



# **NYS PHSAA**

## **Section III**

### ***ATHLETIC DIRECTOR HANDBOOK 2024 -2025***

**Section III Staff:**

Jason Czarny, Executive Director: [jczarny@section3.org](mailto:jczarny@section3.org)

Paul Gasparini, Assistant Executive Director: [pgasparini@section3.org](mailto:pgasparini@section3.org)

Jean Carter, Treasurer: [jcarter@section3.org](mailto:jcarter@section3.org)

Gloria Natale, Administrative Assistant: [gnatale@section3.org](mailto:gnatale@section3.org)

Julianna Finnerty, Media Specialist: [jrfinnerty@section3.org](mailto:jrfinnerty@section3.org)

4983 Brittonfield Parkway  
Suite 201  
East Syracuse, New York 13057  
Telephone 315-451-4588  
[www.section3.org](http://www.section3.org)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	PAGE
Overview: Section III Athletics, Mission, Communication, Membership, Sport Season Dates, Sportsmanship Policy	3-6
Safety Procedures: Concussion, Weather, AEDs	6-11
<b><u>NYSPPHSAA RULES: SECTION III FORMS &amp; GUIDELINES</u></b>	
Athletic Placement Process (APP)	11-12
Athletic Team Combinations	12-14
Bona Fide Students	14-15
Disqualification Policy	15-20
Soccer Yellow Cards	17
Football Disqualification	18
Extended Eligibility	20-21
Foreign Exchange	22
Friends and Neighbor	22
Inter-State Scrimmage and Competitions	22
Mixed Competition	22-24
Outside Agencies	24
Transfer	24-25
Recruitment & Undue Influence	25-28
All – Star Contest	28
<b>SECTION III POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	
Corporate Sponsors	29
Dual Sport Participation	30-31
Game Delay, Suspension, Termination	32
Due Process, Appeals, & Violation Penalties	33-36
Dues & Fees	36
Litigation	36
New League Procedure	37
Placement of a School into a League	37-38
Representation of Leagues	39
Varsity Sport Commitment	39
Equity Position Statement	40
Sexual Harassment	40-42
<b>AWARDS &amp; AD Scholarships</b>	
Students	43
Adults	44
AD Conference Scholarships	45-46
<b>CLASSIFICATION OVERVIEW</b>	
BEDS	46
Section III Classification Process	46-52
Sport Variation Numbers	52-53
<b>SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION</b>	
Participation	54-55
Qualifying Standards & Seeding	55-57
Splitting Classes	57

Protest Policy for a Tournament	61
Officials Assignment Procedure	62
Hosting a Sectional Event	63-64
Digital “All Sports” Pass	65
Tournament Financial Policy	66-68
Ticket Costs & Policy	69-70
School Post Season Team Reimbursements	71
Committee Expense	71-72
<b>SPORT COORDINATORS &amp; COMMITTEES</b>	
Overview	73
Sports Committee Duties & Responsibilities	74-75
Sports Coordinator Duties & Responsibilities	75-76
Sectional Tournament Procedures	76-77
General Information	77-78
Sport Committee Representation	78-79
Sport Coordinators 2024-2025	79-81
<b>OFFICIALS</b>	
Position Statement: Adverse Criticism	82
Officiating Committee	82
Serious Complaint Form	82-84
Territorial Rights	84-85
<p>The NYSPPHSAA handbook is the basis of rules and regulations in this handbook and should be referred to as needed. In addition to the NYSPPHSAA rules and regulations, this handbook contains information specific to Section III. The Constitution &amp; Handbook Committee reviews and updates the AD Handbook annually. Reviews and updates are subject to approval by the Section III Executive Committee.</p> <p>Links to the NYSPPHSAA handbook, SED, Section III forms and other pertinent information are available on the Section III website (<a href="http://www.Section3.org">www.Section3.org</a>).</p> <p><b>Highlighted material in this handbook will be updated on a yearly basis. Other than yearly informational updates, the Constitution &amp; Handbook Committee has the authority to modify this handbook.</b></p>	

## **Overview and Information**

### **SECTION III ATHLETICS**

Section III Athletics became a private not-for-profit corporation in 1972. Membership in Section III is composed of individual junior high/middle schools and senior high schools, approved annually through resolution by each school's boards of education or similar body for private and/or charter school members. A representative Athletic Council determines the policies and procedures of Section III Athletics. The Athletic Council consists of league representatives and members of the Executive Committee. Recommendations for policies, which might be considered for adoption or implementation by the Athletic Council, are developed and proposed by the various Committees and Leagues within Section III. The Section III Office Staff includes an Executive Director, Assistant Executive Director, Treasurer, Administrative Assistant, and Public Information Specialist. See Section III Constitution for specific representation and voting procedures.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Section III Athletics is to provide a governing body that shall organize, administer and facilitate the interscholastic athletic program for member schools of Section III of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA).

Section III Athletics shall:

1. Interpret and support its own rules and regulations as well as those of the Commissioner of Education and the NYSPHSAA.
2. Strive to continually strengthen programs and improve athletic opportunities for students in grades 7 – 12.
3. Lead, assist and involve all constituents in developing and maintaining consistent, equitable competition.
4. Not be responsible for school and league rules and athletic programs planned and controlled by leagues and their personnel. All Section III schools must abide by game rulebooks, league, Section III and NYSPHSAA adopted variations.

### **COMMUNICATION:**

Each League Representative/school's Athletic Director or internal designee shall be responsible for disseminating information from Section III to Superintendents, Principals, Coaches, Guidance Department, and other necessary parties.

All official communication to Section III or its Athletic Council associated with student-athletes and a school district's athletic events will be initiated from the school AD or through school administration. Section III will accept communication from parents, guardians, or other unofficial parties provided it is sent through the school's Athletic Director or designee. However, such communication will only be considered as informational and will not oblige Section III or its Athletic Council to take any action.

The Section III Office does not accept anonymous complaints.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Any eligible school may become a member of Section III by submitting a request for membership into the section's athletic programs signed by the chief school officer of the petitioning school district and sent with the annual dues to the treasurer of the Section.

All member schools of Section III Athletics agree to abide by the Constitution, By-Laws, eligibility standards, sports standards, modified program rules, officiating standards and the code of ethics of this organization, in all inter-school competition as adopted by the Athletic Council or approved by referendum of member schools.

### ***Release from Section III Membership Procedures:***

When a Section III member school would like to withdraw from Section III and/or their current league affiliation, the school must submit a letter of notification by February 1, prior to the school year in which the change will be implemented, including a timeline, to the Section III Executive Director and their League President. The Section III Executive Director will notify the Executive Committee and Athletic Council.

### **SPORT SEASONS:**

The specific calendar dates, once approved by the Section III Athletic Council can be found on the Section III website. ***Put the NYSPHSAA Dates in the Handbook.***

The Executive Director will present sports season dates for the upcoming year at the January Athletic Council meeting. The proposed dates will be voted upon at the March Athletic Council meeting. Modified Sport season start dates are found in the NYSPHSAA handbook. League requests to start their modified program earlier than those dates listed must be submitted to Section III.

The following are the Modified Sports starting dates.\*

<b>Season</b>	<b>Start Date</b>
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Monday, August 26, 2024</b>
<b>Winter</b>	<b>Monday, October 28, 2024</b>
<b>Spring</b>	<b>Monday, March 11, 2024</b>

\*Leagues may modify the start dates.

Sport Coordinators should submit their Championship dates and sites for the following year to the Executive Director by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY:**

Section III contests are played according to the rules of the NYSPHSAA and Section III. These rules provide for fair competition among players.

Athletic Directors and school administrators are responsible for making certain that athletic contests are played under proper conditions which includes the employment of competent game officials. Game officials must be given the cooperation and support necessary for officiating the contest.

The actions of the students, players, coaches, and community reflect the effective teaching of good sportsmanship and citizenship. Therefore, the Athletic Director, or their designee, of schools participating in a contest at Section III schools or Section III sponsored events will be held strictly responsible for the conduct of their participants, coaches, faculty members and spectators. To ensure that each school is accountable, each school must designate a responsible individual to supervise the conduct of their student-athletes and spectators. Conduct which is detrimental to the educational philosophy of athletic activities may be deemed just cause for the school's reprimand, probation, suspension from a particular sport or suspension from all Section III activities for a period of up to one (1) year. Such action is to be recommended by the committee of the sport involved and to be approved by a majority vote of the Athletic Council. Section III recognizes and appreciates the influence and responsibility of the school administration with regard to good sportsmanship at all levels of competition. However, it must also be seen that Section III has been vested with the responsibility to ensure that all contests under its jurisdiction are conducted satisfactorily.

Derogatory social media posts are inappropriate as they conflict with the educational philosophy of Section III Athletics and are, therefore, prohibited. School officials will be notified of any derogatory social media posts that come to the attention of Section III. All schools playing a contest at Section III schools or Section III sponsored events MUST send along an administrator or CAPABLE faculty supervisor. In the event a Supervisor is not present, then the School's Head Coach will serve as the District representative in addressing supervisory issues.

Spectators are prohibited from using any derogatory signs and/or artificial noisemaker at all interscholastic contests within Section III. Artificial noisemakers are any man-made item used by a spectator during a contest/scrimmage to make noise. Artificial noisemakers, whistles, bells, air horns and electronic amplifiers may not be permitted, and management may elect to remove such instruments from the playing and spectator areas. The game manager is responsible for enforcing these provisions.

Pep bands are not considered to be artificial noisemakers. School supervised Pep bands are permitted to perform during dead-ball situations. This interpretation is applicable to regular season contests and postseason competitions.

Any designated school employee may operate an artificial sound during a dead ball situation within a reasonable controlled manner. If the referee determines in his or her opinion that an artificial noisemaker is interfering with the administration of the game, the referee shall direct game management personnel to remove the item(s).

**SAFETY: NYS Head Injury and Concussion Guidelines:**

The Concussion Management and Awareness Act went into effect on July 1, 2012 for all public schools and charter schools. The items listed below are required for school districts to be in compliance with the law. Some of the items are specifically spelled out in the law and others have been recommended by the State Education Department and the Department of Health and approved by the State Board of Regents.

Please review the [NYSED Guidelines for Concussion Management In Schools](#) which is available on the Section III Website.

## **Requirements of School Districts**

### ***Education:***

1. Each school coach, physical education teacher, nurse, and athletic trainer will have to complete an approved course on concussion management on a biennial basis, starting with the 2012-2013 school year.
  - a. School coaches and physical education teachers must complete the CDC course <https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/training/youth-sports.html>
  - b. School nurses and certified athletic trainers must complete the concussion course.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/heads-up/communication-resources/training.html>

### ***Information:***

1. Provide concussion management information and sign off with any parental permission form. NYSPHSAA will provide a pamphlet to member schools on the concussion management information for parents.
2. The concussion management and awareness information on the State Education Department's website must be made available on the school website.

### ***Removal from athletics:***

1. Require the immediate removal from athletic activities of any pupil that has or is believed to have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury.
2. No pupils will be allowed to resume athletic activity until they have been symptom free for 24 hours and have been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. For interscholastic athletics, clearance must come from the school medical director.
  - a. Such authorization must be kept in the pupil's permanent health record.
  - b. Schools shall follow directives issued by the pupil's treating physician.

## **State Education Department's Guidance for Concussion Management**

1. Schools are advised to develop a written concussion management policy. A sample policy is available on the NYSPHSAA website at [www.nysphsaa.org](http://www.nysphsaa.org). The policy should include:
  - a. A commitment to reduce the risk of head injuries.
  - b. A procedure and treatment plan developed by the district medical director.
  - c. A procedure to ensure proper education for school nurses, certified athletic trainers, physical education teachers, and coaches.
  - d. A procedure for a coordinated communication plan among appropriate staff.

- e. A procedure for periodic review of the concussion management program.

## 2. Post Concussion Management

- a. **Cognitive rest** requires the student to avoid participation in, or exposure to, activities that require concentration or mental stimulation.
  - b. **Physical rest** includes getting adequate sleep, taking frequent rest periods, and avoiding physical activity that requires exertion.
  - c. **Return to school activities** may begin once a medical provider clears the student and may recommend a graduated return to activities, after the student has been symptom free for 24 hours. For physical activities, please refer to Zurich Guidelines which can be found at [www.nysphsaa.org](http://www.nysphsaa.org).
3. Schools may develop a **Concussion Management Team** to help guide and implement the program.
- a. The team may include, but is not limited to, students, parents/guardians, school administrators, medical director, private medical provider, school nurse, director of PE, certified athletic trainer, physical education teachers, coaches, and regular education teachers.

**It is important for each school to review this policy with school nurses, trainers, and coaches on an annual basis.**

### ***NYSPHSAA THUNDER and LIGHTNING POLICY: This regulation governs interscholastic sports games and practices from the beginning of the Regular Season through NYSPHSAA Finals***

1. Thunder and lightning necessitates that all outdoor athletic activities and contests be suspended. The occurrence of thunder and/or lightning is not subject to interpretation or discussion - thunder is thunder, lightning is lightning.
  - a. With your site administrator, set up a plan for shelter prior to the start of any contest.
2. When thunder is heard and/or when lightning is seen, the following procedures should be adhered to:
  - a. Suspend play and direct participants to go to shelter, a building normally occupied by the public or if a building is unavailable,

participants should go inside a vehicle with a solid metal top (e.g. bus, van, car).

- b. Do not permit people to stand under or near a tree; and have all stay away from poles, antennas, towers and underground watering systems.
- c. After thunder and/or lightning have left the area, wait 30 minutes after the last boom is heard or strike is seen before resuming play or competition.

## **NYSPHSAA TORNADO POLICY**

1. Tornado Watch-indicates tornados are possible. Event staff must continue to monitor the situation.
2. Tornado Warning-Tornado siren sounds signaling tornado sighted or tornado indicated by radar

## **TORNADO GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES**

1. If a tornado warning is initiated, immediate event delay shall be implemented, and all participants, spectators and athletic staff shall seek shelter immediately. Once inside a secure location, tune to local weather alert radio to be informed of the storm location, path and duration of tornado warning.
2. Warning may be extended, or a new warning issued at any time, so continue to monitor.
3. Safe shelter from tornadoes inside lowest building level, away from exterior walls/windows, with windows closed.

All Clear-tornado warnings will expire after duration specified by the National Weather Service and the site director will notify all involved that the warning has ended, and the event may resume.

## **HEAT INDEX and WIND CHILL**

Measurement:

1. Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight, which takes into account: temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle and cloud cover (solar radiation). This differs from the heat index, which takes into consideration temperature and humidity and is calculated for shady areas.
2. The RealFeel temperature, like the Heat Index, considers relative humidity a major factor in its final calculation — in addition to other weather influences, including cloud cover, sun intensity, and even the sun's angle.

NYSPHSAA has developed policies and procedures for dealing with excessive heat or cold at practice and games. Please see the NYSPHSAA website or handbook for the complete policy and procedures. Play may resume once the index returns to acceptable levels. Information is available at the following sites:

1. [NYSPHSAA Heat Index Procedure](#)
2. [NYSPHSAA Wind Chill Procedures](#)
3. [Early Season Climate Acclimatization](#)
4. [Preseason Heat-Acclimatization Guidelines for Secondary School Athletics](#)

## **AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR - AED**

### **DOMINIC MURRAY ACT**

This Act was written to ensure that schools, students, and parents are provided with critical, lifesaving information on sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) signs and symptoms, and risks to ensure students at risk are evaluated prior to participation in athletics, and that SCA is immediately recognized and treated to prevent death.

This Act is effective as of July 1, 2022.

The Dominic Murray Act requires:

1. The Commissioner of Health to develop information, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Education, relating to pupils exhibiting signs or symptoms of pending or increased risk of sudden cardiac arrest; NYSED consulted with the Department of Health, pediatricians, and pediatric cardiologists to confirm the only means to assess the increased risk of SCA is to review the student's personal and family health history before they participate in athletic activity since it would be impossible to do so during athletics.
2. Directs the Commissioner of Education to post the information on the [NYSDOH Sudden Cardiac Arrest in Youth website](#);
3. All schools must include such information in any permission form, consent form, or similar document that may be required for a student's participation in interscholastic athletics or reference how to obtain such information from the Department and Department of Health's websites, or on the school's website, if one exists;
4. The Commissioner of Education to promulgate regulations requiring that any student displaying signs or symptoms of pending or increased risk of sudden cardiac arrest shall be immediately removed from athletic activities,

and shall not resume athletic activity and physical activities including physical education classes and recess or similar activities during the school day until they receive clearance from a health care provider, which may be either a physician, nurse practitioner (NP), or physician assistant (PA); and retain the authorization on file in the student's permanent health record.

