

2026 MPA FOOTBALL BULLETIN

(updated 7-29-26)

FOOTBALL SEASON

Aug. 3-16	Hands-off Period (Sport Season Policy)
August 17	First Practice
August 22	First Interschool Scrimmage
August 28	Schedules Due
September 3	First Countable Game
October 16	Officials Form Due
October 24	Last Countable Regular Season Game – 8-Man
October 24	Last Countable Regular Season Game – Classes B and D
October 31	Last Countable Regular Season Game – Classes A and C
November 3	On-line voting begins for Sportsmanship Banner (One week to vote)
November 14	8-Man State Championship Games, Edward Little High School
November 21	Class A & B State Championship Games, Fitzpatrick Stadium, Portland
November 21	Class C & D State Championship Games, Lewiston High School

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Concussion in Sport*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*A Guide to Heat Illness*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Sudden Cardiac Arrest*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Protecting Students from Abuse*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

MANDATORY CLINICS – There is no rules video for coaches scheduled for prior to the start of the 2026 season. Rule Changes are listed below;

2026 Rule Changes:

Committee Approves an Additional Option for Wearing Play Cards [1-5-3c(9)] — The committee has approved the wearing of play cards on both the forearm/wrist and belt areas of the body. The committee feels that the wearing of play cards on the belt poses no health risk issue to the player and poses no danger to the opponent.

Committee Gives Clarity to Illegal Personal Contact Actions Related to All Players (9-4-7) — In a concerted effort to clarify illegal personal contact actions as they relate to all players, the committee approved language to include the prohibition to apply equally to the offense and defense. By eliminating the words “defensive” and “blocker’s” from the rule prohibiting slapping an opponent’s head, the prohibition now applies to all players.

EYE SHIELD ATTACHED TO HELMET

An eye shield attached to the helmet must be constructed of a molded rigid material and clear without the presence of any tint. The use of a tinted shield requires the approval of the MPA Football Committee.

EYE SHADE (Grease or no-glare strips or stickers)

Eye shade that is not a solid stroke, or includes offensive words, numbers, logos, or other symbols within the eye shade are illegal.

SPORT SEASON POLICY

Preseason and regular season limitations for formal football programs are defined by the MPA Sport Season Policy. A formal football program is defined as the high school coaching staff working with prospective football candidates from secondary or junior high school in that system in a structured, team-oriented program in which football equipment is used.

HANDS-OFF PERIOD

To provide a window of personal time like the time available prior to the winter and spring sports seasons, summer recess is defined as the time between the last day of the spring sport season to fourteen (14) days prior to the beginning of the fall sport season. This does not exclude individual students from attending camps during this two-week period of personal time if all other Sport Season Policy requirements are met. Individuals choosing to attend camps during this two-week period may use school protective gear or track and field implements.

Please refer to the questions and answers section of the coaches' handbook to clarify the policy and answer questions you may have.

OFF-SEASON TRAINING

A school's comprehensive off-season conditioning program may include such activities as muscular strength and endurance exercises, cardiovascular fitness activities, agility, speed, power, balance, coordination, and flexibility training. The program must be voluntary, open to all students, and should not include sport-specific skill development or coaching.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The safety of athletes (*participants*), spectators, coaches/directors, school personnel, and all others present at an athletic contest must be the first concern to the contest officials and building administrators.

1. When an interscholastic contest has been scheduled and dangerous playing conditions exist or severe weather is anticipated, the following should be considered:
 - a. Prior to beginning an athletic contest, when severe weather is anticipated, the head contest official and the principals of each school, or their designees, will meet to review the suspension and/or postponement procedures. This would include any playing rule book coverage.
 - b. The host school administrator will be responsible for informing contest officials, visiting school administrators and, if applicable, the individual responsible for public address announcements of designated shelter areas.
 - c. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard near a contest conducted outdoors, play should be suspended.
 - d. If any other life-threatening condition occurs, play should be suspended immediately, and predetermined directions to safe locations will be announced.
2. When a suspension of a contest occurs, the following should be considered:
 - a. If the suspension is forty-five minutes or greater, resuming later should be considered.
 - b. Play shall not be resumed until **30 minutes** after the last flash of lightning or clap of thunder.

