



APPLING COUNTY  
MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK  
FOR ATHLETICS

# **APPLING COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL BY-LAWS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Athletic Program for Middle School Athletics will operate under the same general policies as the high school programs with the exception of State Standard policies that regulate middle school athletics.

The purpose of the middle school athletic program is to orient our middle school students to the competitive experiences of team play in inter-league play. While participation is open to every athlete, all coaches need to be sensitive to individuals who may be cut from the program and those who may have limited play. The team concept should be taught, in that even the people on the bench have a role to play in the success of the team. That does not mean that every player has to play in every game, but that each player should know their role on the team and that their role is key to the success of the team. Good communication with the participants and their parents should help alleviate complaints in regard to playing time. Each child is important to the team, but the team is more important than any one individual. Coaches should use good judgment in making cut and/or deciding on playing time for students. When the game is either under control or out of control, efforts should be made to clear the bench. A coaching decision must be made to determine at what point that may take place; that is why you are called “coach”.

A league called the Southeast Georgia Middle School Conference has been formed with the following school systems as members: Appling, Arthur Williams, Bacon, Brantley, McIntosh, Long, Martha Puckett, Pierce, Ware, and Waycross. Schedules will be representative of the membership where common sports are played. We hope to move toward all sports being recognized in the membership.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the by laws and rules of the league and the overall policies of our athletic conference to ensure compliance.

## **Objectives of Participation**

1. Physical, mental and emotional growth and development
2. Acquisition and development of special skills in activities of each student's choice
3. Team play with the development of such commitments as loyalty, cooperation, fair play and other desirable social traits
4. Directed leadership and supervision that stresses self-discipline, self-motivation, excellence and the ideals of good sportsmanship that make for winning and losing graciously
5. A focus of interest on activity programs for student body, faculty, and community that will generate a feeling of unity
6. Achievement of initial goals as set by the school in general and the student as an individual
7. Provision for worthy use of leisure time in later life, either as a participant or spectator
8. Participation by the most skilled that will enable these individuals to expand possibilities for future vocational pursuits

## **SECTION I – MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The Conference will not be subdivided, unless there are 10 more member schools.
- B. Conference members are Appling County, Arthur Williams, Bacon, Brantley County, Long County, Martha Puckett, Pierce County, Ware County, and Waycross.
- C. Schools who withdraw from the Conference or would like to be considered for admission should write a letter of intent to the Conference Commissioner prior to May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- D. Conference dues for each year will be \$ 200.00. The Conference may vote to lower dues for the upcoming year at the final meeting of the previous year. Dues are payable to the Conference Secretary prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>. (***\$ 10.00 non-compliance fee and/or letter to schools' Principal and/or Superintendent reporting non-compliance***)
- E. Schools must offer 7 sports, (basketball counts as 2 and football must be played), in order to be a member of this Conference.
- F. Schools that chose to withdraw from the conference must give a 6 month notice or face a \$2000.00 fine for withdrawal. (Amended August 14, 2018)

## **SECTION II – OFFICERS**

- A. The Conference will have a Commissioner who is a school's
- B. Administrator or athletic director as the controlling officer. He/she will:
  - 1. Supervise matters of Conference business.
  - 2. Act as presiding officer at Conference meetings.
  - 3. In accordance with the conference rules, the Commissioner is empowered to make a determination as to whether a violation of conference rules has occurred, and to assess the appropriate penalty which may include a fine and/or probation
- C. The Commissioner will be elected each year at the final meeting and take office at the conclusion of that meeting.
- D. The Conference members will elect a Secretary to take record, issue the minutes of the past meeting, and serve as treasurer of the Conference. The Secretary shall also perform other duties as assigned by the Commissioner including presenting a treasurer's report at every meeting.
- E. The Commissioner may spend up to \$ 300.00 on Conference expenses such as postage, long distance phone calls, and secretarial assistance without approval of the Conference members.
- F. The Commissioner will be paid \$ 300.00 at the end of each year. The Secretary will be paid \$ 200.00 at the end of each year.

## **SECTION III – SANCTIONS AND APPEALS**

- A. ***RULES INFRACTIONS:***
  - 1. Incidents of misconduct before, during, or after a contest on school property that affects the safety and well-being of fans or participants shall be reported to the Conference Commissioner.
  - 2. A second violation within one calendar year will result in Conference action and a letter from the Conference to the guilty schools' Principal and/or Superintendent.
  - 3. Grievance committee will be made up of all principals minus school(s) involved and will investigate any concerns of rule infractions or standard violations.

## **B. PROBATION**

1. If a member school is placed on probation by the Conference for a rules infractions violation, that school is ineligible for post-season play for that year.
2. If the season has been completed, that school will forfeit ALL awards and will receive a \$ 100.00 fine.

