MIAA RULE CHANGE PROPOSALS FOR 2027-29

The following reflects Rule Change Proposals that have been submitted as permitted in the Procedure for Requesting a Rule Change, Rule 88, page 90 of the current MIAA Handbook. **Please note: Rule Change Proposals list the Current Rule (listed in 2025-2027 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 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 will act on each rule change proposal. In the section on Sport Specific Rules (rule change proposals 11-32 within this packet) MIAA sport committees should only act on general rules (rules 1-10) 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, 2026.

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, 2026. The DAC and MSSADA should not act until they have the packet that includes all earlier votes by sport and administrative committees.

4. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council will act upon proposals by January 1, 2027.

5. The MIAA Board of Directors will act upon all proposals by February 1, 2027 and their decision(s) are final.

1. **Page 10**

Part I, Rule 5: Medical Coverage
By: 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. The school designated as the home team, or the host site identified with a participating school, is required to have an AED onsite (and accessible) or with their medical provider for all athletic events.

Proposal:

Add new rule:

5.1 A Pre-Event Medical Meeting must take place with the head coaches and game official(s) before the start of any contest to review the site's emergency action plan and address any weather or safety concerns. If any medical staff, site administrator or the athletic director are in attendance they should also attend the pre-event meeting.

Rationale:

The implementation of a short but important pre-event medical meeting before a contest will ensure a proper execution of an emergency action plan (EAP) if needed. Since game officials often meet with coaches prior to competitions, the meeting can be facilitated by these three parties. The brief meeting will only last 2 minutes.

The availability of officials and coaches to attend this meeting will be time and activity dependent. It is recommended that the meeting be held when at least one contest official and one coach from each participating school can be present. If a participating school does not have an administrator on site to attend this meeting, a coach from the host school can lead the meeting.

If a site administrator and/or medical staff are available, they can also facilitate and participate in the meeting. This brief pre-event medical meeting helps to formalize the process and flow of information should emergency attention be necessary. It will 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.

The NFHS SMAC committee is expecting states to implement a pre-event medical meeting as standard protocol. The NFHS SMAC has recently published a brief article supporting implementation. Link can be found here.

Links for brief Pre-Event Medical Scripts:
Coaches and Officials (no AD or Athletic Trainer)
AD or Athletic Trainer leading

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**5-11-0 Opposed**
Basketball Committee	**2-12-0 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**12-5-0 Supported**
Field Hockey Committee	**0-8-3 Opposed**
Football Committee	**15-1-1 Supported**
Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Golf Committee	**10-5-0 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**6-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**12-1-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**10-3-0 Supported**
Rugby Committee	

Ski Committee	**1-6-0 Opposed**
Soccer Committee	**6-11-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**10-1-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-10-2 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**11-0-1 Supported**
Tennis Committee	**10-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**6-6-0 Opposed**
Wrestling Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

2. Page 10
Part I, Rule 5: Medical Coverage
By: Robert Colandreo, Athletic Trainer and Sports Medicine Committee Member

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. 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:

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. ***(If passed this rule will become effective July 1, 2028)***

Rationale:

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

change would take effect after FY27-28 municipal and school district budgets have been set. Again, ***if passed this rule would become effective July 1, 2028.***

Considering the COVID-19 pandemic and recent media attention, athletic departments have had an ever increasing need to oversee athlete health care and athlete safety. This is the role of an athletic trainer. When athletic trainers received state licensure in 1983, one of the major drivers behind the effort was the need for athletic trainers in the high school setting. Current athletic trainer practice language restricts practice to "*schools, teams and organizations with whom he is associated."* In 1988, a licensure review report by the State Auditor's Office recognized that the intent of the licensure law to assist every high school in obtaining an athletic trainer was falling short, as 74% of school's did not have access to one. Today, 38 years later, approximately 37% of Massachusetts high schools still do not have access to an athletic trainer.

Despite recurring complaints that there are "not enough" athletic trainers to fill positions, the reality remains much the same as was noted by the Board of Allied Health in 1988, "*The Board has reason to believe that the real difficulty is the inability or unwillingness of school systems to pay athletic trainers a salary commensurate with their training and skills."* Athletic trainer positions are still too often perceived, structured and compensated as part-time stipends similar to coaching positions, which remain a primary factor in recruitment and retention difficulties. For smaller schools requiring varying levels of service throughout the year, contract arrangements with hospitals and clinics can provide schools with cost-effective and consistent professional coverage while allowing athletic trainers to receive full-time salaries and benefits.
Athletic trainers ensure schools have appropriate emergency action plans (EAP) in place and review execution of protocols with staff. They manage concussion protocols, assist with first aid and CPR training for coaches and students, oversee AED accessibility, and communicate health information with school nurses, parents, and athletes' physicians. With substance abuse and mental health concerns increasingly present, athletic trainers are often the first to recognize the subtle warning signs.

There is currently legislation pending that would require all secondary schools to hire an athletic trainer. If passed during this legislative session, schools would be required to comply within 90 days. Passage of this rule change would give schools and districts more than one year to evaluate their needs and budget appropriately for athletic training services.

This **one-word** change was last proposed in the 2022 rule change cycle and was voted down. Since then, high-profile incidents in the Hockomock League, a few weeks apart in fall of 2024, demonstrated why a consistent athletic trainer is vital during emergencies. Similar incidents again drew media attention in Ipswich in late March 2026 and few weeks later at St. Mary's of Lynn. The NFHS and other associations continue to advocate for athletic trainers in high schools. Until someone is willing to break the inertia, it is entirely possible this same conversation will still be happening 20 years from now.

Will this association lead by enacting a rule change that finally closes this gap, or will it take another incident reported on by Bob Hohler in the Boston Globe? What happened in Sharon in 2024 should have provided more than sufficient motivation for change. Yet two years later, another serious incident occurred in Ipswich that likely would not have played out in the media had previous proposals (AT requirement and pre-event EAP review) been adopted. Lack of appropriate medical oversight has forever changed a player and his family's life. Individuals not following an established EAP protocol caused an athletic trainer to resign. How many more cases like these will occur over the next 20 years while approximately 150 schools still lack appropriate athletic trainer coverage?

The goal of this one-word change is not to burden, but to prevent financial hardship from unnecessary lawsuits and to spare students and families from avoidable healthcare related costs. For years, hypotheticals have been raised suggesting it is unfair for wealthier communities such as Wellesley or Weston to impose financial expectations on communities with fewer resources. Yet, Boston, Brockton, Cambridge, Chelsea, Durfee, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, New Bedford, Somerville, and Taunton have at least one athletic trainer on staff, many since the 1980s. This proposal is reasonable and attainable.

Massachusetts law already requires school committees to hire school nurses and a school physician. The Department of Public Health recommends a school nurse to student ratio of 1:250-500 students during the school day. Schools with swimming pools cannot open those facilities without a lifeguard present. Yet every day, schools permit students to participate in extracurricular athletic activities that carry significant risks without medical oversight. Lifeguards and school nurses are not considered luxuries, yet as recently as fall 2017, this association's leadership referred to athletic trainers as a luxury. While acknowledging their importance and value, a comparison was made that requiring athletic trainers would be like a rule requiring districts provide a car for their athletic directors to travel to games and other responsibilities and requiring that car be a Porsche.

Why are we still leaving the "second shift" of the school day completely unprotected? The association does not like to impose a financial mandate on their member schools, but by not requiring member schools to adhere to best medical practice are we doing our due diligence to protect the safety of the student athletes playing under the umbrella of the MIAA?

