

NJSIAA COACHES HANDBOOK



2024-2025

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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 are 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 mission of the NJSIAA is to assist member schools in providing equitable education-based interscholastic athletic opportunities that support academic achievement, good sportsmanship and fair play for student athletes.

NJSIAA Vision

Through collaboration with key stakeholders the NJSIAA will strive to achieve student athlete growth in an ever-changing environment for their future success.

NJSIAA Values (not in order of importance)

1. A physically and emotionally safe and healthy playing environment
2. Educational experiences of all student athletes through participation in interscholastic sports
3. Excellence in academics and athletics
4. Rules that support fair play
5. Cooperation among member schools to advance individual and collective well-being
6. Programs that through interscholastic participation develop good citizenship, promote healthy lifestyle, foster involvement from a diverse population and promotes school/community relations
7. Properly trained officials who enhance interscholastic competition
8. Student athlete engagement in programs that promote the understanding that interscholastic athletics is a privilege
9. Insistence that good sportsmanship be exhibited at all times by student athletes, coaches, officials and spectators
10. Effective communication to assist in understanding the function of the NJSIAA at all levels

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 Certifications and Regulations

A person shall be eligible to coach in any interscholastic contest, provided the person satisfies all of the conditions listed below (For the purposes of this section, “coach” shall mean all persons who coach an interscholastic high school athletic team in any way, whether for pay or as a volunteer at the varsity, junior varsity and/or freshman level – ninth grade through twelve grade).

The person’s appointment as coach must be approved by the local educational agency responsible for the member school at which the person coaches.

In addition to the New Jersey Department of Education requirements, the following NJSIAA requirements must be completed:

1. CPR/AED/Basic First Aid Certification
 - All coaches must hold a current (valid) adult CPR/AED and Basic First Aid Certification. Blended courses (online courses with an in-person instructor-evaluated skills test) are approved. Online courses without an in-person instructor-evaluated skills test are not approved. All courses that are approved by the DOE for certification are acceptable.
2. NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course
 - All new coaches will be required to complete the NFHS fundamental of Coaching Course before their first employment as a coach. A certificate of course completion must be submitted to the respective athletic supervisors. Coaches who have experience coaching in an NJSIAA high school prior to the 2006-2007 school year will be exempt from this requirement. This course is a one-time requirement.
3. All coaches must complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports Course. This course must be renewed annually.
4. All coaches must complete the NFHS Heat Illness Prevention Course. This course must be renewed annually.
5. All coaches must complete the NFHS Implicit Bias Course. This course is a one-time requirement.
6. All coaches must complete the BeNice Program. This course is a one-time requirement.
7. 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.
8. 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

Note: The above requirements do not apply to the coaches appointed by the school to accompany student athletes to individual events.

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, respect the officials, and respect their opponents.”

Unsportsmanlike conduct shall subject the individual to disciplinary action. The member school with which the individual is associated may also be subject to disciplinary action if it is found that the member school’s policies, actions, or failure to act, substantially contributed to the individual’s conduct.

Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include but not be limited to the following:

- A. Any person (athletic department, staff member, Student-Athlete or a fan or spectator associated with a member school) who strikes or physically abuses an official, opposing coach, player, or spectator.
- B. Any person (athletic department, staff member, Student-Athlete or a fan or spectator associated with a member school) who intentionally incites participants or spectators to violent or abusive action.
- C. Any person (athletic department, staff member, Student-Athlete or a fan or spectator associated with a member school) who uses obscene gestures or profane or unduly provocative language or action towards officials, opponents, or spectators.
- D. Any person (athletic department, staff member, Student Athlete, or a fan or spectator associated with a member school) who engages in harassing verbal or physical conduct related to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion at an interscholastic event.
- E. Any school or athletic staff member who is publicly critical of a game official, opponents and/or opposing coaches/players.
- F. The administration of a member school will be responsible for the unsportsmanlike conduct of that school’s fans or spectators.

