

CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
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www.ciacsports.com

**42<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL 2017 FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS**  
**Sponsored by CT DOT, IGA, MaxPreps, Spalding and Subway**



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The CIAC state quarter-final football championship playoffs will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2017. Semi-finals will be held on Sunday, December 3 and finals will be held on Saturday, December 9, 2017.

1. Alert Page
2. CIAC Pre-season Conditioning Regulations
3. CIAC Spring Practice Conditioning Regulations
4. The Selection System Instruction Sheet
5. CIAC Football Playoff Information
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CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
2017 CIAC FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS

**ALERT PAGE**

**SIX QUARTER RULE** – Counting quarters and defining a week new approved language

1. Football student-athletes may not participate in more than two levels of competition in any one week period.  
(Examples of levels: Varsity, JV, Freshman, Other)
2. Football student-athletes may not exceed participation in more than six (6) quarters in any one week period.

**Penalty**

When there is a violation of this (six-quarter) rule:

- The varsity head coach will be disqualified and will be ineligible to participate in all contests until he/she sits out for the next contest at the same level of play.
- He/she must retake Coaching Education Module 51 by the end of the same school year.
- The program will review its procedures for keeping track of student-athlete playing time and create a process/plan that ensures that athletes in the program do not exceed the number of quarters played per week again.
- The athlete will be deemed ineligible for the remainder of the year until reinstated by the CIAC Board of Control.
- The game in which the violation occurs is forfeited. A fine will be levied at \$100 per occurrence to a maximum of \$500.

**Definitions:**

- “Level of competition” is defined as either varsity, junior varsity, freshman or any other additional level.
- A “quarter” is counted towards participation once an athlete has been involved in at least six (6) plays in any one quarter.
- A “One week period” is defined as a period of time where a minimum of five days (24 hour periods) of rest or practice are scheduled between athletic contests except when games are postponed.

**SCRIMMAGES** – Team must have a minimum of three (3) days of practice prior to scheduling a full team scrimmage. **In football five (5) days of conditioning practice plus three (3) days of practice in full pads is required before a full team scrimmage.**

All sports teams and individual athletes must have a minimum of ten (10) physical/exertional practice days with their school before the date of the first scheduled competition. No team/athlete shall practice/compete with their school more than six (6) consecutive days to provide a day of rest. Saturdays, Sundays and holidays may be used as practice days unless prohibited by local board policy. Sunday practices may be counted to fulfill the ten day requirement.

**KOREY STRINGER INSTITUTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION** – The CIAC has endorsed the Korey Stringer Institute recommendation for heat acclimatization for all schools. See page 18 of the tournament document for details.

**PERSON-TO-PERSON CONTACT – PRACTICE LIMITATIONS** – The CIAC Board of Control adopted new requirements that went into effect with 2014 spring practices. Please see page 6 for full details.

**BYE WEEK** – One week has been added to the season to allow for a bye week which must be in weeks 4-6 beginning with the 2018-19 season. NO EXCEPTIONS.

**TOURNAMENT ROSTER / ENTRY FEE** – Tournament rosters can be submitted on the eligibility center or the submit scores / forms option under the CIAC for coaches menu at ciacsports.com. Rosters must be submitted by November 20, 2017. Entry fee of \$150 must be mailed to the CIAC office, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410.

**PLAN AHEAD – COLLEGE BOARD EXAMINATIONS AND ACT** – There shall be no postponement of games because of College Board Examinations or the ACT. Schools that feel they have a good chance of making the Playoffs should encourage team members to make arrangements to take the examinations on another date.

**TOURNAMENT FORMAT FOR 2017** – The 2017 championships will be played in a three game format – quarter-finals on November 28, 2017, semi-finals on Sunday, December 3, 2017 and finals on Saturday, December 9, 2017. The top thirty-two (32) teams, eight from each of the four divisions, will qualify for the championships. Quarter-finals and semi-finals will be played at the site of the higher ranked team with the start time to be announced. The sites for the finals will be determined by the Football Committee. **Sites must have lights.**

**CIAC LATE ENTRY POLICY**

- No tournament entries will be accepted after the deadline established by each sports committee except those approved by the CIAC Board of Control.
- Corrections requested by a school to an entry form that was submitted by the established deadline but prior to seeding/pairing data being published on the web site, will be assessed a fee of \$50 per correction to a maximum of \$250.
- All requests for corrections must be submitted on a support ticket via the online eligibility center. **No phone request will be considered.**

**TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS VIOLATIONS** – If a school fails to comply with tournament regulations and such requires the CIAC tournament sports committee, central office staff, or the CIAC Board of Control to redo any portion of the tournament pairings or such non-compliance adversely impacts the management of the tournament, and administrative violation fee of \$50 will be imposed upon the school before entry into the tournament will be allowed.

**SPRING FOOTBALL PRACTICE** – The CIAC Board of Control in March 2008 voted to maintain spring football for member schools. The Board of Control also approved an alternative to traditional spring football practice which allows member schools the choice of traditional spring football or to add four (4) days to the start of practice in August. Schools MUST select one or the other, but not both, by May15 of each school year via the online selection form on the CIAC web site.

The rules/regulations governing spring football and pre-season conditioning and practice can be found on pages 7-9 of this document.

**TIE BREAK** – It is now mandatory that all games played against member schools will use the CIAC tie-break procedures during the regular and post-season.

All games played against out-of-state teams who are members of their state association will not be bound by this rule in 2017 when the game is played at the site of the out-of-state team.

**OVERTIME IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME** – The CIAC Football Committee voted that all final games that are tied will continue to use the CIAC tie-break procedures until a winner is declared.

**SCORE MANAGEMENT POLICY** - The following score management policy will be in place for the 2017 season.

The following running clock rules would apply to all CIAC-sanctioned football games played in the State of Connecticut, including varsity, junior varsity, sub-varsity, and freshmen games. These rules would apply to playoff games but would not be applied to state championship game(s). A one-year trial has proven to be successful and the committee asked that it be voted on to become permanent.

**Point Differential for Consideration**

- When one team leads by 35 or more points in the third quarter or the fourth quarter, the officials shall use a running clock to time the game.
- If the score differential is reduced to less than 35 points in the third quarter or the fourth quarter, the officials shall revert to regular timing until the point differential again reaches 35 (third quarter) or (fourth quarter) points.

--- The one year trial had a slight difference that has been changed above. The trial mandated the running clock when the score reached 42 points in the third quarter (45 in the fourth as above) and reverted back to regular timing when the differential was less than 42 points in the third quarter (35 in the fourth did not change).

### **Running Clock Operations Rules**

- 1) The clock will run continuously when:
  - First down is awarded to either team, including following a change of possession;
  - Ball or runner with the ball goes out-of-bounds;
  - Legal or illegal forward pass is incomplete;
  - Penalty enforcement.
  
- 2) The clock shall be stopped for:
  - End of a period;
  - Scores (touchdown, field goal, safety);
  - Try plays following a touchdown;
  - Charged team timeout;
  - Official's timeout;
  - Injury timeout.

Rationale: The CIAC rules that limit the number of levels a student may appear in football games during a week and limit the number of quarters a student may participate during a week may make it difficult for coaches to follow appropriate score management protocols AND ensure that the team has enough players eligible to play all games at all levels.

*Note: The message regarding the importance of consistently adhering to score management protocols has been heard loud and clear by CIAC member school football coaches, athletic directors and principals. CIAC member school coaches have done an exemplary job of adhering to the principles of good sportsmanship in games where the score differential was significant and the game outcome no longer in doubt. There are score management protocols in the handbook that would remain to remind coaches of what they can do even with the running clock in place. The 50 point rule is no longer necessary.*

**RECONDITIONING/RECERTIFYING FOOTBALL HELMETS** – Effective September 1, 2011 NAERA members will not recondition/recertify any football helmet ten years of age or older.

National Athletic Equipment Reconditioners Association, NAERA, announced a new ten year policy adopted in their winter meeting. The ten years shall be determined by the manufacturers date as required by NOCSAE document 001.

For example, at the end of this upcoming 2017 football season, any helmet dated 2008 or older will not be reconditioned / recertified.

**REPORTING GAME SCORES** – In order to ensure that standings and rankings on both the CIAC's websites and other sites which draw their data from us are timely and accurate, all regular season scores must be entered online no more than 24 hours following the game's completion. It is highly recommended that scores are entered from the site as soon as the game ends.

Scores may be entered via the Online Eligibility Center, the "Submit Scores / Forms" option of the "CIAC for Coaches" menu at ciacsports.com, or the "submit Scores" button in our ciacmobile.com mobile site. Entering scores at ciacsports.com or ciacmobile.com requires either a coaches or scorekeeper's access code, those codes are managed via the Online Eligibility Center and can be retrieved from a school's athletic director.

**Students with Special Needs** – Coaches are reminded to inform contest officials prior to each competition of any student with special needs who could be competing in the contest when his/her disability could impact the individual's performance or the conduct of the competition.

**CIAC TOURNAMENT SITE MEDIA POLICY** – The CIAC places tremendous value on the role the media plays in promoting and highlighting high school sports. To that purpose CIAC tournament venues and hosts should make every effort to provide a working environment conducive to all media (print, broadcast and internet based) covering our events. The following are **minimum standards**, developed in consultation with the CIAC Media Advisory Committee, which should be provided for working media at all CIAC tournament sites:

1. A minimum of one hour following the conclusion of post-game interviews to write in the press box, press area or a suitable facility in close proximity to the site of the event (i.e. office, classroom, etc.).
2. Access to electric power (shared power strip, etc.).
3. Access to wireless internet service.