### **SCHOOL & TOURNAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AED**

1. The home school, or higher seed, is responsible for providing the appropriate number of AEDs at all interscholastic contests, whether on-site or off-site.
2. The AED must be in a location that facilitates recommended response times.
3. At Section III sponsored tournament events, the host school will be responsible for providing an AED(s).
4. At Section III sponsored tournament events conducted at non-school sites, the Sport Coordinator will be responsible for confirming AED availability or providing an AED.

*Information about the Anyone Can Save a Life program can be found at <https://nfhsfoundation.org/anyone-can-save-a-life/>*

### **SPORT SPECIFIC POLICIES**

Safety policies and procedures specific to each sport must be adhered to and can be found in the sport rulebooks and or the Section III sport specific handbooks located on the website.

### **NYSPPHSAA Rules: Section III Forms/Guidelines**

**ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS (APP):** [\*Section III APP Reporting Form\*](#) is on the Section III Website.

A District must pass a BOE policy in order to participate in the Athletic Placement Process (APP). All applications need to be approved by the Section III office before the student athlete's first contest.

For the testing portion of the requirement, including maturity screening, please refer to the NYSPHSAA Handbook. [\*NYSED APP Guidance\*](#)

The Athletic Placement Process is a process for screening students to determine their readiness to compete in interscholastic athletic competition by evaluating their physical maturity, fitness and skill.

The intent of this program is to provide for students in grades 7 through 12 to safely participate at an appropriate level of competition based on readiness rather than age and grade. Students must meet all eligibility standards in order to practice and/or compete, students may only practice or compete against other students at the level they were approved for.

The Athletic Placement Process was designed for mature and exceptionally skilled students to advance to an upper level, and less developed students to participate at an appropriate lower level that is suited to their development and ability. The program is not to be used to fill positions on a team, provide additional experience, provide a place for junior high students where no modified program is offered, or to reward students. It is aimed at the few select students who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness.

### **ATHLETIC TEAM COMBINATIONS:**

*[Section III Combining Contract](#)* is on the Section III Website.

1. The joining together of students from two or more schools shall be permitted for the following reasons provided certain criteria are established and substantiated:
  - a. Lack of enough participants in one or more schools in some or all sports.
  - b. Fiscal problems that force school districts to curtail or eliminate interscholastic programs.
  - c. The inability to secure qualified coaches.
  - d. Declining enrollments.
  - e. In unusual situations, lack of proper facilities, i.e. swimming pools.
2. Special factors that need local consideration:
  - a. United and consistent decisions on the following details are mentioned for those who may be considering combinations. This is not an all-inclusive list of considerations:
    - i. Transportation - how, when, where, etc.
    - ii. Medical information - common student medical forms
    - iii. Insurance - similar or the same
    - iv. Joint agreement on athletic behavior codes
    - v. Joint agreement on eligibility codes
    - vi. Policies on absences being or not being allowed to participate
  - b. Any student who previously participated in a combined program must return to his/her home school once that school has established its own program.

3. Listed procedures for combinations:
  - a. Schools seeking to combine must be dues paying members of NYSPHSAA and Section III. Friends and Neighbors are not eligible to combine with a member school.
  - b. All schools in a combination must have Board of Education approval.
  - c. It is recommended that participating schools in a combination develop a “letter of understanding” in regard to financial obligations, transportation, supervision, etc.
  - d. All schools in a combination must have approval of the league. It is the League President’s responsibility to notify the Section if a combination request is not approved prior to the start of the sport season. (If not a member of a league, apply directly to Section III). Sports conducted by Section III (Football, Ice Hockey, etc) require the approval of the Sport Committee/league approval.
  - e. The athletic director of the host school is responsible for completing the form and submitting it to the Section III office prior to the first contest.
  - f. A copy of the form should also be sent to the Sport Coordinators.
  - g. The Section III Executive Committee will make the final decision and forward its decision to the applying school or schools as well as the NYSPHSAA and Section III Athletic Council.
  - h. If a combined team enters sectional level competition their official BEDS shall be combined for placement in tournament competition.
  - i. All schools participating in a combination for a **varsity** level sport are each responsible for paying the sport fee for that sport when paying their school dues.
  - j. There is an application deadline for the following Section III Sports:  
Football – February 1st    Ice Hockey – May 1st
4. *The combination is not complete until approved by both Section III and NYSPHSAA.*
5. If a combined school team goes beyond sectional level competition their BEDS enrollment shall be combined, using the below criteria, for state level competition.
  - a. The school(s) with the higher(est) classification number will have a percentage of the other school(s)classification number added according to the graduated scale below.

**Sport Specific Combination Classification Formula :** The percentage is dependent upon the association’s “Sport Specific classification cut-off numbers”

<b>Sport Classification</b>	<b>Sport Specific Combination Classification Formula 2024-2025 Season</b>
Six Classes	(Class AAA 100%, Class AA 100%, Class A 100%, Class B 100%, Class C 50%, Class D 40%)
Five Classes	(Class AA 100%, Class A 100%, Class B 100%, Class C 50%, Class D 40%)
Four Classes	(Class A 100%, Class B 100%, Class C 50%, Class D 40%)
Three Classes	(Class A 100%, Class B 50%, Class C 40%)
Two Divisions	(Division I 100%, Division II 40%)

6. The deadline for schools to merge or demerge programs is prior to the first contest and as long as the combination doesn’t affect classification.
7. If a non-public school is part of the merger, the “merged” team may be subject to the Section’s Classification of Non-Public Schools Committee.
8. If a merger is denied by the Section, schools have the ability to resubmit a merger using 100% of all school BEDS enrollment numbers.
9. Reporting procedure: All violations shall be reported to the League and Section

**Bona Fide Students**

*The New York State Education Department regulations (135.4 Physical Education) state: (c) Program Plans, E, iii, (2) Registration. States the following:*

“A pupil shall be eligible for interschool competition or inclusive athletic activities in a sport during a semester, provided that s/he is a bona fide student, enrolled during the first 15 school days of such semester, is registered in the equivalent of three regular courses, is meeting the physical education requirement, and has been in regular attendance 80 percent of the school time, bona fide absence caused by personal illness excepted.”

A contestant must be a bona fide student of the high school represented and must be taking at least four subjects including Physical Education. A foreign exchange student may be considered a bona fide student if all of these eligibility rules are satisfied. A student in an education program in two schools may represent only the home school.

**NOTE:** A student in shared services, part-time or full-time program, taking the equivalent of four subjects including Physical Education, is considered as being registered in the home school. A shared services student is only eligible at one school per school year (home district or shared service school) regardless of the interscholastic athletic programs offered. (May 2020) Exceptions for special cases must be approved by the League and Section.

A student who satisfies all eligibility standards, enrolled in the equivalent of three requirements for graduation, may be enrolled in one or more college courses for advance placement. The student must be earning a minimum of three high school credits and Physical Education to be eligible.

Students enrolled in a TASC program (GED) must be receiving 2.5 hours of instruction daily and also meet the Physical Education requirement in accordance with NYSED Bona Fide Student Regulation. (July 2021)

Students may only be Athletically Placed through APP into a member school. Furthermore, to be eligible to be Athletically Placed into a member schools' athletic programs a student must be registered in that school district; excluding the 13 K-8 school districts in New York State.

**DISQUALIFICATION POLICY:** *Forms required*  
[Disqualification Reporting Form](#) is on the Section III Website.

A coach, player or official who strikes, shoves, kicks, or makes other physical contact with the intent to annoy, harass or intimidate another person shall be expelled immediately and banned from further participation in all sports for a period to be determined by the Section not to exceed one year from the date of the offense.

### **Disqualifications (Ejections)**

All ejections from all sports of any player, coach or school support personnel at all levels must be reported on the Section III disqualification form within one working day of the incident. There is no provision in Section III or New York State Public High School Athletic Association rules to review video for the purpose of voiding a suspension associated with an ejection.

## **Coach**

Any coach excluded by a certified official from an inter-school competition for unsportsmanlike conduct, including but not limited to taunting, is ineligible to coach any inter-school competition in that sport until after the next previously scheduled contest at the same level (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) has been completed. In individual sports, a multi-day contest is considered to be one contest. Disqualification from one season carries over to the next season of participation.

The coach may not be present at the game site nor communicate in any manner during the contest with any person present at the site.

NOTE: "Not being physically present at the site" means the disqualified coach is not to be present in the locker room, on the sidelines, in the stands or site area before, during or after the game/meet. Any coach ejected from:

- a. One ejection, shall not participate in the next regularly scheduled contest.
- b. A second ejection in the same sport, in the same season, shall not participate in the next two regularly scheduled contests.
- c. A third ejection in the same sport, in the same season, will not be allowed to participate for the rest of the season.

If the third ejection takes place in the last contest of the season (regular season or post schedule play), the Section Athletic Council will assess the penalty carrying over into the next season of participation.

If a coach's behavior reaches the stage of being unreasonable and such behavior warrants the ejection of the coach from the contest, the school is solely responsible for providing team and/or individual student athlete supervision. In the event that no certified coach, who is approved by the board of education, is available, the contest will be terminated and forfeited.

## **Player**

Any member of a squad ruled out of a contest (scrimmage/game) for unsportsmanlike conduct, including taunting, or for a flagrant foul, or its equivalent for that sport, shall not participate in that sport in the next previously scheduled contest with a member school or in NYSPHSAA tournament play, but may be present on site at the discretion of the school district. In individual sports, a multi-day contest is considered to be a contest. The contest in which the athlete was disqualified must count in the total maximum number of contests permitted. Disqualifications from one season carry over to the next season of participation.

Disqualifications cannot be appealed unless it's a wrongly identified player. Any player ejected from a contest will be subject to the following sanctions:

- a. One ejection shall not participate in the next regularly scheduled contest.
- b. A second ejection in the same sport, in the same season, shall not participate in the next two regularly scheduled contests.
- c. A third ejection in the same sport, in the same season, will not be allowed to participate for the rest of the season.
- d. All-Stars games or activities are not counted as a "regularly scheduled contest" and athletes/coaches in question may not participate until the suspension is served.

If the third ejection takes place in the last contest of the season (regular season or post schedule play), the Section Athletic Council will assess the penalty carrying over into the next season of participation.

## **Soccer Yellow Cards**

### **NYSPHSAA Yellow Card Accumulation Policy**

It is the intention of the NYSPHSAA to address the issue of the accumulation of Yellow Cards during the soccer season by an individual player or coach. The situations surrounding Red Cards are dealt with directly under the NYSPHSAA Guidelines for Sportsmanship and Misconducts outlined in the State Handbook for all sports. The consequences for the accumulation of excessive Yellow Cards will be as follows:

- 1. It is the Athletic Director's responsibility to keep tally of yellow cards received, and apply the consequence for accumulation of excessive Yellow Cards for his/her school***
2. Five Yellow Cards accumulated by a single player or a coach in the regular season will result in a one game suspension which will be the next regularly scheduled contest. Disqualifications due to an accumulation of five yellow cards occurring in the last game of the season will carry over to the next season of participation.
3. Disqualifications must be reported to the Section III Executive Director within one school day from the issuance of the 5<sup>th</sup> yellow card.
4. The continued accumulation of Yellow Cards by the same individual (player or coach) will result in a one game suspension per additional Yellow Card.

5. In the event that the player or coach receives two Yellow Cards in the same game, resulting in a Red Card, the two Yellow Cards will not count toward the season total, since the individual will receive a one game suspension as a result of the misconduct and ejection.
6. Disqualifications due to an accumulation of five yellow cards occurring in the last game of the season will carry over to the next regularly scheduled contest, sectional game or the next season of participation. The accumulation card total is for regular season play only and the process will start over again for postseason play.
7. The postseason policy will provide a one game suspension after three Yellow Cards and a one game suspension for each additional card received through the State Final.
8. Coaches are to give each official a completed roster card with names and numbers prior to each game. Coaches of both schools are to report all Yellow Cards to their Athletic Director after each game.
9. The athletic directors of both schools are to report all Yellow Cards at all levels to the League if required, by means of Mail, E-mail or Fax for tabulation.
10. The Yellow Card report should include the following information:

<i>School Name</i>	<i>Name(s) of athlete or coach</i>
<i>Boys or Girls Team</i>	<i>Level</i>
<i>Uniform Number(s)</i>	<i>Date</i>
11. Within 24 hours of a game, any official who cards a player or coach will be responsible to inform their respective assignor listing the recipients of yellow cards for that game. Board policy will determine the method of notification to the League and Section.
12. ***Refusing to report or failing to report infractions and allowing a player or a coach to continue play under these circumstances will result in the forfeiture of all games in which the individual in question participated.***

### **Football Disqualification**

Football disqualifications state that any athlete ejected from a football game will be suspended from contest play for the next two consecutive halves. Coaches and school personnel will be suspended for the next full game.

### **Official**

A school administrator shall report unprofessional conduct on the part of the official such as, but not limited to, taunting, baiting, use of profanity, from the aggrieved school to the section Executive Director.

A request will be made to the appropriate sport official's chapter to investigate the incident, try to resolve the situation directly with the school and then to report their action to the section in a timely manner.

### **Team Personnel and Non-Decision-making officials**

Team personnel such as athletic trainers, scorekeepers, managers, bus drivers, etc. as well as non-decision-making officials such as chain crew, line judges, off-ice officials, etc., shall not exhibit unsportsmanlike conduct. Any team personnel or non-decision-making officials excluded by game officials shall be subject to the same penalties as coaches.

### **Reporting Player & Coach Disqualifications**

*(Unsportsmanlike Conduct and Rules Infraction)*

The Athletic Director of the school that has had athletes/coaches disqualified is required to complete the designated reporting form and must e-mail or fax that form within one workday of the contest to the Section III office. Failure to notify or delinquency in reporting disqualifications may result in a school being reprimanded by the Section III Executive Committee. Future shortcomings in this area will result in stronger disciplinary action.

### **Failure to Enforce the Disqualification Policy**

A school administrator that fails to enforce the Disqualification Policy will have the contest forfeited in which the offending individual participates as an ineligible participant (next previously scheduled contest).

### **Disqualifications (Ejections)**

All ejections from all sports of any player, coach or school support personnel at all levels must be reported on the Section III disqualification form within one working day of the incident. There is no provision in Section III or New York State Public High School Athletic Association rules to review video for the purpose of voiding a suspension associated with an ejection.

### **Appeals**

At the December 2010 NYSPHSAA Executive Committee meeting, a rule change gave the authority to each Section to hear only appeals of a misidentified player, review clear and concise evidence and penalize the appropriate student athlete. All other ejections stand without appeal.

### **Coaches' Responsibility**

Coaches are responsible to see that all ejections/red cards are reported to the Athletic Director.

### **Athletic Director's Responsibility**

The Athletic Director will submit a completed disqualification form to the Section III office within one working day of the incident.

### **Officials Responsibility**

Officials or Chapter Supervisor are responsible for reporting any player or coach(s) who was ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct. A written (faxed or e-mail) report or a phone call will be sent to the athletic director, league officer (if applicable), and Section III office within 24 hours of any incident.

**EXTENDED ELIGIBILITY (Duration of Competition):** [Section III Extended Eligibility Form](#) is on the Section III website.

Section III has assumed the task of hearing and ruling on all cases of extended eligibility for all schools in Section III. The Section III Extended Eligibility Committee will preside over on all cases by the rules as set forth by the Commissioner of Education. The committee plans to meet three times per year. Therefore, it is imperative that you plan ahead as much as possible.

All requests for extended eligibility should be in the Section III office per the following schedule:

Fall sport:	1 <sup>st</sup> day of official Varsity Practice
Winter sport:	1 <sup>st</sup> day of official Varsity Practice
Spring sport:	1 <sup>st</sup> day of official Varsity Practice

Normally, a student is eligible for senior high athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons commencing with entry into the ninth grade. However, by satisfying the Commissioner of Education requirements of Selection/Classification, a student may receive extended eligibility to permit:

- a. Participation during five consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the eighth grade; or
- b. Participation during six consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the seventh grade.

The Chief School Officer must present sufficient evidence that proves that as a direct result of the illness or accident, the pupil will be required to attend school for one or more additional semesters in order to graduate - demonstrate that, (a) the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of a sport was caused by illness, accident, documented social/emotional condition or documented social/emotional circumstances beyond the control of the pupil; (b) as a direct result of such circumstances the pupil is required to attend school for one or more additional semesters in order to graduate; and (c) such participation would not have a significant adverse effect upon the opportunity of other pupils to participate successfully in interschool competition in the sport.