- c. When weather conditions are no longer a threat to the safety of participants, spectators, or contest officials, administrators from all schools involved will meet with the head contest official to determine if play will continue.
 - d. If play is to be resumed, contestants will be given at least a fifteen-minute warm-up period prior to competition.
3. If evacuation is necessary, the following should be considered:
- a. If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
 - b. All personnel, athletes and spectators should be clearly informed of available safe structures or shelters in the event a thunderstorm approaches. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced. The person in authority must be aware of the amount of time it takes to get to each structure and the number of people each structure can safely hold. For large events, time needed for evacuation is increased and there must be a method (i.e., announcement over loudspeaker) for communicating the need for evacuation and directing both athletes and spectators to the appropriate safe shelters.
 - c. The most ideal structure is a fully enclosed, substantial building with plumbing, electrical wiring, and telephone service, which aids in grounding the structure. A fully enclosed automobile with a hard metal roof and rolled-up windows is also a reasonable choice. School buses are an excellent lightning shelter that can be utilized for large groups of people. However, it is important to avoid contact with any metal while inside the vehicle.

Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and do not use showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm as the current from a local lightning strike can enter the building via the plumbing pipelines or electrical connections. It is also considered unsafe to stand near utilities, use corded telephones or headsets during a thunderstorm, due to the danger of electrical current traveling through the telephone line. Cellular and cordless telephones are considered safe and can be used to summon help during a thunderstorm.

When caught in a thunderstorm without availability or time to reach safe structures, you can minimize the risk of lightning-related injury by following a few basic guidelines:

- Avoid being the highest object. Seek a thick grove of small trees or bushes surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch.
- Avoid contact with anything that would be attractive to lightning. Stay away from freestanding trees, poles, antennas, towers, bleachers, baseball dugouts, metal fences, standing pools of water, and golf carts.
- Crouch down with legs together, the weight on the balls of the feet, arms wrapped around knees, and head down with ears covered.

NFHS Point of Emphasis - Proper Procedures for Weather Delays

At some point during the high school football season, many parts of the country must address weather issues. Some of these, according to NFHS guidelines, dictate a suspension/delay during a game. Most of the time, the delay is due to lightning and thunder (either lightning seen, or thunder heard); and when a suspension or delay occurs, the teams are sent to a safe, sheltered area until the weather situation has ended. NFHS guidelines on handling lightning and thunder delays require use of the 30-minute rule, meaning when the game has been suspended, play cannot resume until at least 30 minutes have elapsed following the last sighting of lightning or the sound of thunder. Once

the game is suspended, each further instance of lightning or thunder requires a reset of the clock and the commencement of a new 30-minute interval. Seldom is there a problem with game officials or site administrators following the basic 30-minute rule when there is lightning or thunder. However, some game officials and administrators are not abiding by the mandatory halftime intermission and warm-up rule when there is a lightning delay near the end of the first half. If there is such a delay late in the second period, once the second period is completed, NFHS playing rules require a halftime intermission of at least 10 minutes followed by the required 3-minute warm-up period before the third period may begin. Coaches or game officials cannot shorten the halftime intermission or the warm-up period. However, both coaches could agree to shorten (end) the second period during the delay, and then the third period could start after the delay as soon as the mandatory warm-up period is completed. It is important for game officials, coaches, and administrators to be aware of the halftime intermission and warm-up rules on nights when the weather could present delays and to administer those NFHS football rules correctly.

SUSPENDED CONTESTS

During any varsity football contest which may not be resumed due to weather or a catastrophic injury or circumstance, the following will occur: 1) Teams may mutually agree to end the contest and the score stands. Should the game end with the score tied each team will be awarded .5 of a victory. 2) A suspended contest must be continued from the point of suspension within three days of the suspended contest. All other situations will be dealt with by the MPA Football Committee.