Site directors should communicate these requirements to any staff person who may be responsible for the administration of the event. If for some reason a site will not be able to provide these items for a contest, a site representative should inform the CIAC in advance and work with the media on site before the game and work to provide a reasonable solution to the issue. Members of the media who will be covering events are directed to contact the appropriate site as far in advance as possible to inform them they will be at the event and discuss what arrangements will be made for working media at the site.

**UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS AT CIAC-SANCTIONED EVENTS** – The use of unmanned aerial systems, often referred to as drones, is prohibited for any purpose by any person(s) at all CIAC-sanctioned events. This policy includes not only the restricted playing area of the venue(s), but also the physical confines of the entire stadium / field / arena structure. For the purpose of this policy, an unmanned aerial system is any aircraft without a human pilot on board.

**NEW CONCUSSION AND SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST LEGISLATION AND CIAC REQUIREMENTS** – Beginning July 1, 2014 all CIAC member schools are required to educate all parents and student-athletes on the signs and symptoms of concussion and return-to-play requirements as well as signs and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest. Educational information both written and video that schools can use to meet this requirement are available online at the CIAC web site. Additionally, all parents and student-athletes must sign off that they have been educated in the signs and symptoms of concussion and sudden cardiac arrest using the consent forms that are available on the CIAC web site or through the school athletic department. No athlete can participate in football or any other sport until properly educated and there are signed consent forms on file.

Further, the new State Statute requires parents/guardians to be notified within twenty-four (24) hours when an athlete has been removed from play due to an injury. Schools will need to determine who is the responsible school personnel who will make contact with the parent. Schools will also be required to report all concussions sustained in or out-of-school annually to the State Department of Education. Schools will need to develop protocol on who reports such information. This requirement goes into effect July 1, 2014.

## 2017 NFHS FOOTBALL RULE CHANGES

- 1-3-1h (New) Commercial advertising is not permitted on the ball.
- 1-5-1b(3) Further clarifies that the jersey of the home team shall be a dark color clearly contrasting to the white jersey required for the visiting team.
- 1-5-1a(2) Permits any of the game officials to accompany the referee to meet with the head coach for equipment verification.  
Note, 1-5-4
- 2-3-10 (New) Defines a blindside block and specifies a penalty for an illegal blindside block.  
9-4-3n (New)  
9-4 Penalty
- 2-16-2h Illegal participation fouls by the receiving team occurring during the kick are now enforced under post-scrimmage kick fouls.
- 2-24-10 (New) Defines a pop-up kick and specifies a penalty for a pop-up kick.  
6-1-11 (New)  
6-1 Penalty
- 2-32-16 Expands the definition of a defenseless player by incorporating specific examples.
- 3-4-7 (New) Gives the option to the offended team to start the clock on the snap for an accepted penalty inside the last two minutes of either half.
- 4-2-2l (New) Specifies that the ball is declared dead if a prosthetic limb comes completely off of the runner.
- 7-1-6 Stipulates that it is encroachment to strike the ball or the snapper's hand/arm prior to the snapper releasing the ball.
- 7-5-10 Removes non-contact face guarding from the pass interference restrictions.

### 2017 Editorial Changes

Facilities Statement; 1-3-2; 1-5-1a(1); 1-5-1a(2) Note; 1-5-2b; 1-5-3b(6); 1-5-3c(2); 1-5-5; 1-6-1; 1-6-2; 2-5-3; 2-41-3; 2-41-5; 3-4-8; 3-5-7f; 3-5-8b(2); 3-5-10b; 3-5-10c; 4-2-2k; 7-5-6a; 9-3 Penalty; 9-4-3k; 9-8-1h; 10-5-1c; Football Fundamentals – VI-2; Penalty Summary; Index

### 2017 Points of Emphasis

1. Responsibility on Players to Avoid Illegal Contact
2. Illegal Helmet Contact
3. Sideline Management and Control, Professional Communication Between Coaches and Game Officials
4. Proper Enforcement of Penalties for Violations of the Equipment Rules

**FOOTBALL CONTACT PRACTICE LIMITATIONS** – Following the conclusion of the 2014 football season, the CIAC worked with its Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and Football Committee to establish new policy on the amount of permitted contact in football practice. The new regulations were created after examining language from other state associations and reviewing the results of surveys sent to all Connecticut high school football coaches. The changes in person-to-person contact practice limitations which will apply to spring, pre- and regular season football are as follows:

Live person-to-person contact be limited in practice to the following:

- **Week 1** – Pre-season conditioning – No contact
- **Weeks 2 & 3** – Maximum 120 minutes per week – includes only 1 scrimmage per week (deduct 60 minutes from the 120 minutes for each additional scrimmage)
- **Weeks 4-13** – Competition season – Maximum 90 minutes per week (Must include a bye week – No (zero) contact in practice allowed)
- **Week 14** – 45 minutes of contact in practice per that week
- **Week 15 Thanksgiving Day Game & State Tournament** – (Starts the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving Day Game) – Zero contact in practice allowed
- **Note:** Spring Practice – 120 minutes for the entire spring session – After the three (3) day conditioning period)

### **Definition of Contact**

1. **Full Contact** – Football drills or live game simulations where live action occurs (11 on 11 or 7 on 7)
2. **Live Contact** – Contact at game speed where players execute full tackles at a competitive pace taking players to the ground.
3. **Thud** – Initiation of contact at or up to full speed with no pre-determined winner and no take-down to the ground.

### **Definition of Non-Contact**

1. **Air** – Players run unopposed without bags or any competition.
2. **Bags** – Activity is executed against a bag, shield or pad to allow for a soft contact-surface with or without the resistance of a teammate or coach standing behind the bag.
3. **Control** – Drill is run at an assigned speed (not full) until the moment of contact, one player is pre-determined the winner by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.

### **Six quarter rule and defining a week**

1. Football student-athletes may not participate in more than two (2) levels of competition in any one week period. (Examples of levels – varsity, JV, freshman, other)
2. Football student-athletes may not exceed participation in more than six (6) quarters in any one week period.

### **Penalty**

When there is a violation of this (six-quarter) rule:

- The varsity head coach will be disqualified and will be ineligible to participate in all contests until he/she sits out for the next contest at the same level of play.
- He/she must retake Coaching Education Module 51 by the end of the same school year.
- The program will review its procedures for keeping track of student-athlete playing time and create a process/plan that ensures that athletes in the program do not exceed the number of quarters played per week again.
- The athlete will be deemed ineligible for the remainder of the year until reinstated by the CIAC Board of Control.
- The game in which the violation occurs is forfeited. A fine will be levied at \$100 per occurrence to a maximum of \$500.

### **Definitions**

- **“Level of Competition”** is defined as varsity, junior varsity, freshman or other.
- A **“quarter”** is counted towards participation once an athlete has been involved in at least six (6) plays in any one quarter.
- A **“one week period”** is defined as a period of time where a minimum of five days (24 hour periods) of rest or practice are scheduled between athletic contests except when games are postponed.
- A **“play”** is defined as any offensive, defensive or special team’s participation during a scheduled contest.

## SPRING FOOTBALL CONDITIONING PRACTICE 2017

**Spring Football Practice Guidelines** -- The Korey Stringer Institute Recommendations for Heat Acclimatization apply to spring practice.

1. Spring football may begin on the Friday before Memorial Day, but not before this date.
2. Conditioning Practice:
  - a. Each participant in spring football practice must have three days of conditioning before the participant may wear full equipment.
  - b. **On days 1 and 2** – Total practice time should not exceed 3 hours on any one day AND footballs may not be used for the first hour on either day. Helmets may be used on both days.
  - c. **On day 3** – Total practice time should not exceed 3 hours and footballs may not be used for the first hour. Helmets and shoulder pads may be used on the third day AND contact **ONLY** with sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated.
  - d. Warm-up, stretching, cool down, walk through, conditioning and weight room activities are included as part of the 3 hour practice time.
  - e. **On days 4-10** all other present regulations regarding spring remain the same.
  - f. **Only one practice session per day will be permitted.**
  - g. A coach must be present at all practice sessions.
  - h. Spring sports participants must have completed their season before joining spring practice.
3. A maximum of ten (10) days of spring football practice is permitted; however, spring football cannot be carried over past the date on which the school closes for summer recess. The ten (10) days includes the three (3) condition days and the seven (7) contact days.
4. Only 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be permitted to participate in spring practice. (No 8<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.)
5. **Person-to-person contact is limited to a maximum of 120 minutes during the seven days of allowed contact.**
6. **Only one intra-squad scrimmages will be allowed and the contact time must be deducted from the 120 minutes of allowed contact. Interscholastic scrimmages and games are not allowed.**

### MANDATORY BYE WEEK – REGULAR SEASON

One week has been added to the season to allow for a bye week which must be in weeks 4-6 beginning with the 2018-19 season. NO EXCEPTIONS.



