



MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8

Soccer – Boys & Girls

2026-2027 Sport Handbook

Section 1: RULES

A. GENERAL

All contests under the jurisdiction of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 shall be played according to the National Federation of State High School Association Soccer Rules, except for any special rulings adopted by the Committee.

1. All Eligibility Lists must be received by the RIIL Office, and all Assumption of Risk forms must be on file with the school, prior to any competition.
2. Heat Acclimatization: Article 7, Section 3
3. Definition of a Game/Scrimmage: Article 7, Section 2
4. Sportsmanship Expectations for Coaches, Student-Athletes, & Spectators: Article 12, Section 3
5. Loyalty to Home School: 5
6. Penalties for Ejections: Article 6, Section 7
7. Protest Procedure: Article 5

B. SPORT SPECIFIC

Boys and Girls:

1. All socks worn by players must be the same dominant color.
 - a. NFHS rule 4-1 regarding uniforms and socks must be followed
 - b. Exception – Jerseys and shorts that are not compliant will be allowed if the school does not have the funds to purchase new uniforms. Schools must conform to the new regulations at their earliest opportunity or when funds become available.
2. Players must have a complete uniform on until the referees have left the area.
3. Blue cards will be read to both teams at the center circle before the game. Teams will shake hands in the spirit of good sportsmanship after the blue card is read.
4. All teams must use and keep a score book. All teams must use a scorekeeper who is separated from the two benches and placed in the midfield. If a scorer is not provided at mid-field, the home team coach will be issued a yellow card prior to the start of the game.
5. Speaking captains will talk to the referee only when asked by the referee.

6. All players must remain seated on or behind a bench which is placed no less than 15 ft from the touchline when space allows at the facility. When there is not 15 ft of space available at the facility, the officials and home team head coach must clearly designate the bench area during the pregame conference. The exception is for those players warming up while wearing vests. Those players must warm-up behind the bench area or in an area clearly 15 ft from the touchline. (Already covered are those players substituting into the game reporting to the scorer's table). If there are no benches, the coach must designate a line 15 ft from the touchline and all players must remain behind it.
7. Any player injured must leave the game. That player can only return to the game at the first stoppage of play.
8. A coach may seek clarification of a referee's ruling at halftime or after the game. The coach may seek this clarification at midfield after both teams have completely exited the field to their respective benches.
9. There shall be no negative, foul, or abusive dialogue between and/or among coaches, players and referees during the course of a game.
10. PENALTIES
 - a. A player must leave the field of play when a yellow card is issued (including the goalie), but for no specified amount of time.
 - b. After five cumulative yellow cards a player must sit out the next game. Note: A player has a clean slate for the playoffs except when a player is issued the 5th yellow card during the last regular season game. The player must sit out the first game of the playoffs. If the fifth card happens to be the second yellow in a game, the player must sit out the next two consecutive League games.
 - c. During all games if a coach is assessed a yellow card, he/she must remain seated on the bench.
 - d. A player, coach, or bench personnel shall be disqualified (red card) for:
 - i. Taunting
 - ii. A subsequent caution
 - iii. Leaving the team area to enter the field where a fight or altercation is taking place. Exception: the head coach may enter the field to aid the officials in controlling the players when a fight or altercation is taking place.
 - e. Whenever a referee ejects a player from a soccer game, s/he will then notify the coach at once. Anytime a player receives a red card; the RIIL Office shall be notified. See RIIL Middle School 6-8 Handbook, Article 9, Section 4, paragraph A1 (Reports from officials). The player is automatically out of the next scheduled League game in accordance with Article 6, Section 7
 - f. A disqualified player shall be ineligible to participate in the next League contest(s) as per Article 6, Section 7.
 - g. Referee game reports will include reasons for yellow and red cards.
 - i. A team that accumulates five (5) or more Red Cards during the regular season shall be:
 - ii. Disqualified from RIIL tournament play
 - iii. Placed on probation
 - iv. A team that accumulates a total combination of ten (10) Red and Yellow Cards during the regular season shall be:
 - v. Disqualified from RIIL tournament play
 - vi. Placed on probation

- h. If a team/coach is issued five (5) yellow cards during a playoff game, the team will lose one player and play the remainder of the game short-handed. Additionally, if the same team is issued two (2) more yellow cards they will lose another player and play two short.

Section 2: MANDATORY COACHES CERTIFICATION & CONTINUING EDUCATION

- A. ALL Coaches must be appointed by their School Administration. A coach is any adult with access to student-athletes through an education-based athletic program.
 - a. Including, but not limited to: Volunteer Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Head Coaches.
- B. Coaching Requirements: Article 13

Section 3. SCHEDULE/GAMES

The RIIL shall make up the schedules and order of games.

