



**Official Rules**  
**for**  
***Flag Football | 2025***

## General Code of Conduct

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. is committed to cultivating a safe and welcoming environment for its regional and national events and programs that encourages and promotes good sportsmanship by student-athletes, parents, coaches, administrators and other spectators. We ask that event participants and attendees cooperate in being respectful at all practice and competition venues, partner hotels and/or ancillary venues throughout the course of the event. All those involved with the event are expected to refrain from the following behaviors:

1. Acting in a way that is unruly, disruptive or illegal in nature.
2. Intoxication or other signs of impairment that may potentially result in bad behavior.
3. Excessive use of profanities and other vulgar language that interfere with other attendees' ability to enjoy the event.
4. Using bigoted, demeaning or abusive or other disruptive and intimidating language and/or gestures.
5. Verbal or physical harassment of officials, athletes and coaches before, during and following the competition.
6. Disrupting the progress of competition (including physically entering or throwing objects onto the playing field or competition mat).
7. Interfering with or failing to abide by security or emergency procedures or response.
8. Displaying signs that contain offensive language, or any graphic art that may be deemed disrespectful.
9. Defacing, destruction or theft of property associated with the event, including property of the opposing team or other athletes, including officials, as well as official venues.
10. Violence or threats of violence against other individuals at any official venue.
11. Publicly criticizing or making derogatory statements of an official, opposing teams, event personnel or its policies, or other individuals associated with the event. This includes comments with respect to their conduct, character, competence, integrity or appearance. Note: social media is deemed a public forum.
12. Failing to follow instructions of event personnel.
13. Any behavior which otherwise violates conduct codes set by partner venues, hotels or ancillary venues including but not limited to theme parks, as enforced by those properties.

Failure to abide by these expectations are grounds for removal from competition. Pop Warner reserves the right to remove individuals or the entire team. Depending on the infraction, a one-year ban from Pop Warner events and programs will be considered. A repeat offense of the same infraction may result in a permanent ban. All removals will be without refund.

## Members Code of Conduct

In addition to the aforementioned General Code of Conduct, all Pop Warner coaches, administrators and other program volunteers shall:

1. Create a positive, safe and healthy environment, free of abuse and harassment, for all athletes and their families.
2. Not criticize athletes in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team members if others might benefit.
3. Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
4. Not criticize an opposing team, its athletes, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
5. Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
6. Strive to make every athletic activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
7. Remove from a game, competition or practice any athlete when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
8. Emphasize that winning is the result of good teamwork.
9. Not engage in excessive sideline coaching and shall not leave the bench area/coaches' designated seating area to shout instructions from the sidelines or competition mat. In younger divisions, if you are on field after all is snapped you must remain silent for duration of play. **(No calling out who to throw ball to while on the field)**
10. Together with team officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators at all times. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave.
11. Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
12. Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a volunteer or athlete involved in Pop Warner. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status.
13. Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by the athlete's physician.
14. Not permit an ineligible athlete to participate in a game/ competition.
15. Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
16. Do not address opposing athletes on the field directly. Only speak to Coaches and Refs when issues occur.
17. Not possess or drink alcoholic beverages and/or use illegal substance(s) on either the game, practice field/practice area or competition venue.
18. Not smoke, vape and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field.
19. Uphold all rules and regulations regarding Pop Warner programs.
20. Refrain from engaging in any action within or outside Pop Warner which in PWLS sole & absolute discretion reflects negatively upon, or causes embarrassment to, the Pop Warner program.

If any of these rules are broken, Pop Warner or its member league shall have the authority to impose a penalty including permanent removal from the program.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Pop Warner Little Scholars is to enable youth athletes to benefit from participation in team sports and activities in a structured environment. Through this active participation, Pop Warner programs teach fundamental values, skills and knowledge that young people will use throughout their lives.

## **GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE POP WARNER PROGRAM**

Pop Warner is an international program operated for the benefit of its youth athletes. Since 1929, the program's philosophy has been that academics and athletics go hand-in-hand. At every level, Pop Warner seeks to develop well-rounded young athletes who learn not only the fundamentals of football, cheer & dance, but also the importance of education, in an atmosphere conducive to developing sound mind, body and character – and having an enjoyable time along the way!

The objectives of Pop Warner are to inspire youth, regardless of race, creed, religion or national origin, to practice the ideals of sportsmanship, scholarship, and physical fitness, as reflected in the life of the late Glenn Scobie "Pop" Warner.