BONA FIDE TEAM RULE

A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for and actively participates in team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are prevented from missing high school practice or competition to compete or practice elsewhere.

* Two waivers per student athlete per sport season may be granted by the principal on a case-by-case basis for extraordinary circumstances. (e.g., If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a prestigious weekend event then a waiver may be granted. If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a nationally recognized tournament over a school vacation, then **that** waiver may be granted for that activity. If a request to miss practice every Friday because he/she is receiving specialized coaching from an outside team/coach, then a waiver should not be granted **because it violates the spirit and intent of the rule.**)

** This policy is not intended to restrict dual sport participation in schools that allow dual participation.

*** Penalty for violation of this policy:

1 st Violation	Suspension from play for one game/contest
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2 nd Violation	Removal from team for remainder of season
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(Effective Date: 2011 Fall Sport Season)

GAME DISQUALIFICATION / EJECTION RULE

In all team and individual sports (varsity or sub-varsity), ejection or disqualification from a game, meet, or match for unsportsmanlike behavior of any form, by a coach or a player shall result in the suspension of that player or coach. The coach or player ejected from a contest must sit out all contests at all levels until the coach or athlete completes the ejection penalty by sitting out the next game at the level from which he/she was ejected. This rule applies to a game, meet, or match suspended before completion as well as a completed contest. This penalty may not be served by sitting out an exhibition, sub-varsity, or other competition.

Any communication concerning a player or coach ejection must be sent from the school administration to the MPA Football Committee. Any direct communication from coaches, parents or administrators with the local officiating board is not acceptable.

A suspended coach may not be present at the game site. 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.

Prior to their return to the sideline any coach ejected from a game must complete the NFHS *“Teaching and Modeling Behavior”* video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

Prior to their return to play any player ejected from a game must complete the NFHS *“Sportsmanship”* video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

Schools must complete the Ejection Report located on the MPA website after each ejection. Failure to report an ejection will result in a \$50.00 fine.

Any coach or player ejected from the last game, meet, or contest of a sports season shall serve a one game suspension in the opening countable game, meet, or contest in the next varsity sport in which he/she participates. The coach/athlete may participate fully in the preseason prior to serving the one game suspension.

This policy will not prevent standing committees from imposing more restrictive disciplinary action. (Effective Date: 1996-97 Winter Sport Season; Revised 2008, 2009)

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

The Football Committee is committed to promoting and recognizing outstanding sportsmanship during the regular season and throughout the tournament. Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations among the players, coaches, and officials, and graceful acceptance of results. To make the sportsmanship banner selection process meaningful the committee asks that coaches and athletes from all levels of the program be involved in the voting process.

Areas to be considered:

- A. Neat attire by players, coaches, and managers.
- B. Players supporting one another on the field/court/ice and from the bench.
- C. No acts of unnecessary roughness/taunting.
- D. No inappropriate gestures, language, or expressions.
- E. Players use appropriate and positive communication with their coach.
- F. Players and coaches treat officials with respect—no inappropriate gestures, language, or expressions.
- G. Positive community involvement.

Sportsmanship banners will be presented in all classes in both the North and South Divisions.

Sportsmanship voting will take place for one week after the season using the on-line sportsmanship voting link provided on the MPA website. Any school that receives an ejection, at any level in the program, shall be ineligible for the award. Schools that do not submit a sportsmanship ballot may not be considered for the award.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

RULES

2026 National Federation Football Rules are in effect for all regular season and post-season play.

NUMBER OF GAMES

Each team will play an eight (8) or nine (9) game schedule, exclusively of league play-offs and MPA championship contests.

PRE-SEASON PRACTICE FORMAT/REGULATIONS

The following are guidelines for the structure of pre-season practices to address the concerns for an acclimatization and recovery model within the existing sport season period. They apply to all levels of football (Varsity, JV, Freshmen, etc.).

Day 1- 2

Protective Equipment Used: helmets and cleats only.

Contact Level: none

Field Equipment Used: all field equipment excluding heavy bags, sleds, and any weighted items.