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

Sportsmanship Protocol

1. Education-based athletics is an extension of the classroom and is about more than just winning and losing.
2. Coaches must teach, promote, model, and set clear standards of behavior for themselves, players, and fans.
3. Game officials must fairly and consistently enforce NFHS playing rules and address unsportsmanlike behavior by coaches and participants.
4. Coaches are required to train their team on what to do in case an altercation occurs.
5. Coaches are required to ensure that the postgame handshake protocol is followed.

The NJSIAA strongly believes that the handshake at the end of every interscholastic contest is an important part of sportsmanship. Emphasizing the importance of the handshake is a valuable practice in promoting sportsmanship. The NJSIAA's stance is that it highlights a critical lesson for student-athletes and coaches while demonstrating respect and integrity regardless of the outcome.

Walking away from the handshake due to a tough loss sends the wrong message, suggesting that poor sportsmanship is acceptable in the face of defeat. Student-athletes and coaches engaging in post-competition handshakes can teach valuable life skills such as resilience, humility, and respect for their opponents. This practice helps to foster a positive sports culture and prepares our student-athletes for future challenges both on and off the field.

Handshake Protocol

1. Administrators/security should be stationed within close proximity to the handshake line.
2. One team should be on the right and the other team should be on the left. Players from one team should not be allowed to walk down both sides of the line.
3. Absolutely no non-essential personnel should be allowed on the playing surface until both teams have reached a designated area after completion of the handshake line.
4. A coach or site personnel should be stationed at the end of the handshake line to direct the players who have completed the handshake to a designated area.
5. Best practice is to have coaches at the front and end of the line. If that is not practical, a coach at the end of the line is mandatory.

Players Leaving the Bench Area

Any player that leaves the bench area during an altercation, regardless of whether the player engages in the altercation, shall be disqualified, and will be subject to the disqualification penalty (automatically disqualified from the next two contests, except football which is one game.) Only coaches can leave the bench with the purpose of restraining players and/or stopping altercations.

NJSIAA Use of Video

NJSIAA reserves the right to use video to determine for the following situations:

1. To identify if a violation of our sportsmanship policy occurred and to determine if additional disqualifications are necessary.
2. To correctly identify the players that have left the bench.
3. To ensure that disqualifications are correctly identified.

NJSIAA staff is responsible for entering these additional disqualifications in the system.

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.

A member school's head coach shall be held responsible for the head coach's actions and the actions of all assistants and staff who report, directly or indirectly, to the head coach.

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.

The NFHS updated its rules to allow jewelry to be worn during competition in certain sports. Jewelry includes, but is not limited to, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and watches. Medical alert medals are not considered to be jewelry and must be taped to the body. The following sports allow jewelry to be worn during competition unless the official rules the jewelry is potentially dangerous: baseball, softball, golf, tennis, bowling, swimming, cross country*, track & field*. Jewelry is prohibited in all other sports. *NJSIAA modifications prohibit the wearing of a watch during the regular season and post-season competitions.

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.

NJSIAA Pre-Season and Scrimmage 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. Only practices with the school team count toward the six (6) day practice rule. No national/club practices will count toward the six (6) day practice rule.

NJSIAA does not limit the number of scrimmages a school may participate in during the pre-season, with the exception of football; 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. Football scrimmages will be permitted twice per week with a maximum of three (3) full contact scrimmages prior to the start of the regular season. While a school is competing in the State Tournament, it may schedule with teams entered in the tournament one (1) scrimmage during any week in which it has only one (1) bye and two (2) scrimmages during any week in which it has two (2) byes. These scrimmages will not count in the total number of allowable games.

More detailed information regarding the information above can be found in the NJSIAA handbook under “NJSIAA Program 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.

NJSIAA Transfer Rule

Students first transfer is penalty free, regardless of the reason for the transfer or prior level of participation, if:

- The transfer occurs prior to the start of practice, and
- The transfer occurs prior to the completion of the students third year of eligibility (Senior Transfer Rule)

Transfer Penalties:

- Second or subsequent transfers = 30-day sit or ½ the maximum number of contests
- Senior transfers = 22-day sit or ⅓ the maximum number of contests
- Transfer after start of practice = 30-day sit or ½ the maximum number of contests
- Transfer after competition start date = 30-day sit or ½ the maximum number of contests and student is ineligible for NJSIAA post-season competition

There are exemptions for military transfers, HIB placements and DCP&P placements.

