

2025-26



Basketball Coaches Manual

Last edit 8/23/25

The Ohio High School Athletic Association Mission Statement
To serve our member schools and enrich interscholastic opportunities for students.

Table of Contents

Message from the OHSAA	3
Important Basketball dates	4
Rules Interpretation Meeting information	5
Basketball resources	6
Ohio Basketball Coaches Association	7
Tournament information	10
Athletic Districts/Regional Representation	11
Team seeding - MaxPrep	12
Pre-season Parent Meeting	13
Coaching Certification Requirements	14
Military Appreciation Night	15
NFHS Rule Changes and NFHS Comments	16
NFHS Points of Emphasis -	20
State Adoptions	23
Game ball and uniform information	24
Uniform comments / Special events	27
Running Clock and Court Diagrams	28
OHSAA General Sport Regulations	29
Out of season coaching/Individual instruction/Fitness programs/ Open gyms/Ejection protocols/Participants leaving the playing area	
Basketball specific regulations	37
Games-Quarters limits/Exceeding quarter limits/Sub-Varsity 2-quarter games/Non-interscholastic competition/video taping/ Scrimmages/Interrupted games/Freshman squads/Middle school squads/Protests/Officials jurisdictions	42
Rating and Voting for Officials -	48
NFHS Coach's Code of Conduct	49
NFHS Sportsmanship	50
OHSAA Sportsmanship Resources	53
Comments to the Media	53
Concussion Management/Cardiac Arrest	54
Return to Play Form	61
Public Address Announcement	63

Coach

THANK YOU! While we have always known the value of our coaches, and how much they impact our student-athletes, it has NEVER been truer than now. There is so much uncertainty in the world, and everyone (kids and adults alike) is looking for something stable. For many of our kids, even if their sporting events are in question, their relationship with their coach is ALWAYS felt. We appreciate the time and effort you have given and will continue to give and ask that you remain flexible and positive as we move into this winter together.

It is important that we work **together** to ensure this information is in the hands of ALL coaches – not just head coaches. In essence, this guide is a detailed written version of the online meeting that all head coaches are required to take.

And, speaking of ‘online meetings’, these rules meetings remain **mandatory** for Varsity Head Coaches and are offered **online**. Directions and availability are detailed on page 5 of this manual. We hope you’ll encourage your assistant and junior high coaches to view this also. The purpose of the “Rules Interpretation Meetings” is to give EVERYONE a thorough understanding of the interpretations of OHSAA Regulations as well as the changes and “points of emphasis” to the National playing rules written by the NFHS.

Rules governing OHSAA basketball stem from the National Federation (NFHS) *and* the OHSAA. NFHS Rules govern all playing rules while OHSAA Sport Regulations govern specific rules to Ohio as well as the various administrative regulations and interpretations. Our elected Board of Directors approves these regulations annually and serve as the basis for ALL schools playing by the same rules.

Practices for the 2025-26 season starts on October 24, 2025 (Girls) and October 31, 2025 (Boys) and concludes with the state basketball tournaments on March 12-14, 2026, for girls and March 19-22, 2026, for boys.

Communication is key in the successful administration of any of our sports. To assist in the administration of basketball, I have selected four individuals to serve as Regional Coordinators:

Kevin Calver, Northwest	kcalver@ohsaa.org
Jim Hayes, Central/Southeast	jhayes@ohsaa.org
Scott Kaufman, Southwest	skaufman@ohsaa.org
Don Spinell, East/Northeast	dspinell@ohsaa.org

I encourage you to ask questions or seek assistance by *first* going through your Athletic Administrator. We encourage YOUR communication with them to help us operate as efficiently as possible. My team will try to keep you informed of changes and current information with ‘Coach Memos’ that are emailed and posted on the basketball pages. Nearly all information can be found on the “Basketball” web pages (boys or girls). **Please** take the time to review the materials provided here, and I encourage coaches to ‘check the website’ periodically.

This is wishing each of you a successful basketball season. I commend you for your time and effort working with the student-athletes in Ohio.

Doug Ute

Doug Ute
OHSAA Executive Director
Basketball Sports Administrator

8/23/25

Important Basketball Dates

GIRLS BASKETBALL

First day for online rules meeting	Thursday, October 9, 2025– 9:00 AM
First day of coaching	Friday, October 24, 2025
Regular Season contest begins	Friday, November 21, 2025
Last date to enter/withdraw	DIII-VIII: Monday, February 2, 2026, 12:00 noon
	DI-II: Monday, February 9, 2026, 12:00 noon
Tournament Draw	DIII-VII: Sunday, February 8, 2026 – 2:00 PM
	DI - II: Sunday, February 15, 2026 – 3:00 PM
Sectional Tournament (D III-D VII)	February 16-21, 2026
District Tournament	February 23-28, 2026
Regional Tournament	March 2-8, 2026
State Tournament Championship	March 12-14, 2026
Season ends	March 14, 2026
No contact periods (two periods) for	1. First day after the last interscholastic contest and continuing 28 Days. 2. August 1 -23, 2026

BOYS BASKETBALL

First day for online rules meeting	Thursday, October 9, 2025 – 9:00 AM
First day of coaching	Friday, October 31, 2025
Regular Season contest begins	Wednesday, November 26, 2025
Last date to enter/withdraw	DIII-VII: Monday, February 9, 2026, 12:00 noon
	DI-II: Monday, February 16, 2026, 12:00 noon
Tournament Draw	DIII-VII: Sunday, February 15, 2026 – 2:00 PM
	DI -II: – Sunday, February 22, 2026 – 2:00 PM
Sectional Tournament (D III-DVII)	February 23-28, 2026
District Tournament	March 2-7, 2026
Regional Tournament	March 9-15, 2026
State Tournament	March 19-22, 2026
Season ends	March 22, 2026
No contact periods (two periods) for	1. First day after the last interscholastic contest and continuing 28 Days. 2. August 1 -23, 2026

Rules Interpretation Meeting Information

Rules affecting basketball coaches/team are classified as being “Administrative Rules” or “Playing Rules”. It is more efficient to deliver specific Administrative Rule changes/highlights to coaches and officials separately through an **online delivery of the Mandatory State Rules Meetings**. A significant amount of the meeting will be spent detailing specific General Sports Regulations affecting basketball. Completion of the Rules Meeting remains mandatory for 2025-26. The Rules Meeting for Coaches is geared exclusively FOR coaches.

The ONLINE Rules Meeting link will be live on **Thursday, October 10, 2025 at 9 a.m.**

The last day for completion of the online version is November 21, 2025 at 11:59 pm . Beginning November 22 there will be a \$50.00 late fee charged for access to the online version. The final deadline, with penalty, is Monday, January 19, 2026, at 11:59 pm. AFTER JANUARY 19 at 11:59 pm, THE BASKETBALL RULES MEETING WILL NO LONGER BE AVAILABLE. *Should you not take the Basketball Rules Meeting by this date, you will be removed from the tournament.*

OHSAA Basketball Sports Regulations will be covered as well as General Regulations and Bylaws as they pertain to coaches and players. Though the main purpose is to provide knowledge and advice on the various OHSAA regulations, this is the education mechanism to ensure compliance with the various rules and regulations. Considering the many infractions that occur throughout the year, the information provided in these meetings is designed to reduce and prevent these infractions.

Instructions for Completing the Rules Meeting Online

Instructions for Coaches

- The coach must log into **Final Forms**
- On the landing page, the coach will see the sports to which they have been assigned
- The coach will click on the “Form” icon on the left side of any sport highlighted in **red** to access the rules meeting for that sport
- The coach will click the play button on the video and watch the entire video
- The coach must enter their name at the bottom and click submit, certifying that they have watched the entire video and that they understand and will be held to the rules and interpretations explained in the video
- Once submitted, the sport will turn **green** as an indication that credit has been provided to the school for that sport’s rules meeting

Instructions for Administrators – Checking for Credit

- The administrator must log into **Final Forms**
- The administrator will click the “Manage” drop down and select “Sports”
- On the landing page, the administrator will see all sports sponsored by the school
- The administrator can utilize the filters in the upper left corner to sort out which sports have and have not received credit by season
- Any sport highlighted in **green** has received credit for the state rules meeting
- Any sport highlighted in **red** has not received credit for the state rules meeting
 - o Coaches or administrators should follow the instructions above to complete the meeting requirement
- Any sport with no highlight color does not require a rules meeting or the rules meeting has not yet been made available

OHSAA Basketball Resources

Doug Ute, *Basketball Sport Administrator*: dute@ohsaa.org

John Kronour, Ph.D, *Director of Sports Management*:
jkronour@ohsaa.org

Beau Rugg, *Director of Officiating*: brugg@ohsaa.org

Dennis Morris, *Director of Officiating Development*:
dmorris005@woh.rr.com

Kevin Calver, *Regional Coordinator – NW*: kcalver@ohsaa.org

Jim Hayes, *Regional Coordinator – C/SE* – jhayes@ohsaa.org

Scott Kaufman, *Regional Coordinator – SW*: skaufman@ohsaa.org

Don Spinell, *Regional Coordinator – E/NE*: dspinell@ohsaa.org

OHSAA Basketball Webpage (Girls'):

<https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/girlsbasketball>

OHSAA Basketball Webpage (Boys'):

<https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/boysbasketball>

NFHS (Rules, Court Diagrams, etc.): <http://www.nfhs.org>

Ohio High School Basketball Coaches' Association:

<https://oh.nhsbca.org>

OHSAA Handbook:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/SchoolResources/Handbook.pdf>

The Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association

The Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association is voluntary, non-profit organization that was formed in 1947 by basketball coaches in Ohio. Today, the OHSBCA is one of the largest coaches' associations in the country with more than 4,000+ members. The OHSBCA is organized into 16 separate districts and are governed by officers. The objectives of this body include:

- To promote a harmonious relationship between principals and coaches in their respective schools concerning the administration of the game of basketball.
- To promote pure, wholesome, amateur interscholastic basketball in the schools of Ohio.
- To help maintain the highest possible standards in interscholastic basketball and the basketball coaching profession, and to work together for the improvement of conditions in Ohio High School Basketball.
- To secure a better understanding of the problems of high school basketball coaches and to place at the disposal of coaches, sources of information.
- To have a representative group of coaches to which may be referred basketball problems of general interest in the hope of creating better relationships between high schools and a sympathetic understanding of all basketball problems.

Joining the OHSBCA

1. The Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association holds a membership drive each September, the membership drive lasts until December 31 of that year. No memberships will be accepted between January 1 and August 31.
2. Annual membership fees are only \$25.00.
3. Memberships are active one current season

The Value of Joining the OHSBCA

1. The OHSBCA maintains a strong Mentoring Program in each District.
2. Mentors are there to help with designing practice plans to helping interpret the rules of the game. They maintain a strong interest in the importance of high school basketball and insuring strong coaches from generation to generation. Mentoring lists are available from the website
http://www.ohiobkcoaches.com/Information/Mentoring_List.htm.
3. The OHSBCA maintains a listing of state records and assists with the publication of these records.
4. The OHSBCA promotes the student-athlete in basketball through various programs that include:
 - Academic All-Ohio Teams
 - All-State and All-District Teams including 'Coaches of the Year'
 - Coaches Awards (100 game winners, 200 game winners, The Paul Walker Award, The Bob Arnzen Award
 - Scholarship Programs providing \$15,000.00 to members sons/daughters
5. OHSBCA has partnered with LUCEO SPORTS and the PLAYBOOK ANIMATION iOS app in order to provide every member access. This app enables a coach the option of drawing, storing and viewing plays from any electronic device (iphone, ipad, laptop, tablet, etc).

8/23/25

OHSBCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

As of 7/1/25

Elections will be held in October for VP and Secretary

Role	Name	School	Email Address
Executive Director/Awards Director	Joe Balogh	Retired	joe.balogh@ohiobkcoaches.com
President/Midwest Live Boys Director/Girls Coach of the Year Director	Doug Graham	South Point	dgraham@southpoint.k12.oh.us
Vice-President	John Feasel	Olentangy	john_feasel@olsd.us
Past President/Boys Coach of the Year Director	David Sheldon	Colonel Crawford	sheldon.david@cck12.org
Treasurer/Web Master/Newsletter	Pat Carroll	Lake	hoopmaster@ohiobkcoaches.com
Secretary/Boys Assistant Coach of the Year Director/Paul Walker Award Director	Bob Von Kaenel	Dover	vonkaenelr@dovetornadoes.com
District 1 Director	Jeff Brink	Springfield	brinkj@hudson.k12.oh.us
District 2 Director	Sean O'Toole	Gilmour Academy	otooles@gilmour.org
District 3 Director	Brett Larrick	Elyria	larrickbrett@elyriaschools.org
District 4 Director	Josh Hose	Massillon	jhose@massillonschools.org
District 5 Director	Joe Dunlevy	Indian Creek	joseph.dunlevy@iclsd.org
District 6 Director	Joe Bedingfield	Willard	joebedingfield@willardcityschools.org
District 7 Director	Dave Boyce	Perrysburg	dboyce@perrysburgschools.net
District 8 Director	Aaron Elwer	Delphos St. Johns	aelwer@delphosstjohns.org
District 9 Director	Carla Siegel	Fort Loramie	Carla.siegel@loramie.k12.oh.us
District 10 Director	Michael Bates	Africentric	Mbates06@yahoo.com
District 11 Director	Chris Powell	Granville	powell.425@gmail.com
District 12 Director	Chris Crane	Caldwell	ccrane@caldwell.k12.oh.us
District 13 Director	Travis Wise	South Point	twise@southpoint.k12.oh.us
District 14 Director	Josh Arey	Peebles	josh.arey@ovsd.us
District 15 Director/Girls North-South All-Star Game Director	Adam Priefer	Centerville	adam.priefer@centerville.k12.oh.us
District 16	Ricardo Hill	Indian Hill	coachricardohill@yahoo.com
District 1 & 4 Girls Director/Girls Player of the Year Director	Mike Miller	Triway	coachmiller234@gmail.com
District 2 & 3 Girls Director/Top 20 Director	Andrew Booth	Wadsworth	abooth@wadsworthschools.org
District 5 & 12 Girls Director	Troy McClellan	Strasburg	troy.mcclellan@strasburgtigers.org
District 6 & 7 Girls Director/Midwest Live Girls Director	Natalie Lantz	Shelby	natalie.lantz@gmail.com
District 8 & 9 Girls Director/Girls Assistant Coach of the Year Director	Greg Rickard	Crestview	gprickard24@gmail.com
District 10 & 11 Girls Director	Dave Butcher	Reynoldsburg	butcherdave06@gmail.com

8/23/25

District 13 & 14 Girls Director	Jon Buchanan	Fairland	jonathan.buchanan@fairland.k12.oh.us
District 15 & 16 Girls Director	Beth Simmons	Summit Country Day	simmons_b@summitcds.org
OHSBCA Gold/Silver Awards Director	Blake Balogh	Worthington Kilbourne	bbalogh@wscloud.org
Hall of Fame Director	Paul Wayne	Retired	wayne14@embarqmail.com
NHSBCA Rep	Tom Barrick	Retired	Tom.barrick@ohiobkcoaches.com
OHSBCA Advisor	Larry Wilson	Retired	wilson120@cox.net
Public Relations Director/Clinic Director/Academic Director/Podcast	Adam Hall	Canton South	ohsbcpublicrelations@gmail.com
Boys North-South All-Star Game Director/Boys Player of the Year Director	Greg Nossaman	Olentangy Liberty	greg_nossaman@olsd.us
Midwest Live Boys/Girls Assistant Director	Joe Bogdan	Canton McKinley	joe.bogdan.44@gmail.com
OHSBCA Scholarship Director	Scott McVeigh	Retired	smcveigh@perkinsschools.org
Podcast	Walt Cerrato	Canton South	wc32124@gmail.com

Looking Ahead to Tournament Time

OHSAA tournament divisions are determined by processes set forth in OHSAA General Sports Regulation 16. Changes to tournament division enrollment cutoffs after Board of Directors approval may occur if there was an error during this process that would apply to all schools. Therefore, changes to an individual school’s data and/or tournament participation will NOT modify the approved tournament divisions. More information can be found at: <https://www.ohsaa.org/School-Resources/Divisional-Breakdowns-2025-26-School> year.

