

# 2016 MPA FOOTBALL BULLETIN

(updated 7-25-16)

## FOOTBALL SEASON

August 1-14	Hands-off Period (Sport Season Policy)
August 15	First Practice
August 22	First Scrimmage With Another Team
September 2	First Countable Game (After 3:00pm)
October 29	Last Regular Season Game
October 31	On-line voting begins for Sportsmanship Banner (One week to vote)
November 18	Class B State Championship Game, University of Maine, Orono
November 19	Class A, C, D State Championship Games, Fitzpatrick Stadium, Portland

\*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Concussion in Sport*” video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).

\*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*A Guide to Heat Illness*” video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).

\*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Sudden Cardiac Arrest*” video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).

## MANDATORY CLINICS

There **will not** be any mandatory rules clinics held in football this fall. Coaches may attend the local officials meeting if they would like. Listed below are the rule changes for the coming year:

**1-5-1d(5)a** Completely clear or completely white tooth and mouth protectors are no longer prohibited.

**1-5 NOTE; 1-5-2b** Football gloves are now required to meet either the new SFIA specification or the existing NOCSAE test standard at the time of manufacture.

**2-17; 9-3-6;** Clipping in the free-blocking zone is now illegal.

## SPORT SEASON POLICY

Preseason and regular season limitations for formal football programs are defined by the MPA Sport Season Policy. A formal football program is defined as the high school coaching staff working with prospective football candidates from the secondary or junior high school in that system in a structured, team-oriented program in which football equipment is used.

## **HANDS-OFF PERIOD**

In order to provide a window of personal time similar to the time available prior to the winter and spring sports seasons, summer recess is defined as the time period between the last day of the spring sport season to August 1 or fourteen (14) days prior to the beginning of the fall sport season, whichever occurs later. This does not exclude individual students from attending camps during this two-week period of personal time as long as all other Sport Season Policy requirements are met. Individuals choosing to attend camps during this two-week period may use school protective gear or track and field implements.

Please refer to the questions and answers section of the coaches' handbook to clarify the policy and answer questions you may have.

## **OFF-SEASON TRAINING**

A school's comprehensive off-season conditioning program may include such activities as muscular strength and endurance exercises, cardiovascular fitness activities, agility, speed, power, balance, coordination, and flexibility training. The program must be voluntary, open to all students, and should not include sport-specific skill development or coaching.

## **WEATHER CONDITIONS**

The safety of athletes (*participants*), spectators, coaches/directors, school personnel, and all others present at an athletic contest must be the first and foremost concern to the contest officials and building administrators.

1. When an interscholastic contest has been scheduled and dangerous playing conditions exist or severe weather is anticipated, the following should be considered:
  - a. Prior to beginning an athletic contest, when severe weather is anticipated, the head contest official and the principals of each school, or their designees, will meet to review the suspension and/or postponement procedures. This would include any playing rule book coverage.
  - b. The host school administrator will be responsible for informing contest officials, visiting school administrators and, if applicable, the individual responsible for public address announcements of designated shelter areas.
  - c. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard in the vicinity of a contest conducted outdoors, play should be suspended.
  - d. If any other life-threatening condition occurs, play should be suspended immediately, and predetermined directions to safe locations will be announced.
  
2. When a suspension of a contest occurs, the following should be considered:
  - a. If the suspension is forty-five minutes or greater, resuming at a later date should be considered.
  - b. Play shall not be resumed until **30 minutes** after the last flash of lightning or clap of thunder.
  - c. When it appears that weather conditions are no longer a threat to the safety of participants, spectators, or contest officials, administrators from all schools involved will meet with the head contest official to determine if play will continue.
  - d. If play is to be resumed, contestants will be given at least a fifteen-minute warm-up period prior to competition.
  