Pop Warner strives to make the game fun for all athletes. The program stresses learning lessons of value that will transcend their participation in Pop Warner, such as: self-discipline, teamwork, determination, friendship, leadership, and good sportsmanship. With such goals in mind, and by providing an opportunity to participate in an organized, supervised environment with emphasis on maximum safety and participation, Pop Warner offers young athletes a unique and memorable opportunity to excel.

**IMPORTANT POINT—MEDICAL & CONCUSSIONS** The home team or hosting organization has the responsibility to provide medical coverage at each game or competition. In the absence of a physician and or ambulance on the site, the minimum safety requirement will be the presence of one individual associated with the home team/host organization who is currently EMT qualified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety, the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety ([www.sportssafety.org](http://www.sportssafety.org)), or their equivalent.

Work together with your local EMTs to establish an emergency plan that fits your specific area and needs. Your emergency plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. introduce or identify trainer/health care provider to visiting coach;
2. home team/host organization review emergency plan with visiting team;
3. designated duties for coaching staff and or athletes;
4. specific directions to your facility for emergency medical service (EMS);
5. emergency numbers,
6. injury report forms;
7. treatment authorization card;
8. list of administrators that the coach is required to contact.

Practice your emergency plan early in the season, and repeat often throughout the season. A similar plan should be in place for teams traveling to away games and competitions.

All teams are recommended to have a staff member carry the entire team's medical release forms and emergency numbers for all athletes in case in an emergency their parent(s) or guardian must be reached. Having the family physician's number opposite the athlete's name is also recommended.

## **S1: CONCUSSION RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES:**

An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or a head injury in a practice, game or competition shall be removed from practice, play or competition at that time based on evaluation and determination by the Head Coach. However, if an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional is on site and available to render such evaluation, that person shall always have final authority as to removal or return to play/ competition of the athlete. When an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional is not present, and a parent or guardian of the injured athlete is serving as head coach, the final authority on removal of a athlete shall rest with the league president, association president or the top ranking assistant head coach; whomever is present and highest in the Pop Warner chain of command.

Any Pop Warner athlete who has been removed from practice, play or competition due to a head injury or suspected concussion may not return to Pop Warner activities until the athlete has been evaluated by a currently licensed medical professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and receives written clearance to return to play from that licensed practitioner.

In the absence of an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional, at Pop Warner regional events, the Regional Director and/or Regional Cheer & Dance Coordinator shall be the final authority on removal of an athlete for a suspected head injury or concussion. At National events, the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner, or in their absence the Executive Director, shall be the final authority on removal of an athlete for a suspected head injury or concussion.

Pop Warner recommends that all decisions be made in the best interest of the athlete and that when any doubt exists as to the health of the athletes, they sit out. Please check [www.popwarner.com](http://www.popwarner.com) or [www.cdc.gov/concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion) for Center for Disease Control (CDC) signs and symptoms chart for concussions.

# Flag Football Rules

## RULE 1: PLAYERS

S1: A game is played between two teams consisting of seven (7) players each. Based on the number of players on bench, teams can flex up to eight (8) players each to make meeting 10 play minimum requirements easier to meet.

S2: Each team roster shall have a maximum of 18 players, and a minimum of 6 players. A forfeit will result when the minimum is not met. (Does not apply to 6U who can flex as much as needed)

S3: Only players appearing on the official team roster in the SportsConnect Roster System are to be counted as players. The Roster is completed and active in the SportsConnect Roster System before the first game of the season and verified by the league in a process called "certification."

S4: The offensive team must have a minimum of four (4) players on the line and a maximum of two (2) in the backfield (not including QB). The defensive team may choose any formation - no restrictions on the number of defensive players on line of scrimmage

S5: Mandatory Play Rule: All players will play a minimum of 10 plays (offense or defense). Failure to abide by this rule will result in forfeiture of that game. Teams are encouraged to have a coach/volunteer track number of plays for opposing team (up to 10 plays) per child on field and turn into referee at end of game.

S6: A team will have :45 seconds to put the ball in play after the ready signal.

S7: A younger division student athlete MAY play/participate in an OLDER division, but an older division student athlete may NOT play in the YOUNGER divisions.

S8: All coaches and sideline personnel are **REQUIRED** to have a badge issued by Milford Eagles Pop Warner and have it visible to enter field of play. If you do not have a badge visible, you must remain behind fence. That includes Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Team Parents. This will be strictly enforced. Remember your badges.