Two-A-Day Practice Schedule:

- Each practice may last no longer than 2¼ hours (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities).
- Emphasis during these sessions should be on conditioning.
- A player will not be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half of the scheduled practice time.
- No practice should be scheduled during the most intense temperatures of the day.
- There should be 3 hours of recovery time between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next. During this time, it is strongly advised that no physical activity be permitted (speed, strength, agility, or conditioning).
- No walk-throughs.
- The maximum number of practices is two.

One-A-Day Extended Practice Schedule:

- Practice should be broken into 2 separate parts with neither part lasting more than 1 ¾ hours (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities).
- Teams must take at least a 75-minute break during the extended practice. This should include rest and hydration.
- Emphasis during this practice session should be on conditioning.
- A player should not be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half of the scheduled practice time.
- No walk-throughs.
- No practice should be scheduled during the most intense temperatures of the day.

Day 3-4

Protective Equipment Used: uppers (helmets, shoulder pads, practice jerseys, cleats)

Contact Level: limited, above the waist

Field Equipment Used: all field equipment.

Two-A-Day Practice Schedule:

- Each practice may last no longer than 2 ½ hours (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities).

- Emphasis during these sessions should continue to be on conditioning.
- A player will not be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half of the scheduled practice time.
- No practice should be scheduled during the most intense temperatures of the day.
- There should be 3 hours of recovery time between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next. During this time, it is strongly advised that no physical activity be permitted (speed, strength, agility, or conditioning).
- Walk-through no longer than ½ hour may take place.
- The maximum number of practices is two.

One-A-Day Extended Practice Schedule:

- Practice should be broken into 2 separate parts with neither part lasting more than 1 ¾ hours (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities).
- Teams must take at least a 75-minute break during the extended practice. This should include rest and hydration.
- Emphasis during these practice sessions should continue to be on conditioning.
- A player should not be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half of the scheduled practice time.
- No walk-throughs.
- No practice should be scheduled during the most intense temperatures of the day.

Day 5-6

Protective Equipment Used: full equipment.

Contact Level: full contact

Field Equipment Used: all field equipment.

Two-A-Day Practice Schedule:

- Each practice may last no longer than 2 ¾ hours (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities).
- A player will not be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half of the scheduled practice time.
- Practice may not have any more than 30 minutes of full contact.
- No practice should be scheduled during the most intense temperatures of the day.
- There should be 3 hours of recovery time between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next. During this time, it is strongly advised that no physical activity be permitted (speed, strength, agility, or conditioning).
- A walk-through of no longer than 1 hour may take place.
- The maximum number of practices is two.

One-A-Day Extended Practice Schedule:

- Practice should be broken into 2 separate parts with neither part lasting more than 1 ¾ hours (includes all warm-up, stretching, conditioning, cool-down, and weight training activities).
- Teams must take at least a 75-minute break during the extended practice. This should include rest and hydration.
- Practice may not have any more than 30 minutes of full contact.
- A player should not be engaged in intense exercise or activity for a maximum of one-half of the scheduled practice time.
- No walk-throughs.
- No practice should be scheduled during the most intense temperatures of the day.

Schools may scrimmage on Day 6 (Saturday) providing the following conditions are met:

- Coaches are present on the field during the scrimmage.

- Game conditions are not followed, including no special teams play.
- Play will be stopped for teaching.
- Each team will run a set number of plays (maximum of 20)
- Athletes will be matched by ability level (Team A #1 Offense vs. Team B #1 Defense and Team A #2 Defense vs. Team B #2 Offense, etc.)
- Special attention will be given to player fatigue with an opportunity for the athlete to rest and rehydrate.
- For those schools that scrimmage on Day 6 (Saturday) the following practice guidelines must be followed on the following Monday.
 - Teams may only schedule one practice
 - Maximum equipment allowed will be uppers (helmets, shoulder pads, practice jerseys, cleats)
 - Contact must be limited, above the waist.
 - Focus should be on stretching and conditioning.
- Any player who does not begin practice on Day 1 must follow the outlined, individual 6-day acclimatization period beginning on their first day of participation. No player may have full contact prior to Day 5 or participate in a scrimmage or exhibition game until Day 6 of their individual acclimatization period.
- Schools may participate in a maximum of two interschool contests (scrimmages, exhibition games, 7 on 7 skeletons, etc.).
- There should be a minimum of three full recovery days between interschool contests and/or exhibition games. Regular practices with the above guidelines are held during this time.
- Schools may not have more than 3 full-contact practices per week during the regular season.
- Practice may not have any more than 30 minutes of full contact.
- It is recommended that athletes do not participate in any more than 6 quarters (at any level) of play per week.

