

#### 4.1 **GENERAL**

- 4.1.1** Philosophically, the LHSAA believes that diversification or involvement in a variety of activities is a good and wholesome thing. The LHSAA believes that student-athletes should NOT be channeled into one activity but should be encouraged to participate in a variety of activities sponsored by a member school. The LHSAA wishes to enhance involvement while at the same time discourage the exploitation of students by overzealous individuals and organizations who attempt to impose an obligation or pressure on the student. Blanket statewide policies to prohibit excessive school and school personnel involvement out of season are difficult to write and even more difficult to enforce. It is not the intent of the LHSAA with its rules and interpretations in this area to limit opportunities for boys and girls. Designating sport seasons' length is an attempt to provide balance to the athletic calendar and to afford students an opportunity to compete in a variety of sports throughout the school year and is designed to function so little or no conflicts shall exist between in-season sports and out-of-season sports. The school principal shall be responsible for assuring that the coaches under his/her charge are in strict compliance with the provisions of the sports season rule. The sports season concept extends from the 6<sup>th</sup> through the **46<sup>th</sup>** week of the NFHS calendar year.
- 4.1.2** The LHSAA sports season for a school team is defined as that period beginning with the opening date of practice as called by each coach within the official starting dates and extending through the school team's last game of the season to include playoff games and the state championships, if applicable, in a particular sport. The actual sports seasons for an individual sport can be found under the "Important Dates" section at the beginning of each sports section in the handbook.
- 4.1.3 Practice Regulations:** Any practice shall be in accordance with the following regulations:
1. Student-athletes shall not engage in more than three hours of practice activities on those days during which one practice is conducted.
  2. Student-athletes shall not engage in more than five hours of practice activities on those days during which more than one practice is conducted.
  3. The maximum length of any single practice session shall be three hours.
  4. On days when more than one practice is conducted, there shall be, at a minimum, two hours of rest/recovery time between the end of one practice and the beginning of the next practice. Rest/recovery time shall be defined as void of any team or individual activity including but not limited to weight training sessions, conditioning sessions, skull sessions, film sessions, or any other similar athletic session.
  5. Schools shall not schedule multiple practices on consecutive days, and student-athletes shall not participate in multiple practices on consecutive days.
- 4.1.4** Subject to the approval of the school principal, a coach may have out-of-season organizational meetings with his/her players or potential players. Other than these organizational meetings, a coach shall not organize, supervise, administer, or direct out-of-season practices, meetings, or gatherings of student-athletes in the school. This includes: tryouts, informal workouts in a particular sport, and classroom sessions in a particular sport. Restrictions do not include strength and conditioning programs; these programs shall be allowed under this rule (subject to the approval of the school principal).
- 4.1.5** Subject to the approval of the school principal, facilities may be used for voluntary out-of-season play, open to all students and required, directly or indirectly, of none. For safety purposes, school personnel may be present as observers of free play, but coaching and instruction are forbidden. "Open gym/field activities" are permitted if they are voluntary and not part of the team selection process and adhere to these principles:
1. Diversity of students - must be open to all;
  2. Student conducted - students choose from offered activities and any coach of a sport under LHSAA jurisdiction shall not coach, instruct, critique, direct, evaluate, or participate in a sport he/she coaches;

3. Recreational emphasis - the program is not an organized program of instruction and/or competition and there shall not be any organized drills, practice structure and no instruction regarding offensive or defensive schemes by any person, including team members and parents.

**4.1.6** Subject to the approval of the school principals, coaches may teach the fundamental skills and techniques of the specific sport during the out-of-season period with a limited number of student athletes. Outside the sports seasons but during the school year, coaches are prohibited from providing coaching at any one time under one roof, facility, or campus to more than four (4) students in grades 7-12 of the school or school system for which they coach. This does not allow two coaches to coach eight (8) students from the same school; no matter how many coaches are present, no more than four (4) players from the same school may be involved in out-of-season drills and techniques during the school year. This not only applies to the specific sport(s) coached by the coach, but it applies to all levels and all genders, whether the coach is paid or volunteers.

**4.1.7 The penalties for a school in violation of the sports seasons rule shall be as follows:**

1. The school may be placed on administrative, disciplinary, or restrictive probation not to exceed one calendar year.
2. The school may be suspended from the association until the violation is assessed by the Executive Committee.
3. The school may be suspended from participating in that sport not to exceed one calendar year.
4. The school shall be fined not to exceed \$500.
5. The coach shall be penalized under Rule 5.12 of the Penalty Code.
6. Other penalties may be imposed on the school and/or individual(s) to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation including being charged with 5.11.12.

## **4.2 INDEPENDENT or NON-HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS**

**4.2.1** It is the philosophy of the LHSAA that when a student elects to be a member of high school team, that student's loyalty and allegiance shall be directed to the school and the team of which said student is a member. A student who is a member of a high school team may not participate in games, tryouts, etc. in that particular sport during the same season on an independent or non-high school team or as a member of an "all-star" team or completely unattached on an individual basis.

**4.2.2** An independent team is a sports team that is not directly sponsored or supported by a high school through the use of:

1. School uniforms
2. School equipment
3. Funding in any manner from the school's athletic account or funding from the school's athletic boosters' club.
4. Faculty or non-faculty coaches of that school during the school year.
5. Exception: A school sponsored athletic program for bona-fide students in the 8th grade and/or below shall not be considered an independent team and is not subject to the independent team rule or the sports season rule.

