

## MIAA RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS FOR 2023-2025

The following reflects Rule Change Proposals that have been submitted as permitted in the Procedure for Requesting a Rule Change, Rule 89, pages 99-100 of the current MIAA Handbook. **Please note: Rule Change Proposals list Current Rule (listed in 2021-2023 handbook), Proposal, and Rationale.** All responding groups should review the proposals and forward their recommendations, using the form at the back of this packet, to MIAA Assistant Executive Director, Phil Napolitano. Although changes should not be made on the original proposals, any group may make amendments, which will be included in the report passed on to the next group in the process.

The MSSADA and all MIAA Administrative Committees are welcome to act on each rule change proposal. In the section on Sport Specific Rules (rule change proposals 20-38 within this packet) MIAA sport committees should only act on general rules (rules 1-19 and 39-43) and rules specific to their own sport.

Each of the below named groups, when reviewing a rule change proposal, may take one of the two following actions:

- Record votes in favor and opposed to each proposal.
- Recommend an amendment to the proposal with votes recorded in favor and opposed.

### **REVIEWING BODY ACTIONS MUST REFLECT THE ACTUAL VOTE**

1. MIAA Sport Committees and MIAA Administrative Committees votes are due to the MIAA by November 1, 2022.
2. The MIAA District Athletic Committees (DAC) and the Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA) votes are due to the MIAA by December 1, 2022. The DAC and MSSADA should not act until they have the packet that includes all earlier votes by sport and administrative committees.
4. The MIAA Board of Directors will act upon proposals by January 1, 2023.
5. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council will act upon all proposals by February 1, 2023 and their decision(s) are final.

1. Page 22

**Part II, Definitions and Policies - Rule 5: Medical Coverage**

**By: Robert Colandreo, Athletic Trainer and member of the MIAA Sports Medicine Committee**

**Current Rule:**

Each member school should employ a licensed certified athletic trainer. Licensed physicians, athletic trainers, and coaches should receive sport medicine training. Schools' must have medical coverage at all levels of football, wrestling and rugby and at varsity ice hockey games per sport rules. For all varsity football games, each team must employ a licensed physician, licensed athletic trainer or certified EMT to be with their team (MIAA BOD voted to delay implementation until Fall 2022 season). The school designated as the home team, or the host site identified with a participating school, is required to have an AED on-site (and accessible) or with their medical provider for all athletic events.

**Proposal:**

***NOTE: If this rule were passed, it would become effective on July 1, 2024.***

Update the language in the rule to read, "Each member school ~~should~~ **must** employ a licensed ~~certified~~ athletic trainer. Licensed physicians, athletic trainers, and coaches should receive sport medicine training. Schools' must have medical coverage at all levels of football, wrestling, and rugby and at varsity ice hockey games per sport rules. For all varsity football games, each team must employ a licensed physician, licensed athletic trainer or certified EMT to be with their team. The school designated as the home team, or the host site identified with a participating school, is required to have an AED on-site (and accessible) or with their medical provider for all athletic events. **A medical time-out or medical minute meeting should take place between the medical staff, game official, and head coaches before the start of any contest to review the site's emergency action plan and address any weather or safety concerns.**"

**Rationale:**

The intent of this rule change is to ensure schools employ, in some capacity appropriate for their needs, an athletic trainer. The intent of this rule change is not to require a school or district to create a new full-time position, but to ensure that while games and practices are going on students have access to an athletic trainer. It is recognized that every high school in Massachusetts has a varying need for athletic trainer services. Some larger schools currently have more than one athletic trainer on staff. Other smaller high schools may only have a need for a part-time contracted athletic trainer. Time to plan for this expense is recognized and a one-year delayed implementation would be welcomed.

Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, athletic departments have had an ever increasing need to oversee athlete health care and athlete safety. This is the job of an athletic trainer. Back in 1983 when athletic trainers received state licensure, one of the major drivers behind the push was the need for athletic trainers in the high school setting. The athletic trainer practice act language currently restricts athletic trainer practice to "schools, teams and organizations with whom he is associated." Today, after almost 40 years, approximately 40% of Massachusetts high schools still do not have access to an athletic trainer. The athletic trainer position still being perceived and structured like a coach and paid via a part-time stipend is a factor that makes finding athletic trainers difficult. Contract arrangements with hospitals and clinics allow for a full-time position with a reasonable salary and benefits for the athletic trainer, while the school gets the part-time coverage it needs.

Athletic trainers will ensure your schools have emergency action plans in place and will review the execution protocols with staff. The AT will be the person who will manage concussion protocols, assist in basic first aid and CPR training for coaches, manage AED accessibility, and communicate health information with the school nurses and athlete's individual doctors. With substance abuse and mental health matters ever present, often it is the athletic trainer who may be the first to recognize some of these matters.

There is currently legislation pending that would require all secondary schools to hire an athletic trainer. If this legislation passes this legislative session, or next, it will immediately require a school system to hire an athletic trainer within 90 days. As was the process with the AED rule a few years ago. Passage of this rule change would give schools and districts a greater than one year time frame to evaluate their needs and set a future budget to hire or contract athletic training services.

The implementation of a medical time out before a game will ensure a proper execution of an emergency action plan if needed. Game officials often meet with coaches and ATs prior to competitions, but not always. This quick meeting of both head coaches, the game officials, and athletic trainers if present will make sure everyone knows what to do if something happens during an event. As stated, these meetings often already take place, this would simply formalize the process and make everyone meet at one time together instead of two or three conversations. It should not add any time to pregame, nor should it delay the start of any competition. It is required at the professional and collegiate sports levels and should be standard practice at the high school level as well.

## 2. Page 32

### **Part III, Rule 33: Coaches' Education**

**By: Bob Rodgers, Athletic Director, Whitman-Hanson Regional High School**

#### **Current Rule:**

All coaches hired prior to August 1, 1998 are exempt from taking the Fundamentals of Coaching Course. Coaches hired after 8/1/98 and before 7/1/05 must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course with the exception of Certified MA teachers. All MIAA member school coaches (stipend or volunteer) are required to take annually the online National Federation Concussion Course, or other MA Department of Public Health recognized education program, prior to the start of their season. Rugby Coaches must see Rule 76.2 for additional coaches' education information. All coaches (stipend or volunteer) first serving as an interscholastic coach after July 1, 2005 must complete the National Federation of High Schools, NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course taught by an MIAA Instructor, (must be passed prior to coaching a second year) and an approved Sports First Aid course (NFHS, American Red Cross or American Heart Assoc. and must be passed prior to coaching a third year). All coaches (stipend or volunteer) first serving as an interscholastic coach after July 1, 2007 must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course, an approved Sports First Aid course and the NFHS Sport Specific Technical and Tactical Skills Course in the sport they are coaching (must be completed prior to coaching a third year). Note: The sport-specific requirement began on July 1, 2007 or when each particular sport-specific course becomes available, if after this date. NFHS Sport Specific Technical and Tactical Skills Courses presently available: Baseball, Basketball, Field Hockey, Football, Golf, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Wrestling, Volleyball, Cheer & Dance, and Track and Field. The NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course requirement must be met through attending an MIAA sponsored Fundamentals of Coaching Class with MIAA Certified Instructors.

The NFHS Sports First Aid and Sport Specific requirement may be met by completing on-line courses with the NFHS <http://www.nfhslearn.com>. AED training for all coaches is required. Coaches will be trained on symptoms of cardiac events in student-athletes. This training will be done in conjunction with the existing mandated CPR training which is a State Law for all coaches.

#### **Proposal:**

Eliminate this portion of the rule -

*"...and the NFHS Sport Specific Technical and Tactical Skills Course in the sport they are coaching (must be completed prior to coaching a third year). Note: The sport-specific requirement began on July 1, 2007 or when each particular sport-specific course becomes available, if after this date."*

#### **Rationale:**

For some coaches the sport specific course may be helpful but for others this is just a check the box requirement. It should be up to each athletic director if they feel the person they are hiring needs that

additional training. Coaches should be encouraged to be lifelong learners and do the professional development that they think will benefit them the most. Requiring coaches to pay \$50 to take a course that many of them could teach themselves does not make a lot of sense. In addition, the level of compliance on this rule is minimal and it is not helpful to have requirements that are not being followed.

**3. Page 33 & 66**

**Part III, Rule 34: Recognized Sports and Scheduling Limits for School**

**Part V, Rule 69: Football**

**By: Steve Kendall, Athletic Director, Ayer-Shirley Regional High School**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

MIAA schools would have the option in competing in 8v8 football instead of 11v11 football. The rules would follow NFHS rules with the adaptations for 8-man football from USA Football. [Click here](#) to view the rule book.

**Rationale:**

Many smaller schools are having difficulty fielding enough players for traditional 11-man football. An 8-man option would provide these smaller schools the opportunity to offer football without multi-school co-operative teams that ultimately punish a school (by moving up a division) for being willing to continue to try to field a football team. The large majority of schools who co-op do so to have enough athletes to have a team, yet still move up a division. The hope would be this would INCREASE the number of football-playing schools and eventually increase the number of students playing football. Thirty other states offer 8-man football while several offer 9-man football.

**4. Page 33**

**Part III, Rule 34: Recognized Sports and Scheduling Limits for School**

**By: Steve Kendall, Athletic Director, Ayer-Shirley Regional High School**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

Add Girls Flag Football as a Fall Sport.