3. If evacuation is necessary, the following should be considered:

- a. If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
- b. All personnel, athletes and spectators should be clearly informed of available safe structures or shelters in the event a thunderstorm approaches. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced. The person in authority must be aware of the amount of time it takes to get to each structure and the number of persons each structure can safely hold. For large events, time needed for evacuation is increased and there must be a method (i.e., announcement over loud speaker) for communicating the need for evacuation and directing both athletes and spectators to the appropriate safe shelters.
- c. The most ideal structure is a fully enclosed, substantial building with plumbing, electrical wiring and telephone service, which aids in grounding the structure. A fully enclosed automobile with a hard metal roof and rolled up windows is also a reasonable choice. School buses are an excellent lightning shelter that can be utilized for large groups of people. However, it is important to avoid contact with any metal while inside the vehicle.

Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and do not use showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm as the current from a local lightning strike can enter the building via the plumbing pipelines or electrical connections. It is also considered unsafe to stand near utilities, use corded telephones or headsets during a thunderstorm, due to the danger of electrical current traveling through the telephone line. Cellular and cordless telephones are considered reasonably safe and can be used to summon help during a thunderstorm.

When caught in a thunderstorm without availability or time to reach safe structures, you can minimize the risk of lightning-related injury by following a few basic guidelines:

- Avoid being the highest object. Seek a thick grove of small trees or bushes surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch.
- Avoid contact with anything that would be attractive to lightning. Stay away from freestanding trees, poles, antennas, towers, bleachers, baseball dugouts, metal fences, standing pools of water, and golf carts.
- Crouch down with legs together, the weight on the balls of the feet, arms wrapped around knees, and head down with ears covered.

### **SUSPENDED CONTESTS**

During any varsity contest which may not be resumed due to weather or a catastrophic injury or circumstance, the following will occur: 1) Teams may mutually agree to end the contest and the score stands. 2) The contest must be continued from the point of suspension within three days of the suspended contest.

### **BONA FIDE TEAM RULE**

A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for and actively participates in team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team

are prevented from missing high school practice or competition to compete or practice elsewhere.

\* A single waiver per student athlete per sport season may be granted by the principal on a case-by-case basis for extraordinary circumstances. (e.g. If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a prestigious weekend event then a waiver may be granted. If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a nationally recognized tournament over a school vacation then **that** waiver may be granted for that activity. If a student requests to miss practice every Friday because he/she is receiving specialized coaching from an outside team/coach, then a waiver should not be granted **because it violates the spirit and intent of the rule.**)

\*\* This policy is not intended to restrict dual sport participation in schools that allow dual participation.

\*\*\* Penalty for violation of this policy:

1 <sup>st</sup> Violation	Suspension from play for one game/contest
2 <sup>nd</sup> Violation	Removal from team for remainder of season

(Effective Date: 2011 Fall Sport Season)

### **GAME DISQUALIFICATION / EJECTION RULE**

In all team and individual sports (varsity or sub-varsity), ejection or disqualification from a game, meet, or match for unsportsmanlike behavior of any form, by a coach or a player shall result in the suspension of that player or coach. The coach or player ejected from a contest must sit out all contests, at all levels until the coach or athlete completes the ejection penalty by sitting out the next game at the level from which he/she was ejected. This rule applies to a game, meet, or match suspended before completion as well as a completed contest. This penalty may not be served by sitting out an exhibition, subvarsity, or other competition.

**Any communication concerning a player or coach ejection must be sent from the school administration to the MPA Football Committee. Any direct communication from coaches, parents or administrators with the local officiating board is not acceptable.**

A suspended coach may not be present at the game site. Not being physically present at the site means the disqualified coach is not to be present in the locker room, on the sidelines, in the stands, or site area before, during, or after the game/meet.

Prior to their return to the sideline any coach ejected from a game must complete the NFHS *“Teaching and Modeling Behavior”* video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).

Any coach or player ejected from the last game, meet, or contest of a sports season shall serve a one game suspension in the opening countable game, meet, or contest in the next varsity sport in which he/she participates. The coach/athlete may participate fully in the preseason prior to serving the one game suspension.