A few items to consider when interpreting Extended Eligibility:

1. Did the student "miss" a semester of eligibility?
2. Did the student "miss" the semester as a direct result of an illness, accident or documented social/ emotional condition?
3. Will the student require additional semesters to graduate as a result of the illness, accident or documented social/ emotional condition?
4. Has it been determined that the student will not have a significant adverse effect upon his teammates or opponents?
5. Does the student still meet the Age 19 rule?

DOCUMENTATION - The following documents must accompany the Extension of Duration of Competition application before the Section's Extended Eligibility Committee will evaluate it:

1. Letter from the Chief School Officer providing sufficient evidence to show that the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of a sport was caused by an appropriate circumstance outlined in the *Duration of Competition: Commissioner's Regulation*.
2. Copy of Transcript, attendance record, recent report card and a statement describing that as a direct result of the illness or accident, the pupil will be required to attend school for one or more additional semesters in order to graduate.
3. Proposed schedule of courses for "extra" semester (s).
4. Copy of original professional's statement (physician, judge, etc.) describing and validating one of the appropriate circumstances for granting an extension of competition. Make sure inclusive dates are included.

**FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENT: *Forms required.***

A Foreign Exchange student may be considered a bona fide student (page 14) if all of the eligibility rules are satisfied, and the required form is submitted into the Section III office before participation. Policy per NYSPHSAA

**FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOR:** Policy per NYSPHSAA

**INTERSTATE SCRIMMAGES AND COMPETITIONS**

Scrimmages and games must be held following the NYSPHSAA guidelines. Out-of-state scrimmages and games must be differentiated and reported to the NYSPHSAA before a school trip takes place. Schools are governed by NYSPHSAA rules and regulations regarding the sanctioning of interstate competition and the number of games or contests that may be scheduled during the season. If a team or individual plays more than the allowable number of games in a season it will result in forfeiture of games played above the allowable number by the state and disqualification from participating in Section III Tournaments.

A member school wishing to participate in a contest/scrimmage involving any non-NYSPHSAA member schools must file an application for sanction with the NYSPHSAA office.

**Scrimmage: *As per NYSPHSAA Handbook Sport Guidelines***

A scrimmage is a practice session, which simulates a game between two teams where the sport rules have been altered. A school district may or may not utilize officials for a scrimmage.

**MIXED COMPETITION**

The NYS Education Department has revised the guidelines for mixed competition in athletics to ensure equitable access to athletics for students of all genders. The [guidelines for students to participate in mixed competition athletics](#) are:

1. Signed parent/guardian consent.
2. A current health examination ([New York State School Health Examination Form](#)).
3. A completed and signed [Interval Health History Form](#) if the health examination was not completed within 30 days of the start of the season; and
4. Clearance from the director of school health services (a.k.a. medical director) for the student to participate in athletics.

## **MIXED COMPETITION APPROVAL**

No student athlete may participate in a mixed competition program without approval from the Mixed Competition Committee. The Committee will consider a variety of factors and determine eligibility based upon their consideration of significant adverse effects. A student is eligible for mixed competition upon approval of the Committee.

There is a notification form on the website. It is the Athletic Director's responsibility to notify all parties of mixed competition participants:

1. The Section III Sports Coordinator.
2. The athletic director of the regular season opponent schools.
3. The League President

## **Mixed Competition Protests**

Any school district wishing to protest a student's participation must do so in writing within two (2) business days of the competition with that school. Notification of the protest should be indicated in the scorebook. Official correspondence between District representatives and the Section III Executive Director shall occur within the two-day timeframe.

1. The Executive Director of Section III will notify the school under protest within one (1) business day (24 hours) of the written protest.
2. It is recommended that the Mixed Competition Committee convene within five (5) business days but not to exceed ten (10) business days of the notification of a school under protest.
3. The school(s) protesting must provide statistical and observational data including game films, statistics, etc. in support of their protest.
  - a. Protests must be based on facts, not assumptions.
  - b. If evidence of unethical collaboration on the part of protesting schools or coaches occurs, there will be reason to declare the protest(s) invalid.
4. Once a protest is filed, each school district involved shall designate one (1) spokesperson through whom all information and correspondence pertinent to the case will be directed.
5. All due process procedures will be afforded and adhered to.

If as a result of a hearing, the mixed student(s) is declared ineligible, the hearing committee must also determine a ruling on the record of the games or contests in which the ineligible student(s) participated.

Should either party wish to appeal, the following avenues are available:

1. Section III Hearing Panel chaired by the Hearing Officer
2. NYSPHSAA
3. The Commissioner of Education
4. The Court System

All statistics pertinent to those underclass students participating under mixed competition should be kept at the league level and sent to the Section III Executive Director at the conclusion of the season.

**OUTSIDE AGENCIES:** [Outside Agency Form](#) is on the Section III website. Schools may not participate in contests hosted by an Outside agency/sponsor, unless the event is co-sponsored by Section III, a league, or a school district.

1. In order to co-sponsor an event, the host athletic director is required to submit the form prior to the event for the Executive Director's review and Athletic Council approval.
2. A Financial Report must be completed and forwarded within two weeks after the event is completed to Section III.

**TRANSFER:** [Transfer Notification Form](#) is on the Section III website.

A transfer student is one who has changed registration from one school to another. The change in residency is required before there is a change in registration. In situations where there has not been a corresponding change of address of a student's parents, or other persons with whom the student has resided for at least six months, the school may petition the Transfer Committee for a transfer waiver based on undue hardship for the student. Please refer to the [NYSPHSAA Handbook Chapter 31 on Transfer](#) for further information.

1. Transfer waiver requests are to be initiated by schools receiving a transfer student.
2. Students requiring a transfer waiver are ineligible to participate in a scrimmage or game until approved by the Transfer Committee.
3. The Transfer Committee prior to the beginning of competition each sport season will act upon student transfer waiver requests.
4. Once a student enters grade nine and participates in a sport at the 9<sup>th</sup>, Junior Varsity or Varsity level, they now fall under the NYSPHSAA Transfer rule.
5. Transfer waiver request must include a detailed explanation and rationale for the transfer.

6. Sending and receiving school may ask for a transfer committee hearing/review regarding a particular transfer. Member schools, leagues, or sport committees may make the same request.
7. A school receiving a transfer student may request a hearing referred to a “Declaratory Judgment” (a decision by the Transfer Committee) if they want to resolve particular issues or uncertainties regarding a transfer.
8. Non-Public/Charter to Public – Students who transfer from a non-public/charter school to the public school of their residence are exempt from the transfer rule. This type of transfer without penalty is permitted once in a high school career.

### **Residency Clarification**

The School District shall provide sufficient evidence to establish that the student and his/her family are residents of the School District for purposes of the Transfer Rule. A residence is not lost until it is abandoned by the immediate family and another one established through action and intent. Residency requires one's physical presence as an inhabitant and the intent to remain indefinitely. The mere renting of property within the District does not confer residency. The Superintendent determines residency and must provide evidence upon request. Residency is required before the change in registration.

### **ATHLETIC RECRUITMENT AND UNDUE INFLUENCE**

The Athletic Recruiting and Undue Influence policy refers to any effort on the part of a school employee or an individual or a school related organization to induce, encourage, or discuss school transfer for athletic reasons. Violators will be subject to the Penalty outlined below.

#### **Recruitment and Undue Influence Policy** (*NYSPHSAA Handbook*)

Recruiting and Undue Influence is defined as the use of influence by any person connected directly or indirectly with a NYSPHSAA school to induce a student to transfer from one school to another, or to enter the ninth grade at a member school for athletic purposes - whether or not the school presently attended by the student is a member of NYSPHSAA.

1. The use of undue influence to secure a student for competitive purposes in a sport is prohibited. An infraction shall cause the student to forfeit eligibility in that sport for one year from the date of enrollment. The offending school shall be subject to provisions of Bylaw #19 (D).

2. Evidence of undue influence includes, but is not limited to, personal contact by coaches and sponsors in an attempt to persuade transfer, gifts of money, jobs, supplies, clothing, free transportation, admission to contests, invitation to attend practices and/or games, or free and/or reduced tuition.
3. The use of undue influence to secure a student for competitive purposes in a sport is prohibited. An infraction shall cause the student to forfeit eligibility in that sport until the student's eligibility is reinstated. One year from the date of enrollment is the earliest a student may request reinstatement of eligibility.
4. Responsibility for determining student eligibility following a violation of the undue influence rule in a Section is at the discretion of the Section's Executive Committee. Each Section shall establish guidelines to determine the process and standards for eligibility reinstatement. (July 2023).

### **Procedure for Recruitment and Undue Influence Complaints**

Any Section III school may submit a complaint alleging violation of the NYSPHSAA Undue Influence Rule. Such complaints must be filed on the *Recruitment & Undue Influence Reporting Form* to the Section III Executive Director. All complaints must include the signatures of the Chief School Officer, Principal and Athletic Administrator of the filing school. The Complaint Form is available on the Section III website.

1. Complainants must adhere to the following procedures:
  - a. Any and all evidence must be submitted with the *Recruitment & Undue Influence Reporting Form*.
  - b. All witness statements must be signed and notarized, summarized and submitted via email or certified post.
2. The allegation and all evidence will be shared with the Chief School Officer and Athletic Administrator of the school that is accused of violating the policy. They will be given 10 school business days to investigate and respond to the allegation.
3. The Section III Executive Committee will then review the allegation, the response and all supporting documentation, and *recommend a determination to the full Executive Committee*. The determinations may include one of the following:
  - a. No violation: evidence does not support a violation
  - b. In violation: violation of the rules of undue influence has occurred.
  - c. Referral to a Hearing Panel: A hearing to gather additional information is needed to make a determination.

## **Hearing Procedures**

The Hearing will take place before the Section III Executive Committee. The Section III Assistant Executive Director will act as the Hearing Officer. Neither the Section III Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director will be a voting member of the Hearing Committee. *Executive Committee members will recuse themselves from the Hearing if their school or student is party to the complaint.*

Both parties will be present with one spokesman for each side.

1. Each side will be given 15 minutes to provide their arguments
2. Members of the Executive Committee may ask questions of any of the participating parties as guided and directed by the Hearing Officer.
3. Each side will be given 5 minutes for closing statements
4. The Executive Committee will discuss and deliberate, and within **10** school business days will reach a decision.
5. If a violation has occurred the Executive Committee may, in addition to the prescribed NYSPHSAA policy, consider the following consequences:
  - a. Censor
  - b. Probation
  - c. Suspension

Conditions of probation and conditions of suspension, including length of penalty and individuals subject to the penalty, will be determined by the Section III Executive Committee.

## **Athletic Shopping**

Involves the action of a student, parent, or legal guardian who makes their choice of schools based upon gaining a possible athletic advantage to the student. Athletic shopping may include, but is not limited to one or more of the following factors, which may have influenced the desire to transfer:

1. Dissatisfaction with the previous school's athletic program.
2. Dissatisfaction with coaches or other school athletic personnel.
3. An attempt to be part of a better team or athletic program.

4. An attempt to enhance prospects for a college athletic scholarship or other athletic awards.
5. Avoidance of punishment or unpleasantness.
6. Violators will be subject to the Penalty outlined below.

**Penalty for Athletic Recruitment and Athletic Shopping:**

A member school or individual found to be in violation of the policies for Athletic Recruitment and/or Athletic Shopping by the Section III Athletic Council may be barred from participation in any or all-interschool athletic activities for a period up to one year.

**SENIOR ALL - STAR CONTEST:** [\*All Star Contest Form\*](#) is available on the Section III Website.

The Section III Executive Director and the Executive Director of the NYSPHSAA prior to the contests being conducted must approve all Senior All-Star contests. Only those contests conducted and supervised by school personnel will be approved. Any other requests for Senior All-Star contests will not be approved and violations will be dealt with via Due Process.

All Senior All-Star contests shall be the complete responsibility of the participating Section III School or League. This includes the following:

1. Securing approval from
  - a) Section III Executive Director first
  - b) NYSPHSAA Executive Director second
2. Financial responsibility
3. Returning all necessary forms to the Section III Executive Director
  - a) All letters of intent
  - b) Roster sheets
  - c) Financial report

All league requests for Senior All-Star contests, to be conducted by leagues, must be forwarded to the proper authorities, with all proper material, prior to the annual seeding meeting. Late and inadequately completed forms will not be approved or processed. NOTE: NO written approval – means no contest. Senior All-Star contests will not be approved in a subsequent year unless the same group has discharged all obligations the previous year.

## **SECTION III POLICIES and PROCEDURES**

### **Corporate Sponsorship**

A goal of Section III Athletics is to strive to sponsor the best possible championship tournament for our student-athletes. Section III will accept corporate or individual sponsorship on the sole condition that all said donations will be distributed on an equitable basis to enhance the athletic opportunities for all student-athletes. Any form of Corporate Sponsorship other than those specified in the awards policy shall need pre-approval by the Section III Executive Committee.

### **Procedures for Corporate Sponsorships**

The Section III Executive Committee must approve all corporate sponsorships, prior to any final agreements. Proposals for sponsorship shall include the name of the corporate sponsor, the amount of the sponsorship, and the purpose for the donation, and all proposed agreements. Proposals should be sent to the Section III Executive Director to be reviewed with the Executive Committee. Corporate Sponsorship is permitted on a seasonal and/or annual basis. However, approval must be granted each year/season.

### **Guidelines for Corporate Sponsorships**

1. When considering corporate sponsorship, NO DRUGS, ALCOHOL OR TOBACCO-RELATED PRODUCTS (including e-cigarettes, vape pens, etc.) MAY BE INCLUDED.
2. Before approving corporate sponsorships, the Board of Directors shall consider whether the sponsor's support creates situations that are educationally sound and equitable.
3. The following are some of the areas that might warrant corporate sponsorship: Printed programs, Tickets, Newsletters, Meals, Awards, Meeting expenses, Equipment & Supplies, Website, Apparel, Other.
4. Professional solicitors may be hired, if approved.
5. Corporate sponsorship obtained by Section III personnel will be expended for sport specific administration cost or returned to the general fund. It may not be used by any sports committee.
6. The Sport Committee may only utilize sponsorship funding that they obtained with prior approval of the Board of Directors.

## **DUAL SPORT SEASON PARTICIPATION**

In the Section sports of Ice Hockey and Indoor Track & Field, Section III athletes are NOT allowed to be dual sport athletes during these seasons. If seasons overlap due to play-offs, then students are allowed to start the next season as they complete their current season. Dual sports participation in other seasons/sports is dependent upon league rules.

**PRACTICE SESSIONS:** Athletes must meet all Standards of Eligibility to participate in practice.

1. An organized practice in grades 7-12 is a session for the purpose of providing instruction and practice in physical conditioning activities, skills, team play, and game strategy designed expressly for that sport under the supervision of a qualified coach appointed by the Board of Education of the local school district. Such instruction and practice shall be held only during the season designated for that sport. Athletes who switch from one sport to another sport are permitted to count conditioning practices toward their new sport as follows (excluding bowling, golf, and rifle):
  - a. Sports with six (6) practices for the individual before the first contest/ scrimmage will be allowed to carry over three (3) days.
  - b. Sports with ten (10) practices for the individual before the first contest/ scrimmage will be allowed to carry over four (4) days.
  - c. **NOTE:** Athletes whose seasons are lengthened due to participation in NYSPHSAA Regional and Championship contests are allowed to count conditioning practices towards their new sports as follows:
    - i. Sports with six (6) practices for the individual before the first contest/ scrimmage will be allowed to carry over three (3) days;
    - ii. Sports with ten (10) practices for the individual before the first contest/ scrimmage will be allowed to carry over four (4) days.
    - iii. Only one practice session a day and only six days of a calendar week may be counted toward the total practice sessions required. A practice session conducted on the same day as a game cannot be counted to meet the minimum practice requirement to be eligible for that day's contest. All required practice sessions shall be organized and planned for a reasonable length of time and shall include vigorous activity specific to the sport for the purpose of improving the physical condition of the players. Warm-ups prior to a game/ contest are not considered "practice." Each of the required number of practices for an individual must include vigorous activity.

- iv. Practice is considered an integral part of the interschool program in that sport. An individual must be eligible according to age and all other Eligibility Standards to participate in practices or competitions with the high school squad in that sport.

