

## **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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- 9.1.1** 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.
- 9.1.2** 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.
- 9.1.3** Representatives will be appointed by the Director.
- 9.1.4** Chairperson: The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Director and shall serve on the Commission.
- 9.1.5** Meetings: The committee shall meet twice a year at a time and place determined by the Director.
- 9.1.6** 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**

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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.

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

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- 9.3.1** All participants (administrators, coaches, athletes, officials, parents, fans, etc.) are expected to: 1) conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the “Compete with Class” core values (Respect, Integrity, and Personal Responsibility) and 2) hold themselves and other participants accountable for actions that do not reflect those core values.
- 9.3.2** When determining the eligibility of students, it is the school’s responsibility to read and follow all of the policies and procedures in Section VI (NMAA Handbook).
- 9.3.3** 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.
- 9.3.4** 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.
- 9.3.5** Sixth and Seventh grade students are not eligible under any circumstances to participate with senior high teams.
- 9.3.6** Seventh and eighth grade students cannot play down at any level.
- 9.3.7** Eighth grade participation at the high school level is permitted with the approval of the local school board. As per NMAA bylaw 6.4.1.A.2, the “8<sup>th</sup> grade participation form” (found in the

forms section of the NMAA website under eligibility forms) must be submitted to the NMAA for approval prior to participation.

- 9.3.8** An eighth grade student may participate in interscholastic sports at the high school level. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students not already attending the institution they will be participating for must participate at their home attendance zone public high school. 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.
- 9.3.9** In Class A and 2A, an eighth grade student may participate on a junior high/middle school and high school team concurrently until the junior high/middle school game limitations are reached.
- 9.3.10** A 9<sup>th</sup> grader can participate at the middle school level in A and 2A, as long as there is a mutual agreement between the schools. 9<sup>th</sup> graders at 3A-5A schools may not participate at the middle school level.
- 9.3.11** Once an eighth or ninth grade student in Class 3A - 5A participates at the high school level, he/she is required to stay at that level in that particular sport.
- 9.3.12** 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 immediate athletic eligibility. If not enrolled by the 10<sup>th</sup> day, the student is ineligible until his/her eleventh (11) day of attendance.
- 9.3.13** 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/sport and five (5) days for all other sports).
- 9.3.14** 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 (See also 9.3.17).
- 9.3.15** (K-5) students cannot play up on junior high / middle school teams.
- 9.3.16 Age Limitations:**
- A. Sixth Grade:** A Student must be less than 13 years of age on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.
  - B. Seventh Grade:** A Student must be less than 14 years of age on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.
  - C. Eighth Grade:** A Student must be less than 15 years of age on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.
  - D. Ninth Grade:** A Student must be less than 16 years of age on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.
- Note:** Age appropriateness does not supersede allowable semesters of competition. (See 6.13.1)
- 9.3.17** 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.

**9.3.18 Student Transferring to Follow a Coach in Middle School**

The transfer/residency requirement is implemented as a means to discourage recruitment and reduce the opportunity for undue influence. Beginning with the summer prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, if a student participates on/with any team (i.e. interscholastic, AAU, American Legion, club settings, summer program, etc.) that is affiliated with or coached by a coach associated with that same sport at a school other than the one the Student attends or has attended, and then transfers to that school, regardless of change in bona fide residence, it will be assumed that the Student has been recruited to attend that school or transferred to that school for athletic reasons, and the Student will be ineligible for all high school athletic participation for both the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade school years. If the Student transfers to a school that his/her coach has relocated to, regardless of change in the Student's bona fide residence, it will be assumed that the Student transferred to that school for athletic reasons and he/she will be ineligible there for all high school athletic participation for both the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade school years.

***Q1: If a student athlete plays on a summer league team, participates in summer practices, etc. at a jr. - sr. high school outside of his/her attendance zone, and then transfers to that school, is he/she in violation of the Student Transferring to Follow a Coach bylaw?***

***A1: Yes. If a student has not officially withdrawn from his/her present school and enrolled in the new school that he/she plans to attend, he/she will be deemed ineligible should he/she choose to transfer to that school after participating on a summer league team, and/or in summer practice, open gym, etc.***

**9.3.19 Open Enrollment Choice**

An incoming ninth grade student, or an eighth grade student who participates at the high school level, will have made his/her Open Enrollment Choice. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students not already attending the institution they will be participating for must participate at their home attendance zone public high school. For ninth grade students, the Open Enrollment Choice can be to attend a school within the attendance zone of his/her primary residence or attend a school outside the attendance zone of his/her primary residence, to include a private school, with an approved transfer.