**Maximum # of Competitions**

<u>Fall Sports</u>	<u>Per Season</u>	<u>Per Week</u>
Girls Flag Football	18	3

**Rationale:**

The girls' high school flag football movement is sweeping the nation. Since Georgia sanctioned girls' high school flag football in 2020, joining Alaska, Florida and Nevada in offering girls the opportunity to compete scholastically in the sport of flag football, Alabama has become the 5th state to officially sanction with efforts underway in at least 15 additional states, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and Washington.

The explosive growth can be attributed to the financial, promotional and educational efforts of individual NFL Clubs, NFL FLAG (operated by RCX - Reigning Champs Experiences), NFHS, Nike and/or Under Armor, and USA Football, all of which have expressed support for the initiative in Massachusetts. However, the introduction of girls' flag football has been successful in every district and/or state that has

sanctioned or piloted programs because, for the first time, girls have been given the opportunity to play “America’s game”. The old adage “build it and they will come” has been proven in every location girl’s flag football has been introduced.

In addition to the high school level, women’s flag football has become a scholarship sport at the collegiate level, with the NAIA (2020) and NJCAA (2021) adopting the sport within the past two years. In the spring of 2022, Victoria Salmon of Ayer-Shirley Regional HS became the first female in New England to earn a college scholarship to play flag football with more expected in the class of 2023. Additionally, led by USA Football and the NFL, efforts are underway to introduce the sport within the NCAA’s Emerging Sports for Women program and as a sport within the LA2028 Olympic programme.

The opportunity for the state of Massachusetts is to become the first state in the U.S. to sanction the 5v5 non-contact version of the game, the same version being introduced at the NCAA level and within the Olympic programme, as well as the version played by NFL FLAG at the youth level. Massachusetts is the #1 state in the country in terms of NFL FLAG participation and # of leagues.

The 5v5 non-contact version of the game requires a smaller field (70 yards long including two 10-yard endzones with 50 yards goal line to goal line x 25 yards wide), maximum rosters of 15 players (making it easier to form varsity and JV teams) and limited equipment (uniforms and flag belts), which the supporting organizations listed above have been providing to state’s adopting the sport. Rules of the game could be NFL FLAG or International Federation of American Football (IFAF) rules, which are very similar with only minor differences.

By the end of the decade, girls’ flag football will be viewed nationally as the emerging HS sport of the 2020s. It is not a matter of if, but rather when, every state in the country will offer girls flag football and with so many organizations offering support (including the New England Patriots), the time to act for the state of Massachusetts is now.

## 5. Page 33

### Part III, Rule 34: Recognized Sports and Scheduling Limits for School

By: Greg Rota, Athletic Director, Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

#### Current Rule:

None

#### Proposal:

Add Pickleball as a recognized MIAA Fall Sport.

Massachusetts's high school Pickleball shall be played under the rules of the United States of America Pickleball Association (USAPA) with the following modifications:

- All matches are to be decided on the best two out of three in a set. All games are played to 11 and you must win by 2 points.
- Team contests will consist of two singles matches (1 Boy match and 1 Girl match) , two doubles matches (1 Boys Doubles, 1 Girls Doubles), and 1 Mixed Doubles Match (1 Boy playing with 1 Girl) with eight participants (4 Boys & 4 Girls) taking part. No player may play more than once in the same team match under any circumstances. If fewer than eight players- (4 Boys/4Girls) are available for a match, line-ups will be determined on the basis of most number of participants, and least number of points forfeited as prescribed in **Rule 85.2.3**. Any league may have the option of increasing the number of single matches to two or three in league contests only.
- Players are to be played with a coach’s preference in any position. There are 3 possible positions that a top player could play: 1<sup>st</sup> Singles, Doubles, or Mixed Doubles. The Visiting coach shall fill out their line-up first. The Home team will fill out their line-up second. Tournament play positions can be found under **Rule 85.5**

- Coaching, by the high school team coach only, is allowed on side changes during the entire match and after each game. No coaching is allowed during a player/team timeout.
- Only participating players are allowed within the playing area while a match is in progress.
- There will be no more than a fifteen-minute time delay for any injury affecting an individual player. The USAPA Rulebook 10.B will be followed. If a player is unable to continue a match (a match to be considered as starting with the first serve), that match shall be forfeited in the team score.
- Preceding a match, the visiting team shall have a 15 minute warm-up period with the courts at their disposal; each player or doubles team will subsequently have a ten minute warm-up with their respective opponents before the match commences. All practice serves shall be taken by all players during the warm-up period.
- The home team shall be responsible for providing at least 6 new USAPA approved balls for every varsity team match. Matches taking place outdoors must use a USAPA Outdoor approved ball, and matches occurring indoors must use an Indoor USAPA Approved Ball.
- The home coach is responsible for proper spectator deportment.
- The home coach should make provisions to have water available within the playing enclosure for all players.
- If a player becomes incapacitated during the warm-up period, a substitution may be made as long as the substitution conforms to all rules enunciated herein. If not, the point must be forfeited in the team score.
- Each coach is responsible for his/her own team members, whether they are players or spectators.
- All Pickleball Coaches must complete and submit any available scores from all matches, regular and post-season match results. These results should contain player names and scores. These results should be submitted to a League Director via a Google Form. All coaches should be able to view team and player results.

#### **Clarification of terms:**

- "Prior consent" means that a coach must inform the opposing coach at least 24 hours in advance of a scheduled match as to the conditions causing a request for an adjustment. This could be moving a match indoors because of rain or high wind warnings.
- "Representative" means that the player is one of the best eight players available for the match.
- "The prescribed arrangement" for playing a match when one team has fewer than eight players is:
  - 1 player is missing: Team forfeits its singles match- Boys or Girls depending who is missing.
  - 2 Players missing- same gender- doubles forfeit
  - 2 players missing- different genders- both singles are forfeited.
  - 3 players missing- same gender- the missing gender's singles and doubles forfeited
  - 3 players missing- 1 boy and 2 girls- boys singles and girls doubles are forfeited
  - 3 players missing- 1 girl and 2 boys- girls singles and boys doubles are forfeited
  - 4 players missing- forfeited match
- No competitor or team in tennis will be allowed to compete without wearing a proper uniform that has the school's name and/or insignia.
- If a player in the MIAA Tournament cannot participate in the next round, they can be replaced by a teammate.
- During the MIAA State Tournament, the team with the Lower seed will provide their lineup to the Higher seed. The Higher seed will complete the lineup matches with their players.

#### **Rationale:**

This proposal of Pickleball will be a Fall Sport. This is a great opportunity for BOTH large and small enrollment schools. If this Rule proposal passes, it will give many of us the opportunity to begin this sport without any impact to those who don't want the sport. A "YES" vote helps kids play the sport. As Athletic Directors, we are here to help promote sportsmanship and athletic opportunities. This is a lifetime opportunity.

Pickleball has become America's fastest growing sport and has grown exponentially both State and Nationwide. All over Massachusetts there has been an explosion of outdoor courts and indoor facilities.

This growth is similar to the Bobby Orr hockey rink boom from the 1970's. Everyone is catching on. It's not going away like the racquetball craze of the early 80's.

Physical Education programs in almost every HS across the State have had successful outcomes playing this sport. It can be played indoors or outside which will limit the cancelation factors that are every AD's nightmare. The sport will require smaller vans/activity buses keeping costs lower. Like Tennis, there are NO referee requirements and an endless supply of Pickleball Ambassadors statewide who will volunteer to run matches and teach free clinics.

We've all been having trouble trying to maintain large teams. This proposed sport will allow a school to create a Title IX compliant sport using fewer players. Only 4 boys and 4 girls are required to create a team. USA Pickleball will even donate your initial startup costs to \$250 which purchases 2 nets, balls, etc.

Currently, several indoor facilities will host district Championships and USAPA will supply Tournament referees. The Bay State Games will be hosting a HS Division this Summer just as they did before Rugby was adopted. This is a win-win situation.

Sports Illustrated published an article on May 25, 2022:

<https://www.si.com/podcasts/2022/05/25/inside-fight-over-pickleball-si-weekly-podcast>

**6. Page 33**

**Part III, Rule 34: Recognized Sports and Scheduling Limits for School**

**By: Peter Serino, Athletic Director, Abington High School**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

Ultimate Frisbee to be recognized as a sport by the MIAA during the spring season. Ultimate Frisbee will follow the [rules of USA Ultimate](#) and will be co-ed. The state divisions will have champions in the boys, girls and co-ed divisions.

**Rationale:**

Ultimate Frisbee is a growing sport that already has a significant number of teams (over 150 registered with USA Ultimate in Massachusetts) participating at the high school level in the state of Massachusetts. By becoming a MIAA sport there will be an organized structure for the students participating and equal recognition as their peers.

Abington High School, a school of less than 600 students, has been able to sustain an ultimate frisbee team during the spring season where we offer our most sports of any season (Track & Field, Tennis, Lacrosse, Baseball, Softball). Ultimate Frisbee attracts a group of students that are typically not engaged in athletics. By the MIAA recognizing the sport the opportunities for participation would increase and more students would be actively engaged in their school community.

Ultimate Frisbee is a self-officiated game (like tennis) with minimal costs to start up – teams only need a field, uniforms, and discs. There are already several high school teams in the State of Massachusetts that are competing through USA ultimate or other unorganized off shoots. By being recognized it will provide a safe and uniform experience for the students.