## **C. APPEAL PROCEDURE**

1. Appeals will be heard for eligibility (transfer of student) and rules infractions only. All decisions/calls made by officials in a game will be FINAL.
2. Athletic Directors will act as an appeals committee with a 2/3 vote required to hear an appeal.
3. Appeals must be made in writing and received by the Conference Commissioner within 24 hours of the infraction.
4. The appeal must include a payment of \$50.00 at the time of hearing the appeal by the conference.
5. The Commissioner will then call a meeting of the Athletic Directors who will hear the appeal. If the meeting cannot occur due to time constraints, the information will be communicated to all member schools.
6. The Commissioner will gather all information of the appeal and ask for the vote of each school by chosen communication if no meeting occurred.
7. If the Commissioner is directly involved in the appeal, the Secretary will serve his roll. If both are involved, the responsibility will fall to the senior member of the Conference.
8. If an appeal is granted, the \$50.00 will be refunded.

## **SECTION IV - BY-LAWS**

- A. A vote of 2/3 of the member schools is required to change Conference By -Laws.
- B. There will be no changes in By-laws during the calendar year, unless there are changes in the NFSH or GHSA.

## **SECTION V – ELIGIBILITY**

- A. A student is eligible to participate one year in the sixth grade, one year in the seventh grade, and one year in the eighth grade. This applies to the first year a student enters that grade.
- B. Participation means as a player or a manager.
- C. To be eligible for the first semester at any grade level, the student must meet district promotion standards from the previous year. The student cannot be placed or retained.
- D. Each participant cannot fail more than one CORE class for the semester preceding participation. An athlete fails 2 classes or more, they are not eligible. Connection classes and all other classes are handled on the school level by school administration.
- E. If a student has any school behavior problems, ISS, OSS, chronic tardiness, insubordination, disrespectful to coaches/teachers/administrator/staff/teammates,

- academic inadequacies are unacceptable and will be disciplined until corrected by Head Coach & Athletic Director's discretion and/or game(s) suspension and/or dismissal from the team and/or dismissal from the program for one year.
- F. A student must not reach his/her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday prior to May 1<sup>st</sup> preceding their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.
  - G. A student/player who is eligible at the middle school level can play both Middle school and Junior Varsity, but not concurrently. A player being in violation of this rule will not be allowed to finish the middle school season of that sport. This will also result in the forfeiture of all conference games that the violation occurred in.
  - H. Member schools must follow IDEA policy.
  - I. Team rosters are to be sent to the Conference Commissioner 5 days before the schools' first contest / game / match / meet. (**\$ 10.00 non-compliance fee and/or letter to schools' Principal and/or Superintendent reporting non-compliance**)
  - J. School Attendance is required for half of the school day of any athletic activity which the student wishes to participate in.
  - K. Anyone wishing to participate in athletics at any Appling County Middle School must have adequate insurance, either private or through the school and must have a signed concussion form and physical examination before he/she can participate (try out or practice) in any athletic event. The school and athletic department are not responsible for any medical bills related to participation in athletics.
  - L. All students who are selected to represent a Middle School Sports Program will be required to sign, acknowledging that he/she has read and fully understands the rules and policies of the School and Athletic Department.
  - M. All students must be considered amateurs. An amateur is one who has never violated his/her amateur standing by receiving money, tuition, board, or pay of any description or compensation for playing under one's own name or assumed name.
  - N. A student is not eligible if they are considered a migrant student. A migrant student is any student who changes schools after enrolling in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade without making a bona fide family move as defined by the GHSA. Consistent with the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) definition of "**bona fide move**", if the student moves simultaneously with the entire parental unit or persons he/she resided with at the former school, and the student and parent(s) or persons residing with the student live in the established attendance zone of the new school, the student may be considered for eligibility at the receiving Appling County Middle School.

### **FORFEITING ACHIEVEMENTS AND QUITTING A TEAM**

In an effort to promote athletic participation, and at the same time to eradicate the negative side effects of quitting, all students are granted an initial grace period for try-outs in any sport. Students may feel free to try out during the first two weeks of any athletic season to determine whether or not they are committed to play and practice for an entire season.

If, at the end of the two-week grace period and prior to the date of a sport's first game or contest, the student decides that he or she is not prepared to make a seasonal commitment, then the student may choose to leave that particular program in good standing with the Athletic Department. However, should a student stay with a particular sport after the grace period has ended and at some later point in the season decides to quit, the student will face athletic

probation. This means that an athlete is not allowed to participate in another sport during the same school year unless the athletic director is willing to justify and recommend the probationary athlete's participation. Supportive evidence of the probationary athlete's sincerity and desire to participate as well as his or her commitment to successfully complete the entire athletic season must be demonstrated by the probationary athlete. The decision to allow the athlete to participate must ultimately be based on what is best for the athletic program as well as the student athlete.

Should a student athlete be granted a second opportunity to participate in another sport, the consequences for quitting again will be severe. A student athlete who quits a second time will automatically be disqualified from participation in the athletic program for one school year. This policy applies to all athletes in each grade.