- Massachusetts State Auditor's Sunset Report, 1988 (1 item; Pages 1, 19, 36)
- NFHS Article (1 item)
- Boston Globe Articles (2 items; Hohler May 1, 2025, Stoico August 4, 2025)
- Ipswich News posts/articles (2 items; Meek April 1, 2026, Palmer April 22, 2026)
- Lynn Item Article (1 item; Barrett April 22, 2026)

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**0-15-1 Opposed**
Basketball Committee	**0-14-0 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**1-13-4 Opposed**
Field Hockey Committee	**0-11-0 Opposed**
Football Committee	**0-16-1 Opposed**
Game Officials Committee	**0-12-1 Opposed**
Golf Committee	**12-3-0 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**0-6-0 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**0-13-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**3-9-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**1-10-2 Opposed**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**2-5-0 Opposed**
Soccer Committee	**0-17-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**0-10-1 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**14-1-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Tennis Committee	**0-9-1 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**4-8-0 Opposed**
Wrestling Committee	**0-16-0 Opposed**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	

District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
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3. Pages 20
Part II, Rule 33: Coaches' Education
By: Nairi Melkonian, Greater Lawrence Technical 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 have completed the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course with the exception of Certified MA teachers.

All coaches (stipend or volunteer) first serving as an interscholastic coach after July 1, 2005 must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course, and an approved Sports First Aid course.

- The NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course requirement must be met through attending an MIAA sponsored Fundamentals of Coaching Class with MIAA Certified Instructors. Must be completed and passed prior to coaching a second year.
- The NFHS Sports First Aid may be met by completing on-line courses with the NFHS http://www.nfhslearn.com. Must be passed prior to coaching a third year.

Additional requirements for all coaches:

- Massachusetts requires coaches to be certified in CPR per Section 1. Section 47A of chapter 71 of the General Laws. Additionally, AED training is required and will most likely be done in conjunction with the existing mandated CPR training.
- All MIAA member school coaches (stipend or volunteer) are required to take annually the on-line 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.*

Proposal:

The NFHS Sports First Aid may be met by completing on-line courses with the NFHS http://www.nfhslearn.com. Must be passed prior to coaching. ~~a third year.~~

Rationale:

The immediate health and safety of student athletes requires coaches to be trained and ready to respond to medical situations at all times. Athletic activities frequently occur without on-site medical personnel, which places coaches in the position of first responders during emergencies. Coaches must be able to recognize and manage urgent conditions such as asthma attacks, anaphylaxis, fractures, and control bleeding to prevent complications and protect the student's well-being and uphold the school's duty of care.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**0-15-0 Opposed**
Basketball Committee	**5-9-0 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**17-0-1 Supported**
Field Hockey Committee	**11-0-0 Supported**
Football Committee	**0-12-4 Opposed**
Game Officials Committee	**0-10-3 Opposed**
Golf Committee	**10-5-0 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**4-1-1 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**11-4-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**11-1-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Rugby Committee	

Ski Committee **1-6-0 Opposed**
Soccer Committee **0-16-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee **7-4-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee **15-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee **0-12-0 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee **12-0-0 Supported**
Tennis Committee **5-4-1 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee
Volleyball Committee **5-6-1 Opposed** ***(Amendment – complete course within 7 days of hire, 11-0-0 Supported)***
Wrestling Committee **15-1-0 Supported**
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

4. **Pages 20-25**
   Part II, Rule 34: Recognized Sports, And Scheduling Limits for Schools
   By: Kevin Magee, Athletic Director, East Longmeadow High School

   Current Rule:

   34.6 **Schedule Commitment Deadlines** for each season are published in the *Sport limitations sheet*. Schools must adhere to the maximum number of competitions allowed per week and per season in each sport and submit this information via the MIAA scheduling system by these seasonal deadlines.

   - Placeholder games must be entered on the schedule for regular-season contests, including tournaments, that are played before the cutoff date and for which an opponent has not been determined. The Opponent for such games must be listed as "TBA" for each of these games.
     - Leagues/conferences/regions may hold end of the regular-season tournaments, approved by the Board of Directors, as part of their committed schedules.
       - The championship game will be exempt from the maximum game limit number for each sport
       - All games prior to the cutoff day **WILL COUNT** in the power rankings
       - If a tournament is scheduled to run after the cutoff date, those games **WILL NOT COUNT** in the power rankings and these games must be completed prior to the start of the MIAA tournament
       - Teams **WILL NOT** be penalized for including a placeholder TBA on the committed schedule for a contest in which they later don't qualify
       - The TBA placeholder game must be part of a tournament or other approved event
   - After the established commitment deadline, all schedules will be considered **FINAL** and no changes can be made.
   - A school shall not participate in any contest(s) not listed on a team's

schedule as of the Schedule Commitment Deadline. Any violation of this policy will result in the team receiving a forfeit loss for each unscheduled contest played. Additionally, the added contest(s) may lead to overscheduling, resulting in further forfeits. See rule 34.7 below.

Proposal:

In the second bullet of Rule 34.6, the following language is already included in the MIAA Rule:

- After the established commitment deadline, all schedules will be considered **FINAL** and no changes can be made.

The proposal is to add the following bullet:

- However, if the school made a clerical error(s) with their schedule(s) that is noticed after the schedules have been finalized. Then the school will have the opportunity to correct the clerical error(s) beyond the established commitment deadline by paying a $500 fine to the MIAA for that season.

Rationale:

When an Athletic Director makes an innocent clerical error that can be easily corrected then we should support the correction of that error. Student-Athletes should not have to forfeit games or be excluded from games that they were planning on playing due to a clerical error that can be easily corrected.

For the purpose of this proposal, a "clerical error" is defined as:

A situation in which an athletic director can provide the MIAA documentation demonstrating that a regular-season scheduling commitment was confirmed but was entered inaccurately into the Arbiter scheduling system due to a human clerical error.

Some Examples of clerical errors:

1. Inputting the wrong number of TBA games
2. Inputting the same opponent twice (when it should have been once)
3. Inputting the wrong opponent
4. Labeling a scrimmage as a league game when it should have been a scrimmage
5. Inputting the wrong date to the game that puts it outside the scheduling calendar

Overscheduling shall not be considered a clerical error unless it results from one of the circumstances outlined above. For example, if the same opponent is inadvertently entered twice when the team was scheduled to play that opponent only once, the error may be considered a clerical error.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**13-2-1 Supported**
Basketball Committee	**0-14-0 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**2-12-4 Opposed**
Field Hockey Committee	**3-5-3 Opposed**
Football Committee	**0-15-2 Opposed**
Game Officials Committee	**1-11-1 Opposed**
Golf Committee	**9-6-0 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**0-6-0 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**2-12-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**7-4-1 Supported**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**0-11-2 Opposed**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**0-7-0 Opposed**
Soccer Committee	**5-11-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**2-9-0 Opposed**

Sports Medicine Committee **3-12-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee **0-12-0 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee **1-10-1 Opposed**
Tennis Committee **2-8-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee
Volleyball Committee **2-9-1 Opposed**
Wrestling Committee **16-0-0 Supported**
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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5. Pages 25-26
Part II, Rule 36: Multiple School Events: Involving Only MIAA Member Schools
By: Lindsey von Holtz, Director of Athletics, Mount Greylock Regional HS

Current Rule:

36.2 Sub-varsity multi-school events are not allowed.

Exception: Swimming & Diving, Track, Volleyball, Wrestling, and Cross-Country subvarsity multi-school meets may be considered for approval. These events may be considered if:

1. a team champion or winner is not determined,
2. the event is not advertised as a tournament or championship, or
3. the event does not provide competitors with any award and/or recognition not provided to all other participants equally.