No student or team may be permitted to participate in school organized practice or play on seven consecutive days during the regular season. Specifically, during the regular season, physical and/or instructional activities related to the sport on seven consecutive days are prohibited. **NOTE:** Any contests leading up to Sectional play is considered "regular season."

- d. School sponsored activities conducted out of the sports season such as general conditioning, weight training, weight lifting, intramurals, recreation, open gyms, club activities and camps are permitted: 1. if such programs are not mandated by coaches or school personnel; 2. if such programs are available to all students.
- e. Non-school sponsored activities are permitted if such programs are not mandated by coaches or school personnel. It is recommended that no school equipment be used for these programs as per State Comptroller Opinion 85-37.
- f. Upon returning from military training, student-athletes shall be eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics once they have completed the required number of practices. Eligibility for participation will also include meeting all eligibility requirements imposed by the Commissioner of Education and NYSPHSAA such as, but not limited to, health examination, age, grade, etc.
- g. Schools that have made arrangements with another member school to share the use of a practice facility may do so without violating the Scrimmage Regulation if the athletes/teams do not scrimmage before the required number of practices has been completed.
- h. Games and practice between students and adults (alumni or faculty) are not approved.

### **Delays of a High School Athletic Contest:**

When a league does not have a written policy regarding late contest start times, the following Section III policy shall apply:

1. If a team fails to arrive for a regular-season contest at the time stated on the contract, it shall be necessary for the host administration to delay the contest, declare the game forfeited, reschedule the contest, or declare the event “no contest.”
2. If the host school has been notified of the reason for the delay and projected arrival time, the officials must stand by for 45 minutes beyond the scheduled starting time. When the team arrives, a reasonable amount of time must be provided for the visiting team to conduct a pre-game warm-up. In any case, warm-up shall not be less than 15 minutes.
3. If the host school has not been notified that there is a delay and the reason for it, the officials have permission to leave the site, without obligation, 45 minutes after the contracted start time has passed.

### **Suspending or Terminating Games – Officials vs. Host AD responsibilities:**

1. AD's are responsible for determining the safety of field conditions up to game time.
2. Once the contest has started, the decision for game safety becomes the responsibility of the officials.
3. When an official believes a contest should be suspended prior to its scheduled finish, the official should separate the two teams and send them to their respective bench, sidelines, etc. The official will confer with the ranking school officer in attendance of both schools.
4. Ranking school officers include, from the top down, Superintendent, Principal or AD, and lastly the coach. Attempt to give time for the ranking school officers to come forward and identify themselves. The ranking school officer is expected to voluntarily come forward punctually.
5. If in the contest official's opinion, the contest should not be restarted, attempt to have the two schools agree to a suspended contest to be completed at a later time and day.
6. If the ranking school officers will not agree to a “suspended contest,” then the official shall administer the sport rulebook in the spirit of sportsmanship and with their own best judgment.
7. Terminated contests count as a game or day of competition. Suspended contests, continued from the point of interruption, will not count as an additional day of competition. Any contest or game, which starts over, is to be counted as a new game or day of competition.

8. It is possible for officials to suspend a contest and have the League declare a winner without resumption of the contest.

## **DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS**

Section III is a membership organization and will only hear appeals from its member schools. All notice of appeals requires the Athletic Director and Superintendent's signature before the appeal will be considered. The aggrieved party must notify the Executive Director of Section III, of its intention to appeal to the Appeal Panel not later than ten (10) calendar days from the date the aggrieved party received a written decision of the League or Committee.

### **Procedures for Petitions, Hearings and Appeals**

#### **Level I – Initial Petition**

A school may present a request for relief from any league or committee rule, ruling, regulation or requirement it deems itself entitled to by presenting its written petition to the appropriate committee of its league in accordance with the rules, regulations and policies of the league.

A school may present a request for relief from any Section III rule, ruling, regulation or requirement it deems itself entitled to by presenting its written petition to the appropriate committee of Section III in accordance with the rules, regulations and policies of Section III. If the petition for relief is made to a committee of Section III, the Executive Director of the Section shall give notice to an appropriate league official and committee members and those notices shall be deemed notice to all schools potentially affected by the petition. The committee to which the petition has been referred may request responses as may be appropriate from interested adverse parties and may consider the evidence submitted by the school and the adverse parties in making such a decision as is required by the petition.

*The Level I Petition is the initial petition for relief.*

#### **Level II – Initial Review of Adverse Ruling**

A Level I ruling which is averse to the school bringing the petition or to the league or to schools, which are negatively affected by the ruling, may be appealed by any negatively affected entity, as follows:

1. From a League Ruling
  - a. Any negatively affected party may but is not required to renew its petition or response by presenting additional evidence in support of its position to the League which considered the original petition. The submission of additional evidence by any party allows the opposing party to submit additional evidence in response. The right to renew or respond with additional evidence is available on a one-time basis, only, after which the presenting of additional evidence is foreclosed. The League shall then consider the body of evidence and publish its final decision.
  - b. A negatively affected entity may appeal the League decision by requesting a three-member panel composed of appropriate League representatives to be appointed by the League president and which shall be convened as required to give timely relief if the appeal were to be granted. No new evidence can be submitted to the three-member panel.
  - c. After exhausting the League appeal process, a negatively affected entity may appeal the League decision to Section III, which shall hear the appeal according to Section III procedures. No new evidence can be submitted.
  - d. Any further appeal shall be to the NYSPHSAA in accordance with its rules and regulations.
2. From a Standing Committee Ruling:
  - a. Any negatively affected party may, but is not required to renew its petition or response by presenting additional evidence in support of its position to the Standing Committee that considered the original petition. The submission of additional evidence by any party allows the opposing party to submit additional evidence in response. The right to renew or respond with additional evidence is available on a one-time basis, only, after which the presenting of additional evidence is foreclosed. The Standing Committee shall then consider the body of evidence and publish its final decision.
  - b. A negatively affected entity may appeal the Standing Committee decision to the Section III Executive Committee, which shall hear the appeal according to Section III procedures. No new evidence can be submitted.
  - c. Any further appeal shall be to the NYSPHSAA in accordance with its rules and regulations.

### Appeal Panel & Hearing Officer

The President of Section III, in consultation with the Executive Director, will appoint a three-member Appeal Panel. The three panel members will be individuals who are eligible to hold elected office under the Section III Constitution or other persons designated by the Section III President or Executive Director when persons eligible to hold elected office are not available to serve. The Assistant Executive Director, or a designee appointed by Section III President, will serve as the Hearing Officer and chair of the Appeal Panel. The Hearing Officer is responsible for presiding over appeal hearings and ensuring that they are conducted in a fair and orderly manner. This includes managing the proceedings, maintaining decorum, and enforcing rules of procedure. The Hearing Officer will not be a voting member of the panel.

The Section III Appeal Panel shall review the evidence, may hear arguments, and shall have the power to affirm, reverse or modify the decision of a League/Committee.

Decisions shall not be reversed or modified unless the Section III Appeal Panel finds that:

1. The decision of the League/Committee is clearly contrary to the evidence presented, or
2. The facts found by the League/Committee constitute a violation of the NYSPHSAA Section's Constitution, rules or standards, or Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, or
3. A procedural error affected the reliability of the information that was utilized to support the finding of the League/Committee.

A written decision of an Appeal Panel will be rendered within five school days of the hearing.

Any Section III School, League, Committee or legislative body must present a notice of Appeal of any action of a Section III League/Committee in writing within ten (10) business days of the action to the Executive Director. The Athletic Council or its designee (a three-member Section III Appeal Panel) shall act upon the appeal.

## **VIOLATION PENALTIES**

Section III fully supports the rules and penalties outlined in the NYSPHSAA handbook.

Section III will impose and enforce a suitable penalty upon any member school, which violates the constitution, bylaws, rules, regulations, sports standards, or code of ethics of the section. A member school found guilty of such a violation by the Section Athletic Council may be barred from participation in any or all-interschool athletic activities for a period up to one year.

In addition to those rules and regulations referenced above, Section III has adopted the following additional rule and the penalties prescribed for its violations:

1. Starting practice prior to the first allowable date.
2. Cancel practice two days for every day of the violation.
3. Forfeiture of all scheduled contests that had been previously scheduled that could not be played because of insufficient practice days.

## **DUES AND FEES**

### **Dues**

Section III dues and sport fees are approved by the NYSPHSAA Section III Board of Directors. The previous years delinquent accounts receivable shall be added to the school's annual dues statement.

### **Mileage**

The mileage reimbursement rate for the Executive Committee members, committee chairs and sports coordinators shall be set at the IRS reimbursement rate that is established annually in January of each year.

## **LITIGATION**

If a school and Section III are named as defendants in a suit based on enforcement or interpretation of Section III rules or regulations, the school may tender its defense to Section III and Section may accept but will not be obligated to provide for the school's defense.

Any school which institutes an unsuccessful legal action or appeal to the courts or the Commissioner of Education to overturn, stay or enjoin any decision, ruling or rules of the Section or the NYSPHSAA will be liable for reasonable costs and attorney's fees incurred by the Section in defending against such action.

Further, should Section III be forced to initiate legal action to collect the costs and attorney's fees, the member school shall be additionally liable for the Section's/Association's reasonable cost and attorney's fees resulting from the collection action and shall be deprived of all rights to participate in any post schedule championship conducted by the Section or the NYSPHSAA.

Any member school that does not make final payment for costs by June 30<sup>th</sup> of that year shall be denied membership in the Section.

### **NEW LEAGUE PROCEDURE**

A "Letter of Request" needs to be submitted to the Section III Executive Director seeking permission from the Athletic Council to create a new league. Along with that letter, the following items are required:

1. League's name
2. Identification of the membership
3. Proposed Constitution and By-Laws of the new league
4. Timeline including withdrawal from old and the starting date of the new league.
5. Letter of notification to existing league of their intent to withdraw and to desire to form a new league.

Once all of the information above has been submitted to the Section III office, the request to create a new league shall be presented as a motion (per Section III Constitution) at the next scheduled Athletic Council meeting. A motion of acceptance by a simple majority vote of the Athletic Council is required.

If the schools petitioning for the new league are not in agreement with the Athletic Council ruling, the schools shall have the right to an appeal with NYSPHSAA based on that organization's appeal procedure. The decision by the NYSPHSAA will be binding.

### **PLACEMENT OF A SCHOOL/SPORT INTO A LEAGUE**

Section III supports a member school(s) right to request direct placement into a League either as an entire program or per sport. A school may request to be placed into an existing League, either as an entire athletic program or on a per sport basis, by the Section when the school is not currently affiliated with a League. A school is able to request placement even if it has not been a dues paying member in Section III for at least one year. A school that seeks the assistance of the Section in order to gain relief from a current league placement, cannot be considered for placement in another league unless that school has withdrawn from their current

league and has played an independent schedule for at least one year within Section III, either as an entire program or on a per sport basis. A school must request league placement and be denied before approaching Athletic Council for a league placement. If a school is denied placement in their preferred league, they may petition the Athletic Council to place them in a league. A condition of requesting league placement is that the school competes as an independent for at least one school year. The year of being independent can begin before the request for league placement is made. Schools seeking placement must submit a written request to the Section III Executive Director by October 31. The Athletic Council will hear the appeal, with all interested parties presenting, at the November Athletic Council meeting.

### **I. Procedure: School into League Placement by the Section**

1. If a school is denied league affiliation, either as an entire program or on a per sport basis, the school may request an Athletic Council hearing to be placed in an appropriate league.
2. The school must be placed in a league based on the following criteria: similar interest, similar size, and location.
3. The Athletic Council will vote to determine league placement.
4. If the league/school is not in agreement with the Athletic Council ruling, the league/school shall have the right to an appeal to the NYSPHSAA based on that organization's appeal procedure. The school and league will abide by the Athletic Council decision pending the outcome of any appeal.
5. The decision by the NYSPHSAA will be binding.

### **II. Procedure: School Request to Gain Relief from Current League Placement**

1. If a school is denied affiliation by their desired League, that school must play as an independent for one (1) school year before the Section will take further action.
2. After playing as an independent for one school year, the school may request an Athletic Council hearing to be placed in an appropriate league.
3. The school must be placed in a league based on the following criteria: similar interest, similar size, and location.
4. If the league/school is not in agreement with the Athletic Council ruling, the league/school shall have the right to an appeal with NYSPHSAA based on that organization's appeal procedure. The decision by the NYSPHSAA will be binding.

## REPRESENTATION OF LEAGUES

1. For an explanation of Athletic Council league representation, refer to the Section III Constitution.
2. For an explanation of Committee representation, refer to the Section III Constitution.
3. When league representation is required on a committee, it is each league's responsibility to provide representation.
4. It is the **league representative(s) responsibility to keep their member schools informed** of Athletic Council discussions, votes and actions.

2024-2025 ATHLETIC COUNCIL REPRESENTATION:

League	Number of Schools	Representatives
Center State Conference	23	5
Central Counties League	7	2
Frontier League	17	4
Onondaga High School League	31	7
Salt City Athletic Conference	15	3
Tri-Valley League	10	2
Independent Schools	4	1

## VARSITY SPORT COMMITMENT

The Varsity Sport Commitment Letter will be shared via a *Google Form*.

Athletic Directors must complete a Section III Annual Varsity Commitment form and send it to the Section III office on or before June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. Each sport also has an Individual Tournament Commitment form which will need to be completed and submitted prior to the seeding meeting. Schools must note on that form of any potential school organized conflicts. Forms can be found in the sport handbook.

When participating in Regional/State Contests, a signed Behavior Code of Conduct for all athletes and coaches must be submitted by the AD at the annual NYSPHSAA AD's meeting.

### **Position Statement: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity**

Section III believes that gender, ethnic, and racial equity is more than being in compliance with the law. It is a spirit. It is a personal ethic. It is a commitment to do what is right and fair for all athletes, officials, coaches and athletic administrators; it means creating an atmosphere and an environment where opportunities and resources are distributed fairly to all. An atmosphere where no person experiences discrimination on the basis of gender, race or ethnicity.

It is the position of Section III Athletics that its member schools monitor their athletic programs to ensure that athletic offerings are equitable and meet the interests and abilities of student-athletes. While Section III Athletics does not have the authority to promote specific interpretations or to rule on compliance issues regarding federal and state laws, it does believe that all concerned should take steps to promote the spirit and intent of gender, racial, and ethnic equity.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Section III affirms its commitment to non-discrimination and recognizes its responsibility to provide for all adults and athletes an environment that is free of sexual harassment and intimidation. Sexual harassment is a violation of law. Therefore, Section III prohibits all forms of sexual harassment by employees, volunteers, student athletes, and non-employees such as contractors (officials) and vendors, which occur at all Section III sponsored events, programs and activities including those that take place at venues other than schools.

Generally, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

Section III acknowledges that in determining whether sexual harassment has occurred the totality of the circumstances, expectations, and relationships should be evaluated including, but not limited to, the ages of the harasser and the victim; the number of individuals involved, and the type, frequency and duration of the conduct. Section III recognizes that sexual harassment can originate from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex, and from a third party such as a visitor, volunteer, or vendor, or any other individual associated with Section III. Sexual harassment may occur from athlete-to-athlete, from adult-to-athlete, from athlete-to-adult, as well as adult-to-adult.

In order for Section III to enforce this policy, and to take corrective measures as may be necessary, it is essential that any person who believes that he/she has been a victim of sexual harassment within the Section III environment, immediately

report such alleged harassment; such report shall be directed to or forwarded to the Section III Executive Director through informal and/or formal complaint procedures as developed by Section III. Such complaints are recommended to be in writing, although verbal complaints of alleged sexual harassment will also be promptly investigated in accordance with the terms of this policy. In the event that the Executive Director is the offender, the complainant shall report his/her complaint to the President of Section III.

However, even in the absence of a complaint, if the Section has knowledge of or has reason to know of or suspect any occurrence of sexual harassment, the Section will investigate such conduct promptly and thoroughly.

Upon receipt of an informal/formal complaint, Section III will conduct a thorough investigation of the charges. To the extent possible, within legal constraints, all complaints will be treated as confidentially and privately as possible. However, disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation of the charges, and any disclosure will be provided on a “need to know” basis. Based upon the results of the investigation, if Section III determines that an employee, and/or athlete has violated the terms of this policy and/or accompanying regulations, immediate corrective action will be taken as warranted. Should the offending individual be an athlete, appropriate disciplinary measures will be applied by the administration of the athlete’s school. Should the offending individual be a school employee, Section III will allow the school of employment of said individual to investigate the complaint, and then follow-up with a written report to Section III. Third parties (such as officials, volunteers, vendors, etc.) who are found to have violated this policy and/or accompanying regulations will be subject to appropriate sanctions as warranted and in compliance with law. Section III prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participated in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment. Regulations will be developed for reporting, investigating and remedying allegations of sexual harassment. Section III will also provide an appeal procedure (outlined in this handbook) to address any unresolved complaints and/or unsatisfactory prior determinations.

