

DANE COUNTY AREA YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

Updated: June 30th, 2021

WIAA & NFHS regulations will govern the league with the following exceptions...

PLAYING FIELD

- I. All fields shall be WIAA standard sized football fields. No game will be scheduled on any field that does not comply with the rules.
- II. Spectators are prohibited from standing, loitering, traversing, or observing the game from within a rectangular **5 yard zone** around the field.

GAME LENGTH

- I. Each DCAYFL contest shall consist of four, nine minutes quarters with a 25 second play clock.
- II. Overtime is not allowed. The game is considered a tie if the score is even at the end of the fourth quarter, in which then each team is assessed a ½ win and a ½ loss.
- III. Officials will provide the game stopwatch and run game time on the field. A scoreboard clock may also be used, however, the referee's time will serve as the official time. Officials have the ability to change the scoreboard clock.

POSTPONEMENTS

- I. There shall be no postponements of any DCAYFL contest unless an "on-time" start is deemed hazardous to the health and well-being of the participants. This decision will be made by the game's official(s) with the mutual consent of both team's coaches. Examples could include lightning, torrential rain, and other weather related threats. Rescheduling the game will be the home team's responsibility. The home team will provide the visiting team dates and times for the games to be played. The final date and time must be mutually agreed upon.
- II. Any game played through the start of the 3rd quarter will be considered a complete game if the game is stopped/postponed for any reason. The score at the time of the decision will be the final score. Any game stopped/postponed prior to the beginning of the 3rd quarter is not considered final and will be continued at a later date and time scheduled by the home team. The decision for stopping or postponing game play is to be made by the head referee and/or Program Director of the home team.

AGE REQUIREMENTS

- I. All players must be in the grade level in which they are registered for and cannot exceed the following age limits set forth for that grade division before September 1st of the current season unless approved otherwise by the Board of Commissioners.

4th Grade Division - 11 years old
5th Grade Division - 12 years old
6th Grade Division - 13 years old
7th Grade Division - 14 years old
8th Grade Division - 15 years old

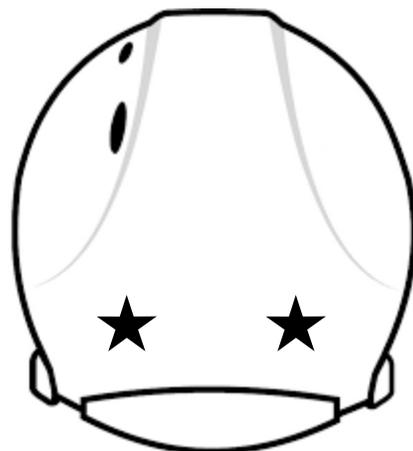
- II. Any player younger than the maximum limitations for any division in 5th through 8th grade shall not be restricted from competition at an older division, as long as competition is restricted to one DCAYFL team. At the discretion of the Board of Commissioners, programs may be allowed to move players down a grade division if numbers become an issue. A player cannot play more than one grade level ahead or below of where that player currently is enrolled. Only the DCAYFL President or Vice-President is allowed to determine a player's eligibility.
 - A. Note: 3rd grade players will be allowed, only with the approval of the Board of Commissioners.

WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

- I. Any player weighing at or above the restricted weight limit set for their grade division will be designated as a Blue Star Player. The divisional weight limits are as follows:

4th Grade Division - 95 lbs.
5th Grade Division - 105 lbs.
6th Grade Division - 115 lbs.
7th Grade Division - 130 lbs.
8th Grade Division - 150 lbs.

- II. Blue star decals (or white depending on helmet color) will be furnished by the DCAYFL and given to all Blue Star Players at the time of their official weigh-in. Decals are to be placed on the front and back of the helmet as shown below, indicating where that player is allowed to play.



III. Blue Star Players may not advance the ball and must adhere to the following position/alignment restrictions. Violations of the following rules will result in 1 warning per half and then a 5 yard procedure penalty.

A. Offensive Blue Star Players (4-5):

1. Must play Center, Guard, or Tackle.
2. Up to five offensive Blue Star Players may be on the field at one time.
3. Must be in a 3 or 4 point stance; no 2 point stance allowed.
4. Normal line spacing shall be used. Normal line spacing is from foot to foot up to two feet or one arms length apart.
5. Linemen may pull after the snap of the ball.

