

NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

FOOTBALL

ACTIVITY MANUAL



2025-2026

WWW.NSAAHOME.ORG

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(UPDATED 6.25.25)

NSAA MISSION AND PURPOSE

The public and non-public high schools of Nebraska voluntarily agreed to form the Nebraska School Activities Association for the following purposes:

- To formulate and make policies which will cultivate high ideals of citizenship, fair competition, sportsmanship, and teamwork which will complement the member schools' curriculum programs.
- To foster uniformity of standards in interscholastic activity competition.
- To organize, develop, direct, and regulate an interscholastic activity program which is equitable and will protect and promote the health and physical welfare of all participants.

Who is the NSAA? The Other Half of Education

- The NSAA is a non-profit organization, comprised of 308 public and non-public member high schools in the State of Nebraska. Member schools voluntarily agree to conduct NSAA-sanctioned activities consistent with the rules established locally and the rules established collectively as members of the NSAA.
- The NSAA sanctions 24 sports and 5 performing arts activities and directs 28 State Championships for nearly 100,000 student-activity participants annually.
- The NSAA Constitution and Bylaws, Activity Manuals and policies form the governance structure of the organization. These regulations are approved and changed only by member schools and a member-elected Board of Directors through the legislative process initiated and driven by member schools.
Unless otherwise noted, NSAA rules and regulations apply to current 9th thru 12th grade students.
- NSAA rules set baselines for participation such as: academic requirements; attendance requirements; transfer eligibility; sportsmanship.
- The primary functions of the NSAA Staff are to: assist member schools with compliance questions related to eligibility, transfers and playing rules; enforce the rules established by the member schools; and administer NSAA State Championship events.
- The NSAA honors and recognizes students, coaches and volunteers for their excellence and achievements through multiple awards programs.
- The NSAA annually registers officials and judges. Member schools are responsible for hiring officials and judges during the regular season.
- When parents, families, students, or community members have questions or concerns related to NSAA-sanctioned activities, those must be directed first to the administration of the member school.
- Staffing, playing time, and team rules are decisions made by the member school, not the NSAA. The NSAA has no authority to interfere with these member school decisions.

This FOOTBALL MANUAL has been prepared and designated to provide general information for the use in the administration of interscholastic Football competition, including the state play-off series. Sections of the NSAA Bylaws & Approved Rulings related to football are included in this manual.

Football coaches and athletic directors should be familiar with these policies. It is their responsibility to conduct their football program within the rules established by the NSAA.

The regulations within this manual shall be considered official unless schools are notified of a change.

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CHANGES, UPDATES & CLARIFICATIONS TO THE 2025 FOOTBALL MANUAL ARE HI-LIGHTED IN YELLOW.

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NSAA POLICY ON COMMENTS AND NEGATIVE ACTIONS AGAINST OFFICIALS AND JUDGES

The National Federation of State High School Associations has devised Code of Ethics guidelines for high school coaches. The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. The coach or sponsor shall respect and support contest officials and judges. The coach or sponsor shall not indulge in conduct that would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials, judges or players is unethical.

The Nebraska School Activities Association has embraced that Coaches Code of Ethics and has established policies and standards that will cultivate the ideals of good sportsmanship, professionalism, and conduct. It shall be the responsibility of each member school to ensure that all individuals directly associated with the interscholastic program conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and professional manner.

The high school coach or director is a representative of the school at interscholastic activity events. It is the responsibility of all coaches and directors to serve as role models for students and the public.

It is the expectation that all coaches, directors, administrators, and student participants shall refrain from negative criticism of NSAA member institutions, officials, adjudicators, judges, etc. in public statements before, during or after interscholastic events. The appropriate public response to media questions at all venues regarding officiating/judging is “per NSAA policy, I am unable to comment.” Any other response is a violation of this board policy and is subject to penalty.

It would be considered a violation of this NSAA policy to include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Making degrading and/or critical remarks about officials or adjudicators or the officiating or judging before, during or after an event either on or off-site, via social media, or through any public means.**
- **Detaining the officials/adjudicators/judges during or following the event to request a ruling or explanation of actions or evaluation by the official(s)/adjudicator(s)/judges.**
- **Entering the officials dressing area following the contest.**

Negative actions by an individual directly associated with the program shall be reported to the NSAA office by the school and/or by the head contest official, adjudicator, judge, or manager. The school shall document the results of their investigation and actions taken, where necessary and appropriate. The NSAA Executive Director shall determine the appropriate penalties for violation of this board policy.

2025 NFHS FOOTBALL RULES CHANGES

Committee Clarifies and Restricts Attachments on Tooth and Mouth Protectors 1-5-1d(5)a - 4, 5 (NEW)

Items that are attached to the tooth and mouth protector that do not serve a purpose and function in protecting the teeth or mouth will not be allowed. Items that are a part of the tooth and mouth protector that are a health or risk issue to the player and can pose a danger to themselves or other players, will not be allowed.

Arm Sleeve Specifications Developed to Guide Manufacturers, Players and Coaches Effective with the 2027 Season 1-5-2d (NEW), 1-5-3c(5)

The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), in working with the football arm sleeve manufacturers and the NFHS, has developed new football arm sleeve performance specifications to be effective with the 2027 playing season. These new specifications closely align with the current rules for football gloves.

Electronic Equipment Approved to Permit Non-Audio and Still Images to Assist with Relaying Plays from the Sideline to Players 1-5-3c(2)

This change allows for the use of some additional equipment, but continues to preclude in-helmet communication. This would allow for fixed electronic signs with play signals as well as non-audio methods but still would not permit the players between the numbers to watch video.

Rules Additions Further Prohibit the Use of Video and Audio Devices by Players 1-5-3c(3) (NEW)

No player participating in the game will be allowed to wear any type of audio or video device in order to record or transmit audio or video.

Forward Fumbles Out of Bounds to be Returned to the Spot of the Fumble 3-4-3, 4-3-1 EXCEPTION (NEW)

A situation potentially giving an unfair advantage to a fumbling team was revised. When a forward fumble goes out of bounds or is ruled out of bounds between the goal lines, the ball shall be returned to the spot of the fumble.

Further Clarifications Made to Rule 10-4 in Specific Situations 9-6 PENALTY, 10-4-4b (DELETED)

The committee continues its revisions and clarifications within the penalty enforcement rules to ensure consistency, particularly among illegal participation fouls.

Rules for 6-Player Football Revised to Permit Advancement of a Fumbled Snap Six-Player – Rule 2 and 7, Six-Player – Rule 7

The committee clarified that as long as there is a change of possession from the snap receiver to another player on offense, the ball can be advanced beyond the line of scrimmage.

2025 NFHS EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-5-1b(2)b(1); 1-5-1b(3)b(1); 2-32-16d; 2-33-1, 2; 2-41-9b; 6-1-9; 7-2-5b EXCEPTION 2; 7-5-12; 9-4-3 (NEW); 9-8-1g; 10-3-1, 2; 10-4-2; 10-4-4a; 10-5-3; PENALTY SUMMARY;

2025 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Illegal and Improperly Worn Player Equipment
2. Sportsmanship
3. Defenseless Player / Targeting

NFHS AND NSAA RULES

2025 National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules and 2025-26 NSAA rules and regulations shall govern all high school competitions in Nebraska.

***For a complete listing of the NSAA Bylaws refer to the
[NSAA CONSTITUTION](#)***

WARNING ABOUT THE INHERENT DANGERS OF FOOTBALL

Student athletes and parents should be aware that Football, like all sports, will always have inherent dangers. Although rare, death or catastrophic injury can result from participation in this sport, and care should be taken by all concerned to minimize such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment, proper training methods and common sense.

FOOTBALL HELMET WARNING - LABELS REQUIRED

Each player's football helmet, by rule (NFHS 1.5.1a), must have a visible exterior warning label regarding the risk of injury. The label is part of the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) and indicates that players have been instructed and understand the risks involved in the game of football. Football helmet manufacturers, helmet reconditioning, sporting goods dealers, and individual salespeople, in most cases, will provide free exterior warning labels to the schools. Football coaches should make sure that ALL football helmets are certified and meet the NOCSAE standard and have a visible warning label.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. In order to determine if the NSAA can authorize such an accommodation, the school administration should contact the NSAA to request an accommodations hearing.

NSAA AND NFHS POLICY STATEMENT ON STEROIDS

The NSAA and the NFHS strongly oppose the abuse of anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing substances by high school student-athletes. Such use violates legal, ethical, and competitive equity standards and imposes unreasonable long term health risks.

APPROVED RULING 2.1.2

MEDICAL PERSONNEL AT REGULAR SEASON CONTESTS

Severe injuries, sudden illnesses and other critical incidents do not often occur during school activities, but it is important for every school to have an emergency action plan (EAP) for administrators, faculty, coaches and staff members to follow should emergencies occur. Due to lack of universal availability of medical coverage and other logistical reasons, NSAA does not require that schools have a physician, trainer or ambulance on-site at regular season activities; however, each school should have a plan in place should there be an emergency involving students, coaches, officials, or spectators requiring medical attention.

APPROVED RULING 2.12

REQUIRED TRAINING COURSES

Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Education

All coaches, activity sponsors, and volunteers are required to complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training courses at least once every three years. These courses should be taken prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach would be present for or involved in administering. Any course taken after May 1 would be considered valid for the following school year. All first year coaches are required to complete all three courses prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach.

Please access the courses at www.NFHSLearn.com

CPR/AED Certification

All head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to be CPR/AED certified once every two years. Certification should be completed prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach/sponsor would be present for or involved in administering. All first-year head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to complete certification prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach. Coaches aides and volunteer coaches are not required to be CPR/AED certified.

NFHS SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that impairs normal function of the brain. An athlete does not have to suffer a direct blow to the head or lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to sustain a concussion.

Common Signs & Symptoms of Concussion Include:

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea
- Dazed or stunned appearance
- Confusion about assignment or position
- Forgetfulness
- Uncertainty of game, score, or opponent
- Clumsy movements
- Slow response to questions
- Mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to or after hit or fall
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Emotions of “not feeling right” or “feeling down”

Activate the Emergency Medical System or call 9-1-1 if, after a bump, or jolt to the head or body, an athlete has one or more of these danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Convulsions or seizures (shaking or twitching)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out)
 - Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously

Suggested Concussion Management:

1. No athlete should return to play (RTP) or practice on the same day of a concussion.
2. Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health-care professional as soon as possible.
3. Any athlete with a concussion should be medically cleared by an appropriate health-care professional prior to resuming participation in any practice or competition.
4. After medical clearance, RTP should follow a stepwise protocol with provisions for delayed RTP based upon return of any signs or symptoms at rest, while doing schoolwork or with physical activity.

For further details please see the “NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports” at www.nfhs.org

2025 KEY DATES

Date of 1 st Practice (All Schools)	Week 6	Monday	August 11
First Contest (Week #1 Games)	Week 8	Thursday	August 28
1 st Round Play-offs (D1, D2)	Week 16	Thursday	October 23
2 nd Round Play-offs (D1, D2)	Week 17	Friday	October 31
Quarterfinal Play-offs (D1, D2)	Week 18	Friday	November 7
Semifinal Play-offs (D1, D2)	Week 19	Friday	November 14
1 st Round Play-offs (A, B, C1, C2, D6)	Week 17	Friday	October 31
Quarterfinal Play-offs (A, B, C1, C2, D6)	Week 18	Friday	November 7
Semifinal Play-offs (A, B, C1, C2, D6)	Week 19	Friday	November 14
Finals (D6)	Week 20	Friday	November 21
Finals (D1, D2, B)	Week 21	Monday	November 24
Finals (C1, C2, A)	Week 21	Tuesday	November 25

The football season begins with the first day of practice on Monday, August 11, 2025, for all schools.

The season concludes with the State Championships Games:

2025 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME TIMES COPE STADIUM (UNK)

Friday	November 21	7:00 pm	Class D6
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2025 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME TIMES MEMORIAL STADIUM (UNL)

Monday	November 24	10:15 am	Class D1
Monday	November 24	2:45 pm	Class D2
Monday	November 24	7:15 pm	Class B
Tuesday	November 25	10:15 am	Class C1
Tuesday	November 25	2:45 pm	Class C2
Tuesday	November 25	7:15 pm	Class A

FUTURE DATES

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FIRST PRACTICE</u>	<u>WEEK #1 GAMES</u>
2026	Monday – 8.10	Thursday – 8.27
2027	Monday – 8.9	Thursday – 8.26
2028	Monday – 8.7	Thursday – 8.24

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS - 3.1 SPORTS SEASONS

3.1.1 Interschool sports sponsored by the Association shall be divided into three seasons: Fall, Winter, and Spring.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.1.1

- A. A season begins on the first day of allowable practices for that sport, as designated in 3.1.1.2. The season officially ends with the conclusion of the State Championship in that sport. Students may not participate in outside group instruction or competition once the season officially begins, and outside group instruction or competition may not commence until the school's varsity team has been completely eliminated from further participation in the sport.
- B. All scheduled and postponed regular season varsity contests must be played prior to the start of sub-district, district, or state competition. Once sub-district, district or state competition begins, no regular varsity contests shall be permitted.
- C. Students who are not listed on the NSAA district entry form may participate in outside group instruction or competition of the same sport before the varsity school team has been completely eliminated from post-season competition. Those students who have participated in outside group instruction or competition following their regular season schedule would not be eligible to be placed on the district or state entry form of the same sport and would not be allowed to practice with the varsity team.

3.1.1.1 A season begins the day of opening practice as permitted by the NSAA rules rather than the first day of interscholastic competition.

3.1.1.2 The division of sports seasons shall be as follows: No school shall register more than one varsity team per sport and no student shall participate simultaneously in more than one sport per season.

Note: Week designations are for the standardized calendar. The standardized calendar usually begins with the first full week in July.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.1.1.2

- A. If a student is participating in one sport during a sports season and decides to quit that sport and participate in another sport during the same season, the student shall be required to sit-out from competition at all levels for seven days. During this seven day sit-out period, students are permitted to practice. No student who has practiced or competed in one sport will be allowed to switch to another sport if the district or state meet in the student's former sport is in progress or has been completed or a season has ended.
- B. If a student participates in two sports simultaneously during a sports season, that student shall become ineligible to participate in the district and/or state contest during that sports season.

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS – 3.2 SCHOOL-YEAR, OUT-OF-SEASON PROGRAMS

- 3.2.1** A member school shall not provide support, hold an organized practice or enter students in any non-high school competition in NSAA sponsored sports during the "School-year, Out-of-Season" time period. A member school may provide support during the "Summertime" period per the district's Board of Education policy.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.1

Faculty vs. student, alumni vs. student, or parent vs. student contests are not permissible during the season of the sport involved. If such contests are held out-of-season, the organized practice rule must be followed.

- 3.2.2 "School-Year, Out-of-Season" Definition.** "School-year, out-of-season" is defined as that period of time during the school year in which no organized practice can be conducted. The "school-year, out-of-season" period begins on the first day of fall practice and runs until the first allowable date of practice in that sport, and the period after a team or individual has been eliminated from further competition during the championship series of district and state tournaments/meets through Memorial Day or the end of the school year, whichever is later.

For non-varsity competition, "school year, out-of-season" begins the day following the last date of interscholastic competition or the last date of the varsity season, whichever is later.

3.2.3 “School-Year, Out-of-Season” Participation. Except during the season of the sport involved, a student may be a member of a non-high school team and compete unattached in non-high school competition. Students are prohibited from wearing high school uniforms during non-high school sponsored competition.