If a student athlete is dismissed from the team due to disciplinary action by the coach of his/her sport, then the athlete may appeal to the athletic director and principal for reinstatement to the team. Again, the final decision must ultimately be determined in regard to what is best for the athletic program as well as the student.

If an athlete is ejected from a game for any reason, he/she will be suspended for the next game. Other factors may warrant further disciplinary action by the Athletic Department and/or the individual school.

Students who get in trouble at school and are placed in ISS cannot play in any athletic contest while in ISS. Any student that is suspended home may not participate while suspended home and they will be suspended for one game or more when they return to school. The school administration has the right to suspend kids for more than one game if they choose. Any student that is suspended home two times during a season should be removed from the team. The Athletic Department or individual school reserves the right to discipline an athlete for any infraction that is deemed to be detrimental to the athletic program.

The possession and use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and has serious and harmful effects on the physical and mental well being of students. With that in mind, any athlete with possession of drugs/alcohol is subject to dismissal from the athletic program.

### **Equipment**

When an athlete is issued equipment, he/she is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of that equipment. If it is lost or stolen or defaced in any way other than normal wear and tear, then the athlete is financially responsible for said equipment.

The return time of all equipment is one week after the final contest of the season.

### **Travel**

All athletes will travel with his/her team to all events. They will also return with the team unless the head coach is notified by a parent or legal guardian of substitute transportation. This permission must come before the team departs and must be in written form. Players may be released to parents after a contest and after notifying the head coach. Failure to comply with this rule may lead to suspension from the team.

## SECTION VI – SCHEDULES

- A. The number of games a member school is allowed to play will be determined by the conference. Middle school can only play 70% of a varsity schedule excluding playoffs.
- B. Games may be played outside the conference once conference obligations are met.
- C. Players must participate in 60% of the conference contests in order to be eligible to compete in conference championships. Athletes participation in cross country, golf, tennis, and/or track must compete in two regular season events to be eligible to compete in the conference championship. (Amended May 13, 2019)
- D. Teams must participate in 100% of the conference contests in order to be eligible to compete in conference championships. (For exclusions refer to Section VII J)
- E. Regular season games may be played any day per week preceding a school day, and must end by 9:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday, unless the next day is not an official school day for both schools, then they can play on to finish the game. Curfew for playoff games must end by 11:30 p.m. (Amended Oct. 20, 2015)
- F. Member schools are to send all sports schedules to the Conference Commissioner and each opponent in order to avoid conflicts. (***\$10.00 non-compliance fee and/or letter to schools' Principal and/or Superintendent reporting non-compliance***) Sports' schedules serve as contracted obligation between the two schools.
- E. Season records (wins & losses & scores) are to be sent to the Conference Commissioner the first school day after the last regular season game. (***\$10.00 non-compliance fee and/or letter to schools' Principal and/or Superintendent reporting non-compliance***)

## SECTION VII – RULES COVERING ALL SPORTS

- A. A sport will be sanctioned if two or more schools participate in that sport.
- B. The following sports are currently sanctioned by the Conference: *football, fast-pitch softball, cheerleading, cross country, girls/boys basketball, wrestling, baseball, girls/boys golf, girls/boys soccer, girls/boys tennis, girls/boys track, swimming (Amended August 2017) and weightlifting.*
- C. Ties in the Conference standing will be determined by:
  - 1. Head to head record
  - 2. Record against common opponents
  - 3. Overall record
  - 4. Process of tiebreaker for each individual sport
  - 5. In any step of the tie-breaking process if a tie involving more than two teams is broken so that all ties are broken, that step determines the placements. If two teams remain tied after a step is completed, revert back to head-to-head record to break the tie. If the tie cannot be broken, move to the next step.
- D. State Standards and GHSA By-laws (white book) will govern all Conference activities except for those differences outlined in these Conference By-laws.
- E. Read the sportsmanship letter at all sporting events and games.
- F. Admission to all athletic contests shall be \$ 5.00 for adults and students k-12 (\$ 6.00 for all tournaments/play-offs/finals). (optional for track) There will be no advanced ticket sales. Players and cheerleaders eliminated from tournaments must pay admission to the



remaining games. Conference passes and GHSA passes will be honored at all events. Local school passes may not be used at Conference tournaments and/or play-offs. (*Each member school will receive 20 Season Passes each year*) (*Amend May 8, 2017*)

- G. First place and Conference Runner-up trophies will be awarded at all Conference finals.
- H. The Conference recommends that each host school for all events provide security officers. NOTE: mandatory for football, basketball, softball, soccer & tournaments (Mandatory for all sports with officials.)
- I. Except for football, host schools for Conference Tournament Finals should pay all expenses and retain 95% of net profits. The remaining 5% will be forwarded to the Conference. Expenses should not exceed: *scorekeeper \$ 10.00/game, security \$20/hour, and gatekeeper \$ 50.00, officials to be determined by GHSA.* (Amended May 13, 2019)
- J. When games are cancelled due to inclement weather, or other “acts of God”, the game is scheduled for the next available date, including Saturday. Location can be switched if in agreement with the original home team.
- K. The Conference will vote for a school to receive a SPORTSMANSHIP Trophy at the conclusion of the year and an ATHLETIC DIRECTOR of the Year.
- L. Ejections from contest will serve a one game suspension for all players/coaches. An ejection of a coach for the second time during a season will result in a fine of \$100 to be paid to the conference. An ejection of a player for the second time during a season will result in the player being suspended from play for the remainder of the season including post-season.
- M. A conference school can compete in one state competition during their season.