Proposal:

Sub-varsity events involving multiple schools are approved as long as the following criteria are met:

1. a team champion or winner is not determined,
2. the event is not advertised as a tournament or championship, or
3. the event does not provide competitors with any award and/or recognition not provided to all other participants equally.
4. **The event/competition is sponsored and managed by MIAA member school personnel.**

Note: Sub-varsity events that meet the criteria outlined in MIAA Rules 36.1 and 36.5 require sanctioning paperwork to be submitted to and approved by the MIAA.

Rationale:

With so many schools struggling to field sub-varsity programs due to numbers, allowing multi-school events at lower levels would provide students more opportunities to compete and improve. The current rule only allows events in swimming, track, volleyball, wrestling and cross country. Students involved in other sports would also benefit from this opportunity. Requiring sanctioning would be challenging if a last-minute opportunity appears for schools to get playing experience for their sub-varsity teams.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
Basketball Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**12-4-2 Supported**
Field Hockey Committee	**9-0-2 Supported**
Football Committee	**16-0-1 Supported**
Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Golf Committee	**14-1-0 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**0-6-0 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**12-0-1 Supported**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**7-0-0 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
Softball Committee	**11-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**8-3-1 Supported**
Tennis Committee	**10-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**11-1-0 Supported**
Wrestling Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

6. Pages 35-36
Part III, Rule 45: Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members
By: Phil Napolitano, MIAA Assistant Director

Current Rule:

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g., practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs.

45.1 A student-athlete must be a team member for a minimum of 50% of the regular season schedule for that sport to participate in any MIAA Tournament competition.

- A team member is defined as any student-athlete who attends practices or games for their sport team – e.g., Freshman basketball player moved to JV and then Varsity.

45.2 Bona Fide waiver requests for Saturday and Sunday practices only do not need submission to the MIAA rather approval determined by the High School Principal or principal's designee.

45.3 MIAA Bona Fide waivers are only allowed during the pre-season or regular season. Bona Fide Team Member Waivers (for missing any practice or game) are not permitted during MIAA post-season play. The postseason officially begins the day after the cut-off date.

45.4 Unattached athletes are not eligible for tournament participation (see Rule 30).

Proposal:

Add a new rule.

45.1.1 No student may join a team after the halfway point of the season, including students who meet the MIAA Rule 57 Transfer rule exemptions (e.g., a family move).

Determining the halfway point of the season (same methodology outlined in rule 46.2):

- Example- In the sport of ice hockey, if you had scheduled 20 games, the half season point would be at the conclusion of the 10th scheduled game on your originally committed schedule.

Rationale:

Rule 45 (Bona Fide Team Members) states that a student-athlete must be a member of a team for a minimum of 50% of the regular season schedule in that sport in order to be eligible for MIAA Tournament participation.

Rule 46.2 further states that a school may permit a student-athlete to change sports during the season, provided the halfway point of the season has not yet passed.

Recently, we have seen an increase in situations where a student-athlete chooses to participate in a club or AAU sport, soccer, for example, and then returns to the school team after the halfway point of the season. Under the current rules, the student may still participate in the remainder of the regular season, despite being ineligible for postseason play under Rule 45.1. This creates confusion within school communities and appears inconsistent with the intent of other rules that emphasize participation as a bona fide team member for at least 50% of the season.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**3-13-0 Opposed**
Basketball Committee	**8-4-2 Supported**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**16-0-2 Supported**
Field Hockey Committee	**8-1-2 Supported**
Football Committee	**17-0-0 Supported**
Game Officials Committee	**11-1-1 Supported**
Golf Committee	**12-3-0 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**6-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**4-6-2 Opposed**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**7-4-2 Supported**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**7-0-0 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
Softball Committee	**7-3-1 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**9-6-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**8-3-1 Supported**
Tennis Committee	**10-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed *(Amendment – ineligible for varsity only***

11-1-0 Supported)

Wrestling Committee **13-3-0 Supported**
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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MIAA BOD

7. Page 36
Part III, Rule 46: Only One School Sport Per Season is Permitted
By: Merrimack Valley Conference

Current Rule:

A student-athlete shall participate in only one MIAA interscholastic sport in any defined MIAA sport season (Fall, Winter, or Spring), including tournaments and/or championships in that season. For the purposes of this rule only, a student-athlete officially becomes a member of that team for the sport season on the date of the school's first regular season contest in that sport. A student-athlete is not allowed to play more than one season of the same sport in a school year.

Exceptions:

46.1 If a licensed physician recommends that an athlete terminate participation in a sport for medical reasons after the first contest, the athlete will be permitted to join another team if student-athlete receives the written approval of a licensed physician.

46.2 A school may approve a varsity or sub varsity request to join a second varsity or sub varsity team after terminating membership with the first varsity or sub varsity team, providing written approval is received from the principal, athletic director, both coaches involved with the change, and it happens within the first half of the season.

Determining the halfway point of the season:

• Example- In the sport of ice hockey, if you had scheduled 20 games, the half season point would be at the conclusion of the 10th scheduled game on your originally committed schedule.

PENALTY - If a student-athlete violates this rule, student-athlete will be ineligible for that season, and all contests in which student-athlete participated in both sports must be forfeited.

Proposal:

Exceptions

46.3 If approved by the school district, student-athletes who are participating in another MIAA interscholastic sport may also serve as partners for Unified Sports in the same season.

Rationale:

Unified partners are volunteers without intellectual disabilities who train and compete alongside Special Olympics athletes, promoting inclusion and breaking down barriers. These partners are often student-athletes that compete in other sports but still have the time and willingness to volunteer with the Unified sports programs. Denying them the opportunity to do so is detrimental to both the Unified student-athletes and partners. Rule 46 states that “A student-athlete shall participate in only one MIAA interscholastic sport in any

defined MIAA sport season (Fall, Winter or Spring). Under Rule 34 for recognized sports by season, Unified sports are not listed.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**14-1-1 Supported**
Basketball Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**14-1-3 Supported**
Field Hockey Committee	**9-0-2 Supported**
Football Committee	**17-0-0 Supported**
Game Officials Committee	**8-1-4 Supported**
Golf Committee	**14-0-1 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**1-3-2 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**2-13-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**5-1-6 Supported**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**4-8-1 Opposed**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**6-1-0 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**15-1-0 Supported**
Softball Committee	**10-0-1 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**2-10-3 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tennis Committee	**9-0-1 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Wrestling Committee	**13-2-0 Supported**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

8. Pages 39-44
Part III, Rule 49: Sportsmanship: Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

49.3.5 Disqualification references in the following sports per specific sport rules do not apply to the above prescribed penalties: field hockey (see below); basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls' lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey game misconduct; wrestling-technical disqualification.

• Field Hockey - A student-athlete who receives a red card due to an upgrade (i.e., green card to a yellow card to a red card - third minor offense) should not be suspended from the next game and

the official need not fill out the MIAA Student Disqualification Form.

Proposal:

Revise 49.3.5 and add subsection.

49.3.5 Disqualification references in the following sports per specific sport rules do not apply to the above prescribed penalties: field hockey (see below); basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls' lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey game misconduct; wrestling-technical disqualification; **soccer (2) yellow cards**.

- Field Hockey - A student-athlete who receives a red card due to an upgrade (i.e., green card to a yellow card to a red card - third minor offense) should not be suspended from the next game and the official need not fill out the MIAA Student Disqualification Form.

