7.15 FOOTBALL

7.15.1 General Rules/Policies

A. Classes - There are seven classes: 6-Man, 8-Man, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A and 6A.

B. Practice Regulations

1. Start Date - Practice may begin on Monday of Week #6*.

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 #8*.

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.

A maximum of four (4) days of conditioning may be waived if verification is submitted in writing to the Director that the student has been enrolled in a fitness class/athletic period under the jurisdiction of school personnel. (Applies to the second grading period only)

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 on 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.*

Week 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 simulations 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. The use of helmets/pads is mostly prohibited during the off-season/summer. If approved by school/district administration, helmets/pads may be used in a limited capacity beginning the Monday of week #47 through the Saturday of week #3 of the following NMAA calendar year. See Bylaw 7.5.2.G for exact regulations.

C. Competition Period: A student 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.

EXAMPLE: Student A is on both the Junior Varsity and Varsity Football Teams. The student participates in the JV and Varsity games as follows (FE = Football Experience):

Tuesday, Junior Varsity
1st Quarter – 2 plays on offense (1 FE), 12 plays on defense (1 FE)
2nd Quarter – 15 plays on defense (1 FE)
3rd Quarter – 12 plays on defense (1 FE)
4th Quarter – 1 play on offense (NOT an FE), 11 plays on defense (1 FE),

TOTAL FOOTBALL EXPERIENCES = 5

Friday, Varsity
1st Quarter – 10 plays on offense (1 FE)
2nd Quarter – 15 plays on offense (1 FE)
3rd Quarter – 14 plays on offense (1 FE)
4th Quarter – Did not play

TOTAL FOOTBALL EXPERIENCES = 3

TOTAL FOOTBALL EXPERIENCES FOR THE 5-DAY PERIOD = 8

D. Game Limitations

1. Football Game Definition - For the purpose of determining the number of games played by an individual, a student-athlete is considered to have played a football game when he/she participates interscholastically in eight or less football experiences in a consecutive five-day period.

*NOTE - A student-athlete can participate in a maximum of 11 regular season games.

2. Each team is limited to total regular season games as follows:

Class	Varsity	Non-Varsity
6- Man	9	8
8-Man & 2A thru 6A	10	9

***Q1*: Our program has several student-athletes that play on both a sub-varsity and varsity team. During the 11-week football contest season, our sub-varsity team plays during our varsity team's bye week. Can a student-athlete participate in a football contest during all 11 weeks?**

A1: Yes. Individuals are limited to 11 games per season.

E. 8-Man Football Rules, Recommendations and Information

1. Where possible, the field will be 100 yards long and 40 yards wide. The hash marks will be placed 40 feet from the sideline (13 yards 1 foot).

2. The 80-yard field is acceptable if the schools are unable to extend to 100 yards. The field must be 40 yards wide.

3. The end zones will be 10 yards in length.

4. 4 downs to make a 1st down which is 10 yards.

5. The kickoff on a 100-yard field will be from the 40-yard line. The kickoff of an 80-yard field will be from the 30-yard line.

6. Scoring is identical to 11-Man football. 6 points for touchdowns, 2 points for running or passing after touchdowns, 1 point for an extra point kick, 3 points for field goals, etc.

7. Penalties will be enforced exactly the same as 11-Man football.

8. Per NFHS Rules, at least three players must be on the offensive line of scrimmage at the snap and may have any legal jersey number. Each player who at the snap was on the end of the scrimmage line (total of two) is eligible to receive a forward pass. Each player who at the snap was legally behind the scrimmage line (maximum of three) is eligible.

9. There is no number code. Officials will need to be very observant as to who is eligible or ineligible on each offensive play.

F. Schedule Deadlines/Procedures - One copy of the schedule for the subsequent school year is to be sent to the NMAA and must be postmarked on or before May 15. Delinquent schedules are subject to a fine to the school, payable to the Association.

G. NMAA Rules Clinic - The head football coach from each declared football school must attend the NMAA in-person rules clinic or complete the alternate version of the rules clinic if it is a year where the in-person clinic is not mandatory. Failure to comply shall result in a $100 fine to the school per head coach which will be assessed on September 1st.

H. Tie Breaker - The tie-breaking procedure in the National Federation Football Rulebook is used in all games (varsity, sub-varsity and middle school) between New Mexico schools, as well as out-of-state guests, with the results determining the winner.