## **SECTION VIII – BASEBALL**

- A. Weekday games begin at 4:00 PM unless otherwise agreed upon.
- B. All teams will participate in the Conference tournament.
- C. Semi-finals will be played on Thursday (Higher Seed) and the Finals will be played on Saturday at #1 Seed. (Amended May 13, 2019)
- D. The higher seeded team will be designated HOME for the entire tournament.
- E. For semi-finals/finals, each participating school will provide 3 new baseballs for each game.
- F. Home team is responsible for sending in scores of games the next school day to the Conference Commissioner.
- G. Baseball Bats: 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams use -3 BBCOR Stamped Approved Bats, 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> grade teams must use -5 legal stamped approved 2 ¾ barrel bats. (Amended May 13, 2019)
- H. Pitching restrictions: (a) Maximum Pitches in One Game: Sub-varsity 70. (b) Required Rest Periods: 0 Days 1-24 Pitches: 1 Days 25-40 Pitches: 2 Days 41-55 Pitches: 3 Days 56-70 Pitches (Amended May 13, 2019) HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION Note: A pitcher shall not throw more than 70 pitches cumulative over a two-day period and cannot pitch more than two consecutive days. The rest period is based on the total pitches thrown during a given two-day period. (c) A pitcher at any level (varsity or sub-varsity) shall be allowed to finish the batter when the pitch count limit is reached during an at-bat, but must be replaced immediately when that at-bat ends. (d) A “Day of Rest” is defined as a calendar day. Example: a varsity level pitcher who reaches the 110-pitch limit on a

Tuesday would not be allowed to pitch again until Saturday. (e) Tabulation of Pitch Counts - This process will be done by a GHSA registered umpire from the host school's assigned local association. This official recorder will be paid a one-half game fee plus travel. It will then be the responsibility of the recorder to enter the pitch count information for each school following the completion of the game into the GHSA MIS system. (f) In games vs. non-GHSA member schools, the GHSA pitching restrictions shall be adhered to, regardless of the pitch count policy of the host school affiliation or state association. When playing out of state, it is the GHSA member school's responsibility to report the pitch count information to the GHSA office. (g) State Tournament - The format for all rounds will be a "best-of-three" series with the first two games being played on the first day. During the State Tournament, no pitcher shall be allowed to throw more than 120 pitches over a three-game series (unless the schedule is affected by weather delays). (h) If a school is found to have violated any of the provisions of this policy, the offending school shall be fined \$250.00 and the head coach at that level assessed a two-game suspension. All fines are due to the conference 10 days from the date of the violation. (Amended May 13, 2019) Any subsequent violation during the same season will result in penalties being doubled and the head coach being required to meet with the Executive Director prior to being reinstated to coach. (Amended Aug. 10, 2017) If a team violates the conference pitch count rules that team will forfeit the game that the violation was made in. (Amended Dec. 6, 2017)

- I. Ties in the Conference standing will be determined by:
  1. Head to head record
  2. Record against common opponents
  3. Overall record within conference
  4. Runs allowed in game(s) against tied schools
  5. Coin Toss between tied schools

## **SECTION IX – BASKETBALL**

- A. Schools will play a full Conference schedule of games that count towards tournament seeding. Additional league games may be added.
- B. Weekday games begin at 4:00 PM unless otherwise agreed upon.
- C. 6-minute quarters will be played with at least 10 minute to warm-up and at least 8 minutes between halves.
- D. If officials or teams are late for a game, the coaches of both schools must agree to any changes in the warm-up time and length of quarters before the start of the game. The total time available for the games must be divided equally for each game.
- E. Players can only play on one team throughout the year in basketball. They can only play on the 6/7<sup>th</sup> grade team or 8<sup>th</sup> grade team during a season. Coaches may choose to move up 6/7<sup>th</sup> grade players after their season has ended as long as the players do not exceed the 70% rule for participation.
- F. Home teams will wear white jerseys unless agreed otherwise. Undershirts must meet GHSA rules.
- G. Girls will use the smaller GHSA approved basketball.
- H. All teams in the Conference will participate in the Conference Tournament.