- **Soccer - A student-athlete who receives a red card due to a second yellow should not be suspended from the next game and the official need not fill out the MIAA Student Disqualification Form.**

Rationale:

Several sports have this exception for multiple yellow cards in one contest. Soccer yellow cards (for infractions 1-10) are in the same category of offenses as lacrosse cards, basketball fouls, or hockey misconducts. Officials still have the authority to issue a straight red card for infraction codes 11-15 if necessary.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
Basketball Committee	**0-14-0 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**2-12-4 Opposed**
Field Hockey Committee	**1-8-2 Opposed**
Football Committee	**7-7-3 Opposed**
Game Officials Committee	**5-5-3 Opposed**
Golf Committee	**10-4-1 Supported**
Gymnastics Committee	**0-5-1 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**0-10-2 Opposed**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**1-9-3 Opposed**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**3-2-2 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**0-16-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**6-5-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**0-15-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**6-6-0 Opposed**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tennis Committee	**2-7-1 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Wrestling Committee	**0-15-0 Opposed**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	

District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

9. Page 46
Part III, Rule 53: Student Eligibility: Middle School Students on Senior High Teams
By: The chairs of the nine MIAA District Athletic Committees (DACs)

Current Rule:

Middle Level Waiver Guidelines (click link to access)

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).

Note: Consideration can only be given to middle level students when school district residency creates the direct path to a single high school and does not require application for admission or have any other conditions impacting a students' matriculation.

PENALTY: Violations of middle school student participation limitations will be addressed in accordance with MIAA Rule 86, Participation of an Ineligible Student.

Proposal:

A middle school student is eligible to represent a senior high school on its **sub-varsity** athletic teams **only** when the MIAA member high school includes those grades, and the student is under the direct "jurisdiction" and "supervision" of the high school principal (see Rule 51 for definitions). **Varsity competition is limited to students in grades 9–12 only regardless of school structure**.

Schools with a separate middle school principal and a high school principal **MUST** receive a Rule 53 Middle Level Waiver for middle level students to participate on a high school **sub-varsity team**.

Note - In extenuating circumstances, a middle waiver for 8th grade varsity participation may be considered in correlation with the established maximum participation guidelines. Such waivers must be approved by the respective league, District Athletic Committee (DAC), and a quorum of DAC Chairs prior to participation. Varsity waiver consideration shall not supersede existing eligibility standards, residency requirements, and/or matriculation guidelines.

Policies

- Middle-level waivers for **sub-varsity** participation may be permitted through the normal waiver approval process, requiring approval from both the respective League and District Athletic Committee (DAC).
- Consideration can only be given to middle level students when school district residency creates the direct path to a single high school and does not require application for admission or have any other conditions impacting a students' matriculation.
- No high school student may be "cut" in favor of a middle level student.
- Middle Level Waivers cannot be applied for a single student. Consideration will not be given if the request is motivated to provide opportunity for a specific student(s) or the anticipated high school numbers will support a team. Please refer to Maximum Number Guidelines document.

- Schools may have middle level teams and also request a Rule 53 Middle Level Waiver for students to participate at high school level.
- Schools in Cooperative Team Agreements may also request a Rule 53 Middle Level Waiver. High school students on the cooperative team may not be cut to accommodate a Rule 53 Middle Level Waiver approved student(s).

Rationale:

A significant concern was raised during this year's district meetings regarding inconsistencies in middle-level waiver approvals, particularly as they relate to varying school structures and district-level authorization.

Although progress has been made, an audit of winter middle-level waivers revealed that approvals remain highly inconsistent from district to district. Additionally, the audit indicated that many waiver requests are submitted with the exact minimum number required for approval, raising questions about the legitimacy of some applications.

This proposal seeks to establish a more consistent, transparent framework for waiver approvals that aligns with existing alignment policies and ensuring fairness across all districts and school models. Furthermore, it would continue to promote participation at the sub-varsity level, support student retention within towns, and provide athletic opportunities for students who otherwise would not have access to middle school sports programs.

Key Proposal Elements

- Varsity competition limited to grades 9–12 only.
- In extenuating circumstances, an 8th-grade student may be granted a varsity-level waiver under established *maximum guidelines*, provided the waiver is approved by the respective league, district, and a quorum of the DAC Chairs.
- A waiver application would be required regardless of school structure.
- Middle-level waivers would be permitted for sub-varsity participation only and approved through normal process – league and DAC approval.
- All existing guidelines, including the requirement of a direct path of residency, would remain in effect.

Goals

- Establish statewide consistency in relation to enrollment and alignment used for tournament purposes.
- Ensure equitable application of rules statewide, regardless of differing school structures and inherent advantages or disadvantages.
- Promote participation at lower levels with a focus on student retention.
- Support towns by providing increased athletic opportunities for students without middle school athletic programs.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**5-10-1 Opposed**
Basketball Committee	**6-8-0 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**9-2-5 Supported** ***(Amendment to allow waivers to include 7th graders. 9-3-4 Supported)***
Field Hockey Committee	**0-9-2 Opposed**
Football Committee	**0-13-4 Opposed**
Game Officials Committee	**1-11-1 Opposed**
Golf Committee	**7-8-0 Opposed**
Gymnastics Committee	**0-6-0 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**8-7-0 Supported**

Lacrosse Boys Committee	**2-8-2 Opposed**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**4-5-4 Opposed**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**1-6-0 Opposed**
Soccer Committee	**2-13-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**1-8-1 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**2-11-2 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**10-2-0 Supported**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**0-11-1 Opposed**
Tennis Committee	**0-10-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Wrestling Committee	**0-14-1 Opposed**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
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District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

10. Pages 52-53

Part III, Rule 59: Student Eligibility: Time Allowed for Participation After First Entering Grade Nine
By: Michael Nelson, Athletic Director, Greater Lawerence Technical HS

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 yearlong 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.

59.3 A waiver in relation to rule 59 **will 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 but has chosen to repeat that grade. Given these conditions do not satisfy the criteria outlined in rule 59.2, a school cannot utilize the student eligibility waiver process or appeal process outlined in rule 87. In such cases, the school is not permitted to submit a waiver.

59.4 All students repeating a grade must complete the MIAA Acknowledgment of MIAA Rules 57 and 59 form. This completed form must be submitted with all waiver applications.

Proposal:

Rule 59.3 - A waiver shall not be permitted for a student who has earned sufficient academic credits to advance to the next grade level but has chosen to repeat that grade; **however, a waiver may be considered if the student is required to repeat the grade due to an inability to complete state-approved vocational or technical program competencies.**

Rationale

This revision clarifies an important distinction between a student who elects to repeat a grade and one who is required to do so for educational reasons. The current rule prevents students from repeating a grade for the purpose of gaining an athletic advantage. However, it does not account for students enrolled in vocational/technical programs where progression is based not only on academic credits, but also on the completion of state-approved competencies and required instructional hours.