3.2.4 Organized Practice.

No organized practice in any sport shall be held during the “school-year, out-of-season” period. An organized practice shall be defined as follows:

- A. **Football.** An organized practice in 11-man football shall mean more than seven students under direct supervision of a sponsor. An organized practice in 8-man football shall mean more than five students under the direct supervision of a sponsor. An organized practice in 6-man football shall mean more than four students under the direct supervision of a sponsor. If more than one group is practicing at the same time, it shall be called an organized practice. The only pieces of general equipment shall be footballs, shoes, helmets, kicking tees, and handheld dummies and there shall be no contact with mechanical training devices or blocking sleds or with another player.

3.2.8 Summertime Participation.

“Summertime” shall be defined as the Tuesday following Memorial Day to July 31. During the “summertime” there shall be no restrictions on the amount of contact between students and high school coaches. Attendance shall be voluntary, and coaches/school representative may not directly or by implication require a student to attend “summertime” activities as a condition for membership on a high school team or restrict the level of team participation within the high school program.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.8

The school year out-of-season period begins on the date of the official start of fall practices. Summer activities are regulated between the Tuesday following Memorial Day and July 31. Between the end of the summer activities period and the start of the school year, out-of-season period (August 1 through the official start of fall practices), the following shall apply:

- (1) The organized practice rule shall be in effect.
- (2) Conditioning programs may be held.
- (3) Attendance at commercial camps and clinics is permissible, but the organized practice rules shall be in effect for such camps and clinics.
- (4) No school-sponsored clinics or camps may be held.
- (5) Due to safety concerns, schools may permit the use of football helmets and softball and baseball protective equipment.

3.2.8.1 NSAA Catastrophic Insurance does not cover coaches/students/schools during the summertime period.

3.2.8.2 Summertime School-Sponsored Camps/Clinics:

A school may organize a camp or clinic in any sport from the Tuesday following Memorial Day through July 31. The camp shall be limited to no more than ten days starting with the first date of the camp/clinic.

- A. Summertime school-sponsored camps/clinics include planned physical activities that are instructional and competitive in nature where actual games can be played or simulated by camp attendees.
- B. Summertime school-sponsored camps/clinics shall be voluntary and open to all interested students from grades 9-12.
- C. The use of school facilities and equipment is permitted in accordance with local school board policy.
- D. Football summertime school-sponsored camps/clinics must adhere to the following contact limitation progression:
 - 1. On day one and day two, unlimited “air” and “bag” contact is allowed with the use of handheld dummies only. Contact with blocking sleds or other mechanical devices, as well as with other players is prohibited. The no-contact rule does not preclude incidental or inadvertent contact or the touching of a ball carrier with the hand(s). The only pieces of general football equipment shall be footballs, shoes, helmets, kicking tees and handheld blocking dummies.
 - 2. On day three through ten, contact with blocking sleds and other mechanical devices is permitted. Unlimited “air”, “bag”, and “control” contact is permitted. A maximum of 30 minutes per day and no more than two consecutive days of “thud” contact is permitted. In addition to general football equipment, shoulder pads are permitted, but full protective equipment may not be worn.
 - 3. If a football camp/clinic is not held over ten consecutive days, the camp/clinic must restart with day one of the progression.

3.2.8.3 Summertime Conditioning Program. A member school may organize and supervise a summer conditioning program to include weightlifting, running, and exercising. Conditioning sessions shall be no longer than 75 minutes in length per day or no more than 5 hours per week, and no student shall participate in more than one such session per day.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.8.3

Conditioning sessions organized and run by members of the school's coaching staff are subject to the 75-minute limitation. Students, for example, who work out on their own at the school facility in weightlifting, general calisthenics, running, or agility-type exercises shall not be considered to be involved in an organized conditioning program.

3.2.8.4 Summertime Open Gym/Facilities. It is permissible for students to be involved in NSAA activities of a school's open training program during the summertime. Permitting the participation by non-high school students (graduates, adults, or individuals not a member of the school) shall be determined by the district's Board of Education policy.

3.2.8.5 Summertime Regulations for Athletes and Coaches. From the Tuesday following Memorial Day or the final day of school (whichever is later) until July 31, there shall be no restrictions on the contact between students and high school coaches.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.2.8.5

- A. The organized practice rule shall be in effect during the school year until Memorial Day, except in the case of organized teams (e.g., Legion baseball, USA softball, etc.). If a high school coach or other adult associated with the school program is also the coach of an organized non-school team, practice and competition involving the coach and athletes of that non-school team may begin at the conclusion of the state tournament of that activity or during Week 46 of the standardized calendar, whichever date is later.
- B. If a high school coach or other adult associated with the school baseball program is also the coach of an organized non-school Junior or Senior Legion baseball team that will practice or compete after July 31st in preparation for a qualifying state, regional or national legion baseball tournament, that school must seek a waiver for the school-year, out-of-season Bylaw 3.2.4 (Organized Practice) from the NSAA Executive Director to continue their practice and competition through the completion of these tournaments

3.2.8.6 Summertime Leagues/Competitions. High school coaches are permitted to coach students from their school in summer league competition and games, provided there is no direct support from the school.

- A. All league fees and costs are to be paid by the athlete and/or his/her parents. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or organizations shall not provide expenses or support for individuals participating in such leagues.

- B. Team fundraisers may be used to finance summer league and camp activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for summer league or camp activities. Any athlete receiving money for summer league/camps must participate in the fundraising activity.
- C. The use of school-issued game uniforms is prohibited.

3.2.8.7 Summertime use of School Facilities. Member schools may permit the use of their facilities in accordance with the district's Board of Education policy.

3.2.8.8 Summertime Use of School Equipment. Member schools may permit the use of school equipment, other than school-issued game uniforms in accordance with the district's Board of Education policy.

3.2.9 Summertime College/Professional/Commercial Team Sport Camps/Clinics. High school coaches are permitted to accompany students from their school to college, professional, or commercial sports specialized team camps/clinics during the summer.

- A. The purpose of a specialized sports camp/clinic/school is to give team members an opportunity to improve their skills in a particular activity.
- B. The athlete and/or his/her parents shall pay the fees and expenses for attendance to such camps or schools. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or other organizations shall not provide expenses or support for individuals participating in camps, schools, and non-school competition.
- C. Team fundraisers may be used to finance team commercial camp/clinic activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for camp activities. Any athlete receiving money for summer team camps/clinics must participate in the fundraising activity.
- D. The school shall not provide school-issued uniforms but may provide transportation for individuals participating in such camps/clinics, or schools with prior approval from the district's Board of Education.

3.2.10 Summertime Individual Commercial Camps/Clinics. During the summer, students may attend any individual skill/technique camps or clinics.

- A. The purpose of an individual sports camp/clinic/school is to give a student an opportunity to improve his/her skills in a particular activity.
- B. The athlete and/or his/her parents shall pay the fees and expenses for attendance to such camps or schools. The school, booster clubs, individuals and/or other organizations shall not provide expenses or support for individuals participating in camps.

- C. Team fundraisers may be used to finance individual commercial camp/clinic activities. The AD/coach can hold money collected from fundraising in a school account until the money is needed to pay for summer individual camp/clinic activities. Any athlete receiving money for summer camps/clinics must participate in the fundraising activity.
- D. The school shall not provide school-issued uniforms.

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS – 3.3 GENERAL REGULATIONS GOVERNING COMPETITION

3.3.1.2 If a school fails to honor the assigned games, that school shall be excluded from participation in the state qualifying contest and/or the state contest for that particular sport.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.3.1.2

- A. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, more stringent penalties may be assessed if a school fails to honor the assigned contests. The Board of Directors may impose, but not be limited to, one or more of the penalties outlined in Bylaws 2.11.1 through 2.11.1.10.
 - B. When a school's varsity team is unable to complete the season, those remaining teams on that school's regular season schedule may either:
 - 1. Receive forfeit wins for those scheduled contests and shall be awarded wild card points for those forfeit wins. Wild card points will be determined by the forfeiting team's record at the time of seeding for postseason competition.
- OR
- 2. If more than seven days remain before any level of postseason seeding is to take place in that sport, a school may replace the forfeited contest on their schedule with another opponent/contest. Replacements that may be added to the schedule are limited to either teams similarly affected by the forfeiting team, or teams that have an unfilled, allowable contest opening on their schedule. Replacement contests must be scheduled a minimum of seven days in advance of any postseason seeding and will count towards postseason/wild card seeding.
 - C. Any school with a regular season forfeit not imposed by the NSAA will be ineligible for the postseason.
 - D. Any school with a regular season or postseason forfeit not imposed by the NSAA will be fined \$1000 with the money going to the opponent if the game was to be the opponent's home game. The fine will be waived if the NSAA is able to replace the opponent's home game.
 - E. Any school with a regular season or postseason forfeit not imposed by the NSAA will be responsible for paying the officials.

3.3.7 State Contests. The Board of Directors shall have charge of all state interscholastic contests in activities sponsored by the Association. The Executive Director shall be the director of all such contests. He/she may delegate the details to someone else and have such other help as he/she deems necessary.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.3.7

Eligibility for District/State Competition

- A. In all athletic activities, **teams wishing to enter** a sub-district, district, or state contest shall have **participated in a minimum of five interschool varsity** contests prior to the sub-district, district, or state contest.
 - 1. Exceptions to the requirements for a team that has not participated in at least five interschool varsity contests would be considered if the team was unable to participate if weather conditions forced a cancellation of scheduled contests. Other extenuating circumstances would be considered by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis.
- B. In order to participate in a district or state tournament, **a student is required to have been a member of the school's team for at least twenty school days prior** to the first day of the sub-district, district, or state tournament.
 - 1. Exceptions to the requirements for a student who is not a member of the school team for twenty school days would be considered if an individual was unable to participate because of illness, injury, or transfer from another high school. School, team, or game suspensions, regardless of the underlying cause, shall not be considered as exceptions to this participation rule.
- C. To be eligible to participate in a sub-district, district and/or state contest, **a student shall have been a member of a school's team and shall have been "available to participate" in at least thirty percent (30%)** of the school's scheduled interschool contests.
 - 1. Exceptions to the requirements for a student who has not been available to participate in at least 30% of the school's varsity interschool contests would be considered if an individual was unable to participate because of illness, injury, transfer from another high school, or if weather conditions forced a cancellation of scheduled contests.
 - 2. When determining whether a student has been available for 30% of the school's varsity interschool contests, one would divide the number of varsity interschool contests for which the student was available by the school's total number of varsity interschool contests; all decimals .1 or above would be rounded up to the next higher whole number.
 - 3. The term "available to participate" means that the student was a bona fide member of the team, eligible to participate for the school at some level of competition in the sport and is not suspended from participation in activities for by virtue of NSAA rules.

- D. For situations pertaining to eligibility to participate in district or state contests that are not specifically addressed by these guidelines, the Executive Director shall have the authority to waive membership and participation requirements on a case-by-case basis.
- E. If a school takes its team off the playing field prior to the completion of a contest or prior to the suspension or termination of a game by the game officials, and the contest is forfeited because of the refusal of the school's team to continue play, the school shall be subject to a penalty set by the Board of Directors. The penalty may be the exclusion from participation in sub-district, district, playoffs, or state contests.

- 3.3.7.2** The Executive Director is granted the authority to require schools to alter travel plans to arrive the day prior to the scheduled state contest if weather conditions so warrant. If a school chooses not to travel to the contest site the day prior to the scheduled contest, the school shall understand that the games will go on as scheduled and if they are unable to arrive prior to the scheduled game time, a forfeit will be issued.
- 3.3.10** **Supervision.** The superintendent, principal, or an authorized representative of the faculty shall accompany and supervise the team or individuals to all contests.
- 3.3.11** **Conduct and Sportsmanship.** Member schools shall maintain proper crowd control and enforce the principles of good sportsmanship and ethics during all interscholastic contests. Failure to fulfill this obligation shall subject the school to penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.
 - 3.3.11.1** **Conduct of Coaches and Athletes.** Coaches and athletes shall conduct themselves in accordance with the playing rules of the sport contest and refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct during interscholastic competition. Failure to fulfill this obligation shall subject the individual(s) to penalties as provided in Article 2, Section 2.11, NSAA Bylaws Governing All Activities.
 - 3.3.11.2** **Definition of Unsportsmanlike Conduct.** Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include the following: fighting, verbal abuse or dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, inappropriate comments are actions that may be construed as sexual harassment, profanity, obscene gestures, flagrant and violent fouls, taunting, trash talk, baiting, cheating, throwing or abusing equipment, inappropriate posters, physical intimidation or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of a team bench area.

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS - 3.5

PARTICIPATION ON NON-HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS AND IN NON-HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITION

3.5.1 Any student who participates in any athletic contest other than as a representative of his/her high school during the season of the sport involved becomes ineligible to represent his/her school in that sport for one or more contests or the remainder of the season.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.5.1

- A. To be eligible to participate in a district and/or state contest, **a student shall have been a member of a school's team and shall have been "available to participate" in at least eighty percent (80%)** of the school's scheduled interschool contests because of participating in non-high school competition.
1. The term "available to participate" means that the student was a bona fide member of the team, eligible to participate for the school at some level of competition in the sport and not involved in outside participation activities (exception: Olympic Development Program or national team activities as approved by the NSAA.)
 2. The term "school's scheduled interschool contests" is defined as those contests which appear on the school's varsity schedule at the beginning of the season. An exception to this requirement will be considered if a student was unable to participate because of injury, illness, or had transferred from another high school.
- B. During the season of a particular sport, athletes participating in that sport for a high school may attend and physically take part in college camps and clinics.
- C. At no time during the high school sport season can a student who is a member of the school squad in that sport compete in non-school organized competition in any skill of the sport.
- D. A person may be considered to be a participant without being an official entry in the competition.
- E. The phrase "compete in non-school organized competition in any skill of the sport" is interpreted to mean to take part in any skill of the sport of season. For example, a student out for cross country or track would become ineligible to represent the high school if he/she participates in a road race or a marathon. A student on the high school basketball team would become ineligible if he/she participates in a free throw

contest, 1 on 1, 2 on 2, 3 on 3, 4 on 4 basketball contest, or other similar contest. **A student out for high school football will become ineligible if he competes in a punt, pass and kick contest.** A wrestler shall not participate in a non-school takedown tournament during the wrestling season. An exception to this rule may be granted by the Executive Director for special circumstances.

- F. Schools must contact the Executive Director in advance of the event to determine whether an activity would qualify under this exception.
- G. If prizes or awards are provided for such participation, such awards need to be in compliance with NSAA guidelines. Awards to individuals for activity participation in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any negotiable instrument are not allowed.
- H. Halftime free-throw or three-point contests or other such halftime skill contests used as fundraisers by a school-related group shall no longer impact the eligibility of students out for the sport, providing the awards is not in the form of cash, merchandise certificates or any negotiable instruments, and providing that the full retail value of the symbolic or merchandise award does not exceed the value set by the Board of Directors (currently \$50).

3.5.2 Individual Instruction. During a season of a sport, a student is permitted to take individual instruction from a person other than the high school coach at times other than scheduled high school practice sessions, but such instructions shall not interfere with, nor be substituted for the high school coaching, practice sessions, or contest.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.5.2

During a season of a sport, a student is permitted to take individual instruction from a person other than the high school coach. Group instruction, practices with outside teams, and tryouts for outside teams other than as part of a college or university recruiting visit, however, are not permitted.