## FALL FOOTBALL PRACTICE CONDITIONING / CONTACT – AUGUST 2017

### Regular Season Practice Guidelines

1. Football physical conditioning practice must be conducted for at least five (5) days prior to contact and no earlier than Friday, August 18, 2017 for those who conducted traditional spring football practice or Monday, **August 14, 2017 for those who chose not to conduct traditional spring football practice.**
2. On days 1-5 there cannot be more than 1 practice session per day AND the total practice time must not exceed 3 hours in any one day.
3. On days 1 and 2 footballs may not be used for the first hour on either day. Only helmets may be used on both days.
4. On days 3-5 footballs may not be used for the first hour on each day. Only helmets and shoulder pads may be used AND contact ONLY with sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated.
5. **A coach must be present at all conditioning sessions.**

### Contact Practice with Pads

6. Teams may start practice with pads and contact beginning Thursday, August 24, 2017 for those school that conducted traditional spring practice **or Saturday, August 19 for those who chose not to conduct traditional spring practice,** provided the minimum number of conditioning sessions have been held. No contact is permitted prior to these dates
7. **A coach must be present at all practice sessions**
8. Live contact in full gear may not begin before the 6<sup>th</sup> day.
9. On days 6-14 live person-to-person contact is limited to a maximum of 120 minutes plus one full team or seven-on-seven scrimmage. If a second scrimmage is conducted the time must be deducted from the 120 minutes of allowed contact.
10. On days 6-14 a double practice day in full gear must be followed by a single practice day in full gear. On single practice days, one walk through without full gear is permissible as long as it is separated from the full practice by at least 3 hours. When a double practice day in full gear is followed by a day of rest then another double practice day in full gear is permitted after the rest day.
11. On any double practice day, neither practice should exceed three hours in duration, and no more than five total hours of practice in the day. Warm-up, stretching, cool down, walk through, conditioning and weight room activities are included as part of the practice time. The two practices should be separated by at least three continuous hours in a cool environment.
12. Team must have a minimum of three (3) days of practice prior to scheduling a full team scrimmage. In football five days of conditioning practice plus three days of practice in full pads is required before a full team scrimmage.

All sports teams and individual athletes must have a minimum of ten (10) physical/exertional practice days with their school before the date of the first scheduled competition. **No team/athlete shall practice/compete with their school more than six (6) consecutive days to provide a day of rest.** Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays may be used unless prohibited by local board policy.

13. Teams found in violation of the above rules will be subject to disciplinary review by the CIAC Board of Control.
14. Coaches are required to review with their players the suggestions for reducing head and neck injuries and “hot weather hints.”

**Football Practice Calendar – August 2017**

**Schedule for schools that Do Not Conduct Spring Practice**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	August 14 <b>Day 1</b> Conditioning	August 15 <b>Day 2</b> Conditioning	August 16 <b>Day 3</b> Conditioning	August 17 <b>Day 4</b> Conditioning	August 18 <b>Day 5</b> Conditioning	August 19 <b>Pads – No earlier than this date</b>
August 20 Optional <b>Pads</b>	August 21 <b>Pads</b>	August 22 <b>Pads</b>	August 23 <b>Pads</b> * 1 <sup>st</sup> allowable scrimmage	August 24 <b>Pads</b>	August 25	August 26

\*First allowable day for a full team or seven-on-seven scrimmage

**Football Practice Calendar – August 2017**

**Schedule for schools that Conduct Spring Practice**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					August 18 <b>Day 1</b> Conditioning	August 19 <b>Day 2</b> Conditioning
August 20 *Optional Extra Conditioning	August 21 <b>Day 3</b> Conditioning	August 22 <b>Day 4</b> Conditioning	August 23 <b>Day 5</b> Conditioning	August 24 <b>Pads No earlier than this date</b>	August 25 <b>Pads</b>	August 26* <b>Pads</b>
August 27 Optional <b>Pads</b>	August 28 <b>Pads</b> *1 <sup>st</sup> allowable scrimmage	August 29 <b>Pads</b>				

\*Three days of contact practice in full pads are required prior to a full team or seven-on seven scrimmage.

CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

To: CIAC Member Schools  
Re: **Football Selection System**

1. Four (4) classes of competition will be used for the tournament. Thus a champion will be determined in the  
Division LL                      672 and Over  
Division L                         514 - 671  
Division M                        389 - 513  
Division S                         Up to 388

The Football Committee will review yearly the number of teams in each division striving for equity in numbers of teams in each. (When there is an uneven number of teams for each division, the greater number of team(s) will be placed into the smallest division(s) by enrollment first.) **A listing of tournament divisions is available on the football page at [ciacsports.com](http://ciacsports.com).**

2. To be eligible for the Playoffs a minimum of eight (8) games must be played.
3. The top eight teams in each division will be selected using a point system as follows:

Four classes of competition will be used with the point system.

Division LL - Division L - Division M - Division S

- a. A school will receive 100 points for defeating a school in its own division;  
90 points for defeating a school in one lower division;  
80 points for defeating a school in two lower divisions;  
70 points for defeating a school in three lower divisions;  
110 points for defeating a school in one higher division;  
120 points for defeating a school in two higher divisions;  
130 points for defeating a school in three higher divisions.
- b. A school defeating a league opponent of a lower division will not be subject to the structure as outlined in paragraph a., but will receive 100 points.
- c. The following is used **only if a game is played against an out-of-state team at the out-of-state team's site.**  
The out-of-state team must be a member of their state high school association.

A school will receive 50 points for tying a school in its own division;

45 points for tying a school in one lower division;  
40 points for tying a school in two lower divisions;  
35 points for tying a school in three lower divisions;  
55 points for tying a school in one higher division;  
60 points for tying a school in two higher divisions;  
65 points for tying a school in three higher divisions.

- d. A school will receive 10 points for each victory and 5 points for each tie earned by any opponent it has defeated.
- e. A school will receive 5 points for each victory and 2.5 points for each tie earned by an opponent it has tied. A school will not receive any bonus points for a tie where they were the opponent.

- f. The total number of playoff points will be divided by the total number of games played to determine the point value earned by each school.
- g. The following five steps will be used in breaking ties in pairings if two or more schools finish with the same point value in the same division.
  - 1) In the event there are exactly two schools tied at the point value and the two schools have met during the regular season, the winner wins the position in question (head-to-head).
  - 2) The wins and ties of each of the opponents are added (2 points per win and 1 point per tie) and the team with the greatest number of points wins the position in question. This includes each opponent regardless of whether the game was won or lost.
  - 3) The team that defeated the highest rated (CIAC point system) team wins the position in question.
  - 4) The team with the best winning percentage wins the position in question.
  - 5) Each team will be assigned a computer-generated random “tiebreaker number” two weeks prior to the end of the season. If there is still no winner after the first ten criteria in this section are applied then the team with the highest random tiebreaker number will be the winner of the position in question.
- h. The top eight (8) teams in each division will qualify for the semi-final games (32 teams total).

**Tournament Format for 2017** – The 2017 championships will be played in a three game format – quarter-finals on November 28, 2017, semi-finals on Sunday, December 3, 2017 and finals on Saturday, December 9, 2017. The top thirty-two (32) teams, eight from each of the four divisions, will qualify for the championships. Quarter-finals and semi-finals will be played at the site of the higher ranked team with the start time to be announced. The sites for the finals will be determined by the Football Committee and all sites for all levels of tournament play must have lights. If a site is a natural grass field, an alternative site that is artificially surfaced, must be named prior to tournament play in case weather conditions dictate that a grass field is not playable.

The #1 seed in each of the eight divisions will play the #4 seed and #2 seed will play #3. The winners advance to the championship game the following week.

- i. **CHAMPIONSHIP SITES:** To be determined – All must have lights, access to lavatory facilities, a sheltered, heated and lighted area for teams to prepare both at half-time, and prior to the game. While a locker room may be used, some better choices may be available as long as they meet the criteria and maintain privacy and security for the athletes. Wearing cleats must be allowed in these areas.

**Quarter-final games** will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2017 – Site of the higher ranked team

**Semi-final games** will be held on Sunday, December 3, 2017 – Site of the higher ranked team

**Final games** will be held on Saturday, December 9, 2017 at sites to be determined.

CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

**2017 CONNECTICUT HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PLAYOFF INFORMATION**

**TIE-BREAK REQUIREMENT** – The CIAC Football Committee voted that starting with the 2013 season it is now mandatory that all games played against member schools will use the CIAC tie-break procedures during the regular and post-season.

All games played against out-of-state teams who are members of their state association will not be bound by this rule in 2017.

**TOURNAMENT ROSTERS, ENTRY FORM AND ENTRY FEE** – The CIAC Football Committee will meet on Friday, November 24 to select those schools that will take part in the playoffs. All schools wishing to take part are required to submit on the eligibility center or the “Submit Scores / Forms Option” under the CIAC for Coaches Menu at [ciacsports.com](http://ciacsports.com). Rosters must be submitted by Monday, November 20.

Entry fee of \$150 should be mailed to the CIAC office, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410. If a school needs an invoice in order to pay its tournament fee, one can be downloaded by using the “Generate Tournament Invoice” link under the football options in the password-protected online eligibility center.

**THE LAST DATE TO COUNT WILL BE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23.** No school may pre-schedule a game after November 23.

GAMES PLAYED ON THE FRIDAY OR SATURDAY AFTER THANKSGIVING CAN BE CONSIDERED IN THE SELECTION PROCESS IF THEY OCCUR AS THE RESULT OF A POSTPONEMENT OF A THANKSGIVING DAY GAME.

Data Sheet Entry Forms must be submitted via the password-protected online eligibility center or the “submit scores / forms” option under the CIAC for coaches menu at [ciacsports.com](http://ciacsports.com) by Monday, November 20. Late entries will be disqualified.

