

## **SECTION IX JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL**

(See Section VI for General Eligibility Rules and Section VII for General Athletic Rules)

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### **9.1 JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

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- A.** Purpose: To represent the Junior High/Middle School division of the NMAA, to consider the total programs of the junior high/middle school level; and to give input to the Bylaws Committee and/or Commission. Recommendations for referenda relating to this division may also be made to the Director.
- B.** Committee Composition: The statewide committee shall be composed of ten representatives, two from each of the identified regions. Eligibility is limited to employees of member schools in good standing serving in an administrative capacity.
- C.** Representatives will be appointed by the Director.
- D.** Chairperson: The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Director.
- E.** Meetings: The committee shall meet twice a year, once during Week 11 and once during Week 35 or 36 at a time and place determined by the Director.
- F.** Voting: All decisions shall be by a majority vote. Members shall have one vote each.

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### **9.2 JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL MEETINGS AND HANDBOOK**

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On an annual basis, the NMAA will conduct five (5) centralized regional meetings throughout the State of New Mexico for representatives of member schools. These meetings will be conducted in early fall.

The NMAA requires all regions or districts to submit a Junior High/Middle School Handbook for the conduct and management of sports/events within that region. A copy of the current handbook shall be on file with the NMAA by September 15<sup>th</sup> annually and revisions are to be submitted to the NMAA as changes are made.

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### **9.3 INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY: GENERAL**

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- A.** When determining the eligibility of students, it is the school's responsibility to read and follow all sections of the policies and procedures in Section VI.
- B.** With the exception of football and with the approval of the local school board, sixth grade students are permitted to participate on seventh and eighth grade teams.
- C.** Sixth grade students who participate at the Junior High/Mid School level must follow all policies and procedures applicable to seventh and eighth grade students.
- D.** Seventh grade students are not eligible under any circumstances to participate on senior high teams.
- E.** Seventh and eighth grade Students cannot play down at any level.
- F.** Eighth grade participation at the high school level is permitted with the approval of the local school board.

- G.** An eighth grade student may participate in interscholastic sports at the high school level, but once the election is made to participate on a high school team, that is the Student's open enrollment choice. A change of school attendance after this open enrollment choice will be governed by the transfer rules outlined in Section VI.
- H.** In Class A, an eighth grade Student may participate on a junior high/middle school team concurrently until the junior high/middle school game limitations are reached.
- I.** Once an eighth or ninth grade Student in Class AA - AAAAAA participates at the high school level, he/she is required to stay at that level in that particular sport.
- J.** A student entering school for the first time in a school year must have enrolled by the tenth (10) school day of that semester to be considered for athletic eligibility. If not enrolled by the 10<sup>th</sup> day, the student is ineligible until his/her eleventh (11) day of attendance.
- K.** The 10 day rule applies if the student is absent from school for 10 or more school days and is officially dropped from the school registry, unless out of school due to documented illness or injury. A student is required to practice the appropriate number of days in advance of participation in a contest/game/match (i.e. ten (10) days for football and five (5) days for all other sports).
- L.** Transfer rules outlined in Section VI, do not apply to Junior High/Mid School students who have transferred in good standing and who have not participated at the high school level.
- M.** Elementary (K-5) students can not play up on junior high / middle school teams.
- N.** Age Limitations: 6<sup>th</sup> grade = 13 by August 31, 7<sup>th</sup> grade = 14 by August 31, 8<sup>th</sup> grade = 15 by August 31.
- O.** A Student making a bona fide change in residence and who meets all other NMAA requirements will be ruled eligible to compete in a sport at the receiving school even though he/she has participated in that sport at his/her previous school during that same sports season. Students who are considered transfer students, without a bona fide change in residence, will not be allowed to participate in a sport at two different schools during the same sports season.

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**9.4 INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY: SCHOLARSHIP**

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- A.** When a Student first participates at the sixth or seventh grade level, he/she may compete without reference to his/her immediate or previous scholastic record.
- B.** An eighth grade Student competing in interscholastic sports at the high school level has made his/her open enrollment choice. The Student may compete without reference to his/her immediate or previous scholastic record. The end of the 1<sup>st</sup> grading period in 8<sup>th</sup> grade establishes the beginning of the scholarship requirements for this Student.
- C.** A ninth grade Student who has not previously competed in interscholastic sports at the high school level has his/her open enrollment choice. The Student may compete without reference to his/her immediate or previous scholastic record in eighth grade (last grading period and/or semester, whichever is applicable). The end of the 1<sup>st</sup> grading period in 9<sup>th</sup> grade establishes the beginning of the scholarship requirements for this Student.
- D.** The cumulative provision cannot be utilized for middle/junior high school students.
- E.** One class or credit may be made up in summer school. Only a core class (English, Math, Science, or Social Studies) or a literacy or math block may be made up in summer school.

- F. If a student is ineligible at the semester based on his/her six or nine weeks grades, semester grades may be used for academic eligibility.