***Q1: If an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student in the 3A-5A classification participates at the high school level in one sport, must the student remain at the high school level in all sports?***

***A1: An 8<sup>th</sup> grade student in the 3A-5A classification may participate at the high school level in one sport and at the jr. / mid. high level in others.***

**9.3.20** For Charter School/Alternative School/Home/and Non-Member Private School student participation and eligibility please refer to Sections 10.1-10.7.

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**9.4 INTERSCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY: SCHOLARSHIP**

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**9.4.1** A Student first participating at the sixth or seventh grade level may compete without reference to his/her immediate or previous scholastic record. The end of the first semester establishes the scholarship requirements for this Student.

**9.4.2** An eighth grade Student competing in interscholastic sports at the high school level has made his/her open enrollment choice. The Student's eligibility to participate shall be determined by the semester grading period immediately preceding participation.

**9.4.3** 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 semester). The end of the first semester in 9<sup>th</sup> grade establishes the beginning of the scholarship requirements for this Student.

**9.4.4 Academic Eligibility**

**A.** A Student shall have a 2.0 grade point average with no F's, based on a 4.0 grading scale, or its equivalent, for the semester grading period immediately preceding participation.

**1.** Stricter guidelines may be imposed by the school/district.

**9.4.5** The cumulative provision cannot be utilized for middle/junior high school students.

**9.4.6** Classes or credits may be made up in summer school. Only core classes (English, Math, Science, or Social Studies) or a literacy or math block may be made up in summer school. Grades earned during a summer session must be placed on a student's transcript by the school registrar prior to the first day of the fall semester in order for the course to be utilized for eligibility purposes.

**9.4.7** If a student is ineligible at the semester, they may become eligible at the next regular grading period.

***Q1: My middle school only uses quarter grading periods. How should we determine scholastic eligibility?***

***A1: Scholastic eligibility is based on grades earned the semester preceding participation. The middle school must determine a semester grade for each course to comply with NMAA scholastic eligibility requirements.***

***Q2: A student fails a middle school course during the spring semester. The student opts to take summer school to repeat the course however; the school only provides pass/fail marks during summer school. If the student earns a "pass" mark, does this replace the F earned during the spring semester?***

***A2: No. In order for a failed course to be replaced during summer school, the student must pass the exact course and receive a letter grade.***

***Q3: A middle school student is deemed scholastically ineligible at the end of a semester and the middle school does not offer summer school. When can that student regain his/her eligibility?***

***A3: Ineligible students may regain their eligibility at the next regular grading period of the following semester. If utilizing a 6-week grading period, students that regain their eligibility after the first 6-weeks of the semester (1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> 6-weeks), must also have their eligibility checked at the next 6-week grading period of that semester (2<sup>nd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> 6-weeks).***

***Q4: An incoming ninth grade student who has not yet participated in high school sports failed a spring semester middle school course as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader the previous school year. Is this student afforded a clean slate for the incoming school year as a ninth grader?***

***A4: Yes. If the student is an incoming ninth grade student who has not yet participated at the high school level, he or she is afforded a clean slate for high school participation. The end of the first semester will establish the scholastic eligibility requirements for this student.***

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**9.5 DUAL PARTICIPATION**

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**9.5.1** 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.

**Exception:** Dual participation is not allowed in the sport of football.

**9.5.2** If an eighth grade Student is participating at the high school level, the dual participation rules in Section VI apply.

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

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**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:

|                        |                          |                            |
|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b><u>Football</u></b> | <b><u>Basketball</u></b> | <b><u>Other Sports</u></b> |
| \$200                  | \$150                    | \$100                      |

**Note:** 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.

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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.

For a complete guide for all officials' fees please refer to section 5.2.

**9.7.6 Co-op Participation**

Class A and 2A schools are allowed to co-op for team sports at the middle school level.

**9.7.7 Ejection Policy**

For a complete guide regarding ejections please refer to section 7.7.2.