## RULE 2: PLAYING FIELDS

S1: Each game begins with a coin toss to determine which team will start with the ball. Away teams call the coin flip while the coin is in the air. Winner of the coin flip has the option to start on offense or defense. Other team decides which direction they want to go on the field of play.

S2: Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after Scores, Turnover on downs and/or Halftime. The only time a possession is NOT started on the 5-yard line is after Interceptions which are returnable. Possession will start where defender's flag was pulled after interception or at 5-yard line after Score as normal.

S3: The following field equipment will be used:

- A. A 20 Yard Line Marker will be used to indicate the distance to go for a first down (placed at the forward zone line).
- B. Pylons or "G" Markers will be used to indicate for goal line.

## RULE 3: EQUIPMENT

S1: GAME BALL

- A. MEPW allows the use of any ball of the appropriate size. 6U - Mini, 8U - Pee Wee, 10U+ - Junior

S2: FLAGS

- A. Each player must wear a belt with the number of flags designated as "standard" by the league, which will be 2 flags. Flags must be popper style flags. Flags may not be cut or altered.
- B. Popper and Belt Attachment must be the same color. You cannot wear shorts same color as flags.
- C. If wearing flags not provided by league, flags must be age appropriate for a youth league. No inappropriate images, language, etc.
- D. The flags will be attached to a belt and extend or hang from each side of the player's body (hip).
- E. Flags will be 14-20 inches long and a minimum of 2 inches wide.
- F. The belt must be tight to prevent being turned around during a de-flagging.
- G. The securing of flags to the body, waist or belt, other than provided flag belt, is illegal.
- H. Jerseys cannot be worn over flags. (Jersey Tuck Rule)
- I. If a player's flag is inadvertently lost, they are ineligible to handle the ball. If a receiver catches a ball and is missing a flag, it is ruled an incomplete pass. If a runner takes ball on hand-off, play is dead where player received ball.
- J. If an athlete is wearing flags not provided by league, refs may ask them to line up and pull their flags to confirm they have not been tampered with.

NOTE: The flags will be attached to a belt made for that purpose. Such a belt has equal resistance at the point of attachment of flags, thereby ensuring an equal effort necessary to de-flag a player.

### S3: GAME UNIFORMS

- A. All team members must wear the same color jersey. If a jersey is lost, team member may wear a shirt that as closely matches the color of jersey as rest of team.
- B. All jerseys will be numbered on the back at minimum.
- C. Any type of pants may be worn provided said pants have no front or side pockets. They must be a different color than flags worn.
- D. Jerseys will be tucked in at all times.
- E. Sneakers are the preferred shoe; however, non-detachable, rubber-cleated shoes are allowed. No other footwear is acceptable.

### S4: EYE GLASSES

- A. Eye glasses, when worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass).

### S5: MOUTH GUARDS

- A. Mouth guards are required and keeper strap is not necessary.

## **RULE 4: PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT**

S1: Spiked or street shoes.

S2: Padding of any kind, including hard surface padding such as shoulder pads, hip pads, and helmets.

S3: Hard metal or any other hard substance on a player's clothing or person.

S4: Anything that conceals the flags.

S5: Slick or sticky substances such as grease or glue.

S6: Any equipment, in the opinion of the referee, that will endanger or confuse players.

S7: Players must remove all jewelry and hard billed hats.

## **RULE 5: REFEREES**

S1: There will be at least one (1) referee for 8U and up.

S2: The league may assign more than one referee for a game.

S3: Each game official will carry a handkerchief and drop it whenever an infraction occurs.

## **RULE 6: THE RULES OF THE GAME**

### **S1: PLAYERS**

- A. The free substitution rule is always in effect and a player may enter the game any time the ball is dead.
- B. All offensive players are eligible including QB after a handoff/lateral or Center.
- C. You can have one player in motion at a time, all motion must be lateral to the line of scrimmage. You are able to snap while the player is in motion (like Jet Sweeps and such) - but if the player makes a move toward the line of scrimmage they must set before snap.

### **S2: TEAM CAPTAINS**

- A. Each team will have at least one captain on the field at all times during the game.
- B. The captain will address the referees only on matters of interpretation and to obtain information.
- C. Team captain(s) will be responsible for calling the coin flip at the beginning of the game. This should be done by an athlete, not a coach.