- A. Regular RIIL Middle School 6-8 soccer games shall be two equal periods of thirty (30) minutes. The score at the completion of two periods of play shall stand as official with the following exception:
 - 1) Time shall be extended beyond the expiration of the normal period of either half to permit a penalty kick to be taken.
- B. The home school is responsible for providing adequate crowd control measures. There is a need for increasing vigilance in this matter. Schools must make every effort to ensure that players, officials, and spectators are protected. Schools should take the following measures to secure a safe environment by:
 - 1. utilizing bleachers for fans to sit and watch the game(s) where space permits.
 - 2. providing a painted or roped offline - ten (10) feet minimum - beyond the touch and end lines behind which fans watch the game.
 - 3. making fans aware that transgressing this line or roped off area to view the game or interact with its participants physically or verbally in any way will constitute interference with play and could result in ejection from the venue in which the game takes place.
 - 4. providing an easily identifiable school supervisor who is preferably an administrator or athletic director. The school supervisor will introduce him/herself to the visiting coach and the referees and will assist in the supervision of the game both on and off the field of play before, during, and after the game.
 - 5. providing a separate scorekeeper in a designated area between both benches and midfield.
 - 6. providing two (2) clearly marked twenty (20) yard coaching boxes.
 - 7. holding mandatory meetings before the first game of the season for all coaches, athletes and their parents/guardians to review the RIIL Middle School 6-8's policy on sportsmanship and fan behavior during RIIL Middle School 6-8 sanctioned events.
- C. Game Clock: During finals, the RIIL Middle School 6-8 will supply a game official to run the Official Field Clock.

Note: If a team is substituting players in a blatant attempt to reduce the actual playing time, the official may stop time during these substitutions.

D. In accordance with Article 7, Section 3 (Heat Acclimatization rules for Fall Sports) a mandatory hydration time out will be implemented at the 15-minute mark of each half when the temperature is 80 degrees or greater and the relative humidity is 40 percent or greater.

E. Important Dates:

A. Preseason:

1. First Day of Practice: Monday, August 24, 2026
2. Soccer Preseason is 10 days
3. First Day to schedule a Scrimmage: Saturday, August 29, 2026

B. Regular Season:

1. First Day to schedule a Game: Wednesday, September 9, 2026
2. Week #1: begins on Wednesday, September 9th
3. Week #2: begins on Monday, September 14th
4. Week #3: begins on Monday, September 21st
5. Week #4: begins on Monday, September 28th
6. Week #5: begins on Monday, October 5th
7. Week #6: begins on Tuesday, October 13th (four day week)
8. Last Day of the Regular Season: Thursday, October 15th

C. Postseason:

1. Preliminary Games: **October 19 or 20**
2. Quarterfinals: **October 21 or 22**
3. Semifinals: **October 26 or 27**
4. Championships: **October 28 or 29**

F. Game Cap: 12 Regular Season Games prior to the start of the playoffs

G. Home teams shall set a date/time for all contests.

1. If there is a conflict in the date/time of the contest with the visiting team(s) and mutual agreement cannot be reached, the visiting school Principal/Athletic Director shall submit ***a written request*** to the RIIL to review the circumstances of the disagreement and render a decision. **This must be done prior to the submission of the Home Confirmation Schedule.**
2. Once the Home Confirmation Schedule is submitted, *changes will not be allowed unless there are extenuating circumstances.*

H. In accordance with Article 6, Section 14, all contest scores are to be reported on-line on the RIIL Website. Coaches obtain access to the system through their Athletic Director.

I. Postponement of Regular Season Games after the confirmation deadline:

- a) Scheduled contests may be postponed because of weather or field conditions; however, the contest must be rescheduled by the home school with consideration of officials and visiting schools' availability. Postponement for any other reason requires the prior consent of all schools involved and the permission of the Middle School Director of Soccer.

- a. Additional Officials Fees for Games Changed within Two Weeks of original date/time
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- 2) Practice Limitations:
 - a. Scrimmages allowed after 5 days of practice
 - b. Games allowed after 10 days, not including Sundays
 - 3) Rosters shall be completed via the RIIL official website and made available to the public no later than 10 days after the start of practice. Rosters must be updated when students are added/removed from the team.
 - a) Rosters must include: name, grade, and jersey number.
 - b) Rosters must be presented to the referee and opposing coach before each game.
 - 4) 2026 Divisions - There will be 5 Divisions with the top three teams from each division qualifying for the playoffs. The number 1 seed will receive a bye in the first round of the playoffs. A 16th team will be chosen from the five divisions if there is no other way to break a tie for third in a division.