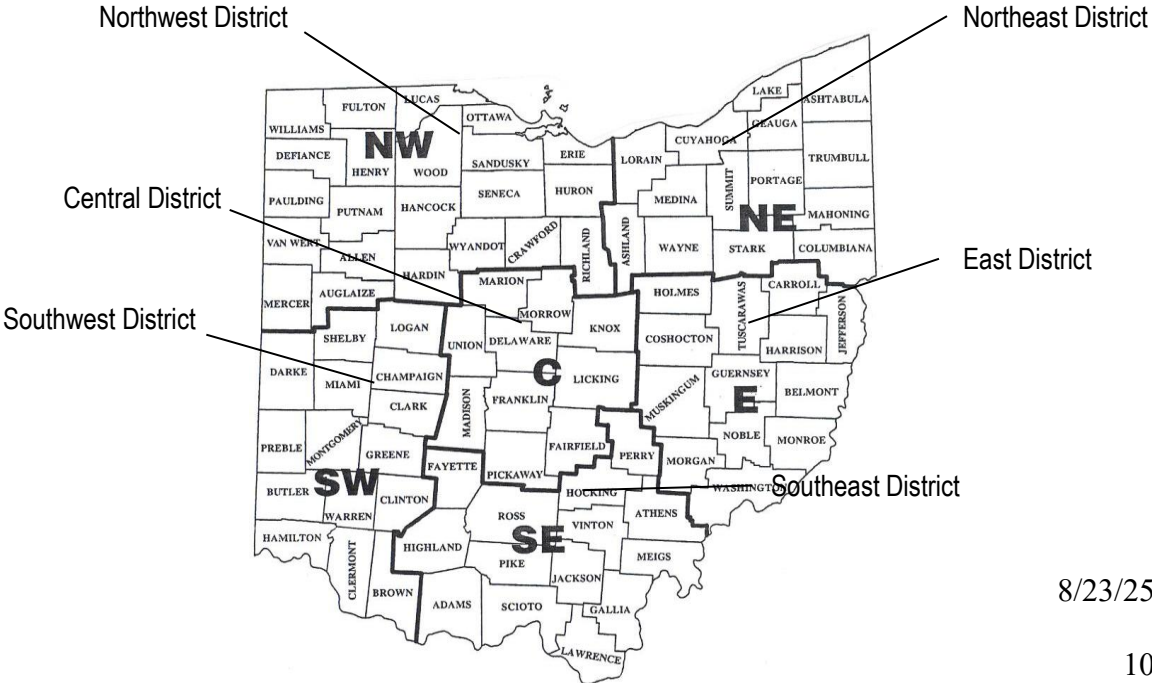
Basketball will have seven divisions for the 2025-26 season. The division breakdowns are as follows:

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>	<u>Schools</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Enrolled</u>	<u>Schools</u>
I	625 and more	66	I	577 and more	65
II	431- 624	72	II	407-576	71
III	269-430	130	III	262-406	127
IV	196-268	129	IV	189-261	128
V	144-195	131	V	132-188	127
VI	100-143	130	VI	91-131	125
VII	99 and less	132	VII	90 and less	126
		790			769

Athletic Districts

Representation to the Regional tournament (the number of Regional ‘qualifiers’) from District winners is determined by a formula based upon the number of teams participating in the previous year’s tournament.

The complete tournament regulations that will be adopted by the Board of Directors at its’ October meeting will be able to be read in their entirety by logging on to www.ohsaa.org and navigating to the boys’ or girls’ basketball site under the “Sports and Tournaments” pull down menu. With a few exceptions, most schools in the counties listed below are assigned sites from the respective District Athletic Boards. You are encouraged to visit their websites for additional information.



Regional Tournament Representations

Tournament representations in basketball are based on the number of teams that participated in the tournament the previous year. Once the formula is applied, if a district does not have enough teams to earn a Regional Qualifier, the teams in that district are assigned to compete in another district.

Boys	D-I	D-II	D-III	D-IV	D-V	D-VI	D-VI
C	6	4	2	2	2	1	1
E				2	2	1	1
NE	4	7	6	4	4	4	3
NW		2	2	3	2	5	6
SE			2	2	2	2	2
SW	6	3	4	3	4	3	3
	16	16	16	16	16	16	16

Girls	D-I	D-II	D-III	D-IV	D-V	D-VI	D-VI
C	6	3	2	2	2	1	2
E				2	2	1	1
NE	5	8	6	5	4	4	3
NW		1	3	2	2	6	5
SE			1	1	3	2	2
SW	5	4	4	4	3	2	3
	16	16	16	16	16	16	16

Tournament Draw Dates

The draw date for tournaments is established by the Board of Directors. The approved dates for the 2025 Tournament are:

Girls' Tournament Draw: DIII-DVII - February 8, 2026 – 2:00 PM
DI & DII – February 15, 2026 – 3:00 PM

Boys' Tournament Draw: DIII-DVII - February 15, 2026 -2:00 PM
DI & DII – February 22, 2026 – 2:00 PM

State Tournament Dates

Girls' State Championships **March 12-14, 2026** Wittenberg University, Wright State University
University of Dayton Arena

Boys' State Championships **March 19-22, 2026** Wittenberg University, Wright State University
University of Dayton Arena

MAXPREP AND TEAM SEEDING

The OHSAA BOD has approved, on the recommendation of the OHSBCA, the use of MaxPrep to prepare the OHSAA RPI rankings as the seeding tool. This will replace the coach's vote. The formula used for calculating the OHSAA RPI rankings has been established by the OHSBCA. Concerns about the process should be shared with your district OHSBCA representative. (Note – the Coaches association is meeting in October, 2025 to review the formula.)

COACHES MUST ENTER THEIR SCORES THROUGH THEIR MAXPREP TEAM ADMINISTRATOR ACCOUNT. Note - If you receive a message that the score is pending approval, you have entered the score through the Fan App. **Appeals for late scores entered through a MaxPrep Fan account will not be considered.**

The deadline for entering girls scores:

DIII – DVII – Friday, February 6, 2026, 11:59 PM. Final OHSAA RPI rankings will be available on Saturday, February 7, 2026.

DI & DII – Friday, February 13, 11:59 PM. Final OHSAA RPI will be available on Saturday, February 14, 2026.

The deadline for entering boys scores:

DIII – DVII - Friday, February 13, 11:59 PM. Final OHSAA RPI will be available on Saturday, February 14, 2026.

DI & DII - Friday, February 20, 11:59 PM. Final OHSAA RPI will be available on Saturday, February 21, 2026.

COACHES MUST ENTER THEIR SCORES THROUGH THEIR MAXPREP TEAM ADMINISTRATOR ACCOUNT. **Appeals for late scores entered through a MaxPrep Fan account will not be considered.**



Pre-Season Parent Meetings

Pre-Season meetings are required before every sport season, specifically this year many of these may be done in an online format. Most of these occur in conjunction with other winter sports and it is a great time to inform parents of expectations before the season begins. The OHSAA provides several materials to be used at these meetings, one of which is a PowerPoint presentation. Additionally, there are more resource materials on our website under School Resources: <https://www.ohsaa.org/School-Resources>. We also have encouraged coaches to invite local officials to meet with their team during pre-season workouts, early practices or at your pre-season meeting. It allows the officials to meet the athletes and discuss new rules. Again, it provides a forum for healthy discussions and an opportunity for parents to learn more about the game.

Coach Certification & Education Requirements

Pupil Activity Permit

Per Ohio Administrative Code, any high school or middle school coach (volunteer or paid) must have a valid Pupil Activity Permit (PAP) issued by the State Department of Education (SDE).

Athletic Administrators are responsible for maintaining records of compliance for each of the following courses throughout the term of a coaches' PAP:

1. Completed background checks
2. Completed course from an approved First Aid for Coaches provider
3. Completed course from an approved Concussion provider
4. Completed course from an approved Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training provider, including Lindsay's Law
5. Completed course from an approved Coaching Fundamentals provider
6. Completed training course in CPR from a course approved by your school or District
7. Completed mental health course from an approved provider



The OHSAA has partnered with Coaches' Tool Chest (www.coachestoolchest.com) as a single source, online provider for each of the courses needed to obtain or renew a PAP. CTC helps ensure coaches are compliant with all Ohio requirements as well as provide relevant professional development. This annual course provides a single certificate with a single expiration date for all the coaching requirements in Ohio.

Specific information about alternative single source courses, additional details and application information can be found:

<https://sboe.ohio.gov/educator-licensure/apply-for-a-new-license/pupil-activity-coaching-permits>

Military Appreciation Night

The OHSAA has designated Friday/Saturday January 23/24, 2026 as Military Appreciation weekend. We are asking that ALL Schools across the state band together for one consistent theme night – Military Appreciation Night. Your school will hear more about this through various communications; however, we are asking YOUR HELP as the head coach to encourage participation. The event has experienced incredible success in previous years. YOUR leadership will go a long way into making this a successful night.

THANK you for your encouragement to your student leaders.



2025-26 Rules Information

Rules Changes

Basketball Rules Changes - 2025-26 **By NFHS on May 28, 2025**

4-6-1a & b (NEW): This rule change clarifies and expands the definition of basket interference to include additional actions that unfairly affect the ball while it is in a scoring position. Basket interference now occurs when a player slaps or strikes the backboard, causing the backboard or basket to vibrate, while the ball is on or within the basket, touching the backboard, or within the cylinder.

Rationale: This clarification helps officials consistently identify interference that affects scoring plays and ensures the integrity of the basket area during shot attempts.

4-22-1 & 2: This change removes the offensive team from goaltending violations, simplifying enforcement for officials and reducing ambiguity over whether a ball was a shot or a pass. It also encourages more scoring opportunities and minimizes confusion for players and coaches. Rationale: The change eliminates the possibility of an offensive goaltending violation, which simplifies the rule for officials and players. It removes the need to judge whether a ball in flight is a try or a pass, resulting in clearer enforcement, greater consistency, and more opportunities for scoring plays near the basket.

4-22-3 (NEW): This rule change establishes that once the ball contacts the backboard, it is automatically considered to be on its downward flight. Therefore, if a player touches the ball after it hits the backboard, and the ball has a possibility of entering the basket, it is ruled as goaltending.

This clarification helps protect legitimate shot attempts, reduces rough rebounding situations, and addresses a common rules misconception among coaches and players. It provides officials with a clearer standard for enforcing goaltending in backboard-related plays.

Rationale: This change enhances officiating clarity and protects legitimate shot attempts. It also addresses a common misconception among coaches and players by explicitly defining goaltending, leading to more consistent enforcement.

4-34-1: This rule change updates the definition of a player to clarify that a player is one of the five team members legally on the court at any given time, except during time-outs or intermissions. The change ensures consistency in rule enforcement by recognizing that it is difficult to distinguish between players, substitutes, and bench personnel during time-outs and intermissions. This clarification also supports the accountability of coaches for all team conduct during these periods and helps avoid misapplication of penalties such as technical fouls.

8/23/25

Rationale: This change ensures consistent enforcement of penalties for unsporting conduct by bench personnel. It allows officials to issue technical fouls to bench personnel during time-outs, aligning with the current rules for intermissions. It eliminates confusion and potential misapplication of rules and ensures fair and consistent enforcement of penalties for unsporting behavior, regardless of the individual's role.

7-5-4: This rule change updates the procedure for determining the designated throw-in spot following a stoppage of play (not due to the ball going out of bounds) in the frontcourt and backcourt. Instead of relying on an imaginary line, officials now use existing court markings, specifically the three-point line, to determine the location. This change improves accuracy, consistency, and clarity for officials by using visible floor markings rather than imaginary lines, which were often misjudged.

Rationale: By using the visible three-point line as the line of demarcation, officials will have a clearer and more consistent method for determining throw-in locations. This improves accuracy and reduces confusion, resulting in more reliable throw-ins.

9-2-12 & 9-3-4 (NEW): This rule change addresses situations where a thrower purposely and/or deceitfully delays returning inbounds after legally stepping out of bounds and then becomes the first player to touch the ball upon re-entering the court. Previously penalized as a technical foul, this action is now treated as a violation, aligning it with similar out-of-bounds scenarios. The change reduces the severity of the penalty to encourage more consistent enforcement by officials and prevents players from gaining an unfair advantage through deceptive re-entry tactics.