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAW

3.7.1 – AMATEUR RULE

A student shall be an amateur in all sports sponsored by the Nebraska School Activities Association. A student may be declared ineligible if he/she:

- A. Accepts merchandise, compensation of any nature, or illegal awards for competing in Association-sponsored activities.
- B. Enters into any agreement or contract to compete in professional sports.
- C. Permits, with or without actual endorsement, the use of name, picture, and/or personal appearance as an athlete in the promotion of a commercial or profit-making event, item, plan, or service (this does not prevent a student's picture or name from being included in programs); or,
- D. Receives merchandise or compensation of any nature for coaching any NSAA approved sport during the season of the sport in his/her school.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.7.1, C – NAME, IMAGE & LIKENESS

Under Bylaw 3.7.1.c, the term “with or without actual endorsement” requires that the student or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) have knowledge that the student's name, picture, and/or personal appearance are being used by another person or entity.

Note: For commonly asked NIL Questions, [view these NIL Q&A's](#).

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS – 3.11.4 FOOTBALL

- 3.11.4.1** Football shall be conducted during the fall sports season. The season for football shall begin with the first day of practice as permitted by NSAA rules and shall end with the state playoff finals.
- 3.11.4.2** No team representing a member school may participate in more than eight (Classes D1 & D2 & D6) or nine (Classes A, B, C1 & C2) regularly scheduled football games in addition to the State-sponsored series of playoff games from the date of the first permitted contests to the last contest date.

- 3.11.4.3** An individual player may take part in no more than eight quarters of football per calendar week, except during the state playoff competition. (This limitation does not apply to a contest which has been postponed.)
- 3.11.4.4** No football “bowl” games shall be played.
- 3.11.4.5** No member school shall establish or attend an early season football camp.
- 3.11.4.6** At the beginning of football practice each year, every member school shall be required to have two days of no-contact rules. A school shall not permit an individual athlete to participate in a drill involving contact unless the athlete has had at least two days of practice with no-contact rules. The no-contact rule shall include contact with a mechanical or training device, blocking sleds, as well as with another player without handheld dummies.
 - 3.11.4.6.1** The only pieces of player equipment to be worn by the individuals during the period of no-contact drills are shoes and helmets.
 - 3.11.4.6.2** The only pieces of general football equipment to be used during the first two days of football practice are footballs, kicking tees, and blocking dummies.
- 3.11.4.7** No game or scrimmage may be held in football with any team not belonging to the NSAA or to its own State High School Association.
 - 3.11.4.7.1** No game or scrimmage in football may be held with any team other than an intra-squad scrimmage or game before the opening game of the season.
 - 3.11.4.7.2** An alumni scrimmage is illegal in football.
 - 3.11.4.7.3** The penalty for participating in an illegal scrimmage or game may be suspension from the NSAA for one season in that sport.
- 3.11.4.8** A state football playoff shall be held with regulations established by the Board of Directors.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 3.11.1-3.11.13 (ALL ATHLETICS)

During a sports season, a school shall not permit a student who is not a member of the high school’s team, an adult, a college student, or alumni to participate in any practice session, drill, scrimmage, or game in which a school team is involved (e.g., boys’ soccer team member cannot participate with girls’ soccer team members, etc.). This does not prevent a coach from being involved for the primary purpose of teaching or demonstrating a skill, method, or technique.

NSAA ATHLETIC BYLAWS 3.12.4 PROTESTS

- 3.12.4.1 Protests based upon the eligibility of players will be considered by the Executive Director and Board of Directors.
- 3.12.4.2 Protests based upon play situations and situations which involve judgment on the part of game officials will not be considered.

NSAA SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES AND EJECTIONS

Approved Rulings and Interpretations for 2.11.3 and 2.11.4

- A. Enforcement of the “sit-out rule” for ejections from high school contests for unsportsmanlike conduct is a responsibility of the member school. Failure to properly enforce this rule could result in other sanctions by the NSAA.
- B. Administrators will be expected to promptly file a report with the NSAA whenever a participant or coach from their school has been ejected from any high school contest. Such filing must be done online under the AD login section of the NSAA webpage.
- C. A participant or coach ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next athletic contest at that level of competition and any other athletic contest at any level during the interim.
- D. Enforcement of the “sit-out rule” is expected to begin immediately, regardless of whether it is regular-season or tournament play.
- E. Any participant ejected a second time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next two contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
- F. Any participant ejected a third time during a season from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next three contests at that level of competition and all other athletic contests at any level during the interim, in addition to other penalties the NSAA or school may assess.
- G. During the time of their “sit-out” suspension, athletes who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not suit up or participate, but it is the school’s discretion whether such athlete is able to travel with the team or sit on the team bench. *(The athlete is permitted to practice per school’s discretion)*

- H. Coaches who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct may not coach in any contest or be present at the contest site during the time of their “sit-out” suspension. Coaches who are ejected will also be required to successfully complete an NFHS **“TEACHING AND MODELING BEHAVIOR”** online course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Teaching and Modeling Behavior online course before being able to coach the following season or year.
- I. Coaches who are ejected a second time in a season will be required to sit-out the next two contests at that level, plus all other contests at other levels during the interim. Coaches may not be present at the contest site during the time of their “sit-out” suspension. Any coach ejected a second time will also be required to successfully complete the NFHS **“FUNDAMENTALS OF COACHING”** online course within 10 days of the ejection. Failure to successfully complete the course will result in a suspension from coaching for the remainder of the season. In those situations in which the ejection of the coach occurs near the end of the season or during the NSAA end-of-season play, the coach will be required to successfully complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching online course before being able to coach the following season or year.
- J. If the ejection takes place in the final game of the season, the suspension will carry over to the following season of the same sport.
- K. When schools have students or coaches with multiple ejections, the school shall submit to the NSAA a written management plan on how they plan to remediate the problem.
- L. **Officials will be expected to file with the NSAA an ejection report for any ejection of a player or coach from a contest online. Any unusual situation that occurs prior to, during, or after a contest should also be reported.**
- M. **Prompt reporting to the NSAA office by the official is necessary. Officials are asked to submit their electronic report or call the NSAA office by the day following the ejection.**
- N. Officials are asked to be specific in listing the reason(s) for an ejection.
- O. Affiliated officials (officials registered from contiguous states) will also be required to perform this reporting function.
- P. **There is no appeal process for ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct.**
- Q. The Executive Director shall reserve the right to consider the length of suspensions when some levels of competition are scheduled on an irregular basis (e.g., three weeks between regularly scheduled non-varsity contests).

NSAA ONLINE RULES MEETINGS

The NSAA presents rules meetings in order to inform and educate coaches, officials, and judges about NFHS playing rules and rules changes, NSAA guidelines and approved rulings, and to discuss health and safety issues related to activities participation.

All head coaches are required to attend an NSAA Rules Meeting or complete an NSAA Rules Meeting online annually. Failure to do so will result in possible late fees and suspension penalties.

Online rules meetings are initially offered at no cost to coaches and officials, followed by a period with a \$50 "Late" Fee. The following sanctions and fees are applicable to those coaches who fail to complete the rules meeting by the expiration of the "Late" Fee period.

Online Football Rules Meetings:

July 28 to August 20	No charge
August 21 and August 22	\$50 Fee

Absence from the required rules meeting OR FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE ONLINE RULES MEETING by the end of the day on August 22 will result in the following sanctions:

First Offense in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in any competition in that activity until

- (1) The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$100; and
- (2) The head coach successfully completes the open book test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.

During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

Second and Subsequent Offenses in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in all NSAA end-of-season play (subdistricts, districts, playoffs, and state competition).

- (1) The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$200; and
- (2) The head coach successfully completes the open book test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.

During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

MANDATORY ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD

1. Days 1 through 5 of the heat-acclimatization period consist of the first 5 days of formal practice. During this time, athletes may not participate in more than 1 practice per day.
2. If a practice is interrupted by inclement weather or heat restrictions, the practice should recommence once conditions are deemed safe. Total practice time should not exceed 3 hours in any 1 day.
3. A 1-hour maximum walk-through is permitted during days 1–5 of the heat-acclimatization period. However, a 3-hour recovery period should be inserted between the practice and walk-through (or vice versa). The only pieces of player equipment to be worn by the individuals during the walk-through are shoes and helmets. The only pieces of general equipment to be used during the walk-through are footballs and kicking tees.
4. During days 1 & 2 of the heat-acclimatization period, helmets are the only protective equipment permitted.
During days 3 & 4, only helmets and shoulder pads are permitted.
Beginning on day 5, all protective equipment may be worn.
5. Beginning no earlier than day 6 and continuing through day 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.
6. On a double-practice day, neither practice should exceed 3 hours in duration, and student-athletes should not participate in more than 5 total hours of practice. 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.
7. 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.
8. Click the links below for Heat Index and WBGT information

[Heat Index Chart](#)

[WBGT Chart](#)

[WBGT Geographic Regions](#)

[WBGT Regions by School](#)

DEFINITION (LEVELS) OF CONTACT

Levels of Contact focus on the varying levels of intensity throughout practices to build player confidence, ensure their safety and prevent both physical and mental exhaustion. These Levels of Contact will increase player safety by reducing the risk of helmet-to-helmet contact without sacrificing skill development.

Five intensity levels are used to introduce players to practice drills which position them to master the fundamentals and increase skill development.

Air	(Coach pre-determined outcome) Players run a drill unopposed without contact.
Bags	(Coach pre-determined outcome) Drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface.
Control	(Coach pre-determined outcome) Drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; one player is pre-determined to be the “winner” by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.
Thud	(No coach pre-determined outcome) Drill is run at assigned speed through the moment of contact; no pre-determined “winner”. Contact remains above the waist; players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.
Live Action	(No coach pre-determined outcome) Games, scrimmages, and drills run in game-like conditions. These are the only times that players are taken to the ground.

MANDATORY CONTACT LIMITATIONS

Days 1&2	3.11.4.6 – No Contact Rule Equipment – Helmets Allowable Contact – “Air” and “Bag” (COACH PRE-DETERMINED OUTCOME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unlimited
Days 3&4	Equipment – Helmets and shoulder pads Allowable Contact – “Air”, “Bag” and “Control” (COACH PRE-DETERMINED OUTCOME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unlimited
Day 5-14	Equipment – Full protective equipment may be worn Allowable Contact – “Air”, “Bag” and “Control” (COACH PRE-DETERMINED OUTCOME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unlimited “Thud” and “Live Action” (NO COACH PRE-DETERMINED OUTCOME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximum 30 minutes per practice ○ No more than 2 consecutive days ○ Only one practice (on a scheduled 2-a-day) ○ 2 scheduled scrimmages, not to exceed 90 minutes each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not to be scheduled before day 6
Day 15 - through remainder of season	Equipment – Full protective equipment may be worn Allowable Contact – “Air”, “Bag” and “Control” (COACH PRE-DETERMINED OUTCOME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unlimited “Thud” and “Live Action” (NO COACH PRE-DETERMINED OUTCOME) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maximum of 4 days per week (including games) ○ No more than 2 consecutive days ○ Maximum of 30 minutes per practice

CLASSIFICATIONS

Member schools shall be divided into **seven** classes for participation in the state football playoffs. (A – B – C1 – C2 – D1 – D2 – D6)

- 2.13.2 **Basis for Classification.** A school's classification shall be based on its total enrollment for all activities with the exception of football, boys tennis, boys basketball, boys bowling, boys wrestling, boys golf, boys soccer and baseball that will be classified on boy enrollment only, and volleyball, softball, girls basketball, girls bowling, girls wrestling, girls golf, girls tennis and girls soccer that will be classified on girl enrollment only.
- 2.13.2.1 A school's total enrollment shall be the total boy and girl enrollment in grades nine, ten, and eleven according to the enrollment figures submitted to the State Department of Education on October 1st of the preceding school year.
- 2.13.2.2 If, in a particular activity, the schools are classified for a two-year period, the total enrollment shall be the figures from the State Department of Education on October 1st of the year which immediately precedes the two-year classification period.

APPROVED RULINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS FOR 2.13.2

- A. In all athletics, with the exception of football, Class A will be classified based on a total enrollment of 850 or above. The total enrollment figures shall be doubled for unisex schools. [Per AR 2.13.3, the classification period for Class A shall be for two years]
- B. **Tiebreaker.** If schools are tied in enrollment for the last position or positions of a class, the following tie-breaker will be applied:
1. The first tie-breaker will be a three-year average of enrollment which includes the year on which the current year's classification is based and the two previous years. The higher three-year average will be in the larger class.
 2. If the tie still exists, then the school with the higher immediate previous year's enrollment will be placed in the larger class.
 3. If a tie still exists, it will be decided by a coin flip in the NSAA office.
- C. **Opting Up in Classification.** A school may opt up any classification in any NSAA activity. Request to opt up must be submitted to the NSAA within one week of the classification for that activity being released.
- D. **Opting Down in Classification.** Due to safety consideration and small participation numbers, schools may elect to opt down one classification in football. Such decision must be made prior to statewide scheduling, and such schools are ineligible to win the district championship and ineligible for playoff consideration.

The 2024 & 2025 Football Classifications have been determined in the following manner.

Class A

- **THREE-GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT OF 425 AND ABOVE**

Class B

- **THREE-GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT FROM 424-160**

Class C1 & Class C2

- **NOTE:** Starting with the 2022&2023 Classification Cycle
- **THREE-GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT 159 AND BELOW**
- **After Class A and Class B are determined, eligible Class C1 and Class C2 schools playing 11-man football are divided into two classes with approximately equal numbers of schools in each class. Odd number added to C2.**

Class D1 and Class D2

- **ELIGIBLE CLASS D1 & D2 SCHOOLS PLAYING 8-MAN FOOTBALL ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO CLASSES WITH APPROXIMATELY EQUAL NUMBERS OF SCHOOLS IN EACH CLASS. ODD NUMBER ADDED TO D2**

Class D6

- **ALL SIX-MAN SCHOOLS**

The Football Classifications for the 2024 & 2025 seasons were based on the three-grade enrollment submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education in the fall of 2023.

- a. The **BOY** Enrollment figures submitted to the State Department of Education in the fall of each odd numbered year will be used to determine the two-year football classifications.
- b. Schools playing football and having a three-grade **BOY** enrollment in excess of **47** are required to play 11-man football in order to be eligible for the State Football Playoffs. If such schools choose to play 8-man football, they will not be eligible for the State Football Playoffs.
- c. Schools playing football and having a three-grade **BOY** enrollment in excess of **27** are required to play 8-man football in order to be eligible for the State Football Playoffs. If such schools choose to play 6-man football, they will not be eligible for the State Football Playoffs.
- d. Schools playing 8-man football that are ineligible for the State Football Playoffs due to having **BOY** enrollments in excess of **47**, unless they are within their one-classification waiver period, shall also be ineligible for competing for the District Championship.

- e. Schools playing 6-man football that are ineligible for the State Football Playoffs due to having **BOY** enrollments in excess of **27**, unless they are within their one-classification waiver period, shall also be ineligible for competing for the District Championship.
- f. Schools playing football with a **BOYS** enrollment of **47** or fewer may play 11-man football.
- g. Schools playing football with a **BOYS** enrollment of **27** or fewer may play 8-man football.
- h. If during the immediate preceding classification period a school's **BOY** three-grade enrollment submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education was **47** or less and if that school has been playing 8-man football, such school may remain eligible for 8-man football for one more classification period, even though its new three-grade enrollment exceeds **47**.
- i. If during the immediate preceding classification period a school's **BOY** three-grade enrollment submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education was **27** or less and if that school has been playing 6-man football, such school may remain eligible for 6-man football for one more classification period, even though its new three-grade enrollment exceeds **27**.
- j. **A school that Opts Down in classification and is thus ineligible for the playoffs in the 2024 & 2025 cycle can become eligible in the second season (2025) if their boy enrollment figure as submitted in September of 2024 falls within the appropriate classification enrollment range.**

Schools in Class B, C1, C2, D1, D2 and D6 may form cooperatives in football according to the same stipulations adopted for all other activities. Cooperatives will play the level of classification as based on the enrollment figures established by the NSAA.