## **Procedure for Sexual Harassment Complaints**

**Volunteers/Athletes representing School Districts:** Upon receipt of a complaint of sexual harassment, Section III will refer the complaint to the school districts involved. Within 10 working days, the school districts shall provide a written report of their investigation to Section III. At that point, Section III has the right to declare the matter satisfactorily closed or continue the investigation with the possibility of a three-person hearing.

**Contractors, Officials, Volunteer:** Upon receipt of a complaint of sexual harassment, Section III will investigate the complaint with appropriate sport representatives of the Officiating Committee. If necessary, a three-person hearing may be initiated by Section III to determine the appropriate consequences. Investigations may consist of personal interviews with affected or involved individuals, and other methods and documents deemed pertinent. To the extent possible, Section III will not release the details of a complaint or the identity of the complainant to any third parties who do not need to know such information. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with Section III's legal obligation to provide due process to the accused, with the appropriate notice of allegations and an opportunity to respond to those allegations. Section III will conduct a thorough investigation which provides complainants, the accused and witnesses an appropriate opportunity to provide relevant information and or to take necessary action to resolve the complaint, Section III retains the right to disclose the identity of parties and witnesses to complaints in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know.

Section III will enforce appropriate sanctions against individuals engaging in sexual harassment, including warning, reprimand, suspension, or discharge. Persons who knowingly make false accusations against another individual as to allegations of harassment may also face disciplinary action.

## **AWARDS**

### **STUDENTS:**

#### **Athletes**

At Sectional Championships, the winning team will be presented team medals for their accomplishments immediately following the contest, and a Section III banner for ceremonial/picture purposes. Athletic Directors of winning teams should gather the sizes of team members and contact Section III to place their online order for team members shirts. Each sport will receive a designated number of complimentary championship t-shirts. However, the online order process will allow schools to purchase additional shirts at their own cost if they elect to do so. Individual Section III Champions will be presented a championship t-shirt and medal at the contest. Sport Coordinators should work with Section III Office staff to facilitate the process of getting t-shirts, medals and the championship banners to the championship contests.

With prior approval of the Executive Committee, sport committees may provide additional honors and awards. However, the sport committee must solicit the necessary funding or donations to purchase the awards.

#### **Scholar Athlete Recognition Dinner:**

Schools may nominate a male and female student. Each of these individuals will receive special recognition at the annual dinner and will also be awarded a plaque for their accomplishments. To be eligible for selection, the recommended qualifications senior student-athletes should:

1. Have a cumulative grade point average of 90% or better,
2. Have participated in varsity competition in a Section III sponsored sport, and
3. Other factors such as community service, exemplary citizenship or other extracurricular activities are taken into consideration.
4. A Google Form will be sent to all Athletic Directors for submission of Scholar Athlete information to the Section III Office.

## **ADULTS:**

Adult awards are presented at a time specified by the Section III Executive Committee. It has been the practice of the Section to honor those persons who have given their time, effort and expertise to the student athletes in Section III for an extended period of time.

Section III provides three levels of recognition for adults. The Service Award, Exceptional Service Award, and the Allen Gilberti Lifetime Achievement Award. Please review the criteria for each of the awards outlined below as you consider who YOU should nominate, so they can be recognized for their efforts. These awards will be presented at the Mandatory AD meeting in the Fall.

Examples of service to Section III, upon which these awards are based, are roles such as committee member, sport coordinator, Section III officer, Section III representation on NYSPHSAA committees, and other demonstrations of leadership and achievement as deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee. General criteria for Section III Awards are:

The *Service Award* is presented to people who have:

1. Served Section III for five or more years,
2. Who have demonstrated leadership and commitment,
3. Provided quality service, and extreme dedication in their Section III role.

The *Exceptional Service Award* is presented to people who:

1. Are past recipients of the Section III Service Award,
2. Who have served Section III for ten or more years, and
3. Who have continued to demonstrate outstanding commitment and dedication for Section III.

The *Allen Gilberti Lifetime Achievement Award* is presented to people who:

1. Have contributed 15 or more years of total combined and continuous service to Section III,
2. Who have given extraordinary service during their career, and
3. Who have given their time and effort to Section III in many service and leadership capacities.

## **Nominations**

Nominations should be submitted upon request and in writing. The Section III office shall maintain a list of nominations, as well as past recipients, for the use of the Awards Committee. Nominations may be made by anyone involved in Section III activities or by any person affiliated with a member school.

## **Section III Scholarships for ADs to attend Conferences**

During times when Section III has the resources, the Board of Directors has agreed to provide financial support for the professional development of Section III Athletic Directors.

Specifically, the Board of Directors has agreed to sponsor **two** Athletic Director's attendance, one at the NYSAAA Conference and one at the NIAAA Conference. These sponsorships will remain in place until Section III financial considerations dictate that the Board of Directors rescinds them as they are creating the Section III budget. Preferred applicants for the NYSAAA Conference are individuals newer to the AD profession and/or individuals who work in a District that does not provide financial support for this professional development opportunity. Preferred criteria for NIAAA applicants are individuals who are more veteran in the AD profession and/or those individuals who work in a District that does not provide financial support for this professional development opportunity.

The deadline for letters requesting expenses (travel, room, conference meals) are listed below. A letter of request must be submitted to the Executive Director, and member Athletic Directors approved to attend shall submit written reports and/or presentation to the Athletic Council after attending.

Procedural expectations common to both the NYSAAA and NIAAA Conferences:

### **Application format & deadline:**

Submit a request in writing to the Executive Director by September 15<sup>th</sup> (NIAAA) October 31<sup>st</sup> (NYSAAA) of the requested school year.

### **Application Review by Executive Committee:**

The Executive Director will present applications to the Board of Directors for their review and determination.

**Expenses covered through scholarship:**

Travel, room, conference meals and registration. The applicant will pay expenses and then request reimbursement upon returning from the conference. Alcohol costs will not be reimbursed, and itemized receipts must be submitted for reimbursement.

**Expectations of Sponsored ADs:**

Upon returning from the Conference the sponsored AD will: submit a written one-page summary of the experience to the Board of Directors via the Executive Director; at a league meeting, present information and facilitate a collegial discussion about sessions attended; and, consider presenting compelling session information at the Spring Section-wide AD meeting that will benefit all ADs professional development.

## **CLASSIFICATION OVERVIEW**

**BASIC EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM (BEDS): *Forms required.***

For school classification purposes, enrollment figures are based on the State Education Department BEDS (Bureau of Education Data Systems) data. The school enrollment numbers from the previous school year, grades 9, 10 and an average of 9/10 will be used and approved by the NYSPHSAA Executive Committee, using the finalized BEDS numbers from NYSED for the following school year.

*\* Each October NYSPHSAA approves School Enrollment Numbers to be used for the following school year.*

Yearly classification numbers, as well as classification cut-off numbers for each sport, can be found on the NYSPHSAA website: [NYSPHSAA Classification Numbers](#)

**SECTION III CLASSIFICATION PROCESS: [Section III Classification by BEDS](#)**

It is the policy of Section III to place all schools in the appropriate class to ensure, insofar as reasonable, equitable competition among the member schools. Public schools shall be classified based on their BEDS number except in those instances where a public school specifically requests placement in a class other than the one indicated by its BEDS number.

The Section III Athletic Council may consider such requests but is under no obligation to grant reassignment based on such requests and specifically retains the right to deny any such request.

Recognizing that private schools which include, charter schools, parochial schools of various faiths and denominations, and private schools (together “Private School(s)”) are not limited in many of the constraints that affect public schools, and that Private Schools regularly compete with public schools in league, non-league, and sectional and state competition, the Section III Classification Committee shall meet in accordance with the procedures outlined herein and shall apply the rules published herein to place private schools in the appropriate classification for the purpose of ensuring insofar as reasonable equitable competition among all member schools.

#### **Duties of the Classification Committee**

The Classification Committee is responsible for making the determination of placement in one of the classes for competition in the specific sports program (e.g. football or basketball) for all Private Schools. To accomplish this function, the Section III Classification Committee shall meet biennially (starting in the fall of each odd numbered year) to place Private Schools for which a request had been made for reclassification of one or more of its sports to the appropriate class for the purpose of promoting the Section III policy of ensuring insofar as reasonable equitable competition among all member schools. The proper classification of any sport for a particular school will be to

1. move up in class;
2. move down in class; or
3. remain in the previously assigned class.

Except in the most unusual situations, moves in class will be limited to one class for any two-year period. BEDS numbers will only be used as a starting point of discussion, and placement will only occur through an approved motion of the Classification Committee. If a sport motion fails or if no motion were presented, then the Private School would play where their current BEDS numbers place them.

#### **General Rules Affecting Classification**

BEDS numbers, as submitted to the New York State Education Department in October, will serve as the baseline data for enrollment figures for all Section III schools. NYSPHSAA should provide BEDS enrollment data to Section III by December.

The NYSPHSAA Statewide classification system and guidelines shall be used by Section III schools for Sectional, Regional, and State competition.

Except in unusual circumstances, classification of Section III public schools will be based upon the number of students (boys and girls) enrolled in grades 9-11 including a percentage of ungraded students as follows:

1. 9-12 configuration count  $\frac{3}{4}$  of ungraded,
2. 7-12 configuration count  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the ungraded,
3. 7-9 configuration count  $\frac{1}{3}$  of ungraded.

Private School initial classification will be based upon its BEDS number where there is no significant difference in strength of programs offered by like classified public schools.

Classification of any school shall be made on a sport specific basis meaning that a school program will not be assigned to a higher or lower classification than that indicated by the school's BEDS number on a program wide basis.

### **Classification Procedure**

The Classification Committee will meet three times during the school year of the biennial review year. The meetings will be held at the conclusion of each sport season that is at the end of the fall, winter and spring seasons. The Section III office will send out a meeting notice, sport season report forms and agenda prior to each meeting. The meeting dates will also be posted on the Section III web site. The publication of this notice of the sport season meeting will serve as adequate notice to each Private School which meets the published criteria for placement of the sport in a higher classification in any sport that any motion to move the Private School to a higher classification in that sport may be considered and acted upon at the meeting.

Accordingly, any Private School wishing to oppose a higher reclassification in a sport notwithstanding its meeting of the criteria for a higher classification should come prepared to address such a motion. In the spirit of collegiality, any school, league or sport committee wishing to submit a recommendation for consideration of reclassification of a school's program should but is not mandated to present the motion in writing to the Executive Director one week prior to the scheduled meeting. Sport season report forms are required to be completed by the Athletic Director of the Private School and returned to the Executive Director one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

A representative of the charter and non-public schools is required to attend each Classification Committee meeting and be prepared to discuss each of their teams during the sport season of deliberation.

Any Athletic Director may contact the Executive Director to review recommendations and sport season report forms received prior to the scheduled meeting. Recommendations, regardless of when made, will be evaluated during the Classification Committee meeting. All business should be brought before the assembly by a motion of a committee member. Motions will follow Roberts Rules of Order. The representative of the Private Schools plus will be afforded the opportunity to address the committee before the vote is conducted.

### **Move Up in Classification**

A Private School sport may be considered for placement in a higher classification, if, but only if one of the following criteria are met during the two-year cycle immediately preceding the season's meeting:

1. A winning percentage of .750 in at least one of the following manners over the established two-year period:
  - a. Overall record
  - b. League record
  - c. Record in class (minimum of four games played)
2. League and/or Playoff Champions
3. Sectional Finalist
4. State champion

### **Remain in Place Classification**

A Private School sport may be considered for continuation of its current classification if during the two-year cycle immediately preceding the season's meeting, the team achieved:

1. A winning percentage of .500 or above:
  - a. In class
  - b. Overall (regular season)
  - c. League record
  - d. Qualifies for sectionals or wins a first-round sectional game.

If a Private School team that has been previously moved up in class does not achieve any of the preceding criteria, the Classification Committee will reclassify the team down one class/cycle unless objective evidence justifies further movement, but in no event will the Private School be classified at less than the class indicated by its BEDS number.

### **Change in BEDS or Sport Variation numbers**

If, in the second year of a classification cycle, a school's BEDS numbers would cause the non-public/charter school to drop a class, OR, In the second year of a classification cycle the NYSPHSAA changes the sports variation numbers that would cause any of the school's sport programs to drop a class. THEN:

1. The Section III President, Executive Director and Classification Chairperson will make a recommendation as to the need for the Classification Committee to reconvene for the purpose of establishing appropriate placement for that school's program. Mid-cycle reviews may occur when the NYSPHSAA Classification cut off numbers are changed.
2. Criteria used to determine the need to reconvene the committee will be that established for a sport to "Move up in Classification".
3. A League, School or Sport Committee Chairperson may make a request to the Section President, Executive Director or Classification Chairperson the need to reconvene the Classification Committee.
4. A sport program may not be moved up higher than the class it was in at the start of the classification cycle, unless their current BEDS numbers place them into that new class.

In the event that the Classification Committee is reconvened and if the committee took no action, then the non-public/charter school would play where their current BEDS numbers place them.

### **Information to be provided to Classification Committee**

Sports chairperson and/or representative should present at the Classification Committee meeting with a recommendation and supporting evidence.

1. Sectional tournament brackets, scores and results (need not be limited to the previous 2 years).
2. Sport season report forms are required to be completed by the Athletic Director of the Private School and returned to the Executive Director one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
3. Transfer Committee's annual report.

## **Appeals**

The procedure for the appeal is set forth in the Section III Due Process Procedures for Appeals of Committee Decisions.

A Private School that has been reclassified may appeal the classification or reclassification decision. The school shall submit a written appeal to the Executive Director within ten (10) business days of the notification by the Classification Committee. The Section III Appeal Panel will hear the appeal.

The appeal shall be based solely on the information presented to the Classification Committee. An appeal based upon new information must be referred back to the Classification Committee.

### **Voluntary Request to Move Up in Classification for Sectional Competition**

Requests from a school to move up in classification in any sport(s) must be submitted to the Athletic Council. The request to move up will be for two (2) years, it will remain in effect for a two (2) year cycle, and must be submitted as follows:

Fall Sports:	August 1st for the September Athletic Council meeting
Winter Sports:	October 1st for the November Athletic Council meeting
Spring Sports:	February 1st for the March Athletic Council meeting

The appropriate Section III Sport Committee will provide their recommendation on the request at the Athletic Council meeting prior to the vote. The request must state a specific rationale as the reason for wanting to move up. A rationale that the school is seeking better competition would require that the team in that sport would have won the sectional championship in the previous year in the class that they are requesting to move up from.

When the 2-year moving-up cycle is completed, a school will automatically be returned to their BEDS classification. Schools may request to move up after the completion of their two-year cycle.

### **Voluntary Request to Move Down in Classification in Section Sports (Football & Ice Hockey)**

Deadline for submission of a formal request to the Section III Executive Director for Football is February 1st and for Ice Hockey is May 1st.

1. All schools will be placed in a class according to the current Classifications numbers or placement.

- Schools that feel they cannot compete in their proper class due to program deficiencies may petition to be placed into a lower class by the established deadline. Schools should submit a formal letter to the Section III Executive Director. It MUST be signed by the Chief School Officer and the Athletic Director in order to be valid. The appropriate Section III Sport Committee will also provide their recommendation at the request at the Athletic Council prior to the vote. Schools must understand that if approved they will not be eligible to participate in sectional playoffs.