Rationale: This change lessens the penalty for players who delay their return after being out of bounds, shifting the penalty from a technical foul to a less severe violation. This rule aligns with the penalty structure of similar violations, such as Rule 9-3-3 (where a player steps out of bounds on their own volition). The change is intended to make it easier for officials to recognize and penalize these actions consistently while reducing the severity of the penalty, encouraging more accurate enforcement.

10-4-4b: This rule prohibits players from illegally contacting the backboard or ring in ways that create an unfair advantage or interfere with a scoring attempt. This rule is designed to maintain fair play and protect the integrity of scoring opportunities by penalizing actions affecting the outcome of a shot, with a technical foul.

Rationale: The rule change aims to standardize and clarify the enforcement of basket interference, leading to fairer outcomes and more consistent officiating. The removal of subjective judgments around intent allows for clearer rulings and better alignment with current game dynamics.

Goaltending and Basket Interference Addressed in 2025-26 Basketball Rules Changes and additional comments on changes

By NFHS on May 28, 2025

A trio of changes to address when goaltending and basket interference are called are among the changes to high school basketball rules for the 2025-26 season. These revisions to the NFHS Basketball Rules Book are among the six changes recommended by the Basketball Rules Committee during its April 28-30 meeting in Indianapolis – all of which were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Rule 4-22-3 has been added to indicate that a ball is considered to be on its downward flight once it contacts the backboard on a legitimate shot attempt. Therefore, it is goaltending if a defensive player touches the ball after it contacts the backboard. Prior to this change, an official determined if a shot attempt was still ascending and out of the cylinder before goaltending could be called. “By establishing that a ball is considered to be on its downward flight upon contacting the backboard, this rule change introduces a clear and objective standard,” said Monica Maxwell, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the Basketball Rules Committee. “It significantly reduces the need for officials to make subjective judgments regarding the trajectory of a shot, thereby enhancing consistency and accuracy in goaltending calls.”

Rules 4-22-1 and 4-22-2 were amended to indicate that only a defensive player can commit goaltending, eliminating the possibility of an offensive goaltending violation. The change removes the need to determine whether a ball in flight is a field-goal attempt or a pass. Any alteration of a shot attempt with contact to the basket or backboard by an offensive player would be considered basket interference.

Additionally, the act of intentionally slapping or striking the backboard during a shot attempt will now result in basket interference and not a technical foul. This addition of new Rule 4-6-2 and corresponding removal of Rule 10-4-4b from the “Player Technical” section aims to standardize officiating and remove intent from the decision.

Similarly, it is a violation for a player to purposely or deceitfully delay a return to the court after being out of bounds and be the first to touch the ball in new language added in Rules 9-2-12 and 9-3-4. This change removes the act from Rule 10-4-2, which called for a technical foul and lessens the penalty to a violation.

In a change to Rule 4-34-1, all players in the game will be considered bench personnel once an official signals for a time-out. This change ensures consistent enforcement of penalties for unsporting conduct by allowing officials to issue technical fouls to bench personnel during time-outs. Prior to this change, if a player warranted a penalty for unsporting conduct during a time-out, an official was required to determine if the player had been in the game or on the bench.

“One of the points of emphasis this year will be bench decorum,” said Billy Strickland, executive director of the Alaska School Activities Association and chair of the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee. “How can we help coaches and officials know that communication is a two-way street? It just needs to be done a proper manner.”

8/23/25

The determination of the location for a throw-in after a stoppage of play was adjusted in Rule 7-5-4 using the three-point line. If a violation occurs on or within the three-point line, the designated spot will be on the end line. A throw-in will be on the sideline if the violation occurs outside the three-point line. This rule change eliminates the use of the imaginary line to determine a throw-in spot. Therefore, if there is a violation in the frontcourt or backcourt, the violation is administered, and the ball is made available for a throw-in at one of the four designated spots based on the location of the throw-in violation in relative to the 3-point arc.

2025-26 Basketball Editorial Changes: 4-19-3c, 4-47, 5.2.1 SITUATION C, 6-3-2a, 6-3-5b, 10-5-2

2025-26 Basketball Points of Emphasis

Contact on the Ball Handler

Continued emphasis is placed on the consistent enforcement of illegal contact involving the ball handler. While hand-checking remains a known concern, other forms of illegal contact must also be recognized and penalized. Defenders often use their hips, torsos, or other parts of the body to displace, redirect, or impede a ball handler's freedom of movement. These tactics must be identified and addressed in accordance with the rules.

Particular attention is required during late-game scenarios. Not all fouls committed in the closing moments of a contest are necessarily intentional. Determinations regarding intentional fouls must be based on the act itself, rather than on the intent or verbal instructions from coaching staff. The presence of directives such as "foul," "red," or "scramble" does not automatically classify the resulting contact as intentional.

If the contact constitutes a legitimate attempt to play the ball or to defend an opponent — either on the ball or away from it — it should be adjudicated as a common foul. Standards for evaluating contact must remain consistent throughout the game, including in its final moments. The strategic intent of one team to stop the clock must be weighed against the opposing team's interest in allowing the clock to run.

Conversely, contact that is excessive, clearly removes an opponent's apparent advantage, or does not constitute a legitimate basketball play should be classified as an intentional foul. Instructional emphasis must be placed on teaching players how to commit fouls within the parameters of the rules.

Bench Decorum, Communication, and Player Altercations

Ongoing concerns have been noted regarding bench decorum, improper communication with officials, and incidents involving player altercations. All team personnel, including coaching staff and bench players, are expected to uphold a standard of sportsmanship through disciplined behavior, clear expectations and structured preparation.

Bench Decorum and Communication

Bench decorum remains a significant point of emphasis. Officials are expected to take a proactive role in managing coach and bench behavior, particularly regarding the conduct of head and assistant coaches. Rule 4-48 (Warning for Coach/Team Conduct) should be applied early and consistently to prevent escalation and maintain game control.

Effective communication between coaches and officials should be established prior to the contest and maintained throughout. A professional and respectful tone is expected. When

8/23/25

reasonable rules-based inquiries are made by coaches (e.g., “Can you watch the screening?”), a simple verbal acknowledgment or nonverbal gesture such as a nod is generally sufficient.

Rules-based questions—such as, “What did my player do wrong on that illegal screen?”—are appropriate and should receive a clear and informative response. These interactions support the educational purpose of the game. In contrast, rhetorical questions or comments not seeking clarification (e.g., “What’s it going to take to get a foul called?” or “It’s getting rough out there”) do not require a response.

Coach on the Floor

Rule 10-5 delineates the privileges and restrictions for head coaches and bench personnel. Only the head coach is permitted to stand and provide instructions to players during live ball play. This communication must be carried out in a professional and sportsmanlike manner. All other personnel, including assistant coaches and team members not actively participating in play, must remain seated except during rule-allowed situations (e.g., during time-outs or spontaneous reactions to exceptional play).

This emphasis seeks not to restrict enthusiasm but to preserve order and promote respect for the game. Adherence to coaching box boundaries is essential to maintaining safety and fairness. An increasing number of incidents have been observed involving coaches stepping onto the court during live play. Such behavior introduces potential safety concerns and must be addressed through rule enforcement.

Coach Responsibilities Before and During a Fight

The head coach holds primary responsibility for the prevention and de-escalation of potential altercations. Proactive planning is expected, including the designation of specific duties for assistant coaches in the event of a fight. One assistant coach may be tasked with managing on-court players, while others may be assigned to control bench personnel. Such role assignments serve to prevent mass disqualifications and maintain order during disruptive incidents.

Faking Being Fouled

In the previous season, the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee adopted Rule 4-49, Warning for Faking Being Fouled, to address unsporting acts where players simulate illegal contact in an attempt to deceive officials and gain a competitive advantage. These actions include embellishing contact on block/charge plays, simulating impact during shooting attempts, or using movements such as a 'head bob' to draw a foul. Such conduct compromises the integrity of the game and places undue influence on officiating decisions. A corresponding signal (#15) was also introduced to assist with enforcement.

For the 2025–26 season, this point of emphasis is reaffirmed, with renewed focus on consistent adjudication across all levels of play. Faking being fouled may occur by offensive or defensive players, and must be addressed in accordance with approved procedures and NFHS guidelines.

Types of Faking Being Fouled

Three primary categories of Faking Being Fouled have been identified:

Head Bob

This infraction occurs when a player in control of the ball simulates contact by quickly snapping the head backward. In this case, the faking signal (#15) should be displayed immediately, and the whistle should be sounded concurrently. If this is the first offense for the team, a team warning is reported. Since the infraction occurs while in player control, the offending team retains possession and is awarded a throw-in at one of the four designated spots in either the frontcourt or backcourt, depending on the location of the warning.

In the Act of Shooting

If a shooter simulates being fouled—typically by falling to the floor without contact—after releasing the ball, the faking signal (#15) should be displayed immediately; however, the whistle should be withheld. Play should be stopped upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- The try is successful;
- The defensive team gains control of the ball;
- The offensive team secures a rebound but does not immediately attempt to score;
- A dead ball situation occurs for any other reason.

While on Defense

If a defensive player simulates being fouled (e.g., by falling to the floor without contact), the faking signal (#15) should be displayed immediately, with no whistle sounded. Play should be stopped under the same conditions listed above for shooters.

Conclusion

When correctly and consistently applied, Rule 4-49 serves as an effective deterrent. Proper adjudication ensures that players, coaches, and spectators clearly understand how violations will be addressed and reinforces the importance of integrity in game play.

State Adoptions Permitted by NFHS Rules

The National Federation has identified specific items that may or may not be adopted by each state association. These are found on page 74 of the 2024-25 NFHS Rules Book. The following State Adoptions are permitted to be made and either “adopted” or “not adopted” in the state of Ohio

Determining ball size for junior high boys’ competition – Adopted in Ohio

Comment: The NFHS Playing Rules permit states to determine on a state-by-state basis what ball is best suited to be used at the Junior High level. The OHSAA has determined that the ‘smaller’ COMPOHIO285CB is the best for players that age.

Authorizing use of replay equipment at the conclusion of a state championship series contest – Adopted in Ohio

Comment: This will be used at the **state tournament semifinal games (if technology is available at the site) and the championship games**. The NFHS Rule permits it on a state-by-state basis, however it may only be used at the end of regulation (or overtime) and only to determine if an attempt was released in time AND whether it was from behind the 3-point line or not. It has been tested and the use of a minimum of 3 camera angles has shown that it CAN be utilized without flaw.

Authorizing rule exceptions to provide reasonable accommodations– Adopted in Ohio.

Comment: The NFHS allows reasonable accommodations to be made to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. If permission is granted, you will keep that to show officials prior to a contest.

Authorizing use of a running clock when a specific point differential is reached – Adopted in Ohio for all games.

Comment: Any time a score differential reaches 35 points during the second half, a running clock shall be utilized. After the 35-point score differential has been met but the score drops below 30 points, the clock reverts to regular NFHS timing. (This eliminates timing issues in a faster paced contest). The clock shall be stopped only for an injured player on the court or when there is any unusual delay deemed necessary by the officials.

Determining the number of electronic media time-outs – Adopted in Ohio.

Comment: This is primarily a concern at the state tournament level since it is the only level in which LIVE television is permitted. At the state tournament level, the number of “TV Timeouts” is carefully reviewed with finalists prior to the state tournament.

Authorizing use of one commemorative/memorial patch on the jersey – Adopted in Ohio.

Comment: The patch shall not exceed 4 square inches, shall not be a number and must be located above the neckline or in the side insert.

Rawlings & Game Ball Information

The Rawlings Basketball (see below) is required for use during the OHSAA tournament. Rawlings continues to be the official ball provider for boys' and girls' basketball as well as supporting the OHSBCA with various products.

Official OHSAA Girls' Tournament Ball: **COMPOHIO285CB ("Contour")**

Official OHSAA Boys' Tournament Ball: **COMPOHIOCB ("Contour")**

The smaller basketball (28.5 – 29" circumference and 18-20 oz.) is mandatory for use in girls' basketball grades 7-12 and in boys' basketball for grades 7-8.

Please note that a **PINK BASKETBALL IS NEVER PERMITTED FOR USE.**

GENERAL UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Uniform regulations are developed as part of the National playing rules by the National Federation (NFHS). NBA and Olympic team uniform styles seldom meet the NFHS regulations, so you are encouraged to review these uniform regulations when ordering new uniforms.

A few key points of the Uniform Regulations are listed below:

- Numbers must be centered horizontally and vertically on the front and back with at least a 6" number required on the back and a 4" number on the front.
- Approved uniform numbers shall not include BOTH "0" and "00". One or the other is permitted...not both.
- Home team uniforms MUST BE WHITE while visiting team uniforms must be a contrasting dark color. **The 'dark' color of away uniforms should be the darker of the school colors.** This would eliminate gray, orange, or yellow/gold for away uniforms in most instances. This is not mandated for sub-varsity teams (but eventually will).
- The American flag may be worn on the team shirt provided it does not exceed 2 x 3 inches and does not interfere with the visibility of the player's number
- A visible manufacturer's logo/trademark is permitted on the jersey and the short but is not permitted on the undershirt
- A player's team jersey designed to be worn inside the pants shall be tucked inside the pants and the pants shall be above the hips and worn properly. A player not conforming to this uniform policy shall be directed to leave the game.
- A commemorative/memorial patch may be worn on the jersey provided it is not a number and must be worn above the neckline or in the side.

8/23/25

SHOOTING SLEEVES

“Shooting Sleeves” are addressed in the NFHS Rules Book in Rule 3, Section 5, Article 3. *Arm sleeves, knee sleeves, lower leg sleeves, compression shorts and tights are permissible:*

- *Anything worn on the arm and/or leg is a sleeve, except a knee brace and shall meet the color restrictions.*
- *The sleeves/tights, compression shorts shall be black, white, beige or predominant color of the jersey and the same color sleeves/tights shall be worn by all teammates*
- *All sleeves/tights, compression shorts shall be the same solid color and must be the same color as any headband or wristband worn*
- *Meet all logo requirements (only 1 manufacturers logo OR school logo with size limitation of 2 ¼ square inches and shall not exceed 2 ¼ inches in any dimension)*



Legal



NOT Legal



NOT Legal



NOT Legal

HEADWEAR – OTHER EQUIPMENT

Nearly all equipment issues are addressed in Section 5 of the NFHS Basketball Rules in Rule 3. Some important items:

Braces, casts, splints, etc. are NEVER PERMITTED TO BE WORN on the elbow, hand, finger/thumb, wrist, or forearm, EVEN if it were covered with padding. Simply NOT permitted. Many find this difficult to understand and often will provide a ‘physician’s note’ that indicates it is necessary. However, even if a physician DID provide a medical note – it is still NOT permitted. This is basically due to the risk of eye injury to others on the court.

