives attending the State Athletic Administrators Association Conference in Indianapolis, and the Study Committee comprised of middle level representatives from each of the state's six districts.

2017 – Latest Revision

### District Representatives:

District 1 – Kim Kilmer – Lowell

District 2 – Gene Teel, West Noble / Joe Brown, Concord

District 3 – Kiel Atkinson, Wash Twp / Mike Connors, Belzer / Kelly Antcliff, Zionsville  
Andy Aspass, Lynhurst / Brian Kendall, Chapel Hill

District 4 – Jamie Wingler, Center Grove Central / Dave Edens, Clark Pleasant

District 5 – Tom Cullen, East Washington

District 6 – Tim Martin. South Spencer

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## **MIDDLE LEVEL SCHOOL GUIDELINES**

### **PREAMBLE**

The Indiana High School Athletic Association and the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association do not govern middle level schools, but recommend that they follow these rules within the guidelines set by the individual school district, principals' association, district athletic association, or school's athletic conference. Middle schools shall comply with Title IX.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of these guidelines shall be to encourage, unify and give direction to wholesome amateur interschool athletic competition between middle level grade students. All such interschool athletic competition coming under the suggested guidelines shall be subservient to and complementary to the academic or curricular functions of the schools, which are their primary purposes. To assure that the program of interschool athletic competition remains steadfast to the principles of wholesome amateur athletics and subservient to its primary academic or curricular functions of education of the middle level school, schools should cooperate with agencies vitally concerned with the health and educational welfare of school students; furnish protection against exploitation of schools or their students; determine guidelines for qualifications of individual contestants, coaches and officials; and provide written communications to establish guideline standards for eligibility, competition and sportsmanship.

### **PART I**

#### **GENERAL ELIGIBILITY RULES**

##### **RULE 1 – RULE COVERAGE**

###### **Section 1**

All contests rules for events are adopted from the NFHS. These guidelines apply to all teams and all contestants enrolled in middle level schools participating in interschool athletic contests, tourneys and/or meets. The guidelines below are those deemed age appropriate for athletes in the Indiana.

##### **RULE 2 – ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY**

###### **Authority**

###### **Section 1**

The principal is recognized as the school representative and as such is accountable for conduct of the athletic program of that school.

###### **Section 2**

The principal has the authority to designate a faculty member/s employed in that school system to act as a director of the teams representing the school.

###### **Section 3**

It is understood that any school corporation may adjust the scope of athletic activities.

###### **Section 4**

The principal or designee shall institute adequate team and crowd control measures at all contests in which their school participates and assures that their school's participants and fans conduct themselves in a proper and sportsmanlike manner.



## **Certification of Eligibility**

### **Section 5**

- a. The principal of the school in accordance with the guidelines hereby suggested must certify to the eligibility of all contestants.
- b. Each school should establish their own guidelines toward scholastic eligibility.
- c. When eligibility is in question, should not be allowed to participate in interschool contests.
- d. All participants should be fulltime students within their respective school district.

## **Consent and Release Certificates**

### **Section 6**

Students, prior to their first practice, should have had:

- a. a physical examination signed by a physician(MD or DO) holding an unlimited license to practice medicine, a nurse practitioner (NP) or a physician assistant (PA).
- b. written consent of parent or guardian for such participation.

Evidence of both, included on the Consent and Release Certificate, should be on file in the principal's office prior to the student's first practice. Physical examination must be on or after April 1 for the following school year. Such certification may suffice for the entire school year. This guideline should not be waived. It is recommended that all student athletes have insurance.

- c. signed Sudden Cardiac Arrest and Concussion Form on file.

### **Section 7**

Students who are physically unable to practice for 5 consecutive days due to illness or injury should present to their principal or director a statement from a physician licensed to practice medicine that they are again physically fit to participate in interschool athletics.

## **RULE 3 – AGE**

### **Section 1**

Students participating in sixth grade, seventh grade and/or eighth grade athletic contests should be eligible within the following guidelines:

**6th grade** - A student who is or shall be fourteen (14) prior to or on the scheduled date of the last contest in a sport should be ineligible to compete in grade-level specific sports within the following guidelines.