I. 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.

J. Post-Game Protocols for Spectators – At the conclusion of each football game, spectators may not access the field.
Exception – For State Championship contests, spectators may be allowed access to the field after the conclusion of the awards presentations should the host school allow for it.

K. Coaches Education – Football Coaches must complete the NFHS Learn Football Tackling 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. This requirement is for ALL middle school / junior high and high school coaches.

*NOTE – Coaches that have previously taken the USA Football Heads Up Course do not need to take the new course until their original certification expires (expiration is 4-years from the date of completion).

L. Use of Play Clock – Per NFHS Rules, an electronic/field level 40/25-second play clock can be used if the host school has the technology and staff available to effectively operate the system. Game officials can opt to keep this 40/25-second count on the field if it is determined that the clock is malfunctioning or operated inconsistently.

M. Film Requirement – Coaches are required to submit game film to the NMAA/NMOA Football Hudl account for each varsity contest. Film can be raw game footage and need not be clipped. Deadlines for submission after each contest are:

Thursday games – film must be submitted by 1:00 p.m. on Saturday
Friday games – film must be submitted by 1:00 p.m. on Saturday
Saturday games – film must be submitted by 10:00 a.m. on Sunday

The NMAA/NMOA Hudl Account will serve as an open library where all varsity game film is stored and can be accessed by coaches, officials, and NMAA/NMOA staff. Film not received in the NMAA/NMOA Hudl account using the above deadline will now be subject to penalty as follows:

1st Offense – Warning in Writing to Head Coach and Athletic Director
2nd Offense – Suspension from the 1st Half of the next game for the Head Coach
3rd Offense – Suspension from the entire next game for the Head Coach

N. Extension of Team Box – Per state association adoption of NFHS Rule 1-2-3g Note 3, the team box will be extended to the 10-yard lines for both teams.

In addition to authorized team personnel, properly credentialed media representatives and approved event staff may be in the team box between the 10-yard line and the 25-yard line, but only if approved by the head coach.

Only authorized team personnel may be in the team box between the 25-yard lines.

7.15.2 Officials

A. Officials working any NMAA sanctioned events must be registered through the Association.

B. The use of a non-registered official for any contest shall subject the violating school to a fine.

C. Number of Officials:

6-Man/8-Man/2A/3A……..Four (4)
4A/5A/6A……Five (5)*

*Provided there are sufficient numbers of registered NMAA/NMOA officials to satisfy this requirement.

D. Officials are selected and assigned by the commissioners, under the direction of the state commissioner, for regular season games and play-off games.

E. A school may designate up to 5% of the officials in each region of the state as a #3 ("will not use") on the preferential list which is due in the NMAA office on or before June 1st; however, a coach must provide a narrative statement within the context of one or more of the "Categories for Justification of Exclusion" in order for the exclusion to be considered.

7.15.3 District Information

A. A school must play its full district schedule to be eligible for the championship.

B. In case of a two team tie for placement within the district, the team that defeated the other in regular district play will earn the higher placement.

C. In the event that more than two teams tie, placement is determined by a point spread system during the season as follows:

1. Compare the results of head to head competition: If one team has defeated the other two, that team has earned a higher placement.

2. Placement shall be determined by the point spread of games played between the tied teams, with 13 points being the maximum allowed for any one game. Each team involved uses either a plus or a minus spread; if a team wins by 10, they are credited (+10); the other team has a deficit (-10) in the calculation.

3. If two teams tie on the point spread of the tied teams, the team which defeated the other team in regular district play has earned the higher placement.

4. If all teams tie in the point spread of the tied teams, the point spread on all district games shall be used, with 13 points being the maximum allowed for any one game.

5. If two teams tie in the point spread of the tied teams, the team which defeated the other team in regular district play has earned the higher placement.

6. If all teams are still tied, a coin toss determines placement.

a. The three tied teams each flip a coin.
b. The "odd man out" is the third place team.
c. First and second place is then determined by which team defeated the other team in regular district play.

Example: A, B, and C all flip a coin. A and B coins are heads, C coin is tails. C is therefore 3rd place. A beat B head-to-head during regular district play. A is first place and B is second place.