**7. Page 33**

**Part III, Rule 34: Recognized Sports and Scheduling Limits for School**

**By: Tom Arria, Athletic Director, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School**

**Current Rule:**

<u>Spring Sports</u>	<u>Maximum # of Competitions</u>	
	<u>Per Season</u>	<u>Per Week</u>
Baseball	20	3
Golf	20	4
Boys Lacrosse	18	3
Girls Lacrosse	20	3
Outdoor Track	16	3
Rugby	8	1
Softball	20	3
Tennis	20	3
Volleyball	20	3

**Proposal:**

For the sport of boys’ lacrosse, reduce the maximum number of competitions per season from eighteen (18) to sixteen (16). Additionally reduce the maximum number of competitions per week from three (3) to two (2).

**Rationale**

Boys’ lacrosse is a very physical sport. Fitting 18 games into our already short spring season is difficult and physically taxing on student athletes. As an example, the top level Division I college programs play 16 games a season and 1-2 per week. Additionally their season is an entire month longer, February - May.

**8. Pages 34-36**

**Part III, Rule 35: Starting and Closing Dates for Tryouts, Practices and Contests**

**By: Jay Costa, Athletic Director, Shrewsbury High School**

**Current Rule:**

**35.4.1** For the fall season only, the first team competition may not occur before the 14th calendar day after and including the first day of practice except golf, which may not occur until after seven calendar days from the first practice. For the winter and spring seasons, the first team competition may not occur before the 11th calendar day after and including the first day of practice except golf, which may not occur until after seven calendar days from the first practice.

**Proposal:**

For the fall season only, the first team competition may not occur before the 14th calendar day after and including the first day of practice except golf, which may not occur until after seven calendar days from the first practice. For the winter and spring seasons, the first team competition may not occur before the **18<sup>th</sup> calendar day** after and including the first day of practice except golf, which may not occur until after seven calendar days from the first practice.

**Rationale**

To provide downtime between seasons for school administrations, athletic directors and multiple-sport athletes. Schools would still have the option to start practices/tryout on the Monday after Thanksgiving and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in March if desired. The delay in contests start dates will allow member schools the option of starting practices/tryouts a week later should they choose to do so. This rule change will allow time between each season for multiple-sport athletes to take care of non-athletic business or pre-season training for winter or spring sports. It also prevents football players that are involved in post season play not to miss the start of winter tryouts and gives spring athletes time to recover before start of the spring season and athletic administrators to prepare for upcoming season. This rule change could encourage more participation of multiple sport athletes (which has decreased over the years), and reduce athletic and school administration burnout by providing a time off from game contests during the school year.

**9. Pages 38-40**

**Part III, Rule 40: Out-of-Season Coach-Athlete Contact Limitations**

**By: Tom Arria, Athletic Director, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School**

**Current Rule:**



40.1- Unless otherwise permitted in this rule, between seasons a coach may conduct a meeting(s) with team candidates only to elect captains, collect equipment, issue equipment, to provide for physical examinations, to conduct legitimate fund-raising events, or to offer wellness workshops or activities.

### **Proposal:**

After the last Spring State Final Game or last day of school whichever is the latter - and a week prior to the scheduled beginning of the earliest Fall Sport Date, coaches may have contact with high school students (rising 9th-rising 12th grade) in order to organize up to 15 days of skill development sessions. School facilities may be used for such gatherings.

Each session is voluntary and must be open to any student who enrolled at the high school who wishes to attend. When scheduling summer skills and drills sessions, it is limited to a maximum of 2 per week and each session may run up to a total of 2 hours.

Individual school Principal and/or Athletic Directors may adopt more restrictive policies relative to out of season instruction based on the school districts' policies.

The following criteria must be met prior to coaches scheduling out of season skill development sessions:

1. Written proposal with dates, times, facility permits must be submitted to the Athletic Director and be approved by the school Principal. This document must be filed in the school athletic office and followed strictly, any amendment to the written proposal must be requested in writing/email and be approved.
2. The written plan describes the goals of the activity, and expected number of participants.
3. Proper planning with appropriate supervision is the responsibility of the supervising coach (author of the skill development proposal).
4. Funding- operational school budgets cannot be used for any out of season skill development sessions.
5. A coach may not directly or indirectly require an athlete to participate in a sport or training program scheduled during this timeframe.

### **Rationale**

This rule change proposal/amendment is based on offering equity and accessibility to all students. Out of season activity and ability to improve as a student athlete is limited to those who have the resources and means. Attending camps, clinics, private coaching sessions, clubs or other training is available to those with the financial means necessary to afford it. There are several student athletes, or those who wish to become student athletes who do not have the financial support, or means necessary to pursue additional sport training to work to improve and get better in the off season. Similar to the arguments made for our students of high needs, once summer begins and there is no class - they begin to fall behind academically during their time off. The same can be said for improvement in athletics. They receive instruction, grow as a student athlete, and the season ends, another season may begin and then throughout the summer they are in large part left on their own. This rule change would allow school approved, qualified, safe coaches to train students for no charge and help them improve and in some cases provide a safe haven for a population of students during this time of disengagement. A familiar educator, a coach, who has a relationship with a student can maintain contact through a tool (the sport) and keep students engaged in a positive manner. Cities or towns that have a population of high needs above the state average, are not only having a more difficult time competing at the state level throughout team sports. It is also understood that in some communities that students are more susceptible to negative behaviors during this period of disengagement.

This proposal is to keep students in need engaged, while also providing an opportunity for professional instruction and training to begin to "level of the playing field".

## 10. Pages 38-40

### Part III, Rule 40: Out-of-Season Coach-Athlete Contact Limitations

By: Joe Rogers, Newton South Girls Basketball Coach

#### Current Rule:

40.1- Unless otherwise permitted in this rule, between seasons a coach may conduct a meeting(s) with team candidates only to elect captains, collect equipment, issue equipment, to provide for physical examinations, to conduct legitimate fund-raising events, or to offer wellness workshops or activities.

40.2- A coach is defined as any paid or volunteer member of the athletic staff.

40.3- The MIAA considers the last coach of record as holding that position until replaced by the principal.

40.4- A coach may not directly or indirectly require an athlete to participate in a sport or a training program outside of the MIAA defined sport season. Voluntary conditioning sessions open equally to all students in a school and which are entirely devoid of sports-specific activity may be conducted between seasons provided no candidate is either required to participate or penalized for not doing so. A "candidate" is defined as:

- 40.4.1- A varsity or sub-varsity athlete who participated in a high school program at some interscholastic level the previous year and has eligibility remaining; or
- 40.4.2- A middle school student "selected" to participate in an out-of-season program.
- 40.4.3- A sixth grade student in a 7-12 high school or an eighth grade student in a 9-12 high school.

40.5- A high school coach may be employed by a park or recreation department or other organization or may volunteer for such a group to teach his/her sport out-of-season provided the following conditions exist:

- 40.5.1- No candidate may either be required to attend or be penalized for not attending.
- 40.5.2- School funds are not used.
- 40.5.3- A coach's high school candidates must constitute the minority of those taking part in any out-of-season sport's program, and never more than 50% competing on any team at any moment (e.g. no more than two basketball candidates could be on the court, or 3 ice hockey players on the ice, on the same team, at any point during a game). In sports that are individual in nature, or where competition involves a series of scoring events, candidates of that high school coach must be fewer than 50% of those participating in the overall competition or program.

40.6- A program is deemed to be an intramural rather than an out-of-season program provided that:

- 40.6.1- The program is available to all high school students on an indiscriminate basis, and a representative number of non-candidates are regular participants.
- 40.6.2- No participants may receive any attention not offered to all other participants.
- 40.6.3- Candidates in that intramural sport must constitute a minority of those taking part in the program and never more than 50% of any team actually playing or competing at any one time. (See Rule 40.5.3)
- 40.6.4- The program must be a direct offering of the high school involved.

40.7- Public High Schools can host an open house to introduce their schools, academic, extracurricular activities and facilities including athletic department presentations (that will include coaches) talking about their sport, facility and philosophy as happens during Catholic School Week. Organizational meetings for fall sports including collecting names, physical documentation and practice schedules for the fall would be not allowable until after May 1st.

40.8 High School Coaches (paid or volunteer) of one sport may be involved in out-of season activity of another sport during the summer only.

**PENALTY:** Because these standards are designed to protect young people from unfair and inequitable scenarios, any coach who violates, or does not prevent violations, of these standards will be rendered ineligible to participate or be present at any MIAA approved or sponsored interscholastic competition in that sport for one year from the date of determination of a rule violation. If a violation is inadvertent or relatively minor, this penalty may be reduced by the Board of Directors, or its designee.

**Proposal:**

First Day of Fall Practice Through End of School Year (School Year):

Coaches will be permitted to work with their team outside of the normal season, during the school year, for no more than three hours per week up until their seasonal start date. The three hour time period is voluntary for students and may include; agilities, practices, individual sessions, open gyms, games or contests during the week. Weekend club or rec team games/tournaments and weight training/conditioning activities are not included in this three hour limitation. The three hour time limit is cumulative for all coaches. (This includes Spring football) There are no out of season limitations for the individual sports to include: cross country, golf, squash, swimming, tennis and track.

Summer Season:

The day after the last day of school through August 1 (Fall Sports)

The day after the last day of school through the Start of Fall Practice (All other Sports)

Fall teams, Summer begins the day after the last day of school and ends August 1st. During this time, coaches can work with student athletes in any capacity. Workouts must be on a voluntary basis. The use of protective padding for football, blocking/tackling sleds or similar apparatus is prohibited and no contact is allowed. Camps are excluded. From August 1st thru the start date for Fall practices, Fall sports teams may utilize weight training and conditioning activities only. Any instruction, drills, scrimmages, station work or any activity involving equipment for that sport is prohibited.