**9.5 DUAL PARTICIPATION**

- A. Participation on a non-school team in the same sport during the school season is discouraged. If a Student is allowed by the Junior High/Middle School to participate in this manner, the Student is expected to give the interscholastic schedule precedence. In the event of a conflict with the school schedule, the decision will be left up to the local school board.  
**Note:** If in a particular sport, a school allows an athlete to participate on school and non-school teams simultaneously, the non-school affiliated games do not count against the athlete's game limit.
- B. If an eighth grade Student is participating at the high school level, the dual participation rules in Section VI apply.

**9.6 GAME CONTRACTS, GUARANTEES, FORFEITURE FEES**

- 9.6.1 Only the administrative head or legally designated school employee shall enter into contracts, pay guarantees or officials, or make final arrangements for events.
- 9.6.2 Schools should contract contests subject to the following exceptions:
  - A. A school may not contract or compete against non-member schools.
  - B. A school may not contract or compete against a school suspended by the Association.
- 9.6.3 Contracts for regular season contests shall be in writing. The original contract is binding unless nullified by a subsequent contract.

**9.6.4 Forfeits**

Game contracts need to provide a forfeiture fee to be paid should there be a failure on the part of either party to carry out arrangements agreed upon.

- A. Regardless of sport, if two weeks (14 calendar days) notice is not provided before the cancellation of a game/contest/event, a forfeiture fee will be imposed. By mutual agreement, the forfeiture can be waived.
- B. When schools do not have a forfeiture fee in their contract for a regular season event and cannot resolve the failure of one school to fulfill the contract, the Board has established minimum forfeiture fees as follows:

**Minimum forfeiture fees:** If not already in the contract, this applies to both regular season games and tournaments. Other costs of putting on the contest, as well as lost revenues may also be taken into consideration by the Director in assessing the fee owed by the school for failing to meet the obligations of the written or unwritten agreement.

	<u>Football</u>	<u>Basketball</u>	<u>Other Sports</u>
A-AA	\$200	\$150	\$100
AAA-AAAAA	\$500	\$375	\$250

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**9.7 GENERAL SECTION**

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The following regulations are common to all sports unless otherwise specified:

**9.7.1 Playing Rules/Equipment**

Junior High/Middle Schools must use the playing rules and equipment for contests as specified in the NMAA Handbook and the sport specific National Federation rules.

**9.7.2 Sport Seasons**

The Junior High/Middle School season start dates have been established in Section 9.8. Under no circumstances can the season extend beyond that of the high school.

**9.7.3 Championships Prohibited**

There shall be no district/regional/state championships declared in any phase of interscholastic competition at the Junior High/Middle School level.

**9.7.4 Online Sport Rules Clinics**

Schools are advised that at least one representative from each Junior High/Middle School program should attend the online state rules clinic in each sport of participation.

**9.7.5 Officials**

Schools are required to use officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests.

**9.7.6 Co-op Participation**

Class 1A schools are allowed to co-op on team sports at the middle school level.

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**9.8 SPORTS REGULATIONS**

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**9.8.1 Baseball**

**A. Practice Date** – Practice may begin on the Monday of Week #32.

**B. Game Limitations** – Each team or individual is limited to twelve (12) games.

**C. Sport Specifics**

Baseball Bats used at the middle school level must follow NFHS standards as listed in the NFHS Baseball Rulebook. Although only wood/composite wood bats are allowed at the high school level, approved BBCOR metal bats may be used at the middle school level. Middle school athletes participating in a high school level contest must use wood/composite wood bats.

**9.8.2 Basketball**

**A. Practice Date** - Practice may begin Monday of Week #16 for those schools that do not offer fall team sports programs (football, volleyball, and/or soccer) or for schools that have split seasons due to facilities.

**B. Game Limitations**

**8<sup>th</sup> grade** – Each team or individual is limited to eighteen (18) total games. This includes regular season games and invitational tournament games.

**7<sup>th</sup> grade** – Each team or individual is limited to eighteen (18) total games. This includes regular season games and invitational tournament games.

**C. Sport Specific**

1. The basketball used by Junior High/Middle Schools girls’ teams is 28½” in circumference and weighs 18-20 ounces.

2. Maximum Length of game time shall be as follows:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Length of Quarter</u>
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	6 minutes
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	6 minutes
8 <sup>th</sup> grade	6 minutes
8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	8 minutes
9 <sup>th</sup> grade/C Team	8 minutes

3. A player is considered to have played a game when he/she competes interscholastically in five or less quarters on any day or night against a given school. (Five quarters is the maximum permitted?) This applies to all levels.

**9.8.3 Cross Country**

**A. Practice Dates** – Practice may begin Monday of Week #7.

**B. Meet Limitations** - The maximum number of meets for teams or individuals:

7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade:	Seven (7) meets
9 <sup>th</sup> grade/C Team	Eight (8) meets

**C. Sport Specifics**

**Distance** – The maximum length of race is 3 miles

**9.8.4 Football**

**A. Practice Date** – Practice may begin on the Monday of Week #7.

1. Each team or individual must have at least ten (10) days of practice before competing in a game. Sundays are not counted toward the ten (10) days of practice required in advance of competition.

2. The first three (3) days of practice for each participant/team shall be a time of conditioning without the wearing of pads (helmets are permissible.) The remaining seven (7) days, pads are permissible.
3. A junior high / middle school football player should be limited to 48 minutes per week if they participate on more than one team.