NOT Legal

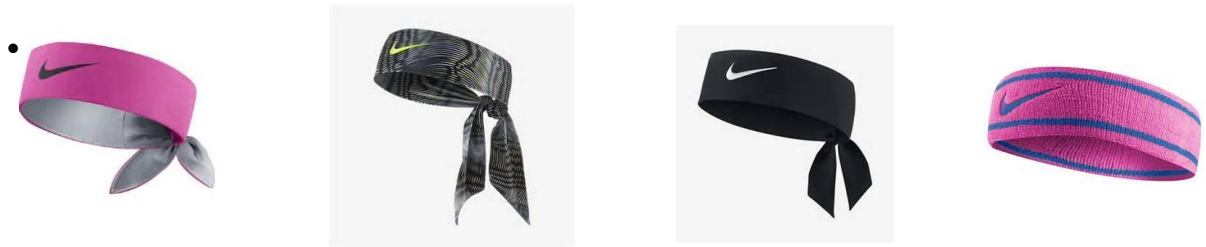


Wristbands and Headbands must meet the following requirements outlined in Rule 3 Section 5 Article 4 of the NFHS Playing Rules:

- Headbands and Wristbands must be a single solid color of **white, black, beige or the predominant color of the jersey.** Headbands and wristbands that are worn must be the

same color for each item and all participants and must be the same color as any sleeve or tight that is worn.

- Only 1 wristband may be worn on each wrist with it being no more than 4 inches wide. It must be worn on the arm **below the elbow** and must be unadorned (no writing of any kind on the wristband).
- HEAD COVERINGS 3-5-4d: Allows hair adornments provided they are securely fastened close to the head and do not present an increased risk to the player, teammates, or opponents. Rubber, cloth or elastic bands, beads, barrettes, and bobby pins may be used to control hair.
- Only 1 headband may be worn, and it must be worn on the forehead/crown. It must be unadorned and can be **no more than 3 inches wide**.
- The Headband that became popular that ties in the back is **NOT LEGAL – since the tie in the back hangs down below 2 inches**.



ALL of the Headbands shown above are NOT LEGAL

Head decorations are prohibited.

REMINDER:

Head Decorations and Headwear Refer to the National Playing Rules of the sport to determine what head decorations or headwear are permissible.

Exception: In the event a head coach represents to the referee in advance of the start of the competition that a player wishes not to expose his/her uncovered head, the referee shall approve a covering or wrap which shall not:

1. Fundamentally alter the sport.
2. Be abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other participant.
3. Be attached in such a way that it is likely to come off during play, and
4. Be deemed to be unsporting/offensive. For other exceptions not addressed above, school administrators and/or head coaches shall contact the OHSAA sport administrator via email well in advance of the competition date to discuss if a waiver is available and, if so, the details of the waiver process.

8/23/25

Note: If there are any concerns about head decorations or headwear well in advance of the start of competition on that day, contest officials shall approach the head coach (or assistant coach if the head coach is not available) to address the issue

“Special Event” Contests

“Coaches vs Cancer”, the Kay Yow/WBCA Cancer Fund, and other events through the National Basketball Coaches Association have become part of many schools’ basketball contests. These “Game for a Cause” often desire to have uniforms not permitted within the NFHS uniform regulations. Obviously, the OHSAA supports these events and schools/coaches’ efforts to become involved in the “OHSAA Foundation Service Week” was instituted with this concept in mind, giving schools through the sport of basketball the opportunity to generate support and funds for **local** charities. We continue to support the OHSAA’s Foundation in that endeavor and continue to encourage student-athlete involvement for support that stays within the local communities, while applauding coaches’ efforts to orchestrate these events.

In the event schools choose also to be part of an event, you must still follow NFHS Basketball Uniform Regulations with respect to jersey color but may request to wear an alternate color (pink for example) headbands, wristbands, etc. (No request is needed for shoelace or shoe colors). If you wish to do this, after working out details with the opposing school, please utilize the Waiver Request Form located online on the “Basketball” web pages. Upon approval, please then contact the game official

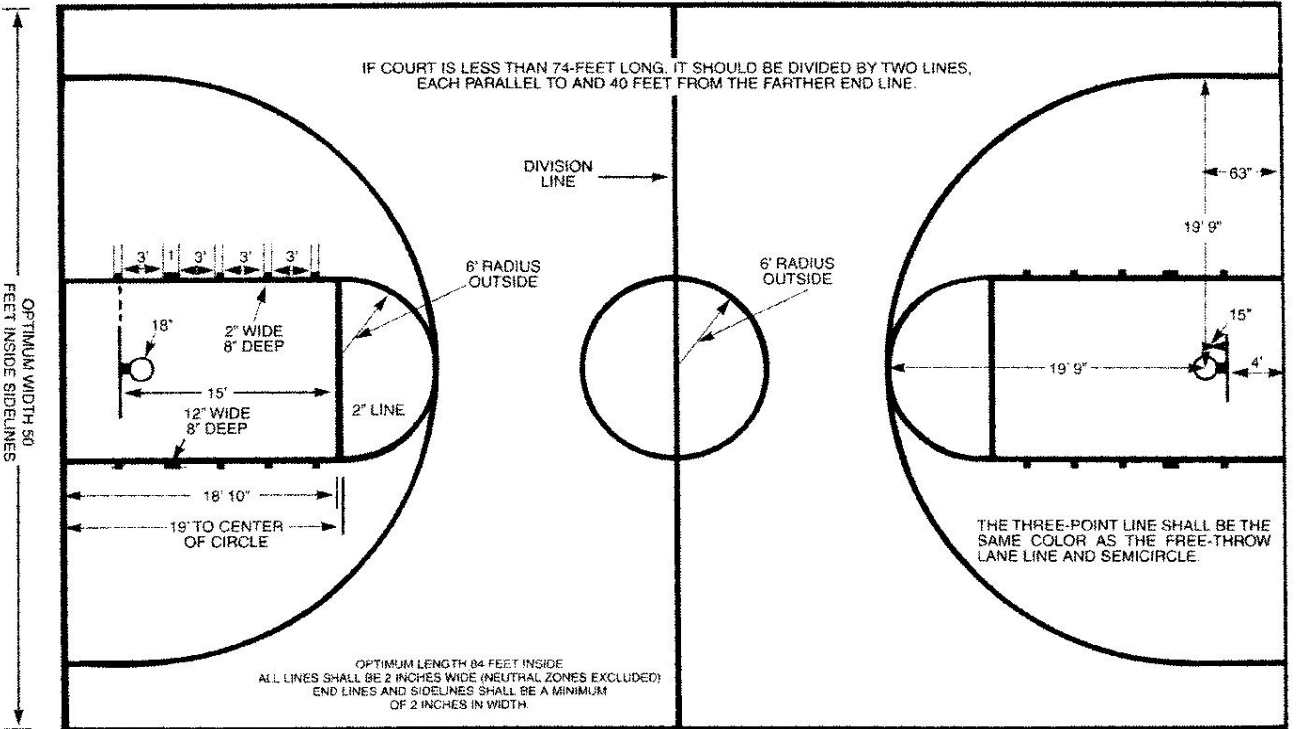
A PINK (or other alternate color) BASKETBALL IS NOT PERMITTED for use during any basketball contest.

“Running Clock” – Score Differential

NFHS Playing Rules permit the use of a running clock when a specific point differential is reached by STATE ADOPTION

This has been adopted in Ohio that will authorize a running clock anytime the score reaches a 35-point differential in the second half in all regular season and tournament games.

The Court & Related Information



Left End Shows Rectangular Backboard 72-Inches Wide

Right End Shows Fan Backboard 54-Inches Wide

Important Note Regarding “Buffer Zones” (From NFHS Rule Book)

More and more schools are placing chairs near the court to use as the ‘team bench’ instead of the front row of the bleachers. Though it is certainly acceptable to do so, special note should be made to the Playing Court Dimensions (Rule 1, Section 1) and the Supplement to the Court Diagram. *This rule and supplement require a **minimum** of 3 ft. of unobstructed space outside boundaries (sidelines and end lines) between those lines and the seating. The **preferred** amount of space is 10 ft. This simply means that IF you utilize chairs for bench seating, you MUST insure adequate space (3 ft.) from those chairs to the sideline. The design of many older courts does not permit this and players’ feet and/or chair legs are within a foot or so of the sideline, which is not permissible.*

OHSAA Sports' Regulations

Regulations governing the sport of basketball are divided into two basic categories: **GENERAL Sports Regulations** and **BASKETBALL Regulations (sports specific)**. These are reviewed annually and approved by the OHSAA's Board of Directors.

The Basketball Sport Regulations are available through the boys' and girls' basketball web pages at <https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/girlsbasketball> or <https://www.ohsaa.org/sports/boysbasketball>.

Basketball specific AND the General Sports' Regulations are found on the left side of the page.

General Sports Regulations

These "General" regulations address regulations that affect *all sports* governed by the OHSAA. They include, but are not limited to, such things as Instructional Programs outside the window of the season, Physical Fitness (Conditioning) Programs, Open Gym Regulations, No Contact Periods, Player, and Coach Ejection Policies. These are important and *most* areas of concern can be addressed simply by reading through these Regulations or contacting your Athletic Administrator.

You are **strongly encouraged** to take the time to read these to familiarize yourself and your staff with the various rules approved by the Board of Directors that govern all sports. Though there are far too many to list in this manual, a *few* of the more common ones that affect basketball squads are:

General Sports Regulation 7.3 -7.5 -Student Participation on Non-interscholastic teams and Coaching

School coaches are permitted to coach non-school (AAU, AYBT, GYB, etc.) outside the season with players from your school teams on it. Before you start thinking you can coach and have voluntary practice outside the season (such as in September or October) read further:

First, there are three regulations that must be followed:

1. The No-Contact Period (GSR 11) must be followed. It still exists and that STILL means that during those 2 periods of time you will NOT be permitted to coach. According to the General Sports Regulation any coach, paid or volunteer, approved by the Board of Education shall not coach or provide skill instruction to team members in the sport of basketball during two periods of no-contact. This includes any type of tryouts in or out of school for purposes of non-interscholastic.
 - a. the first day after the school's last interscholastic contest and ending 28 days later.
 - b. August 1 – 24, 2025 (August 1 -23, 2026)
2. General Sports Regulation 7-3-1 permits a non-interscholastic team to have three (3) players that have played for the school team. Whether a school coach or a non-school coach is coaching a non-school team, the player limitation rule applies.
 - A. There can be no rotating players from your school teams from one non-school game to another. In other words, your permission to coach a team that consists of 3 players from your school does NOT give you the permission to use 3 different players in each game you play in. This is true whether you are coaching the non-school team or not,

rotating players to 'get around' the 3-player limit is not permitted. You simply cannot have 4 or more on a non-school roster and only play 3 in each game.

- B. A student who played for a different school the previous year, then transfers, will be counted in the player limitation of team members permitted on the same non-school team. As soon as that student-athlete transfers, he/she WILL be counted in the player limitation from the same school team IF he/she participated in basketball at their previous school.
3. General Sports Regulation 7.5.1 states coaches have a maximum of 13 days to provide coaching and/or instruction, including video and film study, to any number of their players in excess of the limitations set forth in General Sports Regulation 7.3 from May 15 through July 31.

General Sports Regulation 7.6 - All-Star Games

An "All-Star" game is nothing more than a "non-Interscholastic" event. If it is not a regular season/tournament OHSAA game, it is a NON-INTERSCHOLASTIC contest. The limitations outlined in General Sports Regulation 7 shall apply to underclassmen. There is a limit of **three (3)** per team that played for the same school teams the previous season. This limit is not in effect in June and July if the team is coached by a coach not employed by the school in which the team members are participating. A school coach could coach up to **three (3)** of their players on an all-star team. Seniors would not count in that limitation. There is no limitation by the NCAA or the OHSAA of permitting a player to only play in '2' of these. They can play in as many as they wish. ***Coaches may coach their student-athletes in these games, even if they occur during the 28-day no-contact period.*

General Sports Regulation 7.8 through 7.10 - "Individual Instruction" Regulation –

This regulation permits school coaches the opportunity to provide individual skill instruction outside the season of play and outside of their sport's defined no-contact period from August 1 through May 14. (Reminder - Basketball has a no-contact period from August 1 – August 24.) It is written with the intent of providing SKILL INSTRUCTION to individuals. It is intended to provide an affordable alternative to 'private' instructors. This regulation clearly limits the number of individuals (regardless of age or gender) present while the instruction is taking place to **THREE**.

There may be multiple groups, with no more than three individuals in each group, receiving individual skill instruction at the same time in the same facility. The following must be followed:

1. The number of students working together in each specific group cannot exceed three in the sport of basketball.
2. The students, in their specific groups, remain in their specific groups during the entire instruction period. This is interpreted to mean that students cannot change groups. Groups may rotate together to different coaches teaching a different skill, but the group should be three or less working together with any one coach or group of coaches.
3. The students, in their specific groups, do not engage in team play against students in any of the other specific groups. "Team play" is defined in GSR 7.8.3 as an activity with more than one player opposing one player (2-on-2, 2-on-1, 2-on-3, 3-on-3, etc)

ALL coaches, whether paid OR volunteer, must follow the guidelines established within this regulation. It is built upon the assumption that ANY individual that works with individuals in a school has a Pupil Activity Coaching Permit and falls under these guidelines. Special attention should be given to the Ohio

Ethics Law as it relates to school individuals using school facilities outside the normal work environment. (See your school administration on the Ohio Ethics Law and how it relates to you as a coach).