This policy will not prevent standing committees from imposing more restrictive disciplinary action. (Effective Date: 1996-97 Winter Sport Season; Revised 2008, 2009)

### **SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD**

The Football Committee is committed to promoting and recognizing outstanding sportsmanship during the regular season and throughout the tournament. Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations among the players, coaches, and officials, and graceful acceptance of results. In order to make the sportsmanship banner selection process meaningful the committee asks that coaches and athletes from all levels of the program be involved in the voting process.

Areas to be considered:

- A. Neat attire by players, coaches, and managers.
- B. Players supporting one another on the field/court/ice and from the bench.
- C. No acts of unnecessary roughness/taunting.
- D. No inappropriate gestures, language, or expressions.
- E. Players using appropriate and positive communication to their coach.
- F. Players and coaches treating officials with respect—no inappropriate gestures, language, or expressions.
- G. Positive community involvement.

Sportsmanship banners will be presented in all classes in both the North and South division.

**Sportsmanship voting will take place for one week at the conclusion of the season (October 31 – November 4) using the on-line sportsmanship voting link provided on the MPA website. Any school that receives an ejection, at any level in the program, shall be ineligible for the award. Schools that do not submit a sportsmanship ballot may not be considered for the award.**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**RULES**

2016 National Federation Football Rules are in effect for all regular season and post-season play.

**NUMBER OF GAMES**

No team may play more than a nine (9) game schedule, exclusive of league play-offs and MPA championship contests.

**PRE-SEASON PRACTICE FORMAT/REGULATIONS**

The following are guidelines for the structure of pre-season practices to address the concerns for an acclimatization and recovery model within the existing sport season time frame. These changes are in response to concerns voiced from both the Maine Principals' Association and the National Federation of State High School Associations. They apply to all levels of football (Varsity, JV, Freshmen, etc.).

### **Day 1-2 (August 15-16, 2016)**

Protective Equipment Used: helmets and cleats only

Contact Level: none

Field Equipment Used: all field equipment excluding heavy bags, sleds, any weighted items

Practice Length: 2¼ hrs (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities). Emphasis during these sessions should be on conditioning.

Recovery Time: 3 hours between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next. During this time, it is strongly advised that no physical activity be permitted (speed, strength, agility, or conditioning). No walk-throughs. Maximum number of practices is two.

### **Day 3-4 (August 17-18, 2016)**

Protective Equipment Used: uppers (helmets, shoulder pads, practice jerseys, cleats)

Contact Level: limited, above the waist

Field Equipment Used: all field equipment

Practice Length: 2½ hrs (with above restrictions)

Recovery Time: same guidelines as above only with the addition of a walk-through of no longer than ½ hour

### **Day 5-6 (August 19-20, 2016)**

Protective Equipment Used: full equipment

Contact Level: full contact

Field Equipment Used: all field equipment

Practice Length: 2¾ hrs (with above restrictions)

Recovery Time: same guidelines as above only the length of the walk-through is extended to 1 hr

- A player will be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half the scheduled practice time.
- When on a two-practice schedule, no practices can be held between 11:30am and 3:00pm to avoid activity during the most intense temperatures of the day.

- No contact or scrimmages between schools can take place during the first six days of the pre-season period.
- Schools may scrimmage beginning on Day 7 (Monday, August 22, 2016).
- For schools following a one-a-day practice schedule, the scheduled practice length is not to exceed three hours. (same recovery guidelines as above)
- Any player who does not begin practice on Day 1 must follow the outlined, individual 6-day acclimatization period beginning on their first day of participation. No player may have full contact prior to Day 5, or participate in a scrimmage or exhibition game until after Day 6 of their individual acclimatization period.
- Schools may participate in a maximum of two interschool contests (scrimmages, exhibition games, 7 on 7 skeletons, etc...) between Day 7 (8/22/16) and Day 12 (8/27/16)
- There should be a minimum of three full recovery days between interschool contests and/or exhibition games. Regular practices with the above guidelines are held during this time. (Monday, Day 7 can play Friday, Day 11 (8/26/16); Tuesday, Day 8 can play Saturday, Day 12 (8/27/16)
- Schools may not have more than 3 full-contact practices per week during the regular season.
- A practice may not have any more than 30 minutes of full-contact.
- It is recommended that athletes not participate in any more than 6 quarters (at any level) of play per week.