### **S3: TEAM COACHES:**

- A. Coaches on the field:
  - a. **6U:** As many as it takes to ensure a smooth game is played with proper levels of support.
  - b. **8U:** One coach for each team will be permitted on the field (both offense and defense). Offensive Coach must remain silent during play if remaining on the field of play. Defensive Coach must be 5+ yards behind deepest safety before ball is snapped after helping athletes get in position.
  - c. **10U, 12U, 14U:** One coach for each team will be permitted on the field for offense play call only. They must leave field of play before team is set. No coaches allowed on field for defense.
- B. Max of 3 coaches + 1 media person allowed on the sideline per team *for rosters of 12 or less*. Max of 4 coaches + 1 media person *for rosters of 13+*.

### **S4: TIME**

- A. Two 25-minute running clock halves for all divisions.
- B. Three (3) time-outs per half. (30 seconds)
- C. Five (5) minutes between halves.
- D. In the event of an injury, the clock will stop then restart when the injured player is removed from the field of play.
- E. :45 second play clock for all divisions.
  - a. Huddle must break within 30 seconds of start. Snap must occur within 15 seconds of huddle break.

### **S5: LAST TWO MINUTES OF THE GAME**

The clock WILL stop in the final two minutes **of the game** on these actions:

- A. Incompletions
- B. Out of Bounds
- C. QB Sack
- D. Change of Possession
- E. Penalties.
  - a. (NOTE: If it is an offensive penalty, the clock WILL start on the official unless it is a dead ball foul) a turnover on downs and/or Halftime.

#### S6: NO KICKOFFS

- A. Each possession starts at the 5-yard line after scores.

#### S7: PUNTING

- A. Teams are not permitted to punt.

#### S8: DOWNS (First down and zone to go)

- A. Each team will have four consecutive downs to advance the ball into the next zone or to score a touchdown.
- B. Once a team enters into the next zone, it is a first down and a new series of downs begins.
- C. A team failing to move the ball into the next zone will lose possession. The opposing team takes over at their 5-yard line.
- D. The forward part of the ball touching any line will be the determining factor in measuring for a first down.
- E. A down will be repeated if provided for by the rules.
- F. When the offensive team is within the last zone and has a first down, it will be first down and goal to go.
- G. At the conclusion of each down, the referee will place the ball in the center of the field (equal distance from sidelines- not on a hash mark).
- H. No Run Zone:
  - a. No rushing the ball inside within 5 yards of the end zone or first down line.
  - b. Within the No Run Zone, all forward passes must be beyond the Line of Scrimmage.
  - c. If a forward pass is thrown, but receiver is **behind** LOS, this will be a loss of down penalty on Offense. Defense will have option to accept or decline penalty based on result of play. If receiver is on or beyond the LOS this is a legal pass. Judgement of positioning will be decided by refs.

#### S9: DE-FLAGGING

- A. There shall be NO tackling of the ball carrier or passer. If an athlete goes to take out legs while attempting flag pull, this will be considered a tackle.
- B. The player carrying or having possession of the ball is down when the flag is removed from his/her waist (de-flagging). The defensive player shall hold the flag above his/her head and stand still.
- C. The defensive player cannot hold or push the ball carrier to remove his/her flag. An accidental touch of the body or shoulder while reaching for the flag shall not be considered a violation; however, touching of the head or face shall be considered a violation.
  - a. If defender pulls on shorts or jersey that is under flag belt, this is considered a hold.
  - b. If extra belt length is hanging loose and not properly secured, if defender pulls on that it is considered a pulled flag immediately. Secure the extra belt length.
- D. A defensive player must go for the passer's flag. Defensive player cannot touch the passer's arm or swat at ball during throwing motion.
- E. A defender may NOT push a player out of bounds to end a play, defender must go for flag pull.
- F. It is illegal to attempt to strip or pull the ball from the ball-carrier's possession at any time.
- G. A defensive player may not intentionally pull the flags off of a player who is not in possession of the ball.

#### S10: BLOCKING

- A. Blocking and/or Screening (running in front of runner) is not permitted. See S11:H

#### S11: BALL CARRIER

- A. The ball carrier cannot use his/her hands or arms to protect his/her flags. The defensive player must have the opportunity to remove the ball carrier's flags.
- B. The ball carrier cannot lower his/her head to drive or run into a defensive player. Ball-carriers **MUST** make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position. If ball-carrier runs into defender with established position, this is a Charging Penalty. (See RULE 11: PENALTIES > Charging).
- C. Stiff-arming by the ball carrier is illegal.
- D. They may run in any direction until the ball is declared dead.