7. This process, including the coin toss, is administered by the NMAA staff. The official declaration of results is the responsibility of the Association staff.

7.15.4 Playoff Information

A. General

1. Each school determines the number of players it suits out for playoff games.

2. In case of a tie score in playoff games, including the championship, a winner is determined by the procedure set forth in the National Federation Football Rulebook Ten-Yard-Line Overtime Procedure.

B. Playoff Procedure and Seeding for an 8-Team format in 6-Man Football

1. Eight teams advance to the playoffs.

2. The district champions automatically advance to the playoffs.

3. There will be six At-Large selections.

4. The eight teams will be seeded 1 through 8 by the NMAA Staff based on criteria.

5. The higher seed will host the quarterfinal games. In the semifinal and final rounds, the home site is determined by past history. If the two schools do not have past history, the higher seed will host.

C. Playoff Procedures and Selection/Seeding for 12-Team Format for Classes 8-Man, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A

1. Twelve teams advance to the playoffs.

2. The district champion automatically advances to the playoffs. The remaining teams will be selected At-Large to fill the 12-team bracket.

3. The 12 teams will be seeded 1 through 12 by the NMAA Staff based on criteria.

4. The higher seed will host the first round of 12 and quarterfinal games.

5. In the semifinal and final rounds, the home site is determined by past history. If the two schools do not have past history; the higher seed will host.

For All Classes, past history is defined by the NMAA as any semifinal or final round playoff game between 2 schools dating back to 1953.

Q1: Highland played Organ Mountain in the semifinals in 2005 at the Field of Dream. These two teams play this year in the finals. Based on past history, where will the game be held?

A1: Based on the two schools' past history, the game will be held in Albuquerque.

Q2: Belen played Artesia in Artesia in the 2005 quarterfinals due to the fact that Artesia got a first round bye in the round of 12. If Belen and Artesia play this year in the semifinals, where will the game be held?

A2: The quarterfinal game does not qualify as "past history" because it is not a semifinal or final. Thus, the location will be determined based on potential previous match-ups between these schools that may have taken place during the semifinals or finals. If these schools have no past history, the higher seed will host.

Q3: Animas played Melrose in the 6-man semifinals in 2004. The game was played in Animas. Both schools are now in the 8-man division in football and are playing in this year's 8-man championship. Where will the game be held?

A3: The game will be held in Melrose based on the past history of the two schools. The classification of the schools is not a factor in this decision.

E. Dates and Times for Football Playoff Games (1st Round, Quarterfinals, Semifinals)

1. If the two schools are 250 or more miles apart (one way), the following format will be used:

a. Mutual agreement by participating schools.
b. Non-agreement, the game will be played on Saturday at 1pm.

2. If the two schools are less than 250 miles apart (one way), the following format will be used:

a. Mutual agreement by participating schools.
b. Non-agreement, the home team makes the choice of:
1) Friday at 7:00 or 7:30 p.m., or
2) Saturday at 1:00 p.m.
c. In the event there is a stadium conflict, the date and time will be decided by the NMAA with priority given to the team that must travel the farthest distance.

NOTE: The 250 miles is from one city to another as indicated on the NMAA (NMOA) Officials chart utilized to determine payment for mileage.

F. Dates and Times for Football Championship Games (Finals)

1. Championship games must be played on Saturday at 1:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m., unless there is mutual agreement between the two schools to play on Friday night.

7.15.5 Financial Information

A. After expenses, the net profit from all playoff/championship game receipts are split 70% to the Association and 30% to the participating schools. Deficits are the responsibility of the participating schools.

B. Financial Reports - The NMAA financial report found on the website along with all supporting documentation concerning expenses must be sent by the host school to the NMAA within 10 business days of the event.

7.15.6 Playoff Weeks*

Week 17	6-Man & 8-Man playoff brackets released (Saturday Evening)
Week 18	6-Man Quarterfinals & 8-Man First Round of Twelve 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, & 6A brackets released (Saturday Evening)
Week 19	6-Man Semifinals & 8-Man Quarterfinals 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, & 6A First Round of Twelve
Week 20	6-Man Finals, & 8-Man Semifinals 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, & 6A Quarterfinals
Week 21	8-Man Finals 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, & 6A Semifinals
Week 22	2A, 3A, 4A, 5A, & 6A Finals