### **Definitions:**

A **practice** is defined as the time a participant engages in physical activity. Warm-up, stretching, and cool down activities are to be included as part of practice time. All conditioning and/or weight room activities shall be considered practice.

A **walk-through** is defined as a teaching opportunity with no intense physical activity and without the use of full practice equipment. This time does not include conditioning or weight room activities.

A **recovery period** is defined as the time between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next practice. During this time, it is recommended that no physical activity be permitted.

### **Mandates:**

1. Each player must have had a physical exam in accordance with their school's policy prior to participation in football.

2. Each coach must meet MPA coaches' eligibility in both CPR/AED and first aid as described in the coaches' eligibility section of the MPA handbook.
3. Each coach must complete the NFHS "*Concussion in Sport*" video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).
4. Each coach must complete the NFHS "*A Guide to Heat Illness*" video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).
5. Each coach must complete the NFHS "*Sudden Cardiac Arrest*" video that is available at the NFHS website ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)).

### Guidelines/Recommendations

1. Prior to the season, schools should provide training to coaches and/or trainers in the proper use of charts and equipment that would allow them to measure the heat index to insure what are safe and unsafe conditions to either play or practice.
2. Coaches should encourage and allow their players to hydrate frequently throughout the scheduled practice time.
3. Athletes should be encouraged to remove their helmets frequently during extreme temperature situations.

Each locker room should have a working, accurate set of scales to weigh players prior to and at the end of each practice session to determine the percentage of weight loss due to dehydration. The pre and post practice weight of each player should be recorded. This will help to determine players who should be watched, players whose practices must be modified, or players who should be held out of practice until their weight is back to an acceptable level through proper hydration replacement procedures. A weight loss of 3% or less is considered safe. A loss of over 3% puts a player in the danger zone.

### **NEW VARSITY PROGRAMS**

New varsity teams must maintain/participate in a subvarsity/developmental program (with a minimum of 6 games) for a minimum of two consecutive seasons prior to entering varsity competitions. If a league wishes to admit a school earlier due to an odd number of teams, it may apply to the football committee.

### **ADJUSTED TIMING RULE**

If the score differential is 35 points or more in the second half of any game, at any level, the clock goes to running time. The clock will stop for only the following:

- Charged time outs
- Injuries
- Penalties
- Scores



If the clock is stopped for any of the above, the clock will start on the ready-for-play or when a free kick is touched (other than first touching by K). If the point differential falls below 35 points, timing will revert to standard timing rules.

The point differential applies to all football contests and levels played in the State of Maine.

### **FOOTBALLS – REGULAR SEASON**

During the regular season schools must use footballs that meet NFHS guidelines. All game balls must be examined and approved prior to the contest by game officials. The balls will be marked by the officials for game use.

### **TOURNAMENT SITE/HOST PLAYOFF SITE POLICY**

In the event that a site conflict occurs with a school hosting an MPA regional or state championship game and a home regular season or playoff game then the game will be rescheduled, at the request of the host school, to the day prior to the championship game.

### **TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION / PLAYOFF INFORMATION**

1. Currently each league may determine their playoff format. 6 teams will qualify for the Class A South playoffs, 6 teams will qualify for the Class A North playoffs, 8 teams will qualify for the Class B south playoffs, 6 teams will qualify for the Class B North playoffs, 8 teams will qualify for the Class C south playoffs, 6 teams will qualify for the Class C North playoffs, 6 teams will qualify for the Class D South playoffs and 4 teams will qualify for the Class D North playoffs.
2. Regional championship and runner-up plaques will be awarded at the North and South Regional Championship contests (leagues are asked to present league trophies at post-season banquets).
3. Teams may choose to play in a region other than where they are placed by the Classification Committee; however, when the playoffs occur those teams must play under the rules of the leagues where they have been assigned.
4. All divisions will use the Crabtree System in determining Crabtree ranking.

