



8th Grade Division Rules

1. **Legal Teams**

All teams must be community-based. All intact community season teams may have a maximum of 30 players on their roster. A community may combine their current community season teams to form one team. A combined community team will have roster limit of 22 players. An association leader must sign off on all rosters prior to submitting your printed roster at check-in before your first game.

Players: **All players must be in eighth grade for the 2022-2023 academic year.**

2. **Weight Restrictions/Weigh-ins:** There is **no weight limit** on backs and receivers in the 8th grade division.

3. **Playing Fields:** The team box shall extend from the 25-yard line to the 25-yard line, 5 yards deep, marked with cones or chalk. All coaches and players are to remain inside that box during the game. The penalty for violation is 5 yards. No coaches are allowed on fields. Spectators must be **10 yards** back from the field of play.

Fields will be regulation size fields according to the MSHSL. Ball size for 8th grade is for ages 12-14.

4. **Officials:** A minimum of two officials will be assigned to each game, three for the championship game. The Tournament Director will assign officials to each game.

5. **Start of Play:** We will run kickoffs to start the game and the 2nd half.

6. **Scoring and Timing:** A touchdown is worth 6 points. **8th grade:** extra points are worth 2 points if scored on a passing play, or 1 point if scored on a running play. Safeties are worth 2 points.

8th grade games will consist of four 12-minute quarters with running time except for the last two minutes of the half. 45-second play clock will be in effect once the ball is placed by the referee. Because there is no visual clock, the referee will inform the offense once 30 seconds have elapsed. Exceeding the 45-second limit will result in a 5-yard penalty.

Game will have running time, with the exception of the following:

- Penalties
- Injuries
- Touchdowns (through the PAT until the following kickoff)
- Change of possession (until next offensive play begins)

Time is stopped during the last 2 minutes of each half for the following:

- Incomplete pass
- Out of bounds
- Moving of yard and down markers

There will be 3 timeouts per half.

Timeouts will last 1 minute from the time the huddle starts. Timeouts will not be carried over from the first half to the second half. In the case of an overtime game, each team will have 1 timeout. Timeouts will not be carried over from the second half. Halftime will be 10 minutes.

Tie Games

Overtime will begin with a coin toss. The winner of the coin toss will have the choice of beginning on offense or defense. The loser of the coin toss will choose from which end of the field the overtime will be played. The offensive team will have 4 plays from the 25-yard line to score a touchdown. Extra points do apply in overtime. Once the offensive team has either scored a touchdown or run out of downs, the opposing team will receive the ball and have the same opportunity to score a touchdown. Both teams to run all plays from the same end zone.

7. **Offense:** Teams may run any legal offense (i.e., 7 players on the line of scrimmage). A player is considered on the line of scrimmage, so long as their helmet is even with or forward of the center's hips. It could range in time anywhere from one second to no more than 45 seconds. An official can hold up a play to allow for a defensive player to get on the field and get set up (i.e., injuries, moving chains), only on a change of possession. The clock stops on a change of possession.

If the game is still tied after regulation and overtime, we will run according to the MSHSL with a coin flip and possession starting at the 25-yard line. If the defense scores during overtime, their team wins (game over).

35-Point Rule: When a team is down by 35 points or more, the clock runs nonstop. If the score reverts to less than 35-point difference, the clock goes back to normal stoppages. When the 35-point rule is in effect, there will be no passing allowed by the team that is ahead. If the winning team does pass, the first offense will be an incomplete pass, loss of down and a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. The second offense will be the same plus ejection of the coach from this game, and the coach will not be allowed at the next game. There will be no timeouts allowed to be taken by a team that is 35 points or more ahead.

8. **Defense:** Any defense formation with a 3-, 4-, or 5-man front, and blitzing is allowed.
9. **Fumbles:** Live Ball Advance as allowed.
10. **Kicking Game:** The kicking team will line up on the 35-yard line. The kicking team cannot cross the 35-yard line until the ball has been kicked. The receiving team must have 5 players lined up between the 45- and 50-yard lines. If the ball is kicked out of bounds the receiving team takes possession on their own 30-yard line. A free kick will occur after a safety.

For a safety, the ball will be placed at the kicking team's 20-yard line and can be punted or kicked off. The set up for a free kick is the same for a regular kickoff. All communities – please ensure that the 35-yard lines are marked well for ball placement.

- Onside kicks have always been and are still legal per high school rules.
- When a touchback occurs, the ball will be placed on the 20-yard line.

- Punting will be done according to the MSHSL.

11. **Rules and Penalties:** Minnesota State High School League rules are used to govern all play. Our rules are either clarifications or changes made specifically for our league.

Any unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches, players, parents, or spectators will result in an automatic 15-yard penalty. **It is the responsibility of the head coach** to control their players, parents, and spectators. Officials will have the final say as to what behavior is considered unsportsmanlike and coaches will be given a single warning, resulting in the previously mentioned 15-yard penalty. Any time a player, parent, spectator, or a coach has been ejected from the game, **the game will not continue** until that person has left the premises. If they do not leave within 5 minutes of being ejected, the team that they represent will be forfeited for the entire rest of the tournament.

No more than 2 coaches will be allowed on the field during timeouts to discuss strategy. Only the head coach or the coach on the field at the time can talk to the referees during the game.

12. **Penalty Enforcements:** Will be the same as the MSHSL.