General Sports Regulation 9 -Pre-Season Conditioning/Training & Weight Training Programs

This regulation references training for strength, cardiovascular, flexibility/agility but does NOT include specific sport skills training or instruction. Specifically, these programs may:

- Be conducted anytime and are not a violation of the OHSAA bylaws and regulations so long as no coaching and instruction of sports techniques and skill is provided.
- Be supervised by any individual approved by the Board of Education (or governing body) including coaches, providing oversight by coaches does not occur during a designated no-contact period.
- NOT include the use of any equipment used in the playing of that sport.
- Include the use of mats for safety purposes only.

Open Gyms at Member Schools - General Sports Regulation 10

- Open Gyms (or facilities) are clearly defined in Rule 10 of the OHSAA Sports' Regulations. An abbreviated version state:
- A school may open its athletic facilities for **unstructured free play** provided the activity is supervised by a school employee who may remove participants or spectators for disciplinary reasons.
- The school may designate the sport or sports that will be played during the free play period but **may not limit participation** to a select group of students from within the school. Participation **may** be limited to students enrolled in that specific school.
- There can be no designation of who will play on which team or who will play whom. Only those students participating may be involved in the selection of teams.
- No individual invitations, written or oral, are permitted. However, school coaches may send an invitation to other school coaches to invite their students to an open gymnasium or facility.
- A coach, paid or volunteer, violates the provision of these regulations when the coach requires, suggests or in any way implies that a student's chance to be selected for an interscholastic squad is contingent upon participation at an open gymnasium or facilities program.
- Mandatory attendance at open gyms is **not permitted**.
- Transporting athletes to a school or non-school open gym is a violation for any member of the coaching staff, paid or volunteer.
- Coaches **may participate** in unstructured free play in the open gym/facilities.
- Schools MAY restrict individuals from observing the open gym activity.

General Sports Regulation 11 - No Contact Period

Basketball coaches have two non-contact periods:

1. 28 days following their team's last interscholastic contest.
2. August 1-24, 2025 (August 1-23, 2026)

General Sports Regulation 13 - Ejection Procedures for Schools

Why Ejections Cannot Be Appealed or Overturned

Though EVERY ejection has a valid story...appeals are not heard or filed. Ejections are like any other call made by an official that is permitted by NFHS Rule. No call made can be overturned, whether it is a traveling call, a basket interference call, a Technical Foul, OR two Technical Fouls, resulting in Ejection

13.1) Ejections by OHSAA Contest Officials

After a contest official provides electronic notification of an ejection, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator, who shall have seven days to respond to the notification and outline the subsequent contests in which the ejected individual(s) shall fulfill their mandatory suspension(s). If no response has been received after seven days, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's athletic administrator a second time, and the athletic administrator shall be given seven additional days to respond to the notification. If no response has been received after the second 7-day period lapses, the OHSAA shall electronically notify the school's principal, who shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification. If no response has been received after the third 7-day period lapses (21 total days), the OHSAA shall electronically notify both the principal and athletic administrator one final time, and the school shall have seven additional days to respond to the notification. If no response has been received after the fourth 7-day period lapses (28 total days), the OHSAA shall assess the school a \$150 fine per unanswered report. Failure to adhere to this procedure shall result in the school being subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

13.2) Ejections by Non-OHSAA Contest Officials (Out-of-State Ejections)

It is the responsibility of each member school to notify the OHSAA Office each time a coach or player(s) has been ejected from a contest played out of state within seven days once the team has returned to the school. Failure to adhere to this procedure shall result in the school being fined \$150 and subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

General Sports Regulation 14 - Ejection for Unsporting Conduct (Disqualification for unsporting conduct or flagrant violation)

14.1) Players

14.1.1) Standard Ejection Penalty

Any player ejected or disqualified from a contest (including scrimmages and previews) for unsporting conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until the student has sat out two regular season/tournament contests (one in football) at the same level as the ejection or disqualification and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office. (Note in basketball, disqualification for a fifth foul during a game does not carry additional game suspensions)

Note: The Executive Director's office is strictly prohibited from reviewing any extraneous evidence such as video/audio recordings or entertain any/all challenges to the propriety of one or the other of these two ejections except insofar as a challenge to the identification/misidentification of the ejected player and /or misapplication of a rule that directly results in ejection of a player or coach.

14.1.2) Sub-varsity Ejections

Ejections that occur at sub-varsity levels must serve the same ejection consequence as stated above or until the passage of 10 calendar days following the ejection, whichever occurs first.

14.1.6) Ejections for Fighting

Any player ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the player shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification. The definition of fighting is found in the NFHS playing rules and reads as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact." If video is presented to the Director of Officiating, or their designee, and the video clearly shows the ejection action did not meet the NFHS definition of fighting (as written above), the suspension length may be reduced. The player(s) in question is ineligible until such time as the designee rules on the submitted video or the four-game penalty has been fulfilled.

14.1.7) Guidelines for Ejected Athletes

A student who has been declared ineligible for two games may be on the sidelines/team bench, accompany and/or travel with the team but may not participate in pregame warmups and may not wear a team warmup or game uniform while on the sidelines/team bench, accompanying and/or traveling with the team.

See Bylaw 4-1-3 for additional regulations regarding what ineligible athletes are permitted to do during their period of ineligibility. When ejection or disqualification of a player results from illegal substitution in basketball, the two-contest ineligibility does not apply.

14.1.8) Ejections Occurring at the End of Season

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same period as stated above in the next sport in which the student participates and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

14.1.9) Ejection for a Second Time

A student who is ejected or disqualified a second time in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office. A student who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Executive Director. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

Note: The Executive Director's office is strictly prohibited from reviewing any extraneous evidence such as video/audio recordings or entertain any/all challenges to the propriety of one or the other of these two ejections except insofar as a challenge to the identification/misidentification of the ejected player and /or misapplication of a rule that directly results in ejection of a player or coach.

14.1.10) Enforcement of Ejection Policy

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This

8/23/25

regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Executive Director as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

Note: When national playing rules (see the specific national playing rules) refer to a disqualification for unsporting conduct or a flagrant violation, this is considered an ejection as referenced in this regulation.

14.2) Coaches

14.2.1) Standard Ejection Penalty

Any coach ejected or disqualified from an interscholastic contest (including scrimmages and previews) for unsporting conduct shall be suspended from coaching in all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until the coach has sat out two regular season/tournament contests at the same level as the ejection or disqualification.

Further, the coach shall be fined \$100, with the fine payable to the OHSAA no later than 30 days after the OHSAA's 'Season Ends' date, and the coach shall take the National Federation of State High School Association's "Teaching and Modeling Behavior" course, which must be completed no later than 30 days after the OHSAA's "Season Ends" date and can be taken at www.nfhslearn.com. Additionally, the coach may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

Note: The Executive Director's office is strictly prohibited from reviewing any extraneous evidence such as video/audio recordings or entertain any/all challenges to the propriety of one or the other of these two ejections except insofar as a challenge to the identification/misidentification of the ejected player and /or misapplication of a rule that directly results in ejection of a player or coach.

14.2.2) Sub-varsity Ejections

Ejections that occur at sub-varsity levels must serve the same ejection consequence as stated above or until the passage of 10 calendar days following the ejection, whichever occurs first.

14.2.5) Ejections Due to Fighting

Any coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all contests for the remainder of that day. In addition, the coach shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in that sport until four regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection or disqualification. In the sport of wrestling, any coach ejected for fighting shall be ineligible for all wrestling contests for the remainder of that day and event. In addition, he/she shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels in wrestling until four regular season/ tournament contest points or four event days at the same level as the ejection or disqualification have been completed. The definition of fighting is found in the NFHS playing rules and reads as follows: "Fighting is any attempt by a player or non-player to strike or engage a player or non-player in a combative manner unrelated to the sport. Such acts include, but are not limited to, attempts to strike an opponent(s) with the arm(s), hand(s), leg(s), or foot (feet), whether or not there is contact." If the video is presented to the Director of Officiating, or their designee, and the video clearly shows the ejection action did not meet the NFHS definition of fighting (as written below), the suspension length may be reduced. The player(s) in question is ineligible until such time as the designee rules on the submitted video or the four-game penalty has been fulfilled.

8/23/25

14.2.6) Guidelines for Ejected Coaches

On the day of the ejection, a coach who has been disqualified shall be ejected from the vicinity of the playing area and is prohibited from further contact, direct or indirect, including electronic communication with team members, managers, and other coaches during the remainder of the contest. The coach must return to the locker room or team bus or leave the premises. The coach shall not go to the spectator area. After the initial ejection and suspension, a coach who has been suspended from coaching for the next contest(s) may attend the next contest(s) but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest including halftime or any intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the squad to an away contest.

Note: The Executive Director's office is strictly prohibited from reviewing any extraneous evidence such as video/audio recordings or entertain any/all challenges to the propriety of one or the other of these two ejections except insofar as a challenge to the identification/misidentification of the ejected player and /or misapplication of a rule that directly results in ejection of a player or coach.

14.2.7) Ejection Occurring at End of Season

If the ejection or disqualification occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year and may be subject to additional penalties as deemed appropriate under Bylaw 11 by the Executive Director's Office.

14.2.8) Failure to Comply with Ejection Regulations

The penalty for failure of the coach to comply with the ejection regulation shall result in the forfeiture of the contest.

14.2.9) Ejection of Coach When No Other Coach Present

If a coach is ejected/disqualified from a contest and no other coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education from that school is present (Bylaw 3-2-1), the contest shall be forfeited.

14.2.10) Ejection for a Second Time

A coach who has been ejected or disqualified for unsporting conduct for the second time in a scrimmage, preview, regular season contest or OHSAA tournament contest shall be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory conference with the Executive Director at the OHSAA headquarters. The principal of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with Bylaw 11.

Note: The Executive Director's office is strictly prohibited from reviewing any extraneous evidence such as video/audio recordings or entertain any/all challenges to the propriety of one or the other of these two ejections except insofar as a challenge to the identification/misidentification of the ejected player and /or misapplication of a rule that directly results in ejection of a player or coach.

14.2.11) Enforcement of Ejection Policy

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure this regulation is enforced. When a suspended coach is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Executive Director as specified in the OHSAA tournament regulations. In accordance with Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

General Sports Regulation 15 - Participants Leaving the Playing Area — Spectators Entering the Playing Area

15.1) No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the 'playing area' in which a contest is being conducted and enter the 'spectator area' of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the 'playing area' and enters the 'spectator area' of a facility to so engage a person, the maximum penalty may include ineligibility for up to one calendar year.

15.1.1) The school shall immediately report the situation to the Executive Director's Office and investigate to report what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what 'safeguards' have been implemented by the school to prevent future occurrences. The school and/or student athlete shall be subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

15.2) No spectator at any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the 'spectator area' in which a contest is being conducted and enter the 'playing area' of the facility to engage in any type of conflict—verbal or physical. If a spectator leaves the 'spectator area' and enters the 'playing area' of a facility to so engage a person, the minimum penalties shall be:

15.2.1) The OHSAA shall recommend to the member school sponsoring the contest that the individual shall be denied admission to any contests sponsored by the member schools of the OHSAA for a period to be determined in consultation with school administration and the Executive Director's Office.

15.2.2) The school shall immediately report the situation to the Executive Director's Office and investigate to report what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what 'safeguards' have been implemented by the school to prevent future occurrences. The school shall be subject to additional penalties as outlined in Bylaw 11.

Basketball Specific Regulations

Aside from the “General Sports Regulations” covered above, each sport has SPECIFIC regulations affecting that specific sport. These ‘specific’ sport regulations are reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors for every sport the OHSAA sponsors. These address areas such as (but not limited to) the number of contests (game, scrimmage, or preview) that are permitted for each sport, season start and end dates, out of state travel, etc. All coaches should familiarize themselves with these regulations. Coaches should familiarize their entire staff with the importance of these Regulations as they directly affect the eligibility of student-athletes. Upon approval, they are submitted for printing to the annual OHSAA Handbook (which every administrator has been provided).

BASKETBALL — BOYS AND GIRLS

2. BASKETBALL — BOYS AND GIRLS

A. GENERAL REGULATIONS

1) Interscholastic Participation

- 1.1) Mandatory practice may begin:
 - 1.1.1) Girls – October 24, 2025
 - 1.1.2) Boys – October 31, 2025
- 1.2) Grades 9-12 are allowed 5 scrimmages plus 1 preview (See 1.12 for Foundation Games).
- 1.3) PREVIEW/SCRIMMAGE — A preview may be scheduled and played only starting with the first day after the official start date of coaching and ending with the date of the first regular season game of the teams involved. Each team may schedule one preview, and no player may participate in more than one preview. Previews must be played according to National Federation Basketball Rules and shall meet all definitions in Sports Regulation 23.
- 1.4) SPECIAL WAIVER — A scrimmage or preview scheduled against a Special Olympics team, or a team of similar designation, may be approved by the OHSAA to be played in addition to the maximum allowable number of scrimmages or previews. A waiver for approval of such contests can be found on the “Basketball” section of the OHSAA website. This waiver must be submitted to, and approved by, the OHSAA Basketball Administrator prior to the contest taking place.
- 1.5) Any scheduled regular season basketball game which is not started due to unforeseen circumstances such as failure of team to arrive, strikes or school closings is considered “No Contest.” Games not played are not included in won-lost statistics and cannot be considered “Forfeits.”
- 1.6) A student athlete in grades 9-12 may play in a maximum of 132 quarters plus OHSAA sponsored tournament. (Penalty — See General Sports Regulation 20.)
- 1.7) A student-athlete in grades 7-8 may play in a maximum of 96 quarters plus one postseason or league/conference tournament not to exceed four games by one team. (Penalty — See General Sports Regulation 20.)
- 1.8) 7th & 8th grade students shall not practice with 9th through 12th grade students, and vice versa.

Exception: If a member high school sponsors a basketball team but is unable to field a roster of at least ten (10) players (grades 9-12), the school can petition the

Executive Director's office to approve combined practices with the high school and 7/8 grade teams as long as the following criteria are met:

- a) Both the high school and the 7/8 grade school are OHSAA member schools and;
- b) Both the high school and the 7/8 grade school are part of the same district/system and;
- c) Coaches at the high school are permitted to have contact with the 7/8 grade students under an exception to Bylaw 4-9-2 (recruiting) and;
- d) The request is for an entire 8th grade team or combined 7/8 grade team to practice with the high school team, and not for individual 7/8 grade students to practice with the high school team.
- e) The Superintendent of the district/system signs off on the request to the Executive Director's Office.