- I. Home team is responsible for sending in scores of games the next school day to the Conference Commissioner.
- J. Ejections are one game suspension.
- K. Mercy Rule Basketball: Will have a running clock 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, if down by 40 at the half and running clock, if down by 30 starting the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
- L. Games will be on Monday and Thursday.
- M. The last 9 games will determine seeding for play-offs.
- N. Ties in the Conference standing will be determined by:
  - 1. Head to Head record of last 9 games.
  - 2. Overall record within the conference.
  - 3. Points allowed against tied schools of last games played between tied schools.
  - 4. Coin Toss between tied schools

## SECTION X – CHEERLEADING

- A. Schools with a competition squad may participate in the Conference tournament. The order for cheerleading competition will be determined by a random drawing. **There will be no flash photography, no cheer grams, and no exhibition or contests at the Conference tournament.**
- B. Host schools for teams must provide warm-up areas.
- C. Only GHSA / NCA certified officials are to be used.
- D. Each squad will perform a choreographed routine not to exceed 2 and ½ minutes.
  - 1. Each routine must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - 2. GHSA Competitive Cheerleading Manual
  - 3. GHSA Constitution and By-Laws
  - 4. National Federation Spirit Rule Book
- E. Cheerleaders are not allowed to stomp on bleachers while cheering at ANY contest.

## SECTION XI – CROSS COUNTRY

- A. Cross County can run up to 7 meets and a Conference Championship. (Amended Dec. 9, 2015)
- B. The course will be 2.0 miles. (Amended May 14, 2018)
- C. Each school can only run 7 runners at the Conference Championships and only top 5 runners will count with the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> runners counting displacers.

## SECTION XII – FOOTBALL

- A. The top 4 teams will participate in the play-offs with (#1 team hosting #4 team) and (#2 team hosting #3 team).. The play-off games will be the Wednesday following the final regular season game or first available date. The play-off winners will meet the following Wednesday in the Championship game hosted by the highest seed. (Amended May 13, 2019)
- B. In the play-off game and the championship game, each team will receive 40% of the gate receipts after expenses. The Conference will get 20% if it exceeds \$ 10.00. Expenses

cannot exceed the following: *clock operator \$15.00/security \$20.00/hour, and gatekeeper \$10.00, officials to be determined by GHSA.*

- C. All games must begin no later than 5:00 PM.
- D. 8- Minute quarters will be played with at least 10 minutes between halves.
- E. Each team may use the brand of football they choose as long as it meets middle school standards in size and weight.
- F. In all games in case of a tie at the end of regulation play, the following rules apply. A coin toss will determine a team's choice of offense / defense / side of field. The offensive team will take the ball at their opponent's 15-yard line with 4 plays to score and opportunity for extra-point conversion or gain a first down. After one team's opportunity, the other will receive their 4 downs from the 15-yard line and extra-point conversion opportunity or gain a first down. If either team scores or both teams have had their opportunity, the score determines the winner. This procedure continues until a winner is determined.
- G. Home team is responsible for sending in scores of games the next school day to the Conference Commissioner.
- H. Football schedule must meet standards of 70% rule (Amended May 4, 2016) – 6 games plus a scrimmage game.
- I. The scrimmage games will consist of two 8 minute quarters. The game times are 5:00; 5:30 and 6:00 (only use this format when teams are uneven). (Amended May 13, 2019)
- J. Football games will start at 5:00.
- K. Football tie-breaker
  - 1. Head-to-Head
  - 2. Record versus Common Opponent
  - 3. Overall Record
  - 4. Total points allowed between teams that are tied.

(Amended May 13, 2019)

- L. Football procedures when there is a subregion.

The top two teams from each sub-region will participate in the play-offs with #1 (North) hosting #2 (South)

and #1 (South) hosting #2 (North). The play-off game will be the Wednesday following the final regular season

game or first available date. The play-off winners will meet the following Wednesday in the Championship game

hosted by the highest seed.

- M. Football tie-breaker - (Use when there is a sub-region: Must break sub-region tie first)
  - 1. Sub-region Record
  - 2. Head-to-Head
  - 3. Record versus Common Opponent
  - 4. Overall Record
  - 5. Total points allowed in sub-region

### **SECTION XIII – GOLF**

- A. Regular golf matches will be 9-hole matches. Coaches may agree to play an 18-hole match if time permits.

- B. The Conference Tournament will be a 9-hole match with all schools invited to participate. Boys will play one tee back and RED tees for the girls.
- C. Matches should begin at 3:30 PM unless otherwise agreed upon.
- D. The tournament host may elect to charge each participating team a meal fee to cover the cost of feeding the players during the tournament. This fee should not exceed \$ 40.00 for 2 teams and \$ 25.00 for 1 team.
- E. Coaches should send a list of their tournament roster and their 9-hole scoring average to the Tournament Host 7 days prior to the tournament. (***\$10.00 non-compliance fee and/or letter to schools' Principal and/or Superintendent reporting non-compliance***)
- F. Each school participating in the Tournament will provide 2 Marshals.
- G. USGA competitive rules apply.
  - H. Golf date will start the same as baseball, due to GHSA moving the start date back. Coaches only are allowed to converse with players between the tee box and greens on all holes of the match.