**FORFEITED GAMES** – **Football exclusively** – The option of choosing to accept or not accept the win does not exist. This applies to the sport of football only. All scheduled games shall be played as a victory, loss, or tie, or shall be declared as a forfeit. **The Football Committee is empowered to review and make decisions in individual cases when teams are directly affected by the inability to schedule a game on the final Saturday and yet comply with this regulation.**

**DATES / TIMES OF GAMES** – **All quarter-final games will be played on Tuesday, November 28 and semi-final games will be played on Sunday, December 3** at the site of the higher ranked team – game time to be announced. Postponements of quarter-finals will be played on November 29 and semi-finals will be played on December 5.

**All final games will be played on Saturday, December 9, 2017.** The postponement date will be on December 10, 2017.

Only in the case of extremely inclement weather will the game be postponed.

**SITE OF FINAL GAMES** – Sites for the finals will be determined on Tuesday, December 5, 2017.

**CANCELLATION** – Postponements after December 10 may not be possible. The Tournament Director, CIAC staff and Football Committee Chairman will make the final decision to play or not to play beyond the 10th.

**COLLEGE BOARD EXAMINATIONS** – There shall be no postponement of games because of College Board or ACT Examinations. Schools that feel they have a good chance of making the Playoffs should encourage team members to make arrangements to take the examinations on another date. **Please note final games will be played during the day in 2017.**

**DETERMINATION OF RATINGS** – The CIAC Football Committee will classify, by enrollment, opponents that are out-of-state, and prep schools. Out-of-state high schools must be affiliated with their state high school athletic association.

**SCORE MANAGEMENT** – Please see Alert pages for policy.

**DISQUALIFICATION RULE**: When a coach is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior, the coach is ineligible to participate in the next contest at the same level of play (even if the next contest does not occur until league or CIAC tournament play or next year). If one or more different level contests are scheduled prior to the next contest at the same level of play, the coach shall be ineligible to participate in the next (but no more than one) contest at all other levels of play.

**ALL GAMES PLAYED WILL COUNT TOWARD THE TEAM'S RATING EXCEPT THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Games against junior varsity teams will not be counted in the ratings.
2. Games contracted after September 8, 2017, will not be considered in determining a school's point value for playoff consideration. The deadline may be extended ten (10) days to permit a school to complete negotiations for a specific game contract provided a written request for extension is made to the CIAC office. The written request must be received in the CIAC office no later than 3:00 p.m. on September 8, 2017.
3. To be eligible for the playoffs a minimum of eight (8) games must be played.
4. Playoff games to determine a league champion will not be considered.
5. Games played against high schools who are not members of their state association will not be considered.

**SCHEDULES** – In some leagues teams play each other twice, home and home. Where this occurs both games will be counted in determining the team's point value. This policy only applies to league teams, not home and home games with teams in different leagues or independents. In those cases only the first game will count toward tournament.

**REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF DIVISION** – Schools will not be permitted to request a change of division.

**REGULAR SEASON AND PLAYOFF TIE BREAKERS** – It is now mandatory that all games played against member schools will use the CIAC tie-break procedures during the regular and post-season. All games played against out-of-state teams who are members of their state association will not be bound by this rule if the game is played at their site.

**TIE GAMES** – If a regular season or playoff game ends in a tie, the following tie-breaker system will be used:

1. Immediately following the conclusion of the fourth quarter, a coin toss is to be held with the visiting team captain calling heads or tails. The winner of the toss shall be given the choice of offense or defense, or designating the end of the field. The loser gets the remaining option.
2. After a three minute rest period, during which both teams may confer with their coaches, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, first and goal, on the ten (10) yard line.
3. The rules for loss of possession are the same as during the regulation game. If a touchdown is scored the try for an extra point(s) will follow. Field goal attempts are permitted during any down. When a team scores via either a field goal or the try for point following a touchdown it gives up possession of the ball.
4. If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in an overtime period, then the procedure shall be repeated with other overtime periods until a game winner is determined. In this case, there shall be an intermission of two minutes. At the subsequent meeting of team captains, the loser of the overtime coin toss will be given first choice of the options. If additional overtime periods are required, then first options will be alternated with no coin toss.

5. Each team will be permitted one time out during each overtime period.
6. Rules pertaining to offensive and defensive pass interference remain the same in the overtime period.
7. If the defensive team gains possession of the football by recovering a fumble or intercepting a pass, the ball immediately becomes dead. The defensive team may not score points.
8. The team scoring the greater number of points in the overtime shall be declared the winner. Overtime periods will continue until a winner is declared.

Regular season, semi-final and final game(s) will continue using the above tie-breaker procedures until a winner is declared. **Beginning with the third overtime period, teams must go for two after a touchdown.**

**HOME TEAM – VISITING TEAM** – The home team is the team having the highest point value. The home team will wear the dark colored jersey – the visiting team will wear white or light color.

**SELECTION OF OFFICIALS** – The CIAC Football Committee will select the game officials in accordance with the following procedures:

1. The CIAC Football Committee or its designee shall, with the commissioners from the six officiating boards, select the officials, chain crews and clock operators to work all tournament games. Neutral boards will always be assigned to work tournament games.
2. Each commissioner will provide the list of officials selected to work the tournament to the tournament director prior to November 7. Boards failing to do so by that date risk being excluded from working tournament games.
3. Teams qualifying for the tournament will be provided the list of tournament officials prior to November 17.

**RESOLVING DISPUTES AT CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES** – A dispute procedure has been developed for championship games to address a disputed call.

1. Purpose – The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference Football committee desires to provide a process for resolving problems and disputes which may arise during the football playoffs. In establishing this process it is hoped that all parties will feel that they have proper recourse and that all possible steps will have been taken to have the state championships decided on the merits of the competing teams.
2. Clarification – It will be the responsibility of the Tournament Director to clarify the dispute procedure to the assigned game officials, to the head coaches and to the site director prior to the game.
3. Game Disputes – Disputes regarding game situations can only be made by the head coaches. In a dispute situation the head coach will notify the nearest official that he desires a time out to confer with the referee as per the National Federation Rules.

The referee will immediately notify the head coach of the other team and the site coordinator of the nature of the disagreement. He must then meet with all game officials to discuss the issue. The referee is encouraged to also confer with the officials who are assigned to the sideline crew and the clock operator. Every attempt should be made to obtain as much information as possible before rendering a decision. The decision of the referee, based on his discussion with the other officials, is final and must be delivered before the game can continue.

The site director will be responsible for informing the crowd and the media personnel of the dispute and the decision. The site coordinator will also be responsible for reporting the details of the dispute to CIAC officials.

4. Decisions by Game Officials – Disputes arising from the decisions, interpretations and/or misapplications of National Federation or CIAC game rules by officials during the contest must be resolved at the time of the dispute and cannot be contested after the event. All decisions of the game officials are final.

FILM EXCHANGE – Playoff teams must make available to their opponents films or video tapes of any two of their games that the opposing coach desires. (Note: For quarter-final and semi-final games – not later than the Saturday after Thanksgiving and by Monday following the semi-finals.) If one of the teams does not take game films, films of their games taken by opponents will be obtained.

MEDICAL COVERAGE – The site director at the game (semi-finals and finals) will have in attendance the services of a doctor who will be available to either team. A participating team may if it so wishes, have in attendance its own personal physician who will be permitted to attend to its needs. The expense for the personal physician will be the responsibility of the school. An ambulance must be on site at the start of all championship games. **Schools must have their athletic trainer in attendance.**

GAME BALLS – The Spalding Alpha 72-6758 is the official football for tournament play. Other Spalding balls may be used with CIAC approval.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR’S MEETING – The Tournament Director will oversee that the participating schools, site directors and site coordinators know the following: field location, field passes, postponement notification, pre-game time schedule, team introductions, dressing facilities, reserved parking, spectator parking, reserved seating sections (bands), press box, tickets and admission prices, police protection, filming of game, half-time program, faculty supervision, reimbursement of approved school expenses, medical services. This information will be reviewed at the “Press Conference” (date listed below).

PRESS CONFERENCE – CIAC will host a press conference for all schools that advance to the finals on Tuesday, December 5 (snow date Wednesday, December 6, 2017).

REIMBURSEMENT FOR QUARTER-FINAL AND SEMI-FINAL GAMES –CIAC will reimburse the home team in the quarter-final and semi-finals up to \$1,700 for costs associated in staging the game. CIAC will assume the cost of the officials and site director.

PRICE OF ADMISSION – (Subject to change)

<u>Quarter-final / Semi-final Games</u>		<u>Final Games</u>
Free	Children five (5) and under	All tickets will be \$10.00
\$5.00	Students / Senior Citizens	Service men/women with I.D. \$5.00, in
\$10.00	Adults	uniform with I.D. - Free

GAME RULES – There will be full compliance with National Federation Rules – NO EXCEPTIONS.

FINALS – POST GAME AWARDS PRESENTATION – Immediately following the conclusion of the game, each team will report to the 40 yard line on the side of the field they used during pre-game activities. The CIAC football representative will instruct the announcer to announce the post-game awards presentation.

SPORTSMANSHIP -- Member schools are expected to conduct their relations with each other at all levels of competition in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Everyone involved has the obligation to see clearly his/her influence and act accordingly. **The CIAC acknowledges that the school administration is responsible for the athletic program, including the making of broad and specific policies and procedures relating to sportsmanship and the conduct of activities in the school.** To that end, the CIAC urges each school principal to adopt the following sportsmanship procedures and standards for their school and to champion the “Class Act” sportsmanship program as these standards will be used in all CIAC post-season contests.



