

NJSIAA COACHES HANDBOOK



2022-2024

Message from Colleen Maguire - NJSIAA Executive Director

“A good coach can change a game. A great coach can change a life.”

John Wooden

On behalf of the NJSIAA staff, I want to personally thank you for coaching our student-athletes. Education-based athletics is more than wins and losses, it is an opportunity to teach lifelong lessons that play an integral role in the development of our student-athletes.

We all have fond memories of our high school sports-playing days. We all owe it to today's student-athletes to provide them with the same opportunities to create their own fond memories. Providing a positive experience and modeling sportsmanlike behavior is your primary responsibilities.

The lifelong lessons that are to be learned by participating in education-based athletics will encourage today's student-athletes to pay it forward to the next generation of student-athletes.

Thank you for playing your part and best of luck during this school year.

NJSIAA Mission Statement

The NJSIAA, a private, voluntary Association is committed to serving all types of student-athletes, its member schools, and related professional organizations by the administration of education-based interscholastic athletics, which support academic achievement, good citizenship, and fair and equitable opportunities. We believe our member schools, along with their leagues and conferences, share the following convictions:

1. A safe and healthy playing environment is essential to our mission.
2. Participation in interscholastic athletics enhances the educational experience of all students.
3. Interscholastic athletics is a privilege.
4. Excellence in both academics and athletics is pursued by all.
5. Interscholastic participation develops good citizenship, promotes healthy lifestyles, fosters involvement of a diverse population, and promotes positive school/community relations.
6. Rules promote fair play and minimize risk.
7. Cooperation among members advances their individual and collective well-being.
8. Training of administrators and coaches promotes the educational mission of the interscholastic experiences.
9. Properly trained officials/judges enhance interscholastic competition.

Nine (9) Legal Duties of a Coach

- 1. Properly plan the activity.**
 - a. Teach the skills of the sport in the correct progression.
 - b. Consider each athlete's developmental level and current physical condition. Evaluate your athletes' physical capacity and skill level with preseason fitness tests and develop practice plans accordingly.
 - c. Keep written records of fitness test results and practice plans. Don't deviate from your plans without good cause.
- 2. Provide proper instruction.**
 - a. Make sure that athletes are in the proper condition to participate.
 - b. Teach athletes the rules and the correct skills and strategies of the sport. For example, football teaches athletes that tackling with the head (spearing) is illegal and also a potentially dangerous technique.
 - c. Teach athletes the sports skills and conditioning exercises in a progression so that the athletes are adequately prepared to handle more difficult skills or exercises.
 - d. Keep up to date on better and safer ways of performing the techniques used in the sport.
 - e. Provide competent and responsible assistants. If you have coaching assistants, make sure that they are knowledgeable in the skills and strategies of the sport and act maturely and responsibly.
- 3. Warn inherent risks.**
 - a. Provide parents and athletes with both oral and written statements of the inherent health risks of their sport.
 - b. Also warn athletes about potentially harmful conditions, such as playing conditions, dangerous or faulty equipment, and the like.
- 4. Provide a safe physical environment.**
 - a. Monitor current environmental conditions (i.e., windchill, temperature, humidity, and severe weather warnings).
 - b. Periodically inspect the playing areas, the locker room, the weight room, and the dugout for hazards.
 - c. Remove all hazards.
 - d. Prevent improper or unsupervised use of facilities.
- 5. Provide adequate and proper equipment.**
 - a. Make sure athletes are using equipment that provides the maximum amount of protection against injury.
 - b. Inspect equipment regularly.
 - c. Teach athletes how to fit, use, and inspect their equipment.
- 6. Match your athletes appropriately.**
 - a. Match the athletes according to size, physical maturity, skill level, and experience.
 - b. Do not pit physically immature or novice athletes against those who are in top condition and are highly skilled.
- 7. Evaluate athletes for injury or incapacity.**
 - a. Require all athletes to submit to preseason physicals and screenings to detect potential health problems.
 - b. Withhold an athlete from practice and competition if the athlete is unable to compete without pain or loss of function (e.g., inability to walk, run, jump, throw, and soon without restriction).
- 8. Supervise the activity closely.**
 - a. Do not allow athletes to practice difficult or potentially dangerous skills without proper supervision.
 - b. Forbid horseplay, such as "wrestling around."
 - c. Do not allow athletes to use sports facilities without supervision.
- 9. Provide appropriate emergency assistance.**
 - a. Learn sports first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
 - b. Take action when needed. The law assumes that you, as a coach, are responsible for providing first aid care for any injury or illness suffered by an athlete under your supervision. So, if no medical personnel are present when an injury occurs, you are responsible for providing emergency care.
 - c. Use only the skills that you are qualified to administer and provide the specific standard of care that you are trained to provide through sports first aid, CPR, and other sports medicine courses.
 - d. If the athletes are minors, obtain a signed written consent form from their parents before the season. For injured adult athletes, specifically, ask if they want help. If they are unconscious, consent is usually implied. If they refuse help, you are not required to provide it. If you still attempt to give care, they can sue you for assault.

