



**MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8  
HANDBOOK**

# RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8

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**MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**Article 1: ORGANIZATION**

**Section 1. NAME**

For the purpose of competition, the schools under the jurisdiction of the Principals' Committee on Athletics shall be known as the RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8; a voluntary association of Principals who pledge their schools and participants to follow the Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League as enacted by the Principals' Committee on Athletics.

**Section 2. PURPOSE AND FUNDAMENTAL PHILOSOPHY**

- A. The RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE d/b/a the Principals' Committee on Athletics (PCOA) will within its jurisdiction support the athletic programs, contests, and schedules and matters relating thereto, in participating middle schools (6-8), and of the State of Rhode Island, whose principals are members of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals, to maintain, improve and raise the athletic standards in the participating schools of the State of Rhode Island, and in general carry on any other lawful activity which is calculated, directly or indirectly to promote and enhance the goals of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
- B. The RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE is a voluntary, incorporated, non-profit association of Principals organized to coordinate the efforts of its members toward the ultimate objectives of interscholastic activities. The purposes of this Association are to:
1. emphasize varied seasonal activities with broad participation under the direction and supervision of the school;
  2. maintain interscholastic activities in proper perspective and not to overemphasize them to the detriment of the academic program of the schools;
  3. formulate minimum uniform and equitable standards of eligibility that must be met by students to attain the privilege of representing their schools in interscholastic activities.
  4. provide a fundamentally fair and equitable framework in which interscholastic athletic competition in an educational setting can take place;
  5. promote an interscholastic athletics program providing educational experiences not otherwise provided in the curriculum, which will develop areas of knowledge, skills and emotional patterns and will contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals and better citizens;
  6. create and maintain a harmonious relationship between all schools within the RIIL, public, private and parochial;
  7. foster a cooperative spirit, good sportsmanship, and school spirit on the part of school representatives, school patrons, and students;
  8. prevent professionalism and undue pressure on students from parents, coaches and peers;
  9. promote even competition and maximum participation in RIIL activities by minimizing the impact of individual wealth upon equal athletic opportunity; and
  10. be sure that non-school activities do not interfere with the academic and interscholastic programs, are sponsored primarily for the benefit of the participants and do not result in exploitation of high school youth.

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### **Section 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- A. Board - the Rhode Island Board of Officials for the respective sports.
- B. PCOA - unless otherwise defined, shall refer to the Principals' Committee on Athletics.
- C. Chair - unless otherwise defined, shall refer to the Chairperson of the Principals' Committee on Athletics.
- D. Director(s) - unless otherwise defined, shall refer to the director of the particular sport(s) in question.
- E. Executive Committee - unless otherwise defined, shall refer to the Chair, the Executive Director, and the President of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals or his/her designee.
- F. Middle School Sub-Committee-the members of the middle school sports advisory board
- G. Executive Director - the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League
- H. Assistant Director - the Assistant Director of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League
- I. Middle School Sports Coordinator-Coordinator for middle school sports for the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
- J. Field - unless otherwise defined, shall refer to the area upon which a game is played.
- K. Game - to be regarded as interchangeable with the terms meet, match, or contest. The sports involved are Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Soccer, Softball, Spring Track and Field, and Wrestling. (See Article 7, Section 2.)
- L. IEP - Individual Educational Plan
- M. Non-League Games - any game which falls within the maximum number of games outlined in Article 7 and which is not part of the adopted RIIL schedule, playoffs or Round Robin games.
- N. Principal - the chief operating officer of the member school who is eligible for membership.
- O. RIASP - the Rhode Island Association of School Principals
- P. RIIL - the Rhode Island Interscholastic League
- Q. Round Robin - a sanctioned athletic contest played for the Rhode Island Interscholastic Injury Fund - also known as the Injury Fund Game.
- R. Rules - the Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League Middle School 6-8 or other rules as referred to herein.
- S. School - unless otherwise defined, shall refer to a member school whose grade levels are certified by the Rhode Island Department of Education. Competition on behalf of the school shall be limited to students enrolled in Grades 6-8 in those schools certified as middle schools and Grades 7-8 in certified junior high schools. All grade levels in the school shall be under the academic control and supervision of the Principal.
- T. Scrimmage - shall be defined as a controlled practice supervised by coaches which does not meet any of the requirements for a game. (See Article 7, Section 2.)
- U. Semester(s) - said period(s) shall be computed without reference to the athlete's physical presence in the school, all semesters being consecutive school calendar semesters and not individual athlete attendance semesters.

### **Section 4. GOVERNING AND OPERATIONS**

The RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8 governing body shall consist of the same individuals who are members of the Standing Committee on Senior High Athletics of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals.

- A. The PCOA shall consist of seventeen (17) members.
- B. Principals and/or Assistant Principals of certified four-year or three-year high schools are eligible to serve on the Committee. In addition, one (1) member of the RI Interscholastic

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Athletic Administration Association, one (1) member of the RI School Superintendents' Association and one (1) representative of the Middle School Sub-Committee are approved to serve.

- C. A Middle School Sub-Committee shall consist of Middle School Principals and/or Assistant Principals, School Administration, the Middle School Sports Coordinator, and one (1) member of the RI Interscholastic Athletic Administration Association. It will serve as a committee for issues concerning middle school students. The Chair of the sub-committee will be appointed by the RIIL Executive Director.
- D. The Middle School Sport Coordinator will oversee the middle school sports program for the RIIL and report directly to the Executive Director of the RIIL.
- E. Directors will be assigned for each of the various sports. In the absence of a sport director, the Middle School Sport Coordinator will fill that role until a director can be appointed.
- F. The RIIL Middle School 6-8 shall support athletic programs, contests, schedules, and matters relating thereto.
- G. The RIIL Middle School 6-8 shall have special charge of any contest deemed by the Committee necessary to be held in any sport beyond the fixed schedule of that sport to determine a State Championship.
- H. Financial Administration: In accordance with Article I, Section 4 of the RIIL Rules and Regulations, the administration of the finances of the RIIL is vested in the RIIL Principal's Committee on Athletics. Every three years, the RIIL Principals' Committee on Athletics shall select a sub-committee of their members to serve as the RIIL Finance Committee.
- I. Additional powers, duties and responsibilities:
  - 1. The PCOA shall have power to initiate investigations, (take testimony, and demand affidavits), relative to the violations of the Rules and Regulations. If charges are brought against (or are discovered involving) any school (or individual) for violation of the Rules, or violation of the spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship, the PCOA shall consider such charges and determine and assess penalties as may be necessary.
  - 2. Any school or individual that is charged with the violation of the Rules and Regulations may appeal as herein set forth within 14 days of notice of such violation or decision.
  - 3. The PCOA is empowered to require any school to provide administrative staff members to supervise any scheduled athletic activity, both home and away, if conditions in the judgment of the PCOA require such administrative supervision.
  - 4. The PCOA shall determine the number of divisions/classes into which a RIIL sport shall be divided and shall be empowered to assign schools to those divisions/classes on whatever basis it sees fit. It shall supervise the schedule, assign officials, and award championships in the following sports: Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Softball, Soccer, Spring Track and Field, Wrestling, and such other sports as shall from time to time be added
  - 5. Schools shall annually declare their intent to compete for the succeeding school year by April 1st.
  - 6. Where possible, all schedules will be released as early as possible after the completion of the previous year's season.
- J. Duties also include but are not limited to:
  - 1. having control of middle school athletic policies.
  - 2. making rules of eligibility for players.
  - 3. making regulations for the administration of middle school contests.
  - 4. disciplining members and athletes for violation of Rules and Regulations.

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5. delegating to the Executive Director such powers as it may deem advisable to act for the full PCOA between meetings or in such other capacity delegated by the PCOA.
  6. providing for the hearing of appeals from decisions of the Executive Director and Assistant Director and all Standing Committees of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
  7. responsibility for election, appointment, and determination of salaries of all employees of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
  8. acting on behalf of the members of all matters pertaining to sports officials.
  9. exercising all other functions necessary to carrying out the spirit and purpose of the bylaws.
  10. determining membership dues.
  11. making such bylaws and amendments to bylaws at any time as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of the organization.
- K. Members of the PCOA are allowed reasonable expenses to and from all meetings, and any other reasonable expenses incurred as members of the PCOA while representing the RIIL or the RIASP, as determined by the Chair.
- L. Any member of the PCOA may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the PCOA.
- M. Any vacancy in the PCOA occurring during the year may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by a majority vote of the PCOA. Any PCOA member so appointed shall hold membership until the next annual meeting of the RIASP.
- N. Procedure for Filling Vacancies
1. Once the vacancy has been confirmed the Executive Director will announce the vacancy (Board Member or Sport Director) and request applicants (interested parties).
  2. The applicants will be screened by the Executive Director and Chair of the PCOA.
  3. Names of applicants will be forwarded to members of the PCOA for discussion and selection. Applicants may also be interviewed by the PCOA.
  4. Superintendent Vacancy on the PCOA
    - a. The RI School Superintendent's Association (RISSA) will submit names and backgrounds of those interested individuals to the Executive Director of the RIIL.
    - b. Must be an active member of the RISSA
    - c. Must have experience as a secondary administrator.
    - d. Experience as a former member of the PCOA is preferred.
    - e. The RISSA representative may serve a two (2) year term with the opportunity to reapply at the conclusion of the term.
  5. Athletic Director vacancy on the PCOA
    - a. The RI Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (RIIAAA) will submit names and backgrounds of those interested individuals to the Executive Director of the RIIL.
    - b. Must be an active member of the RIIAAA.
    - c. Must have experience as a secondary interscholastic athletic administrator.
    - d. Past service on RIIL committees is preferred.
    - e. The RIIAAA representative may serve a two (2) year term.
  6. Middle School Representative vacancy on the PCOA
    - a. Must have experience as a middle school administrator or be involved in school administration with middle school oversight.
  7. Each PCOA member casts a vote for a candidate. If there are more than two (2) candidates, the candidate who received more than 50% will be selected. If no candidate receives the

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necessary 50% the two (2) with the most votes will be selected, and a run-off election will be held to select the candidate.

- O. All members of the PCOA must sign a pledge, in writing, that they accept the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL and pledge to abide by said Rules and Regulations and RIIL policies and procedures.

### **Section 5. STANDING COMMITTEES**

All committees, whether standing or special, shall be appointed by the chairperson of the Principals' Committee on Athletics with the approval of the PCOA.

- a. Tournament sites will be secured by the Executive Director and subsequently reported to the Principals' Committee on Athletics.

### **Section 6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS – RIIL**

The officers shall be a Chairperson, Assistant Chairperson, Executive Director/Secretary, Treasurer, and such other officers, as the Committee shall deem necessary.

- A. The officers shall be elected for a term of five years. This election is to be accomplished at the first meeting following the annual meeting of the RIASP and the term of service is to commence at the time of election.
- B. Any elected officer(s) may succeed themselves in office after being nominated for and elected to that office.
- C. Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to the Committee.
- D. Any vacancy in an office of the Committee that occurs during the year may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by affirmative vote of the majority of the Committee present at a meeting as long as not less than eight (8) members are present. Any officer so elected by the Committee shall hold office until the next succeeding election of officers.

### **Section 7. DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS**

- A. The Executive Director shall:
  - a. be the executive officer of the PCOA/RIIL and shall have power to act for the PCOA/RIIL between meetings.
  - b. be authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the PCOA/RIIL
  - c. be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Committee subject to such appropriate contractual arrangements as may be made from time to time.
  - d. the Executive Director must sign a pledge, in writing, that s/he accepts the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL and pledges to abide by said Rules and Regulations and RIIL policies and procedures.
- B. The Assistant Executive Director/Assistant Director shall:
  - a. assist the Executive Director in the day-to-day operations of the League.
  - b. be authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the PCOA/RIIL, with the approval of the Executive Director
  - c. Upon recommendation of the Executive Director, the Assistant Executive Director will be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the PCOA subject to such appropriate contractual arrangements as may be made from time to time.
  - d. carry out the duties as assigned by the Executive Director.

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- e. the Assistant Executive Director must sign a pledge that s/he accepts the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL and pledges to abide by said Rules and Regulations and RIIL policies and procedures.
- C. The Administrative Assistant shall:
  - a. assist the Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director and Assistant Director in the day-to-day operations of the League.
  - b. carry out the duties as assigned by the Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, and Assistant Director
  - c. attend meetings and functions associated with their sport assignment and duties.
  - d. the Administrative Assistant must sign a pledge that s/he accepts the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL and pledges to abide by said Rules and Regulations and RIIL policies and procedures.
- D. The Chair shall:
  - a. preside over all meetings.
  - b. conduct such other business of the RIIL as provided for by the PCOA.
  - c. appoint all Standing and Special committees of the RIIL subject to the approval of the PCOA.
  - d. fill vacancies occurring on the Standing and Special committees of the RIIL subject to the approval of the PCOA.
  - e. sign all authorized contracts along with the Executive Director
  - f. in conjunction with the other elected officers, prepare agendas for all meetings and perform all the duties commonly associated with the office.
  - g. serve ex-officio on all Standing and Special Committees of the RIIL
- E. The Secretary shall:
  - a. maintain an accurate account of the proceedings of all meetings.
  - b. attach to the current minute book a copy of the bylaws and other rules, procedures, and policies as may be formulated.
  - c. affix a list of officers and Standing and Special Committee Chairs to the current minute book.
  - d. be custodian of all papers and records of the RIIL not specifically assigned to others.
  - e. authenticate official documents by his/her signature.
  - f. submit to his/her successor all books, records, and files in good condition.
  - g. assist the Chair with the correspondence of his/her office; conduct the routine correspondence of the RIIL as instructed by the PCOA.
  - h. maintain a correspondence file.
- F. The Business Manager/Treasurer shall:
  - a. sign a pledge, in writing, that s/he accepts the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL and pledges to abide by said rules and regulations and RIIL policies, and procedures.
  - b. authenticate official documents by his/her signature.
  - c. submit to his/her successor all books, records, and files in good condition.
  - d. be custodian of all funds belonging to the RIIL depositing them properly in the bank or trust company designated by the PCOA.
  - e. be bonded for an appropriate sum as decided by the PCOA.
  - f. pay all authorized bills by check:
    - i. All checks issued by the RIIL shall require two (2) authorized signatures.
    - ii. The signatures of the Treasurer, with the Chair or duly authorized member of the PCOA, shall constitute valid signatures.

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- iii. In an emergency situation, approved by an affirmative recorded majority vote of the PCOA, the signature of the Chair and the Executive Director may be used jointly.
  - g. keep an accurate and up-to-date account of all financial transactions and submit a monthly financial report to the PCOA.
  - h. submit the books, records and accounts for an audit at the close of the fiscal year, and at other times as requested by the PCOA.
- G. The Sport Director(s) shall:
- a. confer with the Middle School Sport Coordinator prior to the start of the season of the particular sport in question for planning purposes.
  - b. conduct a compulsory interpretation meeting for coaches prior to the start of each sport's season.
  - c. establish a plan for playoffs subject to the approval of the Middle School Sport Coordinator
  - d. supervise and/or make arrangements for the supervision of all RIIL Middle School 6-8 sponsored playoffs under the control of the Committee.
  - e. evaluate the program at the end of the season and make recommendations for Rule and Regulation changes to the RIIL Middle School 6-8
  - f. render to the Middle School Sport Coordinator a written report upon request of their activities at the conclusion of the sport season.

### **Section 8. MEETINGS**

The Principals' Committee on Athletics (PCOA) shall meet on the third Monday of the following months during the school year: August, November, January, March and June, except when such Monday shall occur on a school holiday. The hour and place, either within or without of this state, shall be fixed and determined by the Executive Committee. But in case of failure by the Executive Committee to make such a determination, such hour and place, either within or without this state, may be determined by the Chair.