B. Defensive Blue Star Players (4-5):

1. Must play Guard or Tackle.
2. Up to four defensive Blue Star Players may be on the field at one time.
3. Must play head to head to the offensive linemen and must be in a three or four point stance. They may slant to the left or the right after initial contact is made with the offensive player in front of them.

C. Offensive Blue Star Players (6-8):

1. Must play Center, Guard, or Tackle.
2. Up to five offensive Blue Star Players may be on the field at one time.
3. Must be in a 3 or 4 point stance; no 2 point stance allowed.
4. Linemen may pull after the snap of the ball.
5. Blue Star Players must be covered by eligible players.

D. Defensive Blue Star Players (6-8):

1. Must line up no wider than the outside shoulder of the Offensive Tackles.
2. Must play Nose Guard, Guard, or Tackle.
3. Must be in a 3 or 4 point stance; no 2 point stance allowed.
4. Must line up on the Line of Scrimmage.
5. Up to five defensive Blue Star Players may be on the field at one time.

MODIFIED OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE RULES

I. Blitzing is not allowed for all grade divisions. All players on the line of scrimmage shall be in a down position. No player shall be in an upright stance on the line of scrimmage unless within their own 5 yard line. The depth rules for linebackers and defensive backs do not apply inside the 5 yard line of the defense at any grade level.

A. All linebackers must align at a minimum of 4 yards from the line of scrimmage, with no movement toward the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped.

1. Defensive backs in grades 4-5 shall line up a minimum of 4 yards from the line of scrimmage and cannot press or start toward the line of scrimmage until the snap of the ball. There is unlimited width of position and no maximum depth for defensive backs in grades 4-5.

2. Defensive backs in grades 6-8 can play press coverage on a receiver that the defensive back is lined up on, but cannot cross the line of scrimmage on the snap of the ball to blitz. If the defensive back's first step is across the line of scrimmage and not engaging the receiver he/she is lined up on, that player is illegally blitzing.
- B. The penalty for illegal blitzing is 10 yards and replay of down. If a penalty is incurred on the last play of the 1st half or game, the penalty is 10 yards and replay of down. The offense can decline the penalty and accept the result of the play.
1. Two Illegal blitzing penalties in a game incurs an additional penalty of unsportsmanlike conduct against the head coach of the offending team, 15 yards additional penalty (a total of 25 yards), and replay of down. A subsequent unsportsmanlike conduct penalty will lead to the ejection of the head coach, their immediate removal from the playing field, and his/her suspension for the next scheduled game. A declined illegal blitzing call still counts toward the unsportsmanlike conduct call against the head coach.
- II. Fourth and fifth grade divisions are considered instructional divisions. The following limitations have been drafted to help coaches and referees simplify the game for the younger entry level players.
- A. All 15 yard penalties shall become 10 yard penalties.
 - B. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall remain a 15 yard penalty.
 - C. Modified Offensive Rules:
 1. Teams must use a balanced seven-man line with no splits other than normal line spacing. Normal line spacing shall be from foot to foot up to two feet or one arms length apart.
 2. Linemen may pull after the snap of the ball.
 3. Flankerback or backs must line up one yard behind the offensive end with the inside shoulder in line with the outside shoulder of the offensive end.
 4. No motion before the snap.
 5. One offensive coach shall be allowed on the field.
 6. Any backfield formation may be used; however, only one player on each side may be wider than the outside of the end regardless of the formation. The other remaining players must line up no wider than the offensive guards. Note: This is to help alleviate multiple running backs from lining up on one side or the other.
 - D. Modified Defensive Rules:
 1. All 6 defensive linemen (guards, ends, and tackles) must line up head to head with the offensive linemen and must be in a three or four point stance. They may slant to the left or right after initial contact is made with the offensive player. Stunting is not allowed.
 2. The 5 players not on the line of scrimmage (middle linebacker, 2 outside linebackers, and 2 defensive backs) must be 4 yards from the line of scrimmage prior to the snap of the ball. Outside linebackers cannot line up more than a yard outside the last offensive lineman or tight flanker. The defense is a 6-5 alignment.
 3. After the snap, all players can cross the line of scrimmage without limitation.
- III. For sixth through eighth grade divisions, any offense or defense is allowed.