When implementing a transfer penalty (30 or 22-day), the student's first day of the penalty will begin on the day of the team's first official interscholastic contest (not including scrimmages). For football, the Week 1 Competition Start Date will be used as the start date for counting the number of days a student is penalized. Students who have a 30-day penalty become eligible on week 5 unless they participate in four (4) games prior to week 4 (i.e., weeks 0, 1, 2 and 3). Students who have a 22-day penalty become eligible on week 4 unless they participate in three (3) games prior to week 3 (i.e., weeks 0, 1 and 2).

The entirety of the NJSIAA Transfer Rule/Policy can be found in the NJSIAA Bylaws Article V – Eligibility of Athletes. Coaches must consult their AD to confirm the eligibility status of all transfers prior to participating in any regular season contests.

Ineligible Players

To ensure that member schools make certain that all Student-Athletes comply with eligibility standards or that they obtain appropriate waivers where necessary prior to competition, the following forfeiture penalties will be imposed: (1) If the ineligible student participates as a member of a team, the team will forfeit any contest in which the ineligible student participated, regardless of how long the ineligible student participated in the contest. (2) If the ineligible student participates as an individual, in an event or tournament at which no team score is calculated or team champion

declared, the ineligible student will forfeit any contest won. These penalties are mandatory and are not subject to appeal.

Disqualifications (DQs)

Any coach and/or student-athlete 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 penalty may not be present at any contest in that sport during the period of disqualification. Definition of not being present at the site means the disqualified player or coach is not to be present in the locker room, on the bus, on the sidelines, in the stands or site area before, during or after the game/meet.

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 agree that the wrong student-athlete was disqualified based on evidence provided after the report has been filed.

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.

Schools are to be reminded of the 3-team DQ rule for state tournament eligibility, which states "Any varsity team accumulating three or more player or coach disqualifications prior to the team's participation in the state tournament will not be permitted to participate in the state tournament. The 3-team DQ rule is no longer applicable during participation in the state tournament.

The NJSIAA will follow the procedure below for schools that are disqualified from state tournament competition:

1. If a school is disqualified, either for the use of an ineligible player or violating the 3-team DQ rule, from state tournament competition after the tournament has been seeded but prior to the bracket being final, then the bracket will be reseeded and the next ranked school who entered the tournament will be included.
2. If a school is disqualified, either for the use of an ineligible player or violating the 3-team DQ rule, from state tournament competition after the tournament has been seeded and after the bracket is final, then the bracket will not be reseeded, and no additional school will be included.
3. If a school is disqualified from state tournament competition due to the use of an ineligible player during the state tournament, then the school will be removed from the tournament immediately and their last opponent will advance in their place.

Levels of Disqualification

1. Coach DQ

- a. 1st time
 - Sit 2 games/1 for football
 - \$200 fine
 - 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” / “Specific Sport 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.

Procedure In the Event of Thunder or Lightning

All coaches and officials should monitor the weather report on game day. The protocol below details the steps to be followed in the event of lightning and/or thunder at outdoor events. If the host school has a more stringent policy, including those schools with lightning detection systems, that policy shall be adhered to. This policy should be reviewed annually with all administrators, coaches, and game personnel.

Every school should develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safer areas, and should determine the amount of time needed to get everyone to a designated safer area. A designated safer area is a substantial building with plumbing and wiring where people live or work, such as a school, gymnasium, or library. An alternate safer place from the threat of lightning is a fully enclosed (not convertible or soft top) metal car or school bus.

If severe weather strikes prior to the beginning of the event, host school site management shall be the decision-maker regarding the policy. If it occurs once the event has begun, the lead game official shall be the decision-maker.

When one contest is suspended on a site due to thunder or lightning, all outdoor contests/activities on that site must be suspended.

When caught in a thunderstorm without the availability or time to reach a safe structure, the risk of injury may be minimized by seeking low ground and avoiding contact with anything made of metal. Avoid bleachers, metal fences, and standing pools of water.