## CIAC Sportsmanship Guidelines

- The CIAC request that all school personnel – administrators, faculty, and coaches – give special and specific emphasis about CIAC’s expectations for good sportsmanship during the regular season as well as CIAC tournaments requiring that athletes and members of the student body conduct themselves in a manner that reflects nothing but credit upon your school. Any unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of students and adults is unacceptable and will be addressed with strong and appropriate measures.
- The CIAC sportsmanship standards should be as widely disseminated as possible using the student-parent handbook, student-athlete handbook, school newspaper, parent newsletter, school web site and the local media.
- The CIAC sportsmanship standards for spectators should be read by PA announcers prior to each contest.
- The CIAC sportsmanship standards of conduct be prominently posted at all sports venues.
- When event programs are provided, the CIAC sportsmanship standards be included.
- Member schools require having athletes, parents/guardians, sign an acknowledgement which would show that they have read the student-athlete handbook and understand the CIAC sportsmanship standards.
- Member schools work with community officials to insure that levels of the CIAC sportsmanship standards are enforced when contests are held at their school and at non-school facilities.
- The CIAC and the CIAC sports committees insist the CIAC sportsmanship standards be rigorously enforced at all regular season contests and at all CIAC tournament contests. This is particularly important when contests are held at non-school sites.
- Member schools will conduct a pre-season meeting with student-athletes, coaches and parents to review the CIAC sportsmanship standards.
- Member schools should communicate with opposing schools and inform them they are a “Class Act School” and provide them with the CIAC sportsmanship standards which will be strictly adhered to.
- Member schools hosting a game should make available to visiting schools necessary game information – includes directions for parking, location of ticket booths, seating arrangement, ticket prices, game time, directions for each game site.
- Member schools hosting a game should designate specific seating areas for students, bands, adults and visitors. If possible, opposing student bodies should be separated.
- Member schools hosting a game should arrange for adequate police supervision.
- When possible the member schools hosting a game should assign officials to dressing facilities separated from both teams. Provides escorts for the officials when it appears that disturbances may develop.
- Member schools should take measures to prevent fans from getting near or on the playing area and around the players benches. After the contest, prevents fans from going onto the playing area.
- Member schools should provide for adequate supervision of students and facilities. Supervisors should sit in the stands with the students.
- **Member schools should support and adhere to ALL the following CIAC standards.**

## The CIAC “Class Act” Sportsmanship Standards

### **ALL Spectators (including parents):**

- Will adhere to the host school’s acceptable dress code at all home and away contests commensurate with classroom behavior. For CIAC tournament contests all spectators will be appropriately attired with their torso completely covered and with no visible degrading or demeaning writings/logos.
- Any signs displayed must be positive in nature, reference only the school supported by the sign maker, and must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director of the school reference in the sign.
- During outdoor sports, no air horns or horns of any kind or whistles will be used, and any other noisemakers will be allowed with the host athletic director’s approval and only be used during “dead ball” situations to celebrate good play. During indoor sports, no noisemakers will be used. Pep bands are allowable at a home contest if the school provides adult supervision and the band only plays during “dead ball” situations.
- Spectators will cheer positively to support their team, will not cheer negatively against the opponent.
- Spectators will show respect for the game officials and their decisions.
- Spectators will show respect for the playing of the National Anthem.

### **Game Personnel / Announcers:**

- Will explain and consistently enforce host school expectations for spectators.
- Will be enthusiastic but not show favoritism while making announcements, and never publicly question or criticize the players, coaches, or officials.
- Will encourage respect for the National Anthem and remind spectators to remove caps and stand.

### **Coaches**

- Will exemplify high moral character, behavior and leadership, lead by example, and set a standard for players and spectators to follow both on and off the athletic arena.
- Will teach players the rules of the game and to respect the game, and will take action when athletes exhibit poor sportsmanship.
- Will respect the integrity and judgment of officials and will not publicly criticize or question the decisions of officials.
- Will be aware of the competitive balance of contests and will manage the score in a manner that is sportsmanlike and respectful of opponents.

### **Players:**

- Will accept the responsibility and privilege the student-athlete has in representing their school and community by learning and showing teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline in all aspects of the game.
- Will demonstrate respect for self, coach, teammates, opponents, officials and spectators by exhibiting good character and conducting themselves as a positive role model.
- Will win and lose graciously.
- Will cheer for your team, not against your opponent.
- Will congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.

## **KOREY STRINGER INSTITUTE HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION GUIDELINES INCORPORATED INTO CIAC PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

The CIAC Board of Control has adopted the Korey Stringer Heat Acclimatization Guidelines in the sport of football beginning the Spring of 2014.

### **Spring Football Practice Guidelines**

1. Spring football may begin on the Friday before Memorial Day, but not before this date.
2. Conditioning Practice:
  - a. Each participant in spring football practice must have three days of conditioning before the participant may wear full equipment.
  - b. On days 1 and 2 – total practice time should not exceed three hours on any one day AND footballs may not be used for the first hour on either day. Helmets may be used on both days.
  - c. On day 3 – total practice time should not exceed three hours and footballs may not be used for the first hour. Helmets and shoulder pads may be used on the third day AND contact ONLY with sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated.
  - d. Warm-up, stretching, cool down, walk through, conditioning and weight room activities are included as part of the three hour practice time.
  - e. On days 4-10 – all other present regulations regarding spring remain the same.
  - f. Only one practice session per day will be permitted.
  - g. A coach must be present at all practice sessions.
  - h. Spring sports participants must have completed their season before joining spring practice.
3. A maximum of ten (10) days of spring football practice is permitted; however, spring football cannot be carried over past the date on which the school closes for summer recess. The ten (10) days includes the three condition days and the seven contact days. Contact will be limited to a maximum of 120 minutes in the seven days of allowed contact.
4. Only 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be permitted to participate in spring practice. (No 8<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.)
5. Only one intra-squad scrimmages will be allowed and the time of the scrimmage must be deducted from the 120 minutes of allowed contact. Interscholastic scrimmages and games are not allowed.

### **Regular Season Practice Guidelines**

1. Football physical conditioning practice must be conducted for at least five (5) days prior to contact and no earlier than Friday, August 18, 2017 for those who conducted traditional spring football practice or Monday, **August 14, 2017 for those schools who chose not to conduct traditional spring football practice.**
2. On days 1-5 – there cannot be more than one practice session per day AND the total practice time must not exceed three hours in any one day.
3. On days 1 and 2 – footballs may not be used for the first hour on either day. Only helmets may be used on both days.
4. On days 3-5 – footballs may not be used for the first hour on each day. Only helmets and shoulder pads may be used AND contact ONLY with sleds and tackling dummies may be initiated.
5. Live contact in full gear may not begin before the 6<sup>th</sup> day.

6. On days 6-14 a double practice day in full gear must be followed by a single practice day in full gear. On single practice days, one walk through without full gear is permissible as long as it's separated from the full practice by at least three hours. When a double practice day in full gear is followed by a day of rest then another double practice day in full gear is permitted after the rest day.
7. On any double practice day, neither practice should exceed three hours in duration, and no more than five total hours of practice in the day. Warm-up, stretching, cool down, walk through, conditioning and weight room activities are included as part of the practice time. The two practices should be separated by at least three continuous hours in a cool environment.
8. A coach must be present at all practice sessions.
9. On days 6-14 live person-to-person contact is limited to a maximum of 120 minutes plus one full team or seven-on-seven scrimmage. If a second scrimmage is conducted the time must be deducted from the 120 minutes of allowed contact.
10. Teams must have a minimum of three days of practice in full gear prior to a full team interscholastic scrimmage.
11. All teams/individuals must practice a minimum of 10 physical/exertional practice days with their school before the date of the first scheduled competition.
12. No team/athlete shall practice/compete with their school more than six (6) consecutive days to provide a day of rest. A scrimmage is an exertional practice.

### **Questions and Answers**

1. **Q.** May a coach run a three hour conditioning practice during the spring or fall pre-season followed by a one hour weight room session?  
**A.** No, any one day during conditioning cannot exceed three hours of practice time.
2. **Q.** May a coach run a three hour conditioning practice during the spring or fall pre-season conditioning period followed by a one hour chalk talk or film session in a classroom?  
**A.** Yes, the practice does not exceed three hours of physical activity.
3. **Q.** May a coach run two 3-hour practices with players in full gear during days 6-14 of the fall pre-season period?  
**A.** No, total practice time for double sessions cannot exceed five total hours.
4. **Q.** May a coach run two 2-hour practices with players in full gear during days 6-14 of the fall pre-season period?  
**A.** Yes, provided the two practices are separated by at least a three hour rest period.
5. **Q.** May a coach run a 3-hour single practice in full gear followed by a 2-hour walk through in helmets only as long as there are three hours of rest time separating the two sessions during days 6-14 of the fall pre-season?  
**A.** Yes
6. **Q.** May coaches run a one 5-hour practice during days 6-14 of the fall pre-season period?  
**A.** No, no one practice session can exceed three hours in length at any time. The 3-hour session includes warm-up, stretching, cool down, walk through, conditioning and weight room activities.

7. **Q.** May teams have a full scrimmage against another school on the first day of full contact in full gear?
  - A. No, teams must practice for three days in full gear before having an interscholastic scrimmage.
8. **Q.** May teams attend a camp beginning the sixth day of the fall pre-season and practice in full gear against another team at the camp?
  - A. Yes, provided it's not a full team scrimmage and it's practicing against matched athletes from another team.
9. **Q.** May an individual join the football team for the first time on the teams fourteenth day of practice and compete the next day in the school's first regular season game?
  - A. No, individuals must have ten days of practice prior to competition.
10. **Q.** May an athlete who has been injured and being held out from practice during the season for a period of two weeks rejoin the team when medically cleared and play immediately?
  - A. Yes, provided during that two week period the athlete was attending practice and doing some prescribed light conditioning workouts on uninjured areas.