Any request for combined practices other than for low numbers will not be considered. If approved, the 7/8 grade students SHALL NOT be placed on any high school roster, nor are they permitted to play in any high school contests. The approval shall only be granted for practice purposes.

- 1.9) A student shall not be permitted to participate in more than six quarters during any one day. Any part of a quarter is to be considered as a full quarter. In an overtime game, the extended time shall be considered an extension of the fourth quarter.
- 1.10) Penalty for participation in more than six (6) quarters per day:
 - When discovered during a contest, the student shall be disqualified from the game and the game shall continue to completion. The contest will result in a forfeiture by the offending team. All quarters played by the individual shall count toward the maximum permitted. The OHSAA Basketball administrator shall be notified.
 - When discovered after a contest is completed, the contest will result in a forfeiture by the offending team. Additionally, all quarters played by the individual shall count toward the maximum permitted for the player in a season. The OHSAA Basketball administrator shall be notified.
- 1.11) Length of quarters:
 - a. Varsity — 8-minute quarters.
 - b. Freshman, reserve or junior varsity — 6 minutes recommended, maximum of 7 minutes.
 - c. Grades 7 & 8 — 6 minutes maximum.
 - d. Overtime — 8-minute quarters – 4-minute overtime; 6- or 7-minute quarters – 3-minute overtime.
- 1.12) Member schools electing to participate in the *Basketball Service Week Foundation Game* are permitted to use one of their five allotted scrimmages to play a regulation game under all normal game conditions. Foundation games do not count against a team's won-lost record and may be played any time between November 9 and the first Sectional tournament contest (Girls) and November 16 and the first Sectional tournament contest (Boys).
- 1.13) Game Ball: The official game ball adopted by the OHSAA is the Rawlings CompOhioCB (boys) and the Rawlings CompOhio28.5CB (girls) and is required to be used for all regular season and tournament contests in grades 7-12.

1.14) Rule 5, Section 5, Article 3 - Note in the NFHS Rule Book states: A state association, by adoption, may institute a running clock when a specified point differential is reached at a specific time in the game." Ohio has adopted this rule and is defined as follows: Any time a score differential reaches 35 points during the second half, a running clock will be utilized. After the 35-point differential has been met but the score drops below 30 points, the clock reverts to regular timing. Should a game reach the 35-point differential in the second half, the clock shall only be stopped for an injured player on the court, team timeouts or when there is an unusual delay deemed necessary by the contest officials.

2) **Out-of-State Travel**

A basketball team may travel out of state to compete in contest scrimmages, previews and games in states or provinces in Canada that are contiguous to Ohio regardless of distance to travel. The states include Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The province includes Ontario. Additionally, a basketball team may travel out of state one time per interscholastic season (Bylaw 9-2-1). Schools must complete the form from the following link when they are participating in a non-contiguous state:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Eligibility/forms/NonBorderingStateApproval.pdf>

Penalty for violation: The school shall be ineligible for the OHSAA postseason tournament in the sport in which the out-of-state travel was involved and could be subject to additional penalties as referenced in Bylaw 11.

3) **Ejection for Unsporting Conduct**

See *Ejection Policies for Players and Coaches* under Sections 13 and 14 of the General Sports Regulations.

4) **Transfer Bylaw**

Due to the many questions regarding this bylaw and its application to students wishing to play basketball please go to this link <http://www.ohsaa.org/Eligibility/Transfer> to assist in understanding this bylaw. Note that students who transfer and do not meet an exception to this bylaw are ineligible for all varsity regular season contests and including the OHSAA tournament beginning with varsity regular season game #12.

5) **Non-Interscholastic Participation**

5.1) Basketball Players Who Have Not Competed for Their School This Season: A sports regulation identified as the Individual Non-Interscholastic Competition Date stipulates that a basketball athlete who has not participated for the school team in basketball that season must cease non-interscholastic basketball participation by the first allowable competition date in basketball in order to be eligible for OHSAA Tournament competition provided all other applicable bylaws and regulations have been followed.

In addition, an athlete who has participated for the school in basketball who violates this non-interscholastic competition date by participating in a non-interscholastic contest in basketball shall be ineligible for OHSAA tournament competition in basketball in addition to any other penalties that may be prescribed.

NO NON-INTERSHOLATIC COMPEITION IS PERMITTED ON OR AFTER THIS

DATE: Girls: November 21, 2025

Boys: November 26, 2025

8/23/25

- 5.2) A member of an interscholastic basketball squad (any student who has played in a scrimmage, preview or regular season/tournament game as a substitute or starter) sponsored by the Board of Education shall not participate in a non-interscholastic program (tryouts, practice or contest) as an individual or a member of a team in the sport of basketball during the school's season (Sports Regulation 7.2).
- 5.3) A member of an interscholastic basketball squad (any student who has played in a scrimmage, preview or regular season/tournament game as a substitute or starter) sponsored by the Board of Education may participate in non-interscholastic basketball prior to and after the school season under the conditions of General Sports Regulation 7.3 and 7.5.
- 5.4) All-Star Games — "All-Star" events are non-interscholastic events by rule. Student-athletes in team sports who wish to participate in one of these "all-star" competitions outside the school basketball season may do so without jeopardy to eligibility provided the students maintain compliance with General Sports Regulations 7.3 and 7.6 that address Non-School Team Competition.

The purpose of this special "All-Star" regulation is to provide an opportunity for the interscholastic team sport coach to coach players from his or her school. Coaches are permitted to coach in "All-Star" contests if they meet all the provisions of General Sports Regulation 7.6.

Participation during the no-contact period for coaches is permitted.

6) **Instructional Programs**

See *Regulations for Instructional Programs* under Section 7 of the General Sports Regulations.

7) **No Contact Period — Coaches**

See *Regulations for No Contact Period — Coaches* under Section 11 of the General Sports Regulations.

8) **Penalties**

- 8.1) The maximum penalty for violation of Sports Regulation 7.2 (participation with a non-interscholastic basketball squad while a member of the school's interscholastic basketball squad) or any OHSAA regulations for any member of the school squad, EXCEPT a senior, is ineligibility for the remainder of the interscholastic basketball season or the ensuing basketball season. For a senior, the maximum penalty shall be ineligibility for the remainder of the school year.
- 8.2) The penalty for a coach for violation of Sports Regulation 7 (non-interscholastic teams) may include suspension, probation, public censure, fine not to exceed \$1,000 per occurrence or such other penalty as the Executive Director may deem appropriate.

B. SPECIFIC REGULATIONS — GRADES 9-12

- 1) Tryouts, coaching, instruction may begin — **Girls - October 24, 2025**
Boys: October 31, 2025

First game: **Girls: November 21, 2025**

Boys: November 26, 2025

- 2) Deadline date for OHSAA Tournament — **Girls: January 26, 2026**

Boys: February 2, 2026

- 3) Tournament draw/seeding meeting — **Girls: Feb. 8 - DIII-DVI -2:00PM**
Feb 15 – D1/DII- 3:00PM
4) **Boys: Feb 15 - DIII-DVI- 2:00PM**
Feb 22 – D1/DII- 2:00PM

- 5) Coaching and Regular Season end—

Girls: March 14, 2026.

Boys: March 22, 2026

- 5) Scrimmage or Previews — Maximum of five scrimmages plus one preview (Note: An OHSAA Foundation Game may replace one scrimmage)

- 6) Regular season games — Maximum of 22 games

- 7) Rules — National Federation Basketball (NFHS)

- 8) Officials:

1. Varsity — Class 1 Basketball Only. In the event only one OHSAA registered basketball official arrives to officiate the game, the game may be played provided the participating coaches agree
2. Reserve/Junior Varsity — Class 1 or Class 2 Basketball Only. In the event only one OHSAA registered basketball official arrives to officiate the game, the game may be played provided the participating coaches agree
3. Freshman — Minimum of one OHSAA Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 basketball official required. All other officials are required to be an OHSAA Class 1, 2 or 3 or basketball official in training

C. SPECIFIC REGULATIONS — GRADES 7 & 8

- 1) Tryouts, coaching and instruction may begin:

Girls – October 24, 2025

Boys – October 31, 2025

- 2) First game — **Girls – November 21, 2025**

Boys – November 26, 2025

- 3) Coaching and Season end — **Girls: February 23, 2026**

Boys: March 2, 2026

- 4) Scrimmages or Previews — Maximum of two scrimmages plus one preview

- 5) Regular season games — Maximum of 16 games

8/23/25

- 6) **Postseason games** — 1 league/conference tournament or 1 postseason tournament not to exceed 4 games. Maximum of two (2) contests can be played in one calendar day
- 7) **Rules** — National Federation Basketball (NFHS)
- 8) **Basketball** — The approved ball shall have a circumference minimum of 28 1/2 inches to a maximum of 29 inches for 7th & 8th grade competition
- 9) **Officials** — One OHSAA Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 basketball official required. All other officials are required to be an OHSAA Class 1, 2 or 3 or basketball official in training

Items frequently questioned:

Game/Quarter Limitations

Maximum Number of Games Permitted for Teams 9-12: **22 games.**
 Maximum Number of Quarters Permitted for Players PER DAY: **6 quarters/day.**
 Maximum Number of Quarters Permitted for players (Regular Season) grades 9-12: **132 quarters.**

Additional Game/Quarter Limitations

Sub-Varsity (Freshmen & JV): Any freshmen or JV level tournament must count in the 22 total games permitted.

Scrimmages/Previews: Maximum of 5 scrimmages and 1 preview.
 Length of Quarters: 8 minutes for Varsity. Freshmen and Junior Varsity (max. of 7 minutes)
 Length of Overtime: 4 minutes for 8-minute quarters; 3 minutes for 6 or 7-minute quarters

Junior High School/Middle School (7-8) Game & Quarter Limitations

Maximum number of games permitted: **16**
Note: Teams are permitted to play in 1 Post-Season tournament in addition to the 16 games
Not to exceed 4 games.

Post-Season Tournaments are defined as any tournament in which the last game is the last Game of the season for that school OR any league/conference sponsored tournament. Any “Christmas Tournaments” or “Holiday Tournaments” or other in-season tournament must count in the regular season games.

Maximum number of Quarters permitted for Players PER DAY: **6 quarters/day.**
 Maximum number of Quarters permitted per player per season: **96 quarters/season*#**
***This does not include the number permitted in a post-season/conference tournament**
No player may participate in more than 1 post-season/conference tournament

Scrimmages/Previews (7-8): Maximum of 2 scrimmages plus 1 preview
 Length of Quarters: **6 minutes**
 Length of Overtime: **3 minutes**

Quarters Permitted & Penalty for Violation

A player is not permitted to participate in MORE than **SIX** quarters during any one day. Any part of a quarter is considered a full quarter. Any overtime is considered an extension of the fourth

8/23/25

quarter. Players are permitted a total of **132 quarters** (high school) or **96 quarters** (Junior High) for the season plus any played in post-season tournament play.

Penalty for Violating Quarters/Day:

If detected DURING a contest: The student shall be disqualified from the game and the game shall continue to completion. The contest will result in a forfeiture by the offending team. All quarters played by the individual shall count toward the maximum permitted. The OHSAA Basketball administrator shall be notified.

If detected AFTER a contest: The contest will result in a forfeiture by the offending team.

Additionally, all quarters played by the individual shall count toward the maximum permitted for the player in a season. The OHSAA Basketball administrator shall be notified.

Sub-Varsity -2 quarter games policies

- Games shall consist of two quarters of either 6 or 7 minutes maximum.
- Teams will shoot at the same basket in both quarters.
- There shall be no overtime. If tied after two quarters, the game is over.
- Time outs – three full time outs per game, no 30 second time outs.
- Fouls accumulate through quarter 1 to quarter 2 towards the bonus.
- For a team – counts as a game; for an individual – quarters of participation count towards the maximum permitted.

Non-Interscholastic Competition

A member of an interscholastic basketball squad sponsored by the Board of Education **cannot participate in a non-interscholastic Basketball program** (such as ‘club, AAU, or ‘travel’), which includes tryouts, practice, and contests as an individual OR a member of a team in the sport of Basketball anytime during the school team’s season. A student-athlete becomes a member of the school team when he/she participates in a scrimmage, preview OR regular season or tournament game as a substitute OR as a starter.

A member of an interscholastic basketball team sponsored by the Board of Education **MAY** participate in non-interscholastic basketball (such as ‘club’, AAU, or ‘travel’) **PRIOR TO** and **AFTER** the school season under the following conditions:

- The number of interscholastic basketball players from the same school on a non-interscholastic team is limited to **THREE (3) on the roster** of that non-interscholastic team. This number includes all players that played on the school team in the previous season from grades 9-11*.
- **Participation in “3 on 3” tournaments (such as but not limited to “Gus Macker” tournaments) must follow the player limitation rule limiting the team to THREE (3) players from the same school program. Rotating players throughout the tournament is not permitted.**
- A player may continue to play with a non-interscholastic squad in a national qualifying tournament only in excess of the THREE player limit until the squad is eliminated but no later than Labor Day.
- A player may play in non-interscholastic basketball **ONLY WHEN** the student’s team has completed its season.

*Graduating seniors are exempt from this player limitation.

Also, keep in mind, Sport Regulation 8.2.1 that permits individual instruction does not conflict with the non-interscholastic regulations. **It does not change the number permitted on a non-school team out-of-season.** That number for basketball is three (3).

Videotaping Regulations

The improvement of various electronic devices, especially cell phones, has drawn much attention to the rules regarding recording basketball contests. Complete regulations are available in the OHSAA Handbook or through the General Sports Regulations on the web at <https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/GeneralSportsRegulations.pdf> under Section "A" of the Media Regulations. A few highlights of this include but are not limited to:

- It is **not permissible for a school or school representative to videotape or photograph regular season contests, scrimmages, previews, OR tournament contests of other schools** without the written consent of the schools participating in the contest.
- The NFHS Playing Rule Regulations have addressed the use of Electronic Devices during contests themselves for use by the school team. Please pay special attention to this rule that DOES permit the use of electronic devices on a limited and defined basis for coaching purposes during a contest (NFHS Rule 1-19 and 10-2-3).