NJSIAA Coaching Requirements

- 1. CPR/AED/Basic First Aid Certification**
 - a. Two-year certification
 - b. American Heart (AH) & American Red Cross (ARC) only (Blended course okay)
- 2. NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course**
 - a. One-time course
 - b. Online at nfhslearn.com
- 3. NFHS Concussion Course**
 - a. Required each year
 - b. Online at nfhslearn.com
- 4. NFHS Heat Illness Prevention**
 - a. Required each year
 - b. Online at nfhslearn.com
- 5. NFHS Implicit Bias Course**
 - a. One-time course
 - b. Online at nfhslearn.com
- 6. Swimming & Diving Coaches**
 - a. A valid CPR for professional rescuer certificate issued by the ARC or the YMCA.
 - b. A valid Lifeguard Certificate issued by the ARC or the YMCA.
 - c. A valid Water Safety Instructor (WSI) Certificate issued by the ARC or the YMCA.
- 7. DOE Certification Requirements (Public Schools Only)**

Public school coaches must fall within one of the four categories below.

 - a. NJ Teaching Certification
 - b. NJ Substitute Certification (60 Credits)
 - c. Volunteer Coach
 - Must have one of the certifications above
 - Must complete all NJSIAA coaching requirements
 - d. Paraprofessional Aid/Coach
 - Exempt from all certifications
 - Exempt from all coaching requirements
 - Must be under the direct supervision of a certified coach
 - Must not have any direct supervision responsibilities

NJSIAA Sportsmanship Policy

Prior to the start of every NJSIAA event at all levels, officials are required to read the following statement to all participants. Coaches are expected to assist officials with gathering their student-athletes before an event to assist with the reading of this statement.

“The NJSIAA requires officials to enforce all rules regarding unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and players. There will be no tolerance for any negative behavior, such as taunting, trash-talking and verbal, written, or physical conduct related to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion. Such behavior will result in being ejected from this event. All participants must respect the game and respect their opponents.

The entirety of the NJSIAA Sportsmanship Rule/Policy, which also addresses unsportsmanlike conduct, can be found in the NJSIAA Bylaws Article IX – Sportsmanship.

Coaches Responsibilities

The NFHS has recently updated its rules surrounding hair adornments and religious items for many sports. Please be sure you are up to date in your understanding of these rules.

It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that all players are equipped properly and meet all NFHS rules as they pertain to uniforms and other accessories. Prior to the start of every NJSIAA event at all levels, the official will ask the coach "Are your players properly equipped and ready to play?". Once a coach answers yes, then he/she takes ownership of their team's compliance with all rules and requirements. Officials are instructed to speak only to a coach if they see any violation of a rule regarding uniforms or other accessories – they are not to speak to the student-athlete. It is the coach's responsibility to notify the student-athlete and assist them with remedying any violation.

Coaches must be cautioned not to refuse to play or to complete a game/meet. Such decisions are within the jurisdiction of the game/meet officials once the contest has started, or rest with home management and/or tournament director if the game/meet has not started.

More detailed information regarding the information above can be found in the NJSIAA handbook under the "NJSIAA Rules & Regulations" section seven (7).

NJSIAA Pre-Season Requirements

Student-athletes are not permitted to participate in any scrimmage or game in any strenuous sport until they have completed six days of practice in that sport and a day of rest. The required 6 days are for a 24-hour period and not per practice session (i.e., double sessions do not count as 2 days). Bowling and golf are considered not strenuous sports and therefore not subject to this requirement. If a student-athlete is late to start a new sport because they were participating in a strenuous sport during the prior season, then the student-athlete does not need to meet the 6-days of practice and 1-day of rest rule if there are no more than 3 consecutive days off between their last competition in the prior season and first day at practice.

NJSIAA does not limit the number of scrimmages a school may participate in during the pre-season; however, scrimmages may not include more than four schools. Lastly, any scrimmage that occurs after the NJSIAA official competition start date for that sport will count towards the maximum number of contests for that sport. Any out-of-state or non-member scrimmage must be considered a scrimmage for both teams.

More detailed information regarding the information above can be found in the NJSIAA handbook under the "NJSIAA Rules & Regulations" section seven (7).