**9.7.8 Out-of-Season Coaching**

Junior High/Middle School students can be involved in an out-of-season program. However, sixth and seventh grade students are not eligible to participate in out-of-season programs with high school students. For additional information please refer to section 7.5.

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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 eighteen (18) games.

## C. Sport Specifics

### 1. Length of Competition

- a. Per NFHS Rules, contests should be 7 innings in length. If a game is terminated for any reason before reaching 7 innings (or 6 ½ if the home team is ahead), the game is considered regulation when 5 innings have been completed (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead).
- b. By mutual agreement of the two schools, contest length can be adjusted to 5 innings if two games are played back to back (doubleheaders). If a 5 inning game is terminated for any reason before reaching 5 innings (or if 4 ½ if the home team is ahead), the game is considered regulation when 4 innings have been completed (or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead).
- c. **Mercy Rule (10-Run Rule):** A game is ended any time after 5 innings or after 4 ½ innings when the visiting team is ten or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat (after five innings).

2. **Baseball Bats** – Baseball bats used at the middle school level must follow NFHS standards as listed in the NFHS Baseball Rulebook (single piece wood or BBCOR certified metal/composite bat).

### 3. Pitching Restrictions

- a. A pitcher may throw 90 pitches in any one day. The pitcher will be allowed to finish a batter if they hit the maximum limit (90) during an at-bat, but must exit the game after the batter.

Note – Once a player exceeds the maximum daily pitch count threshold, that player is considered ineligible to pitch, and if used as pitcher once ineligible, the game must be forfeited by the team in violation of these regulations. The school and/or head coach will also be subject to additional sanctions as determined by the Executive Director.

***Q1: Does a player who has exceeded his maximum daily pitch threshold have to be removed from the game completely, or can he stay in the game at another position?***

***A1: Once the maximum pitch count threshold is reached, a player can stay in the game and participate at any position other than pitcher.***

- b. Coaches must keep a written record of all pitch counts for each player for all games. This information should be kept on file with the head coach and also reported to the school administration. (Coaches are responsible for their own players only)
- c. Required Rest Periods

| Pitches | Required Rest   |
|---------|-----------------|
| 81+     | 4 Calendar Days |
| 61-80   | 3 Calendar Days |
| 41-60   | 2 Calendar Days |
| 21-40   | 1 Calendar Day  |
| 0-20    | 0 Calendar Days |

Calendar day = If a pitcher throws 75 pitches on Tuesday, that player cannot pitch again until Saturday (3 required calendar days of rest).

Note – if a player pitches on consecutive days, the cumulative pitch count from those two days must be used to calculate the required rest period. Example = Pitcher A throws 17 pitches on Friday and 45 pitches on Saturday, which is 62 pitches cumulatively – required rest after day two would be 3 calendar days.

***Q1: Pitcher A throws 17 pitches on Friday, thus is eligible to pitch on Saturday. How many pitches can he throw on Saturday?***

***A1: Pitcher A can throw 90\* pitches on Saturday. The daily maximum is 90\*, regardless if a player pitched the previous day. \*Pitcher A may exceed 90 pitches if he is finishing an at-bat that started before 90***

1. Once a pitcher is removed, consideration should be given to the position he is assigned once he is done pitching. Consideration should be given to the throwing requirement of the fielding position once the pitcher vacates the mound.
2. Develop a pitching philosophy that includes the instruction in proper throwing mechanics, broadening the number of players who will become pitchers on their staffs, and developing a “work up” plan so that a pitcher is not throwing the maximum allowable pitches from the first day of competition (i.e., no more than 50 pitches in weeks 1-3, no more than 70 in weeks 4-6 to allow for growth and arm strength to develop.)

**D. Officials** - Schools are required to use a minimum of two (2) officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests.

### **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. All other schools may begin on Monday of Week #19.

#### **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.

**6<sup>th</sup>/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 Specifics**

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> |
|--|--------------------------|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> grade  | 6 minutes                |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> grade  | 6 minutes                |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> grade  | 6 minutes                |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> /7 <sup>th</sup> or 7 <sup>th</sup> /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

1. A player is considered to have played a game when he/she competes interscholastically in five or fewer quarters on any day or night against a given school. (Five quarters is the maximum permitted.) This applies to all levels including Junior High/Middle School. If a player enters into his/her sixth quarter of play in a day, a technical foul will be assessed on the coach and the player will be removed from the game.