Definitions:

Practice is defined as the time a participant engages in physical activity. Warm-up, stretching, and cool down activities are to be included as part of practice time. All conditioning and/or weight room activities shall be considered practice.

A **walk-through** is defined as a teaching opportunity with no intense physical activity and without the use of full practice equipment. This time does not include conditioning or weight room activities.

A **recovery period** is defined as the time between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next practice. During this time, it is recommended that no physical activity be permitted.

Mandates:

1. Each player must meet MPA Student Eligibility as described in the Student Eligibility section of the MPA Handbook as well as having a physical exam in accordance with their school's policy prior to participation in football.
2. Each coach must meet MPA Coaches' Eligibility as described in the Coaches' Eligibility section of the MPA Handbook.
3. Each coach must complete the NFHS "*Concussion in Sport*" video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

4. Each coach must complete the NFHS “*A Guide to Heat Illness*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).
5. Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Sudden Cardiac Arrest*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).
6. Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Protecting Students from Abuse*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

Guidelines/Recommendations:

1. Prior to the season, schools should provide training to coaches and/or trainers in the proper use of charts and equipment that would allow them to measure the heat index to insure what safe and unsafe conditions are either play or practice.
2. Coaches should encourage and allow their players to hydrate frequently throughout the scheduled practice time.
3. Athletes should be encouraged to remove their helmets frequently during extreme temperature situations.

Each locker room should have a working, accurate set of scales to weigh players prior to and at the end of each practice session to determine the percentage of weight loss due to dehydration. The pre- and post-practice weight of each player should be recorded. This will help to determine players who should be watched, players whose practices must be modified, or players who should be held out of practice until their weight is back to an acceptable level through proper hydration replacement procedures. A weight loss of 3% or less is considered safe. A loss of over 3% puts a player in the danger zone.

NEW VARSITY PROGRAMS

New varsity teams must maintain/participate in a subvarsity/developmental program (with a minimum of 6 games) for a minimum of two consecutive seasons prior to entering varsity competitions. If a league wishes to admit a school earlier due to an odd number of teams, it may apply to the football committee.

ADJUSTED TIMING RULE

If the score differential is 35 points or more in the second half of any game, at any level, the clock goes to running time. The clock will stop for only the following:

- Charged time outs
- Injuries
- Penalties
- Scores

If the clock is stopped for any of the above, the clock will start on the ready-for-play or when a free kick is touched (other than first touching by K). If the point differential falls below 35 points, timing will revert to standard timing rules.

The point differential applies to all football contests and levels played in the State of Maine.

FOOTBALLS – REGULAR SEASON

During the regular season schools must use footballs that meet NFHS guidelines. All game balls must be examined and approved prior to the contest by game officials. The balls will be marked by the officials for game use.

TOURNAMENT SITE/HOST PLAYOFF SITE POLICY

If a site conflict occurs with a school hosting an MPA regional or state championship game and a home regular season or playoff game then the game will be rescheduled, at the request of the host school, to the day prior to the championship game.

TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION / PLAYOFF INFORMATION

1. Each school must play an 8-game or 9-game schedule, and each league may determine the number of teams that qualify for post-season play.
2. Regional championship and runner-up plaques will be awarded at the North and South Regional Championship contests (leagues are asked to present league trophies at post-season banquets).
3. Teams may choose to play in a region other than where the Classification Committee places them; however, when the playoffs occur those teams must play under the rules of the leagues where they have been assigned.
4. All divisions will use the Crab Tree Point System in determining post-season ranking. If the Crab Tree Point System does not determine play-off positions or causes a tie, as applied within the schedule, the following tiebreakers will be used by leagues:
 1. Head-to-head competition (if appropriate)
 2. Division record within the conference
 3. Overall record
 4. Heal Points
 5. Coin toss

In the case of a three-way tie the odd coin will determine the lower seed, or the team that will be eliminated, unless there are three teams tied for the final two playoff spots. In that case, the odd coin will determine the higher seed, and the tie breaking procedure will be repeated for the two remaining teams.
5. Tiebreakers will be determined by the criteria listed above.
6. Financial income from the regional championships will remain with the host schools/leagues as appropriate.
7. The submission of the Schedule Form, which is due August 28, 2026, will constitute a school's application for the regional tournament.
8. A team must notify the MPA Football Committee one week prior to the start of the playoffs should they wish to decline their invitation to the playoffs.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Teams competing for championships in Class A, B, C, D, and Large School and Small School 8-Man will be determined by league playoffs. The Football Committee must approve all playoff game proposals.

ELIGIBILITY/TEAM SIZE

A team may bring its entire squad to the championship game. School principals are required to verify that all players participating in the championship games are eligible according to the rules of the MPA.

BANDS

Bands from participating schools will be admitted to the championship game. On-field performances are limited to six (6) minutes per team at the discretion of the site director. Band members must be in uniform; only band members and the director will be admitted. The band of the home team will play the National Anthem. The home team has the option of having an individual sing the National Anthem.

VALUABLES

Each team is responsible for personal belongings such as money, watches, rings, etc.

SIDELINE PASSES

All eligible coaches and certified athletic trainers will be issued sideline badges. Additional sideline badges will be issued for other team personnel (medical, statistician, etc.). **All individuals on the game field (inside the fence) must have a role with the team and must be at least high school age.** Anyone with a sideline badge is asked to remain within the team box.

LOCKER ROOMS

Locker rooms will be inspected prior to each contest, and teams are responsible for any damage which may be observed following the game.

CHEERLEADERS

Varsity cheerleaders from the participating schools will be admitted to the championship game. Cheerleaders are to be accompanied by their advisor, who will be responsible for their conduct.

SPORTSMANSHIP

No one without a sideline pass will be allowed inside the fenced game area. All spectators must always be fully clothed and may not run on the sidelines with flags, etc. Taunting in any form will not be allowed.

NOISEMAKERS, PLACARDS, AND SIGNS

- Bare-chested individuals are not allowed.
- Noisemakers that in any way interfere with the play of the game are not permitted. Schools may determine locally if they are going to allow noisemakers at their home contests.
- Placards, signs, pennants, and shakers on sticks that restrict the view of other spectators are prohibited. Signs or banners may be hung, provided they are not obscene, inappropriate and do not contain profane language.
- Any person throwing objects on the field will be removed immediately from the site.
- Security will be instructed to detain any student perceived to be under the influence of an illegal substance. They will then contact their parents.
- Mascots or other individuals are not allowed on the field.

PLAY-OFF TEAMS/PROGRAMS

Schools qualifying for league play-offs must email the Team Information form by October 16, 2026. Only electronic photos will be accepted. Please indicate clearly in the subject line "Football - class, region, school name. For example: Football – Class A South, Any High School.

FOOTBALLS – STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

For the 2026 State Championship games the Wilson GST ball will be used as the official ball of the state championship football games. Balls to be used in the championship game will be provided to

those teams playing in the state championship game on Monday prior to the contest for use during the week. The balls must be returned 1 ½ hour prior to the championship game. Schools are asked to supply two ball people for their championship game.

HOME TEAMS

In even years, the home teams at the state championship games will be the Northern teams. In odd years, the home teams will be the Southern teams.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Athletic trainers will be provided if a team does not supply themselves. Teams may wish to bring their team physician.