FOOTBALL SCHEDULES

The NSAA will schedule all football games on a two-year basis (**2024 and 2025**). Should vacancies occur within a school's regular season schedule, the NSAA cannot be responsible for assuring that a replacement game is scheduled. In case of such vacancies, the NSAA will work with member schools prior to any replacement scheduling. If a member school indicates interest in filling the vacancy and an opponent is found, the school will be required to play the game. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, more stringent penalties may be assessed if a school fails to honor the assigned contests. The Board of Directors may impose, but not be limited to, one or more of the penalties outlined in Bylaws 2.11.1 through 2.11.1.10.

SCHEDULING TIMELINE (2024 & 2025 SEASONS)

CLASSES A - B - C1 - C2 - D1 - D2 - D6

The classification period and schedules will be for two years – the **2024** and **2025** football seasons for Classes A-B-C1-C2-D1-D2-D6.

The scheduling timeline is dependent on receiving the enrollment figures the NSAA member schools report to the Nebraska Department of Education in the fall of 2023. These figures historically have been available to the NSAA sometime in early December.

The TENTATIVE schedule will be as follows:

1. **November 1, 2023** – Deadline to submit application for a cooperative sponsorship in football for the 2024 and 2025 seasons. **No cooperative sponsorships in football for the 2024 and 2025 football seasons will be accepted or permitted after November 1, 2023.**
2. **November 2023** – Football coops will be approved for the 2024 and 2025 football seasons at the November NSAA Board of Directors meeting.
3. **November 30, 2023** – The deadline for schools to submit their declaration of participation in 11-man, 8-man or 6-man football. **This is also the deadline for schools to submit their intent to “Opt Up” or “Opt Down” in classification.**
 - Those schools with a BOY three-grade enrollment (9th -11th grades) in excess of 47 as submitted in September of 2023 are not eligible for the 8-man football playoffs in 2024 and 2025, unless they’re within the one-classification waiver period. A school that is ineligible for the playoffs in the 2024 & 2025 cycle can become eligible in the second season (2025) if their BOY enrollment figure is 47 or lower as submitted in September of 2024. (If you have questions, please contact the NSAA office.)
 - Those schools with a BOY three-grade enrollment (9th -11th grades) in excess of 27 as submitted in September of 2023 are not eligible for the 6-man football playoffs in 2024 and 2025, unless they are within the one-classification waiver period. A school that is ineligible for the playoffs in the 2024 & 2025 cycle can become eligible in the second season (2025) if their BOY enrollment figure is 27 or lower as submitted in September of 2024. (If you have questions, please contact the NSAA office.)
 - A school that Opts down in classification and is thus ineligible for the playoffs in the 2024 & 2025 cycle can become eligible in the second season (2025) if their boy enrollment figure as submitted in September of 2024 falls within the appropriate classification enrollment range.
4. **December** – Classification and district assignments for the 2024 and 2025 football seasons will be released. Schools will be asked to submit a priority list of non-district schools they would like to have on their 2024 and 2025 football schedules. More detailed information and instructions regarding this process will be provided after the classifications and district assignments are released.
5. **January / February 2024** – The NSAA staff will establish the football schedules for the 2024 and 2025 football seasons for all member schools in Classes A-B-C1-C2-D1-D2-D6.
6. **February 7, 2024** – The schedules along with the home and away designations for Classes A-B-C1-C2-D1-D2-D6 will be released to the member schools. More detailed instructions will be provided at a later time.

PARTICIPATION

The penalty for exceeding contest limitations by a school or an individual shall be the exclusion from competition in the district and / or state competition. Exhibition or unattached participation in interschool high school competition in attempting to circumvent the game, match or meet limitation shall not be permitted.

To be a participant in any NSAA activity at either the varsity or non-varsity levels of competition, an individual must be a bona fide student of a member high school. Exempt-school or home-school students, unless enrolled in a minimum of twenty credit hours of schoolwork, at least 5 of those credit hours in the member high school, are not eligible to represent a member school in NSAA activities, regardless of the level of participation or competition.

VIDEO EQUIPMENT

The use of video equipment or a camera of any sort, for the purpose of scouting a football opponent(s) is not allowed without the written consent of the school(s) involved.

SCRIMMAGES

Intra-squad scrimmages are permissible during the season of the sport involved and are not restricted by the scrimmage characteristics listed in Bylaw 3.3.2.

8-PLAYER & 6-PLAYER FOOTBALL FIELD

The field is 80 yards between goal lines and 40 yards wide with 15-yard side zones. "Seven-yard marks" are to be 12 inches in length, and 4 inches in width shall be located 7 yards from each sideline. The "seven-yard marks" shall be marked so that at least each 10-yard line bisects the "seven-yard mark". These marks shall not be required if the field is visibly numbered. If on-the-field numbers are used, the tops of those numbers shall be seven yards from the sideline.

35 POINT RUNNING CLOCK (ALL CLASSES)

A running clock will be used for varsity regular-season games, play-off games and State Championship games for six, eight and eleven-man football whenever a 35-point score differential is reached after the first half of play. The clock will run continuously except for the following times:

1. During called timeouts. (Restart on the snap)
2. During the break between the 3rd and 4th quarters. (Restart on the snap)
3. Following a score. (Restart on the kick-off, 1st touching or ensuing snap, kick out of bounds or touchback)
4. During penalty enforcement. (Restart on “ready for play”)
5. Extended injury, if coach comes on the field. (Restart on “ready for play”)
6. Anytime the officials deem it necessary for safety reasons. (Restart on “ready for play”)
7. NOTE: NFHS RULE 3.1.3 – A period or periods may be shortened in any emergency by agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee. By mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee, any remaining period may be shortened at any time, or the game terminated.

Normal clock operating and timing procedures will resume if the point differential is reduced to fewer than 35 points. *Optional for non-varsity competition.*

GUIDELINES FOR BANDS

1. The participation of bands at a school football contest is an exciting aspect of the event. The band contributes to the event by increasing the level of excitement and adding a “touch of class” to the festivities. In order to maintain a proper perspective and to ensure equity in competition for the participating teams, a few guidelines must be followed.
2. Band instruments, including drums, are not to be played at any time other than when the entire band is playing.
3. The use of artificial noisemakers is prohibited. (Examples: air horns, whistles, bells, etc.) Megaphones are to be used by cheerleaders only.
4. **Persons subject to the protocols, including bands, shall not create any noise that prohibits a team from hearing their signals.**
5. **Bands are allowed to play at the following times (same rules apply to recorded music):**
 - a. Pre-game
 - b. Between quarters
 - c. Halftime
 - d. Post-game
 - e. Time-outs (except injury time-outs)

- f. After scoring plays prior to the try and / or kick off
 - g. Change of possession
 - h. Between plays stopping when:
 - i. The umpire has placed the ball and moved into position; or
 - ii. The offense breaks the huddle or, in the case of a no-huddle offense, approaches the line of scrimmage to move into formation
6. **Violation of these protocols may result in penalties which include Delay-of-Game, Unsportsmanlike Conduct, or Unfair Acts.**
7. When bands want to warm-up prior to halftime, directors should arrange this so that it is done in an area that is not a distraction to the contest. Note: No whistles may be used while the game is in progress.
8. Because the band acts as a spirit group, members should always act in a positive manner and must not do anything to distract or negatively affect the opposing team. It is the director's responsibility to prevent his/her band from playing at inappropriate times, playing inappropriate music, or taunting the opposing team.
9. The band must display courtesy and respect toward the players, cheerleaders, and fans. To do anything else is not only a distraction from the contest but also reflects negatively on the band, the director, and the school. Support your school and team in a positive manner! Please be sure your band instructors understand these guidelines for all football games.
10. Please let the officials and the opposing team know when they arrive at the game site, if the intermission is going to be increased to a maximum of 20 minutes, if you are having special ceremonies or an extended band performance.

MUSIC LICENSES

Generally, music used for contests (warm-up, half-time, "walk-up" music, etc.) needs to be licensed. Some music may be in public domain; however, most music is not and will require a license. This season, take the necessary time to verify your music is licensed through the proper entities. Visit www.nfhslearn.com to view the video course: *Understanding Copyright and Compliance*.

PUBLIC ADDRESS ANNOUNCER

Activities Directors, coaches and officials need to make sure that the public address announcers at all football games are not doing live play-by-play announcing during the game. The announcers should be done announcing when the teams break the huddle and come to the line of scrimmage and should not announce again until the play is concluded. **There is to be no announcing while a play is in progress.**

VIDEO SCOREBOARDS

If a school has a video scoreboard, the time remaining must be visible at all times during pregame, the game itself and at halftime.

AMBULANCE - MEDICAL PERSONNEL

It is the policy of the Nebraska School Activities Association to defer to the member school whether a physician and/or ambulance need to be present at football games. This is a local school board decision. The NSAA recognizes the importance of having medical personnel/ambulance on site but is not in the position to make it required.

If the local district has a policy stating an ambulance must be on site, then the game will be held up until an ambulance arrives. If this is the policy for the local district the game officials need to be informed prior to the beginning of the game.

SPIRIT LINES

During regular season games, it is up to the local schools to determine if they are going to allow spirit lines during football games.

All spirit lines during NSAA State Football Playoffs and Championship games are PROHIBITED, except for football players in uniform and duly elected cheerleaders.

MANDATORY REPORTING OF SCORES AND STATISTICS VIA MAXPREPS

All varsity game scores and stats are required to be reported to: MAXPREPS.COM

Detailed instructions on how to submit scores and stats to MAXPREPS.COM will be emailed to each member school.

Both schools involved in the contest are encouraged to verify the final score has been submitted.

NSAA member schools that compete against out-of-state schools are required to submit the game results.

Full information on mandatory score and stat reporting is [available by clicking here](#).

PARTICIPATION IN NSAA PLAY-OFFS

1. Participation in the playoffs will be optional for all schools.
2. The schools' varsity football games as assigned by the NSAA office, are used to determine the qualifying teams.
3. A complete schedule or any part of a schedule canceled after the 2-year schedules have been released will be considered forfeited games and will count as a win for the opponent, unless the NSAA and opponent are able to schedule a new game, in which case that game will take the place of the originally scheduled game.
4. If schools mutually agree to cancel a game after the start of the season it will count as a loss for both teams.
5. The following regulations apply to scheduled regular-season football games during the weeks in which the state football playoffs are scheduled:
 - a. Qualifying schools would not be allowed to compete in any further competition except the NSAA playoffs.
6. If a school does not qualify for the state playoffs, it may not participate or schedule a game at any level during the play-off series.
7. Withdrawal from the Championship
 - a. Teams that withdrawal from a sub-district, district or State Championship after pairings have been made are subject to penalty by the Executive Director to be approved by the Board of Directors at the next scheduled meeting unless such withdrawal is authorized by the Executive Director for sufficient cause.

POINT SYSTEM — WILD CARD QUALIFYING CRITERIA

1. All games between Nebraska schools and against the varsity teams of schools located in other states and recognized by the Nebraska School Activities Association as having varsity 11, 9, 8, and 6-man football teams shall count when calculating the point totals.
2. All games played by a school's varsity team, regardless of the location of the opposing school, will count toward the number of permitted contests in a particular sport.
3. All scheduled and postponed regular season varsity contests must be played prior to the start of Subdistrict, District, or State competition. Once Subdistrict, District, or State Competition begins, no regular varsity contests shall be permitted.
4. No points will be awarded to either team if a school which has indicated it will play in the 11-man or 6-man division plays a team which has indicated it will play in the 8-man division.

5. If a school plays an opponent more than once during the season, only the first game shall count in calculating the point totals.
6. The points accrued for the qualifying and seeding of entries shall terminate at the end of the regular season of competition.
 - a. Out-of-state varsity teams will be converted to the Nebraska classification based on the same year enrollment figures obtained from that State's Activities Association.
 - b. Only regular season games of out-of-state teams will be used to calculate the point average.
 - c. If another State's playoffs begin prior to the end of the eighth or ninth week, those playoff results will not count in the point system for the Nebraska teams.
7. Classification of Out-of-State Schools for Wild Card Consideration:

When determining the classification of an out-of-state school for wild card purposes, if the school's three-grade enrollment is less than the lowest enrollment in a particular class, the out-of-state school shall be classified in the immediate lower class. The enrollment of Nebraska schools opting up to play in a higher class will not be considered when comparing out-of-state schools for classification purposes.
8. Classification of Out-of-State Schools for Wild Card Consideration When Enrollment is Identical to Schools in Two Different Classes:

In determining classifications for NSAA activities, if two or more schools are tied for the final place in a particular class, the tie is broken by using the schools' three-year average enrollment for the most recent three years. When determining the classification of an out-of-state school for wild card purposes, if the out-of-state school's three-grade enrollment is identical to the enrollments shared by schools in two different classes, the out-of-state school shall be placed in the higher class.
9. If a Class D1 or Class D2 team plays a school from another state which plays 9-man football, the Nebraska 8-man team will receive points the same as if it had played an 8-man team.
10. **FORFEITS:**
 - a. A contest that is forfeited because of extenuating circumstances between schools shall count as a loss for the team forfeiting, and such forfeiting team shall receive wild card points for such forfeited loss.
 - b. Schools that are required to forfeit a game or games by the Executive Director or the Board of Directors shall count such contests as one of the permissible contests under the contest limitations for that sport. The school shall receive forfeit losses for those scheduled contests and shall be awarded wild card points for those forfeit losses.
 - c. When a school's varsity team is unable to complete the season, those remaining teams on that school's regular season schedule may either:
 1. Receive forfeit wins for those scheduled contests and shall be awarded wild card points for those forfeit wins. Wild card points will be determined by the forfeiting team's record at the time of seeding for postseason competition.

OR

2. If more than seven days remain before any level of postseason seeding is to take place in that sport, a school may replace the forfeited contest on their schedule with another opponent/contest. Replacements that may be added to the schedule are limited to either teams similarly affected by the forfeiting team, or teams that have an unfilled, allowable contest opening on their schedule. Replacement contests must be scheduled a minimum of seven days in advance of any postseason seeding and will count towards postseason/wild card seeding.
- d. If two schools cannot agree on the postponement of a regular season football game and the schools contact the NSAA office for a ruling, first priority shall be given to player safety. The host team has the sole responsibility of determining if the field is fit for play. The game may be postponed or forfeited. If a forfeit is not awarded, the game must be completed by 12 noon on Saturday of the school's last permitted regular season game. If the game is not forfeited and is not played by the stipulated date, each team will be credited with a loss.
- e. If a school takes its team off the playing field prior to the completion of a contest, or prior to the suspension/termination of a game by the game officials, and the contest results in a forfeit because of the refusal of the school's team to continue play, the school shall be subject to a penalty set by the NSAA Board of Directors. The penalty may be exclusion from participation in the district or state series of competition.
- f. Any school with a regular season forfeit not imposed by the NSAA will be ineligible for the postseason.
- g. Any school with a regular season or post season forfeit not imposed by the NSAA will be fined \$1000 with the money going to the opponent if the game was to be the opponent's home game. The fine will be waived if the NSAA is able to replace the opponent's home game.
- h. Any school with a regular season or post season forfeit not imposed by the NSAA will be responsible for paying the officials.