## **Sports Variation & Classification Numbers & Championships 2024-25**

### *Six Classification Sports*

Class	Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer	Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball	Baseball	Softball
AAA	1090 and up	1087 and up	1084 and up	1090 and up	1087 and up	1090 and up
AA	711-1089	694-1086	661-1083	666-1089	687-1086	680-1089
A	412-710	402-693	376-660	378-665	397-686	397-679
B	249-411	244-401	217-375	229-377	236-396	236-396
C	138-248	144-243	120-216	126-228	144-235	136-235
D	137 and below	143 and below	119 and below	125 and below	143 and below	135 and below

### *Variation Sports*

Class	Girls Volleyball	Football	Competitive Cheerleading	Boys & Girls Cross Country	Boys Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse
AAA	1125 and up					
AA	753-1124	1025 and up	1025 and up			
A	459-752	665-1024	555-1024	815 and up	1036 and up	1060 and up
B	286-458	385-664	250-554	450-814	728-1035	775-1059
C	169-285	261-384	249 and below	255-449	450-727	465-774
D	168 and below	260 and below	One Class	254 and below	449 and below	464 and below

Class	Field Hockey	Game Day Cheerleading	Division	Flag Football	Ice Hockey	Boys Volleyball
A	915 and up	849 and up	Division 1	788 and up	1000 and up	901 and up
B	450-914	479-848	Division 2	787 and down	999 and down	900 and below
C	449 and below	478 and below				

## CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sport		Section III Championships	NYSPHSAA Championship
Soccer, Basketball, Baseball, Softball		6 Class Numbers	6 Class numbers
Football, Lacrosse, Ice Hockey, Volleyball, Cross Country, Cheerleading		Class/Division variation Numbers	Class/Division variation Numbers
Wrestling	Individual	5 Class Sports Numbers	2 Divisions by school size
Wrestling	Team (Duals)	Large & Small Divisions	All One Division
Tennis	Individual	Class A & B above, C-1 399-199, C-2 198 - below	All One Division
Tennis	Team	3 Class Sport Numbers	All One Division
Golf		Large & Small Divisions	All One Division
Gymnastics		All One Division	All One Division
Field Hockey		A: 915 & above B: 450-914 C: 272-449 D: 266 & below	Class Variations
Track & Field		5 Class Sports Numbers	Division 1 & Division 2

## SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

It shall be the mission of the Championship Committee to assure all Section III tournaments and contests are consistent, equitable and fair to all participating schools and their student-athletes. The Championship Committee is composed of the chairs of all Section III sport committees. Their role is to ensure that all Section III tournaments and competition are planned and administered at the highest level possible.

***To that end each Section III Sports Committees will***

1. Plan and stage their championship events by establishing guidelines for tournaments that guarantee fair and equitable competition at all venues in Section III. Section III will not recognize a Sectional Championship Team unless there is a minimum of six teams representing six different schools in Section III. Sports with fewer than six teams participating in a culminating tournament in Section III, prior to September 2018, will continue to be recognized as Section III Champions.
2. Assure that Sectional contests are arranged using a consistent, fair and equitable system of seeding wherever possible.
3. Ensure that designated sites where sectional games and contests are held will be the best available fields and courts with adequate seating and safety arrangements for fans and participants.
4. Work with officials' chapters to provide quality officiating for all championship tournament games and contests.
5. Make good sportsmanship and fair play the theme for all Section III games and contests and all games and contests will be conducted with class and dignity.
6. Ensure that entry standards for teams and individuals entering Section III tournaments shall be sport specific and gender consistent. The Athletic Council must approve requests for entry standard exceptions and changes.
7. Ensure that all schools play within their enrollment classification unless they opted to play up or down according to Section III guidelines.
8. Ensure that Section III recognizes achievement in all sports equally.
9. Ensure that overall educational goals are primary and that every effort will be made to avoid conflict with school daytime for meetings, games or contests.
10. Ensure that the National Anthem is played before the start of each Sectional contest.

**PARTICIPATION**

Participation in any athletic event conducted by Section III shall be open to all member schools in good standing with Section III and NYSPHSAA, provided the school and/or individual meets all required NYSED, NYSPHSAA, Section III guidelines and/or sport specific standards.

Only Section III member schools are eligible to participate in Section III postseason competition. Section III school (s) that participate in other Sections during the regular season are eligible to qualify for Section III postseason but are required to notify the Section III office prior to the first contest of that sport season.

**Participants**

Each school is responsible for always providing student-athlete supervision during all Sectional and NYSPHSAA events. This includes from the point of departure from the District until re-entry into the District.

**Special Tournament Committee Procedures**

For individual sports, the competition after the class meets should be called State Qualifier Meets. There should be no school championship or school awards and only the individual winners should receive Section III individual awards (Section III t-shirt and medals, no ribbons).

The following method should be used for entering teams and individuals:

1. The school Athletic Director and/or coach shall be responsible to mail two entries, one to the Section Coordinator and one to their league representative prior to the deadline.
2. The Committee League Representative shall be held responsible to contact all schools in their league prior to the deadline and shall be held responsible to attend and report on all committee meetings.
3. All committees shall adhere to deadlines; however, (A) above should protect the athletes.
4. Team sport deadlines – the deadline for entering teams into Section III team sport tournaments shall be the date that the brackets/events are established.
5. All Section III championship tournaments shall have qualifying standards.

QUALIFYING STANDARDS

*As established in the 2023-24 school year, Open Sectionals will be held in all team sports.*

Section III facilitates team sectionals in the following sports:

Baseball	Boys & Girls Basketball	Boys & Girls Soccer	Bowling
Field Hockey	Flag Football	Football	Field Hockey
Ice Hockey	Boys & Girls Lacrosse	Softball	Boys & Girls Tennis (Team)

Boys & Girls Volleyball	Boys & Girls Wrestling		
-------------------------	------------------------	--	--

The following sports will have a qualifying standard for individuals to enter the tournament (i.e.: a qualifying time or distance, or a qualifying score on a proper course, etc.):

Gymnastics	Boys & Girls Golf	Boys & Girls Swimming
Boys & Girls Track & Field	Boys & Girls Tennis	Boys & Girls Wrestling

In Girls and Boys Individual Tennis and Golf, individuals and or teams must have a .500 record to qualify for sectionals.

The following sports may conduct open sectional tournaments in which all member school teams may participate if qualifying standards are met:

Boys & Girls Cross Country	Boys & Girls Nordic & Alpine Skiing
Cheerleading	Boys & Girls Indoor & Outdoor Track

In order to maintain consistency in the sports where admission cannot be collected (ie: golf, ski) to help cover the cost of the tournament, schools will be invoiced for all applicable fees. Section III will be responsible for negotiations and payment for the championship, and will invoice each school that participated.

### **Six Event Rule - Representation**

A written waiver request (form) for an individual of the “Six Event Rule” should be addressed to the Executive Director prior to the beginning of Sectional competition accompanied with medical documentation. The Executive Committee shall administer appeals of the six-event rule.

### **Extenuating Circumstance**

The Executive Committee will determine if extenuating circumstances exist regarding teams/individual Sectional tournament entry. The Executive Director must receive the written request on school letterhead and explanation of the extenuating circumstance prior to the seeding meeting. Extenuating circumstances will be subject to verification and will be determined on an individual basis at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

## **Seeding**

It shall be the mission of the Championship Committee to ensure all Section III tournaments and contests are consistent, equitable and fair to all participating schools and their student athletes.

Effective with the 2015-16 school year, 20% of each Section III schools' schedule in a sport must be played against schools in its own class or higher class, or that school will not be seeded **higher than fifth** in any sectional tournament.

*All 6 class sports will continue to use the Bradley Terry Model as an extended pilot for the 2024-2025 school year. Any sport other than 6 class sports may apply to Section III to use the BT Model seeding pilot 2024-2025 by 30 days prior to your season. Field Hockey has requested to use the BT Model for seeding.*

Using the seeding criteria determined by each sports' committee, teams will be placed based on their seed into one overall bracket; 32-team brackets will be used to confirm seed matchups. A 32-team bracket will best illustrate accurate bracket placement when more than 16 teams qualify in a classification. No split classes will be used in any sport that has 6 classes in regional and state championships.

Only games completed prior to the established seeding meeting shall be used for sectional seeding. ***Once a school or individual has been seeded in the sectionals, if that school or individual does not fulfill their commitment in the sectional tournament, that school or individual will be banned from sectionals in that sport for the following year.*** For those sports with schools that play an independent schedule, seeding will be at the discretion of Section III and the sports committee.

## **Splitting classes**

When there are 16 schools (complete teams) that qualify for the Sectional tournament in Cross Country and Track and Field, the sports committee may choose to split the class. Teams are ranked by enrollment. The "odd" team in the middle shall be placed in the upper bracket unless there is an enrollment tie with the team below it. In all sports where the Section III Classification Committee elevates a non-public or charter school, when that sport splits a class for the Section III tournament, that school shall be placed in the "upper" split.

## **Sites**

Sites for all Sectional Tournament contests should be secured by the Sport Coordinator, working in conjunction with the Facilities Committee and Executive Director, and must be presented and approved by the Athletic Council.

Designated sites/dates should be determined ASAP for league scheduling purposes. All final contests should be played on the best available sites across the Section.

Schools must get the same consideration when selecting sites regardless of gender and/or school size. All sites for class competitions should be selected well enough in advance to properly plan and carry out the tasks necessary to conduct quality championship events.

### **Practice at Designated Sites**

When during the course of Section III tournament play, competition reaches the level necessitating the scheduling of contests at non-high school sites, participating teams will not be permitted to practice at such sites without permission of the Executive Director and the appropriate Section III sports committee coordinator.

### **Ties**

When Sectional contests end in a tie, approved overtime procedures as specified in the sport rulebook will be followed. In the event a game ended in a tie and all overtime procedures have been exhausted, co-champions will be declared. When co-champions are declared, each sport committee handbook will have procedures to determine who will advance in the tournament.

### **Uniforms**

Athletes will be required to wear their school uniform at Section III Championships and the State Tournament. Sport Committees have the option to have athletes participate in "Section Uniforms" at the NYSPHSAA individual Championships as long as no cost is charged to the students, schools or section. Any "Section III uniform" request requires Executive Committee approval prior to the start of the Section III Tournament.

### **Scouting**

Scouting by coaches and other school related personnel shall be allowed in compliance with those rules and guidelines set up and adopted by leagues and/or Section III through Section III sports committees. It shall be illegal to use any means of scouting not approved by the aforementioned groups. Using video for scouting purposes is allowed for all sports.

### **Souvenirs**

1. The selling of any souvenirs that involve Section III logos or Section implications will not be permitted without prior approval by the Section III Executive Committee and/or Executive Director.

2. The Section III treasury will be reimbursed 15% of the profits from such sales.

### **Pep Bands**

Pep bands must be school approved and must have adult supervision. The Sport Coordinator must be notified of their participation. Playing of music during live ball situations is prohibited.

### **Immediate Decision Authority**

Authority has been extended to the Committee member in attendance at any tournament game. These decisions are to be administered through the site chairman. In absence of a committee member at a game, the site chairman is empowered to rule on the propriety of signs, the safety of all concerned and any other unusual situation not covered in the game rules or Section III regulations.

### **Forfeiture Procedure**

The Executive Committee, at the request of a school district or Sport Coordinator, may review forfeits because of a game that was never played. The Executive Committee has the authority to determine whether the forfeit results (win/loss) will count for qualifying standards or seeding purposes.

During the regular season and prior to the seeding meeting, forfeits not reviewed by the Executive Committee because of a game that was never played, cannot be used to determine:

1. Entry into the tournament, or
2. For seeding purpose, or
3. An incomplete game (as defined by individual sport rule books and/or league procedures) that is conceded by one school will be counted as an official game. This will be used in determining entry into the Section tournament and for seeding purposes.

Refer to the NYSPHSAA handbook in the Penalties for Ineligible Participants section for further information. Awards for ineligible individuals or teams will be vacated. Forfeits are included when determining the Maximum Number of Contests for a team or individual. If a team is forfeiting the contest to the opposing school prior to the scheduled date, and because no contest will take place, the team is not subject to the nights rest rule.

If a team is protesting a contest prior to the start or removes their team during the contest, the coach and athletic director of the protesting team must present to the Executive Committee an explanation of their protest. The Executive Committee will determine the outcome of the protest. Officials are to notify the Section III office promptly in writing when this occurs. All other protests should follow sport specific guidelines.

### **Scheduling Guidelines**

1. Games and contests should be scheduled whenever possible so as not to involve early release time from school for teams, coaches, and fans.
2. Games and contests should be scheduled within a reasonable distance of each school. Every effort should be made to keep travel to the minimum on school days.
  - a. When travel is considered excessive and cannot be adjusted during the seeding process, committees are asked to plan for and use a designated site taking travel of both schools into consideration.
  - b. Conduct the contest at schools or a venue with lights when and where possible.
  - c. Schedule on weekends.
  - d. Designated Semi and Final dates and sites will not change unless there is a problem at the host facility.
  - e. Special problems that the Sport Committee should consider:
    - i. The end of daylight savings time in the fall
    - ii. Attempt to schedule games at night on lighted fields.
    - iii. Schedule games on weekends.
  - f. When two teams from the same school have a common opponent, efforts should be made to schedule the games on the same day at a common location. For example, scheduling a boys/girl's double header at a neutral site at night.
  - g. Not schedule sectional activities on the same day that the school budget vote occurs.
  - h. Avoid major testing dates:
    - i. Each sports committee should be aware of the testing dates (ACT, PSAT, SAT, etc.) and make every effort to reduce the conflicts with those tests.

### **Failure to Honor a Commitment**

Failure to honor competition commitments determined by a Section III sports committee for a varsity contest, will invoke forfeiture by the offending school, and exclusion from Section III postseason competition for their varsity team in that sport during the next sports season. A school is exempted if the decision not to play is mutually agreeable by both schools, or the circumstances are beyond the control of the school (i.e. lack of numbers due to injuries, suspension, etc).

### **PROTEST POLICY FOR A TOURNAMENT**

Section III will follow NYSPHSAA policy and/or sport rulebooks for protests of games in the Tournament. All questions/protests as to game/meet rules or as to the conduct of the game/meet shall be heard and decided by the game/meet representatives as determined by the Section. Members of the sport committee, or their designee, should attend all Section III tournament games. Authority has been extended to the sports committee members, or their designees (host AD), in attendance at any tournament game to immediately rule on any “official” protest. If time and conditions allow, the chairperson or site supervisor may consult with the Executive Director or President via phone. All such decisions shall be final with no right to appeal.

It is Section III Policy that a protest of a contest is not allowed when it is based on judgment decisions of officials. Officials are required to adhere to all provisions of the playing rules, which allow for the review of decisions during contests.

### **Protest Procedures:**

1. Section III game protests must be resolved on site on the same date of the game. There is no appeal of the decision(s) rendered.
2. Coaches must verbally protest immediately and ask the official to note in the scorebook or sign a written copy of the protest at the conclusion of the contest.
3. Coaches are responsible for having a rulebook at the site of the game. In the absence of a rulebook or a needed rule interpretation, the officials should proceed with the contest in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
4. All protests must be noted, in writing, before the officials leave the confines of the playing area.
5. Protests may not be presented after the officials have concluded the contest, except in game ending situations involving the safety of the students.
6. Should be handled in a sportsmanlike manner.

## **Officials**

The Sport Coordinator will assure that the very best available officials are chosen to work the Sectional games. The Sport Coordinator will achieve this with open communication with our official's chapters through the officials Coordinating Committee and the assignors. Committees are to work with assignors to assure that the best officials are selected for sectional play.

Assignments will not be made on a chapter by chapter or a rotating basis, nor should a person be selected because they are an officer in one of the officials' chapters. The pool for selecting officials consists of all the chapters of officials servicing Section III schools during the regular season.

No official will be assigned to two (2) consecutive Section III contests involving the same school in the sports of Soccer, Football, Basketball, Ice Hockey, Volleyball, Baseball, Softball, and Lacrosse. Field Hockey was removed from this list by a motion approved at the 3/27/03 Athletic Council meeting. No official will be assigned two Sectional contests in one day, unless approved by the Executive Director and/or the Sport Coordinator.

### **Number of officials:**

Refer to the current Section III Officials contract for the number of officials assigned to a regular season varsity contest and Sectional contests. As per the [Officials Agreement](#) contract, during the regular season the home school may choose to add an additional official, as allowed by the rulebook.

The home school will be responsible for the cost of the additional official and that official's mileage, per the contract.

### **OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURE**

Sectional schedules will be developed by the Sport Committee and distributed to participating schools and sport assignor(s). Assignors are required to assign the minimum number of officials (as stated above) during all sectional contests unless the current officials' contract stipulates differently. Section III will invoice schools for the additional official, during sectional rounds when the Section is responsible for expenses.

In the spirit of competition for Sectional assignments all boards should work together with their Sports Coordinator to ensure the top officials are working these contests.

1. Existing procedures will be kept in place for each sport.
2. If a conflict arises between chapters and sports committees for sectional assignments the existing method will prevail for that sectional season.
3. A revised procedure may be developed between the chapters and sports committees, overseen by the Section III Officiating Committee, with the approval of the Athletic Council the new procedure will be put into place prior to the start of the next sports season.