- A. Special meetings of the (PCOA) shall be called by the Chair whenever s/he shall deem special meetings necessary or desirable and whenever s/he is requested to do so by the Executive Committee.
- B. Two (2) day notice of a special meeting shall be given by phone to all members, or written notice in the form of a published agenda at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting shall be utilized.
- C. At any meeting of the (PCOA), the presence of eight (8) members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum, but any less number may adjourn to a day specified.
- D. The responsibilities of (PCOA) members serving on the Executive Committee:
  - a. Attend a MINIMUM of FOUR out of FIVE monthly meetings held each year. A calendar of meetings for the year will be made available to all members. Members must call the League Office when unable to make a monthly meeting with as much advance notice as possible.
  - b. Absence from MORE THAN TWO CONSECUTIVE meetings is not permitted. More than this will not allow members to remain updated on League activities. Absences should be discussed with the Executive Director.
  - c. Sit on ONE of the three seasonal Waiver Request Hearing Committees that have been established to help alleviate the number of appeals heard at the monthly meetings. The number of hearings may vary by season but should never be an overwhelming number.

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If unable to attend, members must call the league office and give proper notification of absence in a timely fashion so a replacement can be made.

### **Section 9. AWARDS**

The official trophy of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League shall be a plaque bearing the official adopted seal of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. The PCOA shall recognize League and State Champions.

### **Section 10. AMENDMENTS OF BYLAWS AND RULES**

All bylaws and rules may be amended by a vote of the majority plus one of the members at any meeting of the Committee.

### **Section 11. FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Committee/RIIL will be from August 1 through July 31.

### **Section 12. ANNUAL AUDIT**

In accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the USA (GAAP), an annual audit will be performed by an independent certified public accounting firm. The audit will include a general review of the operations of the RIIL and provide a Management Letter upon delivery of the annual audit. A full and complete copy of the audited financial statements are distributed to the RIIL Principal's Committee on Athletics and member schools upon request.

### **Section 13. DUES AND FEES**

The annual dues of each member school of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 shall be a basic membership charge of \$1000. In addition to the above fees, sports may be subject to additional fees to be listed on subsequent invoices.

- A. September dues and fees must be paid by December 1st of the billing year. Failure to pay by December 1st will result in a late payment fee of \$100.00 and will result in a "show cause" hearing at the December meeting of the Principals' Committee on Athletics as to why the school failing to pay its dues and fees should not be suspended from further competition in the RIIL in accordance with Article 6, Section 3.
- B. All subsequent invoices must be paid within 30 days of the invoice date. Failure to pay within 30 days will result in a late fee of \$100 and/or a "show cause" hearing before the Principals' Committee on Athletics as to why the school failing to pay should not be suspended from further competition in the RIIL in accordance with Article 6, Section 3.
- C. Once the Declaration of Intent to Compete is submitted and RIIL dues and fees are assessed, no refunds can be requested or made.

### **Section 14. RIIL OFFICE**

There shall be such professional, clerical and other employees, as the PCOA shall determine from time to time. All such employees of the RIIL shall be subject to the direction of the Executive Director. The Executive Director and the staff shall be responsible for and perform such duties as shall be assigned to them from time to time by the PCOA /RIIL.

### **Section 15. COMMUNICATIONS**

All communications regarding school athletics must be addressed to the Executive Director/Assistant Director at the RIIL office.

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### **Section 16. WAIVER OF RULES FOR STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

Waivers are exceptional and extraordinary relief from the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL. Undue hardship means a hardship peculiar to the student-athlete or individual caused by unforeseen events beyond the election, control or creation of the student-athlete or individual, his/her family, or school. The Committee interprets undue hardship particular to the situation of the individual which is so severe that normal application of the Rule(s) is not, in the opinion of the majority of the members present, necessary to carry out the spirit or the orderly enforcement of the Rule.

- A. All requests for waivers shall (a) be submitted to the Executive Director, and (b) be in writing.
- B. For waivers of student eligibility, the waiver must be submitted on a “Waiver Request Form” supplied by the RIIL, signed by the Principal of the school requesting the waiver and notarized.
- C. In seeking a waiver of rules for student eligibility, please include (in addition to the Waiver Request Form) the student-athlete’s:
  - a. official transcript
  - b. supporting letters
  - c. medical documentation (if applicable)
  - d. IEP (if applicable)
  - e. any documentation/evidence to substantiate a hardship or extenuating circumstance exists.
- D. The RIIL Executive Director (or designee) shall upon the basis of the completion of the waiver request and documentation provided determines whether the waiver shall be granted or not granted.
- E. Whenever a request of a waiver is acted upon by the Executive Director (or designee), a copy of the decision will be forwarded to the Principal of the sending school.
- F. A negative decision may be appealed before the Middle School Sub-Committee
- G. Waiver requests are addressed by the Middle School Sub-Committee. A majority vote of the members present is required for a decision. Hearings are held prior to each season, or at special meetings called in order to accommodate all waiver requests.
- H. All requests for a waiver of Rules, with all documentation complete, must be received by the RIIL office. A waiver request that is submitted to the RIIL in accordance with the above paragraph shall be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Middle School Sub-Committee
- I. In cases where a waiver of any rule is sought on the basis of disability, a waiver may be granted, as set forth above; if the student-athlete is able to show that his/her inability to meet the RIIL rule(s) is the result of a disability, and that s/he otherwise meets all of the essential requirements of participation in RIIL competition with or without a reasonable modification. The party making a waiver request shall state on the request form that a disability is claimed and specifically identify the disability and hardship. The party making the request shall also provide the Committee with all appropriate evidence documenting his/her disability and hardship, including medical evidence and any applicable IEP.
- J. Limitations:
  - a. No retroactive waiver may be granted.
  - b. Age waivers will be considered only if extraordinary circumstances are supported by a valid, in place and complied with IEP addressing the disability, which resulted in the grade placement. No waivers will be granted to permit a student-athlete to exceed the maximum number of seasons set forth in Article 3. The student-athlete must at all times

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- be in compliance with the IEP and the RIIL's academic rules. If the IEP ceases or compliance ceases, then the waiver ceases.
- c. Waivers of Article 3, Section 4C, may be granted only when the repeating of the school year is caused by an illness that is medically documented and results in significant loss of school time. In no case shall a waiver be granted if the waiver results in the student-athlete having more than three (3) seasons of competition. The Chair or the Executive Director shall review all waiver requests as filed and shall dismiss any request found to be procedurally or substantively without merit or on its face ineligible for consideration by the Middle School Sub-Committee.
  - K. Hearings before the Middle School Sub-Committee are conducted in an informal manner that affords all parties an opportunity to present all information and all relevant arguments. A party requesting a waiver may be represented before the Middle School Sub-Committee by an attorney or other designated representative at their expense. Unduly repetitious evidence may be excluded. All evidence offered by a party will be included in the file of the proceedings. The evidence will be available for inspection by the party requesting a waiver or his/her designee.
  - L. A party requesting a waiver in advance of the hearing may request that the hearing be transcribed at their cost and expense. If the request is granted, the Middle School Sub-Committee shall be provided a copy of such transcript at no cost to the RIIL.

### **Section 18. VIOLATIONS OF RULES**

Any violations of the Rules and Regulations may result in the enactment of any and/or all of the provisions of Article 6 by the Committee, and/or combinations of conditions or restrictions the finds effective in enforcing these Rules and Regulations.

### **Section 19. AMATEURISM - DEFINITIONS AND LOSS OF AMATEUR STANDINGS**

- A. A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social and pleasurable benefits derived there from. An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by:
  - a. competing for money or other monetary compensation (allowable travel, meals and lodging expenses may be accepted).
  - b. receiving any award or prize of monetary value which has not been approved by the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
  - c. capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of monetary value in affiliation or connection with activities involving the student's school team, school or the Rhode Island Interscholastic League
    - i. This provision is not intended to restrict the right of any student to participate in a commercial endorsement provided there is no school team, school, or Rhode Island Interscholastic League affiliation.
  - d. The student is prohibited from appearing in the uniform of the student's school and may not utilize the marks, logos, etc. of the school, or the Rhode Island Interscholastic League as part of any endorsement.
  - e. signing a professional playing contract in that sport.
- B. Accepting a nominal standard fee or salary for instructing, supervising or officiating in an organized youth sports program or recreation, playground or camp activities shall not jeopardize amateur status. "Organized youth sports program" includes both school and non-school programs.

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- C. A school student who loses amateur status may apply to the League for reinstatement in the interscholastic program after waiting a period of one (1) year.
- D. Only awards of no intrinsic value and approved by the Rhode Island Interscholastic League may be accepted by a middle school student-athlete as a result of participation in school or non-school competition in a sport recognized by the League.
- E. Individual interscholastic athletic awards and similar mementos for athletes shall be limited to those approved and administered by the institutions, approved League sponsors, or the Rhode Island Interscholastic League in keeping with traditional school requirements as to what constitutes an acceptable award.
- F. Participation under an assumed name in any athletic contest shall make the student ineligible for one (1) year.

### **Section 20. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

The RIIL requires that each person serving as a committee member, agent or staff member perform his or her duties without influence or the appearance of influence by any other business or financial interest.

- A. Potential conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, a person's direct financial or close personal interest in a company or product which could be affected by a decision of a committee on which the person serves. An interest in a sport camp, sporting goods manufacturer or insurance company holds potential for a conflict.
- B. The RIIL is not critical of such interests. It merely requests that persons disqualify themselves from service to the RIIL on matters relating to such interests.
- C. If a committee member, agent or staff member should have or develop a conflict of interest, such person shall:
  - a. Immediately identify the conflict in writing to the Executive Director; and
  - b. Remove himself or herself from any discussion or decisions involving the matter in conflict. In case of doubt about the existence of a conflict, a member should submit the questions and the relevant facts to the Executive Director for a decision.

### **Section 21. AMENDMENTS OF BYLAWS AND RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE**

Amendments of Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League may be submitted by any member school.

- A. All such proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director and must be signed by the member school principal.
- B. The Executive Director shall place all such proposed amendments on the agenda of the next meeting of the Principal's Committee on Athletics.
- C. All requests must be submitted by January 1st.

**Article 2: THE PRINCIPAL**

**Section 1. MEMBERSHIP**

- A. The Principal of each school of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 must be a member in good standing of the RIASP at the time of filing the Declaration of Intent to compete on April 1st. The Declaration of Intent to compete by any school whose Principal is not a member of the RIASP will not be accepted; hence, no schedule will be given to that school for the following year of competition in the RIIL Middle School 6-8.
- B. Member schools must enter all school sponsored sports teams in the RIIL Middle School 6-8 in all school sponsored sports that are offered by the RIIL Middle School 6-8.
- C. All member schools must participate in the RIIL online Ref-Pay Program.
- D. Athletes in your district should have a pre-participation athletic physical within your school district's stated guidelines.
- E. Benefits of Membership:
  - 1. Allowed to participate in sports offered by the RIIL Middle School 6-8 and use NFHS rules.
  - 2. Allowed to participate on PCOA approved standing committees.
  - 3. Allowed to apply and become a member of the Principals' Committee on Athletics.
  - 4. Allowed to participate in sport-related surveys.
  - 5. Allowed to recommend by-law and sport related rule changes
- F. Terms and Conditions of Membership:
  - 1. Must file application for Full Membership
  - 2. Must be a member of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals (RIASP)
  - 3. Must Pledge Acceptance to all RIIL Rules and Regulations
  - 4. Must file a Declaration of Intent indicating those sports you will be participating in that are offered by the RIIL, and those you will participate in not offered by the RIIL by April 1st.

**Section 2. PLEDGE OF ACCEPTANCE OF RULES**

- A. Each Principal, at the time of filing the Declaration of Intent to Compete, must pledge, in writing, that s/he accepts the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL and pledges his/her school and its participants to said Rules and Regulations.
- B. New Principals of schools who wish to continue voluntary membership or who wish to voluntarily join the RIIL must, within 30 calendar days of assuming office, join the RIASP and sign a pledge acceptance of the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL.
- C. The member school has a responsibility to educate student-athletes, coaches, and other appropriate persons on RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules and Regulation that could affect them. Further, the member school should monitor its compliance with the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules and Regulations.
- D. Restitution Rule – Any member school (or school board acting on behalf of a member school) which institutes an unsuccessful court suit challenging a rule, rules or decision of the League, either prior to or after having first exhausted the internal appeal procedures of the League, shall be assessed the full costs resulting from such litigation, including, but not limited to, court costs, counsel and actual expenses incurred by the League. Any member school that does not make full payment of such costs within sixty days of the assessment shall be prohibited from playoff participation in all sports. The restriction shall continue until the full amount plus interest at the statutory rate is paid.

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E. Mandatory Meeting (beginning in fall 2024) – RIIL Middle School 6–8-member school principal(s) must attend one (1) mandatory meeting held annually in the fall. A fifty (\$50.00) fine will be assessed for not attending.

F. Emergency Action Plans: An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practice protocols should be developed and in place at every middle school. When possible, an athletic trainer should be present at all practices and games.

G. Rationale: An effective emergency action plan (EAP) should be in place as a prompt and appropriate response to any emergency situation that can save a life. The EAP should be designed and practiced to address all teams and all practice and game sites. An athletic trainer is a key component in any strategy to minimize injury risk and optimize safety for all participants.

### **Section 3. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

A. Each Principal is responsible to the PCOA in all matters pertaining to interscholastic sports, including the eligibility of students. S/he may delegate authority only to regular members of his/her staff, but this does not relieve the Principal of ultimate responsibility. No interscholastic games may be scheduled or performed without the approval of the Principal.

B. Proof of and maintenance of eligibility (See Article 3) is the exclusive and continuing obligation of the member Principal.

1. In investigating any complaint, or in the review of any request, or in the conduct of any hearing, the burden is specifically placed on the member Principal to make certain that the individual student(s) involved be notified and given an explanation of the rules, of the hearing procedure, and of their right and opportunity to attend all hearings.
2. Proof of eligibility is the affirmative burden of the member Principal. The Principal has the obligation to come forward with all evidence and testimony necessary for the establishment or maintenance of eligibility.
3. Notice of the Middle School Sub-Committee’s decision will be given in writing to the Principal, who will in turn forward copies to the individual(s) involved. At that time, the Principal will explain the decision along with the rights and obligations as set forth in the Rules and Regulations.
4. The obligation of notification, presentation, and explanation as set forth in this article applies to all eligibility issues and applies equally to dealings with the Executive Director as well as the Middle School Sub-Committee.
5. Schools are responsible for the health, welfare and safety of all athletes’ home, away and tournament games.

C. The Principal or his/her authorized representative shall accompany the school team to all athletic contests. The authorized representative may be either a faculty member or administrator, but in no case a student.

1. Playoff Finals Attendance: If a school is involved in a RIIL Middle School 6-8 playoff “Final(s)”, the Principal and or his/her designee must be present. The Principal and/or designee must introduce themselves to the game supervisor(s) and game officials prior to the game(s). The Principal and/or designee will be responsible for monitoring the schools’ students and teams.

D. The home team is to be held responsible for conditions involving spectators and shall always have present an authorized representative of the school to take this responsibility.

1. The home team should provide an adult game supervisor at all home events. In particular, an adult game supervisor must be present at basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, and wrestling contests. The supervisor shall not be a student, nor a coach

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involved with the game. The supervisor shall identify himself or herself to the game officials thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the game. The supervisor shall be responsible for game administration and crowd control. They should notify police to seek appropriate assistance. In the event of a problem, he/she must notify the RIIL office the next day and submit a written report detailing the incident(s).

2. Schools, through assemblies, bulletins, or other means by which they are accustomed to influencing student opinion, should strive to bring about good sportsmanship on the part of the spectators. Principals should impress upon coaches the responsibility and influence that their remarks, actions, and attitude have on their players and the spectators. There should be a sharp line between enthusiastic partisanship and riotous conduct. Unusual noisemakers, unorthodox cheers, and all such disturbing influences should be discouraged on the part of school directors. (See Article 12 – Sportsmanship).
3. Where necessary, police protection should be present, and no hesitation exercised in ejecting from any school game any spectator, or group of spectators, whose conduct cannot be controlled by a warning, and whose further presence is prejudicial to the interest and/or outcome of the game.
4. The PCOA guarantees cooperation (to all Principals of the middle schools of our State) in the arrest and prosecution of any spectator(s) who commit any assault or crime at any of the games which come under the jurisdiction of the RIIL.