Winter & Spring Sports teams – Summer begins the day after the last day of school and ends the first day of Fall practice. During this time, coaches can work with student athletes in any capacity. The Fall sports start date signifies the end of summer and the beginning of the out of season practice limitations for Winter and Spring teams.

For clarification, a practice is defined as an organized gathering of student athletes, supervised by a coach or coaches, for the purpose of preparing for an athletic contest or to decide the numerical make-up of a team. Athletes participating on an in-season team cannot participate with another out of season team.

**Rationale:**

In my time as a high school coach in Massachusetts, I have heard numerous athletic directors, MIAA officials and other administrators cite Joe Ehrmann's InsideOut Coaching while speaking to coaches about the importance of being a "transformational" rather than a "transactional" coach. What is rarely mentioned, however, is a key and essential ingredient to building "transformational" relationships – time. It takes time to earn trust, it takes time build relationships, it takes time to model to student-athletes that we, as coaches, are invested in helping them for more than the three (3) months a year we see them in season. The time and contact limitations that MIAA Rule 40, as currently constituted, places on coaches, makes this incredibly challenging. No out of season contact, followed by 8-10 practices before games start, and then an immediate end to the season following a last game, with limited wrap-up activities permitted, is a very difficult way to build "transformational" relationships.

The importance of time in “transformational” coaching is recognized by the MIAA in which Joe Ehrmann coached. The Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association allows coaches limited time with their players out of season during the school year and expanded time with student-athletes during the summer. I write now to propose that the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association’s Guidelines for Out of Season Practice (detailed below and in the attached documents) be adopted in place of the MIAA’s current Rule 40.

A second, equally important reason to amend Rule 40 and allow out of season player-coach contact, is to “democratize instruction.” The size of a parent’s pocketbook should not determine who can or cannot be coached/receive quality instruction out of season. Unfortunately, with the rising prices of club sports and the travel to and from practices and tournaments they require, it increasingly does. Allowing out of season instruction by qualified MIAA coaches would help to even the playing field for all of our student-athletes.

Above you will find a proposed amended MIAA Rule 40 “Out-of-Season Coach-Athlete Contact Limitations” which replaces the current Rule 40 with the same rule that Coach Ehrmann, the author of the “transformational coaching” philosophy so many of us aspire to, practiced under. The rule allows for 3 hours of instruction per week (with “black out” periods two weeks before and after the season) during the school year, and open summers in which coaches and players are free to work together as much, or as little, as they so choose. A copy of the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association’s Guidelines for Out of Season Practice (as found on member school St. Francis Academy’s website) is [linked here](#).

## 11. Pages 48

### Part IV, Rule 49: Sportsmanship- Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions

By: MIAA Sportsmanship Committee

#### Current Rule:

49.3 Any student-athlete, who is disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. **The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, have been completed.** (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). Disqualifications in the following sports per specific sport rules: field hockey-(Rule 68.3); basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls’ lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey - eight (8) minutes in penalties and game misconduct (Rule 72.15); wrestling-technical disqualification, do not apply to the above prescribed penalties. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal.

#### Proposal:

Update the highlighted language to read, “The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest *at any level of play (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) in that sport until the next contest and/or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, have been completed at the level where the infraction occurred (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) and the NFHS Sportsmanship online course has been completed (Rule 49.13).*”

#### Rationale:

The MIAA Sportsmanship Committee is proposing these changes to Rule 49.3 to help clarify and prevent incorrect application. This proposal does not impact Rule 49.3.1 which requires a two-game suspension for fighting, punching or kicking an opposing player, or spitting at someone. This proposal also reinforces the language from current MIAA Handbook Rule 49.13 which describes the student requirement to complete the free NFHS Sportsmanship online course.

## 12. Pages 48

### Part IV, Rule 49: Sportsmanship- Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions

**By: Richard Pearson, MIAA Associate Director (unanimously supported by the MIAA Baseball, Ice Hockey and Soccer Committees)**

*\*\*This proposal will also impact ice hockey rule 72.7 and soccer specific rules 78.2.6, 78.2.13, & 78.2.14 which refer to the automatic two (2) game suspension outlined in Rule 49.3.*

**Current Rule:**

49.3 Any student-athlete, who is disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). Disqualifications in the following sports per specific sport rules: field hockey-(Rule 68.3); basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls' lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey - eight (8) minutes in penalties and game misconduct (Rule 72.15); wrestling-technical disqualification, do not apply to the above prescribed penalties. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal.

49.3.1 A two (2) game suspension will be given to any student-athlete who is ejected from any contest for the following reasons: o Fighting o Punching or kicking an opposing player o Spitting at someone

**Proposal:**

Remove the automatic two (2) game suspensions for **student-athletes** from the sports of baseball, ice hockey and soccer.

**Rationale:**

This proposal brings uniformity to the baseline disqualification/suspension for all sports.

Please note this proposal does not impact rule 49.3.1, which outlines two (2) game suspensions for fighting, punching, kicking or spitting; or rules 49.6 and 49.7 which outlines to criteria for one-year suspensions.

**13. Page 48**

**Part IV, Rule 49: Sportsmanship- Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions**

**By: Richard Pearson, MIAA Associate Director (unanimously supported by the MIAA Baseball, Ice Hockey and Soccer Committees)**

*\*\*This proposal will also impact ice hockey rule 72.7 and soccer specific rules 78.2.6, 78.2.13, & 78.2.14 which refer to the automatic two (2) game suspension outlined in 49.4.*

**Current Rule:**

49.4 Any coach disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition (including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc.) is ineligible to coach any competition in that sport at the same level (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, has/have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified coach is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). During the suspension the disqualified coach may not be present at the competition site. Whenever a coach is disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition, the official shall file a written report of the incident with the coach's principal. The coach also shall file the completed form designated for that purpose. Both reports should be completed and forwarded by the official and coach within 24 hours of the competition. The principal should immediately forward copies of the reports to the athletic director, superintendent, and MIAA executive director. If the game official fails to file the report, the coach is still bound by the

suspension. An official who fails to complete the form required as a result of an athlete or coach ejection shall be suspended from officiating any MIAA contest in that sport for at least two weeks or until the form is completed and received by the principal of the disqualified athlete or coach.

**Proposal:**

Remove the automatic two (2) game suspensions for **coaches** from the sports of baseball, ice hockey and soccer.

**Rationale:**

This proposal brings uniformity to the baseline disqualification/suspension for coaches in all sports.

Please note this proposal does not impact rule 49.6 which outlines to criteria for one-year suspensions.

**14. Pages 48**

**Part IV, Rule 49: Sportsmanship- Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions**

**By: MIAA Sportsmanship Committee**

**Current Rule:**

49.4 Any coach disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition (including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc.) is ineligible to coach any competition in that sport at the same level (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, has/have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified coach is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). During the suspension the disqualified coach may not be present at the competition site. Whenever a coach is disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition, the official shall file a written report of the incident with the coach's principal. The coach also shall file the completed form designated for that purpose. Both reports should be completed and forwarded by the official and coach within 24 hours of the competition. The principal should immediately forward copies of the reports to the athletic director, superintendent, and MIAA executive director. If the game official fails to file the report, the coach is still bound by the suspension. An official who fails to complete the form required as a result of an athlete or coach ejection shall be suspended from officiating any MIAA contest in that sport for at least two weeks or until the form is completed and received by the principal of the disqualified athlete or coach.

**Proposal:**

Increase the penalty for a coach disqualification to two (2) contests, across all sports.

The updated language would read, "Any coach disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition (including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc.) is ineligible to coach any competition in that sport *at any level of play (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) until the next two (2) contests have been completed at the level (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) where the infraction occurred.* (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified coach is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next *two scheduled dates* of competition).

**Rationale:**

The MIAA Sportsmanship Committee is proposing this rule change for consistency in application across all MIAA sponsored sports. The committee feels that a coach who is disqualified from a contest, regardless of which sport is coached, should be held to a stricter standard and serve a two-game suspension. Coaches have a responsibility to set positive examples of sportsmanship and respect at all times.

**15. Pages 48-49**

**Part IV, Rule 49: Sportsmanship- Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions**

**By: MIAA Sportsmanship Committee**

**Current Rule:**

49.5 A student or coach ruled out of a contest (pre-season, scrimmage, jamboree/play-day, regular season or MIAA Tournament) twice in the same season shall be suspended from further participation in that sport and in all sports during that season for a year from the date of the second disqualification. A senior and/or a student in their last year of eligibility, who has a second disqualification at any point in the season, will be penalized during the next season in which student-athlete is a participant. (Exception: See soccer rule 78.2.6 and 78.2.7).

**Proposal:**

A student or coach ruled out of a contest (pre-season, scrimmage, jamboree/play-day, regular season or MIAA Tournament) twice in the same season shall be suspended from further participation ~~in that sport and in all sports during that season~~ for a year from the date of the second disqualification. ~~A senior and/or a student in their last year of eligibility, who has a second disqualification at any point in the season, will be penalized during the next season in which student-athlete is a participant.~~ (Exception: See soccer rule 78.2.6 and 78.2.7).

**Other Rules Impacted:**

**78.2.7** The receipt of two red cards for fighting or for flagrant unsportsmanlike behavior in the same season will result in a one-year suspension (from the date of the second offense) in all **Fall** sports.