**B. Game Limitations**

7<sup>th</sup> grade teams are limited to seven (7) games  
 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams are limited to seven (7) games  
 9<sup>th</sup> grade teams are limited to seven (7) games

**C. Sport Specifics**

**1. Length of Competition(s)**

Grade level	Quarters
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> grade:	8 minutes
8 <sup>th</sup> grade:	8 minutes
8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> grade:	10 minutes
9 <sup>th</sup> grade/C Team	10 minutes

- D. Tie Breaker** – Junior High / Middle School Football will follow the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS) tie-breaking procedure between New Mexico Schools and out of state guests, with the results determining a winner.

**E. Mercy Rule**

1. **6-Man** – A game is ended at half-time or during the second half if a team is forty-five or more points behind.
2. **8-Man and 11-Man** - When a team is ahead at halftime by 35 or more points or becomes 35 or more points ahead in the second half, the clock will not stop during out of bounds, incomplete passes or first downs. The clock only stops for time-outs or touchdowns. If the point differential becomes less than 35 points, regular timing resumes.

**9.8.5 Golf**

- A. **Practice Date** – Practice is open year round.
- B. **Meet Limitations** – The maximum number of meets for teams or individuals is eight (8).

**9.8.6 Soccer**

- A. **Practice Dates** – Practice may begin on Monday of Week #7.
- B. **Game Limitations** – Each team or individual is limited to fourteen (14) games. This limit includes regular season and tournament games.
- C. **Sport Specifics**— A game is ended at half time or anytime during the second half if a team is ten (10) or more goals behind.

**9.8.7 Softball**

- A. Practice Date** – Practice may begin on Monday of Week #32.
- B. Game Limitations** – The maximum number of games for teams or individuals is eighteen (18).

**9.8.8 Swimming and Diving**

- A. Practice** – Practice is open year round.
- B. Meet Limitations** – The maximum number of meets for teams or individuals is eight (8).
- C. Sport Specifics**—Events are the same as those for high school students as determined by the NFHS.

**9.8.9 Tennis**

- A. Practice** – Practice is open year round.
- B. Match Limitation** – The maximum number of matches for a team or individual is eight (8).

**9.8.10 Track and Field**

- A. Practice** – Practice may begin on Monday of Week #33.
- B. Meet Limitations** – the maximum number of meets for teams or individuals:

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Meet Limits</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> grade teams or individuals	Five (5)
8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Seven (7)
9 <sup>th</sup> grade	Seven (7)
Combined grade levels (7 and 8, 8 and 9, or 7, 8 and 9) the meet limit is set at the higher level.	

**C. Sport Specifics**

1. Distances for individual events and relays for 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are the same as those at the Senior High Level.
2. A 9<sup>th</sup> grade student shall adhere to the participation limits for the Senior High Level, which is five (5). The maximum number of running events is four (4), no more than three (3) of which are 400 meters or more.
3. A 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student is limited to four (4) events in any track meet. No more than three (3) of these may be running events, including relays. No more than two running events may be 400 meters or more.
4. 1600 meters will be the maximum distance event for junior high and middle school.
- 5.. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Hurdle Height:
  - The boys' 110 meter high hurdles are 36" in height.
  - The boys' 300 meter intermediate hurdles are 33" in height.
  - The girls' 100 and 300 meter hurdles are 30" in height.

- 6. The javelin throw is excluded from Junior High and Middle School track and field meets.
- 7. The discus must weigh 1 kilogram and the shot put 4 kilograms.

**9.8.11 Volleyball**

- A. **Practice Date** – Practice may begin Monday of Week #7.

**Match Limitations** – Each team or individual is limited to fourteen (14) matches. This includes regular season and invitational tournament matches. All matches are considered the best 2 out of 3 games.

- B. **Sport Specifics**—An individual may not participate in more than 4 games in succeeding matches.

**9.8.12 Wrestling**

- A. **Practice** – Practice may begin on Monday of Week #16.

- B. **Match Limitations** – The maximum number of matches for teams or individuals is twelve (12). A match of any type counts toward the limit and a tournament counts as only one match.

- C. **Sport Specifics**

- 1. The earliest date for competition is five days after the start of practice.
- 2. The season must end by Saturday of Week #33.
- 3. The length of the three (3) periods for dual meets and tournaments is one minute, two minutes, and two minutes.
- 4. Overtime in tournaments only consists of three (3) periods, each 30 seconds in length.
- 5. The time limits for weighing in are the same as those stated in the National Federation Wrestling Rulebook.
- 6. The weight classes are as follows:

Grades 7-8-9, 7-8, 9 combination (20 weight classes):

65	85	105	125	150
70	90	110	130	160
75	95	115	135	170
80	100	120	140	185*

\* *Must weigh at least 171 pounds and no more than 225 pounds*

- 7. A wrestling uniform, a singlet, sweat pants, and any body-tight fitting T-shirt must be worn. High top tennis shoes may be used or low tops taped on.
- 8. The National Federation Wrestling Rulebook governs all other matters.