For students, particularly transfer students, entering a vocational program mid-sequence, it is often not possible to complete these competencies within the standard academic timeline. In these cases, repeating a grade is not a voluntary decision, but a necessary step to meet graduation requirements. Additionally, this concern cannot be reasonably exploited, as students cannot simply transfer into a vocational school to circumvent this rule. Under DESE guidelines, admission to vocational/technical programs is governed by a regulated lottery system and approval process.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Baseball Committee	**0-16-0 Opposed**
Basketball Committee	**0-13-1 Opposed**
Cross Country & Track Committee	**3-9-6 Opposed**
Field Hockey Committee	**0-9-2 Opposed**
Football Committee	**0-15-2 Opposed**
Game Officials Committee	**0-12-1 Opposed**
Golf Committee	**6-7-2 Opposed**
Gymnastics Committee	**0-6-0 Opposed**
Ice Hockey Committee	**0-15-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Boys Committee	**2-10-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Girls Committee	**0-10-2 Opposed**
Rugby Committee	
Ski Committee	**1-5-1 Opposed**
Soccer Committee	**0-15-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**0-9-1 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**1-14-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**11-0-1 Supported**
Swimming & Diving Committee	**0-11-1 Opposed**
Tennis Committee	**0-10-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
Volleyball Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Wrestling Committee	**0-13-2 Opposed**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	

District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
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---------- START OF SPORT SPECIFIC ONLY RULE PROPOSALS---------

11. Pages 60-61
Part IV, Rule 66: Basketball
By: Donald Heres, Athletic Director, Northeast Metropolitan Regional HS

Current Rule:
None

Proposal:
The running clock will begin once a team gains a 35-point differential over its opponent only in the second half. Once the running clock provision has begun, it will continue until the conclusion of the contest.

- The clock shall be stopped only for a charged time-out, an injury/blood substitution, a disqualification of a player, coach or fan, and administering free throws.
- On fouls called, leave the clock running until the official has reported the foul and signals for the clock to be stopped. The clock will only stop if the foul warrants free throws to be attempted. After reporting a shooting foul, the official will signal the timer to stop the clock.
- Once the official signals the timer to stop the clock, it will be started once a player touches the ball after the last missed attempt or on the throw-in when it is touched.

Rationale
The point differential is sufficient enough to promote sportsmanship and will not adversely impact the power rating system, as the margin of victory (MOV) in basketball is currently maxed out at 6 points.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Basketball Committee	**0-14-0 Opposed** ***(Amendment – 30-point differential at any point in the 4th Quarter. 14-0-0 Supported)***
Game Officials Committee	**3-8-2 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**1-13-1 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**2-10-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
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MIAA BOD	

12. Pages 62-65
Part IV, Rule 69: Football
By: MIAA Football Committee

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:

Eliminate rule 69.6 entirely. The elimination of the rule in the MIAA handbook will result in the default to NFHS Rules as published. Specific references: NFHS Rule 1 Sect. 6 is specific to coaches equipment and additional NFHS rules address other areas of 69.6).

Rationale

The MIAA Football Committee voted to remove the rule entirely. Current NFHS football rules cover current technology usage which is used by many states. Further, NFHS football rules are specific to how technology can be used on the sideline and with players during the game. The technological capability of many teams and coaches during the game includes portable tablet technology which can be connected to current video replay equipment. Given that NFHS rules outline permitted coaches field equipment, there has been confusion at times with MIAA football coaches about what is permitted and what is in not permitted. Alignment with current NFHS rules will add clarity for all teams, coaches and players.

Other references found in NFHS Football Rules which support full deletion of 69.6:

- **NFHS Rule 1 Sect. 5 Art. 3 c.2** references Other Illegal Equipment:
  2 – "…electronic audio or non-fixed communication devices used to communicate with a player."
- **NFHS Rule 1 Sect. 5 Art. 3 c.3** references Other Illegal Equipment
  3 – "Any audio (microphone) or video (camera) device worn by a player during the game."
- **NFHS Rule 1 Sect. 6** – Coaches Field Equipment
- **ART. 1 . . .** Electronic communication devices including but not limited to audio recorder, Local Area Network (LAN) phones and/or headsets, mobile phones, still photograph(s), film, analog or digital video(s) and/or Internet depictions, shall not be used to communicate with a player except during an outside 9-yard mark conference (7-yard marks in nine-, eight- and six-player competition).
  NOTE: Each state association may authorize the use of a drum by a team composed of deaf or partially deaf players, in order to establish a rhythmic cadence following the ready-for-play.

- **ART. 2 . . .** Electronic communication devices including but not limited to audio recorders, Local Area Network (LAN) 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 nonplayers.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Football Committee	**16-1-0 Supported**
Game Officials Committee	**11-0-2 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

13. Pages 65-66
Part IV, Rule 71: Gymnastics
By: Kathy Ostberg, MIAA Gymnastics Committee Chair
Stephen Cudworth, MIAA Gymnastics Committee Coaches Rep and Tournament Director

Current Rule:
None

Proposal:
Add a new rule, 71.1.11 –
(Add additional eligible skill for a two-element pass)

A two-element pass in floor exercise can include a superior salto to meet minimum acro requirements.

Rationale:
In current NFHS Gymnastics Rules for 2026-2028 a front handspring with front tuck salto or front pike salto does not fulfill the two-element pass criteria as they are classified as only superior skills under NFHS rules.

The performance of a front handspring front tuck or pike salto is recognized as a superior acro requirement in several other gymnastics organizations and is considered a basic progression to develop more difficult tumbling. The NFHS standards do not allow a superior only element to meet minimum requirements. NFHS rules require an athlete to perform a more difficult acro skill to receive minimum credit for this requirement.

This proposal will benefit the intermediate gymnast and encourage proper skill development.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**8-0-5 Supported**

Gymnastics Committee
Sports Medicine Committee **12-1-1 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee **11-1-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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MIAA BOD

14. Pages 66-68
Part IV, Rule 72: Ice Hockey
By: David Costa, Ice Hockey Official and Assignor

Current Rule:
None
Proposal:
Add a new rule:

MIAA sanctioned varsity games shall have a warmup period of 5-minutes.

Rationale:
Currently the MIAA nor the NFHS rule book provide a guideline in terms of a warm up timeframe. The MIAA provides a guideline for game play, as well as the overtime format. By having a designated warm up protocol, this will allow teams and game officials the opportunity to properly prepare for the game. This also creates consistency as teams travel to other arenas within their conferences, or across the state. In the MIAA tournament, depending on location the warm up period varies.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:
Game Officials Committee **13-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee **0-15-0 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee **13-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee **12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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15. Pages 66-68
Part IV, Rule 72: Ice Hockey
By: MIAA Ice Hockey Committee

Current Rule:

None

Proposal:

Add new rule:

Following a goal, any player who deliberately jumps into or makes forceful contact with the glass, regardless of whether it is in front of opposing team spectators or their own fans, shall be assessed a minor penalty.

This action shall be considered:

- **Unsportsmanlike conduct** when directed toward opposing team spectators, as it constitutes taunting; and
- **A safety violation** when directed toward a player's own spectators, due to the risk of injury or unsafe conditions.

This rule is intended to promote sportsmanship and ensure the safety of players and spectators.

Rationale

Player and spectator behavior involving jumping on, hanging from, or pounding on the glass continues to get worse each year. This presents a clear safety issue and is contributing to property damage, leading some rink managers to become reluctant to host games.

While spectator behavior should be managed by school administration, players and coaches play an important role in setting the tone. Refraining from approaching and jumping on the glass after goals can help reduce these incidents. Assessing a minor penalty is a reasonable first step toward discouraging this behavior and promoting a safer, more sportsmanlike environment in the high school game.

Postgame celebrations present similar concerns; however, the appropriate solution for those situations remains unclear.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**13-0-1 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	

District Athletic Committee – 9
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MIAA BOD

16. Pages 66-68
Part IV, Rule 72: Ice Hockey
By: MIAA Ice Hockey Committee

Current Rule:

72.3 During the regular season and MIAA tournament, the National Federation player limitations will be amended to allow a maximum of 22 players to be dressed and on the bench. During the MIAA tournament, two of these 22 players must be dressed as goaltenders.

Proposal:

During the regular season and MIAA tournament, the National Federation player limitations will be amended to allow a maximum of 22 players to be dressed and on the bench. During the MIAA tournament, **this roster shall include a maximum of 20 skaters (defined as forwards and defensemen)**, while it is **recommended** that teams dress two goaltenders.