### E. Other Responsibilities

1. Waivers of Rules, see Article 1, Section 16.
2. Individual Athletic Competition in the Absence of a Team, see Article 3, Section 8.
3. Tuition Students, see Article 3, Section 10.
4. Recruitment of Student Athletes, see Article 3, Section 11.
5. Game Cancellation, see Article 4, Section 1.
6. Game Postponement Unusual Circumstances, see Article 4, Section 2.
7. Definition of Penalties, see Article 6, Section 3.
8. Representation at Meetings, see Article 6, Section 12.
9. Non-League Games see Article 7, Section 4.
10. Notification of Postponement, see Article 9, Section 5.
11. Official Fees - see Article 9, Section 6.
12. Coaches Certification, see Article 13

**ARTICLE 3: ELIGIBILITY**

**Section 1. DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY**

All questions of eligibility are to be submitted in writing to the Executive Director seventy-two (72) hours prior to a regularly scheduled meeting for consideration by the PCOA. Schools will be notified of the decisions by letter.

- A. Each school must file Eligibility Lists online with the RIIL Office for athletes within 10 days of the start date of the sport season. The grade and year in school of each participant should be noted on the eligibility form. Any school(s) failing to file the Eligibility Lists on or before the designated date will be assessed a two hundred dollar (\$200.00) fine per missing eligibility list as defined in Article 6, Section 4.
- B. Athletes listed on the eligibility list may play on an outside team under the terms and conditions as outlined in Article 7, Section 6.
- C. A student not on the eligibility list who participates in a RIIL Middle School 6-8 contest will not be penalized if the error of omission was caused by a school official/coach. However, penalties listed in Article 6, Section 6 will be imposed.
- D. Once the original list is filed, it is the school's responsibility to add additional names of eligible students.  
NOTE: Failure to submit an Eligibility List and/or the omission of a player's name will be subject to penalties as listed in Article 6.
- E. Any athlete who does not have a valid Assumption of Risk form will be ineligible for competition in the RIIL Middle School 6-8. If a student transfers from one school to another, s/he must file a new Assumption of Risk form with their new school.
  - a. The penalty is a one hundred dollar (\$100.00) fine.
- F. Athletes in any sport, requiring helmets, must be equipped with a warning label regarding the risk of use and injury.
- G. When members of a team are charged with being ineligible by an opposing team, the game shall be played as scheduled and the protest filed with the RIIL Office in accordance with the provisions of Article 5.
- H. Student-athletes must be enrolled in the school for which they participate.
- I. Student Athletes enrolled at an RIIL Member School are prohibited from participating in any practice, tryout, or competition for any school that they are not enrolled in.
- J. Any representation of a school by an athlete, whether legal or illegal, must be counted as participation and be so reported on the returns to the RIIL Office.
- K. No student below the 6th grade shall be eligible.
- L. Academic eligibility rules are minimum requirements and member schools, and their governing bodies may adopt higher and more demanding eligibility requirements for local use.
- M. Athletes in your district should have a pre-participation athletic physical within your school district stated guidelines.
- N. Home School Eligibility - For students in home schooling to be eligible for competition in the RIIL Middle School 6-8, the following requirements must be met:
  - 1. The student must be listed on the rolls of the school and certified to the Rhode Island Department of Education as a student.
  - 2. The home school must furnish the school and certify the academic grades and the school must record them on the official school records on a quarterly basis.

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3. If a student is ineligible for academic and/or disciplinary reasons and subsequently becomes home schooled; s/he may not participate in interscholastic athletics during the period of ineligibility.
4. The school must approve the request of the home school student to compete on its teams.
5. All other requirements of the Rules and Regulations must be followed with the regular school certifying the eligibility of the home school student.

### O. **Cooperative Teams** (updated March of 2023)

#### 1. **BACKGROUND**

- i. Various positive factors have motivated schools to create ways of saving existing programs and of establishing new ones, in an effort to increase overall participation in interscholastic sports. Philosophically, high school sports are school based educational athletic opportunities, but the RIIL has traditionally attempted to make reasonable rules for the common good of all student-athletes involved in interscholastic sports.
- ii. Member schools must consider many different factors before deciding whether a cooperative team should be formed. A shift from school teams to cooperative teams may change the way a school handles communication, insurance, supervision, contracts, coaching positions, eligibility standards, educational values, discipline, budgets, facility use, etc.
- iii. Recognizing its ongoing commitment and responsibility to both member schools and to their individual student-athletes, the RIIL has strived to accommodate the needs of both. The overwhelming motivation of cooperative teams has been to allow member schools to work together to analyze the interests of their students and potentially provide additional participation opportunities, while staying true to the mission that high school sports are school based educational athletics.

#### 2. **POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

- i. Regulations: Completion of the RIIL Coop Team Application
- ii. The joint application includes:
- iii. The application form signed by the principals of all cooperating schools designating the name under which the cooperative team will compete and identifying the host school, which will assume full responsibility for the administration of the coop team.
- iv. A statement expressing the reasons for the formation of a cooperative team.
- v. Written assurance that the cooperative team will not limit or lessen participation opportunities for students in any of the cooperating schools. A no cut policy must be in place.

#### 3. **Formation of Cooperative Athletic Teams of Two or More Member High Schools**

- i. The RIIL shall have the authority to approve the formation of cooperative athletic teams by two or more-member high schools under the conditions contained herein.
- ii. The determination of the proper set of circumstances which will allow multiple schools to form a cooperative team will depend significantly on the issue of competitor displacement. When the RIIL believes that a cooperative arrangement will cause an unreasonable displacement of potential competitors from one of the schools, the request to form a cooperative will be denied.

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- iii. Cooperative teams should only be sought when all other methods of increasing participation within their school have been exhausted. Schools experiencing declining participation in a sport should first conduct extensive promotion within their school, expand sub-varsity opportunities within their district, and most importantly enact a multi-year no-cut policy to teach the sport to novices in an education-based setting.
- iv. Cooperative teams may not be formed for financial reasons. No consideration will be given to cooperative proposals which result from the elimination of the sport due to financial cutbacks during the two years immediately prior to the request. Cooperative proposals will not be considered if they are driven by desire to "save money" at the risk of decreasing the number of potential student participants.
- v. Cooperative programs exist until they have finished the phase-out period of no less than one additional season or by mutual agreement of all schools involved to dissolve.
- vi. All schools participating in the cooperative must be members of the RIIL.
- vii. *Students who previously participated on a cooperative team that is disbanded will have an opportunity to be grandfathered if the school they attend no longer offers that sport. These students will be allowed to finish their athletic eligibility with another school in the disbanded cooperative team that decides to continue to offer that sport as a stand-alone team.*
- viii. **School Considerations:** The principal of the host school should assure that during preliminary local discussions adequate attention was given to the following: A sufficient reason for sponsoring a cooperative team. An appropriate name for the cooperative team. Suitable practice arrangements. Fair competitive arrangements. Safe and adequate transportation arrangements. Provisions for physical examinations and medical coverage. Insurance provisions. The setting and monitoring of academic standards for eligibility. The purchase, repair, and cleaning of equipment. Source and control of finances. Use and maintenance of facilities. Selection, supervision, and payment of coaches. Selection and supervision of cheerleaders. Coordination of school schedules. Ticket prices and sales, disbursement of gate receipts. Student spectator and fan control and supervision. Cooperative team identity: mascot, colors, etc.. Award policies (school letters and certificate design). Governance for the resolution of disputes.

### **Section 2. FEMALE COMPETITION**

- A. Competition in the RIIL Middle School 6-8 for Girls is limited to female competitors in Basketball, Cross Country, Soccer, Softball, Spring Track.
- B. Determination of Gender Based Eligibility
  - a. The RIIL recognizes the value of participation in interscholastic sports for all member-school student athletes. Member schools are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable state and federal law when determining gender-based eligibility for participation. Per Article 2, Section 3B, "proof of and maintenance of eligibility is the exclusive and continuing obligation of the member Principal."

### **Section 3. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

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- A. At all times the student should have secured for the period from the beginning of the quarter or trimester up to the end of the regular marking period which shall not exceed a maximum of 12 weeks and a passing grade in 60% of the student's program (credits). A student who is not passing 60% of his/her program (credits) is ineligible to participate in games (league and non-league) until the end of the quarter or trimesters of the next marking period. This is a minimum standard for academic eligibility. Schools may choose to initiate a higher standard for academic eligibility. In this instance, the higher standard (school policy) will be supported by the RIIL.
- B. At the end of a course which meets for multiple marking periods, a school may utilize the grade earned during the last marking period or the final mark earned in determining academic eligibility. However, the school must be consistent in its application of this provision for all athletes in all sports.
- C. To be eligible at the beginning of a school year, the student must have done passing work at the end of the previous school year in June of 60% of the student's program (credits).
- D. In the case of a student who devotes a considerable part of the summer to make up subjects failed during the school year and receives credit toward promotion for this make-up work, that student shall be entitled to count such credit toward eligibility provided this credit is made an official part of his school record during the first week of the fall term. In case a student fails to complete the minimum scholastic requirements for athletic eligibility at the end of a quarter due to unavoidable absence, the student shall be ineligible for the next quarter until these requirements of the preceding quarter are made-up.
- E. Failures or incomplete work caused by unavoidable absence may be made up at the beginning of the quarter provided it is made a matter of final record within three weeks of the first day of that quarter.
- F. The student shall receive no special privilege such as extra examinations, delayed marks, make-up opportunities, or other favors which are not granted on equal terms to every student in the school; with the further provision that grades for failures or incomplete work in which a make-up opportunity is granted at the end of a quarterly marking period must be made a matter of final record within two calendar weeks of the first day of the succeeding marking period.
- G. If the student repeats work for which credit has once been received, the student cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
- H. The student cannot count for eligibility, points obtained in a subject taken during the summer vacation that had not previously been regularly pursued in the classroom.
- I. Admission to or exclusion from participation in a sport because of these eligibility rules shall take place at the close of the school day on which report cards are issued for the end of the regular marking period.
- J. If a game is postponed or results in a tie, the eligibility of the participants does not hold over until the game is played off.

### **Section 4. LENGTH OF ELIGIBILITY**

- A. Age - An athlete will be ineligible for athletic competition if his 15th birthday occurs prior to September 1st.
  - a. It is recommended that Principals exercise great care in determining the age of contestants and in all doubtful cases secure birth certificates from the city or town clerk of the athlete's place of birth.
  - b. In case of doubt about the age of any contestant in an athletic contest, a birth certificate or some other legal evidence satisfactory to the PCOA must be presented to the Chair or

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Executive Director on demand. If no satisfactory evidence can be presented, the athlete must be barred from competition.

- c. Competitors in interscholastic sports, who are born outside the state, shall file with their Principal the following: birth certificates or other legal evidence of birth dates (i.e. alien registration cards) and their complete school records in secondary schools attended outside of the state. This data must be made available to the PCOA upon request.
- B. An athlete shall not represent middle schools in any one sport for more than three seasons and such an athlete shall automatically become ineligible after s/he has been six consecutive semesters in attendance in the 6th, 7th, or 8th grade.
1. Once a student enters the 6th grade, that student is limited to six (6) consecutive semesters of eligibility and automatically becomes ineligible for athletic competition three years from the date of entry into the sixth grade.
  2. Six weeks shall be considered sufficient to establish a pupil's residence for a semester, which is one-half the established academic school year for that respective school.
  3. If a student who is enrolled in grades six (6) through eight (8) and is eligible for athletics but chooses not to participate in athletics for one or more semesters, or does not participate because no sports are offered, or a particular sport is not available, those semesters count as semesters of enrollment and competition.
  4. If a student who is enrolled in grades six (6) through eight (8) is ruled ineligible for any reason for one or more semesters, those semesters count as semesters of competition.
  5. If a student is suspended or expelled from school for one or more semesters, those semesters count as semesters of enrollment and competition.
  6. Students entering or returning to a middle school from any court ordered out-of-home disciplinary placement must have their eligibility considered by the Committee on an individual basis. In addition, the receiving school must provide the PCOA evidence that the student meets all eligibility requirements as defined in the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL Middle School 6-8.
  7. No student below Grade 6 will be allowed to practice or play with any middle school.

### **Section 5. INDIVIDUAL ATHLETIC COMPETITION IN THE ABSENCE OF A TEAM**

The RIIL Middle School 6-8 will provide the opportunity for male and/or female athletes to compete as individuals on behalf of their respective schools in specified sports and under specified conditions provided the school does not sponsor a team in that sport in the RIIL or an outside league not affiliated with the RIIL Middle School 6-8. However, the RIIL Middle School 6-8 encourages member schools to sponsor team participation when possible. Individual competition shall be limited to cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming, winter and spring track and wrestling.

To be eligible for athletic competition, an individual(s) shall be in compliance with all of the provisions listed in this section.

- A. The student(s) shall:
  1. Have a valid Assumption of Risk form on file in the school office.
  2. Have their athletic eligibility certified by the Principal in accordance with RIIL Rule and Regulations.
  3. Be placed on the eligibility list on the RIIL website.
  4. Participate in accordance with the requirements of the sport.
  5. Be accompanied to all contests by a coach and/or have an authorized representative of the school with them as designated by the Principal.
  6. Comply with all other rules and filings as may be required.

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- B. The school(s):
1. Principal must be a member in good standing of the RIASP.
  2. Must pay the full dues and fees as established by the RIIL Middle School 6-8. Participation of the individual athlete(s) may result in additional costs for the sport involved. An additional fee will be charged for other sports as deemed necessary.
  3. Principal(s) or their official designee shall declare the intent of the athlete to compete with the Director of the Sport or the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Office.
  4. The declaration for an athlete to compete must be made prior to the starting date of the season for the individual sport.
- C. The Sport Director, in consultation with the RIIL Executive Director and the Middle School Sport Coordinator, will have the final authority and will establish the format and placement for the inclusion of individual athletes in competition. The Director will also have the authority to establish a method for athletic competition as individual(s) in state tournaments/meets.
1. Track and Cross Country – Individual athletes are scheduled to compete in four (4) meets. Individual times/distances as outlined in will be used to determine eligibility in State Tournament competition.
- D. Additional requirements:
1. No school may enter more than three (3) individuals in a particular sport. No alternates or substitutions may be made or allowed for these individuals.
  2. Individual athletes must qualify for championships on the same basis as members of school teams.
  3. In any athletic event where an individual qualifies for a medal, the medal shall be awarded to him/her, and the points scored will be attributed to the individual. There will be no displacement (except in the sport of Track and Field) of position or points among other competitors in events in which individuals participate.
  4. No school entering individuals may win a team championship.

### **Section 6. RECRUITMENT OF STUDENT-ATHLETES BY PRIVATE, PAROCHIAL AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

To maintain the educational standards and dignity of our academic and athletic program, all members of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 must refrain from any practices such as recruitment, enticements, and inducements or other pressure which would encourage students substantially for athletic purposes to leave, enter, or not to enter schools within their normal district, as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Education, or schools in which they have enrolled or have indicated in writing the intent to enroll. In order to ensure that the above prohibitions of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 are carried out, the PCOA has adopted the following regulations: (Note: This also applies to students below grade 9 6 who are contemplating enrolling in a RIIL member school, public, private or parochial).

### **POLICY ON RECRUITING**

#### **A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

1. Recruiting is the use of undue influence and/or special inducement by anyone associated with a school in an attempt to encourage a prospective student to attend or remain at that school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.