#### **SECTION XIV – SOCCER**

- A. See GHSA Constitution and By-Laws
- B. Soccer matches will be 25 minute halves.
- C. The overtime will consist of one 10 minute period.(Amended May 13, 2019)
- D. If the score remains tied following the overtime period, a “shootout” of penalty kicks will determine the winner.
- E. A coin toss shall take place to determine which team will put the ball in play for the overtime period.
- F. All teams will participate in the Conference tournament. 1<sup>st</sup> round played at the higher seed. Conference semi-finals and finals hosted by the #1 team.
- G. The #1 Boy’s and the #1 Girl’s will host the soccer conference championships and rotate boys and girls site each year.
- H. Ties in the Conference standing will be determined by:
  1. Head to head record
  2. Record against common opponents
  3. Overall record within conference
  4. Goals allowed in game(s) against tied schools
  5. Coin Toss between tied schools
 (Amended May, 8 2017)
- J. Uniforms: Home teams will wear white and the visiting team will wear dark uniforms.(Amended May 13, 2019)

#### **SECTION XV – SOFTBALL**

- A. Weekday games begin at 4:00 or 4:30 P.M. unless otherwise agreed upon.
- B. All teams will participate in the Conference tournament.
- C. 1<sup>st</sup> round will be at the higher seed and the #1 team will host the semi-finals & finals.
- D. The higher seeded team will be designated HOME for the entire tournament.
- E. For semi-finals/finals, each participating school will provide 3 new softballs for each game.

- F. Home team is responsible for sending in scores of games the next school day to the Conference Commissioner.
- G. Softball teams may have one week in May for try-outs.
- H. Teams will finish out the inning in a game, when reaching the curfew time.
- I. Ties in the Conference standing will be determined by:
  - 1. Head to head record
  - 2. Record against common opponents
  - 3. Overall record within conference
  - 4. Runs allowed in game(s) against tied schools
  - 5. Coin Toss between tied schools  
(Amended June 8, 2016)

. If a contest is tied at the end of regulation (7 innings) please follow the GHSA tie breaker rules.

## **SECTION XVI – TENNIS**

- A. Team matches will be 3 singles and 2 doubles. Players can play in only 1 event. During tournament play, once a match has been decided all remaining players will be pulled from the court. During the regular season, coaches may agree to continue individual matches until completion.
- B. Players are generally expected to call their own lines. Coaches need to be prepared to serve as line judges if a problem arises. Coaches should also be available for helping with tiebreakers. A game is love, 15, 30, 40, game. Some say 1,2,3,4 with 4 begin game. The conference does not play add when the score is 40-40. Instead the next point wins. The receiving team (the team not serving) can choose which box the server must serve in, if the score is 40-40.
- C. For all matches, a Pro Set of 8 (win by 2) will determine the winner of each individual match. 8-Game Pro Set: First player to win 8 games by a margin of 2 games (8-5, 8-6, 9-7) wins the set. A 12-point tiebreaker will be used at 8-8. No Ad scoring will be used for all regular season and tournament matches. Each court will be provided “scorecards” where fans and coaches can see the score of each match. Players are responsible to keep up with this on changeover.
- D. 12-Point Tie-Breaker: The player whose turn it is to serve will be the Server for the first point and will serve the first point from the right side of the court. The opponent will then serve the second and third points the left and right side of the court. Players will continue by serving alternately for two consecutive points. Each time the server switches the new server begins serving on the left side of the court. TIP: When the score is EVEN, you always serve from the deuce or right side. When the score is ODD, you always serve from the Ad or left side. Players change ends after every 6 points and at the conclusion of the tie-break game. For example, when the score reaches 4-2, the players will switch sides. Note: The player serving immediately prior to a changeover will take their second serve once the changeover is made. Players receive one point for each point won. The tie-break winner is the first player to reach seven points provided there is a margin of two points. If there is not a margin of two points, play continues until a two point margin is reached.
- E. First round play-off matches will be played at the home of the higher seeded team.

- F. Each team should provide new tennis balls for each match.
- G. Weekday matches should begin at 4:00 PM unless otherwise agreed upon.
- H. Home team is responsible for sending in scores of games the next school day to the Conference Commissioner.
- I. At no time are coaches, parents, and/or fans allowed to give advice or help to a player. If this happens, there will be a warning and the next infraction will result in points deducted from that player.
- J. Individual team seeding must be turned in to the Conference Commissioner and the host school for the Finals prior to the playing of the 1<sup>st</sup> round. Once the play-offs begin, teams must continue to use the same seeds throughout the Conference Finals. Players must play the same position in the tournament that they played the majority of the regular season in that position.