Scrimmage Regulations

In addition to the scrimmage limitations for teams mentioned throughout this guide, the following are important:

1. Scrimmages may be used ANYTIME throughout the season, including tournament time.
2. Any practice with another school is considered a scrimmage by definition.
3. Any scrimmage between two schools must be considered a scrimmage for BOTH schools. In other words, if Team A counts it as one of their 5 permitted scrimmages, it must be counted as one of the 5
4. permitted scrimmages for Team B as well. It cannot be counted as a 'scrimmage' for one school and a 'game' for another school.
5. Each player is prohibited from participating in more than 5 scrimmages (4 if playing in a Foundation Game). This prohibits a JV player from playing in 4 "JV Scrimmages" and 1-5 Varsity Scrimmages.
6. All scrimmages are limited to 3 hours of scrimmage time.
7. Practicing with a team of alumni players is considered a scrimmage.
8. Admission may be charged for any scrimmage, regardless of who is conducting the scrimmage.
9. Scrimmages vs multiple teams are permitted. If they are on the same day, they count as one scrimmage, but there is a limit of 3 total hours of scrimmage participation.

Interrupted Game/Scheduled Game Not Started

Any game interrupted for any reason shall be resumed from the point of interruption. Any scheduled regular season game which is not started due to unforeseen circumstances *including but not limited to* failure of a team to arrive is considered a "NO CONTEST". Games not played are not included in won-lost statistics.

Freshmen Basketball Squads

The number of contests permitted for Freshmen teams is:

- **22** total contests
- Any non-OHSAA state tournament game played by a freshman team must be counted in the total of 22. (***This includes Freshman tournaments, regardless of when the tournament is held***)
- **5** scrimmages and 1 preview.
- **132** total quarters of participation during the regular season. Should a freshman be 'moved up' to the Varsity for tournament time, those quarters do not count toward their 132 permitted. Freshmen may 'move up' to a JV or Varsity team and back down again at any time. The individual must simply stay within the 132 total quarters permitted to him/her. Please check the penalty for exceeding quarter limitations.
- Freshmen teams may NOT combine with 7th or 8th grade players, nor may they scrimmage or have contests vs. 7th and 8th grade teams.
- A minimum of one OHSAA Class 1, 2, or 3 official is required, and it is recommended that all other officials be Class 1, 2, or 3 officials.
- A freshmen team's "No-Contact Period" begins at the conclusion of the Freshmen season and lasts for 28 days. IF a player 'moves up' to JV or Varsity after the freshmen season, the no-contact period for that individual(s) would begin upon the conclusion of his/her season.

Middle School/Junior High Basketball Squads

The number of contests permitted for 7th and 8th grade teams is:

- **16** total contests **plus** one **post-season/conference** tournament not to exceed 4 games.
- **2** scrimmages PLUS 1 Preview
- **90** total quarters of participation plus any in a **post-season or league/conference** tournament.
- No player may participate in more than 1 post-season/conference tournament. So, if a 7th grader participates in any part of an 8th grade post-season or league/conference tournament, he/she would be ineligible to participate in a 7th grade post season or league/conference tournament for the school. Scrimmages for Junior High teams are limited to TWO hours of competition time.

Special Note About 7th graders on 8th grade teams and vice versa:

7th and 8th graders are permitted to play together, just as 9-12 graders are permitted to play together. Therefore, it is permissible for a 7th grader to play on an 8th grade team, and they may play on BOTH teams but are limited to 6 quarters per day and 90 for the season. And...an 8th grader may play on a 7th grade team as OHSAA rules do not prohibit this. **BUT....** since most 7th grade games are contracted just as that; 7th grade games.... the opposing school contractually has agreed to play against 7th graders. Since our regulations do not prohibit 8th graders from 'playing down', *due to contractual obligations, you should ALWAYS get the permission of the opposing school and redraw a contract.*

Protests/Appeals

Bylaw 8, Section 3(1) of the OHSAA Constitution and Bylaws reads in part, "*Protests arising from the decisions of interpretations of the rules by officials during the game will **not be considered**.* Their decisions and interpretations are final." This means that correctable errors must be

corrected during the game and within the time established by playing rules. **Ejections are NOT Appealable (Sports Regulation 14.1 & 14.2)**

Officials' Jurisdiction

Officials' jurisdiction begins a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the game. National Federation (NFHS) rule 2-2-2 and the OHSAA's Board of Directors "*recommends that officials in Varsity high school basketball games arrive on the floor when the first team appears on the floor for pre-game warm-up.*"

BASKETBALL CALENDAR

Girls Basketball	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Coaching and Tryouts Begin	10/24	10/30	10/29
Season Begins	11/21	11/25	11/24
Tournament Draw – DIII/DVII	2/8	2/7	2/6
Tournament Draw – DI/DII	2/15	2/14	2/13
Sectional	2/16-2/21	2/15-2/20	2/14-2/19
District	2/23-2/28	2/22-2/27	2/21- 2/26
Regional	3/2-3/8	3/1-3/7	2/28-3/5
State	3/12-3/14	3/11-3/13	3/9-/3/11
Season Ends	3/14	3/13	3/11

Boys Basketball	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Coaching and Tryouts Begin	10/31	11/6	11/5
Season Begins	11/26	12/4	12/3
Tournament Draw – DIII/DVII	2/15	2/14	2/13
Tournament Draw – DI/DII	2/22	2/21	2/20
Sectional	2/23-2/28	2/22-2/27	2/21-2/26
District	3/2-3/7	3/1-3/6	2/28-3/4
Regional	3/9-3/15	3/8-3/14	3/6-3/12
State	3/19-3/22	3/18-3/21	3/16-3/19
Season Ends	3/22	3/21	3/19

BASKETBALL — STATE TOURNAMENT ROTATION

The chart below reflects DI playing the last game, DII playing the late game on Friday and a rotation of the other five divisions.

2025-2028-2031	2026-2029-2032	2027-2030-2033
TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD	TBD	TBD

Rating & Voting for Officials

"Voting for Tournament Officials will be done via a form that will be sent out by the OHSAA through Final Forms. You are to enter one form for the entire season, voting for the officials that you believe deserve a tournament assignment.

Please Note:

Officials' votes are used for the NEXT season. The officials you vote for this current season will be assigned pools for NEXT YEAR'S tournament."



Coaches' Code of Ethics

From the NFHS Basketball Rules Book

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and his or her welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The Coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The Coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. IN all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The Coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse.

The Coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.

The Coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The Coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

The Coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

The Coach should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.

The Coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give students special consideration.

The Coach shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic association.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is EVERYONE'S Responsibility!



NFHS Sportsmanship Mission Statement

Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. The ideals of sportsmanship apply equally to all activity disciplines. Individuals, regardless of their role in activities, are expected to be aware of their influence on the behavior of others and model good sportsmanship.

The OHSBCA & Sportsmanship



The Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association stands tall in its commitment to good sportsmanship.

The school-based experience is one that affords tremendous opportunities to student-athletes that they will remember for a lifetime. Those experiences are dependent on the role model the head coach provides. The OHSBCA encourages all coaches to exhibit behavior that serves as a role model for the student-athletes we serve. In conjunction with the OHSAA's Sportsmanship, Ethics, and Integrity (SEI) Committee, the OHSBCA annually selects a recipient of the SEI Award that is recognized at the boys' and girls' state tournament.

The Official's Role in Sportsmanship



The National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) conducted a survey of 550 sports officials and asked, "what is the number-one problem in our games today?" Not too surprising, the number one response was "Poor Sportsmanship". As a result, the NASO brought together some of the best and brightest in youth, high school, collegiate and pro sports to examine the issue and explore the official's role in promoting positive on field/on court behavior. The results were published in the book at the right and identified 3 critical ideas:

1. What exactly is at stake?
2. What is expected of Officials? and
3. What steps need to be taken?

As a result, the following are important results of this study and publication:

1. 65% of respondents indicated their respective associations do not do *enough* to help improve sportsmanship.

2. 89% of officials responding consider themselves PARTNERS with players, coaches and administrators in improving sportsmanship.
3. 54% of officials responding indicated they felt they DO have the training, authority, and knowledge to make an impact.

Sportsmanship for Parents

The NFHS has made a NO COST online course available to PARENTS...to help them understand their role in their son/daughter's athletic career. The course is titled "The Role of the Parent in Sports" and is easily accessible through the "Learning Center" at www.nfhslearn.com. And again...it is FREE and a good tool for coaches to use in dealing with parents.

The OHSAA & Sportsmanship

**Respect
THE
GAME**

As we prepare for the upcoming seasons, the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) wishes to emphasize to each of you the importance of your leadership role in the promotion of sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity. The professional way officials and coaches conduct themselves prior to, during and following a contest unquestionably impacts the behavior of others who may be involved.

The OHSAA has joined the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) in its quest to improve sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity. We are involved in an ongoing campaign in every sport to do just that. Printed below is the mission statement of the NFHS concerning sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity. Please take the time to read and digest this statement and then carefully consider your impact upon students, officials, coaches, and fans. Thank you and have a great season!

The Ohio High School Athletic Association challenges all of us in the basketball community to take positive steps toward the goal of attaining the high ideal of good sportsmanship. It is the responsibility of each of us to serve as a positive role model and set high expectations for others.

ADMINISTRATORS

Athletic departments are comprehensive, pre-eminent teaching departments with a subject matter all their own: self-confidence, leadership, teamwork, discipline, perseverance, respect for others, strategic thinking, dedication, the importance of rules, and sportsmanship. These are true life lessons and participation in athletics provides another forum for learning. Coaches and Officials are responsible for promoting sportsmanship and positive behavior on the field. Administrators, we need your continued assistance in promoting sportsmanship and controlling fan behavior in the stands! Let the parents and fans know what you expect!

COACHES

Your athletes will demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors they have learned from you, either through direct instruction or through observation of your actions. ***Never underestimate the influence you have on your players!*** You must:

- Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- Set a good example for players and spectators to follow.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Develop a program that rewards participants and spectators for displaying proper sportsmanship and enforces penalties on those who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

It is difficult to develop a great shooter, a great rebounder, or a great free-throw shooter. That is true. However, your greatest challenge is to develop mature young adults who will become great citizens and role models in your community.

OFFICIALS

Your job is not an easy one, but the official must be aware that they are an important component in the educational development of students. To carry out this responsibility, you must:

- Know the rules and mechanics of our sport and the philosophy behind them.
- Get fit and stay fit. An official with all the rules and mechanics knowledge and people skills in the world does no good if he or she cannot physically keep up with play.
- Maintain professional and ethical relationships with athletic administrators, especially in fulfilling game contracts.
- Work cooperatively with fellow officials during games and within the referees' association to improve members' performances.
- Always maintain, and when interacting with all participants, an attitude of civility and professionalism.
- Practice effective preventive officiating as much as possible before, during, and after a match. The quiet word, proper signals, timely verbal instructions, a simple thank-you to a player for avoiding an unsporting act, and well-thought-out pre-game conferences with the teams and other game officials will result in an improvement of sportsmanship by eliminating the chance for things to go wrong.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

You serve as a role model for your younger siblings, young fans in the stands, your teammates, and your classmates. Set high expectations for everyone and help them follow-through! You must:

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and the community.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with others. This will assist everyone in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- Treat opponents as you would like to be treated.....with respect.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will serve to create a positive impression of you and your team.

CONCLUSION

Good sportsmanship is everyone's responsibility. It is the essence of interscholastic athletics. Remember...some may question an official's call or a coach's substitution, but no one can question the value of good sportsmanship.

OHSAA Sportsmanship Resources

On our website (www.ohsaa.org – click on “Respect the Game” on the right side of the screen) you will find **Fair Play Codes** for athletes, coaches, and fans, as well as additional information regarding **parents' role in interscholastic athletics**. The sportsmanship page also includes public address scripts, public service announcements, program ads, and contest management guidelines. Please feel free to contact us with any additional questions.

Comments to Media – Think First!

Please read this carefully!

Blame it on professional sports, blame it on the media. It doesn't matter WHO is to blame – **think first before comments are given to media**. This is covered in the Rules Interpretation Meeting as well. You may not agree with the officiating; you may use the overused “I fear for my kids' safety” statement. Regardless.... comments to the media (including Social Media) regarding officiating or unsporting comments about an opponent are **strictly prohibited**. Think twice before speaking. Fines are administered for violations of this OHSAA Board of Directors adopted regulation and are not appealable.



THINK FIRST

Cautions on Social Media

Regardless of your age, every coach today knows the power of social media, especially in the sports' world. Players, coaches & officials need to exercise extreme caution with remarks on social media sites. I urge coaches to have this repeated discussion with players throughout the season.



Concussion Management

Concussion Regulations - Implementation of State Law and NFHS Playing Rules Related to Concussion

It is important for all individuals involved in interscholastic athletics to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions. Thus, it is extremely important that each coach, administrator, contest official and medical support personnel review their responsibilities in protecting students. Further both students and parents have responsibilities in this area as well.

Note: It has always been the ultimate responsibility of the coaching staff, in all sports, to ensure that students are only put into practice or contests if they are physically capable of performing. However, all individuals involved in the conduct of interscholastic competition have responsibilities in this endeavor.

In January 2011, the OHSAA Board of Directors adopted a sports regulation which incorporated the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules related to concussion recognition and management. On April 26, 2013, legislation adopted by Ohio's General Assembly on concussion and head injuries in youth sports became effective. On February 14, 2013, the OHSAA Board of Directors mandated that these regulations become effective on April 26, 2013, for the remainder of the spring sports season and thereafter. This OHSAA regulation, as amended to incorporate this recent legislation, now reads:

Any student, while practicing for or competing in an interscholastic contest, who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or contest by either of the following:

- 1) The individual who is serving as the student's coach during that practice or competition.
- 2) An individual who is serving as a contest official or referee during the practice or competition.

1.1) Return to Play Protocol

If a student is removed from practice or competition due to a suspected concussion or head injury, the coach or referee who removes the student shall not permit the student, **ON THE SAME DAY THE STUDENT IS REMOVED**, to return to that practice or competition or to participate in any other practice or competition for which the coach or contest official is responsible. Thereafter, which means no earlier than the next day, the coach or contest officials shall not permit the student to return to practice or competition until both of the following conditions are satisfied:

- 1) The student's condition is assessed by either of the following:
 - a. A physician, who is a person authorized under Chapter 4731 of the Ohio Revised Code (OCR) to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine or surgery (M.D. or D.O.)