- E. The quarterback cannot directly run with the ball. The quarterback is the offensive player who receives the snap.
- F. Ball Carriers may leave their feet and the play will continue for spinning, jump cuts, QB's passing progression or if there is a clear indication that they have done so to avoid a collision with another player and the play will continue without stoppage.
  - a. However, if while leaving the ground, the runner jumps INTO a player and contact is made (intentional or unintentional) a charging penalty may be enforced by the official.
- G. No blocking or "screening" is allowed at any time.
- H. Offensive players in close proximity to the ball-carrier must stop their motion once the ball has crossed the line of scrimmage. No running with the ball-carrier.

#### S12: CENTER (also see S9)

- A. Center must snap the ball between his/her legs. If ball hits ground, play will be blown dead. 6U is Exempt.
- B. Center cannot take a handoff from the QB.

#### S13: PASSING

- A. All backfield players are eligible passers.
- B. Passing will be attempted from behind the line of scrimmage only.
- C. A lateral pass is a pass thrown parallel to the line of scrimmage or back toward the passer's own goal line. A lateral pass is not considered a forward pass. (See S16:I for dead ball rules)
  - a. A defender may not cross the line of scrimmage prior to the QB releasing the ball unless in a blitz. If a screen pass is called, defender cannot cross line of scrimmage to cover the receiver but can jump the pass after the ball is released from QB hand.
- D. A forward pass is a pass thrown from behind the line of scrimmage toward the defensive team's goal line. Only one forward pass allowed per play.
- E. The quarterback may throw the ball away to avoid a sack. Pass must go beyond the line of scrimmage. No offensive player needs to be in area of throw.
- F. Shovel passes are allowed.
- G. The quarterback has a seven second "pass clock." If the ball is not thrown within seven seconds, the play is dead, the down is consumed and the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.
  - a. If the QB is standing in the end zone at the end of the 7-second clock, the ball is returned to the line of scrimmage.
  - b. If the quarterback throws the ball and then catches it, the ball is dead and treated like an incomplete pass (unless batted by the defender first).

#### S14: RECEIVING

- A. All players are eligible to receive forward passes (including the quarterback if the ball has been handed off behind the line of scrimmage).
- B. A receiver may catch a ball as long as they come down with one foot in bounds before they step out-of-bounds or out of the end zone.
- C. A receiver has right of way when running a route. If defender blocks or engages the receiver prior to ball being received, this will be a penalty. (See RULE 11: PENALTIES > Illegal Contact).
- D. Two or more receivers may touch a ball in succession resulting in a completed pass.
- E. If an offensive and defensive player catch a pass simultaneously, the ball is declared dead at the spot of the catch and the passing team is awarded possession.
- F. An offensive player cannot be out-of-bounds and return in-bounds to catch a pass. This will be ruled an incomplete pass.
- G. Interceptions are returnable. If returned for a score during regular game play, the score will be worth six points, two points if returned during conversions and/or overtime.

#### S15: RUSHING THE PASSER

- A. Teams are allowed one (1) blitz in each four-down set. A blitz is defined as sending a player or players starting seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage to rush the quarterback, crossing the line of scrimmage, in pursuit of disrupting a pass play.
- B. Referee will determine and announce when blitz was used.
  - a. Blitz will be considered used when a pass rusher crosses the line of scrimmage with the quarterback still having the ball in possession.
  - b. A blitz will not be considered used if prior to the pass rusher crossing the line of scrimmage the quarterback:
    - i. passes the football
    - ii. hands the ball off or lateral/pitches the ball to another player
    - iii. on a "trick play" where the football transitions from the quarterback to another player where that player then attempts to pass the football.
  - c. Blitz usage is a referee judgment call. (See RULE 12: PROTESTS > S2)
- C. All players who rush the passer must be a minimum of seven (7) yards from the line of scrimmage when the ball is snapped.
- D. Any number of players can rush the quarterback. Players not rushing the quarterback can defend on the line of scrimmage.
  - a. Note: There is no "5-Mississippi Rule" as after :07 seconds if the pass is not thrown the play is dead.
- E. If a player who rushes the passer is inside of the seven (7) yard mark when the ball is snapped or a team blitzes a second time in series - intentional or not - this will be classified as Illegal Rushing (See RULE 11: PENALTIES > Illegal Rushing).

