

Middle School Football Handbook

Philosophy

School District #11's Middle School Interscholastic Athletic Program strives to provide an opportunity for all interested students to discover and grow within the offered sports. Students will compete at a level that is developmentally appropriate for most and in an atmosphere that strives to an overall positive experience for the student.

Team Division

Teams will be designated as A-squad and B-squad.

- The A-squad team will consist of primarily 8th graders and 7th graders who have prior knowledge of the game, are athletically advanced or are comparable in size to 8th grade players.
- The B-squad team will consist of 6th and 7th graders (special allocations for 8th graders on B-squad will be handled on case by case basis, Athletic office approval is required).

Practice requirements

- Athletes must have Sports Physicals and Emergency contact forms turned into the school office before participating in practice.
- Players must attend 5 days of practice (helmet on) prior to engaging in contact practice (all pads).
- Players must have 9 practices prior to playing in their first game.

Athlete Participation

- Players who have met the practice requirements and who are prepared to participate safely should be given adequate time on the field.

Coach Positions

- There is one paid position per team, all other coaches are volunteers.
- Volunteer coaches must complete D11 Volunteer coaching protocol.

Team Box Area

- Coaches, managers, trainers and players only within the team area.
- Spectators who are inside the team area may incur a penalty for their team.
- Players who are not on the field, and coaches must stay inside the team box.

Spectators

- Spectators must be on the same sideline as their team while remaining out of the team area.
- Spectators are not permitted onto the field unless invited by officials.

Spectator Ejections

Spectators that are ejected from the field by; officials, field supervisor, school admin, etc. can not return to the field as a spectator until they have met with a district level Athletic Director. There is a one game suspension minimum following the ejection.

Rules

NFHS Rules will be followed

Timing

- 8-minute Clock Stop Quarters
- Clock will stop for injuries and time outs

Penalties

- Minor penalties = 5 yards
- Major penalties = 10 & 15 yards

Ball Placement

- Kickoff will occur at the teams 35 yard line
- Touchbacks will be placed on the offensive teams 20 yard line.

Substitution Rule

- All players that are in full uniform on the sidelines must play at least one quarters worth of time of the game. Injury is the only factor that will be acceptable in decreased play time. Injured or ineligible players on the sideline should not have helmets on to help differentiate them from eligible substitutes.

Game Cancelations

- Site supervisors are equipped with monitoring devices and will delay the game if lightning strikes within 10 miles.
- Games that are suspended by weather or other means following the end of the first half will be considered a completed game.

Scoring

Touchdown = 6 points

Extra Point: run in =1 point, throw caught in end zone = 2 points

Mercy Rule

At half-time or any time in the second half, if the score exceeds a 30-point differential the game is over.

Final Season Game

The final game of the season will be seeded base on record. The top four teams will play; seed one vs seed two and seed three vs seed four.

Additional Scrimmage Games

Teams can seek up to two additional games per season with outside of league teams.

Rules Clarification, Updates/Changes August 2022

Chop Block – changed to waist down

Intentional Grounding – passer can now dump the ball to avoid a sac, outside the free blocking zone, ball must make the line of scrimmage.

Targeting/Defenseless Player *Rule 2-32-16*

- Targeting – forcible contact above the shoulders with helmet, forearm, fist, elbow or shoulders
- Defenseless player is a player who, because of his physical position and focus of concentration, is especially vulnerable to injury. When in doubt a player is defenseless.

Personal Fouls

- Not Automatic 1st Downs
- Automatic 1st Downs are Roughing – Passer Kicker, Snapper and Holder

Defensive Pass Interference – 15 yard Penalty

Holding – 10 yards spot foul enforced from the spot if behind the end of the run or from the end of the run if it is behind the spot of foul

Horse Collar – Middle of the shoulders to back

- Hand inside jersey or pads down to the nameplate
- Pull straight back to the ground
- ***Not a horse collar*** if from the front; tackled forward; another player involved in tackle; spins runner around
- Hand in front of jersey ***NOT*** a horse collar

Facemask – it is not a foul to touch the facemask

- A foul for grabbing and twisting
- Runner has an exception, they can stiff arm the defender, but not twist or pull the facemask

12 Players in the Huddle is legal

- A substitute has 3 seconds to notify he is a sub and player begin to leave the field

Rule differences between levels

- Professional NFL
534 differences between NFL and College
- College NCAA
263 differences between College and High School
- High School NFHS