WILD CARD CRITERIA

1. The following point evaluation scales will determine a team's total wild card points:

CLASS A, CLASS B, CLASS C1, CLASS C2 (9 game schedule)

	1 st Div. Team	2 nd Div. Team	3 rd Div. Team	4 th Div. Team
Victory Over	50	47	44	41
Loss To	36	33	30	27

- **A first division team is a team which has won more the 77% of its games played.**
 - 9-0, 8-1, 7-2
- **A second division team is a team which has won at least 55% but not more than 77% of its games played.**
 - 6-3, 5-4
- **A third division team is a team which has won at least 33% but not more than 55% of its games played.**
 - 4-5, 3-6
- **A fourth division team is a team which has won less than 33% of its games played.**
 - 2-7, 1-8, 0-9

CLASS D1, CLASS D2, CLASS D6 (8 game schedule)

	1 st Div. Team	2 nd Div. Team	3 rd Div. Team	4 th Div. Team
Victory Over	50	47	44	41
Loss To	36	33	30	27

- **A first division team is a team which has won more than 76% of its games played.**
 - 8-0, 7-1
- **A second division team is a team which has won at least 51% but not more than 76% of its games played.**
 - 6-2, 5-3
- **A third division team is a team which has won at least 26% but not more than 51% of its games played.**
 - 4-4, 3-5
- **A fourth division team is a team which has won less than 26% of its games played.**
 - 2-6, 1-7, 0-8

2. In addition to the previous basic points, bonus points are awarded on the following basis:
 - No points are deducted for playing a team in a lower classification.
 - Two bonus points for competing against a school one classification above.
 - Three bonus points for competing against a school two classifications above.
 - Four bonus points for competing against a school three classifications above.
3. Competition between a school classified as C1 and a school classified as C2 will be considered as competition between two classes. Competition between a school classified as D1 and a school classified as D2 will be considered as competition between two classes.
4. A team's point rating will be determined by dividing the total number of points by the number of contests played.
5. If there is a tie in enrollment for classification, the three-year Nebraska classification tiebreaker will be used to determine classification assignments.
6. If a Class D1 or Class D2 team plays a school which has more than **47 Boy** enrollment, who is not eligible for the playoffs and plays a majority of its games in the 8-man division, the Class D1 team will receive basic points for playing an 8-man team of D1 size. A Class D2 team in this situation will receive 2 bonus points for playing a team one classification higher.
7. If a Class D6 team plays a school which has more than **27 Boy** enrollment, who is not eligible for the playoffs and plays a majority of its games in the 6-man division, the Class D6 team will receive basic points for playing a 6-man team of D6 size.
8. The score of a game does not affect the number of points a team receives.
 - A score of 7-6 will result in the same number of points as a score of 50-0.
9. If more than one team finishes with the same point average, the play-off qualifier and/or higher seed will be determined in the following manner:

POINT SYSTEM TIEBREAKER

- 1- If only two teams have identical point averages and are tied for one of the qualifying spots and/or higher seed and the teams have played each other, the team that won the contest between the two teams in question will qualify for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.
- 2- If the two teams have not played each other or if more than two teams are tied, Step 3 will be used to determine which team qualifies for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.
- 3- If two or more teams have identical point averages and are tied for one or both of the remaining qualifying spots and/or higher seed, the team, or teams with the greatest number of wins over first division teams (within their classification – Class A & B only) will be selected and/or given the higher seed. If only two teams remain **TIED with the same number of wins over first division teams** after this step and the two teams have played each other, Step 1 will be used to determine the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.
- 4- If a tie still exists, the team or teams with the greatest number of wins over first and second division teams (within their classification – Class A & B only) will be selected and/or given the higher seed. If only two teams remain **TIED with the same number of wins over first and second division teams** after this step and the two teams have played each other, Step 1 will be used to determine the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.
- 5- If two or more teams have identical point averages and are tied for one or both of the remaining qualifying spots and/or higher seed, the team or teams playing the greatest number of first division teams (within their classification – Class A & B only) will be selected and/or given the higher seed. If only two teams remain **TIED with the same number of games played against first division teams** after this step and the two teams have played each other, Step 1 will be used to determine the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.
- 6- **If two or more teams have identical point averages and are tied for one or both of the remaining qualifying spots and/or higher seed, each team's opponents' wins, and losses will be totaled, and the winning percentages calculated. The team whose opponents have the highest winning percentage based on this calculation will be selected as the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed. If only two teams remain TIED with the same opponent winning percentage after this step and the two teams have played each other, Step 1 will be used to determine the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.**

EXAMPLE - 1

Team A	Team B	Team C
5-4	5-4	4-5
6-3	7-2	5-4
2-7	6-3	3-6
9-0	5-4	9-0
3-6	6-3	4-5
5-4	5-4	5-4
2-7	6-3	2-7
6-3	9-0	6-3
<u>9-0</u>	<u>0-9</u>	<u>9-0</u>
47-34(.580)	49-32(.605)	47-34(.580)

Team B would be the play-off qualifier and/or higher seed because the teams on its schedule had a winning percentage of .605. Team A's opponents had a winning percentage of .580. Team C's opponents also had a winning percentage of .580. Team A and Team C remain tied. If the two teams have played each other, Step 1 will be used to determine the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed.

EXAMPLE - 2

Team A	Team B	Team C	Team D
5-4	5-4	4-5	4-5
6-3	7-2	5-4	5-4
2-7	6-3	3-6	3-6
9-0	5-4	9-0	8-1
3-6	6-3	4-5	4-5
5-4	5-4	5-4	5-4
2-7	6-3	2-7	3-6
6-3	9-0	6-3	5-4
<u>9-0</u>	<u>0-9</u>	<u>9-0</u>	<u>8-1</u>
47-34(.580)	49-32(.605)	47-34(.580)	45-36(.555)

Team B would be the play-off qualifier and/or higher seed because the teams on its schedule had a winning percentage of .605. Team A's opponents had a winning percentage of .580. Team C's opponents also had a winning percentage of .580. Team A and Team C remain tied. If the two teams have played each other, Step 1 will be used to determine the qualifier for the State Play-offs and/or get the higher seed. Team D's opponents had a winning percentage of .555. Team D would get the lowest play-off seed or be eliminated from the play-offs.

- 7- If the tie still exists, the State Play-off qualifier and/or higher seed will be decided by a coin flip in the NSAA office. The schools will be notified of the situation prior to the coin flip.

SUBMITTING STATE PLAY-OFF INFORMATION

Go to the NSAA website (www.nsaahome.org) and click “School Login”. Enter your login and go to “View/Edit your Forms” to submit your State Finals Information (detailed instructions can be obtained from the website). You can update these forms until the due date. You will need to contact the NSAA to make changes after the due date.

AWARDS

Class A – 16 teams will qualify for the State Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 6 District Champions and 10 Play-off Qualifiers

Class B – 16 teams will qualify for the State Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 5 District Champions and 11 Play-off Qualifiers

Class C1 – 16 teams will qualify for the State Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 7 District Champions and 9 Play-off Qualifiers

Class C2 – 16 teams will qualify for the State Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 6 District Champions and 10 Play-off Qualifiers

Class D1 – 32 teams will qualify for the State Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 10 District Champions and 22 Play-off Qualifiers

Class D2 – 32 teams will qualify for the State Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 9 District Champions and 23 Play-off Qualifiers

Class D6 – 16 teams will qualify for the state Playoffs and receive a plaque.

- 16 Play-off Qualifiers

The State Champion and State Runner-Up teams will receive trophies.

Each State Championship Head Coach will receive an award.

Individual medals will be presented to the members of the state champion and runner-up teams. The NSAA will provide the following number of medals per class:

Class A – 70 medals	Class C1 – 55 medals	Class D1 – 35 medals	Class D6 – 25 medals
Class B – 70 medals	Class C2 – 55 medals	Class D2 – 35 medals	

Schools may choose to suit up more team members for a play-off and state finals game than the number of medals to be awarded.

Maximum number of players announced per class:

Class A – 70	Class C1 – 55	Class D1 – 35	Class D6 – 25
Class B – 70	Class C2 – 55	Class D2 – 35	

EXPECTED BEHAVIOR AT AWARDS CEREMONIES

Education-based activities give students the ability to train, participate and compete in a structured setting. With that, students often learn lessons that are sometimes not taught in the traditional academic classroom. Some of those lessons include learning to win and lose with dignity and grace. As such, the following guidelines have been developed for awards ceremonies at the conclusion of sub-district, district, and state contests.

Only one team can win a district or state championship, yet the NSAA provides trophies, plaques, and medals to the losing teams in many of the postseason activities. It shall be the expectation that both teams shall accept their medals and trophies in a sporting and willing manner. Some losing teams have been reluctant to step forward and accept their awards, and coaches and administrators need to ensure sporting behaviors for their student athletes. It is natural to be disappointed in losing the contest but stepping forward at this time of disappointment is a life lesson that helps mold proper and sporting behaviors. It is the expectation!

The executive director or the NSAA Board of Directors shall determine the type and severity of sanctions to schools that do not comply with these expectations.

CLASS A FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

SCHOOLS WITH A THREE-GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT OF 425 AND ABOVE are assigned to Class A and are divided into 6 districts. District assignments will be assigned based on the last 2 years of wild card averages. Teams will be assigned using the true serpentine method with the highest wild card average to the lowest wildcard average. **The teams within the district will play a round robin schedule with the first and second place teams in each district qualifying for the play-offs. Using the point system and the point system tie breaker, the 4 teams with the highest regular season point average that did not finish as a 1st or 2nd place team in their district will qualify for the play-offs, making a total of 16 teams.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 16 qualifying teams on one 16 team statewide bracket.

(1 vs 16, 9 vs 8, 5 vs 12, 13 vs 4, 3 vs 14, 11 vs 6, 7 vs 10, 15 vs 2).

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

In the event of a tie in the two-year wild card average, the tie will be broken using the previous year's wild card average and the current NSAA tie breaking system. In the event of a classification change in Class A, the school(s) will be added to the class / district in the order of enrollment.

Steps for Determining District Places

1. To determine 1st or 2nd place, the win-loss record within the district will be the first consideration.
2. If teams are tied, competition between the tied teams will be considered.
3. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 2, the overall winning percentage of all games played will be considered.
4. If at any step there are only two teams tied, refer to Step 2 to break the tie.
5. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 3, determine which team(s) played the greatest number of teams with a winning record.
6. If the tie remains, the point system average and point system tiebreaker will be used.

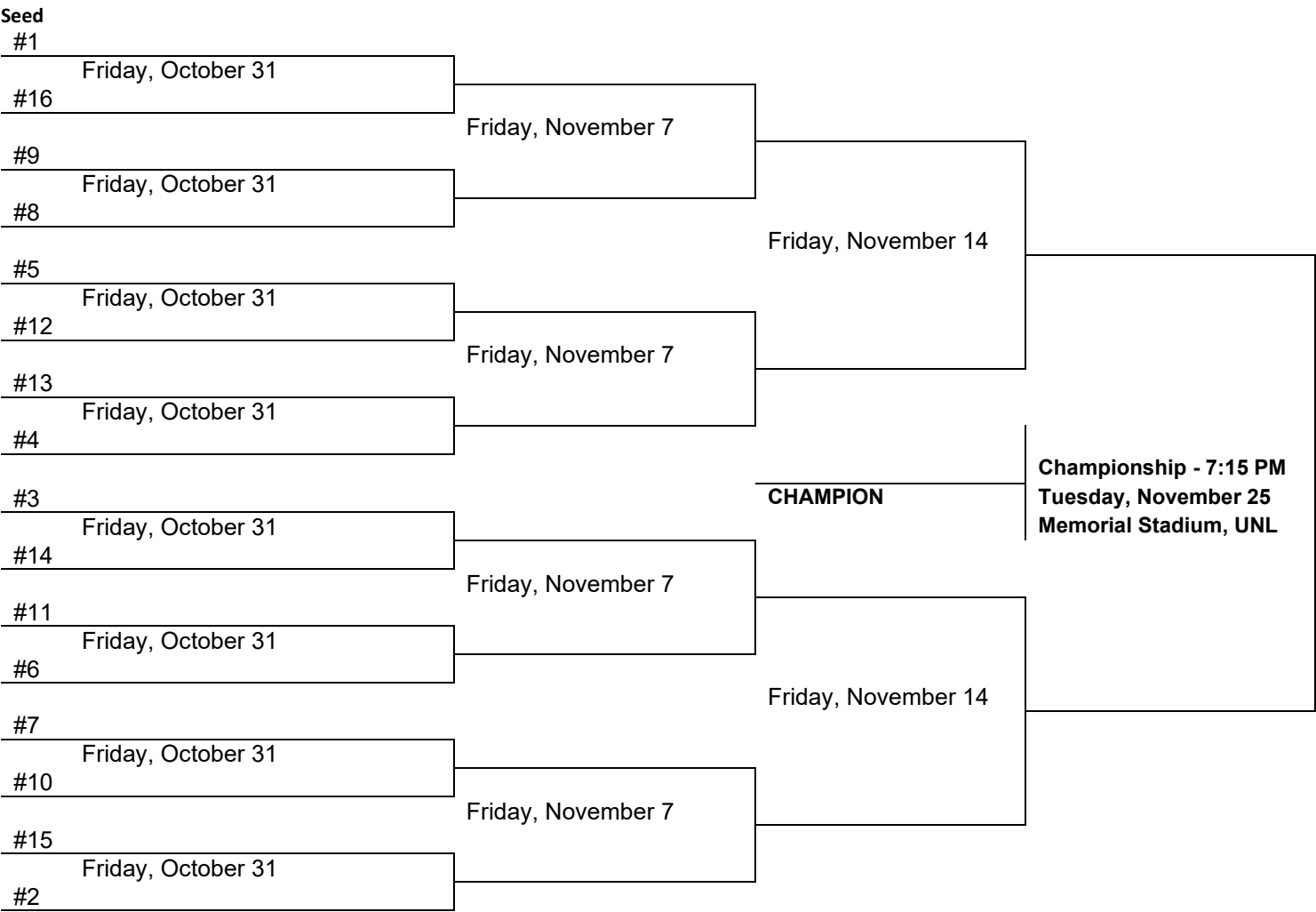
Host School

For first round, quarterfinal and semifinal games, the higher seed will host.

Class A - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class A Football Playoff Bracket (16 Teams – Statewide)



CLASS B FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

SCHOOLS WITH A THREE GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT OF 424-160 are assigned to Class B and are divided into 5 districts. Beginning with the schools located in the furthest west, schools to the east will be added until the pre-determined number of schools for each district is reached. North and South distance will also be considered. **The 5 district champions and the 11 teams with the highest regular season point average that did not finish as district champions will qualify for the play-offs, making a total of 16 teams.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 16 qualifying teams on one 16 team statewide bracket.

(1 vs 16, 9 vs 8, 5 vs 12, 13 vs 4, 3 vs 14, 11 vs 6, 7 vs 10, 15 vs 2).

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

Steps for Determining District Places

1. To determine 1st place, the win-loss record within the district will be the first consideration.
2. If teams are tied, competition between the tied teams will be considered.
3. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 2, the overall winning percentage of all games played will be considered.
4. If at any step there are only two teams tied, refer to Step 2 to break the tie.
5. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 3, determine which team(s) played the greatest number of teams with a winning record.
6. If the tie remains, the point system average and point system tiebreaker will be used.

Host School

For first round, quarterfinal, and semi-final games, the higher seed will host.

Class B - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class B Football Playoff Bracket (16 Teams – Statewide)



CLASS C1 FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

- **NOTE:** Starting with the 2022&2023 Classification Cycle

SCHOOLS WITH A THREE GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT OF 159 & BELOW. After Class A and Class B are determined, eligible Class C1 and Class C2 schools playing 11-man football are divided into two classes with approximately equal number of schools in each class. Odd number added to C2.

