

APPROVED

MIAA RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS FOR 2023-2025 HANDBOOK

**These rule changes will take effect on July 1, 2023*

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.

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.

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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.

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 RULES -----

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.

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 1st, 2nd, 3rd 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.

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 2nd period or
- a 6-goal differential at the beginning of or anytime during the 3rd 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.

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.

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.

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.

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 % than 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.

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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 5th 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 5th 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.