**Rationale:**

The MIAA Sportsmanship Committee is proposing this change to promote an increased focus on sportsmanship and curtail negative behaviors. The committee feels that a second game disqualification in the same season should result in a stricter penalty for the student or coach that violates this standard. If approved, this proposal will require a one-year suspension from the date of second violation, regardless of the season during which the violation takes place. Per MIAA Handbook 90, one-year suspensions may be appealed (students to the Eligibility Review Board, coaches to the District Athletic Committee).

**16. Page 51-52**

**Part IV, Rule 53: Student Eligibility – Middle School Students on Senior High Teams**

**By: Steve Kendall, Athletic Director, Ayer-Shirley Regional High School**

**Current Rule:**

A middle school student is eligible to represent a senior high school on its athletic teams only when the MIAA member high school includes those grades and they are under the direct “jurisdiction” and “supervision” of the high school principal (see Rule 51 for definitions).

Middle level participation polices: [click here](#)

**Proposal:**

A middle school student is eligible to represent a senior high school on its athletic teams when the MIAA member school committee approves the use of middle school students on senior high teams. Because the middle school principal is part of the same school district, that principal would collaborate with the senior high principal on the jurisdiction (i.e. the principal must have the authority to suspend the student from classes) and the supervision of the student (i.e. the principal must have control and knowledge of the student’s daily attendance and achievement).

**Rationale**

Schools that are allowed to use middle school students due to having the same principal have an advantage over schools that cannot. Many of these 8<sup>th</sup> graders at smaller schools, especially in female sports, make an immediate impact on varsity-level teams, yet the 8<sup>th</sup> grade numbers are not counted in the school size. By allowing each school district to make the decision for themselves, it would eliminate the need for waivers and restore some competitive balance and make the rules the same for everyone.

**17. Page 51-52**

**Part IV, Rule 53: Student Eligibility – Middle School Students on Senior High Teams**

**By: David Johnson, Athletic Director, North Reading High School**

**Current Rule:**

A middle school student is eligible to represent a senior high school on its athletic teams only when the MIAA member high school includes those grades and they are under the direct “jurisdiction” and “supervision” of the high school principal (see Rule 51 for definitions).

Middle level participation polices: [click here](#)

**Proposal:**

Any School District that has the High School and Middle School in the same building can allow all students the opportunity to play at the highest level of the sport of their choice. Even if there is a Principal /Headmaster that oversees each school, the "opportunity" for participation will be allowed.

**Rationale**

Even though District may have an individual Principal / Headmaster at each school, most Districts answer to a single School Committee that oversees all of the schools in that community. In most cases, the School Committee is the group that makes the universal decisions for all the students in that particular community. There are some Districts that may opt to not allow this rule in their community, but it gives each District the right to make that decision on their own.

**18. Page 51-52**

**Part IV, Rule 53: Student Eligibility – Middle School Students on Senior High Teams**

**By: Peter Serino, Athletic Director, Abington High School**

**Current Rule:**

A middle school student is eligible to represent a senior high school on its athletic teams only when the MIAA member high school includes those grades and they are under the direct “jurisdiction” and “supervision” of the high school principal (see Rule 51 for definitions).

Middle level participation polices: [click here](#)

**Proposal:**

All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are permitted to play sub varsity sports as deemed appropriate by the individual school districts, provided there is no displacement of athletes in grades 9-12. Schools who wish to use 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at the varsity level must use the current waiver process regardless of the setup of the district (9-12, or 7-12 school etc.) and prove that the use of eight graders at the varsity level is necessary to sustain a team at the varsity level, and not for competitive purposes.

**Rationale**

The current 8<sup>th</sup> grade waiver requirement presents significant inequities to the student athletes of the MIAA. Certain students are prohibited from participating due to the administrative structure of their district, while neighboring and like school students are allowed to participate because of a different administrative structure (7-12 vs. 9-12 school). A rule change would provide equal access to athletic opportunities throughout the MIAA. Currently students in a 9-12 district are unable to access athletic opportunities in the same manner in schools that have lower grades as part of their high school.

Furthermore, the goal of the association should be to provide equal opportunities for athletic participation and encourage as much participation as we can. By allowing equitable access to educational athletics for students there are several clear benefits. First it will be easier for teams to field sub varsity teams creating more like opponents, particularly for smaller schools. Additionally, during a time where mental health issues are paramount more students will be actively engaged in athletics with professional coaches. Lastly, one of the most challenging times for adolescents is periods of transition. Having more



opportunities for 8<sup>th</sup> graders will ease the transition and anxiety around entering high school, a clear benefit for kids and school communities.

Finally, by requiring all schools to use the same waiver process to have 8<sup>th</sup> graders participate at the varsity level it ensures equity of competition at the varsity level. Currently schools who are 8-12 or greater have a distinct advantage over 9-12 schools as they can pull from additional grades, but they are not counted towards their enrollment for alignment purposes. By having a waiver process it ensures that the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (or lower) students are needed for the survival of the program, and not strictly for competitive purposes.

By adjusting the rule, it creates equity of opportunity and competition amongst for all student athletes of member schools.

## **19. Page 58**

### **Part IV, Rule 59: Student Eligibility – Time Allowed for Participation After First Entering Grade Nine**

**By: Phil Napolitano, MIAA Assistant Director**

#### **Current Rule:**

**59.1** A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than four consecutive years after initially entering Grade 9. This limitation shall apply without regard to actual participation or attempt to participate.

**59.2** In no case may a student be eligible to participate in more than four of each of the three annual athletic seasons. Consideration will be given in special cases where a student has been absent from school because of an accident or illness that resulted in the failure to receive passing grades or full credit equivalent to four traditional year-long major English courses. In these instances, the executive director, or designee, shall have the authority to extend the student's eligibility upon presentation of a doctor's certificate on the student's behalf, a letter from the principal attesting to the inability of the student to attend school during a specific period because of an accident or illness, and waiver application for Rule 59. In instances where an extended eligibility is granted, the student may be declared eligible only for the season(s) that the student's accident/illness prevented participation.

#### **Proposal:**

Add rule 59.1.1 and a note to 59.2.

59.1.1 A waiver shall not be permitted for a student who has demonstrated proof of passing grades and earned enough credits to advance to the next academic grade level.

Note after 59.2: A waiver will not be permitted for students who choose to repeat a grade they have already successfully passed. These instances do not satisfy the criteria outlined in rule 59.2

#### **Rationale:**

It is often misinterpreted as to what satisfies consideration for a waiver of Rule 59. This additional language makes it clear to all that a personal decision to repeat a grade that you had previously passed, does not satisfy the criteria that warrants consideration. Thus a waiver should not even be permitted to be submitted for review.

## **----- START OF SPORT SPECIFIC ONLY RULE PROPOSALS -----**

## **20. Page 65**

### **Part V, Rule 68: Field Hockey**

**By: Sherry Bryant, MIAA Deputy Director & Field Hockey Liaison**

#### **Current Rule:**

68.1.1 All players must wear eye protective goggles approved for field hockey

**Proposal:**

Eliminate this rule and follow the current NFHS rule (1-6-5).

**Rationale:**

ASTM certified goggles are not available for all field hockey players, notably those who wear glasses. Removing the mandate would allow those students to participate freely.

Field hockey is a sport where the ball is often on the ground. Goggles impair inferior visions, which cause student to play with their head down, thereby increasing risk of cervical injury

Perhaps the most dangerous play in the sport is the penalty corner. Under the mandatory goggles rule, students could not remove their goggles and wear full-face masks on a penalty corner. Wearing of full-face mask on penalty corners is successfully done at the International, collegiate and high school level in other states across the country. Removal of this mandate would allow that for our students as well.

With these consideration in mind it seems prudent to remove MIAA rule 68.1.1 mandating goggles and instead follow the NFHS rules as voted by the NFHS Board of Directors which includes goggle rule 1-6-5 approved for 2020 stating goggles may be worn by all field players. Schools and parents will have the right to mandate goggle usage for their students should they choose to do so.

**21. Page 66**

**Part V, Rule 69: Football**

**By: Paul Spear, Athletic Director, Framingham High School  
Dave Shea, Athletic Director, Worcester Public Schools  
Cape and Islands League Athletic Directors**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

Rule change would read as follows, "All MIAA Football games in the non-playoff bracket will be 10 minute quarters and if the teams agree they may play 8 minute quarters".

**Rationale:**

- Teams who are in the non-playoff bracket are often down players from injuries or have fewer players to begin with in their program and could use relief from 12 minute quarters.
- Non-playoff teams have often been in lopsided games and when the respective committees are attempting to find matchups they are desperately trying to avoid this and it is proven shorter games will help; it will also alleviate marathon meetings for the volunteers of the committees.
- It will reduce transportation needs and costs by allowing the committees to make closer geographic matchups that cross divisions without concern over lopsided scores and the upset created when matchups are made.
- Non-playoff teams are trying to keep sub varsity competitions but can't because limited rosters and long games force them to play everyone.
- The reality is these games are for friendly competition and do not count towards anything as most non-playoff teams are trying to make it to Thanksgiving games without further injury to players, there is no reason for them playing a full 48 minutes where fatigue can set in and it is just an overall unhealthy situation.

**22. Page 67-67**

**Part V, Rule 69: Football**

**By: Thomas Azevedo, Mass Football Official Association (MSFOA) Rules Interpreter;  
Tom Brow, Association of New England Football Officials (ANEFO) Rules Interpreter;  
Bryan Andrade, Eastern Mass Association of Interscholastic Football Officials (EMAIFO) Director;  
Gary Corvelo, Southeastern Mass Football Officials Association (SMFOA) Director**

**Current Rule:**

**69.3.1.4** If there is a change of team possession during the last play of an overtime period (second series), live ball personal fouls or live ball unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by opponents of the team last gaining possession, that occur after the change of possession, gives the team in possession the option of putting the ball in play, where the penalty leaves the ball, for one down free of penalty or penalize as a dead ball foul at the succeeding spot in the subsequent overtime period. This option is exercised only if the team last gaining possession is free of foul during the down.

