

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL RULES

NUMBER OF CONTESTS:

- All athletes must complete 8 days of practice prior to competing in a contest, 3 with full contact •
Maximum number of contests: 6 or 7 (depending on league)
- Play each team in your league once
- Home team wears the **dark** colored uniform in football
- No scrimmages

PRACTICE TIMES:

- Prior to regular season: 2 hours maximum once a day
- All athletes must complete 8 days of practice prior to competing in a contest, 3 with full contact - Days 1-2 (conditioning) helmets, t-shirts, shorts, football shoes
 - Days 3-5 complete football attire, **no** contact, no squad meetings, skull sessions, or film prior to day 6
 - Days 6-8 full practice
- After season begins: 1½ hours maximum

LENGTH OF CONTESTS:

- Starting time is **5:00pm**
- 8 minute quarters – **Play clock is 40 seconds**
- 10 minute half-time
- **NOTE: 18 minute warm-up regardless of how late a team arrives; warm-up clock begins when the team is off the bus; games that begin 30+ minutes late: 6 minute quarters with a 5 minute half-time; if determined that 6 minute quarters are still too long then ADs and coaches from both teams determine revised quarter length prior to kick-off (i.e.; shorten quarters, running clock w/clock stopped the last 2-min. of each quarter) - halftime remains at 5 minutes. If consensus cannot be reached the host AD/administrator will set the late game parameters.**
- **Game officials do not determine parameters for late arriving teams.**
- **Mercy Rule** –There is a continuous “running” clock when a team has a **28-point** advantage over its opponent at half time or thereafter. The clock would only stop for timeouts by coaches, officials, or injuries. The clock will continue to run for the remainder of the game, regardless of the point differential becoming closer than 28 points.

TIED GAMES PROCEDURES:

- Tied Games a. A tie at the end of regulation may be resolved by the method of the 10-yard line overtime procedures as set forth by the NFHS Football Rules Book
 - Coin Toss: The team that wins the coin toss decides whether to play offense or defense first.
 - Starting Position: The offensive team gets the ball at the opponent's 10-yard line.
- Objective: The goal is to score.
- Downs: Each team has four downs to attempt to score.
 - Possession End: A possession ends on a score, or if the team loses possession through a fumble or interception.
 - Clock: There is no game clock, but the 40-second play clock remains in effect.
 - Winning the Game: The team that has scored more points after both teams have had an equal number of possessions wins the game.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Source of rules is the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations, modified for middle school
- Middle schools use regulation size footballs with or without the NFHS stamp, No small or junior sized footballs.

(This would be the same as unauthorized equipment by the Head Coach, which will result in using the opponent's ball for the entire game)

- Full Participation-each student-athlete must participate in the game
- Teams must leave the playing field immediately upon the completion of the game
- Follow the NCDPI Middle School Athletic Handbook for:
 - Hot weather practices (unlimited water)
 - Practices canceled for weather
 - Suspension/ejection (CMS doubles the penalty)
 - Individual Summer camp is entirely optional, no contact is allowed (no team camps permitted)

Suspended Game a. See 8.7 b. If the game has reached at least half-time and a winner can be determined, the contest is over.

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City Championship rules:

Top 2 teams from each of the 4 conferences automatically qualify.

Top eight teams will compete for the City Championship.

If two teams are tied in the conference standings, the first tiebreaker is their head-to-head record against each other.

VTO City Championship is only open to CMS Middle Schools.

Dates & Locations (Subject to change based on availability)

Championship will cover three event dates (pool play, Semi, Final).

Round #1 – Pool play games (All 8 Teams–

Round #2 – Semi Games (4 winning Teams) –

Championship Games –