- b. Any other licensed health care provider that the school district board of education or other governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school, authorizes to assess the student who has been removed from practice or competition.
- 2) The student receives **written authorization** that it is safe for the student to return to practice or competition from a physician or other licensed health care provider authorized to grant the clearance. Go to the “Sports Medicine” Section of the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) to retrieve the OHSAA’s Medical Authorization to Return To Play (RTP) form.

A school district board of education or governing authority of a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school may authorize a licensed health care provider who is not a physician to make an assessment and grant authorization for a student to return to participation *only* if the provider is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider’s authority to practice in Ohio:

- 1) In consultation with a physician.
- 2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician.
- 3) In collaboration with a physician, or
- 4) Under the supervision of a physician.

Note: A physician or other licensed health care provider who makes an assessment or grants clearance for a student to return to participation may be a volunteer.

1.2) Coaches Requirements

All coaches, paid and volunteer, must possess a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit. When renewing this permit, the coach will be required to complete an online concussion education course as stipulated in the section entitled **Approved Online Concussion Education Course**. This course is valid for three years and expires at the time the Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit expires.

1.3) Contest Officials Requirements

Legislation signed into law by the Governor provides that no school “shall permit” an individual to referee interscholastic athletic contests unless the individual holds a Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has successfully completed within the last three years a training program in concussion recognition. Therefore, all OHSAA licensed officials shall possess either a current Department of Education-issued Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or **show evidence of completing an approved online concussion education course** as stipulated in the section entitled **Approved Online Concussion Education Courses**. This course is valid for three years from the date of completion and must be entered on the official’s *myOHSAA* profile.

1.4) Student and Parent Requirements

All students and their parents or legal guardians shall review and sign the “Concussion Information Sheet” which has been developed by the Ohio Department of Health and which shall be distributed by OHSAA member schools to all students and their parents prior to each sports season. Students and parents shall review and sign this form each year and should keep a copy of the form. In addition, parents and students are encouraged to complete an approved concussion education course.

APPROVED ONLINE CONCUSSION EDUCATION COURSES

The following free online training courses have been approved by the Ohio Department of Health for coaches and contest officials:

National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports:

<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>

This free online course is available through the NFHS. Complete a brief registration form to take the course.

In addition:

- 1) Click the “order course” button to access the free concussion course. Continue following prompts. Although it may look like you will be charged for the course, there is no cost.
- 2) Once you’ve completed “Checkout,” you will be able to take the free online course.
- 3) When you have completed and passed the course, you have the option of printing a certificate of completion.
- 4) All Ohio Officials should select this option to print, retain a copy of the certificate and carry it with them to all contests.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports Online Training Program:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>

NOTE: Both courses offer a “certificate of completion” upon successful passage. The **NFHS course** allows organizations to search for and track coaches and other individuals such as contest officials who have completed the course, while the CDC course does not.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the “signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion?”

The National Federation rule lists some of the signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with a concussion. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has published the following list of signs, symptoms and behaviors that are consistent with a concussion:

SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to hit

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

8/23/25

- Cannot recall events after hit

2. Who is responsible for administering this rule?

All individuals who have responsibilities and duties in the interscholastic athletics environment are responsible: coaches, contest officials, administrators, students, parents, and medical personnel.

3. What is the role of coaches in administering this rule?

- Coaches are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to prohibit any athlete who displays these signs or symptoms from participating in a practice or a contest.
- Coaches are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether a student has sustained a concussion. The coach is responsible for ensuring that the student's parents are notified and the student is referred to a medical professional.
- Coaches shall be aware that any student removed from a practice or a contest due to a suspected concussion or head injury shall not return to participation on the same day as the removal.
- Coaches shall possess a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit and shall take one of the approved online concussion courses upon renewal of the permit.

4. What is the role of contest officials in administering the rule?

- Officials are to review and know the signs and symptoms of concussion and to direct immediate removal of any student who displays these signs or symptoms. When informing the head coach about removal of an athlete, the official shall be accompanied by another (second) official if possible.
- An official shall not permit the athlete who has been removed under this rule to return to competition that same day.
- If a contest official is aware that a student has been permitted to return to competition on the same day as removal, that official shall immediately stop play and remove that student from competition and report the incident to the OHSAA.
- Note that officials are not medical professionals and have no authority to determine whether or not a student has sustained a concussion. The official is responsible for directing removal when he or she observes signs and symptoms that may indicate a student is concussed.
- All Officials shall possess either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or shall complete one of the online concussion courses which are valid for three years from the date of completion.
- At initial licensure or renewal of the OHSAA officiating permit, the official shall indicate that he or she has either a current Pupil Activity Program/Coaching Permit or has completed one of the approved online concussion courses.
- All officials should always carry with them evidence of completion of one of these options while officiating a contest.
- Officials are required to submit to the OHSAA the "OHSAA Concussion Report" within 48 hours whenever a student has been removed from a contest under this regulation.

5. What are the expectations of student-athletes in concussion management?

- While all individuals involved in the interscholastic athletics program have a responsibility to recognize the potential for catastrophic injury and even death from concussions, it is also the responsibility of student-athletes to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with a concussion.
- Student-athletes who exhibit symptoms such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems, have the responsibility to report these immediately to their coach and/or health care professional. Teammates also share the responsibility to report these symptoms when they are exhibited by a fellow student-athlete.
- Student-athletes shall review and sign, on an annual basis, along with their parents or legal guardians, the Ohio Department of Health's Concussion Information Sheet found on the OHSAA website and at this link: https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports-Medicine/PPE_2020-21.pdf
- Who decides if an athlete has not been concussed and/or who has recovered from a concussion?
- **Only** an M.D. (Medical Doctor), D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathy), or another health care provider approved by the school's Board of Education or other governing body who is acting in accordance with one of the following as applicable to the provider's authority to practice in Ohio:
 - 1) In consultation with a physician.
 - 2) Pursuant to the referral of a physician.
 - 3) In collaboration with a physician.
 - 4) Under the supervision of a physician is empowered to make the on-site determination that an athlete has **not** received a concussion. **Even if that determination has been made, however, the student may not return to practice or competition on the same day he/she has been removed from a practice or competition** (see No. 7 below).
- If any one of these physicians or authorized medical providers has answered that "yes" there has been a concussion, that decision is final.

6. Can an athlete return to play on the same day as he/she has been removed from a practice or competition for a suspected concussion?

- No, under no circumstances can that athlete return to play that day.
- No coach or contest official shall allow a student to return to practice or to competition on any day after the initial removal until that student has been assessed and cleared for return with **written authorization** by a physician or licensed health care provider authorized by the school.
- If the event continues over multiple days, then the designated event physician has ultimate authority over return to play decisions.

7. Once the day has concluded, who can issue authorization to return to practice/competition in the sport for a student who has been diagnosed with a concussion?

- Once a concussion has been diagnosed by a physician or other approved health care provider, only a physician or approved provider can authorize subsequent Return To Play (RTP), and such authorization shall be in writing to the administration of the school. This written **RTP authorization shall be kept at the school indefinitely** as a part of that student's permanent

record. Go to the “Sports Medicine” section of the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) to access the OHSAA “Medical Authorization to Return to Play” Form.

- The school administration shall then notify the coach as to the permission to return to practice or play.

8. What should be done after the student is cleared by an appropriate health care professional?

- After a clearance has been issued, the student’s actual return to practice and play should follow a graduated protocol.
- The National Federation of State High School Associations has included the following graduated protocol in its Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion in Sports: (**Note:** This is simply a suggested protocol. The appropriate health care professional who issues the clearance may wish to establish a different graduated protocol.)

NFHS SUGGESTED MEDICAL CLEARANCE RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

1. No exertional activity until asymptomatic.
2. When the athlete appears clear, begin low-impact activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
3. Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sports such as running or skating and may also begin progressive strength training activities.
4. Begin non-contact skill drills specific to sports such as dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.
5. Full contact in practice setting.
6. Game play/competition.
 - Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. (It is often suggested that an athlete not be allowed to progress more than one level per day.)
 - If symptoms recur, the athlete must return to the previous level and should be reevaluated by an appropriate health care professional.
 - Medical check should occur before contact. (Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.)

QUICK LINKS FROM THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Information for Coaches, Officials, Parents and Students, Plus Additional Resources –

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/child-injury-prevention/youthconcussions/>

Ohio’s Return to Play Law –

<https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/child-injury-prevention/resources/rtp-law>

ADDITIONAL CONCUSSION RESOURCES

Nationwide Children’s Hospital – Concussion Information Toolkit

<https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/specialties/concussion-clinic/concussion-toolkit>

CDC Materials on Returning to School for Parents, School Nurses, and Educators

https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/schools/index.html

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Regulations

Ohio law requires additional coaching requirements for all interscholastic coaches (paid and volunteer) and new educational standards for parents and student-athletes regarding Sudden Cardiac Arrest. This law, known as Lindsay's Law, became effective beginning with the 2017-18 school year.

The OHSAA has collaborated with the Ohio Departments of Health and Education, along with other major Ohio healthcare organizations and the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology, to provide education that is relevant and easily accessible so that interscholastic coaches and the parents of our student-athletes can come into compliance with the statute.

With the leadership provided by ODH, ODE, the Ohio Chapter of the American College of Cardiology and other major Ohio health-care organizations, we have developed our own "Ohio" materials to be used to comply with this requirement. The materials include a short video for parents, which is posted to the ODH, ODE and the OHSAA (OHSAA.org) websites; an informational handout and a sign-off form (much like the current Concussion Form) which must be signed by parents and student-athletes and is included in the package of consent forms found in the OHSAA PPE and the paper forms; and a training video and informational handout for coaches which is posted on the ODE website and includes a completion certificate for verification. **This training will be the only acceptable coursework to meet this standard and is provided at no cost to anyone.**

The videos can be accessed through the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) under the "Sports Medicine" section. Likewise, the educational materials for parents and students, which include a short memo and video, and the sign-off forms for parents and students, are also available on the OHSAA website (OHSAA.org) under the "Sports Medicine" section.

It is strongly recommended that each member high school in the state have always at least one functional automated external defibrillator (AED) onsite at the school and/or facility and easily accessible during any school related function, including athletic practices, contests and/or other events, for use during emergencies. A person or entity that acquires an AED shall comply with all regulations governing the placement within the facility of an AED. AEDs are to be made available under the advice and consent of a physician by individuals with proper training and certification.

Return to Play Form for Schools

Ohio High School Athletic Association
4080 Roselea Place, Columbus, Ohio 43214
PH:614-267-2502; FAX:614-267-1677

www.ohsaa.org

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION TO RETURN TO PLAY WHEN A STUDENT HAS BEEN REMOVED DUE TO A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

Ohio State Law as well as NFHS rules and OHSAA policy require a student who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with concussion to be removed from a practice or contest and **not permitted to reenter practice or competition on the same day as the removal**. Thereafter, **written medical authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.)** or another qualified licensed medical provider, who works in consultation with, collaboration with or under the supervision of an M.D. or D.O. or who is working pursuant to the referral by an M.D. or D.O., AND is authorized by the Board of Education or other governing board, **is required to grant clearance for the student to return to participation**. This form shall serve as the authorization that the physician or licensed medical professional has examined the student and has cleared the student to return to participation. The physician or licensed medical professional must complete this form and submit to a school administrator prior to the student's resumption of participation in practice and/or a contest. **To reiterate, this student is not permitted to reenter practice or competition on the same day as the removal.**

I, _____, M.D., D.O. or _____ (other qualified licensed medical provider) have examined the following

(Print name of MD, DO or Other)

student, _____ from _____ High School/7-8th grade school

(Name of Student),

who was removed from a _____ (sport) contest at the _____ level (V, JV, 9th, 7-8th) due to exhibition of signs/symptoms/behaviors consistent with a concussion. I have examined this student and determined that the student is cleared to resume participation upon the completion of the directions provided below.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR DIRECTIONS BELOW

Return to play protocol for concussion as outlined in Zurich Consensus Statement 2012 or as attached.

Return to play protocol for concussion required under direction of Licensed Athletic Trainer or another qualified Licensed medical provider as approved
in above directive

Return to play protocol for concussion not required, and the student may return to participation in practice and competition on this date _____

Other: (explain): _____

VALID ONLY WITH ALL INFORMATION COMPLETED

Signature of Medical Professional

(MD, DO or another qualified Licensed Medical Provider as Approved in the Above Directive)

Date: _____

Contact Information:

(Print or Stamp)

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Return to play is also subject to clarification of this document, as deemed necessary, by Licensed Athletic Trainer, other qualified Licensed medical providers authorized by Board of Education or other governing body, or school district administration. Return to play decisions are also subject to recognized principles of conditioning, skill development, mental preparedness, etc.

Parent(s)/Guardian and student are reminded that the initial signature document of awareness of signs and symptoms of concussion and need/requirement to report are still in effect. Parent(s)/Guardian and student have a responsibility to report any further signs or symptoms of a concussion or head injury to coaches, administrators, and the student- athlete's doctor. Information regarding signs and symptoms are available from school district personnel or OHSAA website.

8/23/25

PRESENT THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Note: The school must retain this form indefinitely as a part of the student's permanent record. Medical Providers should retain a copy for their own records.



**Pre-Game Public Address Announcement
Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Ladies & Gentlemen,

The Board of Directors, Commissioner and Staff of Ohio High School Athletic Association welcome you to this OHSAA sanctioned contest. To honor America, please stand and join in the singing/playing of our National Anthem. *(Playing of the **NATIONAL ANTHEM**)*

As the host of today/tonight’s game, the Athletic Department at _____ High School welcomes you to today’s/tonight’s basketball game between _____ High School and _____ High School and thanks you for your support of high school student-athletes.

The officials assigned to this game have met the requirements set by the Ohio High School Athletic Association and have been approved by both schools to provide their important role in today’s/tonight’s game.

The officials for this game are:

_____, and

The athletes, coaches and officials are guests of _____ High School and fans are asked to respect the effort each of them has put forth preparing for today’s/tonight’s contest. We ask all attending to show courtesy and respect for fellow fans, officials, coaches, those administrating the contest and of course – your team and your opponent. And remember to **“Respect the Game”**. Now let’s meet the players in today’s/tonight’s game.

Visiting Coaches and Team - Starters last