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2. Recruitment of students or attempted recruitment of students for athletic purposes, regardless of their residence, is a gross violation of the by-laws of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 and is expressly forbidden.
3. Member schools are responsible for any violation committed by any person who is under the direct or indirect supervision and control of the principal. Member schools are also responsible for any violation committed by a person acting at the direction of any person under the direct supervision or control of the principal.

### **B. UNDUE INFLUENCE**

1. Undue Influence is the use of direct or indirect communication by anyone associated with a school with a prospective student in an attempt to solicit or encourage the enrollment of a prospective student in that school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.
2. Undue influence includes, but is not limited to:
3. Initiating or arranging telephone, telegram or other written contact such as questionnaires, cards or letters, with a prospective student-athlete or member of his/her family for the purpose of soliciting or encouraging the enrollment of the student in a school.
4. Visiting or entertaining a prospective student-athlete or member of his/her family for the purpose and intent of soliciting or encouraging the enrollment of the student in a school.
5. Providing transportation to a prospective student-athlete or member of his/her family for the purpose and intent of soliciting or encouraging the enrollment of the student in that school.
6. Attending school or non-school athletic contests with the expressed intent of recruiting specific students for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.
7. Requesting booster club members, students, parents or alumni from a school to discuss the merits of the school's athletic program with a prospective student-athlete or member of his/her family by phone, in person, or through letters or other written communications.
8. Any other contact with a prospective student-athlete or member of his/her family for the purpose and intent of soliciting or encouraging the enrollment of the student in a school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.
9. No member school and no one acting on behalf of any member school may give a speech or give any slide, film or tape presentation or distribute any written material, including advertisements in newspapers, magazines or other publications, which states or implies that a member school's athletic program is better than the athletic program of any other member school or that it would be more advantageous for any prospective student-athlete to participate in athletics at that member school as opposed to any other school.
10. When a student at a junior high, middle school or other high school, or the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that student contacts a coach about attending the coach's school, the coach must immediately refer the student, parent(s) or guardian(s) to the principal or other associate school personnel, who have the responsibility of seeking and processing prospective students.

### **C. SPECIAL INDUCEMENT**

1. of any privilege not afforded to non-athletes.
2. Offer or acceptance of free or reduced rent for parent(s) or guardian(s).
3. Offer or acceptance of payment of moving expenses of parent(s) or guardian(s) or assistance with the moving of parent(s) or guardian(s).

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4. Offer or acceptance of employment of parent(s) or guardian(s) in order to entice the family to move to a certain community if any person associated with the school makes an offer.

### **D. ACADEMIC RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS**

1. This policy is not intended to prevent a member school from conducting academic recruitment programs or recruitment programs designed to attract students based upon the school's overall educational and extracurricular programs. However, such recruitment programs must be designed to present the overall educational and extracurricular programs of the school and not be used as a subterfuge for recruiting students for athletic purposes. Such general recruitment programs permissible under this article must be carried out under the following guidelines:
  2. With the permission of the principal, member schools may present speeches, films, tapes or other similar programs to students in elementary, junior high or middle schools with grades below the ninth grade from which the member school can normally expect enrollment.
  3. Member schools may present speeches, slides, film, tape or other similar programs to students at elementary, junior high or middle schools with grades below the ninth grade from which the member school can normally expect enrollment so long as said speeches, slides, films, tapes or other presentations are designed to attract students to attend the member school and are based upon the overall educational programs and not presented solely for the purpose of recruiting prospective athletes.
  4. Coaches or any member of a school's athletic staff cannot conduct recruiting programs of any kind for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics.
  5. Schools may site accomplishments, both academic to athletic, as long as it does not imply that the school's athletic program is better than any other school's athletic program or that it would be more advantageous for a prospective student-athlete if s/he participated at that member school. A student-athlete may not receive or be offered any remuneration of any kind or receive or be offered any special inducement of any kind, which is not made available to all students who enroll in or apply to a school.
  6. Special inducements include, but are not limited to:
    7. Offer or acceptance of money or other valuable consideration such as free or reduced tuition during the regular school year or summer school by any person associated with a school.
    8. Offer or acceptance of room, board, textbooks or clothing, or financial allotment for textbooks or clothing.
    9. Offer or acceptance of pay for work that is not performed or that is in excess of the amount regularly paid for such services.
    10. Offer or acceptance of free transportation by any person associated with a school.
    11. Offer or acceptance of a residence with any person associated with a school.
    12. Offer or acceptance as opposed to any other member school.

### **E. PENALTIES**

1. A member school found to be in violation of any provision of this policy:
  2. May be required to forfeit all contests won in which a recruited student(s) participates.
  3. May be placed on probation and denied participation in the RIIL Middle School 6-8 state championship series for a period of not less than one (1) year in the sport(s) in which the violation(s) occurred.

## **RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8**

4. May be placed on suspension and denied any participation with any member school for a period of not less than one (1) year in the sport(s) in which the violation(s) occurred.
5. May be suspended from membership in the RIIL Middle School 6-8 for a period of not less than one (1) year.
6. A student who is found to be in violation of this policy:
7. May be declared permanently ineligible for interscholastic competition at the school to which s/he was recruited.
8. May be declared ineligible for interscholastic competition for a period not to exceed one (1) year at any RIIL member school.

# **RHODE ISLAND INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8**

## **Article 4: POSTPONEMENTS**

### **Section 1. GAME CANCELATIONS**

No games may be canceled except with the approval of the Sport Director of the Middle School Sport Coordinator; see Article 6, Section 10.

### **Section 2. UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

- A. Where unusual circumstances prevail or where weather conditions are unfavorable, a game may be postponed by mutual consent of the Principals, or authorized agents, of the schools involved. Postponed games will be rescheduled to the next available weekday/night.
- B. The Executive Director or the Middle School Sport Coordinator is empowered to exercise the right to postpone a game in the event of failure of the Principals to agree on the matter. If at game time conditions for playing are, in the judgment of the head official, too hazardous for playing, s/he may at his/her discretion postpone the game even though there is no mutual agreement.

### **Section 3. MUTUAL AGREEMENT**

- A. In case both teams mutually agree on a change in date for a scheduled game for reasons other than those in Section 1; permission for such a change must be obtained from the Executive Director, the Middle School Sport Coordinator, or the Director of the Sport. Coaches are not permitted to make any changes in contest date/times/sites with other coaches, officials and or assignors.
  - 1. Note: No RIIL League contest (league or non-league) will be scheduled to begin before 12 noon on Sunday.

### **Section 4. OPEN DATES**

Postponement of RIIL Middle School 6-8 games must have precedence on open dates of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 schedules and games with outside schools arranged for these dates must be on a tentative basis. A RIIL Middle School 6-8 team fulfilling a contract with an outside opponent to the detriment of its RIIL Middle School 6-8 opponent must forfeit the game to the latter, unless by mutual agreement another date is arranged. All postponed games will be played on the next available weekday/night.

### **Section 5. NON-OFFICIATED POSTPONEMENT**

Postponement for any reason other than weather requires the consent of the schools involved and the permission of the Executive Director or the Middle School Sport Coordinator.

### **Section 6. GAME INTERRUPTION**

- A. Any game interrupted by factors other than weather and unable to be completed on the date the game or contest began will be treated as a suspended game or contest and resumed from the point of interruption. The team that is behind in the score will have the option of requesting that the suspended game be regarded as final, in which case the score of the game or contest at the time of the interruption will go into the records as the final score.
  - 1. Note: This rule would be applied if there is no NFHS sport rule pertaining to game interruption.

**Article 5: PROTESTS**

**Section 1. PROCEDURE**

- A. A school filing a protest in accordance with RIIL Middle School 6-8/NFHS sport rules shall make out the protest in triplicate. One copy will go to the Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director; the second through the Executive Director to the school or schools protested against, and the third copy is to be retained by the protesting school. The protest must be signed by the Principal or Acting Principal and received by the Executive Director no later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the game or contest. The protest must be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00 which is to be returned to the school in the event the decision is in favor of the protesting school, but forfeited to the RIIL Treasury in the case of an adverse decision. This protest shall include all facts relevant to the protested situation.
- B. The procedure for handling protests is:
  - 1. If any of the procedures, deadlines, etc. as set down in the rule for filing a protest are not strictly adhered to, the protest shall be immediately disallowed and the two schools in contention so notified. The Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director shall weigh this protest procedure and make the determination whether the protest shall be heard or terminated at this stage.
  - 2. If the Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director concludes that the conditions for filing a protest have been fulfilled; s/he will report this fact to the Chair. A copy of the protest will also be forwarded to the Principal of the opposing school within 24 hours of its receipt.
  - 3. The Chair or the Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director shall appoint a Protest Appeal Committee of three (members of the Middle School Sub-Committee) to hold a formal hearing on the appeal. This hearing shall take place within five (5) working days of receipt of the official protest.
    - a. Each school may be represented by the Principal, Athletic Director, coach and any other person(s) approved by the Chair, prior to the day of the hearing.
    - b. The game officials may be consulted by the Protest Appeal Committee and may be required to be present at the hearing.
    - c. The Protest Appeal Committee shall determine the admissibility of evidence.
    - d. The Protest Appeal Committee in executive session shall, after considering all the evidence, vote to uphold or disallow the protest. A majority vote shall suffice and be final.

**Section 2. TIMELINESS AND BURDEN OF PROOF**

- A. For purposes of this Article, time is of the essence, and no waivers shall be granted. The burden of proof as to being within the stipulated time frames rests exclusively on the protesting school.

**Section 3. NOTIFICATION OF OFFICIALS**

- A. The Committee will refuse to accept a protest if the protesting team fails to notify the officials of the game at the time of the incident or the first opportunity to do so that the game is being finished under protest. In non-officiated sports, the opposing coach must be notified of the protest at the first opportunity to do so.

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### **Section 4. PROTEST SIGNIFICANCE**

- A. The PCOA will entertain no protest where the protested call did not have a significant effect on the outcome of the contest, nor will the Committee accept protests involving judgment calls made by officials. The Executive Director will make this determination.

### **Section 5. CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION**

- A. In Championship Tournament Competition, the Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director, the Middle School Sport Coordinator, and the Sport Director of the sport, by a unanimous vote will make the final determination of a protest, the provisions of this Article notwithstanding.

**Article 6: PENALTIES**

**Section 1. ADHERENCE TO RULES**

- A. No member school shall be relieved of its obligations to adhere to the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 except by a formal vote of the PCOA. The decision of the PCOA shall be final and in case a school refuses to abide by such a decision or withdraws from the jurisdiction of the PCOA before a decision has been reached, all other member schools shall sever athletic relations with such a school, canceling all contests already scheduled and refusing to schedule others. Competition with the offending school may be resumed only when the PCOA has again admitted the school to its jurisdiction.
- B. This rule shall not be interpreted to mean that isolated cases of infractions of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules and Regulations shall be made a reason for canceling games or severing athletic relations. Such cases of infraction shall be reported to the PCOA. Cancellation or severance of relations shall take place under this rule only when a school through its Principal has definitely declared that it is no longer its purpose or policy to abide by the Rules and Regulations or when the PCOA has formally voted that the school in question is no longer adhering to the Rules and Regulations and that severance of athletic relations is therefore required.
- C. If in the judgment of the PCOA a school is in serious violation of a Rule as published in this manual, such school may be placed on probation for a period of one to three years. If at the end of the probationary period, the infraction has not been rectified, the school may be excluded from participation in the RIIL Middle School 6-8 at the discretion of the PCOA whose decision in all these cases shall be final.

**Section 2. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AUTHORITY**

- A. The RIIL Middle School 6-8 shall have the authority to suspend players in their respective sport or to impose any of the penalties provided in Article 6, Section 3.

**Section 3. DEFINITION OF PENALTIES**

- A. Penalties will be determined and imposed by the PCOA upon member schools, players, officials, or coaches for violations of the Rules and Regulations. Notice of the penalty will be given in writing by the Executive Director to the Principal or his/her nominee of the school involved, who in turn will forward copies of such notice of penalty to the individual(s) involved. At that time, the Principal or his nominee will explain the penalty to the individual(s) along with their rights pursuant to the Rules and Regulations. The type and duration of penalties will be determined in accordance with the nature and extent of the offense. They may include the following: Reprimand, Fine, Probation, or Suspension.
- B. REPRIMAND: An official letter of censure in regard to an inexcusable, unethical, or unsportsmanlike action together with a warning against an occurrence of such acts in the future.
- C. FINE: A monetary payment for violations of the Rules and Regulations.
- D. PROBATION: Permits regular season activity but may prohibit tournament play. Such regular-season activity may be subject to the imposition of such safeguards or conditions as are found necessary.
  - 1. A school may be placed on PROBATION for any of the reasons listed as causes for the more severe penalty of SUSPENSION.
- E. SUSPENSION:

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1. The effect of suspension is to prohibit the taking part in one sport or all interscholastic sports under the jurisdiction of the PCOA for the time of the suspension. The PCOA shall determine the extent of the suspension after a hearing. Suspension may be for one or more of the following reasons:
  - a. violation of the Rules
  - b. refusal to abide by the decision or decisions of the PCOA.
  - c. violating the Rule that requires that all financial aid given to students be reported to the RIIL Office upon request.
  - d. athletic recruiting
  - e. removing a team from field or court because of dissatisfaction with the official.
  - f. failure to control the spectators or the players' bench.
  - g. failure to adequately protect the official and or the visiting team.
  - h. violations of the practice and playing seasons limitations
  - i. flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct
  - j. failure to pay assessed dues and fees by December 1st. of the billing year. This also carries a \$100.00 fine.
  - k. cancellation of RIIL Middle School 6-8 contest without the required consent.
  - l. forfeiting a RIIL Middle School 6-8 contest (league or non-league).
  - m. non-school competition
  - n. non-certified coaches
  - o. failure to report league contests scores.

### **Section 4. ELIGIBILITY LISTS**

- A. Any school or schools failing to file the Eligibility Lists online on or before the designated date shall be subject to a two hundred-dollar (\$200.00) fine for each missing list.

### **Section 5. USE OF INELIGIBLE COACH**

- A. All coaches (paid or volunteer) must meet all RIIL Middle School 6-8 certification requirements (Article 13 Section 1) and must be listed along with contact information on the RIIL website ([www.riil.org](http://www.riil.org)).
- B. Coaches not listed on the RIIL website along with contact information or who do not meet the certification requirements will not be eligible to coach in any RIIL Middle School 6-8 contest.
- C. The penalty for the use of an ineligible coach in any RIIL Middle School 6-8 approved competition, game (league or non-league) event/championship tournament play will result in a fine of \$100 per ineligible coach. The ineligible coach cannot coach until s/he is certified and fine is paid.

### **Section 6. USE OF INELIGIBLE ATHLETES**

- A. If a player's name is omitted from an eligibility list because of an error by a school official, the following penalties shall be imposed:
  1. The Principal shall submit a letter to the RIIL stating the reason(s) why the player's name was omitted from the eligibility list. (It is important to emphasize that all schools continue the required practice of self-reporting infractions).
  2. A one hundred (\$100.00) dollar fine will be assessed to the school.
  3. If the player's (name) omission from the Eligibility List was caused by a coach; the coach is ineligible to coach in the next scheduled RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contest.