MODIFIED FIELD GOALS & EXTRA POINT RULES

- I. Field Goals and extra points may be attempted where goal posts are available. There is no rush on field goals or extra point attempts. The offensive team must be set and long-snap the ball to the quarterback or holder. The holder or QB should be at the kicking point and set the ball. If the field goal is blocked, the ball is put into play at the Line of Scrimmage unless the Line of Scrimmage is between the goal line and the 20 yard line, then the ball is put into play on the 20 yard line. If there is only one goal post, the ball may be moved to the opposite end with the post. All extra points, rushes, or passes are counted as 1 point when attempted from the 2 yard line. A two point conversion may be attempted from the 5 yard line; rushed or passed only. Kicking an extra point will be worth 2 points with the line of scrimmage at the 2 yard line and will be a dead ball play.
 - A. “Sleeper Play”, “Lonesome End”, or any other intentional trick/deception play shall be deemed illegal and penalized with Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

MODIFIED PUNTING RULES

4th-7th Grade

- I. In accordance with research and the DCAYFL’s interest in player safety, the following Punting Rules have been adopted for DCAYFL play.
 - A. If on the 4th down, or any other down where a team may elect to punt, the referee must be notified before the play may occur. Normal clock operating procedures will be observed with the exception of the referee stopping the clock until the offense has declared its intentions. The punting team has 25 seconds to punt the ball after notification. The defensive team must have a minimum of six players on the Line of Scrimmage and may not rush the punting team or punter. No players on the punting team will be allowed to go down field. The ball will be placed and designated down where the ball is controlled. If the ball bounces backwards, it will be placed where its forward progress stopped. If the receiver fumbles the ball forward, the ball will be returned to where the catch was attempted. If the receiver fumbles the ball and it goes behind him, the ball will be placed and considered downed at the point where it is controlled. If the ball goes into the end zone after it was touched by the receiving team, the ball will be down at the point of deflection. If the receiving team catches the ball on the fly, five yards will be awarded to the receiving team from the point of the catch. There shall be no contact made during the punt for any reason. If contact is made and the referee feels it is aggressive and premeditated, a 15 yard penalty shall be assessed. There shall be no quick punts (quick kicks) or punts without declaration. This results in an illegal procedure penalty (5 yards).
 - B. All teams are required to long snap the ball to the punter. If the snap is muffled or dropped, the ball may be picked up and punted from the punter’s original position. There will be no rush.

8th Grade

- I. All WIAA punting rules apply except for the following changes:
 - A. The center is protected, and Blue Star Players cannot punt or otherwise advance the ball.
 - B. If the receiving team is up by more than 21 points, they cannot rush.
 - C. Punting is live play and no declaration is needed on any down.

MODIFIED KICKOFF RULES

4th - 6th Grade

I. Modified Kickoff Rules:

- A. Five Blue Star Players will be allowed for both the kicking and receiving teams.
- B. Blue Star Players cannot advance the ball.
- C. The kicking team kicks off from its 40 yard line, and may use from 1 to 11 players on the kickoff. The receiving team must have 11 players on the field. There is no contact on the kickoff.
- D. If the kick receiver touches the ball and the ball goes forward, the ball is put into play at that point, unless it is in front of the receiving team 40 yard line, or behind its own 20 yard line, then the ball goes into play on the 40 or 20 yard lines respectively. If the kick goes out of bounds, or is controlled before it reaches the receiving team's 40 yard line, the ball is put into play at the receiving team's 40 yard line. If the kick is controlled, goes out of bounds or into the end zone beyond the receiving team's 20 yard line, the ball is put into play at the receiving team's 20 yard line. If the receiving team catches the ball on the fly, the receiving team will be awarded 10 yards from the point where the ball was caught, unless it is in front of the receiving team's 40 yard line. The ball will be placed on the 50 yard line.

7th - 8th GRADE

I. Modified Kickoff Rules:

- A. All WIAA kickoff rules apply except for the following change:
- B. There will be no inside kicks allowed. Any kick that does not go a minimum of 15 yards in the air before touching the ground must be re-kicked.