**D. Mercy Rule** – When a team is ahead at half-time by 35 or more points or becomes 35 or more points ahead in the second half, the clock will stop only for time-outs and for two and three shot free throws. If the point differential becomes less than 35 points, regular time resumes.

**E. Officials** - Schools are required to use a minimum of two (2) officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests.

### 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:

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> grade: | Seven (7) meets |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> grade/C Team             | Eight (8) meets |

### C. Sport Specifics

1. **Distance** – The suggested distance shall be 1.5-2.0 miles. The maximum length of a race is 3.1 miles.

### 9.8.4 Football

#### A. Practice Regulations

1. **Start Date**- Practice may begin on Monday of week #7.

*\*Note: During the 2023 season only, practice may start on Monday of Week #6*

**Exception:** Schools within the 6-Man & 8-Man Classifications may begin practice on the Monday of week #6 (*week #5 in 2023 only*), thus allowing their first regular season game to be played during week #8 (*week #7 in 2023 only*). All 11-man football playing schools cannot participate in a contest until week #9 (*week #8 in 2023 only*).

2. **Minimum Practices before Participation**- Each team or individual must have at least eight (8) days of practice before participating in a scrimmage and ten (10) days of practice before competing in a game. The first regular season game may be played beginning Week #9 (*week #8 in 2023 only*) for 11-man schools and Week #8 (*week #7 in 2023 only*) for 6-Man & 8-Man schools.

The first four (4) days of practice for each participant shall be a time of conditioning without wearing full pads. The first two days of practice should be in shorts and helmets (no pads). During days three and four participants should be in shorts, shoulder pads, and helmets (“shells”). Full pads can then be worn during all remaining practices.

#### 3. Full Pads/Full Contact Regulations by Week

**Week 1-** The first two days of practice should be in shorts and helmets (no pads). During days three and four players should be in shorts, shoulder pads, and helmets (“shells”). Full pads can then be worn during days five and six. During this time, full contact is allowed but should be limited to no more than 30 minutes per player each day.

**\*Week 2-** Full contact is allowed for a total of no more than 120 minutes per player per week. Also, on a single day, full contact should be limited to no more than 30 minutes per player. In addition, one intra-squad or scrimmage would be allowed.

*\*NOTE- Per NMAA Bylaws, schools are allowed ONE scrimmage. Players must participate in a minimum of 8 days of practice prior to participating in a scrimmage and 10 days of practice prior to competing in a game.*

**Weeks 3- End of Season-** Full contact is allowed for a total of no more than 90 minutes per player per week. Also, on a single day, full contact should be limited to no more than 30 minutes per player.

### **Important Definitions**

*Full Contact-* football drills or live game situations where “live action” occurs.

*Live Action-* contact at game speed where players execute full tackles at a competitive pace taking players to the ground.

*Shells-* players are dressed in shorts, shoulder pads, and helmets

*\*NOTE-* It is assumed that when players are in “shells”, no live action will occur.

**4. Offseason/Summer-** In football, schools may use dummies, blocking sleds and hand shields for conditioning and instructional purposes during the offseason. Helmets and pads are not allowed during offseason or summer.

## **B. Competitive period**

A junior high / middle school football player shall not accumulate more than 8 football experiences within a 5-day period. A football experience is defined as follows:

- participating in more than one play on offense during a quarter, or
- participating in more than one play on defense during a quarter

*\*NOTE-* Special teams plays do not count towards participation limits / football experiences.

## **C. Game Limitations**

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

NOTE - Participation on a non-school team during the school season is prohibited. See NMAA Bylaw 9.5 (Dual Participation).

## **D. 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

**E. 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.

**F. Mercy Rule**

**6 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 timeouts or scores. If the point differential becomes less than 35 points, regular timing resumes. A game is ended at halftime or during the second half if a team is 50 or more points behind.

**8-Man and 11-Man** - When a team is ahead by 35 or more points, the clock will not stop during out of bounds, incomplete passes or first downs. The clock only stops for timeouts or scores. If the point differential becomes less than 35 points, regular timing resumes. A game is ended at halftime or during the second half if a team is 50 or more points behind.

**G. Officials**- Schools are required to use a minimum of four (4) officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests.