Example: Second Series - Team B intercepts Team A's pass and, during Team B's run back, Team A commits a personal foul.

Ruling: Team B has the option of extending the overtime period for one down free of penalty, with Team B putting the ball in play where the penalty leaves the ball, provided Team B has not fouled during the down. Or Team B may choose to penalize as a dead ball foul at the succeeding spot in the subsequent overtime period.

**Proposal:**

If there is a change of team possession during **any play of an overtime period** (second series), live ball personal fouls or live ball unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by opponents of the team last gaining possession, that occur after the change of possession, gives the team in possession the option of putting the ball in play, where the penalty leaves the ball, for one down free of penalty or penalize as a dead ball foul at the succeeding spot in the subsequent overtime period. This option is exercised only if the team last gaining possession is free of foul during the down.

**Rationale:**

If there is a change of possession on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or last down, and there is live ball personal fouls or live ball unsportsmanlike conduct fouls by opponents of the team last gaining possession, this is the last play in the second series.

The penalty must be administered: gives the team in possession the option of putting the ball in play, where the penalty leaves the ball, for one down free of penalty or penalize as a dead ball foul at the succeeding spot in the subsequent overtime period.

**23. Page 68-69**

**Part V, Rule 69: Football**

**By: Bill Raycraft, Athletic Director, Malden Catholic High School**

**Current Rule:**

**69.6 Prohibited Field Equipment:**

69.6.1 Jurisdiction regarding the presence and location of communication equipment within the playing enclosure resides with game management personnel.

69.6.1.1 Television replay or monitor equipment is prohibited at the sidelines, press box or other locations within the playing enclosure for coaching purposes during the game. Motion pictures, any type of film, facsimile machines, videotapes, photographs, writing-transmission machines

and computers may not be used by coaches or for coaching purposes any time during the game or between periods. Computers, tablets, etc. are not allowed in the coaching booth. [Exceptions: 1) Monitors may be used only to view the live telecast or webcast. The home team is responsible for assuring identical television capability in the coaches' booths of both teams. This capability may not include replay equipment or recorders. 2) A monitor is permitted on the sideline only to assist team medical staffs in the diagnosis and treatment of student-athletes.

69.6.1.2 Only voice communication between the press box or designated coaching area and team area is permitted.

69.6.1.3 No one in the team area or coaching box may use any artificial sound amplification to communicate with players on the field.

69.6.1.4 Any attempt to record, either through audio or video means, any signals given by an opposing player, coach or other team personnel is prohibited.

**Proposal:**

USE OF COMMUNICATION DEVICES: Electronic communication devices used to communicate with a player, except during an outside 9yd mark conference (7-yard marks in eight man), including electronic signage to signal plays or information from the sideline are deemed illegal equipment per NFHS Rule 1-5-3(c, 2). The rule allows the use of electronic communication devices including but not limited to audio recorder, Local Area Network phones and/or headsets, mobile phones, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and/or internet depictions may be used by coaches and non-players.

NFHS Football Rule 1.6.1.2 covers Coaches Field Equipment, including communication equipment like iPads and other devices that can play video clips. In the NFHS Football Rules Book, Rule 1.6.1.2 says it is legal to use electronic devices to communicate with players when both the coach and players are on the sideline (off the playing field). To communicate with players when the players are between the sideline and 9-yard marks.

During a conference with players inside the 9-yard marks, only coaches are allowed to use tablets.

**Rationale:**

It falls in line with the NFHS Rules regarding communication and allows for better teaching by resolving execution issues during the game right after the play, cues for correcting mistakes and allows coaches to better correct mistakes allowing for better games. The cost of technology has drastically reduced since the NFHS rules inception in 2013 and for as little as \$100 or an existing Ipad a team can review plays legally.

As we saw in our game in 2021 when an opponent used sideline video communication and we did not and attempted to protest the game, it is very difficult to enforce its non-use and this allows compliance with the NFHS.

**24. Page 71-73**

**Part V, Rule 72: Ice Hockey**

**By: Ryan Methia, Athletic Director, Greater New Bedford Regional High School**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

A running clock will be used:

- when a goal differential reaches 10 goals at the beginning of or any time during the 2<sup>nd</sup> period or
- a 6-goal differential at the beginning of or anytime during the 3<sup>rd</sup> period. It will continue for the remainder of the game.

**Rationale:**

Football has running clock at certain points and it has been a great way to conclude uncompetitive games.

**25. Page 73**

**Part V, Rule 72: Ice Hockey**

**By: Richard Pearson, MIAA Associate Director** (*unanimously supported by the MIAA Ice Hockey Committee*)

**Current Rule:**

**72.10** Upon receipt of eight total minutes of penalties -- any combination of a major or minors -- a player will be excluded from the remainder of that game. This amendment supersedes NFHS Rules 4-3-4 and 4-5-2.

**Proposal:**

Remove rule to align with NFHS Ice Hockey Rules.

**Rationale:**

This change will align 72.10 with current NFHS Ice Hockey Rules. This rule is a redundant holdover when MIAA penalty times were less than NFHS rules.

(Current NFHS Rules for reference)

**Rule 4-3 ART. 4 ...** Any player who incurs two major penalties in the same game shall be assessed a game misconduct.

**Rule 4-5 ART. 2 ...** Any player who incurs five penalties, any combination of minors, majors or misconducts in the same game, shall be assessed a game misconduct penalty.

**26. Page 73**

**Part V, Rule 72: Ice Hockey**

**By: Richard Pearson, MIAA Associate Director** (*unanimously supported by the MIAA Ice Hockey and Sportsmanship Committees*)

**Current Rule:**

**72.12** An Ice Hockey player or coach who is ruled out of an MIAA tournament game for a game disqualification will be ineligible for the remainder of the tournament. If it is the last game of the tournament for that team, the player or coach will be ineligible for at least the first two hockey games of the next season.

**Proposal:**

Eliminate this rule entirely.

**Rationale:**

In no other team sport tournament does the penalty for a normally one-game disqualification result in the student or coach being ineligible for the remainder of the tournament. Removing this rule will allow for the language in Rule 49 to be applied to all disqualifications.

**27. Page 77**

**Part V, Rule 78: Soccer**

**By: MIAA Soccer Committee**

**Current Rule:**

**78.2.3** All yellow cards must be treated consistently

**Proposal:**

Change the language of this rule to read, ***“Referees are encouraged to use yellow cards to help manage the contest.”***

**Rationale:**

This language, coupled with several soccer committee proposals below, highlight a point of emphasis that officials should be issuing yellow cards to control the games and behaviors/language on the field. Massachusetts has unintentionally handicapped the official’s ability to use cards to control a game by its low card thresholds with respect to suspensions and tournament eligibility.

**28. Page 78**

**Part V, Rule 78: Soccer**

**By: MIAA Soccer Committee**

**Current Rule:**

**78.2.11** Any player who receives a third yellow card in a season shall be suspended from the next contest; a fourth yellow card and subsequent yellow cards in a season shall result in suspension for two contests. This penalty carries over to the next soccer season (or next season if senior) if happens in last contest, or the next to last contest.

**Proposal:**

Increase the number of yellow cards that would result in a suspension from three (3) to five (5). Additionally, all suspensions within this rule remain one game.

The proposed rule reads, *“Any player who receives a **fifth yellow card** in a season shall be suspended from the next contest; a **sixth yellow card** and subsequent yellow cards in a season shall result in a **suspension from the next contest**. This penalty carries over to the next soccer season (or next season if senior) if it happens in last contest.*

**Rationale:**

The committee believed that three (3) yellow cards in an eighteen (18) game regular season was too small of a number to warrant a suspension. This proposal would further the point of emphasis in allowing officials to use yellow cards as a way to control the games on the field.

**29. Page 78**

**Part V, Rule 78: Soccer**

**By: David Proulx, Athletic Director, Northampton High School**

**Current Rule:**

**78.2.11** Any player who receives a third yellow card in a season shall be suspended from the next contest; a fourth yellow card and subsequent yellow cards in a season shall result in suspension for two contests. This penalty carries over to the next soccer season (or next season if senior) if happens in last contest, or the next to last contest.

**Proposal:**

Any player who receives a third yellow card in a season shall be suspended from the next contest. The yellow card count will reset. If a player receives another three yellow cards in a season, they shall be suspended from the next two contests and count will not reset. This penalty carries over to the next soccer season (or next season if senior) if happens in last contest, or the next to last contest.

**Rationale:**

After the athlete serves the first suspension, the current rule is too punitive since it treats all yellow cards the same. I believe the athlete should start fresh after serving the suspension. If they accumulate enough cards again, they've proven that the first suspension was not sufficient and at that point the rules should be strong and punitive. If this penalty was narrowed to yellow cards that are dangerous and physical in nature which would exclude things like encroachment, unnecessary delay, improper equipment then that could be an alternative way to alter the rule.

**30. Page 78-79**

**Part V, Rule 78: Soccer**

**By: David Proulx, Athletic Director, Northampton High School**

**Current Rule:**

**78.2.12** A coach who receives a third yellow card in a season shall be suspended from coaching the next two contests. A fourth yellow card in a season shall result in a one year suspension. The penalty carries over to the next soccer season if happens in last contest, or the next to last contest.