**SECTION XVII – TRACK**

- A. Weekday meets should begin at 3:30 PM unless otherwise agreed upon.
- B. All coaches from each school should be prepared to assist in timing and judging of events if needed by the host school.
- C. Conference finals will use an outside timing agency (Ex. Perfect Timing)
- D. Team jerseys should be of the same color.
- E. Each participant in the Conference Track meet can participate as follows: 3 Field Events & 2 Team or 2 Field / 1 Running & 2 Team or 1 Field / 2 Running & 2 Team. Each school may enter 2 participants in each event and each school may enter 2 relay teams in each relay event. Total = 3 Individuals & 2 Team = 5 total. Points awarded will be 10, 8, 6, 4, 2, and 1.
- F. Middle School track events include:

<b>Running Events</b>		<b>Field Events</b>
400m Relay	200m Dash	High Jump
1600m Run	1600m Relay	Long Jump
400m Dash		Shot Putt
100m Dash		Discus
100m Hurdles (Girls)	200m Hurdles (Optional-Not Scored)	Triple Jump (Optional-Not Scored)
110m Hurdles (Boys)		
800m run		

- G. Coaches should send a list of their participants in each event in track meets to the host school the day before the scheduled meet to help speed up the meet. There should be a scratch meeting prior to each meet. No one will be allowed to enter an event once the scratch meeting is over. Exception will be made in case of injury.
- H. Only team members allowed on the infields (inside of track)
- I. Order of events will as high schools.
- J. Boys shot 8 lbs; Girls shot 6 lbs, Discus 1 k. for both.
- K. Boys and Girls and girls hurdles 30” and will run 10 hurdles.

**SECTION XVIII – WEIGHTLIFTING**

- A. Each school has the 16 best lifters for the purpose of total pounds lifted over total team body weight. Limit team roster to 16. (Amended May 13, 2019)
- B. Each lifter gets 3 total lifts with the best of the 3 recorded as that lifter’s total max on the bench press.
- C. Once a weight is established on a bench, that weight can only go up. Never will pounds be allowed off after an attempt.
- D. All lifters must have their first attempt written down and then request their next attempts to the assigned official for their weight class at the conclusion of each lift.
- E. The bar **MUST** touch the chest for the lift to be good. Back must stay flat on the bench (no bridging) and feet must stay on the floor. The lifter must rack the weight to determine a successful lift.
- F. Once the spotter has assisted in lifting the weight off the rack, he must not touch the bar again until directed by the official.
- G. Teams will weigh-in at each meet.
- H. Conference championship will be in March. (Amended May 13, 2019)
  
- I. Power Clean: The bar must stay in constant motion. **NO HANG CLEANS!** From the minute the bar leaves the floor it must be moving continuously till the bar is cleaned. No hesitations. It will be a scratch if the bar stops.
- J. SAFETY FIRST: No more than 3 steps after the bar is racked in the clean position. You can however, clean the bar to a front squat position, but you must stand up with the bar taking no more than 3 steps. Any more than 3 steps and it will be a scratch.
- K. SAFETY FIRST: Please put the weight down after cleaning safely. The judge will tell you if the lift is good first and then you must be very careful dropping the bar and always stay on the platform till the lift is completed. Both can be a scratch if not followed.(Amended May 8, 2017)
- L. Weightlifting classes will be awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in each weight division. Team points will be awarded 5 points for 1st, 3 points for 2nd, and 1 point for 3rd.

M. Weightlifting classifications shall be as follows:

<b>70 &amp; Under</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>216 &amp; Up</b>	
<b>80</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>180</b>		
<b>90</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>190</b>		
<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>200</b>		
<b>110</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>215</b>		

(Amended Aug. 10, 2017)

**SECTION XIX – WRESTLING**

- A. Weight classifications shall be as follows: (GHSA & USA Wrestling)



<b>60</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>65</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>70</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>285</b>
<b>80</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>182</b>	

B. Schools participating in the Conference Tournament will fax the host their individual wrestler’s season record (wins-losses-pins) 7 days before the tournament in order to determine seeds for each weight class.

Wrestlers may be allowed to wrestle up one weight class at their coaches’ discretion, but never wrestle down.

C. There will be a 2 pound grace period, after January 1 allowed.

D. Team point totals that will awarded for each weight class are as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	10 Points
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	7 Points
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	4 Points
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	1 Point

E. Dual and tri-meets will consist of three 1-minute periods for each individual match.

F. Coaches will send their rosters with weights to the host school the morning of the match.

G. Weigh-ins for regular season matches should take place either the day before or the morning of the match under the supervision of the Head Coach and a school administrator.

H. In team scoring for regular season matches, NO FORFEITS will be awarded for unfilled weight classes. However, a FORFEIT (6 points) can be awarded if a team chooses not to participate in a weight class but has an eligible wrestler for that class.