**7th grade** - A student who is or shall be fifteen (15) prior to or on the scheduled date of the last contest in a sport should be ineligible to compete in grade-level specific sports within the following guidelines.

**8th grade** - A student who is or shall be sixteen (16) prior to or on the scheduled date of the last contest in a sport should be ineligible to compete in grade-level specific sports within the following guidelines.

### **Section 2**

In non grade-level specific sports, a student who is or shall be 16 prior to or on the scheduled date of the last competition in a sport should be ineligible for competition in that sport.

## **RULE 4 – AMATEURISM**

### **Section 1**

All contestants in middle level school sponsored contests should be amateurs in that sport in which they wish to participate.

### **Section 2**

Students should not play under assumed names nor accept remuneration, directly or indirectly, for playing on athletic teams.

### Section 3

Students should not be considered as violating their amateur standing if they participate in any sport, out of season, sponsored by professionals.

### Section 4

School having students who have violated their amateur standing should notify any school against whom competition occurred which involved that student's participation.

### Section 5

A student may accept reasonable meals, lodging and transportation if such are accepted in service rather than money or in some other material form.

## RULE 5 – AWARDS, PRIZES, GIFTS

### Section 1

The giving and receiving of awards should:

- a. be kept within reasonable bounds
- b. have symbolic value only and
- c. be with the consent and under the supervision of the school principal.

*NOTE: The giving and receiving of awards with the consent and under the supervision of the school principal concerned should mean that the school principal in each school should have real control and supervision without pressure of any kind from outside persons or groups of persons.*

### Section 2

Awards such as trophies, plaques, medals, ribbons or similar articles of symbolic value may be given.

### Section 3

Schools belonging to athletic conferences may make awards to the winning schools or winning participants.

### Section 4

Suitable awards may be accepted by schools and/or students from such local organizations as service clubs, patriotic organizations, civic groups, and dads' and mothers' clubs. Commercial businesses may name a player or players of the game or week provided the student does not accept merchandise, meals, cash, etc. for such an honor.

## RULE 6 – COACHES

### Section 1

Coaches should be regularly certified to teach in schools in Indiana if possible, however lay coaches may be used.

- a. All remuneration for coaching should be from the Board of Education of the school employing the coach.
- b. No school should be permitted to employ a coach who receives extra pay, salary, gifts or trips from outside sources for coaching.
- c. Where there is a coach of a mixed (boys and girls) team or a male coach of a girls' team or a female coach of boys' team, there should also be an adult advisor of the opposite sex. It is **strongly recommended** that such advisor be employed by the school system. Responsibilities must include being present at practices, contests, meetings, and accompanying team to all events, which involve travel.

## **RULE 7 – CONDUCT, CHARACTER, DISCIPLINE**

### **Section 1**

Contestants' conduct, in and out of school, should be such as:

- a. Not to reflect discredit upon their school.
- b. Not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, moral or educational environment in the school.
- c. Any coach removed from a contest will sit for the next scheduled contest.

## **RULE 8 – CONTESTS**

These are general rules applying to all interschool contests.

Remember that official rules of contest are those published by the NFHS.

### **Section 1**

No games, meets or tourneys should be played by schools without the sanction of the principals.

### **Section 2**

Interschool athletic contests should follow the recommended guidelines for that contest.

### **Section 3**

In all contests, the decisions of the officials shall be considered final and binding.

### **Section 4**

Students may represent only one school in any sport during a tournament series.

### **Section 5**

All-boys teams and all-girls teams should not participate against each other in interschool athletic contests.

### **Section 6**

There should be no interschool athletic contests played or practices or clinics held on Sunday. Calling one or more team members together on Sunday for the purpose of studying scouting reports or viewing films of games should be considered a violation.

### **Section 7**

In order to protect the health and safety of all participants, when a school is involved in a strike situation, suspension of students, etc., which prevents regularly scheduled supervised practice sessions of normal length and frequency, prior to participation, there should be:

- a. The required preseason practices, if applicable;
- b. A minimum of 4 separate days of school-approved practices following 5 to 10 consecutive interrupted school days;
- c. A minimum of 6 separate days of school-approved practices following 11 or more consecutive interrupted school days.