### **HEAT STRESS AND ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

Early fall football, cross country, soccer and field hockey practices are conducted in very hot and humid weather in many parts of the United States. This can lead to heat-related illnesses. Most of the heat-related problems have been associated with football, due to the special equipment and uniforms needed. From 1995 through the 2005 football season there have been 19 high school heat stroke deaths in football. This is not acceptable. Heatstroke deaths are fully preventable in high school sports if the proper precautions are taken.

During hot weather conditions the athlete is subject to the following:

**Heat Cramps** – Heat cramps are a mild heat illness that can be easily treated. These intense muscle spasms usually develop after an athlete has been exercising for a while and has lost large amounts of fluid and salt from sweating.

**Heat Syncope** – Weakness, fatigue and fainting due to loss of salt and water in sweat and exercise in the heat.

**Heat Exhaustion** – Heat exhaustion is a moderate heat illness that occurs when a child continues to be physically active even after he or she starts suffering from ill effects of the heat, like dehydration. The child's body struggles to keep up with the demands, leading to heat exhaustion.

**Heat Stroke** – Heat stroke is a severe heat illness that occurs when an athlete's body creates more heat than it can release, due to the strain of exercising in the heat. This results in a rapid increase in core body temperature, which can lead to permanent disability or even death if left untreated. An acute medical emergency related to thermo-regulatory failure, associated with nausea, seizures, disorientation, and possible unconsciousness or coma. It may occur suddenly without being preceded by any other clinical signs. The individual is usually unconscious with a high body temperature and a hot dry skin (heatstroke victims, contrary to popular belief, may sweat profusely).

It is believed that the above-mentioned heat stress problems can be controlled provided certain precautions are taken. The following practices and precautions are recommended:

1. Each athlete should have a physical exam with a medical history when first entering a program and an annual health history update. History of previous heat illness and type of training activities before organized practice begins should be included. State high school association's recommendations should be followed.

2. It is clear that top physical performance can only be achieved by an athlete who is in top physical condition. Lack of physical fitness impairs the performance of an athlete who participates in high temperatures. Coaches should know the **physical condition** of their athletes and set practice schedules accordingly.
3. Along with physical conditioning, the factor of acclimatization to heat is important. Acclimatization is the process of becoming adjusted to heat and it is essential to provide for **gradual acclimatization to hot weather**. It is necessary for an athlete to exercise in the heat if he/she is to become acclimatized to it. It is suggested that a graduated physical conditioning program be used and that 80% acclimatization can be expected to occur after the first 7 to 10 days. Final stages of acclimatization to heat are marked by increased sweating and reduced salt concentration in the sweat.
4. The old idea that water should be withheld from athletes during workouts has **no scientific foundation**. The most important safeguard to the health of the athlete is the replacement of water. Water must be on the field and readily available to the athletes at all times. It is recommended that a minimum ten minute water break be scheduled for every twenty minutes of heavy exercise in the heat. Athletes should rest in a shaded area during the break. **Water should be available in unlimited quantities**. Check and be sure athletes are drinking the water.
5. Replacement by thirst alone is inadequate. Test the air prior to practice or game using a wet bulb, globe, temperature index (WBGT index) which is based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat and air movement. The following precautions are recommended when using the WBGT Index: (ACSM's Guidelines for the Team Physician, 1991)

Below 65 .....	Unlimited activity	73-82.....	High risk
65-73 .....	Moderate risk	82-plus.....	Very high risk

There is also a weather guide for activities that last 30 minutes or more (Fox and Mathews, 1981) which involves knowing the relative humidity and air temperature.

<u>Air Temp</u>	<u>Danger Zone</u>	<u>Critical Zone</u>	
70F	80% RH	100% RH	RH = Relative Humidity
75F	70% RH	100% RH	
80F	50% RH	80% RH	
85F	40% RH	68% RH	
90F	30% RH	55% RH	
95F	20% RH	40% RH	
100F	10% RH	30% RH	

One other method of measuring the relative humidity is the use of a sling psychrometer, which measures wet bulb temperature. The wet bulb temperature should be measured prior to practice and the intensity and duration of practice adjusted accordingly. Recommendations are as follows:

Under 60F	Safe but always observe athletes
61-65F	Observe players carefully
66-70F	Caution
71-75F	Shorter practice sessions and more frequent water and rest breaks
75 plus F	Danger level and extreme caution

6. Cooling by evaporation is proportional to the area of the skin exposed. In extremely hot and humid weather reduce the amount of clothing covering the body as much as possible. **Never use rubberized clothing**.
7. Athletes should be weighed each day before and after practice and **weight charts checked**. Generally a three percent weight loss through sweating is safe and over a three percent weight loss is in the danger zone. Over a three percent weight loss the athlete should not be allowed to practice in hot and humid conditions. Observe the athletes closely under all conditions. **Do not allow athletes to return to practice until they have adequately replaced their weight from fluid loss**.

8. Observe athletes carefully for signs of trouble, particularly athletes who lose significant weight and the eager athlete who constantly competes at his/her capacity. Some trouble signs are nausea, incoherence, fatigue, weakness, vomiting, cramps, weak rapid pulse, visual disturbance and unsteadiness.
9. Teams that encounter hot weather during the season through travel or following an unseasonably cool period, should be physically fit, but will not be environmentally fit. Coaches in this situation should follow the above recommendations and substitute more frequently during games.
10. Know what to do in case of an emergency and have your emergency plans written with copies to all your staff. Be familiar with immediate first aid practice and prearranged procedures for obtaining medical care, including ambulance service.
11. Parents and Coaches Guide to Dehydration and Other Heat Illnesses in Children  
<http://www.nata.org/consumer/docs/parentandcoachesguide.pdf>

**HEAT STROKE – THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY – DELAY COULD BE FATAL. ACTIVATE YOUR EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN BY CALLING – 911.**

**A RECTAL TEMPERATURE NOT ORAL, AURAL, OR TEMPORAL IS DAGNOSTIC OF HEATSTROKE.** Other methods of temperature have given false core body temperatures and caused delay in care. If you are unable to obtain a rectal temperature it is safer to cool the athlete then delay. **Immediately cool the athlete while waiting for transfer to a hospital.** Remove equipment and immerse body in ice cold water and keep cooling athlete.

Despite the many ways athletes can be cooled, immersion therapy has the best cooling rates. Ice water immersion should be your choice of cooling. A plastic kiddie pool or large plastic tub filled with water and with ice on standby should be available at all practices and games. Continue cooling efforts until EMS arrives. Recommendation is to continue cooling the athlete until core temperature is <100 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Heat Exhaustion – Contact licensed health care provider.** Cool body as you would for heat stroke while waiting for medical personnel. Activate your emergency action plan.

**Summary** – The main problem associated with exercising in the hot weather is water loss through sweating. Water loss is best replaced by allowing the athlete unrestricted access to water. Water breaks two or three times every hour are better than one break an hour. Probably the best method is to have water available at all times and to allow the athlete to drink water whenever he/she needs it. Never restrict the amount of water an athlete drinks, and be sure the athletes are drinking the water. The small amount of salt lost in sweat is adequately replaced by salting food at meals. Talk to your medical personnel concerning emergency treatment plans. Athletes that appear to have heat stroke or heat exhaustion should be cooled by ice water immersion.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HYDRATION TO PREVENT HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

### Types of Sports Drinks

#### **Fluid Replacers**

- Examples: Water, Gatorade, Powerade, 10K, Quickkick, Max
- These non-water carbohydrate containing drinks are absorbed quickly and typically are used for activities lasting more than an hour.

#### **Carbohydrate loaders**

- Examples: Gatorlode, Exceed High, Carboplex, etc.
- These drinks replace more muscle glycogen to enhance greater endurance.
- They should be used after ultra-endurance events to increase muscle glycogen resynthesis after exercise.

#### **Nutrition Supplements**

- Examples: Chocolate milk, Gatorpro, Exceed Sports, Ultra Energy, etc.
- These supplements are fortified with vitamins and minerals and they help athletes maintain a balanced diet.
- They help restore muscle glycogen stores after exercise.
- They provide extra calories for athletes beyond a proper balanced diet.

### What Not to Drink

- Drinks with carbohydrate (CHO) concentrations of greater than eight percent can cause upset stomach due to high carbohydrate load and delay water absorption.
- Fruit juices, CHO gels, sodas, and sports drinks that have a CHO greater than six to eight percent are not recommended during exercise as sole beverages.
- Beverages containing caffeine will effect hydration since urine production will increase compared to non-caffeinated beverages.
- Carbonated beverages are found to cause decreased voluntary fluid intake.
- Alcoholic beverages are inappropriate for high school athletes.

### Hydration Tips and Fluid Guidelines

- Drink according to a schedule based on individual fluid needs.
- Drink before, during and after practices and games.
- Drink 17-20 ounces of water or sports drinks with six to eight percent CHO, two to three hours before exercise.
- Drink 7-10 ounces of water or sport drink 10 to 20 minutes before exercise.
- Drink early – By the time you're thirsty, you're already dehydrated.
- In general, every 10-20 minutes drink at least 7-10 ounces of water or sports drink to maintain hydration, and remember to drink beyond your thirst.
- Drink fluids based on the amount of sweat and urine loss.
- Within two hours, drink enough to replace any weight loss from exercise.
- Drink approximately 20-24 ounces of sports drink per pound of weight loss.
- Dehydration usually occurs with a weight loss of two percent of body weight or more.