OFFICIALS SELECTION PROCESS

There will be seven (7) field officials (no alternate) assigned for all state championship games. There will also be one clock operator (head timer), one assistant timer, two-chain crew, a clip person, and one downs marker assigned to each game. Each board will establish a pool of officials that are eligible to work in the championship games. Schools may select two officials from the tournament pool that they would prefer not to officiate their regional or state championship games. Specific official positions in each class will rotate among the boards. The designation of positions will be completed by the local boards after the Football Committee approves the pool.

GAME SITES 2026

Class A	Fitzpatrick Stadium
Class B	Fitzpatrick Stadium
Class C	Lewiston High School
Class D	Lewiston High School
8-Man, Large	Edward Little High School
8-Man, Small	Edward Little High School

All classes are prohibited from practicing on a championship site one week prior to the contest unless exceptional circumstances exist. **Game times will be assigned to each class following the regional championship contests.**

FOOTBALL CLASSIFICATION 2026

	Class A			Class B			Class C	
	<i>850+</i>			<i>635-849</i>			<i>400-634</i>	
	North			North			State Wide	
1.	Lewiston	1655	1.	Brunswick	714	1.	Hampden*	749
2.	Portland	1146	2.	Messalonskee	713	2.	Brewer*	696
3.	Edward Little	1136	3.	Skowhegan	696	3.	Nokomis	614
4.	Bangor	1069	4.	Mt. Blue	694	4.	Greely	613
5.	Deering	1033	5.	Fryeburg	663	5.	Gardiner	583
6.	Oxford Hills / Buckfield	1021 / 149	6.	Cony	647	6.	Hermon	556
7.	Windham	935	7.	Lawrence^	528	7.	Medomak	552
			8.	Camden Hills	737	8.	Leavitt	552
	South			South		9.	York	503
1.	Thornton	1287	1.	Gorham	813	10.	Oceanside	498
2.	Sanford	1075	2.	Westbrook	704	11.	Foxcroft	431
3.	Bonny Eagle	1034	3.	Kennebunk	701	12.	Wells	400
4.	So. Portland	990	4.	Falmouth	695			
5.	Noble	940	5.	Biddeford	689			
6.	Scarborough	911	6.	Marshwood	665			
7.	Massabesic	870	7.	Cheverus/Waynflete^	388/254			

	Class D			8-Man Large			8-Man Small	
	<i>0-399</i>			<i>375+</i>			<i>0-374</i>	
	North			North			North	
1.	Mattanawcook / Lee / PVHS	294 / 117 / 129	1.	Old Town	536	1.	Orono	365
2.	Oak Hill	389	2.	Ellsworth / Sumner / Narraguagus	522 / 238 / 254	2.	Bucksport	358
3.	Winslow	367	3.	Waterville	484	3.	Washington	306
4.	Maine Central	268	4.	Mount Desert	476	4.	Dexter / PCHS	273 / 143
5.	Madison / Carrabec / Valley	167 / 196 / 63	5.	Houlton / Hodgdon / SA / GHCA	382 / 138 / 107 / 20	5.	Stearns / Schenck	132 / 102
6.	John Bapst / Bangor Christian / Central*	508 / 105 / 311				6.	Madawaska / Ft. Kent / Wisdom	115 / 251 / 70
7.	Belfast*	471						
	South			South			South	
1.	Lisbon	362	1.	Mt. Ararat / Hyde	738 / 124	1.	Traip	290
2.	Dirigo	228	2.	Gray-NG	591	2.	Mt. View	288
3.	Winthrop / Monmouth / Hall-Dale	226 / 188 / 251	3.	Yarmouth / NYA	562 / 140	3.	Sacopee Valley	281
4.	Freeport*	629	4.	Cape Elizabeth	511	4.	Old Orchard	203
5.	Morse*	629	5.	Lake Region	500	5.	Telstar	164
6.	Poland*	493	6.	Spruce Mountain	407	6.	Boothbay/Wiscasset	163/141
7.	Mt. Valley*	415				7.	Maranacook	369

* Applied to lower classification

^ Applied to higher classification

Updated 7/14/26