#### S16: DEAD BALL

All balls touching the ground are immediately dead. For example, the ball is declared dead at the following times:

- A. When the ball carrier touches the ground with his/her body, other than hands or feet.
- B. When the ball carrier's flag has been pulled.
- C. If a player's flag inadvertently falls off during a play while that player has possession, the player is down immediately and the play ends. The ball is placed where the flag lands.
- D. If a player who has one or no flags in their belt takes possession of the ball, the play is dead at that spot on the field. If a player receives a pass who has one or no flags, it is considered an incomplete pass.
- E. Following a touchdown, safety or touchback.
- F. When the ball goes out-of-bounds for any reason.
- G. If the center snap hits the ground before reaching a backfield man.
- H. When the ball hits the ground as a result of a fumble or muffed ball. **THERE ARE NO FUMBLE RECOVERIES IN PWFF!**
- I. If a lateral pass touches the ground (ball is declared dead at that point). If a lateral pass goes out-of-bounds, the ball is ruled dead at the point it crosses the boundary line. The ball will be spotted at point where it hit the ground. (i.e. if you lateral back 5 yards and player misses it, you lose the 5 yards)
- J. If a forward pass strikes the ground.

#### S17: MERCY RULE

If a team is up by 24 or more, they only have TWO downs to get a first down and TWO downs to score until that point difference is trimmed below 24 pts; than regular game rules are restored.

The team that is behind by 24 or more points will start their offensive possession at the 10-yard line and get FOUR downs to score. If the point difference is trimmed below 24 pts, Regular game rules are restored.

## **RULE 7: SCORING VALUES**

- A. Touchdown = 6 points
- B. Point after TD by run or pass from 10-yard line = 2 points
- C. Point after TD by pass from 5-yard line = 1 point
- D. Safety (awarded to opponent) = 2 points
- E. XP returned by defense will always be 2 pts (regardless of how many points offense is attempting)
- F. Forfeit (offended team wins by) = 1-0

## **RULE 8: TIE GAME**

- A. **Regular season:** Tie games will go into the record as such and will not be played off in regular season play.
- B. **Playoffs:** Games will enter into overtime. Overtime rules:
  - a. Coin toss: The visiting team's Captain calls heads or tails to determine which team starts with ball.
  - b. Possession: Each team gets one possession from the opponent 15-yard line. Scoring and XP counts as normal points. See Rule 7: Scoring Values above
  - c. Play clock: The play clock runs normally, but there is no game clock.
  - d. Timeouts: Each team gets one timeout for entirety of overtime.
  - e. Scoring: The team with the most points at the end of both possessions wins.
  - f. Extra Points: Follow same structure as regular gameplay.
    - i. Point after TD by run or pass from 10-yard line = 2 points
    - ii. Point after TD by pass from 5-yard line = 1 point
  - g. If score is still tied after initial 2 possessions, additional overtime periods follow until a winner emerges.
    - i. Second set of possessions flips starting order. Example: Team A scored TD, no XP. Team B then scores TD, no XP. Game remains tied. Team B starts second overtime possession first, then Team A tries. Rinse and repeat until a winner is declared.

## **RULE 9: INJURED PLAYERS**

- A. Once removed from a game because of injury, a player must sit out at least one down, and may not re-enter the game without the approval of attending medical personnel.

## **RULE 10: PRACTICES**

S1: Practice cannot begin until August 1 for the fall season, and until March 1 for spring season.

S2: Practices are limited to three days per week, not to exceed 1-1/2 hours each practice, while school is in session, and when school is not in session, practices are limited to four days per week, not to exceed 2 hours duration.