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4. There will be no penalty imposed on the player or the team assuming the player is eligible by all the other Rules and Regulations of the RIIL Middle School 6-8.
  5. Schools that are repeat offenders of Article 3, Section 1, paragraph A3 and Article 6, Section 5 may be subject to further penalties as outlined in Article 6.
  6. Ineligible players who participate for reasons other than being omitted from the Eligibility List will be subject to the present eligibility Rules and Regulations of the RIIL.
  7. **Note\*** *Principals may, at their discretion, impose additional sanctions on staff members whose errors result in a student-athlete being rendered ineligible.*
- B. A student who is ineligible according to RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules and Regulations, but who is permitted to participate representing his/her school contrary to such RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules but in accordance with the terms of a court restraining order or injunction against his/her school and/or the RIIL Middle School 6-8; and said injunction or restraining order is subsequently voluntarily vacated, stayed, reversed, or it is finally determined by the courts that injunctive relief is not or was not justified, both the athlete and the school shall be subject to all the penalties listed in this section for using an ineligible player.
- C. A school which plays a student who is later found to be ineligible (whether because of the student's own misstatement or an error on the part of school authorities), should by written notice to the schools affected immediately forfeit every game in which the ineligible player participated. In the sports of cross country, outdoor track, and wrestling, all points earned by the ineligible student-athlete will be deducted (from the team's total score) and subsequent results of all regular season, playoff and championship events in which the student-athlete participated which may cause a forfeit of these events. Additional penalties may also be imposed on the member school. The Executive Director should also be notified, and if trophies and plaques are involved, they must be returned to the RIIL. The failure of a Principal/school to promptly and automatically implement the forfeiture provisions of this section shall subject a member Principal/school to additional penalties pursuant to Article 6, Section 3.

### **Section 7. EJECTION FROM GAME**

- A. Athlete Ejections:
1. Any athlete who is ejected from any contest (non-league and/or league game) shall be ineligible to participate until he/she sits out the next League game including all games in between. If the infraction is judged most severe, the player may incur the additional penalty of ineligibility for a year from the date of the infraction or the remainder of his/her stay in school. (Refer to Article 6, Section 3). In addition, the athlete must fill out the Unsportsmanlike Conduct Questionnaire and complete the NFHS free online course "Sportsmanship" at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com) before re-establishing eligibility. A player put out of the last contest of that sport season shall be ineligible for the first two (2) RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contests of the same sport in the following year. If the player has senior eligibility, he/she shall be ineligible for the first two (2) RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contests of the next sport in which the player participates. In addition, any player put out of the last contest of a sport season must show cause why he/she should not be put on probation in the same sport the following year, or such a player has senior eligibility, why he/she should not be put on probation for the next sport season in which such player participates.
    - i. **Note:** *Examples of Infraction of Probationary Status* - A player on probation who is reported by an official or game supervisor for such behavior as unsportsmanlike conduct, game disqualification or other offenses that may be

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deemed contrary to the rules of the game and safety of others, will be declared ineligible for the remainder of that sport season as a minimum. If the infraction is judged most severe, the player may incur the additional penalty of ineligibility for a year from the date of the infraction or the remainder of his/her stay in school.

2. The second time an athlete is ejected in the same sport season, that athlete shall be suspended for the rest of that sport season.
  3. The third time the athlete is ejected in the same school year, that athlete must show cause why that athlete should not be suspended from participation in the RIIL Middle School 6-8 for one year from the date of the last ejection. Pending appeal, that athlete shall remain suspended.
  4. Any athlete ejected from a contest for fighting, spitting, taunting, abuse of an official, or similar behavior may be subject to additional consequences.
- B. Coaches Ejected from Games/Matches/Meets:
1. Prior to the start of any RIIL Middle School 6-8 authorized contest at the pre-game conference, the Head Coach shall notify the official (Head Official/Chief Umpire) that s/he is the only coach, or s/he shall identify additional certified assistant coaches of the team authorized by the school.
    - a. In the event a coach is ejected from a contest and there is no certified assistant coach who had been identified to the officials prior to the start of the game, the game will end and the opposing team shall be awarded a victory by forfeit.
    - b. A coach who is ejected shall leave the vicinity [out of sight and sound] of the playing area immediately and shall not return to the playing area during the remainder of the contest. Further, said coach is prohibited from any further contact (direct and/or indirect) with the team or any team member for the remainder of the contest and not until both teams have left the playing area.
    - c. Any coach determined to be in violation of this provision may be subject to an additional period of disqualification.
  2. Coaches ejected from any athletic contest except for a technical violation of the rules shall:
    - a. **First Ejection**
      - i. The coach is ineligible to participate (coach) a minimum of the next two (2) RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contests of that sport/season.
      - ii. The school shall be assessed a \$50.00 fine payable to the RIIL. The coach continues to be disqualified from coaching after the imposed suspension until the fine is paid. In addition, the coach must fill out the Unsportsmanlike Conduct Questionnaire and complete the NFHS “Sportsmanship” and “Teaching and Modeling Behavior” online courses at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com) before re-establishing eligibility, which must be faxed/and mailed to the RIIL office prior to his/her reinstatement.
    - b. **Second Ejection**
      - i. If a coach, who has had two (2) ejections within the same year, s/he is ineligible to coach in any sport in the
      - ii. Rhode Island Interscholastic League or the RIIL Middle School 6-8 for one (1) year from the date of the last ejection.
  3. Any coach/school official who is uncooperative or exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior to the Official Representative of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 during any RIIL Middle School 6-8 Playoff Contest may be ejected from said contest.

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- C. The PCOA reserves the right to review any and all penalties and to impose such appropriate penalties as the individual situation requires.
- D. Clarification: Ejection Rule
  - 1. The Cardinal Rule is:
    - a. Officials officiate the game.
    - b. Coaches coach the game.
    - c. Players play the game.
    - d. Concentrate on your area of the game.
  - 2. Once a coach/player has been ejected NO appeals will be honored from the player, coach, official or other party. Disqualification is a judgment call, and officials must be certain the act warrants disqualification.
  - 3. Whenever a coach/player is ejected from an athletic contest and must remain out of (be disqualified from) the next RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contest(s) of that sport; such ejection prevents a coach/player from being present at the site of said contest(s).
  - 4. In addition, the athlete must fill out the Unsportsmanlike Conduct Questionnaire and **complete the NFHS free online course “Sportsmanship” at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com) before re-establishing eligibility, which must be faxed/and mailed to the RIIL office prior to his/her reinstatement.**
  - 5. **Being present at the site means the disqualified player or coach is not to be present in the locker room, on the bus, on the sidelines, as a spectator in the stands or anywhere in the site area during or after the contest. Any player or coach determined to be in violation of this provision will cause his/her team to forfeit the game(s) during the period of disqualification. An additional period of disqualification may also be imposed.**

### Section 8. ASSAULTS

- A. Any coach or player who assaults (lays hands, physically molests or spits on) a referee or other official in connection with an RIIL or RIIL Middle School 6-8 activity shall immediately become ineligible for further RIIL or RIIL Middle School 6-8 competition for one year from the date of the offense.

### Section 9. ADHERENCE TO HOME SCHEDULE

- A. Any home schedule submitted online and not adhered to, (except as noted on the bottom of said schedule), will carry a penalty of one half the contest fee to be paid to the officials assigned unless the Director of the Sport deems otherwise.

### Section 10. CANCELLATION / FORFEITS OF GAME

- A. All RIIL Middle School 6-8 Scheduled League contests are to be played. In the event a school cancels or forfeits RIIL scheduled League contest without the required consent, the following penalty will be imposed:
- B. The school team will immediately be placed on probation for one (1) calendar year from the date of the unauthorized forfeiture/cancellation.
- C. If another unauthorized forfeiture/cancellation occurs in the same season, the team will not be allowed to participate in any post-season play. In addition, the probation will be extended for one (1) calendar year from the date of the unauthorized forfeiture/cancellation – or- the school team will be subject to any other penalties by the Principals’ Committee on Athletics as outlined in Article 6 by the Principals’ Committee on Athletics.

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### **Section 11. SCHOOL WITHDRAWAL**

- A. In the event that a school withdraws from any sport the PCOA may exclude said school for a period of two years or multiple thereof from that sport. Upon return to the RIIL Middle School 6-8 in that sport, the team will be ineligible for post season play in the first season that they return.
- B. In the event that a school withdraws from the RIIL Middle School 6-8 in any sport to participate in another league, the Committee shall exclude said school from participation in all RIIL Middle School 6-8 sports. An appeal of this suspension shall be governed by Article 1, Section 16.

### **Section 12. REPRESENTATION AT MEETINGS**

- A. Any school(s) failing to have their coach or the representative of the coach at the Interpretation Meetings or any other meeting called by the Chair or the Director of a particular sport shall be fined the sum of fifty dollars (\$50.00) for each meeting missed. Until arrangements are made with the RIIL Office for this sum to be paid into the RIIL Treasury, all RIIL Middle School 6-8 contests will be forfeited.
- B. Payment of all fines must be received by the RIIL Office prior to the start of the next sports season.

### **Section 13. USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT DURING THE SUMMER**

- A. The RIIL cautions against School Districts and Principals allowing school equipment to be used or loaned out for use during the summer months to students from their schools. The use or loaning of equipment to students during the summer or other out-of-season periods opens the schools, their administrators, and coaches to serious liability risks in the event that the student borrowing the equipment or others who might use it are injured while using the equipment. Coaches shall obtain written permission from the Principal and/or Superintendent prior to allowing use of school equipment during the summer. School Districts must ensure the use of school equipment is covered by the District's insurance policy. In the event that the equipment is used or loaned to students in violation of this League policy, may be the very reason a court could find a school negligent and award substantial damages in a negligent liability suit. The insurance policies of most schools do not normally provide coverage for the use of equipment during the summer months. Such use could well weaken the equipment and, when used for school activities during the school year, the weakened state could result in serious injuries to players and be the subject of a suit. In addition, the League's legal counsel maintains that the loaning of equipment that is owned by a member school without permission of the school's governing body could well be a violation of several criminal statutes that restrict use of publicly-owned equipment for private use. Administrators should make certain that no school equipment is loaned out for summer use without written approval. The above applies to all member schools.

### **Section 14. MANDATORY GAME SCORE REPORTS AND COACHES REGISTRATION**

- A. Game Score Reports: All RIIL Middle School 6-8 league contest scores are to be reported online on the RIIL Website. Coaches obtain access to the system through their Athletic Director.
  - 1. The home team (coach/athletic director) is responsible for reporting league contest scores within forty-eight (48) hours of the end of the contest.**

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2. **During Playoffs: The winning coach/athletic director is responsible for reporting the playoff game score within three (3) hours of the end of the contest.**
  3. **Penalty: Failure to report scores will result in a twenty-dollar (\$20.00) fine for each contest not reported. Schools will be billed at the end of the season.**
- B. Coaches Registry: All RIIL Middle School 6-8 Member Schools are to register all certified coaches who represent their schools in all sports and levels (Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshman, Volunteers) online through the RIIL Website.
1. All coaches must be certified as coaches per Rhode Island State law and the RIIL Middle School 6-8.

### **Section 15. CONSEQUENCES FOR COACHES WHO CRITICIZE GAME OFFICIAL(S) IN A PUBLIC FORUM**

- A. **Any coach who criticizes a game official(s) in a public forum over the course of his/her career will be subject to the following:**
- a. **First Offense** – One game disqualification and the school be fined \$100.
  - b. **Second Offense** – Two (game disqualifications and the school be fined \$150.
  - c. **Third Offense** – Disqualification for the remainder of the season \* and the school be fined \$250.
    - i. The coach will be disqualified for a minimum of five (5) games. If the season ends prior to completing the five (5) game disqualification the remaining days will carry over to the next season.
  - d. Each confirmed incident will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by RIIL staff and appropriate action invoked. Additionally, the school administration will be required to file a report with the RIIL delineating the steps the schools and athletic administration have taken to address this issue to assure no reoccurrence.
- B. When a coach is disqualified for such actions the following disqualification rules shall apply:
1. The coach will be disqualified from the next league contest and any non-league games in between.
  2. Coaches cannot be in attendance at the game(s) for which they are serving their suspension and may not participate in any pre-game warm-up activities at the site.
  3. Disqualifications from the last contest of one season carry over to the next season in that sport for coaches.
  4. The school's first incident of non-compliance, for reasons other than defiance of the disqualification rules, will result in forfeiture, a \$250 fine and the coach must serve the disqualification penalty; a school's second incident of non-compliance will prohibit the school from entry in the next RIIL Middle School 6-8 tournament for that sport, or from the remainder of the current tournament if the disqualification occurs during an RIIL Middle School 6-8 tournament or during the last regular season contest / day of competition. However, when a school willfully defies this regulation the school and/or coach will be subject to further action by the RIIL Principals' Committee on Athletics.
- C. Those found in violation of this rule will not have the opportunity to appeal.
- D. Coaches have an opportunity to raise officiating concerns through the proper school channels (Athletic Director and Principal).

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### **Section 16. CONSEQUENCES FOR SCHOOLS THAT VIOLATE RIIL RULES WHILE ON PROBATION**

- A. If a school violates an RIIL Middle School 6-8 rule while on probation, they will be required to complete a formal review of its athletic program. This review will be measured against a set of defined standards of an exemplary interscholastic athletic program along with indicators for each of the defined standards. The findings of this review will be required to be presented to the RIIL along with recommendations for the school's improvement and compliance.
- B. A copy of the defined standards can be found in the Online Document section of the [www.riil.org](http://www.riil.org) website.

### **Section 17. NON-SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS**

- A. Member schools cannot contribute financially to a non-school athletic program.
- B. Member schools cannot be part of the governance of any non-school athletic program.
- C. Member schools cannot collect and or combine school tuition with non-school athletic fees.
- D. Member schools are not permitted to market or promote a non-school athletic program.
- E. Member schools must publicly renounce to all members of the school community their affiliation with any non-school athletic program.
- F. Member schools may not mandate that their students participate for a specific non-school athletic program.
- G. Member schools who identify a non-school athletic program as part of their school athletic program will be asked to withdraw from the RIIL Middle School 6-8 in all sports.
- H. In matters relating to Non-school Athletic Programs the RIIL has the authority to request from member schools documentation to assure compliance with all RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules.

**Article 7: LIMITATION OF SEASONS**

**Section 1. RATIONALE FOR THE LIMITATION OF SEASONS**

- A. Since the school by virtue of the regulations of the PCOA have some control over what students do out of school after school hours, it would seem important that school authorities be aware of the kinds of organized competitive athletics their students participate in on their own. Various leagues are sponsored by a wide variety of community groups. If the same consideration for the health, safety, and education of the young people is not followed by these community sponsors, the health and safety of students might be impaired. The school's interest and concern with this problem should be made known and appropriate guidance given to the community sponsoring groups.
- B. No student below Grade 6 will be allowed to practice or play with any middle school team.

**Section 2. DEFINITION OF A GAME**

- A. A game is any competition between two or more schools, i.e. RIIL Middle School 6-8 League or non-league RIIL Middle School 6-8 games exclusive of scrimmages, which meets any of the following conditions:
  - 1. Teams wearing game uniforms.
  - 2. Score is kept.
  - 3. Time is kept.
  - 4. Results of the contest are reported.
  - 5. The game is structured to meet the game requirements of NFHS rules.
- B. A scrimmage shall be defined as a controlled practice among any number of schools that is supervised by coaches which does not meet any requirements for a game.
  - 1. Officials may be present for safety purposes.
  - 2. Teams may not wear game uniforms.
  - 3. Activity between teams must be broken into controlled practice segments for coaching and instruction purposes only.
  - 4. Structuring a scrimmage in such a way as to resemble or replicate a game without game uniforms will be considered a game and additional penalties may be imposed on the school.

**Section 3. HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION RULES**

- A. Intent: To provide acclimatization rules for student-athletes with the purpose of minimizing injury and enhancing the player's health, performance, and well-being.
- B. Core Principals:
  - 1. Acclimatization Period: The first six days of RIIL Middle School 6-8 approved practice will consist of no more than two (2) hours of practice time.
  - 2. Recommend using shaded areas during rest breaks.
  - 3. Recommend cold water immersion tubs on site for warm weather activities.
- C. Scrimmages/Games:
  - 1. A team shall not be permitted to participate in a scrimmage until they have completed five (5) days of practice for all sports.
  - 2. Number of practices (prior to the first game) is ten (10). The first 5 days – no scrimmages; during the next 5 days scrimmages would be allowed. Games (in accordance with our rules) may begin on the 11th day of practice.