## **SECTION XX – GAME MANAGERS AT MIDDLE SCHOOL**

A. The home team is responsible for having a game manager at each home game. The game manager should be a principal/athletic director or someone the principal/athletic director designates that is a certified staff member. The game manager will always introduce themselves to the officials prior to the game and they will be responsible for crowd control and handling any issues that may come up during the course of a game.  
**Each sport should provide an adult to keep the game clock and the score.**

## **SECTION XXI – QUALIFICATIONS TO COACH**

An athletic head coach must be a professional teacher, or hold a four-year degree while also employed in a teaching or administrative position, meeting the teaching requirements and be employed by only one board of education or similar governing authority within the GHSA membership, regardless of whether or not they are paid for their coaching (Exception: when all

boards of education or similar governing authorities and all principals/headmasters involved sign a consent form on an annual basis he/she may coach at another school system), AND:

- (a) be employed for 20 or more hours per week on a regular basis in a professional, contracted position and must hold a teaching certificate or leadership certificate issued by the State of Georgia, OR
- (b) be employed for 20 or more hours per week on a regular basis as a JROTC instructor in the school's JROTC program, OR
- (c) be assigned as a student intern in a practice teaching situation under the guidance of a college or university teacher training program, OR
- (d) GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION 27
- (e) be a retired teacher teaching or supervising (NOTE: coaching meets the supervising requirement of this by-law) less than one-half time (forty hours considered full time), OR
- (f) be a certified teacher or administrator at a member school on medical leave governed by the "Family Medical Leave Act" and/or the "Georgia Teacher Maternity Leave of Absence" policy (see the GHSA web site for the required form).
- (g) If a currently certified faculty-coach at a member school loses his/her teaching position because of a reduction in force action, that school may petition the Executive Director in writing for that individual to continue to coach without going through the community coach training.
- (h) A teacher at a non-member school who is hired to be a coach at a member school must complete the GHSA Community Coach Education program and may not be a head coach. A consent form between the two schools must be completed annually.
- (i) If a school is in a charter or strategic waiver (IE2) system, the coach (head coach or assistant) must meet the highly qualified requirements outlined in the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's guidelines.

Member schools may employ persons who are not professionally certificated teachers as assistant coaches in their athletic programs. These individuals are referred to as "community coaches."

- a. Community Coach is defined as a person who does not have a professional-level certification, who relates in role and function to a professional and does a portion of the professional's job or tasks under the supervision of the professional, and whose decision-making authority is limited and regulated by the professional. Community coaches are not allowed to function without the immediate supervision of an educational professional and may not assume any of the duties of a varsity Head Coach or be named by the school as a varsity Head Coach.
- b. Licensed para-professionals and full-time substitute teachers must complete the GHSA Coaches Education Program and testing program to be eligible to coach.
- c. All community coaches should be signed to a written "agreement to coach."
  - i. They may coach for only one board of education annually, regardless of whether or not they are paid for their services.
  - ii. Community coaches may not coach the same sport at more than one school even if there are multiple schools in the system.

- (d) All community coaches must complete the GHSA Coaches Education Training and Testing Program in “Sport First Aid” and “Principles for Coaches.”
  - 1. Prospective coaches must be subject to a criminal background check before they are registered for the GHSA coaches education program.
  - 2. Courses are offered at various times each school year throughout the state.
  - 3. Prospective coaches are registered with the GHSA office by the school hiring them.
  - 4. No community coach may do any GHSA coaching until he/she has been notified that the GHSA Coaches Education Program had been completed successfully.
- (e) It is recommended that the following priority for employment be used:
  - (1) certified employees in the local system (secondary, middle, elementary, central office, etc.);
  - (2) retired certificated personnel;
  - (3) community coaches who have completed the GHSA Coaches Education Program.
- (f) All community coaches must attend a regular GHSA rules clinic each year for any sport in which they coach beginning with their first year of service or the school will be fined.
- (g) No person who has coached a non-GHSA team in a sport or activity within the previous 12 months may be hired or utilized by a GHSA member school in that same sport of activity IF any of that GHSA school’s players participated on the non-GHSA team that person coached.

Every faculty coach, community coach, and student-teaching intern at a GHSA member school must complete:

- (a) a GHSA-sponsored rules clinic if he/she coaches the following sports or activities: cross country, football, softball, volleyball, riflery, literary, one act play, cheerleading (spirit and/or competitive), basketball, lacrosse, wrestling, swimming and diving, track, baseball, golf, soccer and gymnastics.
- (b) CPR (minimum compression only) and AED training prior to any team activity or within a maximum of 30 days from the start of a team activity and it must be renewed at a minimum of every two years. NOTE: A fine for each coach who does not complete a rules clinic, or who does not complete the required CPR and AED training, before the assigned deadline will be assessed to the school.

A coach on the payroll of one school district, but under contract to another school district for the following year, may help with spring practice at the new school if arrangements are satisfactory with both systems.

A person who is an active official or an assignor of officials at the high school level may not be a head coach or an assistant coach at a GHSA school in the same sport.