### **Section 8**

Withdrawal of a school athletic team from an athletic contest in progress other than emergency situation and, unless by mutual consent of both schools, should jeopardize future scheduling considerations.

## **RULE 9 – CONTRACTS**

### **Section 1**

The "Contract for Athletic Contests" should be used for all interschool athletic contests and countersigned by the principal or director of the schools involved.



## **RULE 10 – OFFICIALS**

### **Section 1**

The officials in all interschool contests requiring officials should currently be licensed by IHSAA.

### **Section 2**

All licensed officials should wear the current officials' insignia on the prescribed uniform.

### **Section 3**

Written contracts are suggested between schools and officials.

## **RULE 11 – PARTICIPATION**

### **Section 1**

Participation in an athletic contest or any other similar team during the same season in which they represent their school in that sport is strongly discouraged.

### **Section 2**

A student who participates in an interschool contest when ineligible other than in scholarship, too many quarters, too many events and similar oversights, should become ineligible only in that sport for the remainder of that sport season unless facts were purposely withheld or misrepresented. Such deliberate action should make the student ineligible in all sports for the remainder of that semester and all of his/her next semester in school.

### **Section 3**

Participation of students in an organized athletic contest with or against players not belonging to their school constitutes a game. An organized "scrimmage" or practice by students with or against teams or players not belonging to their school is considered a game.

## **RULE 12 – SCHOLARSHIP**

### **Section 1**

Each school should establish their own scholastic requirements for students participating in their interschool athletic contest.

## **RULE 13 – UNDUE INFLUENCE**

### **Section 1**

The use of undue influence by any person or persons to secure or to retain a student or to secure or to retain one or both parents or guardians of a student as residents should cause the student to be ineligible for interschool athletics.

### **Section 2**

No student should be eligible to participate in any interschool contest under the rules, if it should be shown that he/she or any member of their family is receiving any remuneration, either directly or indirectly, to influence them or their family to reside in a given school district or territory in order to establish eligibility on the team of said school.

## **PART II**

### **INTERSCHOOL SPORTS RULES–BOYS & GIRLS**

#### **GENERAL ELIGIBILITY RULES – these rules apply to all sports.**

1. Practice should start no earlier than 3 weeks prior to first scheduled contest.
2. Follow National Federation Rules except in Golf (USGA rules are used) and Tennis (USTA rules are used).
3. There should be 10 separate days of organized practice under the supervision of the coaching staff for each contestant preceding date of participation in interschool contests. Only one practice may be counted for any one day.
4. For grade level teams, students will play in their own specific grade level.

*NOTE: Individual participants may be considered eligible to participate in an immediately following season's sport contest after 5 days of organized practice.*

#### **RULE 51 – BASEBALL (BOYS)**

1. Maximum number of season games for a team or student should be 18 including up to 2 tournaments.
2. All pitchers will follow the sub varsity pitch count “detail below”
3. All bats must be consent with NFHS regulations..
4. 15 run rule after 4 innings.
5. By local adoption a 2:15 time limit may be established.

\*Baseball Pitch Count Sub Varsity 1-25 pitches 0 day rest, 26-35 1 day, 36-60 2 days, 61-80 3 days, 81-90+ 4 days.

#### **RULE 52 – BASKETBALL (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. The length of quarters should be no greater than 6 minutes with a 10-minute halftime.
2. A school should play no more than 16 regular season games and two tournaments.
3. Overtime periods should be 3 minutes in length.
4. Participants can play up to 6 quarters per session.

#### **RULE 53 – CROSS-COUNTRY (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. Participants should not compete in more than 12 scheduled meets in one season.
2. All participants should wear a similar school team uniform.
3. Recommended distance of 3000 meters for all races.

#### **RULE 54 – FOOTBALL (BOYS)**

1. All equipment should be consistent with safety standards in the National Federation Handbook;
  - a. Helmet
  - b. Mouth piece
  - c. Shoulder pads
  - d. Hip pads
  - e. Only molded rubber shoes
2. Teams may use intermediate or regulation ball (example J5Y or J5V); if other team uses different ball, change will be made on change of possession.
3. The length of quarters should be a maximum of 8 minutes for 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 7 minutes for 7<sup>th</sup> graders with a maximum 10-minute halftime.
4. Participants should play no more than 5 quarters per session.