Class C1 is divided into 7 districts. Beginning with the schools located in the farthest west, schools to the east will be added until the pre-determined number of schools for each district is reached. North and South distance will also be considered. **The 7 district champions and the 9 teams with the highest regular season point average that did not finish as district champions will qualify for the play-offs, making a total of 16 teams.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 16 qualifying teams on one 16 team statewide bracket.

(1 vs 16, 9 vs 8, 5 vs 12, 13 vs 4, 3 vs 14, 11 vs 6, 7 vs 10, 15 vs 2).

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

Steps for Determining District Places

1. To determine 1st place, the win-loss record within the district will be the first consideration.
2. If teams are tied, competition between the tied teams will be considered.
3. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 2, the overall winning percentage of all games played will be considered.
4. If at any step there are only two teams tied, refer to Step 2 to break the tie.
5. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 3, determine which team(s) played the greatest number of teams with a winning record.
6. If the tie remains, the point system average and point system tiebreaker will be used.

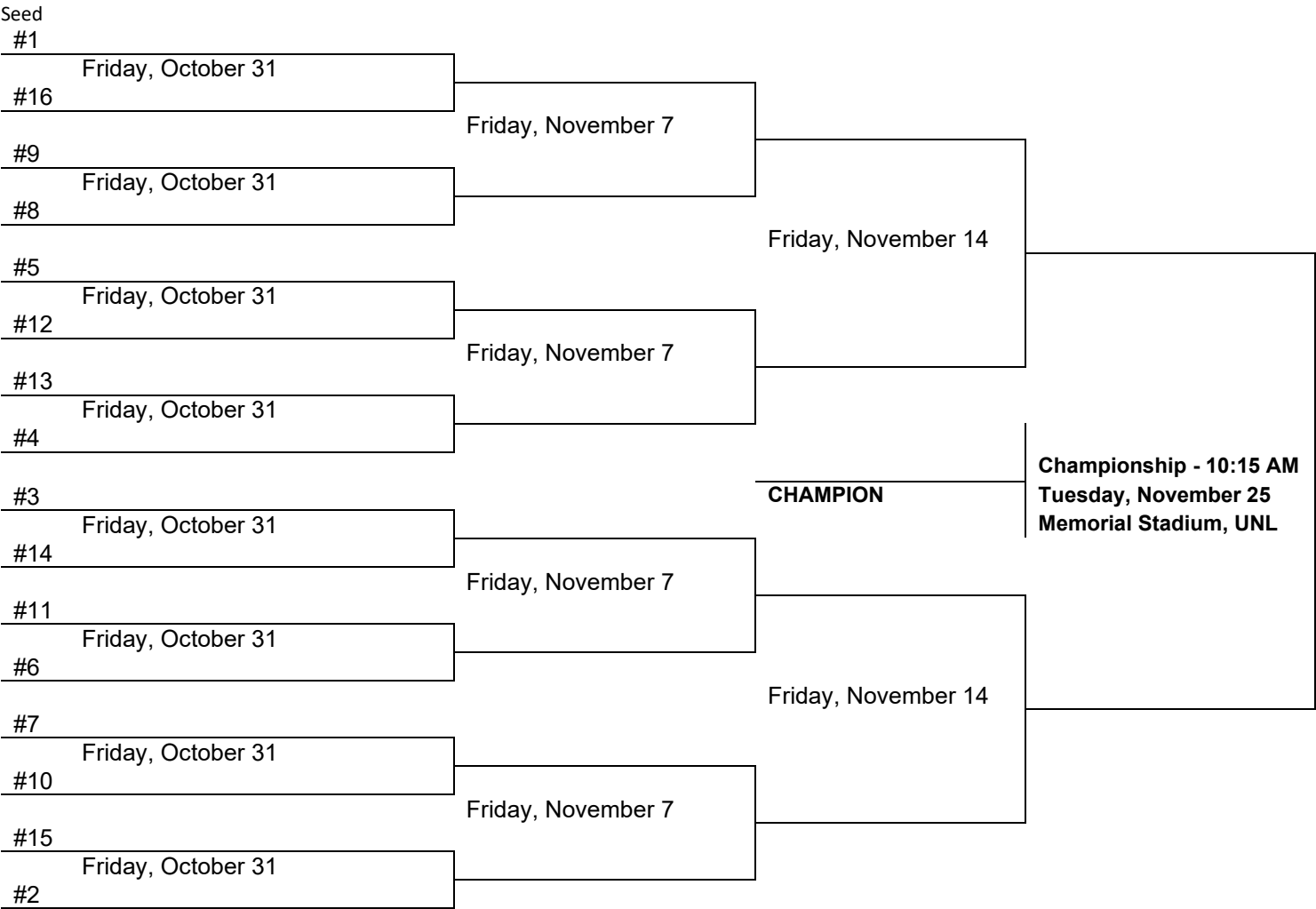
Host School

For first round, quarterfinal, and semi-final games, the higher seed will host.

Class C1 - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class C1 Football Playoff Bracket (16 Teams – Statewide)



CLASS C2 FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

- **NOTE:** Starting with the 2022&2023 Classification Cycle

SCHOOLS WITH A THREE GRADE BOYS ENROLLMENT OF 159 & BELOW. After Class A and Class B are determined, eligible Class C1 and Class C2 schools playing 11-man football are divided into two classes with approximately equal number of schools in each class. Odd number added to C2.

Class C2 is divided into 6 districts. Beginning with the schools located in the farthest west, schools to the east will be added until the pre-determined number of schools for each district is reached. North and South distance will also be considered. **The 6 district champions and the 10 teams with the highest regular season point average that did not finish as district champions will qualify for the play-offs, making a total of 16 teams.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 16 qualifying teams on one 16 team statewide bracket.

(1 vs 16, 9 vs 8, 5 vs 12, 13 vs 4, 3 vs 14, 11 vs 6, 7 vs 10, 15 vs 2).

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

Steps for Determining District Places

1. To determine 1st place, the win-loss record within the district will be the first consideration.
2. If teams are tied, competition between the tied teams will be considered.
3. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 2, the overall winning percentage of all games played will be considered.
4. If at any step there are only two teams tied, refer to Step 2 to break the tie.
5. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 3, determine which team(s) played the greatest number of teams with a winning record.
6. If the tie remains, the point system average and point system tiebreaker will be used.

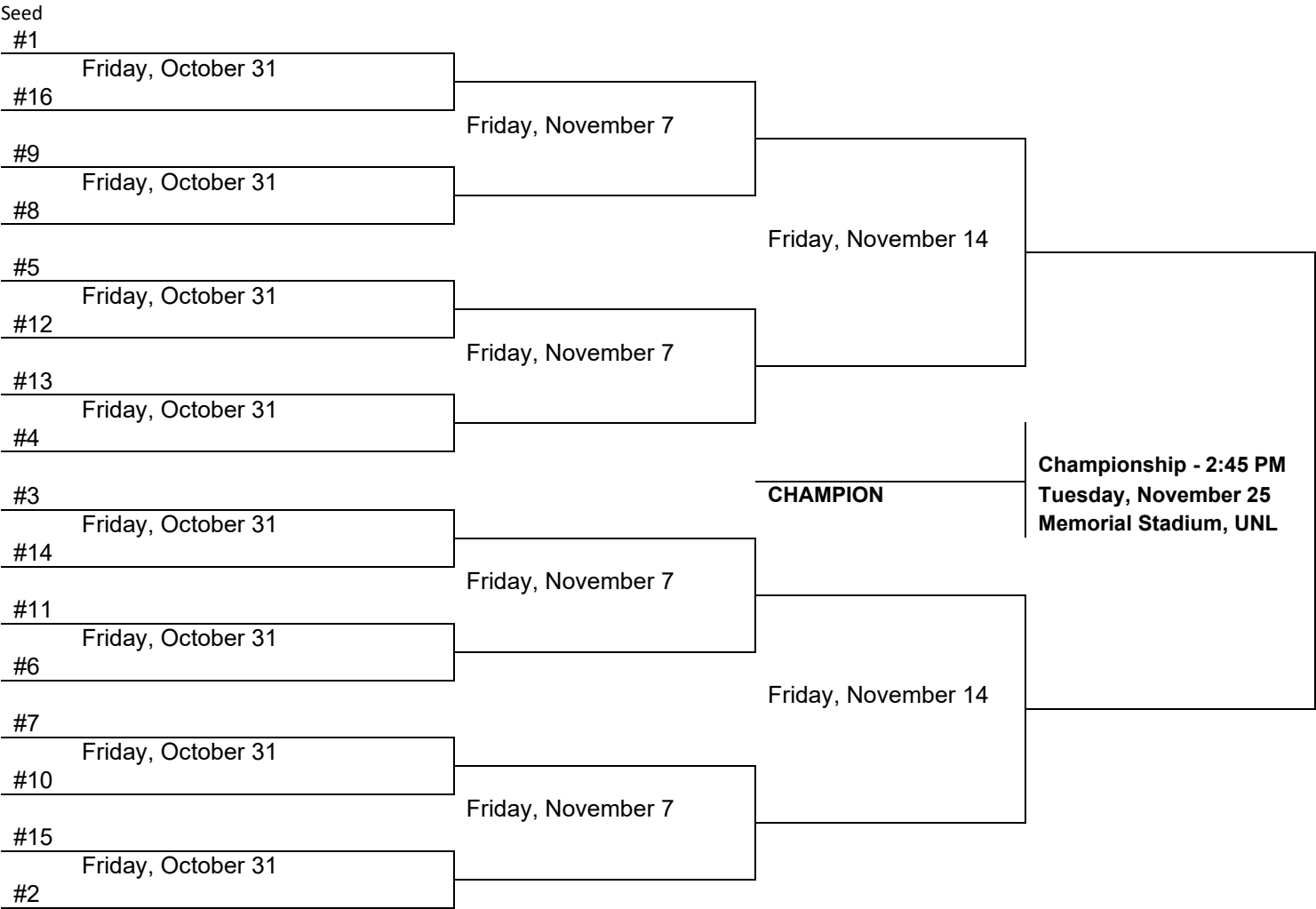
Host School

For first round, quarterfinal, and semi-final games, the higher seed will host.

Class C2 - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class C2 Football Playoff Bracket (16 Teams – Statewide)



CLASS D1 FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

ELIGIBLE CLASS D1 AND D2 SCHOOLS PLAYING 8-MAN FOOTBALL ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO CLASSES WITH APPROXIMATELY EQUAL NUMBERS OF SCHOOLS IN EACH CLASS. ODD NUMBER ADDED TO D2. Beginning with the schools located in the farthest west, schools to the east will be added until the pre-determined number of schools for each district is reached. North and South distance will also be considered. **The 10 district champions and the 22 teams with the highest regular season point average that did not finish as district champions will qualify for the play-offs, making a total of 32 teams.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 32 qualifying teams on one 32 team statewide bracket.

(1 vs 32, 17 vs 16, 9 vs 24, 25 vs 8, 5 vs 28, 21 vs 12, 13 vs 20, 29 vs 4, 3 vs 30, 19 vs 14, 11 vs 22, 27 vs 6, 7 vs 26, 23 vs 10, 15 vs 18, 31 vs 2)

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

Steps for Determining District Places

1. To determine 1st place, the win-loss record within the district will be the first consideration.
2. If teams are tied, competition between the tied teams will be considered.
3. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 2, the overall winning percentage of all games played will be considered.
4. If at any step there are only two teams tied, refer to Step 2 to break the tie.
5. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 3, determine which team(s) played the greatest number of teams with a winning record.
6. If the tie remains, the point system average and point system tiebreaker will be used.

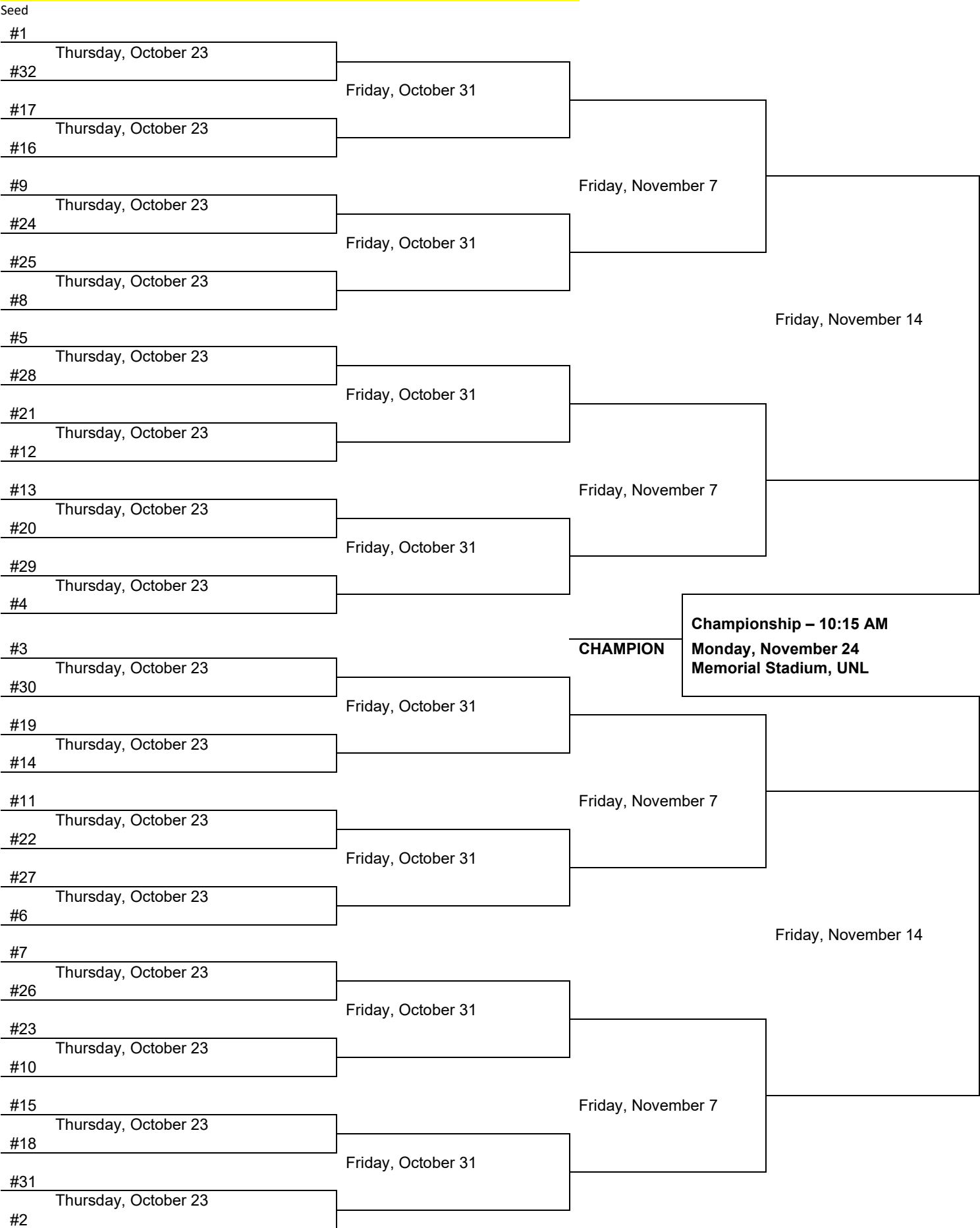
Host School

For first round, quarterfinal, and semi-final games, the higher seed will host.