#### **CRABTREE FORMULA**

Your winning %	_____
<b>+</b>	
Opponents' winning %	_____
<b>X 100</b>	
<b>=</b> Crab Tree Index	_____

If the Crabtree Point System does not determine play-off positions or causes a tie, as applied within the schedule, the following tiebreakers will be used by leagues:

1. Head to head competition (if appropriate)
2. Head points
3. Division record within the conference
4. Overall record
5. Coin toss

In the case of a three-way tie the odd coin will determine the lower seed, or the team that will be eliminated, unless there are three teams tied for the final two playoff spots. In that case the odd coin will determine the higher seed and the tie breaking procedure will be repeated for the two remaining teams.

5. Tiebreakers will be determined by the criteria listed above.
6. Financial income from the regional championships will remain with the host schools/leagues as appropriate.
7. The submission of the Schedule Form, which is due August 3, 2016, will constitute a school's application for the regional tournament.

### **STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

Teams competing for championships in all four classes will be determined by league playoffs. All playoff game proposals must be approved by the Football Committee.

### **ELIGIBILITY/TEAM SIZE**

A team may bring its entire squad to the championship game. School principals are required to verify that all players participating in the championship games are eligible according to the rules of the MPA.

### **BANDS**

Bands for participating schools will be admitted to the championship game. On-field performances are limited to six (6) minutes per team at the discretion of the site director. Band members must be in uniform; only band members and the director will be admitted. The band of the home team will play the National Anthem. The home team has the option of having an individual sing the National Anthem.

### **VALUABLES**

Each team is responsible for personal belongings such as money, watches, rings, etc.

### **SIDELINE PASSES**

All eligible coaches and certified athletic trainers will be issued sideline passes. Additional sideline passes will be issued for other team personnel (medical, statistician, etc.). **All individuals on the game field (inside the fence) must have a role with the team and must be at least high school age.** Anyone with a sideline pass must remain within the team box.

## **LOCKER ROOMS**

Locker rooms will be inspected prior to each contest and teams are responsible for any damage which may be observed following the game.

## **CHEERLEADERS**

Varsity cheerleaders of the participating schools will be admitted to the championship game. Cheerleaders are to be accompanied by their advisor, who will be responsible for their conduct.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

No one without a sideline pass will be allowed inside the fenced game area. All spectators must be fully clothed at all times and spectators may not run the sidelines with flags, etc. Taunting in any form will not be allowed.

## **NOISEMAKERS, PLACARDS, AND SIGNS**

- Bare-chested individuals are not allowed.
- Noisemakers that in any way interfere with the play of the game are not permitted.
- Placards, signs, pennants and shakers on sticks that restrict the view of other spectators are prohibited. Signs or banners may be hung, provided they are not obscene, inappropriate and do not contain profane language.
- Any person throwing objects on the field will be removed immediately from the site.
- Security will be instructed to detain any student perceived to be under the influence of an illegal substance. They will then contact parents.
- Mascots or other individuals are not allowed on the field.

Noisemakers that in any way interfere with the play of the game are not permitted. Placards, signs, pennants, and shakers on sticks that restrict the view of other spectators are prohibited. Signs or banners may be hung, provided they are not obscene, inappropriate, and do not contain profane language.

## **PLAY-OFF TEAMS/PROGRAMS**

Schools qualifying for league play-offs must email the Team Information form by October 21 and must email the photos of the team and of the cheering squad to Tammy McNear ([tmcnear@mpa.cc](mailto:tmcnear@mpa.cc)) in one of the following formats: .jpg, tiff, or .pdf (300 dpi) by Wednesday, November 2.

## **FOOTBALLS – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

For the 2016 State Championship games the Wilson GST ball will be used as the official ball of the state championship football games. Balls to be used in the championship game will be provided to those teams playing in the state championship game on the Monday prior to the contest for use during the week. The balls must be returned 1 ½ hour prior to the championship game. Schools are asked to supply two ball people for their championship game.