Guidelines for schools when thunder is heard, or lightning is seen:

Mandatory Guidelines:

1. Suspend play, or delay the commencement of the contest, for 30 minutes. All participants and spectators shall vacate the outdoor venue to a designated safer area immediately.
 - b. A list of the closest safer areas should be announced and displayed at all outdoor venues.
 - c. Clear instructions should be given over the public address system (if available) to guide participants and spectators to safer areas.
2. Once Play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
3. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count shall begin.
 - a. If, for example, the contest is suspended at 7:00 p.m. due to a lightning strike, and then lightning is witnessed again at 7:25 p.m., the earliest the contest may resume is 7:55 p.m.

Voluntary Guidelines:

4. If the thunder or lightning persists, and access to the field for warmups cannot resume 75 minutes after the initial suspension of play, the contest shall be postponed to a later date. If participants can safely return to the field of play within 75 minutes, the players shall participate in a brief workout period, and the contest shall resume.
 - a. Athletic Administrators, Coaches & Officials may agree to alter #4 if all agree.
 - b. If an agreement on how long to wait cannot be reached, then #4 will be used.
5. For Football only, the host school site management shall determine how long to suspend the game before it is postponed

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's NIL activity.

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

NJSIAA Recruitment Rules and Violations

The recruiting of high school students is prohibited. A student becomes a "high school student" on the first day the student attends ninth grade, or the first day the student attends fall sports practice prior to the student's ninth grade year, whichever is earlier.

Athletic recruitment is defined as any effort to proselytize, pressure, urge or entice a student to transfer to a school for athletic purposes. It is a violation for a member school to engage in athletic recruitment or for a student-athlete to transfer to a school as a result of athletic recruitment. Athletic recruitment includes, but is not limited to:

1. Using mail, letters, brochures, or news media to compare high schools and to solely point out the athletic assets of the sender.
2. Engaging in proselytizing interviews or communications, initiated by school personnel or associates.
3. Offering athletic scholarships, free tuition or other monetary assistance, either from the school directly or indirectly through some affiliated body or individual, to induce a student to attend the school for athletic reasons. This is applicable to students of all grade levels, not just high school students.

Any evidence that a student has moved to a residence associated with, leased, or provided by anyone associated with the school or acting at the direction of the school, including but not limited to administration, staff, coaches, students, parents, booster clubs, or any organization having a connection with the school, shall be considered prima facie evidence of recruiting. This is applicable to students of all grade levels, not just high school students.

If the NJSIAA determines that there has been athletic recruitment by a member school, the recruiting school will be subjected to appropriate disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion among other penalties. The following chart will be used to assist the Controversies Committee in issuing penalties for violation of Article V, Section 4.D, Athletic Recruitment. The following penalties may be fully or in part enacted by the Committee:

Recruitment Violation Chart		
Infraction Level	Types of Infractions	Penalties
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of general advertising for recruitment of 9-12 grade high school students, including but not limited to: social media, flyers, advertisements, brochures, booster/donor sites, etc. There is no student contact involved in level one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School must remediate issue immediately by removing, editing or rescinding advertisement. School (all sports) placed on probation for one year. AD and/or coach will take NFHS Course and attend appropriate NJSIAA workshop at own or district expense.
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeating a Level 1 offense. OR Recruiting contact/communication with a 9-12 grade student-athlete, or their family, from another high school by a non-district approved person including, but not limited to: parents, boosters, alumni, former coaches, and recently hired coaches who may have recruited athletes just prior to being approved by the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person(s) guilty will be banned from all NJSIAA sporting events for three years. Head coach of program will be suspended for ¼ of the season's maximum contests for that sport (scheduled contests if sport has no max.) Head coach will take NFHS Course and attend appropriate NJSIAA workshop at own or district expense. School (all sports) placed on probation for one year for 1st violation; 2 years if a level 1 violation has previously occurred.
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeating a Level 2 offense. OR Direct recruiting contact/communication with a 9-12 grade student-athlete, or their family, from another high school by a district approved person including, but not limited to: paid coaches, volunteer coaches, students at the behest of their coach, or any district employee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violating program is ineligible to compete in NJSIAA Championship Tournament for one year or removed from tournament if in progress. Vacating previously earned championships due to this recruiting violation. Head coach of program, if not directly involved, will be suspended for ⅓ of the season's maximum contests for that sport (scheduled contests if sport has no max.) Any coach involved will be suspended in all sports for 1 year. AD, head coach and all other coaches involved will take NFHS Course and attend appropriate NJSIAA workshop at own or district expense. School (all sports) placed on probation for 1 year for 1st violation; 2 years if a repeat level 2 violation. School will be fined ½ of the maximum amount allowed in Article 10, Section 2.
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeating a Level 3 offense. OR An egregious violation of direct recruiting of a 9-12 grade student-athlete, or their family, from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violating program is ineligible to compete in NJSIAA Championship Tournament for 2 years (removed from current tournament if in progress plus an additional year).