### What to Drink During Exercise

- If exercise lasts more than 50 minutes, a sports drink should be provided during the session.
- The carbohydrate concentration in the ideal fluid replacement solution should be in the range of six to eight percent CHO
- During events when a high rate of fluid intake is necessary to sustain hydration, sports drinks with less than seven percent CHO should be used to optimize fluid delivery. These sports drinks have a faster gastric emptying rate and fluid absorption rate, thus aid in hydration.
- Sports drinks with a CHO content of 10 percent have a slow gastric emptying rate and should be avoided during exercise.



- Fluids with salts (sodium chloride, potassium chloride) are beneficial to increasing thirst and voluntary fluid intake as well as offsetting the small amount of salts lost with water.
- Salts should never be added to drinks, and salt tablets should be avoided, because they lead to slower gastric absorption.
- Cool beverages at temperatures between 50 to 59 degrees Fahrenheit are recommended for best results with fluid replacement.

### **Dehydration, Its Effects on Performance, and Its Relationship to Heat Illness**

- Dehydration can affect an athlete's performance in less than an hour of exercise. Sooner if the athlete begins the session dehydrated.
- Dehydration of just one to two percent of body weight (only 1.5-3 lbs., for a 150-pound athlete) can negatively influence performance.
- Dehydration of greater than three percent of body weight increases an athlete's risk of heat illness (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke).
- High body fat athletes can have a harder time with exercise and can become dehydrated faster than lower body fat athletes working out under the same environmental conditions.
- Poor acclimatization to heat or lower fitness levels can greatly contribute to an athlete's dehydration problems. This is important with the first practices of year, especially in the summer.
- Certain medications or fevers can greatly affect an athlete's hydration status.
- Environmental temperature and humidity both contribute to dehydration and heat illnesses.
- Clothing, such as dark, bulky, or rubber protective equipment can drastically increase the chance of heat illness and dehydration.
- Wet bulb globe temperature measurements should be taken 10-15 minutes before practice, and the results should be used with a heat index to determine if practices or contests should be started, modified or stopped.
- A Heat Index chart should come from a reputable source like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, or National Athletic Trainers Association.
- A relative humidity of greater than 40 percent and a temperature of 90 degrees Fahrenheit are likely to cause heat illness, extreme caution should be used.
- A relative humidity of 80 percent and a temperature of 84 degrees Fahrenheit are likely to cause heat illness, extreme caution should be used.
- A relative humidity of 80 percent and 90 degrees Fahrenheit are likely to cause heat stroke and these conditions are considered dangerous.

<http://www.weather.gov/om/heat/heatindex.shtml>

## REDUCING HEAD AND NECK INJURIES IN FOOTBALL

Frederick O. Mueller, Ph.D.

Head and neck injuries in football have been dramatically reduced since the late 1960's. Several suggestions for continued reduction are as follows:

1. Pre-season physical exams for all participants. Identify during the physical exam those athletes with a history of previous head or neck injuries. If the physician has any questions about the athlete's readiness to participate, the athlete should not be allowed to play.
2. A physician should be present at all games. If it is not possible for a physician to be present at all games and practice sessions, emergency measures must be provided. The total staff should be organized in that each person will know what to do in case of head or neck injury in game or practice. Have a plan ready and have your staff prepared to implement that plan. Prevention of further injury is the main objective.
3. Athletes must be given proper conditioning exercises which will strengthen their necks so that participants will be able to hold their head firmly erect when making contact. Strong neck muscles may help prevent neck injuries.
4. Coaches should drill the athletes in the proper execution of the fundamentals of football skills, particularly blocking and tackling. **KEEP THE HEAD OUT OF FOOTBALL.**
5. Coaches and officials should discourage the players from using their heads as battering rams. The rules prohibiting spearing should be enforced in practice and in games. The players should be taught to respect the helmet as a protective device and that the helmet should not be used as a weapon.
6. All coaches, physicians and trainers should take special care to see that the player's equipment is properly fitted, particularly the helmet.
7. Strict enforcement of the rules of the game by both coaches and officials will help reduce serious injuries.
8. When a player has experienced or shown signs of head trauma (loss of consciousness, visual disturbances, headache, inability to walk correctly, obvious disorientation, memory loss) he/she should receive immediate medical attention and should not be allowed to return to practice or game without permission from the proper medical authorities. Coaches should encourage players to let them know if they have any of the above mentioned symptoms (that cannot be seen by others, such as headaches) and why it is important.

## **Recommendations and Guidelines for Minimizing Head Impact Exposure and Concussion Risk in Football**

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)  
Report from the July 2014 NFHS Concussion Summit Task Force

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and its member associations firmly believe that athletic participation by students promotes health and fitness, academic achievement, healthy lifestyles, and good citizenship. While there will always be a risk of injury, minimizing the risk of head trauma and concussion in all sports is a priority for the NFHS. Over the past several years, the NFHS and the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) have:

- 1) Produced a 20-minute online educational course with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on “Concussion in Sports.”
- 2) Specifically addressed concussion management in the rules books of all sports, including football.
- 3) Written several Points of Emphasis in the football rules book focused on limiting helmet-to-helmet contact and blows to the head with the shoulder, forearm, and hand.
- 4) Disseminated multiple publications regarding concussion management to the member state associations.

In July of 2014, at the request of the NFHS Board of Directors, a task force of medical and scientific experts, high school football coaches, state association personnel, and representatives of several stakeholder organizations met to discuss strategies to reduce head impacts and minimize concussion risk in high school football players during contests and practices, as well as during activities conducted outside of the traditional fall football season (spring and summer practices). The fundamentals outlined below represent the task force’s recommendations and guidelines developed following two days of presentations and discussion of the relevant medical literature and current expert opinion.

The members of the task force fully acknowledge the present limited – though evolving – scientific evidence available to support the fundamentals outlined below with absolute certainty and explicit detail. Accordingly, the outcomes and clinical relevance of an increasing number of research studies may eventually alter these recommendations and guidelines. Ideally, this emerging data will clarify the potential for long-term adverse cognitive, emotional, and/or neurologic effects from concussions and repetitive blows to the head that may not result in the clinical symptoms of concussion. Based on what is currently known, the guiding principles in developing this report for young athletes and those who oversee, support and administer high school football programs were to reasonably limit overall exposure to multiple blows to the head and body (*head impact exposure*) and minimize concussion risk, while maintaining the integrity of the game and attempting to avoid unintended consequences.

The fundamentals below are designed to allow flexibility for the state associations that collectively oversee the more than 15,000 high schools playing football across the country. The teams fielded by these schools may vary tremendously in the number of available players. Team size dictates numerous variables that may affect an athlete’s potential head impact exposure. Those variables cannot be easily accounted for by stringent guidelines. For example:

- An athlete playing on offense, defense and special teams will have greater cumulative head impact exposure and will be at higher risk for injury than an athlete playing a single position.
- The fewer number of players on a team, the greater the chance some players will need to participate in repeated drills, raising head impact exposure and potential injury risk.

As additional evidence emerges, these fundamentals will evolve and may become more or less restrictive. While the current level of knowledge keeps this task force from making proposals that are specific and rigid, there is consensus that lessening the frequency of contact (and thus head impact exposure) is likely beneficial to overall brain health. The task force also recognizes multiple contributing factors that affect head impact exposure and the parallel effects on an individual football player’s brain. For example:

- Position played (linemen receive more total blows than other positions)
- Two-way players versus those who only play offense or defense
- Tackling and blocking techniques
- Practice frequency and duration

- Players that practice and/or compete on multiple levels (such as varsity and sub-varsity) \*
- Concussion history
- Genetic predisposition to concussion

\*Note: This contributing factor was added to the document by the NFHS SMAC.

It is very likely that each athlete has a unique level of resilience or susceptibility to concussion and further brain injury. While there is currently no definitive way to measure or quantify this resilience or susceptibility, the task force recommends reasonably limiting head impact exposure through the fundamentals presented below. Individual risk factors that are modifiable, such as position played, total time spent on field, and sport technique, must be also considered when implementing contact limitations.

### **Fundamentals for Minimizing Head Impact Exposure and Concussion Risk in Football**

- 1) Full contact should be limited during the regular season, as well as during activity outside of the traditional fall football season. For purposes of these recommendations and guidelines, full-contact consists of both “Thud” and “Live Action” using the USA Football definitions of *Level of Contact*.

Rationale: By definition, “Thud” involves initiation of contact at, or up to, full speed with no pre-determined winner and no take-down to the ground. Accordingly, the task force supports that initial contact, particularly with linemen, is just as violent with “Thud” as with “Live Action.” However, the task force also recognizes that “Live Action” likely carries a higher risk for other injuries to the body than does “Thud.” The USA Football *Levels of Contact* “Air,” “Bags,” and “Control” are considered no- or light-contact, and thus no limitations are placed on their use.

- 2) Member state associations should consider a variety of options for limiting contact in practices. The task force strongly recommends full-contact be allowed in no more than 2-3 practices per week. Consideration should also be given to limiting full-contact on consecutive days and limiting full-contact time to no more than 30 minutes per day and no more than 60-90 minutes per week.

Rationale: The task force acknowledges that there are insufficient data to specify with certainty a research-validated “best practices” standard for contact limitations. Several states (Alabama, Arizona, Maryland, and Texas) adopted varying limitations on contact prior to the 2013 football season. Preliminary *High School RIO Injury Surveillance* data suggest these states have seen a statistically significant decrease in concussion rates during practices, with no increase in concussion or other injuries during games.