5. Overtime guidelines;

- a. One overtime possession beginning from the 10 yard line will be afforded to each team following the end of a regulation game with the score tied.
- b. A coin flip will determine the team who possesses the ball first. The winner of the flip will choose possession or side of the field. The loser of the flip will choose the other.
- c. Both possessions will take place on the same side of the field.
- d. A PAT will be allowed (if needed) following a successful touchdown.
- e. The offensive team's possession ends immediately following a score, a turnover, or the conclusion of its series of downs.

**RULE 55 – GOLF (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. Follow USGA Rules
2. Team may consist of six players but score only first four.

**RULE 56 – GYMNASTICS (GIRLS)**

1. Limit each event to no more than 3 contestants per school.

**RULE 57 – SOCCER (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. The length of halves for middle level school contests should be no greater than 30 minutes with a 10-minute halftime.
2. A middle level school team should play no more than 14 scheduled games and one tournament.
3. If a team participates in 2 tourneys, the games played in the second tourney should be included in the 14 games permitted for that grade level.
4. By local association adoption a 5 shot shoot-out can be used for overtime procedures.

**RULE 58 – SOFTBALL (GIRLS)**

1. Maximum number of season games for a team or student should be 18 including up to 2 tournaments.
2. Practice should begin no earlier than 3 weeks before first scheduled contest.
3. Pitchers mound should be at 43 feet.
4. 15 run rule after 4 innings.
5. By local adoption a 2:15 time limit may be established.

**RULE 59 – SWIMMING (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. No more than 10 meets should be scheduled per season.
2. Entered contestant may participate in a maximum of 4 events, 2 of which should be relays.
3. Suggest participants swim 400 yards freestyle instead of 500 yards freestyle.

**RULE 60 – TENNIS (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. Follow the United States Tennis Association Rules.
2. A team should not have more than 3 scheduled matches per week.
3. A contestant may play singles or doubles.

### **RULE 61 – TRACK AND FIELD (BOYS & GIRLS)**

1. All team members/participants must wear the school uniform. No head apparel should be permitted.
2. Each contestant may participate in a maximum of four events.
3. Events - those recommended for middle level schools in the National Federation rulebook.  
Track and Field events: 4x800M Relay, 100M Hurdles, 110M Hurdles, 100M, 1600M, 4x100M Relay, 400M, 200M, 2400M, 4x400M Relay, Shot, Discus, Long Jump, High Jump (by local adoption of pole vault and 200M Hurdles may be included).
4. Recommend pole-vaulting event only if certified coaching is available and landing pad meet National Federation specifications.

### **RULE 62 – VOLLEYBALL (GIRLS)**

1. A school should play no more than 16 regular season games and two tournaments.
2. There should be no more than 3 matches per calendar week.
3. Host school should notify visiting school regarding variations or modifications of facilities or rules prior to contest. \*will change based on survey.

### **RULE 63 – WRESTLING (BOYS)**

1. The recommended weight classes for a middle level combined team are: 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 106, 115, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 220, 245, 285.
2. Wrestlers from 70 to 182 may bump up maximum of one class. Wrestlers from 195 to 245 may not bump up to next class.
3. Weigh-ins may be done before school lunch time under the supervision of the coach and an appointed administrator. The wrestler gets one chance to weigh in. Once the wrestler weighs, they may eat lunch. Weights must be emailed to the opposing school before 12:00 PM on the day of the contest.
4. One pound allowance is given for any of the following:
  - a. match in February
  - b. match on day after a non-school day
  - c. match is second of back to meets
  - d. match in March\*maximum of two pounds will be given
5. Excessive weight loss is not condoned.
6. The maximum number of dual meets should be 14. A student or team may participate in the following:
  - a. 14 interschool dual meets and one tournament or
  - b. additional tournaments may be scheduled with each counting as 2 of the 14 dual meets.