Class D1 - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class D1 Football Playoff Bracket (32 Teams – Statewide)



CLASS D2 FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

ELIGIBLE CLASS D1 AND D2 SCHOOLS PLAYING 8-MAN FOOTBALL ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO CLASSES WITH APPROXIMATELY EQUAL NUMBERS OF SCHOOLS IN EACH CLASS. ODD NUMBER ADDED TO D2. Beginning with the schools located in the farthest west, schools to the east will be added until the pre-determined number of schools for each district is reached. North and South distance will also be considered. **The 9 district champions and the 23 teams with the highest regular season point average that did not finish as district champions will qualify for the play-offs, making a total of 32 teams.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 32 qualifying teams on one 32 team statewide bracket.

(1 vs 32, 17 vs 16, 9 vs 24, 25 vs 8, 5 vs 28, 21 vs 12, 13 vs 20, 29 vs 4, 3 vs 30, 19 vs 14, 11 vs 22, 27 vs 6, 7 vs 26, 23 vs 10, 15 vs 18, 31 vs 2)

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

Steps for Determining District Places

1. To determine 1st place, the win-loss record within the district will be the first consideration.
2. If teams are tied, competition between the tied teams will be considered.
3. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 2, the overall winning percentage of all games played will be considered.
4. If at any step there are only two teams tied, refer to Step 2 to break the tie.
5. If the tie cannot be broken by Step 3, determine which team(s) played the greatest number of teams with a winning record.
6. If the tie remains, the point system average and point system tiebreaker will be used.

Host School

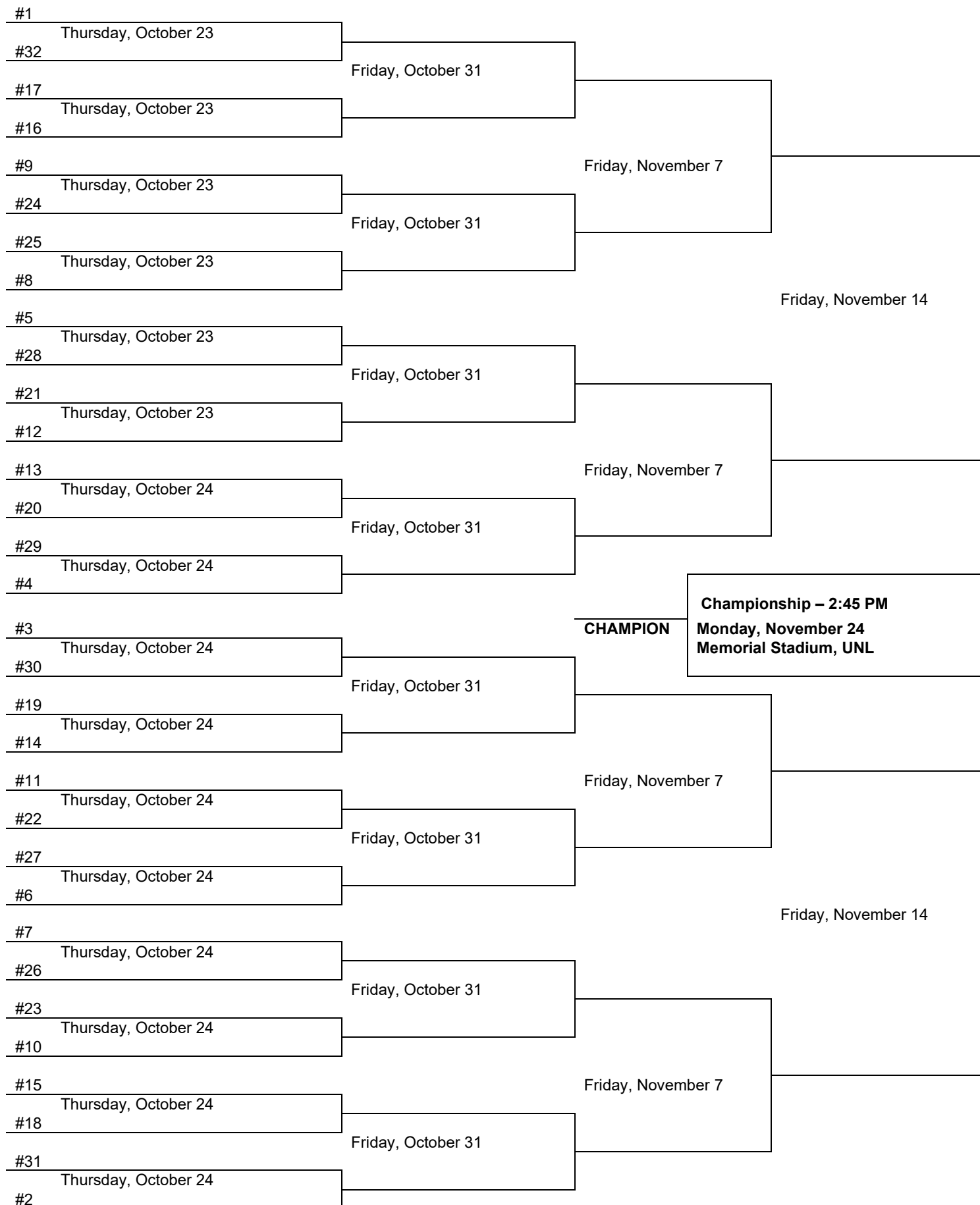
For first round, quarterfinal, and semi-final games, the higher seed will host.

Class D2 - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class D2 Football Playoff Bracket (32 Teams – Statewide)

Seed



6-MAN (D6) FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS

All schools declaring to play 6-man football will be assigned to Class D6 and divided into 6 districts for scheduling purposes only. Beginning with the schools located in the farthest west, schools to the east will be added until the pre-determined number of schools for each district is reached. North and South distance will also be considered. **The 16 teams with the highest regular season point average will qualify for the play-offs.**

The point system and the point system tiebreaker will be used to seed the 16 qualifying teams on one 16 team bracket with no East / West Division.

(1 vs 16, 9 vs 8, 5 vs 12, 13 vs 4, 3 vs 14, 11 vs 6, 7 vs 10, 15 vs 2).

The records of all schools available to the NSAA on the date of the seeding shall be used to calculate wild card averages, even if an error on the record is discovered after the fact or the NSAA imposes a forfeit.

Host School

In the first round of the play-offs, the team with the highest point average will host.

If the schools have identical point averages, the point system tiebreaker will be used to determine the host school.

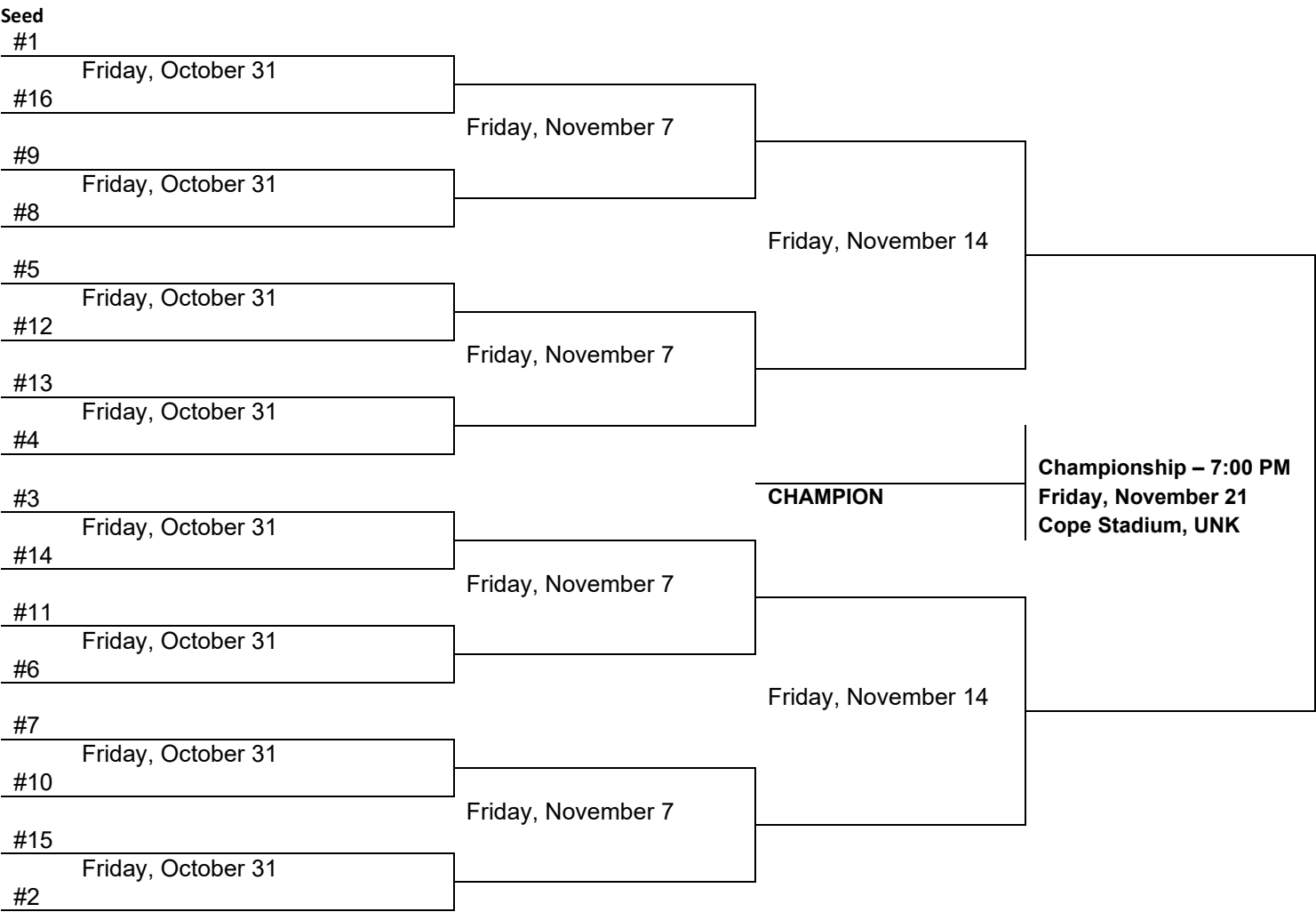
For quarterfinal and the semifinal games, the following procedure will be used:

- If the two teams both hosted their previous game, the team with the highest point average will host. If their point averages are the same, the team with the higher seed will host.
- If the two teams were both visitors in their previous game, the team with the highest point average will host. If their point averages are the same, the team with the higher seed will host.
- If one team was a visitor and one team was a host in their previous game, the team which was a visitor will host.

Class D6 - State Championship Home Team

The team with the higher seed will be designated as the Home Team.

Class D6 Football Playoff Bracket (16 Teams – Statewide)



STATE FOOTBALL PLAY-OFFS GAME ADMINISTRATION

HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY

Facilities must provide reasonable accommodation for special needs.

SPIRIT LINES

All spirit lines during NSAA State Football Playoffs and Championship games are PROHIBITED, except for football players in uniform and duly elected cheerleaders.

MEDIA – STUDENT MEDIA, MEDIA CREDENTIALS & BROADCASTING

All media operations (admission, access, and accommodations) for ***Regular Season*** contests are at the Host School discretion.

The NSAA Media Manual outlines policies for Media Credentials, Student Media, Broadcasting Policies, and other specifics surrounding NSAA post-season contests.

Post-season contests include: Districts, Sub-Districts, Playoffs and State Championships.

The Media Manual is posted on the NSAA website's Media Page.

<http://nsaahome.org/media-info/>

CHEERLEADERS & DANCE TEAMS

Due to potential liability in case of injury, stunts and pyramids by cheerleaders and lifts by dance teams during the sub-district, district and state tournaments are prohibited unless the supervising coach / sponsor has successfully completed the online NFHS Cheer and Dance Safety Certification/USA Stunt Safety Course.

- If the coach/sponsor has successfully completed the online NFHS Cheer and Dance Safety Certification/USA Stunt Safety Course, stunts and lifts shall be allowed in accordance with NFHS Spirit Rules.
- The following restrictions shall be in effect at NSAA sub-district, district and state tournaments and events:
 - Stunts/lifts shall be limited to shoulder height or below.
 - All vertical shoulder level stunts/lifts must have an additional spotter.
 - All vertical shoulder level stunts/lifts must remain on two feet except during the mount or dismount of the stunt/lift.
 - Twisting mounts and dismounts are limited to ½ twist.
 - All cradle dismounts, tosses and inversions are prohibited.
 - Tier 1 is the highest possible stunts and lifts at NSAA Sub-district, District, and State events.
- Cheerleaders/Drill Teams and spectators shall not throw items into the crowd (i.e.: sports balls, candy, etc.).

PRE-RECORDED MUSIC

Pre-recorded music that has been approved by the Host administration may be played during pregame warm-ups provided that a high school band is not available to play during that time. Also permitted shall be the National Anthem or as accompaniment for the half-time performance of an authorized student dance or cheer group.

GUIDELINES FOR BANDS

- Bands are permitted during the State Football Playoffs.
- Refer to page 34 & 35 for additional Band guidelines.

GAME SITES

The site for each playoff game, other than the State Finals, will be selected by the qualifying school designated to be the host school and the NSAA Executive Director. Once the site is selected, it will not be changed without the approval of the NSAA Executive Director.

Site consideration should be given to:

- Adequate seating for spectators of the schools involved.
- Conditions of field.
- Field security (barrier, or fence, around playing field).
- Lighting.
- Parking for spectators.
- Restrooms.
- Safety of competitors and spectators.
- Availability of other facilities clearly superior and advantageous for use in a contest involving State Playoff games in a nearby location.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

- The Host Site Director shall contact the visiting school prior to the game with information concerning parking, seating arrangements, dressing room assignments, pre-game, and half-time activities.
- The home team shall have its choice of team bench.
 - The opponents shall be notified of choice when site of game is determined.
- There shall be no practice held on the (selected) field unless it is the home field of one of the participating schools.
- Warm-up prior to the game will be limited to a maximum of one hour.
- Jerseys of the opposing teams must be of contrasting colors.
 - The home team shall wear the dark-colored jerseys.
- A school may dress any number of players.
 - In championship games, the roster and awards will be limited to the number established for each class.
- Schools are responsible for their own meal and lodging arrangements.
- Only coaches, players, student managers, trainers, statisticians, and team physicians will be permitted on the field.
 - With exception of two statisticians, all must remain in the team box.

- Half-time intermission shall be limited to a maximum of 20 minutes, with three additional minutes given for warm-up activities. Normal Half-time, intermission is 15 minutes plus three minutes for warm-up.
 - If the bands from both schools wish to perform, each will be allowed a maximum of six minutes, including marching on and off the field.
 - Each band director shall consult game manager concerning arrangements to perform.

SCHEDULING

- Game time shall be 7:00 P.M. for night games, unless teams mutually agree to a different time.
- Other games may be played during the afternoon with the approval of the NSAA Executive Director and the mutual agreement of the competing schools. However, if both schools do not agree on the afternoon game, it shall be played at 7:00 P.M.
- If the visiting team is required to travel 120 miles or more to the game site and the game is scheduled for a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, the traveling team shall have the choice of playing the game in the afternoon or evening.
- Game time of afternoon games will be 1:30 P.M., unless teams mutually agree to a different time.
- When two high schools located in the same city use the same facility for home football games, qualify for the football playoffs and are designated home teams on the same date, one school shall play in the afternoon and the other during the evening. The afternoon game shall not begin prior to 1:30 pm and the evening game shall not begin after 8:00 pm. These times may be adjusted for emergency situations.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Snowstorms or other inclement weather conditions may force the postponement of a State Playoff Football game.
- In determining whether to postpone or to hold the contest(s) as scheduled, the Host Site Director should consider the following factors:
 - The weather and road conditions at the site of the contest.
 - Existing weather and road conditions at the location of the schools which are to compete that day.
 - Road conditions between the tournament site and the competing schools.
 - The weather conditions immediately prior to, during, and following the contest, as reported by the weather bureau.
- If, after considering the various factors, the Host Site Director determines that competition is to go on as scheduled:
 - All schools shall be notified early enough to allow each team a sufficient amount of time to travel to the contest site.
 - Once the decision has been made to hold the event as scheduled and any team has begun to travel, the contest(s) shall be held.
- If the Host Site Director feels a postponement is necessary:
 - He/she shall get permission from the NSAA Executive Director before postponing the day's activities.
 - Once the State Football Playoff game has been postponed, the Host Site Director shall be responsible for setting the new time, date, and site, if necessary, for the continuation of the State Football Playoffs.
 - The previously agreed upon schedule may have to be changed to allow the contest(s) to be completed by the required dates.
 - Neither State Football Playoff receipts nor funds from the NSAA are to be used to reimburse any school for additional expenses incurred because of a postponed State Football Playoff game.