### **HOSTING A SECTIONAL EVENT**

When selecting a host site, the Facilities Committee and the individual sport committee will consider a school/venue's available facilities, cost, travel, accessibility, support staff and amenities provided.

The following sections outline the responsibilities of the host school/venue:

<b><i>ITEM:</i></b>	<b><i>IDEAL MINIMUM FOR SECTION III</i></b>
<b>Venue</b>	The host school/venue shall assist in providing routine services necessary to conduct the event. The venue must be appropriate for the sport, clean and accessible.
<b>Playing area</b>	Court and Field diagrams as specified by NFHS guidelines.
<b>Dressing Rooms</b>	Two adequate dressing rooms with space for the number of participants, located near the competition area; including access to a sufficient number of lockers, showers, and lavatories with hot and cold water.
<b>Officials Room</b>	Separate dressing room for the game officials with similar amenities.
<b>Lavatories</b>	Appropriate according to the event.
<b>Electrical Capacity</b>	Multiple GFCI equipped outlets for use with sound systems, scoring, and video production systems, along with separate outlets to accommodate office equipment needs. Sufficient outlets in the common area to support vendor needs.
<b>Telephone Lines</b>	When possible, dedicated telephone lines in the scoring room for official use.

<b>Internet Access</b>	When possible, high-speed Internet access in scoring or press box.
<b>Concessions</b>	Area within the facility designated for food service to participants and spectators. Proceeds from concessions go directly back to the host school.
<b>Parking</b>	Adequate parking space for all Section III officials, event workers, vendors, participants and spectators. Parking location convenient to the facility, and well lit for evening events. Must also have handicap parking.
<b>Auxiliary Areas</b>	Designated area for athlete's equipment.
<b>ITEM:</b>	<b><i>IDEAL MINIMUM FOR SECTION III</i></b>
<b>Additional Warm Up Space</b>	Sufficient open space (hallways, classroom, outdoor area, etc) out of spectator's view and inclement weather conditions.
<b>Scoreboard – Sound</b>	A working scoreboard and public-address system to meet the needs of the individual sport.
<b>Meeting Rooms</b>	Meeting rooms for the sports committee, meeting and hospitality, scoring room, training/first aid, media work area and cheerleaders.
<b>Security</b>	Adequate professional security to handle anticipated crowd control. Game officials shall be provided security on and off the playing area. If requested, security to their car.
<b>Ticket Takers</b>	It is the responsibility of the host venue to provide ticket sellers. Section III will assist in semi and final Sectional events.
<b>Athletic Trainers</b>	If either team does not have an athletic trainer, it's the responsibility of the host venue to have an emergency plan or access to a medical professional.
<b>Handicap Accessible</b>	The proposed venue must be handicap accessible.

***\*\*\* Request for proposal to host a Section III event should be submitted to the Section III Sport Coordinator and or the Executive Director \*\*\****

## Suggested Pre-Game Announcement

*Good Evening. Section III welcomes you to \_\_\_\_\_ (venue) and our \_\_\_\_\_ (Sport) \_\_\_\_\_ (Class/semi/finals) Championship between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*

Section III reminds you that interscholastic athletic events are an extension of the classroom, and as such, it is the expectation of Section III that everyone involved in the game – players, coaches and spectators – be responsible for conducting themselves in a respectful manner. Student Athletes, compete with honor and integrity tonight and play for the love of the game as usual. Coaches, as you always do, please be positive, model appropriate behavior, patience, and respect. Spectators, Section III supports and encourages you to enjoy the competition between our student athletes, cheer for your team, have fun, and support the spirit of Section III Athletics. We thank you for your cooperation.

Section III Athletics wishes both teams the best of luck in tonight's contest!

### **DIGITAL “ALL SPORTS PASS”**

Section III has incorporated a Digital “*All Sport Pass*” to download on your phone that will allow ADs and School Administrators free admission into any event hosted by Section III Athletics. These personalized passes will emphasize the important role that our professionals have while attending and supervising our athletic events, and also assisting in identification if a critical situation should arise. This program will help ensure that our professionals can quickly and easily be identified as they carry out their responsibilities.

These Digital Passes will be distributed to each member schools: Superintendent, High School Principal, Athletic Director, Athletic Trainer, Section III sport committee members along with regional and local media. Every school will receive five generic passes to use as they see fit. Schools will have an option to purchase additional passes for \$25.00 each.

### **Guidelines:**

1. Section III annual passes are given only to our member schools and are good only at Section III sponsored events. These passes are good for two (2) admission only.
2. Section III Lifetime (gold with blue lettering) passes is good for two admissions to any sectional event.

3. In certain unusual conditions, Section III officers or committees may suspend all passes.
4. Old Section III Photo ID badges will no longer be accepted.
5. Faculty and League passes shall not be honored at Section III sponsored events.
6. Media personnel (newspaper, TV, radio) covering Sectional events are required to present their digital pass along professional identification showing the name of their employer.
7. Section III will issue sport specific passes to official's organizations for observation purposes during the regular season. Non-working game officials shall buy a digital ticket unless authorized by Section III Committee for free admittance into a Sectional contest.
8. Family members of working and non-working officials shall buy digital tickets unless authorized by Section III committee for free admittance.

## **TOURNAMENT FINANCIAL POLICY**

Regarding sites, financial reports, and the sales of tickets

1. Sports and Facility Committees must select sites well in advance of the tournaments (10-12 months). **Note:** When a sports committee selects a high school site that has a great quality field or court for its championship site, it is possible that a team may occasionally play a championship game on its own field or court.
2. Playing areas must be rulebook legal size. Any team(s) that, because of its seed, has won the right to host a Section III tournament game will be allowed to host that game at the site where the team normally plays their home games. If a selected first round site is non-regulation or unplayable, the game or contest will be played on a neutral field. In the case of emergency circumstances, a field or court may be used if:
  - a. The Athletic Directors agree on the site.
  - b. The sports committee or coordinator directs the field or court to be used.
3. Prior to semi-final rounds, the host school shall determine if admission is to be charged and so notify all schools. If admission is charged, the proceeds belong to the host school. The host school is responsible for the payment of all game expenses, including the contest officials.
4. Digital tickets for Section III semi-final, final, and regional tournament games are sold through HomeTown Ticketing.
5. Expenses must be sent in with properly filled out vouchers to the Section III Office.

### **Auxiliary Personnel Fees**

The Section III Board of Directors has established the following pay rate for auxiliary personnel at a Section III event; these rates should apply unless the host facility has other contractual obligations with their employees.

Auxiliary personnel must be pre-approved by the Sport Coordinator and or the Executive Director before the event begins. Auxiliary personnel are deemed “Volunteers” who may be receiving a stipend to perform a specific task or who offer services and are not recognized as employees of the school district or the Section for those services.

### **Sectionals/Regionals**

<b>Auxiliary Position</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Site Supervisor (1 per event)	\$35 / hour
Athletic Trainer	\$35 / hour
Announcer	\$35 / game
Main Clock Operator	\$35 / game
Scorekeep / Shot Clock	\$35 / game
Event Staff / Security	\$25 / hour
Ticket Scanner	\$20 / hour
Custodial / Parking	\$20 / hour
Professional Security	Per contract

### **EXPENDITURES**

Section III shall pay all expenditures associated with a sectional or regional event hosted by Section III.

### **Guidelines**

1. All sports committees’ budgets and justifiable expenses shall be submitted by the Sports Coordinators to the Executive Director for approval and paid by the Section. However, all committee services, related to sports committee work by committee people, shall be donated.
2. The Board of Directors is empowered to make decisions about all game programs including the right to negotiate for paid program advertisements.

3. No Section III representatives will purchase any hats, T-shirts or other special items that have not been approved by the Board of Directors.
4. When a sport committee places contests on neutral sites, every effort must be made to see that the games are played at sites where admission can be charged. Sites should provide easily secured seating areas for spectators.
5. If it is impossible to charge admission at a neutral site, Section III will pay only pre-approved contest expenses.
6. All vendors must complete an application and pay a \$ 250.00 fee to the Section and must be pre-approved by the Executive Director. The host booster club is exempt from this process.
7. All media requests should be handled through the Section III office. *Form required for broadcasting.*

## Section III Ticket Policy & Admission Fee Chart 2024-2025

---

Semi-Final, Final and Regional contests hosted by Section III will use digital ticketing, HomeTown Ticketing, for entry.

Tickets may be purchased at the Section III website on the “Store” tab ([Section III tickets](#)) or in line at the event with a credit card. Tickets will be available until they are sold out.

Please contact HomeTown Ticketing via email at [fansupport@hometownticketing.com](mailto:fansupport@hometownticketing.com) or call toll free 1-866-488-4849 with any issues.

1. Each person admitted needs a ticket.
2. Children ages 5 and under do not need a ticket when accompanied by an adult.
3. Gates open 60 minutes prior to the event time.
4. Please have your ticket(s) ready for scanning when you approach the gate.
5. Good sportsmanship is an expectation for all in attendance. Fans not meeting this expectation will be removed from the venue.
6. Backpacks, bags, outside food or drinks are prohibited.
7. Bearer of each ticket assumes all risk and danger incidental to this contest and releases Section III Athletics and all agents thereof from all liabilities resulting from such case.
8. Bearer of each ticket understands that all photographs and video taken at this Section III event are for personal use only and that use for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited without pre-approval by Section III.

### **REFUND POLICY:**

Tickets will only be refunded if the event is CANCELED. If the event is postponed and rescheduled, **hold on to your ticket**, as it will be accepted at the rescheduled event. Admissions help our non-profit organization to cover officials, venue costs, and event workers to make each tournament successful. Below is a table of the ticket prices for Section III events.

**Section III Admission Fee Chart, 2024-2025**

Ticket Prices	Pre-sale	General Admission		4 pack
	Credit	Credit	Cash	
<b>Semi's</b>	\$8.50	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$32.00
Includes Wrestling Duals & Class Meets and Indoor Track Sectional/Class Championships				
<b>Final's</b>	\$9.00	\$11.00	\$15.00	\$34.00
Includes Bowling Shoot-Out, Cheerleading Sectional Championship, State Qualifiers, Inter-Class Wrestling				
<b>Regional's</b>	\$9.50	\$11.50	\$15.00	\$36.00
<b>INDOOR TRACK Meet:</b>	\$5.00	\$5.50	\$10.00	\$16.00
<b>All Events Season Pass</b> <i>(Does not include Sectionals or State Qualifier)</i>	\$25.00			

NOTES:

1. JMA Wireless Dome events: May have different prices and purchase places due to their contract with TicketMaster.
2. Admission prices for preliminary rounds (anything other than semi's and finals) are set by the host school.
3. Children 5 years of age and younger are admitted free to all Section III contests, except those at JMA Wireless Dome.

---

**SECTION III IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES OCCURRING TO ANY PERSON OR PROPERTY AT A SECTION III CONTEST.**

---

**FINANCIAL POLICIES: *Forms and receipts required.***

**Authority for Expenditure**

With the prior approval of the Executive Director all reasonable expenses for hotel, meals and travel shall be paid by the Section:

1. Any Athletic Director or Sport Coordinator required to represent Section III at any official meeting shall be reimbursed for their expenses.
2. Any person not required to represent Section III at an official meeting may request, in writing, to attend. The letter should include justification for attendance and should be directed to the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors

**SCHOOL POST-SEASON TEAM REIMBURSEMENTS**

Reimbursement for post-season (regional and state) competition is provided to schools participating in team sports. Section III has allocated \$10,000 per sport season to be distributed among schools requesting assistance. Reimbursements are determined by the formulas listed below. There is no provision for reimbursement for Regional, Intersectional, or State contests hosted within Section III.

Reimbursement will only be authorized when a Section III school must travel to another Section.

**Deadline Dates**

In order for a school to be eligible for reimbursement, the request must be submitted to the Treasurer 30 days following the event for which reimbursement is sought.

**Reimbursement Restrictions**

Reimbursement is limited to TEAM SPORTS only. The maximum number of school representatives covered for reimbursement is as follows:

<b>Sport</b>	<b>School Representatives (maximum)</b>
Baseball & Softball	20
Basketball	16
Bowling	5

Cheerleading	18
Cross Country	7
Field Hockey	25
Flag Football	30
Football	40
Ice Hockey	25
Lacrosse	25
Soccer	25
Tennis (team only)	8
Volleyball	12
Wrestling	20

### **Expenses**

Upon conclusion of the event the Athletic Director should complete the Reimbursement Request form, itemizing the expenses incurred. Receipts are required. In each expense category listed below, the actual expense will be reimbursed up to the maximum allowed.

### **Travel:**

Mileage allowance is limited to the mileage as shown on the NYSPHSAA Transportation Mileage Chart. Mileage is reimbursed at the established NYSPHSAA rate.

### **Lodging:**

Hotel allowance is \$30.00 per participant.

### **Meals:**

Reimbursement per participant for meals is a maximum of \$31.00 per day. This amount is calculated on Breakfast at \$6.00, Lunch at \$10.00 and Dinner at \$15.00.

### **Busing to the Intersectional Event**

1. This shall be administered by the Section Sport Chairperson, with approval from the Section III office.

2. The Chairman shall establish a deadline for schools to indicate that they elect not to ride the common carrier and thus shall not be billed.
3. Otherwise, all Section III reps and coaches shall ride the common carrier and the chairman shall bill their school.
4. The Section shall pay the carrier and the chairman shall administer the collection.
5. If a school coach cannot attend the intersectional event, then that school must appoint one of the other regular coaches as its school coach to supervise the athlete(s).

### **COMMITTEE EXPENSES**

With the pre-approval of the Executive Director, Section III shall pay all reasonable expenses for hotel, meals and travel:

1. All Sport Coordinators/Chairperson required to represent Section III at any official meeting shall be reimbursed for their expenses. Expenses must be pre-approved by the Section III Executive Director.
2. Sport Coordinators/Chairperson may receive mileage reimbursement for meetings and events from their place of residence, as pre-approved by the Section III Executive Director.
3. No mileage reimbursement for committee members or site personnel.
4. Meals/water will not be provided for officials at team sport sectional tournaments, at the expense of the section.
5. Any person not required to represent Section III at an official meeting may request, in writing, to attend. The letter should include justification for attendance and should be directed to the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors.

### **SPORTS COMMITTEES AND COORDINATORS**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The Section Sport Coordinator and/or Committee Chairperson will provide leadership at the interscholastic level. All committee policies and procedures require Athletic Council approval. Any changes within the policies and procedures need to be highlighted and presented to the Athletic Council for final approval.

## **Sports Committees Duties & Responsibilities**

### **Composition**

1. Coaching representatives will be determined by league alignment in that sport and limited to one representative from each division.
2. For Section III sports that are scheduled by the individual sports committee (i.e. Football, Ice Hockey, Indoor Track), that Sports Committee will determine its representation with the approval of Athletic Council.
3. There shall be a minimum of one Athletic Director appointed, if necessary, by the Executive Committee, as a consultant to all Section III Sports Committees. It is expected that these Athletic Directors shall be in attendance or be represented by another Athletic Director at all of these Section III Sport Committee meetings. If a voluntary Athletic Director cannot be found to consult to a Section III sports committee, then the Athletic Director from the school of the sport coordinator will serve in that capacity. If a sport coordinator is not affiliated with a school district, the Executive Committee will make the appointment.
4. Voting members of Sports Committees are official league and independent school representatives **in attendance**. A Coordinator that serves as a representative will vote. If a Coordinator is not a representative, (s)he will vote only in the case of a tie. Co-coordinators and assistants who are not league representatives shall have no vote.

### **Duties.**

1. Plan and stage championship events by establishing guidelines for tournaments that guarantee fair and equitable competition.
2. Assure that Sectional contests are arranged using a consistent, fair and equitable system of seeding. This seeding process should be the same for boys and girls where the same sport is played.
3. Assure that designated sites will be a quality venue with adequate seating and safety arrangements for fans and participants.
4. Work with officials' chapters to provide quality officiating for all championship tournament games and contests.
5. Make good sportsmanship and fair play the theme for all Section III games and contests. Conduct all games and contests with class and dignity.
6. Plan and attend meetings as specified in the Handbook for Sports Coordinators.
7. Assure that classification policy and procedures are followed.
8. Assure that overall educational goals are primary and that every effort will be made to not conflict with school daytime for meetings, games or contests.

