



Beginning with the fall of 2012-13, the following is in effect for 7th and 8th grade interscholastic athletic contests as it relates to NSAA Bylaw Article 9.8 and NDE Rule 10 & 14:

*No student in grades seven or eight shall participate in interscholastic athletic contests between schools within a school system or between school systems which exceed **6 games in football, 14 matches in volleyball, 12 games in basketball, 8 meets in wrestling, 8 meets in track and field, and 8 contests in all other activities.** Contest limits shall be based on the total number of contests played. Each **game, match, or meet** played in a tournament shall count as one of the contests permitted within these contest limits.*

When a sports season begins and the combined enrollment for boys or girls in seventh and eighth grades is below twelve boys or twelve girls, the local school board can vote to allow sixth graders to play on the seventh and eighth grade team. If enrollment fluctuates during the sports season, and student numbers in the seventh and eighth grades increase to twelve or above for boys or girls, the sixth grader(s) participating in that sport can continue to finish out the season. However, the next season is based upon current enrollment numbers.

Below are some situations to assist schools with interpreting these new regulations:

Q: What does interscholastic mean?

Interscholastic athletic contests are between schools within a school system or between school systems.

Q: How do these new regulations apply to our intramural program?

If your intramural program does not compete against another school within your school system or another school system, the contest limitations would not apply to your intramural program.

Q: Do the contest limitations apply to my school team or to my students?

The contest limitations apply to each student. For example, if a school has 8 football games on the school schedule each student can participate in a maximum of 6 games.

Q: What if the sport is not listed in the contest limitations, how many contests would be permitted?

Sports not specifically listed in the contest limitations are limited to 8 contests. For example, cross country students may participate in 8 meets.

Q: Can 5th graders participate in 7th & 8th grade interscholastic contests?

No, 5th graders may not participate in 7th & 8th grade interscholastic contests.

Q: Can I apply for a waiver from the NDE or NSAA to allow students to play in additional contests or to use 6th graders if the combined girls or boys enrollment is 12 or above?

No, waivers will not be permitted by the NSAA or NDE for additional contests or for the use of 6th graders if the combined girls or boys enrollment is 12 or above.

Q: Are 6th graders allowed to continue on the 7th & 8th grade team if the combined girls or boys enrollment reaches 12 or more after the season starts?

Yes, if a new student(s) moves into the school after the start of each sports season causing the combined enrollment to reach 12 or more, the 6th graders would be allowed to finish that particular season. However, the 6th graders would not be allowed to participate in the next sports season.

Q: If a student participates in a tournament, does each game/match/meet played count toward the contest limitations?

Yes, each game/match/meet played as part of a tournament will count toward the contest limitations for those students who participated in them.

Q: Can each school determine the format of a game, match, or meet?

Yes, schools can determine the format of a game, match, or meet.

Q: Can home school students participate?

Local school boards would need to decide on whether home school 7th and 8th graders would be allowed to participate in school athletics.

Q: What if my question is not addressed in the new regulation? For example, when can volleyball start practice?

If specific questions related to contest limitations and 6th grade participation are not addressed in NSAA Bylaw Article 9 or NDE Rule 10 or 14, it would be considered a local school board decision.