2026 PIAA Football Preseason Bulletin 2

SWRI: Dave Blair August Bulletin

PIAA Statewide Rules Interpreter

Dave Blair: blairde@comcast.net

PIAA Officials Department

Patrick Gebhart, Chief Operating Officer
Alex Mykut, Director of Officiating Services and Sport
Kim Hill, Officials' Corresponding Administrator
Kiernan Huss, Chapters' Administrator

USE OF DRONES POLICY

For the purposes of this policy, a drone is any unmanned aerial device ("UAV"). Drones are not permitted above the competition surface or spectator areas during interscholastic Contests, Inter-school Practices and Scrimmages. Drones may not be used to scout opposing team Practices. Member schools may utilize drones for their own school team practice sessions based upon their local school policies. Persons and/or schools violating this Policy shall be subject to sanctions which may be imposed under Sections 5, 6, 7 and/or 9 of ARTICLE XIII, PENALTIES, of the PIAA By-Laws. Upon timely requests submitted to PIAA, the Executive Director is authorized to grant exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis with any host school/facility local policies.

Reminders

Game Clocks:

Football DOES NOT use tenths (1/10) of seconds. When a school uses the same controller for Basketball and Football, officials should ask that the clock operator turn OFF tenths of seconds. If a quarter ends with :00.9 or less showing on the clock, the quarter is over.

Play Clocks:

For Jr High and JV football games officials are to use the 25/40 play clock. Officials should be deliberate starting the play clock and if kept on the field use good judgment to avoid delay of game fouls but should not ignore when a violation does occur.

Bands:

If officials receive a complaint of an opposing band playing while the team is on offense and hindering the cadence, the Referee should ask the game manager to address it with the respective school. Officials are not to penalize the team for the band playing. If it continues to be an issue after asking gam manager to address it officials should report the situation to their district committee using proper channels.

Mechanics:

5-Person, PIAA crews of 5 will NOT be using the new PAT/Field Goal mechanic. PIAA officials will continue to use the mechanic when a PAT/Field Goal attempt is made that the Wing looking at the R's back will assume a position under the Goal Post along with the BJ.

PIAA officials WILL use the new Free kick mechanic for 5-person mechanics that has the H and L on the Goal Line with the R either in the endzone or in the field of play, and deeper than the deepest receiver. Referees are reminded to stay off the GL and eyes up field. Allow the H or L wind the clock.

Play Cards:

Play cards may now be worn on the arm or BELT.

HEAD SLAP RULE

Rule 9-4-7: No player may “slap” the head of an opponent. This is a Personal Foul and carries a 15-yard penalty. This is NOT to be interpreted as a punch/fight. This usually happens on the initial line play. If the slap is done in a confrontational manner, then and only then should an official judge if this action is a fragrant personal foul and subject to possible disqualification under 9-4-3.

2026 NFHS FOOTBALL Interpretation

There have been numerous questions on the recent 2026 NFHS Football Rules Interpretations as it pertains to Case book Page 68, Situation 8-2-2 Situation C. With the editorial change to "Subsequent Spot" we now can carry over a foul that happens on a scoring play when time runs out in the 4th qtr., and the PAT would tie the game and send game into OT. This pertains to any foul committed by B during a score.

Play1: Score A-7, B14. A 3/G B9. A12 drops back and passes to A84 in the end-zone for a TD. While the pass is in the air B58 commits a DPI.

Ruling: A can elect to accept the penalty for DPI on the try or elect to enforce the penalty in OT.

Play 2: Score A-7, B14. A 3/G B9. A drops back and passes to A84 in the end-zone for a TD. While the pass is in the air B58 commits a DPI. Team A elected to place the penalty in OT. During the successful Try, B35 roughs the kicker.

Ruling: This foul also carries over to OT and is “stackable” and both fouls against B are enforced at the beginning of OT (30 yards)

Play 3: Score A-8, B14. A 3/G B9. A drops back and passes to A84 in the end-zone for a TD. While the pass is in the air B58 commits a DPI.

Ruling: A can chose to enforce in OT should they miss the PAT and send the game into OT. If the PAT is successful, game is over.

Play 4: Score A-7, B14. A 3/G B9. A12 drops back and passes to A84 in the end-zone for a TD. While the pass is in the air B58 commits a DPI. A chooses to place the DPI onto OT. During the attempted Try B commits a holding foul and the try is missed.

Ruling: Only the holding foul can be penalized on the re-try. A can not choose to now enforce the previous DPI in combination with the hold.

Note: This is an irrevocable choice, meaning that once A elects to take a foul on the TD they may not then have it enforced on a re-try.

PRE-SEASON Video

Link to Pre-season Ball rotation Video:

https://youtu.be/uiGu6kD0vNU

PRE-SEASON Quiz

Link to optional pre-season quiz. Thanks to Nick Rosenelli D1 for putting this together.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeLqTOIrwuBUp4OKuO8GaWbMwhQ-mSaiUVc3LL3txOolxkY7w/viewform?usp=publish-editor

Any questions should be directed to SWRI Dave Blair:
blairde@comcast.net