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### D. Definitions:

1. Practice – the time a player engages in physical activity. It is recommended that any practice session be no greater than two (2) hours in length. Warm-up-stretching, conditioning, weight training and ‘cool-down’ periods are all considered practice.
2. Chalk talk and film review are not considered practice time.
3. Note: Practice sessions may be divided while adhering to the time restrictions as described above.
4. Example: 2 Hour Day: one 2-hour practice or two 1 ½ hour practices

### E. By the start of fall sports practice in 2025, an instrument scientifically approved to measure Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer (WBGT) must be utilized at each practice if the WBGT is within 5-10 F of green flag conditions (76.1 F). WBGT readings should be taken on the practice site a minimum of every 30 minutes, beginning 30 minutes before the beginning of practice.

### F. Although use of a WBGT is preferred as a best practice for use prior to the start of fall sports practice in 2025, if a WBGT is not available, the heat index for the approximate location of activity may be determined by entering the postal zip code at <http://www.osaa.org/heatindex/>

1. Rhode Island falls under Category 1 (Cat 1) based on its geographical location.

### G. HYDRATION TIPS AND FLUID GUIDELINES

1. In general, athletes do not voluntarily drink sufficient water to prevent dehydration during physical activity.
2. Drink early, by the time you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated.
3. Drink before, during, and after practices and games. Specifically, the American College of Sports Medicine recommends the following:
4. Drink 16 ounces of fluid 2 hours before exercise.
5. Drink another 8 to 16 ounces 15 minutes before exercise.
6. During exercise, drink 4 to 16 ounces of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes.
7. The NFHS SMAC strongly recommends that coaches, certified athletic trainers, physicians, and other school personnel working with athletes not provide or encourage use of any beverages for hydration of these youngsters other than water and appropriate sports drinks. They should also make information on the potential harm and lack of benefit associated with many of these other beverages available to parents and athletes.

### **Section 4. NON-LEAGUE GAMES**

- A. Schools are required to submit and list all (League and Non-League) on the RIIL Middle School 6-8 online team schedule at [www.riil.org](http://www.riil.org). This includes any out of state games that have been approved and sanctioned by the RIIL Middle School 6-8

### **Section 5. NON-SCHOOL COMPETITION AND LOYALTY TO SCHOOL TEAM**

- A. Definition of school sports season - A school sports season shall be defined as the period beginning with the date of the school’s first practice with any part of a sports squad and ending with the school’s last contest, including district and state tournament contests, in that sport.
- B. Definition of Organized Non-School Competition - organized non-school competition shall be defined as any game(s) which is sponsored by an individual or organization and for which any of the following have been prearranged: coach, official(s), scorer, or team membership.
- C. A member of a school team is defined as a student-athlete who is listed on an Eligibility List who is regularly present for and/or actively participates in all team practices and competitions.
  1. Bonafide members of a school team are prevented from missing a practice or competition to compete with an “out-of-school” team.

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2. If a conflict arises between the middle school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the middle school team practice/competition must be honored by the student-athlete. Priority/loyalty must be given at all times to the middle school team practices and contests unless a waiver has been granted by the Principal and Athletic Director on a case-by-case basis.
  3. Student-athletes may be a member of and compete for “out-of-school” teams if the conditions set forth in #1, 2, and 3 above are met.
- D. Penalties:
1. Any student-athlete who is in violation shall be ineligible for the next two (2) consecutive RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contests in which the student-athlete is a participant. This penalty is effective from the date of his/her last participation in a middle school sport and may carry over to the next sports season in which s/he participates.
  2. Any student-athlete who is found to be in violation of the rule a second (2nd) time or subsequent time(s) shall be ineligible for participation for the rest of that sport season. A student-athlete found to be in violation of Article 7, Section 6c at the end of that sport season shall be ineligible for the first two (2) RIIL Middle School 6-8 League contests of the same sport in the following year. If the student-athlete has 8th grade eligibility, s/he shall be ineligible for the first two (2) contests of the next sport in which s/he participates. In both instances, the student-athlete may be declared ineligible for participation in all interscholastic athletics for his/her school for the remainder of the school year.
- E. RIIL Policy on Captain’s Practices:
1. The term “Captain’s Practice” is commonly used to refer to the team’s captain(s) organizing and conducting, without adult supervision, out-of-season practice for that sport.
  2. The RIIL does not in any way sanction, encourage, or condone “Captain’s Practice” in any sport. “Captain’s Practice”, depending on the member schools’ involvement, may be a clear violation of the rules defining season limitations.
  3. Even though coaches are not present, allowing captain’s practice to be held on school grounds may constitute that the school has organized, encouraged or condoned the activity.
  4. There is also a serious practical consideration. If it can be demonstrated that a school is allowing “Captain’s Practice”, the liability responsibility for an injured athlete may be quite serious.
  5. We strongly recommend that member schools communicate their stance on captain’s practices to coaches, students and parents so that there is no confusion. In many cases, students and parents perceive that this type of activity is organized and administered by the school and there is an obligation for students to participate.
- F. Students whose names are removed from the school’s varsity eligibility list are free to participate in outside programs but may not return to play for the school’s varsity teams. However, they may participate in the junior varsity program(s) of that sport.
- G. Students who participate in outside programs as individuals not representing their school nor using school uniforms or equipment do not violate the simultaneous participation rule.

**Article 8: APPEALS**

**Section 1. PROCEDURE**

- A. The normal channel of communication with the PCOA is to the Executive Director who may decide in the first instance on all matters. However, the Executive Director may refer any matter to the PCOA for a decision.
- B. Any ruling of the Executive Director may be appealed to the PCOA whose decision shall be final.

**Section 2. CORRESPONDENCE**

- A. All correspondence shall be sent care of the Executive Director. All appeals and requests shall be in writing. All appeals shall have a certification confirming that a copy has been sent to all parties of interest.

**Section 3. PROTESTS**

- A. In the case of game protests, the procedure outlined in Article 5 shall be the procedure followed.

**Section 4. WAIVER REQUEST HEARING PROCEDURE**

- A. The procedure outlined speaks to any violations of the bylaws of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. Matters dealing with individual sports, i.e. protests, schedule concerns, league alignments, official's complaints, etc. will be handled by the Sport Director, Middle School Sport Coordinator, and the Executive Director.

**Section 5. INDIVIDUAL APPEALS**

- A. Individuals may appeal any decision involving them alone through their Principal to the proper body outlined above provided the appeal is not made based upon a judgment call of an official. No appeals of ejections of athletes or coaches by game officials will be allowed.

**Section 6. TIME LIMITATIONS**

- A. Appeals must be received at each level within fourteen (14) calendar days.

**Section 7. DECISIONS**

- A. Initial Decisions regarding appeals are effective upon delivery (orally or by fax or by other means) to the school Principal. The school Principal shall deliver a copy to the student(s), parents or personnel involved. For decisions involving others, the decision shall be effective upon posting to the U.S. mail.
- B. Written notice of the appeal application shall be given to all parties. Decisions are not automatically stayed pending appeal. After a written notice of appeal is filed, a written request for a stay may be made. Any application for a stay of enforcement must ordinarily be made in the first instance to the Executive Director making the ruling. The request shall show the reasons for the relief requested and the facts relied upon.
- C. In extraordinary circumstances, the Executive Director may, in his exclusive discretion, decide on the request for a stay rather than refer the matter to the PCOA.

**Article 9: OFFICIALS**

**Section 1. REGISTRATION OF OFFICIALS**

- A. The registration fee for approved Baseball, Basketball, Spring Track, Soccer, Softball, and Wrestling officials shall be \$12.00 plus the cost of the rule book for the respective sport.
- B. Rules as approved by the PCOA shall be the rules followed in all contests of the RIIL Middle School 6-8.
- C. The fee is waived for probationary officials.
- D. Registered officials are entitled to free admission for themselves only to all contests of member schools in the sport of which they are a registered official upon presentation of their Registration Card. (with the exception of RIIL Middle School 6-8 Playoffs).
- E. All officials must register and pay all applicable fees in the online registration system prior to each season. Officials are not eligible to be assigned to any RIIL Middle School 6-8 games unless they have completed the online registration and paid all applicable fees.
- F. All new registered officials are required to have a Criminal Background Check.
  - 1. The RIIL requires all RIIL Middle School 6-8 officials to undergo a background investigation conducted by the Bureau of Criminal Identification of the Department of the Attorney General for the State of Rhode Island. Should the BCI investigation indicate the existence of disqualifying information (a list of disqualifying information is available through each official's association), the individual shall be deemed "disqualified" for assignment in this capacity as an official. In the absence of disqualifying information (and consistent with Article 9) the individual shall be cleared for employment.
- G. PROCEDURE
  - 1. New Officials:
    - a. All new officials will be given a copy of this policy by their association to review in advance of completing step (b.).
    - b. Officials shall complete the BCI disclaimer form and present it in person to the Bureau of Criminal Identification for fingerprinting and processing.
    - c. The Local and Federal BCI results will be forwarded to the Officials Assigning Board (Association) for review.
  - 2. Should the BCI investigation indicate the existence of disqualifying information (a list of disqualifying information is available through each official's association), the individual shall be deemed "disqualified" for assignment in this capacity as an official. The Officials Assigning Board (Association) will then provide the RIIL Middle School 6-8 a list of all officials one week prior to the start of the season who have complied with all requirements. No new official will be authorized to officiate until cleared by the Officials Assigning Board (Association).
- H. All officials serve at the pleasure of the RIIL Middle School 6-8.
- I. All RIIL Middle School 6-8 approved Officials are employed as independent contractors, and not as an employee of the RIIL, or of the school districts or high schools competing in an interscholastic athletic competition event.
- J. Each sport's official organization must annually certify that all registered officials are members of the NFHS Officials Association.

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### **Section 2. ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Assignments will be made by the Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director or the Director of the Sport with the assistance of the designated representative. Notification of all assignments will be made through the Arbiter online system.
- B. No official shall be assigned to the game until his/her registration, fee, and the list of available dates has been received by the RIIL office.
- C. A new official shall not be assigned for any contest whether or not under the jurisdiction of this PCOA, unless such new official has had a criminal background check, had no felony convictions, and is on the approved list of officials of the RIIL. After the initial BCI requirement is met, any official convicted of a felony (a list of disqualifying information is available through each official's association) shall not be assigned for any contest.
- D. The Director of each sport has the right to negate or withdraw assignments from officials who withdraw from assignments without just and proper cause or failure to enforce the Rules and Regulations of the RIIL Middle School 6-8. The Director of each sport involved shall determine just and proper cause. An official may appeal to the Executive Director.
- E. Officials will be assigned in accordance with the terms stipulated in the agreement with the Board. Officials unable to fulfill an assignment must notify the Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director and/or Director of the Sport in a timely fashion.
- F. Assignments of all officials to RIIL and RIIL-sanctioned contests shall be made through the RIIL office.
- G. Playoffs: Assignment of officials to all RIIL Middle School 6-8 play-off games will be made by representatives of each RIIL sport committee. This committee includes the RIIL Sport Director(s) and representatives including officials (1), coaches and athletic directors.

### **Section 3. FAILURE TO COMPLETE ASSIGNMENT**

- A. If an official fails to notify the proper authorities of his/her inability to work a game, unless due to unavoidable circumstances, that official shall be suspended for a period to be determined by the Sport Director.

### **Section 4. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS**

- A. Officials assigned to RIIL Middle School 6-8 games may be required by the Executive Director to file with the RIIL immediately after each game a report on the conditions of the contests.
  1. Any official who ejects a player from a game must notify the RIIL Office by phone no later than 9:00 A.M. of the following day. An official who fails to make such notification within the prescribed time may be suspended from one half the normal assignments given in that particular sport. If necessary, the suspension will extend into the next season of the same sport.
  2. Prior to the start of any RIIL Middle School 6-8 authorized contest at the pre-game conference, the Head coach shall notify the official (Head Official/Chief Umpire) that s/he is the only coach or identify additional certified assistant coaches of the team authorized by the school. In the event a head coach is ejected from a contest and there is no certified assistant coach who had been identified to the officials prior to the start of the game, the game will end, and the opposing team shall be awarded victory by forfeit. A coach who is ejected shall leave the vicinity [out of sight and sound] of the playing area immediately and shall not return to the playing area during the remainder of the contest. Further, the ejected coach is prohibited from any further contact (direct and/or indirect) with the team or any team member for the remainder of the contest and not until both teams have left the playing

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area. Any coach determined to be in violation of this provision may be subject to an additional period disqualification as defined in Article 6, Penalties.

### **Section 5. NOTIFICATION OF POSTPONEMENT**

- A. Officials are entitled to one-half fee in the event they report to the facility ready for duty and no game is played. Schools which have made an attempt to communicate with the officials before they leave for the game, are exempt from this charge. Such notification must be made not less than two (2) hours before game time or in accordance with the Official's Association Agreement. The home schools' responsibility rests primarily in reaching the official by telephone. The postponement will also be made online. Postponed games retain the original fee regardless of date.
- B. After the official has been notified of the postponement, it is the responsibility of the official to contact the assignor if s/he cannot work the rescheduled contest date/time. The assignor will then replace the official as necessary.

### **Section 6. OFFICIAL FEES**

- A. The fees for officials in Baseball, Basketball, Spring Track, Soccer, Softball, and Wrestling are contained in each signed agreement:
  - 1. BASEBALL:
    - a. Two umpires required, except in cases of unusual circumstances approved by the RIIL Middle School 6-8 or emergencies.
    - b. If one of the assigned umpires fails to appear and one Board member umpires the game, that umpire shall receive one and one half the regular contest fee.
  - 2. BASKETBALL:
    - a. Two officials required, except in cases of unusual circumstances approved by the RIIL Middle School 6-8 or emergencies.
    - b. If one official fails to appear and one official referees the game, that official shall receive one and one half the regular contest fee.
  - 3. CROSS COUNTRY:
    - a. Officials assigned will be determined by the RIIL/Director.
  - 4. SPRING TRACK:
    - a. Officials assigned will be determined by the Director.
  - 5. SOCCER:
    - i. Two officials required, except in cases of unusual circumstances approved by the RIIL or emergencies.
    - ii. If one official fails to appear and one official referees the game, that official shall receive one and one half the regular contest fee.
  - 6. SOFTBALL:
    - a. Two officials required, except in cases of unusual circumstances approved by the RIIL or emergencies.
    - b. If one official fails to appear and one official referees the game, that official shall receive one and one half the regular contest fee.
  - 7. WRESTLING:
    - a. One official required.

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### **Section 7. SPORTSMANSHIP AND OFFICIALS' RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The PCOA believes that the ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity permeate our culture. The values of good citizenship and high behavioral standards apply equally to all activity disciplines. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior, which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Further, awareness of the impact of an individual's influence on the behavior of others is expected. Good sportsmanship is viewed by the RIIL Middle School 6-8 as a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity.

If you examine the standards of conduct required in middle school athletics compared to the major college and professional levels, you will conclude that the older the athlete is, the more immature that person is allowed to behave.

Routinely, middle school athletes will be penalized and ejected from contests for antics that are praised and emulated at higher levels. This is to the everlasting credit of those who lead, coach, officiate, participate in, and watch interscholastic athletics. It is this challenge that the contrast between educational athletics and so-called higher levels becomes even more obvious as we raise the standards of what is expected and tolerated in school sportsmanship.

The problem of decaying sportsmanship at all levels of competition is a major concern that needs to be addressed. Misconduct in athletics is a high-profile reflection of the general acceptance of disrespect in society. It is a social problem, and sports are a microcosm of that problem.

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League formed a Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct Committee for the purpose of addressing the issue of sportsmanship and ethical conduct. The Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct Committee, with the approval of the Principals' Committee on Athletics, developed a packet and recommended that all schools adopt and adhere to the expectations.

The Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct Committee was particularly concerned about "taunting." The Principals' Committee on Athletics passed a recommendation of the Sportsmanship Committee to broaden the definition of "taunting" and make it a disqualifying foul in all sports. As a result, officials will be expected to eject players and bench personnel (including coaches) for taunting; and the Rhode Island Interscholastic League tournament supervisors will be expected to eject from the premises any spectator who engages in taunting.