Rationale

To address the challenges some ice hockey teams face in dressing two goaltenders during the MIAA tournament, the proposed language changes the requirement to dress two goaltenders from "required" to "recommended." The limit of 20 skaters (forwards and defensemen) would remain unchanged. NFHS rules already provide for situations in which a team has only one dressed goaltender and that player becomes injured. In such circumstances, the team is permitted a reasonable amount of time for another player to dress in goaltender equipment and assume the position.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**11-2-1 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**

Tournament Management Committee
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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17. Pages 66-68
Part IV, Rule 72: Ice Hockey
By: MIAA Ice Hockey Committee

Current Rule:

72.6 Any member of a team who willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the game immediately and shall be ineligible in all sports for one year from the date of the incident. (Butt-ending is to be interpreted under the NF rule and then, under this rule, if warranted).

Proposal:

Eliminate rule entirely.

Rationale

The language regarding willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempting to injure an opponent resulting in a one-year suspension already exists under Rule 49.3.9, Student-Athlete Disqualifications (covering all sports).

The butt-end penalty already exists in the NFHS rules and if the official believes it rises to the level of 'willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously' attempting to injure an opponent, they are covered under rule 49.3.9 to issue a recommended one-year suspension.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

18. Pages 66-68

Part IV, Rule 72: Ice Hockey

By: MIAA Ice Hockey Committee

Current Rule:

72.7 Any penalty after a whistle shall include a misconduct on the penalized player(s).

Proposal:

Eliminate rule entirely.

Rationale

The NFHS ice hockey rules already address all applicable penalties. Automatic misconduct penalties for after-the-whistle infractions are not being enforced. It is an out-of-date rule from many years ago. It should be left to the officials judgment to determine whether an after-the-whistle penalty rises to the level of a misconduct.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Ice Hockey Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	

District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
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District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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19. Page 69
Part IV, Rule 74: Lacrosse
By: Erin Cash, Concord-Carlisle Head Lacrosse Coach

Current Rule:
None

Proposal:
Add new rule:

90 second shot clock for varsity girls lacrosse games.

- Starts when team takes possession of the ball from opposing team.
- Reset to 70 seconds after the ball has either been touched by the goalie or hits the pipes of the net.

Rationale
Stalling is absolutely killing the girls' game. The top teams are far too skilled to play without this restriction. Teams are beginning to stall for 80% of games- it is awful for the sport, awful for the athletes/coaches' experience and not a true reflection of skill in the game. Stalling has become a tactic to dramatically shorten games and there is no viable excuse for not instituting a shot clock. Football has a play clock, basketball has a shot clock- these clocks are all bought, trained and staffed without fuss. This is just refusal to keep up with the athleticism of our female players, and it is detrimental to truly determining who is the best team when one team can just hold the ball for 10minutes in a 12minute quarter and nothing is done about it. NY has already mandated it.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:
Game Officials Committee **0-13-0 Opposed**
Lacrosse Girls Committee **3-7-2 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee **14-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee **0-11-1 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8

District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

20. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

78.1.1 Any red or yellow card issued to a high school player/coach must be reported on the MIAA Soccer Infraction Score Sheet and enter them on the MIAA Soccer Infraction reporting form found on the MIAA Soccer page. (Please see Rule 78.2.17 for infraction reporting requirements).

Proposal:

Eliminate rule entirely.

Rationale:

The rule is redundant as it is covered under Section 78.2 Sportsmanship: Rule: 78.2.16.

> 78.2.16 The home team must complete the infraction score sheet IF any infractions given. The official must review and sign off on the information at the end of the game. The home team should keep this form for the remainder of the year. Each school is then required to enter all VARSITY infractions on-line through the MIAA Soccer Infraction reporting form found on the MIAA Soccer page. A hard copy of any coach/student disqualification form must be sent to the MIAA. (Sub-varsity level score sheets should be filed and maintained at the local level).

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**9-4-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**3-5-4 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

21. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

78.2.6 Any player who receives a red card is ejected from the contest and shall be suspended from further participation for the next contest; if a player receives a second red card within the same season, the player

is suspended from further participation in that contest and the next contest, unless both red cards are for flagrant unsportsmanlike (see rule 78.2.7).

Proposal:

Remove "if a player receives a second red card within the same season, the player is suspended from further participation in that contest and the next contest, unless both red cards are for flagrant unsportsmanlike (see rule 78.2.7)."

Proposed Rule 78.2.6 would read, "Any player who receives a red card is ejected from the contest and shall be suspended from further participation for the next contest."

Rationale:

Current rule is redundant. The first sentence in Rule 78.2.6 assumes that any player receiving a second red card within the same season is suspended from that contest and the next contest. The sentence immediately preceding it says as much.

The next rule, 78.2.7, immediately addresses the exception to Rule 78.2.6 for fighting or flagrant unsportsmanlike behavior.

> **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 in all Fall sports (from the date of the second offense).

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**14-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

22. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

78.2.9 For purposes of obtaining tournament eligibility:

- For purposes of obtaining tournament eligibility, no team may exceed four (4) red or seventeen (17) TOTAL cards during the regular season. For the appeal process, refer to rule 49.5.2.

Proposal:

Eliminate Rule 78.2.9

Rationale:

There are already rules in place that emphasize the need to use cards as a way to manage the contest. Setting a limit on the number of cards a team may receive to remain eligible for the tournament works against other rules that currently exist.

- Per rule 72.2.2, “the referee must caution (issue yellow card) a player/coach who uses incidental vulgar or profane language”. High school student-athletes are still learning how to regulate their emotions, and thus a few minor “incidental” uses of profane language are counted towards a potential tournament disqualification.
- Per rule 78.2.3, “Referees are encouraged to use yellow cards to help manage the contest.” Referees use cautions to control behavior, calm physical play, and prevent escalation. When yellow cards carry postseason consequences or trigger automatic suspensions due to accumulation, their purpose is fundamentally flawed. A toll designed to manage the match in the moment becomes a punishment that may extend into the season or postseason. This places added undue pressure on officials who may be hesitant to issue a yellow card for an obvious offense or infraction out of concern that doing so may affect a team’s tournament eligibility.

Outlier in MIAA Sports: Soccer is currently the only MIAA recognized sport that enforces a limit on infractions or cards leading to team tournament disqualification. This creates an unfair disciplinary double standard compared to other contact sports.

- A player may foul out in basketball without adding to a season-tally.
- A player may exceed 5 minutes of penalties in Girls Lacrosse without adding to a season-tally.
- A player may exceed 10 minutes of penalties resulting in a game misconduct without adding to a season-tally.

Early season cards: Officials often use cards early in the season or early in a match to "set the tone." These cards are frequently educational or preventative rather than punitive, yet they count toward a season-ending disqualification total just the same as a violent foul.

Ineffectiveness and Card Inflation: The disqualification limit has risen steadily over the years (once 13, now 17). Despite these thresholds, no teams have been disqualified in the last two seasons. This "inflation" suggests the rule no longer serves as a functional deterrent. Rather, it makes officials hesitant to issue cards.

Focus on True Sportsmanship: The MIAA can target the specific behavior that actually damages the culture of the game - disrespect toward officials, violent conduct, etc. - while allowing the physical and tactical aspects of soccer to be played without the fear of a post-season ban. Officials can feel as though they can manage the game without affecting the post-season.