**Proposal:**

A coach who receives a third yellow card in a season shall be suspended from coaching the next two contests. A fourth yellow card in a season shall result in a one year suspension. The penalty carries over to the next soccer season if happens in last contest, or the next to last contest. Cards for illegally equipped players are exempt from this count.

**Rationale:**

The spirit of this rule is to ensure coach behavior is held to a professional standard and provides a strong deterrent to abusive treatment of officials. The fact that a player who forgets to take off a string bracelet off their wrist can lead to a coach receiving a yellow card that will count towards such a strong punishment doesn't fit within the goal of the rule.

**31. Page 79**

**Part V, Rule 78: Soccer**

**By: MIAA Soccer Committee**

**Current Rule:**

**78.2.15** Any varsity team exceeding four red or thirteen yellow cards also must assign a contest manager other than a coach to away contests, as well as for all home contests (as required by Rule 78.2.21). This rule pertains to all soccer contests played at all levels.

**Proposal:**

Change the rule to read, "*Any varsity team exceeding **three** red or **thirteen TOTAL** cards must assign a contest manager other than a coach to away contests, as well as for all home contests (as required by Rule 78.2.21). **The contest manager must be implemented immediately for the remainder of the current season, including postseason and must be in place for the entirety of the next season.** This rule pertains to all soccer contests played at all levels.*"

**Rationale:**

This proposal would allow for this rule to serve as a warning to schools that are at risk of being ineligible for the MIAA Tournament based on rule 78.2.16. By setting the card totals below the threshold that would eliminate a team from the postseason, it allows from the school to address the team and implement changes to correct the behaviors on the field. Additionally, the added contest manager language makes it clear that the position must be assigned for the remainder of the current year, as well as for the entire next season.

**32. Page 79**

**Part V, Rule 78: Soccer**

**By: MIAA Soccer Committee**

**Current Rule:**

**78.2.16** For purposes of obtaining tournament eligibility, no team may exceed four red or fifteen TOTAL cards during the regular season. Delay of game encroachment and deliberate (intentional) handball are infractions, which will continue to be enforced and penalized. The impact of these infractions will be assessed and will be considered towards tournament ineligibility.

**Proposal:**

Increase the total cards that would eliminate a team from the MIAA Tournament from exceeding fifteen (15) TOTAL cards to **seventeen (17) TOTAL cards**. Additionally, this proposal would eliminate the last two sentences of the current rule to ensure the rule is clear.

The rule would read, *“For purposes of obtaining tournament eligibility, no team may exceed four red or **seventeen** TOTAL cards during the regular season.”*

**Rationale:**

This change, coupled with the proposed language of rule 78.2.15 would further the point of emphasis in allowing officials to use yellow cards as a way to control the contests on the field. There would be a clear warning if a school earned enough cards to require a contest manager (78.2.15) and then if they continue to receive more cards that exceed the totals outlined in this rule, they are ineligible for the MIAA Tournament. The two rules complement each other.

**33. Page 79****Part V, Rule 78: Soccer****By: MIAA Soccer Committee****Current Rule:**

**78.2.17** Any team whose players/coaches receive collectively five (5) yellow and/or red cards in a contest (including pre & post-game) will result in immediate termination of the contest, and result in forfeiture by the offending team.

**Proposal:**

Increase the number of cards that will result in the immediate termination of the contest from five (5) to six (6). The rule would read, *“Any team whose players/coaches receive collectively **six (6)** yellow and/or red cards in a contest (including pre & post-game) will result in immediate termination of the contest, and result in forfeiture by the offending team.”*

**Rationale:**

This change would further the point of emphasis in allowing officials to use cards as a way to control the games on the field.

**34. Page 80****Part V, Rule 78: Soccer****By: MIAA Soccer Committee****Current Rule:**

**78.3** Length of Contests - Contests shall consist of four 18-minute quarters, two 36-minute halves, or two 40-minute halves.

**Proposal:**

Eliminate this rule from the MIAA Handbook and follow NFHS rule 7 that outlines the duration of the game.

**Rationale:**

The elimination of this rule puts MIAA soccer in line with the NFHS Rule 7.

ART. 1...*Two equal halves of 40 minutes each shall be played unless, by state high school association adoption, four equal quarters of 20 minutes each are specified.*

ART. 2...*Periods may be shortened by state high school association adoption, or if mutually agreed upon or in any emergency, by agreement of coaches or ordered by the head referee, provided it is determined to shorten the periods before the game or before the second half begins and all remaining periods are the same length.*



**35. Page 80**

**Part V, Rule 79: Softball**

**By: Mike Kosinski, Coach, St. Mary's High School (Westfield)**

**Current Rule:**

**NFHS Rule 3, Section 5, Article 3** - Any time a coach is in a live-ball area to confer with players or an umpire, or to occupy a coach's box, the coach shall be attired in a school uniform or jersey/coaching shirt with slacks, shorts or other leg coverings in school colors or colors of khaki, black, white or gray. Cut-offs or any type of jeans are prohibited. Jackets are not considered part of the coach's uniform.

**Proposal:**

Eliminate the line "Any type of jeans are prohibited". In addition, a line should be added as such, "All legwear shall be appropriate, free of holes, tears and in good condition, no matter the type of material"

**Rationale:**

This line is completely antiquated. In today's society, jeans are appropriate attire and accepted in settings including business and casual. Jeans are not only durable but are much better looking than the sweatpants and shorts that this rule currently allows. Clothing should be judged by appearance not by material. Umpires should not need to be burdened by being fashion police as well as calling a game. Their jobs are tough enough already. This slight change in rule simply brings us into modern day society without compromising a nice appearance by the coaches.

**36. Page 81**

**Part V, Rule 81: Tennis**

**By: Travis Lombardi, Athletic Director, Nantucket High School**

**Current Rule:**

No current rule but the language in the Tennis Format states, "*Playing sites shall be outdoors on courts of asphalt or asphalt consistency. Exception: In case of inclement weather the tournament matches, with mutual consent and at the expense of the host team, may be moved indoors, either before the start of play or at the time of a rain delay.*"

**Proposal:**

Playing sites shall be outdoors on courts of asphalt or asphalt consistency, unless there is a mutual agreement between the two participating schools to play on a surface other than asphalt, ex. grass or clay.

Exception: In case of inclement weather, the tournament matches, with mutual consent and at the expense of the host team, may be moved indoors, either before the start of play or at the time of a rain delay.

**Rationale:**

This proposal creates a unique opportunity for teams that prefer/enjoy playing on grass or class.

**37. Page 86**

**Part V, Rule 84: Wrestling**

**By: Melanie Martin, Athletic Director, Holyoke High School**

**Current Rule:**

**84.4.3** An MIAA Minimum Weight Control Certificate will be issued to each wrestler at the beginning of the season. This Certificate will contain a statement showing the wrestler's certified minimum weight class. This Certificate must be filled out in ink and signed in ink by the wrestler, the wrestler's parent or guardian, the wrestler's coach, and a duly registered Licensed Physician, Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner. It must be on file in the athletic director's office, electronically submitted in MIAA Members Only & on FLO Arena prior to the wrestler's first interscholastic competition of that season

**Proposal:**

Add "Licensed Athletic Trainer" to the list of Medical Providers that can sign the Minimum Weight Certificates.

**Rationale:**

Athletic Trainers are Licensed Healthcare Professionals who are educated and trained in the Minimum Weight Measurements, Calculations and Safe Weight Guidelines for High School Wrestlers. Our Athletic Trainer does all the body measurements and calculates the Minimum Weight Class for our Wrestlers. We currently have our Athletic Trainer complete the forms and then bring them to our District Physician to review and sign. In my 30 years (20 as the School's Athletic Trainer), our Physician has never changed anyone's Minimum Weight. Having to get the signature of our District Physician/Medical Advisor or student's individual Physician is an additional step that is not necessary in Districts that employ Licensed Athletic Trainers.

Adding Licensed Athletic Trainers would allow Districts who employ them simplify the Minimum Weight Certification process.

**38. Page 87****Part V, Rule 84: Wrestling**

**By: Paul Shvartsman, President, Massachusetts Interscholastic Wrestling Coaches Association**

**Current Rule:**

**84.4.6** To qualify at a certain weight for the MIAA Individual Sectional & State Tournaments, a wrestler must weigh-in at his certified weight class at scratch weight at least once during the season, shoulder to shoulder in front of an opposing coach. The opposing coach must sign the weigh-in sheet verifying the scratch weight. A 2lb allowance is granted on January 1st each year, provided the wrestler has achieved scratch weight. If a wrestler has not achieved scratch weight prior to January 1st, the wrestler must achieve scratch weight before being granted the 2lb allowance.

After January 1st, when the 2lb growth allowance is granted, all weight classes will be adjusted to the growth allowance weight (ex. 106 becomes 108). A wrestler must take this 2lb allowance if they plan on bumping up a weight, regardless of if they have achieved the scratch weight. Ex. After January 1st, if a wrestlers weighs 107.9 the wrestler cannot wrestle at 120. If that wrestler has not achieved scratch at 106 they are only eligible for the 113 weight class in that meet.

Wrestler must also weigh-in at the base weight (scratch weight plus any rule book allowances) 60% of the regular season varsity days of competition on which the wrestler competes. Rule book weight class allowances count toward the 60% certification.

With this rule there is a change in the language as well as a separation with-in the language to show that they are separate weigh-in procedural rules.

**Proposal:**

Third paragraph of rule 84.4.6 should be changed from 60% to 50%.