**H. Football**- Only footballs that comply with NFHS specifications should be used. By state association adoption, the ball to be used in games involving only players below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade may have dimensions as found in the following table:

|                     | 9 <sup>th</sup> grade and above | 8 <sup>th</sup> grade and below |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Weight              | 14 to 15 ounces                 | 12 to 14 ounces                 |
| Long circumference  | 27 ¾ to 28 ½ inches             | 26 to 27 inches                 |
| Long axis           | 10 7/8 to 11 7/16 inches        | 10 to 11 inches                 |
| Short circumference | 20 ¾ to 21 ¼ inches             | 19 to 20 inches                 |
| Inflation pressure  | 12 ½ to 13 ½ psi                | 12 ½ to 13 ½ psi                |

*\*NOTE- The dimensions for the ball specified for games played with 8<sup>th</sup> graders and below constitutes that which is known as a “youth” football.*

**I. Post-Game Protocols for Spectators** – At the conclusion of each football game, spectators may not access the field.

**J. Coaches Education** – Football Coaches must complete the USA Football Heads Up Certification Course. It is the responsibility of the school district to ensure that each coach has this certification, which is current for four (4) years from the date of completion.

Note – This requirement is for ALL middle school and high school coaches.

**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.
- D. Officials-** Schools are required to use a minimum of two (2) officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests.

#### 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).
- C. Sport Specifics**
  - 1. Length of Competition**
    - a.** Per NFHS Rules, contest should be 7 innings in length. If a game is terminated for any reason before reaching 7 innings (or 6 ½ if the home team is ahead), the game is considered regulation when 5 innings have been completed (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead).
    - b.** By mutual agreement of the two schools, contest length can be adjusted to 5 innings if two games are played back to back (doubleheaders).
    - c. Ten and Fifteen Run Rules:** A game shall be terminated after three innings if one team is ahead by 15 runs and after five innings if one team is ahead by 10 runs.
  - 2. Softball Bats-** Softball bats used in the middle school level must follow NFHS standards as listed in the NFHS Softball Rulebook.
- D. Officials-** Schools are required to use a minimum of two (2) officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests.

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

#### 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 is seven (7).

**C. Sport Specifics**

1. Distances for individual events and relays for 6<sup>th</sup>, 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 with the exception of the 3200 meter run (see 4 below).
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 6<sup>th</sup>, 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. 6<sup>th</sup>, 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..
8. The shot put shall weigh 4 kilograms for boys and 2.744 kilograms for girls.

### 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.

**C. Officials**- Schools are required to use a minimum of two (2) officials who are registered with the NMAA/NMOA office for all Junior High/Middle School contests. In emergency situations, and with the approval of the NMAA Office, a school may use one (1) official for middle school volleyball.

### 9.8.12 Wrestling

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

**B. Match Limitations** – The maximum number of meets for teams or individuals is eight (8).

**C. Weight Classes**

1. The NMAA recommends the following weight classes:

|    |    |     |     |     |     |
|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 73 | 88 | 105 | 126 | 148 | 187 |
| 78 | 93 | 112 | 133 | 158 | 210 |
| 83 | 99 | 119 | 140 | 170 | 250 |

2. Schools/districts may utilize weight classes which differ from the NMAA-recommended weight classes however, no more than 20 weight classes may be used for a tournament or dual meet. Consideration should be given to ensure safe and appropriate weight ranges while also minimizing forfeits and maximizing competitive opportunities.
3. Participants may not wrestle more than one weight class above that class for which the actual weight at the time of weigh-in, qualifies the participant.
4. The maximum weight class allowed is 250. Participants must weigh more than 187 pounds to be eligible for the 250-pound weight class.
5. The time limits for weighing in are the same as those stated in the National Federation Wrestling Rulebook.

#### **D. Sports 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 consists of a one (1) one-minute sudden victory period followed by one (1) 30-second ride-out period if no points are scored in sudden victory. Choice of position in the 30-second ride-out period is given to the wrestler who scored the first points in regulation. If no points were scored in regulation, a disk flip will determine choice of position.
5. A wrestling singlet, or T-shirt/shorts combination must be worn. Shirts shall be tight fitting and shorts shall be no longer than knee length. High top tennis shoes may be used or low tops taped on.
6. Girls may participate in boys' events however; boys may not participate in girls' events under any circumstance.
7. The National Federation Wrestling Rulebook governs all other matters.