RIIL Middle School 6-8 Soccer Divisions (G&B) Fall 2026

<i>Middle School Name:</i>	<i>BSOC</i>	<i>GSOC</i>	<i>2026 Division</i>	<i># of Teams</i>
Gaudet MS	X	X	EAST	
Kickemuit Middle School	X	X	EAST	
Martin Middle School	X	X	EAST	
Portsmouth Middle School	X	X	EAST	
Riverside Middle School	X	X	EAST	
St. Mary Bay View (Girls)		X	EAST	
Thompson Middle School	X	X	EAST	
Tiverton Middle School	X	X	EAST	7 BOYS, 8 GIRLS
Achievement First Middle Schools Co-op	X	X	METRO	
DeSesto Middle School	X	X	METRO	
Esek Hopkins Middle School	X	X	METRO	
Goff Middle School	X	X	METRO	
Jenks Middle School	X	X	METRO	
Nathan Bishop Middle School	X	X	METRO	
Nathaniel Greene Middle School	X	X	METRO	
PVD Prep Charter School	X		METRO	
Roger Williams Middle School	X	X	METRO	
Slater Middle School	X	X	METRO	
West Broadway Middle School	X	X	METRO	11 BOYS, 10 GIRLS
Blackstone Valley Prep Junior High School	X		NORTH	
Burrillville Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
BVP/Calcutt MS Co-op		X	NORTH	
Calcutt Middle School	X		NORTH	
Gallagher MS	X	X	NORTH	
Lincoln Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
McCourt Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
North Cumberland Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
North Smithfield Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
Ponaganset Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
Scituate Middle School	X	X	NORTH	
Woonsocket Middle School Co-op	X	X	NORTH	11 BOYS, 10 GIRLS
Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School of Coventry	X	X	SOUTH	
Broad Rock	X	X	SOUTH	
Chariho	X	X	SOUTH	
Cole Middle School	X	X	SOUTH	
Davisville Middle	X	X	SOUTH	
Exeter West Greenwich	X	X	SOUTH	
Lawn School	X	X	SOUTH	
Narragansett Pier	X	X	SOUTH	
Westerly Middle School	X	X	SOUTH	
Wickford Middle School	X	X	SOUTH	10 TEAMS
Bain Middle School	X	X	WEST	

Birchwood Middle School	X	X	WEST	
De La Salle Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Deering Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Excel Academy	X		WEST	
Hope Highlands Middle School	X	X	WEST	
N.A Ferri Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Park View Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Ricci Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Warwick Veterans Memorial Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Western Hills Middle School	X	X	WEST	
Winman Middle School	X	X	WEST	12 BOYS,11 GIRLS

Section 4. POSTPONEMENTS

The postponement rules contained in Article 4, unless otherwise stated, shall govern all postponed soccer matches.

- A. In the event a game must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue to play, the head referee shall declare it an official game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than one-half of the game has been played, the game will be restarted from the suspension of play.
- B. Soccer games postponed because of weather conditions should be played, weather and ground conditions permitting, on the following school day, or on the next fair-weather school day.
- C. If a game is postponed for any reason other than inclement weather, it must be rescheduled, as soon as possible, to a definite date by mutual agreement of the opposing school's Principals and with the consent of the Middle School Director of Soccer. If a mutual agreement cannot be reached, the representatives of the schools involved must meet with the Middle School Director of Soccer to reschedule the contest(s).

Section 5. OFFICIALS

RIIL assigned officials' authority extends to pre-and post-game oversight. Fighting and unsportsmanlike penalties will always be within the authority of the officials at the contest site. Two officials will be assigned for each game by the RIIL Office. The home team shall provide a minimum of two student ball boys/girls for each game.

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the officials to see that benches are cleared of everyone except coaches, assistant coaches, managers, scorers, players, and a representative of the school and press.
- B. Officials must enforce the coaches' box. If a coach does not comply, he/she will first receive a warning. If he/she still does not comply, he/she will then be issued a yellow card.

Section 6. PLAYOFFS

The Playoffs will be conducted under the direction of the Sport Director. The playoff format will be determined by the RIIL Executive Director and the Middle School Sports Coordinator and will be published with the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Soccer Schedule.

The division champions will be decided by points. Everyone in the division will play the same amount of games so the available points will be equal.

Seedings for the state tournament will be done by win percentage. Each division may not play the same amount of games, so it is win percentage within the division. (ie. 10 division games, 8-0-2 record for 18 points = 1.8 win percentage.)

League victories will **equal 2 points**, losses 0 points, and ties 1 point.

The five division winners will make up the 1-5 seeds. The second place finisher from each division will be the 6-10 seeds, with the third place finishers being the 11-15 seeds.