NJSIAA Steroid Testing/Banned Substances List

In 2005, an Executive Order was passed that requires NJSIAA to randomly test student-athletes who have qualified, whether as an individual or as members of a team, for state championship competition, for the use of steroids, and other banned substances. NJSIAA partners with Drug Free Sports to facilitate the testing program. The testing protocols and list of banned substances are updated and approved annually by the Executive Committee. Drug Free Sports offers a free service for NJSIAA student-athletes to review label ingredients in nutritional/dietary supplements and medications.

This information can be found in the List of Banned Substances found on the NJSIAA website under Health & Safety/Steroid Testing.

Disqualifications (DQs)

Any coach and/or student-athletes that is disqualified from an NJSIAA event at any level will be required to sit out the next two competitions, except for football which requires a one-competition sit. Any coach and/or student-athlete subject to the DQ sit is not allowed to attend any competition or travel with the team. Officials are required to file the DQ report within 48 hours of the disqualification and must communicate with the school's athletic director the pending DQ by 12:00pm the next day via phone or email.

There are no appeals to any disqualification once it has been filed by the official. NJSIAA does encourage officials to review video to ensure the correct coach and/or student-athlete(s) are identified for disqualification. NJSIAA will also review video brought to its attention that may indicate a violation of its sportsmanship policy. Lastly, a DQ may be corrected if both the official(s) and NJSIAA staff agrees that the wrong student-athlete was disqualified based on evidence provided after the report has been filed.

Any varsity team accumulating three or more player or coach disqualifications for flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct prior to the team's participation in an NJSIAA tournament will not be permitted to participate in the tournament. Seeded teams will forfeit their right to compete if a disqualification limit is reached prior to the start of the tournament for the team.

Any disqualification that involved a bias incident will be reviewed by the Executive Director to determine if further investigation is necessary. NJSIAA may investigate the incident itself or refer the incident to the school, league, or conference for further investigation.

Any bias incident, in the form of a disqualification or complaint, will be forwarded to the NJ Division of Civil Rights as required by a June 2013 Memorandum of Agreement between NJSIAA and the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.

1. Coach DQ

- a. 1st time
 - Sit 2 games/1 for football
 - Must complete the NFHS "Teaching & Modeling Behavior" course
 - Must complete above if 3 or more players receive DQs
- b. 2nd time within 365 days of 1st DQ
 - Controversies Committee Hearing

2. Player DQ

- a. 1st time
 - Sit 2 games/1 for football
- b. 2nd time within 365 days of 1st DQ
 - Sit 4 games/2 for football
- c. 2nd time within the same season
 - Ineligible for the state tournament
- d. 3rd time within 365 days of 1st DQ
 - Suspended indefinitely from all sports

3. Team DQ

- a. Any varsity team accumulating three (3) or more DQs (coach or player) will not be permitted to enter the state tournament.

More detailed information regarding the information above can be found in the NJSIAA handbook under the "NJSIAA Rules & Regulations" / "Sports Specific Sports Regulations" section.

NJSIAA Quick Charts

NJSIAA maintains “quick charts” for each sports season that provide all important dates and other details by sport for a 3-year period. These charts are updated regularly when changes have been approved. You are strongly encouraged to familiarize yourself with the information included.

The seasonal charts can be found under the “Schools” menu tab on our website.

NJSIAA Heat Acclimatization Guidelines

NJSIAA requires all member schools to follow the National Athletic Trainer’s Association requirements for pre-season heat acclimatization for all sports. All coaches must be knowledgeable of these requirements and are required to follow them without exception.

The 14-day heat acclimatization period and related definitions can be found in the NJSIAA Policies and Procedures Handbook.

NJSIAA Heat Participation Guidelines

NJSIAA’s heat participation policy requires the use of a Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer (WBGT) readings to determine what level of activity may be safely hosted. Every member school is required to have a WBGT onsite to ensure compliance with the guidelines. These guidelines apply to any event – practice, scrimmage, or game.

The Guidelines can be found on our website under the Health & Safety/Sports Medicine tabs.

NJSIAA Amateur Rules/NIL Provision

In 2021, NJSIAA Executive Committee updated the Association’s amateur rules which provide a provision to allow student-athletes the opportunity to engage in certain commercial activities in their individual capacities only. Any activity shall not involve any school or team reference, nor can anyone employed by a member school be involved with a student-athlete NIL activity.

Please refer any student-athlete to the FAQs found on the NJSIAA website under Current Resources for more information.

NJSIAA Defined Seasons

1. In-Season Period - The in-season period starts on the first official day of practice and concludes on the final championship in a particular sport.
2. Out-of-Season Period - The out-of-season period shall be from the final championship in a particular sport to the first official day of practice the following year in that sport, except for the summer recess.
3. Summer Period – The summer period begins the Monday after the last scheduled spring NJSIAA event and ends on August 31.

NJSIAA Player/Coach Do's & Don'ts Chart

The following chart is for general guidelines only. More detailed information regarding these questions can be found in the NJSIAA handbook under the "NJSIAA Rules & Regulations" section.