## **2016 HOME TEAMS**

Class A - South      Class B – North      Class C – North  
Class D - South

## **MEDICAL SERVICES**

Athletic trainers will be provided if a team does not supply their own. Teams may wish to bring their team physician.

### **OFFICIALS SELECTION PROCESS**

There will be seven (7) field officials (no alternate). The official's liaison will assign one clock operator (head timer), one assistant timer, two-chain crew, a clip person, and one downs marker. Each board may submit 12 officials or 25% of the board and each coach is asked to submit twelve (12) officials on the form provided. The officials will be selected from the coaches' pool and by the one provided by the local board. Selected officials must have the local board's recommendation. Specific official positions in each class will rotate among the boards. Officials who work two consecutive years must sit out the next year. The designation of positions will be completed by the local boards after the pool is approved by the Chairperson of the Football Committee, Officials' Liaison, and Assistant Executive Director. The local boards may fill in the position with officials based on coaches' and board votes. The officials' names will be available at the pre-game meeting, with input from the official's liaison.

### **GAME SITES 2016**

Class A, C, and D – Fitzpatrick Stadium, Portland and Class B – University of Maine, Orono. All classes are prohibited from practicing on a championship site one week prior to the contest, unless special circumstances exist. **Game times will be assigned to each class following the regional championship contests.**

## FOOTBALL CLASSIFICATION

<b>CLASS A 845+</b>	<b>CLASS B 586-844</b>	<b>CLASS C 460-585</b>	<b>CLASS D 0-459</b>
<u>NORTH</u>	<u>NORTH</u>	<u>NORTH</u>	<u>NORTH</u>
1. Lewiston (1318) 2. Oxford Hills/ Buckfield (1235) 3. Bangor (1169) 4. Windham (1005) 5. Edward Little (977) 6. Portland (868) 7. *Cheverus (465)	1. Brunswick (821) 2. Messalonskee (784) 3. Skowhegan (775) 4. Mt. Blue (696) 5. Brewer (693) 6. Cony (693) 7. Hampden (691) 8. Lawrence (674) 9. Nokomis (661) 10. Gardiner (594)	1. Waterville (583) 2. Oceanside (571) 3. Belfast (530) 4. Mt. Desert Island (519) 5. Hermon (498) 6. Old Town (476) 7. Madison/Carrabec (471) 8. John Bapst (470) 9. Foxcroft (464) 10. Winslow (464)	1. ^Ellsworth/Sumner (707) 2. Mt. View (448) 3. Maine Central (436) 4. Washington Acad. (374) 5. Mattanawcook (348) 6. Orono (346) 7. Houlton (332) 8. Dexter (313) 9. Bucksport (305) 10. Stearns (181)
<u>SOUTH</u>	<u>SOUTH</u>	<u>SOUTH</u>	<u>SOUTH</u>
1. Thornton (1422) 2. Bonny Eagle (1134) 3. Sanford (1047) 4. Scarborough (1034) 5. Massabesic (1019) 6. Deering (927) 7. So. Portland (846)	1. Noble (842) 2. Gorham (838) 3. Mt. Ararat (804) 4. Biddeford (775) 5. Marshwood (739) 6. Westbrook (722) 7. Falmouth (710) 8. Kennebunk (673) 9. Greely (664) 10. York (625) 11. Leavitt (613) 12. Morse (586)	1. Fryeburg (559) 2. Cape Elizabeth (555) 3. Lake Region (524) 4. Gray-NG (495) 5. Spruce Mountain (465) 6. Freeport (511) 7. Poland (502) 8. Yarmouth (496) 9. *Wells (449) 10. *Mt. Valley (418)	1. ^Medomak Valley (546) 2. Winthrop/Monmouth (441) 3. Oak Hill (433) 4. Maranacook (421) 5. Lisbon (384) 6. Dirigo (314) 7. Traip (263) 8. Old Orchard Beach (225)

^ Applied to lower classification (ineligible for playoffs)

\* Applied to higher classification