Ranking the strength of the divisions for seeding purposes will be done by the following:

- i) Eliminate the top two teams and bottom two teams from each division and figure the winning percentage of the remaining teams. The exception is the East Division, where only the top and bottom teams will be eliminated from the division winning percentage.
- ii) Soccer Tie Breaker for Playoff Seeding
 - a. A tie-breaker will be used to seed teams with identical points earned for the season:
 1. Head-to-Head
 2. Three or More Teams: *head-to-head – most points earned in games played among those teams*
 3. Power Ranking/Strength of Victories: (*starting with 1st place team in the division*)
 4. Coin Toss/Draw

A. Playoff games and all other games will consist of two (2) thirty (30) minute halves.

1. In the event a “playoff game” must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue to play, the game will be rescheduled and restarted from the time of the suspension of play.
2. Overtime – Extra Periods (Boys and Girls)
 - a. Teams that are tied at the end of regulation time will play two (2) **5-minute** overtime periods.
 - b. After the first Five (5) minute period, the teams will switch goals and play a second five (5) minute period. The second 5-minute period starts immediately after the first overtime period.
 - c. **Overtime periods are not “sudden death.”** In other words, even if a goal is scored, the period will continue for the full five (5) minutes.
 - d. Penalty Kicks

- i. If a game remains tied after the (10) minutes of overtime, the outcome will be determined by penalty kicks.
- ii. In accordance with NFHS Soccer rules, **any player on the roster that is submitted to the officials prior to the game** is eligible to participate in the shootout.
- iii. A coin toss determines which goal will be used and which team will shoot first.
- iv. Five players are designated by each team to shoot in alternate order.
- v. Each shooter takes one kick from the 12-yard line against the opposing keeper.
- vi. The shootout will end after five kicks, or fewer if one team builds an insurmountable lead, with the team scoring the most goals declared the winner.
- vii. While the kicks are being taken each goalkeeper must stand in the end line corner of the penalty area and on the field unless they are defending the goal.
- viii. Additional Penalty Kicks
 - a. If the score is still tied after five shots per team, a second shootout phase will begin in which each set of kicks, one by each team, is taken until one team scores and one team misses as long as the same number of kicks have been taken by each team. Example: Team A takes kick #7 and scores. Team B takes kick #7 and does not score. Team A is declared the winner. If Team A had missed and Team B scored Team B would be declared the winner and no more kicks would be taken.
 - b. Each kick must be taken by a different player. If the shootout continues past eleven (11) kicks per team, the original order shall be repeated.

B.

Section 7: MEDICAL COVERAGE/EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS:

- A. Home team medical coverage shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting school provides its own medical coverage.
- B. The judgment of the medical person will be final with regard to the medical condition of a player. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice under any circumstance.
- C. An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practice protocols should be developed and in place at every school. When possible, an athletic trainer should be present at all practices and games.
 - a. *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 (freshman, junior varsity, and varsity) 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.

D. Levels of Medical Coverage:

<u>Medical Professional:</u>	<p><i>A. Education/Schooling/Training & Licensure</i></p> <p><i>B. Scope of Practice</i></p> <p><i>C. Able to Return to Play</i></p>
<p>Medical Doctors-MD/DO Advanced Practice Provider-NP/PA</p>	<p>A. Advanced degree (Medical School/Successfully passed the licensing board, and RI Licensed)</p> <p>B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Diagnosis</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play – Yes</p>
<p>Athletic Trainer RI Licensed</p>	<p>A. Minimum Bachelor's Degree (Successfully pass the BOC exam, and RI licensed)</p> <p>B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Assessment of injury, referral for further diagnosis</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES</p>
<p>Physical Therapist RI Licensed</p>	<p>A. Degree varies from BS, MS to DPT (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed.)</p> <p>B. Preventative Care, Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO</p>
<p>Physical Therapist w/ Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) credential & RI Licensed</p>	<p>A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the OCS exam, and RI licensed)</p> <p>B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On the field coverage - not qualified, no emergency training incorporated into initial certification or required to be annually updated.</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play – NO (During a Contest), Yes (In Clinical Setting)</p>
<p>Physical Therapists w/ Sports Certified Specialist (SCS) credential & RI Licensed</p>	<p>A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the SCS exam, and RI licensed)</p> <p>B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On-the-field coverage – Qualified</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES</p>

<p>EMT - Basic, Intermediate & Paramedic</p>	<p>A. Successfully complete the EMT program, pass the board exam, and RI licensed)</p> <p>B. Emergency care</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO</p>
<p>School Nurse (RN)</p>	<p>A. Successful completion of a nursing program (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed)</p> <p>B. Emergency care, referral for further treatment/diagnosis</p> <p>C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO</p>