*Wrestler must also weigh-in at the base weight (scratch weight plus any rule book allowances) 50% of the regular season varsity days of competition on which the wrestler competes. Rule book weight class allowances count toward the 50% certification.*

**Rationale:**

Right now Massachusetts has a much higher % then all other New England States. 50% would make it safer for wrestlers to get to their minimum weight carefully as the wrestlers wouldn't need to rush weight loss early in the season, especially with the quick turnaround from football. It would also give coaches a little more latitude with their line up so they could make a change for a big match or not have to desperately scramble to find another match if one gets cancelled due to weather or COVID.

----- **END OF SPORT SPECIFIC ONLY RULE PROPOSALS** -----

**39. Page 93**

**Part VII, Rule 87: Student Eligibility Waiver- The Process**

**By: Phil Napolitano, MIAA Assistant Director**

**Current Rule:**

87.1 Any request for the waiver of any eligibility rule on behalf of an individual student must be made by the principal on the Fillable Forms designated, "Application for Waiver of Athletic Eligibility Rule", together with any background information, additional pertinent facts, extenuating or unusual circumstances, documents required by the rules, doctors' statement or certificates.

87.1.1 In addition to the current waiver application required, a comprehensive student-athlete resume must be included with any waiver submission.

87.1.2 As part of the waiver application process, the application, including the comprehensive athletic resume, must be submitted to your league or district and put forth for an advisory vote. The results of the advisory vote must be included in the final submission of the waiver application to the MIAA.

**Proposal:**

Eliminate rule 87.1.2, which requires a league advisory vote to be submitted with waiver applications.

**Rationale:**

This rule was put in place last rule change cycle with the sound rationale of allowing the leagues to express their support or concern with each waiver prior to it being submitted to the MIAA Office for review. In the end, I do not believe the process was successful and ultimately became an automatic "stamp of approval". I believe several factors played a role, including the inability for schools to share the confidential information on the student to allow the leagues to make an informed decision. Often times, the league voting process was done via email, where a few sentence summary was shared with the league on the waiver and votes were taken electronically. Leagues were submitting advisory votes without having the full waiver application to review. It is important to note that waivers that were unanimously supported had parameters of ineligibility far outside the norm for any initial approval. Examples include students that were well beyond the age limit and students that reclassified despite being strong academic students and already played in four years of athletics. The numbers below support the elimination of this process.

- Total waivers submitted that required a league vote: **150**
- Number of those waivers that were unanimously supported by the league: **137 (91%)**
- Approximate vote totals of the 150 waivers – **1090 in support, 61 against (95%)**

One other important factor is that the league votes are included in the waiver process that have been challenged in court. Based on the reasons above, I do not believe it is beneficial for the association to have league advisory votes on record.

**40. Page 93-94**

**Part VII, Rule 87: Student Eligibility Waiver- The Process**

**By: Phil Napolitano, MIAA Assistant Director**

**Current Rule:**

87.4 An adverse decision by the Executive Director may be appealed before a subcommittee of both the Eligibility Review Board (ERB) and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council

(MIAC). The subcommittee would consist of no less than five (5) members and no more than nine (9) members. A combination of five (5) total ERB and MIAC members will constitute a quorum. The subcommittee will be selected by the MIAA Executive or their designee.

**Proposal:**

87.4 An adverse decision by the Executive Director may be appealed *by the Principal* before a subcommittee of both the Eligibility Review Board (ERB) and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council (MIAC). The subcommittee would consist of no less than five (5) members and no more than nine (9) members. A combination of five (5) total ERB and MIAC members will constitute a quorum. The subcommittee will be selected by the MIAA Executive or their designee.

**Note: In order for an appeal to be submitted for review by the ERB, the principal must submit a formal request which includes:**

- 1. Which rule (number) is being appealed;**
- 2. Identify where the rule was misapplied;**
- 3. Any specific appeal of the decision letter findings.**

**It is important that the appeal request include additional/new information that addresses the misapplication of rule criteria not simply disagreement with the result of the initial request.**

**Rationale:**

This solidifies that an appeal must come from the Principal. It also provides clear details that should be submitted with the appeal letter. This information will assist the Eligibility Appeals Board with understanding what the school disagrees with as it relates to the decision letter issued by the MIAA Executive Director or their designee.

**41. Page 96**

**Part VII, Rule 89: Procedure for Requesting a Rule Change**

**By: Phil Napolitano, MIAA Assistant Director**

**Current Rule:**

**89.1** Any group or individual may petition for a change in existing rules. All proposals must be submitted on the appropriate form and sent to the MIAA before June 1, 2022 if the change is to become effective on July 1, 2023. Any rule proposed after the deadline may be considered only if the Board of Directors deems said proposal an emergency measure that would affect the health and safety of students. In emergencies, the Board of Directors may grant temporary waivers or approval for experimental rules.

**Proposal:**

A petition for a change in existing rules may **only be submitted by MIAA member school leaders, MIAA committee members, MIAA employees, or those organizations affiliated with MIAA governance (coaches and officials associations).** All proposals must be submitted on the appropriate form and sent to the MIAA before June 1, 2022 if the change is to become effective on July 1, 2023. Any rule proposed after the deadline may be considered only if the Board of Directors deems said proposal an emergency measure that would affect the health and safety of students. In emergencies, the Board of Directors may grant temporary waivers or approval for experimental rules.

**Rationale:**

All MIAA governance is led only by member schools and their leaders. Under current association practices, parents and other public entities do not have direct access to MIAA governance and decision making.

**42. Page 96**

**Part VII, Rule 89: Procedure for Requesting a Rule Change**

**By: Phil Napolitano, MIAA Assistant Director**

**Current Rule:**

None

**Proposal:**

89.1.1 Rule change proposals that are defeated for two consecutive rule change proposal cycles cannot be submitted during the next cycle. (E.g. the same proposal is defeated during the 2023-25 and 2025-27 process. That proposal cannot be submitted during the 2027-29 cycle but is eligible to be submitted for the 2029-31 cycle).

This proposal, if adopted, would take effect immediately. Thereby including any proposal submitted and defeated in the 2021-23 process and again in this current 2023-25 process.

**Rationale:**

Often times the same proposals are submitted each and every cycle, despite being defeated by the membership. This proposal will require a rule proposal that has been defeated for two consecutive rule change proposal cycles to wait a full cycle before being re-submitted.

**43. Page 103**

**Part VIII, Rule 92: Game Officials – Policies and Procedures**

**By: Thomas Azevedo Mass Football Official Association (MSFOA), Rules Interpreter;**

**Tom Brow Association of New England Football Officials (ANEFO) Rules Interpreter;**

**Executive Board of Western MA Football Officials Association (WMFOA);**

**Bryan Andrade of Eastern Mass Association of Interscholastic Football Officials (EMAIFO) Director;**

**Gary Corvelo Southeastern Mass Football Officials Association (SMFOA) Director**

**Current Rule:**

92.18 It is recommended that the number of certified officials assigned to a regular season varsity contest be as follows:

Football 4	Field Hockey 2	Softball 2	
Soccer 2	Gymnastics 2	Wrestling 1	
Volleyball 2	Swimming 2	Cross Country 1	
Baseball 2	Basketball 2	Indoor Track 2	
Lacrosse 2	Ice Hockey 2	Outdoor Track 2	Rugby 1

**Proposal:**

The recommended number of game officials for Football is increased from four (4) to five (5).

**Rationale:**

If there is an injury during a contest and a game official can no longer continue, play can resume with four (4) officials if agreed upon by both coaches and the game administrator. Player safety is the number one priority when we officiate any contest. When a football game is played with only 4 officials we lose coverage over the middle of the field. The mechanics are also changed during the game and officials are often moved out of place to cover for the absence of the 5<sup>th</sup> official.

Examples:

1. During punts, one of the wing officials needs to go down field to cover the returner. By doing this they leave one sideline empty.
2. All deep plays over the middle are no longer covered. These are the plays where most of the targeting plays will happen. With the 5<sup>th</sup> official covering the deep middle, it could limit these play by their presence.
3. There are 22 high school aged students (mostly boys) on every play. Playing game with no coverage over the middle or having to move an official to an area that is most dangerous on particular plays and leave another area empty is not a common practice during a high school football game.

We are asking you to review this recommendation for the Western Massachusetts Board of Football Officials. To my knowledge, they are the only area in Massachusetts that still assigns only 4 officials to a small population of games. Time and time again, they have been put in bad situations because we are shorthanded during these games.

# OFFICIAL RULES CHANGE BALLOT

Date of Vote: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reviewing Body: \_\_\_\_\_

Rule #	Yes	No	Abstentions	Rule #	Yes	No	Abstentions
1.	_____	_____	_____	30.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	31.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	32.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	33.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	34.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	35.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	36.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	37.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	38.	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	39.	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____	40.	_____	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____	_____	41.	_____	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____	_____	42.	_____	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____	_____	43.	_____	_____	_____
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**COMPLETED BALLOT & AMENDMENTS ARE TO BE RETURNED TO PHIL NAPOLITANO @ THE MIAA**

Name of Reviewing Body: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**AMENDMENT VOTED**  
**(Make copies as needed)**

1. Rule proposal number: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Amendment voted:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Rationale:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Committee vote on amendment:

Number **Yes**: \_\_\_\_\_

Number **No**: \_\_\_\_\_

Number abstentions: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPLETED BALLOT & AMENDMENTS ARE TO BE RETURNED TO PHIL NAPOLITANO @ THE MIAA**