- 3) Pre-season practices may require more full-contact time than practices occurring later in the regular season, to allow for teaching fundamentals with sufficient repetition.
  - a. Pre-season acclimatization protocols and regulations regarding heat and hydration take precedent and should always be followed.
  - b. While total full-contact practice days and time limitations may be increased during the pre-season, the emphasis should focus on the proper principles of tackling and blocking during the first several practices, before progressing to “Thud” and “Live Contact.”

Rationale: The task force acknowledges regular season practice limitations may need to be revised during the pre-season. This should be done in a specific and systematic manner to allow coaches to spend sufficient time teaching proper tackling and blocking techniques. Emphasis should be placed upon inexperienced players, as they slowly work through tackling and blocking progressions with “Air,” “Bags,” and “Control” using the USA Football definitions of *Levels of Contact*.

- 4) During pre-season twice-daily practices, only one session per day should include full contact.

Rationale: The adolescent brain needs sufficient recovery time following full-contact practices. In addition, concussion signs and/or symptoms may not develop for several hours after the initial injury.

- 5) Each member state association should review its current policies regarding total quarters or games played during a one week time from.

Rationale: High School RIO Injury Surveillance data consistently show that competition presents the highest risk for concussion. The task force is concerned that participation in games at multiple levels of competition during a single week increases risk for head injury and unnecessarily increases head impact exposure. In addition, games played on consecutive days or those scheduled on the same days (freshman and junior varsity games or junior varsity and varsity games) may not allow the brain an opportunity to adequately recover. Consideration should be given to moderating these situations as much as possible.

- 6) Consistent with efforts to minimize total exposure to full-contact, head impact exposure, and concussion risk, member state associations with jurisdiction over football outside of the traditional fall football season should review their current policies to assess if those policies stand in alignment with the fundamentals discussed within this report and, if needed, modify the policies accordingly.

Rationale: Football played outside of the traditional fall football season presents an opportunity for learning, physical activity, and skill development. However, athletes are at further risk for head impact exposure and concussion during any full-contact activity. Consideration should be given to significantly limiting the total time of full contact. Other factors to consider include time elapsed since the previous football season and whether individual athletes have recently been, or are currently, participating in other contact/collision sports (e.g., ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer and wrestling).

- 7) Each member state association should reach out to its respective state coaches' association on designing and implementing a coach education program that appropriately integrates youth, middle school, and high school football programs in every community. USA Football and the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching courses should be the primary education resources for all coaches. Education for coaches should also include the proper fitting and care of helmets.

Rationale: The game of football continues to evolve and proper coaching technique at each level is fundamental to keeping the game safe and enjoyable. A proper fitting helmet may help decrease, but not eliminate concussion risk.

- 8) Each member state association should regularly educate its schools on current state concussion law and policies and encourage schools to have a written concussion management protocol. Schools should also be encouraged to share this information with coaches, parents, and students annually.

Rationale: Many schools experience frequent turnover of athletic directors and coaches. Frequent "refreshers" on state concussion laws and policies as well as sample concussion management protocols should be made available to ensure all schools are current on, and prepared for, safe and effective concussion management.

- 9) An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) with clearly defined written and practiced protocols should be developed and in place at every high school. When possible, an athletic trainer should be present at all practices and games.

Rationale: An effective EAP should be in place, as a prompt and appropriate response to any emergency situation can save a life. The EAP should be designed and practiced to address all teams (freshman, junior varsity, and varsity) and all practice and game sites. An athletic trainer is a key component in any strategy to minimize injury risk and optimize safety for all participants.

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- Approved by the NFHS Concussion Summit Task Force in August 2014; Approved by the NFHS SMAC in October 2014; and Approved by the NFHS Board of Directors in October 2014.

## **2014 NFHS Concussion Summit Task Force**

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**Disclaimer – NFHS Position Statements and Guidelines** – The NFHS regularly distributes position statements and guidelines to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals, and is no substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes or environmental conditions may be relevant. NFHS position statements or guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other pertinent materials when taking action or planning care. The NFHS reserves the right to rescind or modify any such document at any time.

**Connecticut State Department of Education and the  
Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference  
Concussion and Head Injury Annual Review 2017-18  
Required for ALL School Coaches in Connecticut**

**NOTE:** This document was developed to provide coaches with an annual review of current and relevant information regarding concussions and head injuries. In addition to reviewing this form, the annual review must include one of the following prescribed resources: Connecticut Concussion Task Force video, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports training course or the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) concussion training course. Links to these resources can be found at: <http://concussioncentral.ciacsports.com/>. A new form is required to be read, signed, dated and kept on file by their associated school district annually to comply with Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Chapter 163, Section 149b: *Concussions: Training courses for coaches. Education plan. Informed consent form. Development or approval by the State Board of Education.*

**What is a Concussion?**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** - *“A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth.”* -CDC, Heads Up: Concussion  
[http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion\\_whatish.html](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/concussion_whatish.html)

***Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be mild bump or blow to the head can be serious”*** -CDC, Heads Up: Concussion Fact Sheet for Coaches [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/pdf/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Coaches-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/pdf/Fact_Sheet_Coaches-a.pdf)

**Section 1. Concussion Education Plan Summary**

The [Concussion Education Plan and Guidelines for Connecticut Schools](#) was approved by the Connecticut State Board of Education in January 2015. Below is an outline of the requirements of the Plan. The complete document is accessible on the CSDE Web site: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2663&q=335572>

State law requires that each local and regional board of education must approve and then implement a concussion education plan by using written materials, online training or videos, or in-person training that addresses, at a minimum the following:

1. The recognition of signs or symptoms of concussion.
2. The means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of sustaining a concussion.
3. The nature and risks of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion.
4. The proper procedures for allowing a student athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity.
5. Current best practices in the prevention and treatment of a concussion.

**Section 2. Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion: Overview**

**A concussion should be suspected if any one or more of the following signs or symptoms are present, or if the coach/evaluator is unsure, following an impact or suspected impact as described in the CDC definition above.**

**Signs of a concussion may include (i.e. what the athlete displays/looks like to an observer):**

- Confusion/disorientation/irritability
- Trouble resting/getting comfortable
- Lack of concentration
- Slow response/drowsiness
- Incoherent/ slurred speech
- Slow/clumsy movements
- Loses consciousness
- Amnesia/memory problems
- Acts silly/combative/aggressive
- Repeatedly ask same questions
- Dazed appearance
- Restless/irritable
- Constant attempts to return to play
- Constant motion
- Disproportionate/inappropriate reactions
- Balance problems

**Symptoms of a concussion may include (i.e. what the athlete reports):**

- Headache or dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred or double vision
- Oversensitivity to sound/light/touch
- Ringing in ears
- Feeling foggy or groggy

State law requires that a coach **MUST** immediately remove a student-athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who: a) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following a suspected blow to the head or body, or b) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred. **Upon removal of the athlete, a qualified school employee must notify the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours that the student athlete has exhibited signs and symptoms of a concussion.**

**Section 3. Return to Play (RTP) Protocol Overview**

Currently, it is impossible to accurately predict how long an individual’s concussion will last. There must be full recovery before a student-athlete is allowed to resume participating in athletic activity. Connecticut law now requires that no athlete may resume participation until they have received written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

**Concussion Management Requirements:**

1. No athlete SHALL return to participation in the athletic activity on the same day of concussion.
2. If there is any loss of consciousness, vomiting or seizures, the athlete MUST be immediately transported to the hospital.
3. Close observation of an athlete MUST continue following a concussion. The athlete should be monitored for an appropriate amount of time following the injury to ensure that there is no worsening/escalation of symptoms.
4. Any athlete with signs or symptoms related to a concussion MUST be evaluated by a licensed health care professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
5. The athlete MUST obtain an initial written clearance from one of the licensed health care professionals identified above directing her/him into a well-defined RTP stepped protocol similar to the one outlined below. If at any time signs or symptoms return during the RTP progression, the athlete should cease activity\*.
6. After the RTP protocol has been successfully administered (no longer exhibits any signs or symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussions), final written medical clearance is required by one of the licensed health care professionals identified above for the athlete to fully return to unrestricted participation in practices and competitions.

**Medical Clearance RTP protocol (Recommended one full day between steps)**

Rehabilitation stage	Functional exercise at each stage of rehabilitation	Objective of each stage
1. No activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest until asymptomatic. School may need to be modified.	Recovery
2. Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling maintaining intensity <70% of maximal exertion; no resistance training	Increase Heart Rate
3. Sport specific exercise No contact	Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer; no head impact activities	Add Movement
4. Non-contact sport drills	Progression to more complex training drills, ie. passing drills in football and ice hockey; may start progressive resistance training	Exercise, coordination and cognitive load
5. Full contact sport drills	Following final medical clearance, participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
6. Full activity	No restrictions	Return to full athletic participation

\* If at any time signs or symptoms should worsen during the RTP progression the athlete should stop activity that day. If the athlete’s symptoms are gone the next day, she/he may resume the RTP progression at the last step completed in which no symptoms were present. If symptoms return and don’t resolve, the athlete should be referred back to her/his medical provider.

**Section 4. Local/Regional Board of Education Policies Regarding Concussions**

***** Attach local or regional board of education concussion policies *****
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**I have read and understand this document and have viewed the prescribed resource material. I understand that state law requires me to immediately remove any player suspected of having a concussion and to not allow her/him to return to participation until she/he has received written medical clearance by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.**

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