#	Questions	In-Season	Out-of-Season	Summer
1	Can coaches have meetings with their team or individual players?	YES	YES	YES
2	Can coaches coach their own children?	YES	YES	YES
3	Can coaches have contact with potential players that have not been on their team yet?	YES	NO	YES
4	Can coaches use school organizations like booster clubs to assist in non-NJSIAA programs?	YES	NO	YES
5	Can a coach work or host camps/clinics with their athletes present?	YES	NO	YES
6	Can middle school or recreation teams come to watch high school practices?	YES	YES	YES
7	Can a middle school or recreation team or individuals practice with high school teams?	NO	NO	NO
8	Can a coach have contact with any students in grades eight and below?	YES	YES	YES
9	Can coaches coach an AAU/club/travel team with none of their players on the team?	YES	YES	YES
10	Can coaches coach an AAU/club/travel team with their players on the team?	YES	NO	YES
11	Can a coach that works at a sports facility not connected to the high school coach a team or individuals that are on the high school team?	YES	NO	YES
12	Can a coach that works at a sports facility not connected to the high school coach a team or individuals that are not on the high school team even though H.S. players belong to the facility?	YES	YES	YES
13	When can a school sponsor an interscholastic competition?	YES	NO	NO
14	May the school assist H.S. teams or athletes by providing transportation, entry fees, uniforms, etc.?	YES	NO	YES
15	Can a coach participate in open gyms sponsored by either the school or an outside organization with players present?	YES	NO	YES

NFHS/NJSCA Membership

New to 2022-2023, NJSIAA has partnered with NFHS to allow NJSIAA coaches to be dual enrolled in both the National Federation of Coaches Association (NFCA) and NJ Scholastic Coaches Association (NJSCA) for increased benefits and services. The annual membership period is from July 1st through June 30th. The \$35 annual enrollment will provide membership in both associations which includes some of the following benefits:

- Access to the official NFHS Coaches Association membership card (available from member profile)
- Access to NFHS insurance coverage – see the summary of coverage at https://www.nfhs.org/media/4295234/insurance_coverage_summary.pdf
- Access to NFHS digital rules books
- Ability to submit nominations for NFCA and NJSCA coaching award programs
- Consideration for service on NFHS committees
- Discounts on NJSIAA coaching clinics
- Other partner discounts

Please enroll in the NFCA by visiting: <https://www.nfhs.org/who-we-are/membership#coaches>

This information can also be found on our website: <https://www.njsiaa.org/coaches/njsca>



NFHS School Honor Roll Program

The **NFHS School Honor Roll Program** recognizes those schools with 90 percent or more of their coaches have successfully completed the required courses at each level. Schools that apply and meet the requirements earn a banner to hang in their school to highlight this national achievement. This national distinction is an opportunity for all schools to showcase their dedication and commitment to students and to education-based programs.

Schools can apply for the NFHS School Honor Roll Program via the following link:

https://nfhslearn.com/home/school_honor_roll

NFHS National Coach Credential

The **NFHS National Coach Credential** recognizes those coaches that have completed the required courses at each level, which are the same courses as the School Honor Roll program. This national credential was developed for individuals who are currently coaching or aspire to coach at the interscholastic level. The goal is to enhance the ability of the coach to better serve students, the school, the community, and the profession of coaching.

Schools can apply for the NFHS National Coach Credential Program via the following link:

<https://nfhslearn.com/home/coaches>



NFHSLearn.com

Courses for Coaches

<https://nfhslearn.com/>

The [NFHS Learning Center](#) currently offers about 90 online courses, including more than 60 that are free, for students, coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, parents, officials, performing arts educators, music adjudicators and others involved in high school sports and performing arts programs.

In addition, the NFHS hosts two different national recognition programs that are designed to promote professional development throughout the year – one is for schools and one is for coaches. Both programs have 3 levels of distinction based on the completion of certain courses.

Afterschool Security	Coaching Diving
Bullying, Hazing and Inappropriate Behaviors	Coaching Field Hockey
Concussion in Sports	Coaching Field Hockey: Goalkeeping
Football Tackling	Coaching Football
Fundamentals of Coaching	Coaching Girls Lacrosse
Implicit Bias	Coaching Golf
Introduction to Pitch Smart	Coaching Pole Vault
Protecting Students from Abuse	Coaching Soccer
Social Media	Coaching Softball
Sportsmanship	Coaching Swimming
Teaching Sport Skills	Coaching Tennis
Title IX	Coaching Track and Field
Coaching Baseball	Coaching Unified Sports
Coaching Basketball	Coaching Volleyball
Coaching Boys Lacrosse	Coaching Wrestling
Coaching Cross Country	