- B. The definition of taunting is this:
1. "Any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters."
  2. Examples of taunting include:
    - a. "Trash Talk"
    - b. Physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game.
    - c. References to sexual orientation.
    - d. "In the face" confrontation by one player to another.
    - e. Standing over or straddling a tackled or fallen player.
    - f. Noticeable improvement in school sportsmanship will require concerted effort.
- C. Good sports don't need to wait for other's actions. Good sports already know what is offensive, and what has no more place in school sports than it would have in a school classroom. This is

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educational athletics. We must maintain the highest education standards in all facets of the athletic arena.

- D. **OFFICIALS RESPONSIBILITY:** Officials assigned Rhode Island Interscholastic League contests **MUST** enforce the rules regarding sportsmanship without tolerance for abuse. The only warning to participants and coaches regarding sportsmanship should come at the beginning of the contest. Once the contest begins, penalties not warnings, must be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League expects that officials will eject any coach who protests an unsportsmanlike conduct call provided by the rules of the sport.
- E. Each official at a Rhode Island Interscholastic League sponsored event will be provided with a card with the following statement which **MUST** be read to the Captains and Coaches and/or teams together at **EVERY** contest prior to the beginning of the contest:
- F. “The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and your state association require officials to enforce sportsmanship rules. Middle school athletics emphasize positive values. All of us have worked hard to create a sense of teamwork, respect, responsibility and perspective. We remind you that we expect good behavior and will quickly penalize misconduct. We encourage and appreciate your help. Let this competition reflect mutual respect among all participants, coaches and officials. Coaches, please certify that your players are legally equipped and uniformed according to the NFHS rules. Good luck and have a great contest!”

**ARTICLE 10 – MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

**Section 1. MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS**

- A. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League began offering middle school sports starting August 2024, under the title of RIIL Middle School 6-8.

**Section 2. ORGANIZATION**

- A. The Principals’ Committee on Athletics will oversee the operation of RIIL Middle School 6-8, through the direction of the Executive Director of the RIIL.
- B. A Middle School Sports Coordinator will oversee the operation of RIIL Middle School 6-8 for the RIIL. This is a part-time position.
- C. RIIL Middle School 6-8 will have a sub-committee made up of the RIIL Executive Director, the Middle School Representative to the PCOA, an RIIAAA Representative, principals and other administrators responsible for middle schools, and the RIIL Middle School Sports Coordinator.
- D. Each sport will have a Sport Director (See Article 1, Section 7)

**Section 3. SPORTS TO BE OFFERED**

- A. Fall
  - 1. Boys Soccer
  - 2. Girls Soccer
  - 3. Boys Cross Country
  - 4. Girls Cross Country
- B. Winter
  - 1. Boys Basketball
  - 2. Girls Basketball
  - 3. Wrestling Co-ed
- C. Spring
  - 1. Baseball
  - 2. Softball
  - 3. Boys Track
  - 4. Girls Track
  - 5. Unified Basketball

**Article 11: RADIO & TELEVISION BROADCAST**

**Section 1. PHILOSOPHY**

- A. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League sponsors statewide tournaments in various locations across the state of Rhode Island. The RIIL strongly believes that these events foster opportunities for developing school and community spirit and support. The RIIL feels that media broadcasting of these activities is not absolutely essential to furthering these goals. However, the RIIL does not wish to exclude coverage of these activities from the media who feel that such broadcasts would be in the best interest of their communities and the student athletes. The terms of this agreement have been developed to provide the parameters within which interested media may broadcast an RIIL event.
- B. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League shall own the copyright of all broadcasts (live and delayed, excluding highlights – which are not longer than five (5) minutes in duration), films, videotapes, web casts, other electronic reproductions and recordings of events telecast pursuant to agreement. Notice of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League copyright shall be included as part of every Rhode Island Interscholastic League sports event telecast made pursuant to agreement. The notice shall consist of the symbol or the word “Copyright”, followed by the year that the event is first telecast and the name “Rhode Island Interscholastic League.” and shall appear in the opening and closing credits.

**Section 2. RADIO BROADCAST AGREEMENT**

- A. General Provisions:
  - 1. Broadcasting of any RIIL contest(s) is prohibited without prior written consent of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
  - 2. Expenses incurred in the broadcasting of an RIIL sponsored event shall be the sole responsibility of the originating station.
  - 3. Advertising of and announcements relative to, non-approved sponsors, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or political candidates, parties or organizations are strictly prohibited during the broadcast.
  - 4. The station agrees to include early in the broadcast the following statement:
    - a. “The rights to this broadcast have been granted by the Rhode Island Interscholastic League representing member middle schools across the State and the boys and girls who participate annually in RIIL sponsored athletic competition. Any rebroadcast or republication of the programming without the written consent of the RIIL is strictly prohibited.”
  - 5. The station agrees not to expose negative or questionable activity if it occurs during the programming (e.g. fights, officials’ calls, crowd reaction).
  - 6. Payment in full of the negotiated fee shall be required prior to the start of the established contest.
  - 7. The station retains the right to grant coverage of this event to other entities.
  - 8. The station agrees to indemnify, defend and save harmless the RIIL from any and all claims, demands, liability, suits and proceedings arising out of permission granted in this agreement or any activities in connection therewith.

**Section 3. TELEVISION BROADCAST AGREEMENT**

- A. Fees: The fee for a television broadcast of an RIIL sponsored contest shall be negotiated with the Executive Director of the RI Interscholastic League.

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### B. General Provisions:

1. Telecasting of any RIIL sponsored contest is prohibited without prior written consent of the RIIL.
2. Expenses incurred in the telecasting of an RIIL sponsored event shall be the sole responsibility of the originating station.
3. Advertising of and announcements relative to, non-approved sponsors, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or political candidates, parties or organizations are strictly prohibited during the broadcast.
4. The station agrees to include early in the broadcast the following statement:
  - a. ***“The rights to this broadcast have been granted by the Rhode Island Interscholastic League representing member middle schools across the State and the boys and girls who participate annually in RIIL sponsored athletic competition. Any rebroadcast or republication of the programming without the written consent of the RIIL is strictly prohibited.”***
5. The station agrees not to expose negative or questionable activity if it occurs during programming (e.g. fights, officials’ calls, and crowd reaction).
6. Payment in full of the established fee, as set forth herein, shall be required prior to the start of the established contest.
7. The station retains the right to grant coverage of this event to other entities.
8. The TV/Cable station agrees to provide a copy of the event to the RIIL within seven (7) days of the event.
9. Telecasting of up to one (1) minute of video transmission of any RIIL final event for use as part of a local newscast shall be permitted without charge. Any such use shall include credit to the RIIL and shall be permitted only after completion of the athletic event in question.
10. The station agrees to indemnify, defend and save harmless the RIIL from any and all claims, demands liability, suits and proceedings, arising out of permission granted in this agreement or any activities in connection therewith.
11. The TV/Cable station provides a predetermined number of Public Service Announcements on behalf of the RIIL.
12. The TV/Cable station provides interview opportunities for RIIL corporate sponsors of the event.
13. The TV/Cable station with mutual agreement of the RIIL will choose on-air announcers/broadcasters.

### **Section 4. NFHS NETWORK: POLICY ON STREAMING VIA SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**

- A. The ability of fans or news media companies streaming events through new streaming technologies is becoming more of an issue around the country and is only going to increase. These platforms include but are not limited to Facebook Live, Instagram Live and Periscope. When fans broadcast events via social media or alternative streaming platforms the Network is adversely affected financially. The people watching the illegal stream are the fans most likely to be interested in buying a pass to watch the event and therefore the Network suffers a reduction in subscription sales. We expect credentialed news organizations to know and follow policies, but fans are a different story. We assume that the majority of fans using these streaming technologies are unaware of the rights they are infringing upon. Therefore, we have outlined a strategy for States that focuses on building awareness to protect the rights of the NFHS Network.

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- B. While States have limitations in what they can enforce during an event, here are the four recommended courses of action to educate schools and fans:
1. Update media policies.
  2. Add updated rules to website.
  3. Disseminate information to participating schools, host sites and media outlets.
  4. Notify fans and attendees through in-venue messaging.
- C. Association Media Policies**
1. States should update published media policies with language that makes schools, fans, and other media outlets aware of the rules.
  2. The NFHS Network is the exclusive broadcast rights holder of this postseason event. Any individual streaming a game is strictly prohibited and in direct violation of the RIIL's agreements with the NFHS Network. Any violation of NFHS's exclusive broadcast rights may result in disciplinary action by the RIIL or legal action by the NFHS Network.
- D. Association Website Posting**
1. Since it is unlikely that a fan would ever read the media policy in the by-laws, States should also put messaging on the pages on their website where parents and fans would go to find the event information (i.e. event page or tournament page). This will ensure that interested parties are aware of the rules ahead of the event.
  2. *The NFHS Network is the exclusive broadcast rights holder of this postseason event. Any individual streaming a game is strictly prohibited and is in direct violation of the RIIL's contract with the NFHS Network. Any violation of the NFHS Network's exclusive rights may result in discipline by the RIIL or legal action by the NFHS Network.*
- E. Pre-Event Communication**
1. States should notify schools ahead of time through information packets they send out to participating teams as well as host sites. This is the most effective way to ensure all participating schools are made aware of the rules. The same messaging needs to be sent to anyone who has been granted a media pass for the event.
  2. *The NFHS Network is the exclusive broadcast rights holder of this postseason event. Streaming all – or any part of – the game is strictly prohibited and in direct violation of the RIIL's contracts with the NFHS Network. Please notify your fans and parents of this policy and encourage fans who can't attend to visit [NFHSnetwork.com](http://NFHSnetwork.com) to watch the game live.*
- F. In-Venue Announcements**
1. PA announcements will need to be implemented during the events. Multiple times. Physical signs with similar messaging would be ideal where it is feasible.
  2. Fans are reminded that the broadcast and streaming rights of this event belong exclusively to the N-F-H-S Network. Any individual streaming of this game is strictly prohibited. To watch this game live please go to N-F-H-S-NETWORK-DOT-COM.

### **Section 5. MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. USE OF DRONES (UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS OR UAS's)**
1. Use of Drones (UAS), for any purpose, is not permitted at any RIIL state tournament event. This prohibition applies to all fields of play, courts, arena, mats, gym floor or pool, and covers a ban on the entire facility being used as part of the RIIL event, including the spectator stands and parking areas.
- B. Excluding RIIL Middle School 6-8, the RIIL will grant television and broadcasting rights to home schools subject to the following conditions:**
1. Agreements should be of limited duration, no more than two years before renegotiation.

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2. Only the home team will have broadcast rights, subject to the consent of the visiting team. All school participation must be voluntary. Mutual agreement of both schools must be obtained, and no school shall be coerced into participation.
3. Revenue derived from commercial televising of games should be dispersed as follows:
  - a. 75% of the fee should go to the home team.
  - b. 20% of the fee should go to the visiting team.
  - c. 5% of the fee should go to RIIL.
4. Schools must require payment from the broadcaster within 30 days of the broadcast.
5. Distribution of funds to the visiting team and the RIIL shall be made within 60 days of the broadcast.
6. All contracts shall prohibit sponsorship by non-approved sponsors, Alcoholic Beverages, Tobacco Products and Gambling Activities.
7. Broadcasters should be required to announce once an hour that “the event is broadcast with the permission of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.”
8. Schools, however, are given permission to film or video tape their games provided that no commercial use of any kind is made of the film/videotape and provided that any showing of the film/videotape takes place in the school itself.
9. The RIIL reserves the right to negotiate a game of the week involving the RIIL games in any sport which is operated in the home gymnasium or field of the member school; provided the schools chosen have agreed before the beginning of the school year to participate in the RIIL program. The revenue received will be distributed among the schools participating in the RIIL program with the greater share going to the home school. See Article 11, Section 4.A3.

### **Section 6. MEDIA CREDENTIAL POLICY**

- A. *The RIIL has exclusive rights to all still photographs at all RIIL Middle School 6-8 State Tournament events. Selling of any photographs (electronic or print) either at the venue or on the internet without the written consent of the RIIL is strictly prohibited.*  
***Note:** Media may only post on their website for commercial purposes those photographs that have been published in their newspaper.*
- B. **The RIIL will not issue Media Credentials the week of the event.**
- C. RIIL Media Passes are only valid at RIIL Postseason events, not events hosted by individual member schools.
  1. Individuals who request access to an athletic event hosted by a member school must directly contact the member school prior to the event for permission to enter restricted areas.
- D. School yearbook photographers or others requesting sideline access for a RIIL Championship:
  1. are limited to two per school.
  2. are the responsibility of and have the approval of the Principal.
  3. must be communicated to the RIIL by the Principal/Athletic Director prior to the event.
- E. The RIIL has a two-tiered system for media passes:
  1. Tier 1: Traditional Media Outlet representatives are provided with long-term media passes for the entire school year and are provided with sideline access at RIIL championships.
  2. Tier 2: Non-Traditional Media may be provided with a single game pass and a free general admission ticket to the game and are allowed to sit in spectator seating for the duration. There will be no sideline access at any time before, during, or after the contest until the team vacates the playing surface.

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3. Media Passes and all sideline access will be approved, denied, or revoked at the discretion of the RIIL.
- F. Media Reminders:
1. All media photographers with the appropriate RIIL “Media Credentials’ will have access to the sidelines and permission to take photographs.
  2. Media cannot be located in any space or area where they may interfere with action in the playing/coaching/restricted area.
  3. Media journalists and photographers must stand clear of the awards presentation area and are asked to refrain from conducting post-game interviews until after the awards ceremony has been completed.
  4. **FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THESE GUIDELINES AND RESTRICTIONS WILL RESULT IN THE LOSS OF CREDENTIALS AND REMOVAL FROM THE FACILITY OR MEDIA AREA**

## Article 12: SPORTSMANSHIP

### Section 1: SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League Principal's Committee on Athletics has developed a common set of sportsmanship standards that can be implemented in every member school. Concerns with the behavior of student athletes and coaches on the field or court and the ever-increasing unsportsmanlike behavior of spectators, the committee believes it is essential that all member schools have sportsmanship standards and programs in place.
- B. Member schools are expected to conduct their relations with each other at all levels of competition in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Everyone involved has the obligation to see clearly his/her influence and act accordingly.
- C. The RIIL acknowledges that the school administration is responsible for the athletic program, including the making of broad and specific policies relating to sportsmanship and the conduct of activities in the school. The school principal has the responsibility for establishing the principles of good sportsmanship in the minds of the entire school community. He/she must realize that the kind of sportsmanship that is practiced or displayed by the representatives of his/her school will reflect to its credit or otherwise.
- D. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League has been vested with the responsibility to ensure that all contests during the regular season or regular tournament competition are conducted satisfactorily, as it applies to the principles of good sportsmanship. The RIIL will be guided by the following rule:
  - 1. **HIGH STANDARDS OF COURTESY, FAIR PLAY AND SPORTSMANSHIP MUST PREVAIL AT ALL REGULAR MEMBER SCHOOL COMPETITIONS AND ALL INVOLVED MUST ALWAYS PURSUE VICTORY WITH HONOR.**
  - 2. While this rule is a general standard in terms of enforcement, it is the heart of the entire RIIL program. Good sportsmanship, respect for the rules, respect for others, fair play, and ethics are basically the motives through which an interscholastic athletic program is justified and defended.
- E. *As a minimum, the RIIL Principals' Committee on Athletics expects member schools and leagues to have clearly defined and articulated standards of sportsmanship which are enforced at all levels of play. The standards should align with the standards which follow. The standards should be published in the student athlete/parent handbook and in other documents and publications provided by the school. Expectations for spectators should be posted at each contest site and announced when appropriate.*

### Section 2: TAUNTING

- A. If you examine the standards of conduct required in high school athletics compared to the major college and professional levels, you will conclude that the older the athlete is, the more immature that person is allowed to behave.
- B. Routinely, middle school athletes will be penalized and ejected from contests for antics that are praised and emulated at higher levels. This is to the everlasting credit of those who lead, coach, officiate, participate in, and watch interscholastic athletics. It is this challenge that the contrast between educational athletics and so-called higher levels become even more obvious as we raise the standards of what is expected and tolerated in school sportsmanship.
- C. The problem of decaying sportsmanship at all levels of competition is a major concern that needs to be addressed. Misconduct in athletics is a high-profile reflection of the general

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acceptance of disrespect in society. It is a social problem, and sports are a microcosm of that problem.