Subjectivity: Many cautionable offenses are subjective. Depending on the availability of officials, teams may see the same official(s) multiple times each season. If one official issues yellow cards more liberally than others, that team may approach or exceed the threshold for tournament disqualification quicker than other teams.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**8-4-1 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**0-16-0 Opposed** ***(Amendment- Increase total cards to 20- 16-0-0 Supported)***
Sports Medicine Committee	**0-14-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**10-2-0 Supported**

Tournament Management Committee
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

23. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

78.2.10 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 suspension from the next contest. This penalty carries over to the next soccer season (or next season if senior) if happens in last contest.

Proposal:

Eliminate Rule 78.2.10

Rationale:

There are already rules in place that emphasize the need to use cards as a way to manage the contest. Setting a limit on the number of cards a student may receive to remain eligible for future contests works against other rules that currently exist.

- Per rule 72.2.2, "the referee must caution (issue yellow card) a player/coach who uses incidental vulgar or profane language". High school student-athletes are still learning how to regulate their emotions, and thus a few minor "incidental" uses of profane language are counted towards a potential game suspension.

- Per rule 78.2.3, "Referees are encouraged to use yellow cards to help manage the contest." Referees use cautions to control behavior, calm physical play, and prevent escalation. When yellow cards carry postseason consequences or trigger automatic suspensions due to accumulation, their purpose is fundamentally flawed. A toll designed to manage the match in the moment becomes a punishment that may extend into the season or postseason. This places added undue pressure on officials who may be hesitant to issue a yellow card for an obvious offense or infraction out of concern that doing so may sideline a student-athlete.

No other interscholastic sport treats infractions this way;

- Basketball fouls apply only to the game being played. An athlete may foul out in multiple games without any subsequent game suspension.
- Rule 49.3.5: Field Hockey - A student-athlete who receives a red card due to an upgrade (i.e., green card to a yellow card to a red card - third minor offense) should not be suspended from the next game and the official need not fill out the MIAA Student Disqualification Form.
- Football personal fouls do not accumulate into disqualifications
- Multiple minor penalties in hockey and lacrosse (penalty minutes) do not carry over into the next game.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**10-2-1 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**0-16-0 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**10-2-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

24. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

78.2.13 A deliberate (intentional) handball to prevent a ball from entering the goal is a red card offense. The offender will be suspended from the remainder of that contest and the next regularly scheduled contest.

Proposal:

Revise 78.2.13 to remove: "…and the next regularly scheduled contest."

Proposed Rule 78.2.13: A deliberate (intentional) handball to prevent a ball from entering the goal is a red card offense. The offender will be suspended from the remainder of that contest.

Rationale:

The denial of a goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO) or deliberate use of a handball should not render a player ineligible for the next regularly scheduled match.

Penalties directly related to one game should not carry over to subsequent games. This does not apply to any other sport as a result of a tactical in-game decision (5th personal foul in basketball, 5 minutes of penalties in lacrosse).

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**13-0-0 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**0-14-1 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**0-11-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	

District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

25. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

78.2.17 Game officials will not receive compensation unless they remain present at the conclusion of the soccer contest until the student-athlete handshake is completed.

Proposal:

Revise Rule 78.2.17:

Game officials must remain present until the post-game handshake line concludes. Officials retain full authority to issue yellow or red cards for any misconduct or infractions committed by players or coaches during this time.

Rationale:

Officials should not have their compensation withheld if they determine the environment is too hostile or unsafe to remain present. Furthermore, on-site administrators may forgo the handshake line entirely if they believe it poses a risk of dangerous or unsportsmanlike behavior.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**12-0-1 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**16-0-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**11-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**

Tournament Management Committee
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
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26. Pages 71-74
Part IV, Rule 78: Soccer
By: Bay State Conference

Current Rule:

None

Proposal:

Add new rule:

Any player who receives a second yellow card or a straight red card for infraction codes 1-10, or the denial of a goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO) shall not be ineligible for the subsequent contests.

Subsequently, a player committing a second yellow card or a straight red card for infraction codes 1-10, or the denial of a goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO), resulting in a game disqualification shall not count against the school's disqualification record for Sportsmanship Honor Roll purposes.

Rationale:

In no other MIAA sports, does committing a tactical foul lead to a game suspension, and subsequent removal from the MIAA Sportsmanship Honor Roll.

This rule negatively affects primarily weaker or smaller teams. Teams that may be less talented than others must play within the confines of the game to remain competitive. Committing a tactical hand ball, delaying the restart, encroaching during a set piece, and fouling to prevent a breakaway are all part of the game of soccer. Teams with smaller rosters may have to reinstate a defender that has already been issued a yellow card, risking another yellow card. A new goalkeeper who had been penalized earlier in the game with a yellow card would not be at risk of receiving a second yellow card for delaying the restart if one official counts faster in their head than the goalkeeper.

This is the equivalent to a player, in basketball, committing their fifth foul for a block in the fourth quarter, being ejected from the game, suspended from the next game, and the school missing out on the Sportsmanship Honor Roll.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**9-2-2 Supported**
Soccer Committee	**0-16-0 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**0-11-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

27. Page 74
Part V, Rule 79: Softball
By: Ralph Stefanelli, Official

Current Rule:

79.5 A regulation game shall be declared, if a team is leading by 12 or more runs after 5 complete innings (or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead). The 12-run rule applies in tournament play, prior to sectional semi-final rounds. This rule is also in effect for all games played during the regular season. Individual leagues

are allowed to include a by-law or rule that reduces the number of runs, (less than 12) that places this rule into effect.

Mercy Rule Note: Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run ahead limit while at bat. When the visiting team reaches the limit in the top half of the inning, the home team must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

Proposal:

A regulation game shall be declared, if a team is leading by 12 or more runs after 4 complete innings (or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead), or if a team is leading by 10 runs after 5 complete innings (or 41/2 is home team is ahead). The run ahead rule applies in tournament play, prior to sectional semi-final rounds. This rule is also in effect for all games played during the regular season.

Rationale:

A review of softball scores over the past three seasons (2024- 2026), show an inordinate number of lopsided games, both within conference play and out of conference play. Coaches of winning teams are left trying not to embarrass their opponents, by either bunting or leaving a base early, hoping to create the outs needed to complete a game. While many states have adopted a 3 inning run ahead rule, allowing the student-athlete the opportunity to play at least 4 innings gives them the innings needed to determine a winner in a lopsided game.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**0-13-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**7-3-0 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**11-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

28. Page 74
Part V, Rule 79: Softball
By: Ralph Stefanelli, Official

Current Rule:

None

Proposal:

Add new rule:

No new inning shall start after two (2) hours of playing time has elapsed. This is not a drop-dead time limit. If an inning has started and the two-hour limit is reached, the inning shall be completed with either the visiting team behind and completing their at-bat or the home team behind and completing their at-bat. If the game is tied after the time limit expires, and both teams have batted, normal extra-inning procedures will apply.

This is for regular season play only and will not be used during tournament play.