## **RULE 11: PENALTIES**

### OFFENSIVE PENALTIES

- Offensive Pass Interference: 10-yard penalty and replay the down
- Illegal motion (2 players in motion after offense is set): 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- Illegal Formation: 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- False Start: 5-yard penalty and replay the down
- Illegal Run: 5-yard penalty and loss of down
- Charging:
  - **Unintentional:** 5-yard penalty and loss of down (running through a defensive player with established position)
  - **Intentional:** 15-yard penalty at minimum. Possible ejection if referee deems the player did so will ill-intent (i.e. such as lowering a shoulder to initiate contact)
- Taunting: 10-yard penalty applied end of play (if celebrating going into endzone, will be applied to extra point attempt)
- Illegal Forward Pass: 5-yard penalty and loss of down (QB steps over the LOS or 2<sup>nd</sup> forward pass on same play)
- Blocking: Ball is placed at the spot of the foul and loss of down
- Flag Guarding (including stiff arms): 5-yard penalty from the spot of the foul and loss of down
- Unsportsmanlike conduct: 15-yard penalty applied end of play (man-down penalty, possible ejection if repeat offender)
  - If determined to be flagrant as judged by referee, player may be removed and team must play that man down for 2 plays. (See RULE 12: PROTESTS > S2)
- Delay of Game: clock is stopped and a 5-yard penalty
- Intentional Grounding Penalty: 5-yard penalty and loss of down
  - ONLY if ball does not cross Line of Scrimmage. QB does not need to be outside hashes and no receiver needs to be in area of pass. (QB can't just spike ball)

### DEFENSIVE PENALTIES:

- Defensive Pass Interference: 10-yard penalty and replay down unless it is an offensive catch; Offense decides. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- Illegal Contact (holding, jams, disrupting offensive players route, etc.): 5-yard penalty and replay down unless it is an offensive catch; Offense decides. 1st can occur depending on the yardage.
- Defensive Holding while pulling flag: 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and replay down. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- Illegal Flag Pull (before player has ball): 5-yard penalty and replay down. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- Offsides: 5-yard penalty and replay down. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- Illegal Rushing (before a hand-off has occurred): 5-yard penalty and replay the down; offense decides depending on the result of the play. 1st down can occur depending on the yardage.
- Inadvertent Tackle: 5-yard penalty added to the end of the play and replay down.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct: 15-yard penalty (man-down penalty, possible ejection if repeat offender)
  - If determined to be flagrant as judged by referee, player may be removed and team must play that man down for 2 plays. (See RULE 12: PROTESTS > S2)

NOTE: Any penalties incurred during conversion attempt, penalty yards will be applied to starting drive. For 10-yard penalties, new offense will have option to take 7-yard penalty again if prefer to not start in no-run zone.

### S1: UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS

- A. Offensive and Defensive (10).
- B. Disqualification of guilty player or players if repeated.

## S2: UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT EXPANDED – 15-Yard Penalties

If the field monitor or referee witnesses any of the below acts, the game will be stopped and the player can be removed for 2 plays (man-down penalty) or ejected from the game. No appeals will be considered when the referee chooses to do so. Foul play will not be tolerated!

- A. Fighting-offenders ejected/disqualified from the game.
  - a. If player ejection/DQ for fighting happens in the first half, the second half of same game counts toward suspension.
  - b. If a player is ejected/DQ'd for fighting in second half of game, player will be suspended for the first half of following game.
  - c. Both players names/numbers must be reported to league official.
  - d. A repeat instance of fighting by a player will lead to player being removed from league permanently with no refund.
- B. Defensive player pulling offensive player's flag to make him ineligible for play.
- C. Insulting, profane, and abusive language is not allowed. Officials have the right to determine offensive language. If offensive or confrontational language occurs, the officials will determine if a warning or immediate ejection is warranted.
- D. Interference with progress of the game by coaches or any other team personnel.
- E. Ball-carriers MUST make an effort to avoid defenders with an established position. If a player (as deemed by referee) runs into player intentionally, player may be ejected.
- F. Defenders must give free releases off the line of scrimmage to offensive players and are not allowed to run through the ball-carrier when pulling flags. Rough play will not be tolerated.
- G. Illegal play.
- H. Team leaving field before game is completed. Failure to return-Forfeit. Win for team remaining.
- I. Failure of a team to control players or fans.
  - a. Fans must adhere to good sportsmanship as well. Yell to cheer on your players, not to harass officials or other team. Keep comments clean and free from profanity. Forfeit if not controlled.

## RULE 12: PROTESTS

S1: A team is allowed to use a timeout to question an official's rule interpretation. If the official's ruling is correct, the team will be charged a timeout. If the rule is interpreted incorrectly, the timeout will not be charged and the proper ruling will be enforced. Officials (if multiple) should all agree upon any controversial call in order to give each team the full benefit of each call.

S2: Only protests involving rules' interpretations or the eligibility of a player shall be considered-never the judgment of an official in calling a play.

S3: Protests are decided at the local level in accordance with the administrative procedures of the league.