9. Follow the procedures as listed in the NYSPHSAA or the sport handbook.
10. Plan and stage championship events by establishing guidelines for tournaments that guarantee fair and equitable competition.
11. The sport committee will work with the Facility Committee to determine sites for Sectional semi-final and final contests for the following year. Proposals are presented for approval at the May/June Athletic Council meeting.
12. Changes in Sectional seeding procedures require Athletic Council discussion and approval *prior to the start of the sport season*.-for the following school year.
13. Changes in the Sport Handbook require Athletic Council discussion and approval *prior to the start of the sport season*.

## **Sports Coordinator Duties & Responsibilities**

### Manner of Selection

1. Sport Coordinators will be nominated to a term of three (3) years by a majority vote of their committee at the post-season meeting.
2. The Section III Executive Committee will approve Sport Coordinator appointments annually.
3. The Coordinator will be directly responsible to the Vice President of Boys and/or Girls Sports and may be relieved of their Coordinator duties at any time by the Executive Committee.
4. The Sport Coordinator, with the approval of the Executive Committee, can appoint co-Coordinators and/or Assistants.
5. At the end of the 3-year term of each sport coordinator, the sports committee members in that sport shall be allowed to re-elect the current chair for another term or take nominations from the floor for a new chairperson. Elections must take place at the post-season meeting.
6. If a sport coordinator resigns during their three-year term, the sport's committee will accept nominations to complete the term and then vote to make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.
7. The Sport Coordinator, with the approval of the Executive Committee, can appoint co-Coordinators and/or Assistants.

### Committee & Contest Attendance

1. Attend Section III Athletic Council meetings, during your sport season and as requested, in order to:
  - Present Committee minutes at Athletic Council meeting for review and consideration.

- Propose motions for changes to the Athletic Council, including but not limited to the following:
  - Procedural modifications (including seeding format),
  - Changes in conducting a sectional tournament,
  - Changes in game management.
- 2. Attend State Committee meetings in your sport
- 3. Attend the Intersectional & Regional contests in your sport (if hosted by Section III)
- 4. Attend Section III Championship Committee meetings

Organize and facilitate:

1. Pre and Post Season meeting: provide the Executive Director a list of league representation, indicating who was at the meeting and who was absent. (See page 57 for suggested pre and post season meeting agendas).
2. Send to the Section III office annually:
  - a. Next year's committee budget request (on the specific budget form) for your committee to the Section III Treasurer by the end of the current school year
  - b. All intersectional, regional and section results in your sport.
  - c. Awards order (certificates, patches & banner).
  - d. All next year's dates including: All committee meetings, Seeding meetings, Competition dates must be submitted by MARCH 1st.
  - e. Requests for corporate sponsorship
3. Prepare with the aid of the Section III office staff for dispersal to all appropriate schools and personnel:
  - a. Pre-season meeting minutes and/or report.
  - b. Post-season meeting minutes and/or report.
  - c. Coaches' directory
  - d. Rulebook updates and NYSPHSAA regulations.
  - e. A directory of your committee. Your committee should include one representative from each league.
  - f. The minutes of all committee meetings, including state and section.
  - g. All recommendations in the form of motions to be acted upon by the Athletic Council. These should also be sent to the appropriate Section III Vice-President.
  - h. Competition schedules
  - i. Updated handbook/bylaws for your sport requires notification and approval of the Athletic Council.

4. Obtain from the Section III Office:
  - a. Awards
  - b. Admission Tickets (Section passes are not valid for Sectional finals or NYSPHSAA Regionals hosted by Section III).
  - c. Forms, vouchers, checklists, etc.
  - d. Liability insurance certificates for institutions who request them
  - e. Expense reimbursement forms.

### **Procedure for administration of Sectional Tournaments**

1. Dates should be set well in advance, preferably by March 1st.
2. Sites must be secured. Factors to consider in selecting a site should be:
  - a. Location/travel
  - b. Size/quality of facility
  - c. Community/Spectator interest
  - d. Expenses/Revenue
  - e. Overall satisfaction of teams and competitors.
3. Communicate with host site and Section III office regarding the following job responsibilities:
  - a. Supervision at sites
  - b. Ticket takers and sellers
  - c. Table Personnel: Scorekeepers, Announcers, Clock Operators
  - d. Athletic Trainers
  - e. AED
  - f. Sport specific job duties
4. Work with officials' chapters to provide quality officiating for all championship tournament games and contests. Work with the sport assignor to select game officials for sectional play and regional games hosted by Section III.
5. Immediate decision authority has been extended to the Site Coordinator/hosting Athletic Director at any tournament contest. The Site Coordinator/hosting Athletic Director shall consult with any committee members that are in attendance at the contest prior to rendering a decision. In the absence of committee members at a contest, the Site Coordinator/hosting Athletic Director is empowered to rule on the propriety of signs, the safety of all concerned, and any other unusual situations not covered in the game rules or Section III regulations.
6. File all required tournament reports with the Section III Office at the conclusion of the final championship contest.

7. At Section III sponsored tournament events, the host school will be responsible for providing an AED(s). At Section III sponsored tournament events conducted at non-school sites, the Sport Coordinator will be responsible for confirming AED availability or providing an AED.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Coaches, schools and committees should not speak for Section III and should not contribute to controversy in the media.
2. Only officers of Section III should react to releases in the media.
3. When representing Section III in Regional or State competition, do not buy uniforms, T-shirts, or any other such items unless you have written pre-approval from the Section III Athletic Council or Executive Committee.
4. Vendors seeking to sell merchandise must have written pre-approval from the Section III Executive Director.
5. Corporate sponsorship is not forbidden. However, submit all proposals regarding corporate sponsorship to the Section III Executive Committee for approval, prior to any commitments.
6. There shall be a minimum of one Athletic Director, appointed by the Executive Committee, if necessary, as a consultant to all Section III sports committees.
7. **DO NOT SIGN ANY CONTRACTS** – submit contracts to the Section III office. Negotiating contracts is the responsibility of the Executive Director.

### Pre and Post Season Meeting & Suggested Agenda:

1. Pre-season meeting
  - a. Conducted prior to the official start of practice.
  - b. Ensure all leagues are represented.
  - c. AGENDA:
    - i. Review current dates and sites for the post-season tournament.
    - ii. Review seeding criteria, dates and locations for the current season.
    - iii. Review the current guidelines and discuss any proposals for change in your procedures with your Boys or Girls Vice President.
    - iv. Review BEDS numbers to determine and project where teams will be placed for competition.
    - v. Review approved combinations for Sectional placement. Discuss future sites/locations for future Championships.
    - vi. Other issues as deemed necessary.

2. Post-season meeting
  - a. Conducted within 30 days of the State Finals. Exceptions will be reviewed with the Executive Director.
  - b. Look to fill any vacancies on your committee.
  - c. AGENDA:
    - i. Review seeding criteria establish dates and sites for the following year's tournament and submit to the appropriate Vice President and Section III office.
    - ii. Review current guidelines, bylaws and handbook and bring changes, if any, to the appropriate Vice President to receive direction.
    - iii. Review current BED numbers to assure schools are in the appropriate classification for the following year.
    - iv. Submit to Classification Committee recommendations for placement of private school and attend Classification Committee meetings.
    - v. Other issues as deemed necessary.

## COMMITTEES

*Composition:* Coaching representatives will be determined by the league alignment in that sport and will be limited to one representative from each division.

The number and role of the AD rep(s) varies according to different sport committees. The AD rep will not vote when s/he sits in an advisory role on the committee. For those committees on which the AD serves as a voting member, the AD will have voting privileges. If both the AD and coaching representative are from the same school, they will be limited to one vote.

For Section III sports where scheduling is done by the committee, that sport committee will determine its representation with approval of the Athletic Council. Voting members of a Sports Committee are official league representatives in attendance. Co-Coordinator and Assistant committee members who are not league representatives are not eligible to vote. A coordinator who serves as a representative will vote. If a coordinator is not a league representative, he/she will vote only in case of a tie.

1. To be represented on a Sports Committee a school must participate in that sport.

2. Voting members of Sports Committees are official representatives in attendance.

Sport Committees are encouraged to invite a representative from your sport of the Section III Officials Committee to be a non-voting member of your committee.

While the Executive Committee encourages Section III committees to conduct sport clinics and all-star games, all such events must be self-sustaining and will not be supported financially by Section III.

The Sports Coordinator shall inform the Section III Vice President of Boys and/or Girls Sports if a league representative is not present at a scheduled meeting of that sports committee.

### **SPORT COORDINATORS 2024-25**

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
Baseball	Chip Matteson	Spring 2026
Basketball (B)	Fred Kent Garrett Harthem	Winter 2024-25
Basketball (G)	Larry Stockwell	Winter 2025-26
Bowling (B)	Mike O'Connell	Winter 2026-27
Bowling (G)	Jeff Klatt	Winter 2026-27
Cheerleading	Stephanie Moretti Tiffany Rutledge	Winter 2024-25
Cross Country (B)	Jack Bernard	Fall 2025
Cross Country (G)	Michelle Rauber	Fall 2026
Field Hockey	Monica Tooley	Fall 2026
Flag Football	April Wertheim	Spring 2026
Football (AAA, AA, A)	Bob Campese	Fall 2025
Football (B, C, D)	Keith Kempney	Fall 2025
Golf (B)	Erik Sarony	
Golf (G)	Mike Ferris Britney Wowleko	Spring 2027

Gymnastics (G)	Danielle McQueary	Fall 2025
Ice Hockey (B)	John Cunningham	
Ice Hockey (G)	Mark Fierro	
Indoor Track (B)	Greg Broton	Winter 2025-26
Indoor Track (G)	Dan Reid	Winter 2026-27
Lacrosse (B)	Rob Goss	Spring 2026
Lacrosse (G)	Caitlin Byrne	Spring 2025
Skiing, Alpine (B, G)	Matt Macaulay	
Skiing, Cross Country (B, G)	Jeff Moore	Winter 2026-27
Soccer (B)	Bill Donald	Fall 2025
Soccer (G)	Pete Lautensack	Fall 2025
Softball	Jeff Cantor	Spring 2025
Swimming (B)	Bob Bewley	Winter 2025-26
Swimming (G)	Tom Wells	Fall 2024
Tennis (B)	Todd Hicks	Spring 2027
Tennis (G)	Todd Hicks	Fall 2026
Track (B)	Tom Wells	Spring 2027
Track (G)	Dan Reid	Spring 2026
Volleyball - Fall (B)	Mike Lucia	Fall 2025
Volleyball - Fall (G)	Karla Prince	Fall 2026
Volleyball - Winter (B)	Michael Dziedzic	Winter 2026-27
Volleyball - Winter (G)	Rich Jantzi	Winter 2026-27
Wrestling - Boys	Brad Hamer	Winter 2026-27
Wrestling - Girls	Rick Spicer	Winter 2026-27

## OFFICIALS

Section III officials are deemed “Independent Contractors” who are contracted to perform a specific task or who offer services and are not recognized as employees of the school district or the Section for those services.

### POSITION STATEMENT: ADVERSE CRITICISM

Section III, a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, shall go on record opposing adverse criticism of sports officials through public news media by any member leagues, schools, or individuals directly involved with Section III activities. Section III also opposes adverse criticism of any member league, school, individual, or Section III representative through public news media by sports officials.

Should such adverse criticism occur, then Section III may initiate action against the offending party by means of a letter of reprimand to the league, school, and/or individual involved. All disputes between schools/leagues and an official’s organization shall be settled through the approved agreement between Section III and the Section III officials’ organization.

### OFFICIATING COMMITTEE

The duty of the Officiating Committee is to resolve serious complaints involving officials in a Section III sponsored event, utilizing the representatives from the officials, the Section, and the sports coordinator. The chairperson of the Officiating Committee is empowered to refer very severe matters pertaining to officiating directly to the Section III Hearing Officer, and the Hearing Officer is empowered to conduct an immediate due process hearing in the matter.

### SERIOUS OFFICIATING COMPLAINT FORM

Any time that someone in authority (Official, Coach, AD, etc) feels that there was a serious problem with what happened at a Section III sponsored event, that person is responsible for filing a *Serious Officiating Complaint Form*. Only Section III member schools and approved officials’ associations may initiate the Serious Officiating Complaint procedure. Forms are available on the Section III website and must be filed within 15 working days of the incident (unless an extension is approved by the Executive Director). All forms require mandatory signatures.

## **Extreme Situations**

In extreme situations (such as physical contact, verbal abuse, etc) the Chair of the Officials Coordinating Committee or school administration have the prerogative to request the case be sent directly to a hearing if they believe the situation was not appropriately handled by the responsible organization (school district/officials' organization). School district(s) administrations are encouraged to resolve issues directly with the parties involved before a hearing is requested. If a hearing is requested, the request will be made to the Section III Executive Director.

## **Procedure for Filing a Serious Officiating/Coaching Complaint: *Form required.***

1. When a serious problem occurs before, during or after a game or contest played within Section III, a serious complaint form should be filled out describing the incident and sent to the Section III office as soon as possible after the incident.
2. The description should state the facts (no opinions) and should include who was involved, names and or positions held, and action taken on the spot, if any.
3. The appropriate individuals should sign the form.
4. If a school sends a complaint form, it must have the signatures of the Coach, Athletic Director, Principal, and Superintendent.
5. If an official sends a complaint form, it must have the signatures of the working official and a Chapter officer.
6. The complaining individual should send the complaint form to the Executive Director of Section III.
7. Upon receipt of a properly filed Serious Complaint Form, the Section III Executive Director will forward copies to the specific sport officials and sport/school representatives for investigation and findings.
8. The representatives (officials and sport/school) will contact both parties in the issue to determine the best means of resolving the dispute. This may include any or all of the following: person to person, special meetings, hearings, phone conversation or any other means deemed appropriate for the individual situation.
9. Upon completion of the investigation, the representatives (officials and sport/school) will send a report with the findings and proposed directions for solving the dispute to the Executive Director of Section III and the Chairperson of the Officials Coordinating Committee.

10. It is the responsibility of the two representatives (officials and sport/school) to communicate all resolved matters to all concerned parties in a timely fashion.
11. Upon receipt of the findings, the actions that need corrective action by the parties involved for resolution will be followed and begun within ten (10) working days of the date of receipt of the findings.
12. In the event that either party disagrees with the findings, they may appeal to the Section III Executive Director with a copy to the Chairperson of the Officials Coordinating committee within ten (10) working days of the date of receipt of the findings.
13. The direction of any first appeal may include, but not be limited to any of the following:
  - a. Referral to the Section III hearing officer,
  - b. Referral to the entire Section III Officials Coordinating committee,
  - c. Referral to a specially appointed committee
14. In the event that the action of any of the above committees is not acceptable, a written appeal may be made to the NYSPHSAA and/or the state sport committee involved with the dispute.
15. All unresolved complaints shall be carried on an “Active Complaint List” by the Section III Executive Director and reported at each of the following Section III meetings
  - a. Officiating Committee
  - b. Executive Committee
  - c. Athletic Council
  - d. Athletic Directors
16. If a confrontation between opponents, athletes, coaches, officials, etc. involving physical contact or retaliation occurs, it is the prerogative of the Chair of the Officials Coordinating Committee to send the case directly to a hearing with the Section III Hearing Officer and a panel of administrators to determine the facts and outcome of such action.

#### TERRITORY RIGHTS: OTHER SECTIONS

Officials from any other section may not officiate a Section III contest unless approved by the official’s organization with “Territorial Rights”, the Executive Director and both schools involved with the contest. The exception to this is if the official’s assignor cannot provide the minimum number of officials designated by the sport rule book. In that case, a school has the right to obtain the necessary officials from an alternate source. In doing so, the school must first contact the other Boards in Section III.

If none of them can provide the necessary officials, the school may approach other NYS certified high-school officials outside of Section III.

Each NYSPHSAA contracted official's organization has the right to establish geographical boundaries of service for each member chapter. "Territory" of an official's chapter is recognized for services rendered to Section III member schools and leagues during the regular season of competition. Section III is limited to selecting officials from chapters servicing our section during regular season games, and league championships, except as stated above.

**At Sectional and Regional competition "chapter territorial rights" do not apply, regardless of the location of the site.** Section III and member schools must observe officials' chapters established boundaries for services when making contest assignments for non-league and league competition, except as stated above.

If there is a dispute between groups of officials who both operate in the same geographical area, the first attempt to resolve the problem should be made by the groups directly involved. These groups could decide which group could best serve the schools in the area.

Otherwise, the dispute should be addressed at the Section III Officiating Committee level. Any request to modify territorial assignments established by the chapter must have the approval of the Executive Director and host officials' organization. Such a request must be made, and a determination rendered prior to the beginning of the sport season.