POINT DIFFERENTIAL POLICY

I. After one team goes ahead by at least 14 points:

- A. An official timeout is called to notify each coach of the point spread.
- B. A good faith effort should be made and the team in the lead should begin substituting players.

II. After one team goes ahead by at least 21 points:

- A. The team ahead must substitute freely and keep the ball on the ground. If the team in the lead has a low number of players, they must switch player's positions to comply with this rule. The starting quarterback and running back of the team with the lead must be replaced and can't simply switch positions. They may return to their positions after the score differential is once again below 21 points.
- B. All defensive backs must be heads up or outside of the receivers. Safeties must start 10 yards off the line of scrimmage.
- C. All further touchdowns are followed by only one point conversions. No two point conversions will be allowed.

III. A continuous clock will be used any time a team accumulates a 28 point lead.

GAME DAY PROCEDURES

- I. The following procedure will be followed before the start of every DCAYFL sanctioned game.
 - A. A coach from each team with their Blue Star Players players will meet in the center of the field. Each coach is required to have the team's 3-ring binder which must include the following items.
 1. DCAYFL Medical Emergency Form for every player on the team.
 2. DCAYFL Official Team Roster for your team and the team you are playing.
 3. A photograph(s) of every player on your team in their game jersey.
 4. The current DCAYFL Bylaws and Rules.
 5. A copy of the USA Football Certification for each coach on the team.
 6. A copy of each First Aid/CPR/AED certification.
 - B. Each coach will check the opposing coach's 3-ring binder for this information.
 - C. Each coach will verify that the opposing coach's Blue Star Players are identified per their team rosters by the following criteria.
 1. Number of Blue Star Players on the team.
 2. Game jersey number is correct for each player.
 3. Helmet for each player is marked by 4 stars. Two on the front and two on the back.
 - D. Each coach will declare any other roster changes from the DCAYFL weigh-in roster sheet.
 - E. Officials should ask the following questions (coin toss follows questions):
 1. Are all players properly equipped (as stated in the DCAYFL Bylaws)?
 2. Are all players properly numbered?
 3. Are all Blue Star Players properly designated as such?
 4. Does each coach have their team's 3 ring binder?
 5. Are all players for your team's declared grade currently in that grade?
 - F. Game cancellation will occur immediately if...
 1. A team does not have DCAYFL Medical Emergency Forms for every player.
 2. Failure to have the forms will result in a \$50.00 fine to be imposed by the Board of Commissioners to the program in violation.
 3. The program not in violation will be in charge of rescheduling the game canceled due to this violation. Game site and time will be determined by that program.
 4. The program in violation will be required to pay for all the officials for the canceled game and for the rescheduled game.
 5. A team found to be violating Blue Star Player identification rules will be penalized according to DCAYFL Bylaws.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- I. Alcoholic beverages, smoking, or use of tobacco products or illegal drugs is not allowed at any DCAYFL event.
- II. The use of any remote control aircraft (drones, planes, etc.) is prohibited at all DCAYFL events.

- III. Profanity or abusive language towards officials, coaches, fans, or players is prohibited. The player of a parent/guardian demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct will be benched by the official until behavior is corrected or the individual in question is removed from the field of play.

OFFICIALS

- I. Four W.I.A.A. or other governing body officials are recommended for each DCAYFL contest. However, should there be only three present; the game can still be played. If there are any less than three W.I.A.A. and DCAYFL registered officials present, the contest will be rescheduled. The visiting team shall have the option of rescheduling the contest at their site. Of the three officials present, only one may be under the age of 18. If four are present, two may be under the age of 18.
- II. Coaches may enter the field to attend to any injured player. Coaches and Medical Personnel need no permission from the officials to enter the field when an apparent injury has occurred.
- III. Officials will be provided and paid for league scheduled games by the home program. The league mandates a minimum fee of \$36 per official per game.
- IV. Officials have the right to eject any player, coach, or spectator found to be violating DCAYFL Bylaws, Rules, and Code of Conduct. They also possess the right to remove any player from the field of play who is suspected of having an injury if an athletic trainer or certified medical provider (doctor, paramedic, or EMT) is NOT present.