Rationale:

NFHS rule 4.2.3 allows for a state association to adopt game ending procedures. A review of scores over the past three seasons (2024-2026) has shown an inordinate amount of games that end with one, if not both teams, scoring runs in the high teens or more. The student athletes are playing up to three or more hours to complete a 7-inning game if the run ahead rule has not been reached. Many schools have a middle school waiver in order to field a varsity team, thus potentially diminishing the quality of play in these games, and extending them past a reasonable time to conclude a 7-inning game.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**0-13-0 Opposed**
Softball Committee	**0-10-0 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee	**0-10-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee	**0-12-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee	
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

29. Pages 78-79

Part V, Rule 83: Volleyball

By: Matthew Dibble, MIAA Volleyball Committee Officials Rep

Current Rule:

None

Proposal:

Add new rule:

83.1.6 Line judges will be used for all matches. Leagues can decide if they want adults or players to be line judges.

Rationale:

Line judges are an integral part of the officiating team. If the officials are doing their job correctly then only the R1 is looking at the ball. Line judges are currently used in Western Mass. and in different leagues. Massachusetts used to use line judges. Volleyball has exploded across the country. There are more Club teams in Massachusetts than ever before. Line judges are used at every club tournament in the country from 12 years old to 18 years old. This is part of our culture and is needed as the R1 cannot see everything. Six eyes on the ball are better than two. Leagues can decide if they want adults or players to be line judges. The home team will be responsible to have trained the line judges just like they are to train the libero tracker and scorekeeper.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee **0-12-1 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee **0-9-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee **0-12-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee
Volleyball Committee **6-6-0 Opposed**
MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

30. Pages 78-79
Part V, Rule 83: Volleyball
By: Matthew Dibble, MIAA Volleyball Committee Officials Rep

Current Rule:

83.2 Schedule of Matches

All varsity competitions will be three out of five sets, played to 25 points utilizing rally scoring, and will count toward the season and weekly schedule limit. The fifth varsity set will be played to 15 points.

Junior varsity competitions will be two out of three sets, played to 25 points utilizing rally scoring, with the third set played to 25 points, and will count toward the season and weekly schedule limit. Individual leagues/conferences are allowed to include a by-law or rule that increases the number of total junior varsity sets per match to three, regardless of the outcome of the first two sets.

Proposal:

All varsity competitions will be three out of five sets, played to 25 points utilizing rally scoring, and will count toward the season and weekly schedule limit. The fifth varsity set will be played to 15 points.

Junior varsity competitions will be two out of three sets, played to 25 points utilizing rally scoring, with the third set played to 15 points, and will count toward the season and weekly schedule limit.

Rationale:

Playing the 3rd JV set to 15 is currently what everyone is doing now. The JV and Varsity matches are taking a very long time to complete and making the 3rd set to 15 is consistent with the deciding set in the Varsity match.

The JV match is best 2 out of 3 sets. If one teams wins 2-0 then no third set is needed. No other sport is playing an extra period or extra time if the match/game has been decided. Leagues should not be allowed to extend the JV match to 3 sets if one team wins the first 2.

<u>REVIEWING BODY ACTION:</u>
Game Officials Committee **0-12-1 Opposed**
Sports Medicine Committee **0-10-0 Opposed**
Sportsmanship Committee **0-12-0 Opposed**
Tournament Management Committee

Volleyball Committee **2-10-0 Opposed** ***(Amendment- 3rd JV set played to 15 12-0-0 Supported)***

MSSADA
District Athletic Committee – 1
District Athletic Committee – 2
District Athletic Committee – 3
District Athletic Committee – 4
District Athletic Committee – 5
District Athletic Committee – 6
District Athletic Committee – 7
District Athletic Committee – 8
District Athletic Committee – 9
MIAC
MIAA BOD

31. Pages 80-83
Part V, Rule 84: Wrestling
By: Adilson Galvao, MIAA Wrestling Committee Member & Taunton HS Wrestling Coach

Current Rule:

84.2.1 Member schools shall not schedule or compete on more than 20 days of competition. However, schools are permitted to schedule up to four additional girls' wrestling dates, which will not count toward the 20-day seasonal limit. Six matches are the maximum a student may compete on any given day, exclusive of MIAA sponsored tournaments (see 84.3.3). Ten matches are the maximum a student may compete in two consecutive days.

Proposal:

Permitted schools to schedule up to eight additional girls' wrestling dates, which will not count toward the 20-day seasonal limit.

Rationale:

The continued growth of girls' wrestling across Massachusetts and nationally has created a need for expanded scheduling flexibility to provide equitable participation, competition, and developmental opportunities for female student-athletes.

Currently, Rule 84.2.1 permits schools to schedule up to four additional girls' wrestling dates outside the 20-day seasonal competition limit. Expanding this allowance from four to eight additional girls' wrestling dates would better reflect the rapid growth and current structure of the sport while supporting the MIAA's commitment to increasing opportunities for female athletes.

Since the implementation of the four additional girls' wrestling dates, schools across Massachusetts have quickly utilized those opportunities to expand girls-only dual meets, tournaments, and developmental events. The immediate use of these dates demonstrates the strong demand for additional girls' competitions and shows that schools would similarly take advantage of an increase to eight dates.

In many areas of the Commonwealth, girls' wrestlers still have limited access to girls-only competitions and often compete primarily in co-ed events due to scheduling shortages. Increasing the exempt dates would encourage the continued development of girls-specific events while providing athletes with more opportunities for meaningful competition and skill development. Expanding these opportunities would also support the long-term goal of establishing separate girls' wrestling teams and programs as participation numbers continue to rise and more schools create dedicated girls' wrestling programs.

This proposal would also encourage schools to further invest in girls' wrestling programs through the hiring and development of dedicated girls' wrestling coaches. As girls-only events continue to grow,

schools will have greater incentive to build dedicated girls' programs with stronger leadership, mentorship, and support systems for student-athletes.

Importantly, this proposal does not alter the current student-athlete safety protections already established within Rule 84.2.1, including the limitations of six matches in one day and ten matches across two consecutive days.

This amendment would strengthen girls' wrestling across Massachusetts by improving competitive equity, supporting athlete development, encouraging program growth, and creating additional opportunities in one of the fastest-growing high school sports in the country.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**11-0-1 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**10-0-0 Supported**
Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
Wrestling Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

32. Pages 80-83
Part V, Rule 84: Wrestling
By: Nate Monteiro, MIAA Wrestling Committee Officials Rep

Current Rule: None

Proposal: Add new rule:

If all coaches agree, dual meets at multi-team events may start at 106lbs each time instead of increasing to the next weight class, since this still ensures proper rest periods and prevents unsafe, quick turnarounds.

Rationale:

The purpose of increasing the starting weight for each successive dual in a quad or larger event is to ensure that all wrestlers have the required minimum rest period between matches. For example, if Dual 1 begins at 113 pounds and ends at 106 pounds, the 106-pound wrestler competes last. If Dual 2 again begins at 113 pounds and a coach moves the 106-pound wrestler up to 113 pounds, that wrestler could be required to compete twice within a short period of time and may not receive the required minimum rest. However, if Dual 2 begins at 106 pounds, this issue is eliminated because a wrestler cannot be moved up to compete at 106 pounds.

REVIEWING BODY ACTION:

Game Officials Committee	**11-0-2 Supported**
Sports Medicine Committee	**10-0-0 Supported**

Sportsmanship Committee	**12-0-0 Supported**
Tournament Management Committee	
Wrestling Committee	**15-0-0 Supported**
MSSADA	
District Athletic Committee – 1	
District Athletic Committee – 2	
District Athletic Committee – 3	
District Athletic Committee – 4	
District Athletic Committee – 5	
District Athletic Committee – 6	
District Athletic Committee – 7	
District Athletic Committee – 8	
District Athletic Committee – 9	
MIAC	
MIAA BOD	

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

OFFICIAL RULES CHANGE BALLOT

Date of Vote: _____

Name of Reviewing Body: _____

Rule #	Yes	No	Abstentions
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31.	_____	_____	_____
32.	_____	_____	_____

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:

_____
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_____

3. Rationale:

_____
_____
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_____
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_____

4. Committee vote on amendment:

   Number **Yes:** _____

   Number **No:** _____

   Number abstentions: _____

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