ADMISSION

- Admission prices for all Playoff and State Championship football games will be:
 - \$8.00 for adults.
 - \$6.00 for students.
- Complementary passes will be allotted for band members, cheer teams, and dance teams as indicated below. Tickets for members in excess of the allotted amount must be purchased.
 - **Bands**
 - Class A – 50
 - Class B – 40
 - Class C1 – 30, Class C2 – 30
 - Class D1 – 20, Class D2 – 20
 - Class D6 – 20
 - **Cheer Teams**
 - Class A – 16
 - Class B – 14
 - Class C1 – 10, Class C2 – 10
 - Class D1 – 8, Class D2 – 8
 - Class D6 – 8
 - **Dance Teams**
 - Class A – 14
 - Class B – 12
 - Class C1 – 10, Class C2 – 10
 - Class D1 – 8, Class D2 – 8
 - Class D6 – 8

DISTRIBUTION OF PLAY-OFF GATE RECEIPTS

Each playoff host school will receive an additional \$100 for hosting. (Received in June)

- Officials.
 - \$100.00 per official.
 - \$1.00 per mile, for one vehicle, one way from the crew chief's address (unless adjusted by the NSAA Board of Directors).
- Catastrophic insurance deduction to total 10 percent of gross receipts.
- Gross receipts, minus items listed above in No. 1 and 2, are to be distributed as follows:
 - 25% to home school
 - 25% to NSAA
 - Traveling team expenses by formula or 10% of the gross, whichever is greater.
 - If the receipts are not sufficient enough to cover the Home and Visiting Teams expenses, all items shall be paid on a pro-rated basis, using funds available.
- Balance Bonus:
 - 40% to home school
 - 40% to visiting school
 - 20% to NSAA
- Home team allowance:
 - If gross receipts are not sufficient for the home team to receive the full 25% of the gross receipts allowed by the distribution formula, and if the net receipts to the NSAA, excluding the insurance allowance, equal or exceed \$25,000, the home school will be reimbursed the difference between the full allowance and the amount they received, but this additional reimbursement shall not exceed \$200.
- NSAA Electronic Online Football Playoff Game Financial Report form:
 - Go to the NSAA website and login with your AD password. Choose the Class and Round appropriate to your information and begin entering. The computer will do all the figuring for you! Print three copies using the "printer friendly version." One copy for the visitors, one for the NSAA (with amount due), and one for your records.

REIMBURSEMENT

- Reimbursement will be allowed for players and coaches not to exceed the following:
 - Class A – 42
 - Class B – 42
 - Class C1 – 38
 - Class C2 – 38
 - Class D1 – 28
 - Class D2 – 24
 - Class D6 – 20
- Prior to the game, the visiting school superintendent, principal, or athletic director shall verify the number of individuals who are members of the official traveling party with the host school game manager.
- The host school game manager shall use this information to calculate reimbursements.
- The number to receive reimbursements shall not exceed those given above.
- Each school will be allowed eight passes in addition to those for the players and coaches.
 - These passes will be sent to the school administrator of each school by the host school.
- Visiting teams will be reimbursed with mileage.
 - Mileage: (Can be adjusted by the NSAA Board of Directors)
 - Mileage will be calculated by State Department of Roads map shortest distance.
 - Mileage reimbursements will be based on the number of participants (qualifiers, number on roster) and one coach. (Note: Student Managers will not be included.) A school's mileage reimbursement will be figured using the following formula: (#miles one way x # trips) x appropriate amount listed below:

Amount per mile	Number of Participants/Coaches
\$3.40	19-24
\$4.25	25-30
\$5.10	31+
 - First-Round, Second-Round, Quarterfinal, and Semifinal games.
 - Mileage will be allowed from available funds.

- If income from First-Round, Second-Round, Quarterfinal, and/or Semifinal games is not sufficient to cover the mileage, the refunds to the team shall be pro-rated.
- If net receipts to the NSAA from the football playoffs exceed \$25,000, the NSAA will refund the schools failing to receive allowable mileage an amount equal to the difference between the allowed mileage and the amount the school actually received.
- State Championship Games.
 - Allowable travel expenses will be guaranteed by the NSAA for all State Championship games.

OFFICIALS & GAME RULES

- A five-person crew of officials shall be selected and hired by the NSAA to officiate all rounds of the playoffs including the finals.
 - **Preference may be given to crews with certified officials.**
- The host school shall pay the officials:
 - Officials' fees shall be:
 - \$100.00 per official; State Finals--\$115.00 per official.
 - When hired as a crew, mileage will be paid based upon the crew chief's address to the host city using the following formula: (Using the NSAA mileage chart) One-way miles (to the site of the host city) X number of trips made X \$1.00. The crew may split this mileage fee between themselves in any manner they determine. Officials living in the host city will not be paid mileage.
- A competent chain crew, official timer, official scorer, and scoreboard operator shall be furnished by the host school.
 - These assistant officials are to be paid from the host school's share of the receipts.
- **Officials' decisions shall be final, and no protest based on a decision by a game official will be allowed.**
- 2025 National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Football Rules shall be the official rules.
- Playoff games in 8-man/6-man football shall be played on fields of 8-man/6-man dimensions.
 - An 11-man field may be used only if it is marked with 8-man/6-man dimensions.

HOST SITE DIRECTOR DUTIES

- Each game shall be administered by a Host Site Director appointed by the NSAA Executive Director, and his/her duties shall include:
 - Sending out advance information bulletins to participating schools and coaches.
Suggested items to be included, if applicable, are:
 - List of available housing in area.
 - List of restaurants, to include those which will provide team meals.
 - Location of playing site (address, etc.).
 - Location of dressing rooms.
 - Any parking instructions.
 - Team roster form, team information form, and other necessary forms.
 - Making arrangements for concessions.
 - Arranging for preparation and sale of programs, if applicable.
 - Arranging for ticket sellers and ticket takers.
 - Seeing that ticket price signs are made and posted outside ticket windows.
- Arranging for ushers, especially if reserved sections are used.
- Arranging for a public address announcer and making sure that he/she is properly informed.
 - The public address announcer is not to do live play-by-play announcing during the game.
 - There is to be no announcing while a play is in progress.
 - The announcer should be done announcing when the teams break the huddle and come to the line of scrimmage and should not announce again until the play is concluded.
- Arranging for a timer, scoreboard operator, two chain officials, and down box official, with distinctive colored vests.
- Arranging to have medical assistance present for the game.
- Arranging for traffic control, if needed.
- Knowing where a telephone is located, in case of emergency.
- Arranging for parking attendants, if needed.
- Reserving parking spaces for team buses and officials.
 - Notifying game officials and teams of parking locations and dressing facilities.
- Making arrangements with performing bands and other half-time performing groups.
- Arranging for a band to play the "Star-Spangled Banner."
- Assigning pep club locations.
 - Not permitting decorations on the goal posts, cross bars, or uprights above the cross bars.
- Seeing that no objectionable signs or banners are displayed at the game.
- Assigning spaces in the press box for radio, press, etc.
- Establishing a pass gate policy.
- Providing a special pass gate entrance for players, managers, coaches, and media.

- Having someone assigned to meet team buses and serve as host during the contest.
- **The NSAA will NOT provide game balls for any playoff games.**
 - Each participating team is required to provide their own approved footballs in accordance with 2025 NFHS Football Rule 1-3-1.
- Having towels and managers available on field to dry footballs if they should become wet or muddy.
- Having someone meet game officials and provide them with towels, etc.
- Seeing that no one enters the officials' dressing room at halftime or after the contest.
- Providing security for officials' and team dressing rooms.
- Arranging for officials' checks.
 - Seeing that the officials are paid prior to the contest.
- Seeing that the playing field is ready and that the playing field is enclosed by a barrier (such as a fence).
 - Make sure the football field is marked according to the 2023 NFHS Football Rule 1-2.
 - NFHS Dimensions for 8-man/6-man football with NSAA Adoption will be used for 8-man/6-man football fields.
- Providing a yardage chain and down marker.
- **The visiting team is responsible for checking with the host school to see if sideline heaters OR fans are going to be provided for both teams. The host school does not have to provide sideline heaters or fans for a state playoff game. If the host school uses sideline heaters or fans, they must provide sideline heaters or fans for the visiting team. The visiting team can bring sideline heaters or fans if they can be accommodated by the host school if heaters or fans are not being provided.**
- Providing teams with complimentary programs.
- Filing the financial report and other contest reports with the NSAA office in a timely manner.
- Being responsible for the ticket sales at the site of the contest and the accounting of all money from the sale of tickets and programs at the site of the contest.
- Being responsible for the itemizing and accounting of all expenses at the site of the contest (expenses necessary for game administration).
- Keeping local media informed and reporting results to the media and the NSAA after the game.

2025 NSAA Instant Replay Policy and Protocol

Instant Replay will be used at the 2025 Championship Football games played at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln Nebraska when there is reasonable evidence to believe an error was made in the initial on-field ruling.

The video review process operates under the fundamental assumption that the ruling on the field is correct. The replay officials may reverse a ruling if and only if the video evidence shows beyond all doubt that the ruling was incorrect. Without complete and indisputable replay evidence, the replay official must allow the on field ruling to stand.

Replay reviews will occur automatically in the following situations:

1. On any scoring play or potential scoring play (touchdown, field goal, try or safety).
2. On any turnover or potential turnover. (Clear & Immediate Recovery is Required)
3. A timing error that may have impacted the status of the clock.
4. Determine if a player was down by rule / out of bounds and the spot of the ball.
5. Determine whether there was a catch on a pass or interception.
6. Determine spots that affect the line to gain.
7. Determine whether/when a kick or pass was touched.
 - a. Touching of a pass prior to the foul (Negates Pass Interference)
 - b. Touching of a kick prior to the foul (Negates Roughing / Running into Kicker)
8. Whether or not a free kick has traveled 10 yards before contact is initiated by K.
9. Whether or not the quarterback was behind or beyond the LOS when the pass was thrown.
10. Whether or not the ball crosses the neutral zone with regards to intentional grounded.
11. Illegal Participation Fouls

Personnel:

- 5 Game Officials
 - Equipped with pagers.
- 2 On-field Sideline Assistants
 - Positioned on the 25-yard lines (West sideline)
 - Equipped with pagers and headsets.
- 2/3 Replay Officials in the booth
- 2 Video Replay Technicians in the booth. (Provided by UNL)

Protocol:

- Coaches may not challenge the ruling on the field.
- The on-field officials and sideline attendants have no control and no direct involvement in the review of a play.
- The Replay Official and the Replay Assistant will review plays from the booth in the press box.
- If the Replay Official can confirm the ruling on the field without stopping play, he will do so.
- On most reviews the call will be confirmed quickly, there will be no stoppage of play, and no announcement.
- Play will only be stopped if the ruling on the field meets the above criteria, and the Replay Official cannot confirm the ruling on the field prior to the next legal snap.
- The Replay Official will “page” the Sideline Assistants and Game Officials when play needs to be stopped for review.
- The Sideline Assistants will communicate with the on-field officials when play needs to be stopped until a review is complete.
- Replay decisions will be communicated from the head replay official directly to the on-field Referee.
- The Referee will announce the results of the review.
- There will be a limited number of camera angles on each play.
- For a play to be reversed there must be Indisputable Video Evidence (I.V.E.) that shows the original call was incorrect.
- If there is not a camera angle that definitively shows there was an error, the call will “stand”.

- When the replay officials have an angle that shows the call was correct, they will “confirm” the original call.
- If a camera angle does show that an error was made, the call will be reversed.
- Every attempt will be made to complete the review in ninety seconds or less.
- Any foul that occurs after the point of review and the play is overturned will not be administered.
 - Exceptions
 - Illegal Person Contact (9.4)
 - Noncontact Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Players (9.5)
 - Noncontact Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Nonplayers (9.8)
- Status of the Clock
 - If the ruling on the field is overturned, the status of the clock is determined by the result of the play.
- Restoring Time – End of Period
 - If the ruling on the field is overturned, time will be restored to the point of interruption. The ball will be placed at the appropriate spot after administration of a violation of 9.4, 9.5, 9.8 or any live ball foul committed prior to the point of interruption.
 - Normal game administration will continue from this point as if the play had been ruled as such.
 - Exception – if the ball is dead inbounds and the restored time is 10 seconds or less and no condition exists that would extend the period, and the ball is not beyond the line to gain, the period will be deemed to have expired. A timeout by either team would allow the period to be extended.



Fan/Spectator Support Items

In the Chart below, ONLY those items marked “Yes” will be allowed as fan/spectator support items at all NSAA Sub-District, District, State Playoffs and State Championships.

Sportsmanlike vocal cheering and support from the team bench area are encouraged. The items indicated on this page are for use by fans/spectators.

Prohibited items: Confetti/shredded paper, powder (baby, talc, etc.), Laser light/pointer, flashing objects, miniature sports balls, objects or candy thrown into the crowd, Artificial noise makers, (included but not limited to horns, cow bells, bells, buzzers, clickers, thunder sticks, rattles, instruments not part of a band), whistles, air horns, sirens, cannons/muskets/guns/fireworks, live animals.

Regulations listed are subject to facility restrictions.

SPORT	BA	BB	CC	FB	GO	SO	SB	SW	TE	TR	VB	WR
Balloons	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
One School Banner per school	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hand-held signs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Megaphones (school recognized cheerleaders only)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Shirts on student spectators (required) AR 3.3.11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shirts on general spectators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Team Introduction Run-throughs or Break Away Banners	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pompoms, spirit towels	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prerecorded music that has been approved by the Host Administration may be played during pre-contest warm-ups provided that a high school band is not available to play during that time.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School bands	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes
Carried school flags (Running/taunting prohibited)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE (DRONE) POLICY

- The use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), also known as drones, is prohibited for any purpose by any person at any NSAA post-season tournament venues.
- For purposes of this policy, a UAV is any aircraft without a human pilot aboard this device. This prohibition applies to all fields of play, courts, arena, mats, gym floor or pool, and includes a ban on the entire facility being used as part of the NSAA event, including the spectator areas and parking areas.
- Tournament management shall refuse admission or entry to anyone attempting to use a UAV; and if necessary, Tournament management shall remove anyone attempting to use a UAV and/or confiscate the UAV.
- An exception to this policy, in writing, may be made in specific cases for NSAA broadcast partners, provided the Management of the tournament facility permits the presence of UAVs for broadcast purposes under the control of the NSAA.

Key: BA-Baseball, BB-Basketball, CC-Cross Country, FB-Football, GO-Golf, SO-Soccer, SB-Softball, SW-Swimming & Diving, TE-Tennis, TR-Track & Field, VB-Volleyball, WR-Wrestling, NA-Not Apply