	<p>another high school by a district approved person. The violation may include, but is not limited to: recruitment of multiple student-athletes, recruitment that endangers the health, wellness and safety of student athletes, recruitment violations that showed persistent and ongoing recruitment efforts by a district approved coach or employee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacating previously earned championships due to this recruiting violation. • Head coach of program, if not directly involved, will be suspended for 1 year. • Any coach involved will be suspended in all sports for 2 years. • AD, head coach and all other coaches involved will take NFHS Course and attend appropriate NJSIAA workshop at own or district expense. • School (all sports) placed on probation for 2 years. • School will be fined the maximum amount allowed in Article 10, Section 2.
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The entirety of the NJSIAA Recruiting Rule/Policy can be found in the NJSIAA Bylaws Article V – Eligibility of Athletes.

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 NJSIAA spring competition end date 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 who are currently enrolled another high school?	NO	NO	NO
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
16	Can a coach discuss his/her program with student-athletes, or their parents, from another high school?	NO	NO	NO
17	Can a coach speak to student-athletes from another high school, or their parents, about their school if the student or parent initiates the contact?	NO	NO	NO
18	Is the coach responsible for the actions of his/her assistants, boosters, parents and other school personnel regarding the recruitment of student-athletes from other high schools?	YES	YES	YES

19	Can a coach speak to student-athletes from another high school, or their parents, about their school during a school-run open house?	Yes, in a group, discussing program strengths, but they may not have private or personal recruiting type of conversations.
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NFHS/NJSCA Membership

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/7212168/nfhs-coaches-officials-coverage-limit-summary-2023-2024.pdf>
- Access to NFHS digital rules books
- Ability to submit nominations for NFCA and NJSCA coaching award programs
- Consideration for service on NFHS committees
- 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 Learning Center – 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. Please see details below.

Courses for Coaches

- Administering Interscholastic Unified Sports
- ACL Injury Prevention
- Afterschool Security
- Appearance/Performance Enhancing Drugs...
- Bullying, Hazing and Inappropriate Behaviors
- Communicable Skin Infections
- Concussion in Sports
- Collecting Statistics: Football
- Collecting Statistics: Volleyball
- CPR and AED Training
- Developing Youth Through Sport
- Engaging Effectively with Parents
- First Aid, Health and Safety
- Football Tackling
- Fundamentals of Coaching
- Heat Illness Prevention
- Implicit Bias
- Introduction to Pitch Smart
- Mental Training for Performance
- Name, Image and Likeness
- Protecting Students from Abuse
- Social Media
- Sportsmanship
- Sports Nutrition
- Strength and Conditioning
- Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- Teaching and Modeling Behavior
- Teaching Sports Skills
- The Collapsed Student
- The Female and Male Athlete Triad
- The Collapsed Student
- The Female and Male Athlete Triad
- Title IX
- Understanding Copyright and Compliance
- Understanding Vaping and E-Cigarettes
- Coaching Baseball
- Coaching Basketball
- The Collapsed Student
- The Female and Male Athlete Triad
- Coaching Boys Lacrosse
- Coaching Cross Country
- Coaching Diving
- Coaching Field Hockey
- Coaching Field Hockey: Goalkeeping
- Coaching Football
- Coaching Girls Lacrosse
- Coaching Golf
- Coaching Pole Vault
- Coaching Soccer
- Coaching Softball
- Coaching Swimming
- Coaching Tennis
- Coaching Track and Field
- Coaching Unified Sports
- Coaching Volleyball
- Coaching Wrestling

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>