- D. The Principal's Committee on Athletics passed a recommendation of the Sportsmanship Committee to broaden the definition of "taunting" and make it a disqualifying foul in all sports. As a result, officials will be expected to eject players and bench personnel (**including coaches**) for taunting; and the Rhode Island Interscholastic League tournament supervisors will be expected to eject from the premises any spectator who engages in taunting.
- E. **The definition of taunting is this:**
1. **"Any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters."**
  2. Examples of taunting by coaches, players or spectators include:
  3. Any form of "Trash Talk"
  4. Ethnic or racial slurs
  5. Physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game
  6. References to sexual orientation
  7. "In the face" confrontation by one player to another
  8. Standing over or straddling a tackled or fallen player
  9. Noticeable improvement in school sportsmanship will require concerted effort.
  10. Good sports don't need to wait for other's actions. Good sports already know what is offensive, and what has no more place in school sports than it would have in a school classroom.
  11. This is educational athletics. We must maintain the highest education standards in all facets of the athletic arena.
- F. **OFFICIALS** who are assigned to Rhode Island Interscholastic League contests must enforce the rules regarding sportsmanship without tolerance for abuse. The only warning to participants and coaches regarding sportsmanship should come at the beginning of the contest. Once the contest begins, penalties, not warnings, must be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct. The Rhode Island Interscholastic League expects that officials will eject any coach who protests an unsportsmanlike conduct call provided by the rules of the sport.
1. Each official at a Rhode Island Interscholastic League sponsored event will be provided with a card with the following statement which must be read to **All Team Members** at every contest prior to the beginning of the contest:
  2. ***"The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and your state association require officials to enforce sportsmanship rules. Middle school athletics emphasize positive values. All of us have worked hard to create a sense of teamwork, respect, responsibility and perspective. We remind you that we expect good behavior and will quickly penalize misconduct. We encourage and appreciate your help. Let this competition reflect mutual respect among all participants, coaches and officials. Coaches, please certify that your players are legally equipped and uniformed according to the NFHS rules. Good luck and have a great contest!"***

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### **Section 3: MEMBER SCHOOLS**

- A. The following expectations are designed to serve as a guide for member schools and leagues in developing their sportsmanship standards and to define responsibilities.
1. **School Administration:** The PCOA recognizes that the principal is the final authority responsible for all athletic activity of his/her school at all levels of competition. The administration must take a leadership role in developing standards for their school and league and in articulating those standards to their entire school community.
    - a. The PCOA expects all member schools and leagues (whether one sport or multi-sport) to develop, approve, and implement a league-wide code of sportsmanship for athletes, coaches, cheerleaders, and spectators. The code should be based upon and consistent with the standards of sportsmanship developed by the RIIL (see RIIL Sportsmanship Manual for samples).
    - b. All member schools, as a minimum, adopt their league's sportsmanship code as the school's sportsmanship code. Member schools are encouraged to expand the basic league sportsmanship code to further meet their needs.
    - c. League and school sportsmanship codes specifically and directly state the requirement for all athletes, coaches, cheerleaders, and spectators as well as the acceptable conduct to which each will be held.
    - d. League and school sportsmanship codes specifically state expectations: respect for the decisions of game officials and coaches, no taunting, profanity, derogatory language or gestures, no epithets, etc.
    - e. League sportsmanship codes specifically state the penalties that will occur when an individual fails to adhere to the sportsmanship code.
    - f. The code be as widely disseminated as possible using the student-parent handbook, student-athlete handbook, school newspaper, parent newsletter, school web site and the local media.
    - g. The sportsmanship code for spectators is read by PA announcers prior to each contest.
    - h. The sportsmanship code(s) of conduct be prominently posted at all sports venues.
    - i. When event programs are provided, the sportsmanship code be included.
    - j. Member schools work with community officials to ensure that levels of good sportsmanship are enforced when contests are held at their school and at non-school facilities.
    - k. The RIIL PCOA insists that rules of good sportsmanship be rigorously enforced at all regular season contests and at all regular tournament contests. This is particularly important when contests are held at non-school sites.
    - l. Schools will conduct a pre-season meeting with student athletes, coaches and parents to review the athletic standards for sportsmanship for the school and league.
      - i. Member schools require athletes, parents/guardians, sign an acknowledgment which would show that they have read the student-athlete handbook and understand the sportsmanship code, rules of the school and team and RIIL eligibility requirements.
    - m. Inform the school who will be representing the school at away events.
    - n. Send letters to parents, student-athletes, students, cheerleaders, coaches, spectators and the media emphasizing the need to support school athletic events and promote the principles of good sportsmanship (Refer to the RIIL Sportsmanship Manual for entire list of sample letters.)

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2. **Athletic Administration:** The athletic director is the person responsible for the implementation of the school league sportsmanship effort. The athletic director must be aware they are the leader of all athletic events, and the behavior of coaches, players, and spectators is their direct responsibility. Sportsmanship is enhanced when the athletic event is well organized and supervised.
  - a. Follow the Guidelines for Security, Safety and Crowd Control found in the RIIL Manual for Tournament Operations.
  - b. Make available to visiting schools necessary game information, include directions for parking, location of ticket booths, seating arrangement, ticket prices, game time, directions for reaching game site.
  - c. Designate specific seating areas for students, bands, adults, and visitors. If possible, opposing student bodies should be separated.
  - d. Arrange for adequate police supervision.
  - e. Post in plain sight at the entrance to the field, track, or gymnasium a copy of the causes for expulsion from the contest, e.g., use of alcohol, drugs, throwing objects, unruly behavior.
  - f. If possible, assign officials to dressing facilities separated from both teams. Provide escorts for the officials when it appears that disturbances may develop.
  - g. To prevent long lines, provide extra help at concession stands during half-time and at breaks.
  - h. Take measures to prevent fans from getting near or on the playing area and around the players benches. After the contest prevent fans from going onto the playing area.
  - i. Provide adequate supervision of students and facilities. Supervisors should sit in the stands with the students.
  - j. Direct the route for movement of all visiting school buses and all home team buses. (Include band, pep clubs, etc.)
  - k. Inform visiting school where they are to park buses.
  - l. Have the PA announcer give the location of restrooms, concession stands and the lost and found.
  - m. Provides a first aid area for emergencies. Assure access to a telephone from the contest area.
  - n. Provide reserved parking and has a host to greet the officials when they arrive at the site.
  - o. Eliminate from the gymnasium during the regular season – banners, signs, noisemakers, bugles, etc. These tend to be offensive and negative in tone and cause hard feelings. (Note: The RIIL does not permit banners, signs, noisemakers, bugles, etc., at all games).
  - p. Do not permit all of the lights to be turned off for such things as the introduction of players or special pre-game and half time shows. Make sure there is sufficient lighting necessary to provide good crowd control for the spectators' safety.
  - q. Insist that unruly spectators be removed from the premises. Take legal action against those who are guilty of assault or disturbing the peace.
  
3. **Coach:** The coach plays a critical role in supporting and enhancing good sportsmanship. **The coach must accept primary responsibility for the behavior and actions of his/her players and assistant coaches, during and after all games.** The coach serves as a role model for his/her players, their parents, and the spectators. The coach must always be in control, practice sound values and ethics and always pursue victory with honor.

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- a. Will model ethics and sportsmanship, always pursue victory with honor and maintain dignity and self-control.
  - b. Shall stay informed about sound coaching techniques and the physical, mental, and emotional development of the student-athlete.
  - c. Will teach players the rules of the game and to respect the game, officials, and opponents and will take action when athletes exhibit poor sportsmanship.
  - d. Will place the academic, emotional, physical and moral wellbeing of student-athletes above desires and pressures to win.
  - e. Will be an ambassador for sport among athletes, schools, families and the community.
  - f. Will abide by the rules of the game and RIIL in letter and spirit.
  - g. Shall exemplify high moral character, behavior and leadership, lead by example and set a standard for players and spectators to follow.
  - h. Will respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
4. **The Student-Athlete:** As members of their team, a student athlete serves as a role model. They are admired and respected by many, including younger athletes and their behavior and actions often have a significant impact on others. The student athlete plays an essential role in the promotion of sportsmanship, and they must accept the responsibility to always display high standards of sportsmanship.
- a. Will accept the responsibility and privilege the student-athlete has in representing their school and community by learning and showing teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline in all aspects of the game.
  - b. Will demonstrate respect for self, coach, teammates, opponents, officials and spectators by exhibiting good character and conducting themselves as a positive role model.
  - c. Will win and lose graciously.
  - d. Will have a thorough knowledge of and abide by all rules of the game and RIIL.
  - e. Will work for the good of the team at all times.
  - f. Will cheer for your team, not against your opponent.
  - g. Will congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
  - h. Will refrain from the use of illegal or unhealthy substances to gain an unfair advantage.
5. **The Official:** The official is responsible for assuring the safety of the players, the management of the contest and the enforcement of sportsmanship standards during the game. By controlling the game and demanding that sportsmanship standards be followed by players and coaches they enhance the event and defuse inappropriate behavior by everyone, especially the spectators.
- a. Will be fair and impartial at all times.
  - b. Will keep calm and poised and will not exhibit emotions or argue with players or coaches when enforcing a rule.
  - c. Will encourage and enforce good sportsmanship and understand his or her role in controlling not only the game, but also the safety and welfare of players and the contest environment.
  - d. Will be fully knowledgeable of the rules of the game.
  - e. Will not tolerate unsportsmanlike behavior on the part of players or coaches before, during or after the game. Fighting and unsportsmanlike penalties will be within the authority of the officials at all times at the contest site.
  - f. Will demonstrate positive support of all players, coaches, fellow officials and athletic administrators at all times.

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- g. Will accept their role in an unassuming manner.
6. **The Parent/Spectator:** Controlling parent and spectator behavior at games is proving to be a major challenge for school and athletic administrators. Leagues and schools that have well defined standards for sportsmanship that are discussed with parents at pre-season meetings and announced at game sites experience more positive behavior at games.
- a. Will respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
  - b. Will be respectful of all players, coaches, officials and other spectators.
  - c. Will never target anyone for abuse whether it be physical, verbal or emotional.
  - d. Will never engage in name calling, taunting, harassment, obscenities, and any other disrespectful language or gestures.
  - e. Will always be a positive role model for other spectators and your child.
  - f. Will cheer for your team, not against your opponent.
  - g. Will make an effort to know and understand the rules of the game.
  - h. Will recognize that attending a middle or high school athletic contest is a privilege, not a license to verbally assault officials, coaches or opposing team(s) and their spectators.
  - i. Will recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
7. **The Announcer:** The announcer plays a major role in supporting sportsmanship at all events. The announcer should remain impartial, never be critical of officials or others and be aware of their influence over the tone of the contest.
- a. The game announcer must not show favoritism; must use proper language at all times; be enthusiastic but keep calm.
  - b. Let no one except those in charge of the event use the microphone. The announcer is responsible for any remarks made into the mike.
  - c. The announcer must never criticize an official's decision.
  - d. The announcer should explain the procedure for pre-game introductions.
  - e. The announcer should explain to the spectator that the cheerleaders have established a schedule of rotation of floor cheers (basketball games).
  - f. The announcer should explain state and conference rules and regulations.
  - g. The announcer should be aware of what is going on in the stadium/gym/pool so that directions can be given calmly in an emergency. Serious situations can be avoided if the announcer will caution the crowd against coming down to the field/floor/deck, throwing things, or causing other disturbances. (Please refer to game announcements in the RIIL Sportsmanship Manual.)

## Article 13: COACHING REQUIREMENTS

### Section 1. COACHES CERTIFICATION

- A. Member school Principals or their designee are responsible for ensuring that all coaches, paid or unpaid at all levels meet the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Coaching Requirements outlined below.
- B. All coaches must be in compliance with the Initial Certification Requirements below, prior to the start of their sport season for the **2025-2026 school year**.
- C. Mandatory Coaches Registration
1. All coaches must annually register online with the Rhode Island Interscholastic League.
  2. Current and valid certifications shall be uploaded by each individual coach for approval by the athletic administrator of their member school.
  3. Member school athletic administrators have access to all certifications submitted by their appointed coaches.
- D. Initial Certification Requirements - **ALL Coaches must complete or have already completed the following NFHS Courses ([www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)):**
1. **NFHS Middle School Coaching Course (the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course can be substituted here)**
  2. NFHS Protecting Students from Abuse Course - **FREE**
  3. NFHS Concussion Course - **FREE** (Must be Taken Annually)
  4. NFHS Online Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course - **FREE** (Must be Taken Annually)
- E. **ALL Coaches must at all times maintain current certification in the following areas:**
1. NFHS Online First Aid, Health and Safety Course, or Red Cross or American Heart Association (AHA) First Aid Certification or equivalent.
  2. Red Cross, American Heart Association (AHA) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification or equivalent.
    - a. The RIIL Sports Medicine Advisory Committee strongly recommends that CPR courses include an in-person hands-on component.
- F. **All Coaches must continue to maintain current certification in the following areas:**
1. NFHS Online First Aid, Health and Safety Course, or Red Cross or American Heart Association (AHA) First Aid Certification or equivalent. (Must be Taken Bi-Annually)
  2. Red Cross, American Heart Association (AHA) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification or equivalent. (Must be Taken Bi-Annually)
  3. NFHS Concussion Course - **FREE** (Must be Taken Annually)
  4. NFHS Online Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course - **FREE** (Must be Taken Annually)
- G. Coaches must fulfill the following continuing education after Initial Certification:
1. Within three (3) years of Initial Certification
    - a. NFHS Online Sport-Specific Course
    - b. NFHS Implicit Bias Online Course – **FREE**
    - c. NFHS Heat Illness Prevention Course - **FREE**

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- d. NFHS Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Course – **FREE**
- e. NFHS Bullying, Hazing and Inappropriate Behaviors Course - **FREE**
- f. NFHS Engaging Effectively with Parents Course - **FREE**
- g. NFHS Sportsmanship Course – **FREE**

### H. Lifetime Certification

1. Coaches that complete all NFHS Honor Roll Level 3 requirements will achieve RIIL Lifetime Certification.
2. Please Note that Coaches who earn the NFHS Honor Level 3 designation must still continue to maintain current certification in the following areas:
  - a. NFHS Online First Aid, Health and Safety Course, or Red Cross or American Heart Association (AHA) First Aid Certification or equivalent course.
  - b. Red Cross, American Heart Association (AHA) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and AED Certification or equivalent course.
  - c. NFHS Concussion Course - **FREE** (Must be Taken Annually)
  - d. NFHS Online Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course - **FREE** (Must be Taken Annually)

### **Section 2. COACHES ELIGIBILITY**

- A. Coaches who have not fulfilled the RIIL Coaching Certification Requirements are not eligible to coach at any RIIL member school.**
- B. Each head coach of a varsity team under RIIL jurisdiction must attend (before the start of the season) a rules interpretation meeting for that sport. If the head coach cannot attend the meeting, the Athletic Director or his/her designee must attend.

### **Section 3. PENALTY**

- A. The penalty for the use of an ineligible coach in any RIIL approved competition, game (league or non-league) event/championship tournament play will result in a fine of \$100 per ineligible coach. The ineligible coach cannot coach at any RIIL member school until s/he is certified and fine is paid.