**4.2.3** An organized exhibition group is a structured unit of participants in a sport that conducts public performances in a sport which do not involve actual competition. A student who is a member of an LHSAA school team in a sport may not participate with an organized exhibition group in that same sport. Participating with an organized exhibition group while a student is a member of the school team in that same sport shall be a violation of this rule.

- 4.2.4** Once a student becomes a member of an LHSAA school team, he/she may not participate with an independent team or an organized exhibition group in that same sport. A student who is a member of an LHSAA school team may not practice with or play in a contest with an independent team in the same sport that the school team he represents is competing. Practicing with or playing on an independent team while a student is a member of the school team in that same sport shall be a violation of this rule. This rule shall be in effect for a student from the time he/she reports for the school team until the student is no longer a member of the school team for any reason, or until the team has completed its sports season including state playoffs, if applicable.
- 4.2.5** A student who is a member of an LHSAA school team shall not participate in any manner in an event, a meet or a contest as an unattached contestant against a high school team, a junior high school team, a collegiate team, a club team or other unattached individuals in that same sport. One individual shall constitute a team in indoor and outdoor track and field.
- 4.2.6** A student-athlete who plays on an independent team shall not have his/her high school eligibility affected, provided such play takes place after his/her school has completed its sports season and/or before he/she becomes a member of a school team in the fall. Participation with an independent team is legal in the following situations:
1. Prior to reporting for the school team for the first official practice date.
  2. After no longer being a member of the school team for any reason.
  3. After the school team has completed its sport season including the state championships, if applicable.
  4. During the summer months when school is not in regular session and prior to the start of the LHSAA sports season in a sport.
- 4.2.7** If a majority of the team members from the same school participate on an independent team, the team cannot be coached by a faculty member or non-faculty coach of that school. A coach may coach an independent team during the out-of season period if the teams consists of no more than the following number of team members from the same school.
1. Basketball - 3
  2. Baseball - 5
  3. Softball - 5
  4. Soccer - 6
  5. Volleyball - 3
- 4.2.8** **Exceptions and Legal Participation:** Participation with an independent team in the following sports shall not be considered violations of this rule:
1. Bowling
  2. Cross Country
  3. Golf
  4. Gymnastics
  5. Powerlifting
  6. Swimming
  7. Tennis
  8. Track and Field, Indoor
  9. Track and Field, Wheelchair
  10. Track and Field, Para-Ambulatory Athletes
- 4.2.9** Other legal participation include the following situations:
1. Participation at a professional baseball tryout camp provided the student has written permission from his principal. If a tryout camp is conducted during the high school sports season, the student shall be limited to participating in individual drills and restricted from participating in any type of team play.
  2. Participation in a road run as an individual and not as a school representative during the indoor and/or outdoor track season.
  3. Participation in sports not recognized as LHSAA sports such as rodeo, sand volleyball (2-person) or bicycling, etc. during an LHSAA sports season. Any subdivision or variation of a sport such as 3-on-3 basketball, etc. is still considered to be an LHSAA sponsored sport.

4. Participation on an independent team in another sport that is different from the LHSAA sport during an LHSAA sports season.

*Example: Participating on an independent basketball team while the student is a member of the school baseball team.*

5. Participation at a basketball evaluation showcase during the fall NCAA contact period provided the student is classified as a senior and/or is in his/her seventh or eighth semester of eligibility and has written permission from his/her principal.

6. Participation with an Olympic Development soccer program as approved by the Louisiana Soccer Association.

**4.2.10 The penalties for a member of school team violating the independent team rule: Student practices and/or plays with an independent team/organized exhibition group and does not play with the school team after the violation:**

1. The school may be placed on administrative probation not to exceed one calendar year in the same sport.
2. The school may be fined not to exceed \$200 per student if the school self-reports the violation or not to exceed \$400 if the violation is reported by a source outside of the school.
3. The student shall be ruled ineligible for the remainder of the season in the same sport.
4. Other penalties may be imposed on the school and/or individual(s) to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.

**4.2.11 The penalties for a member of school team violating the independent team rule: Student plays with an independent team/organized exhibition group and plays with the school team after the violation:**

1. The school may be placed on administrative probation not to exceed one calendar year.
2. The school shall be fined not to exceed \$200 per student if the school self-reports the violation or not to exceed \$400 if the violation is reported by a source outside of the school.
3. Any contest in which the student participated after the violation shall be forfeited.
4. The student shall be suspended for the remainder of the sports season.
5. The student shall be ineligible in the same sport during the next season for the same number of contests/playing dates that he/she participated in after the violation.
6. Other penalties may be imposed on the school and/or individual(s) to a degree in keeping with the severity of the violation.

**4.3 OUT OF SEASON - DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR** - Schools shall not require or sponsor activities in the name of the school team outside the school season of the sport involved. A school sponsored team or group of any number of students sponsored by the school which resembles the school's team, is not permitted to practice or compete outside the LHSAA defined season for that sport. Any non-school group can sponsor activities which involve groups of athletes which are mainly or exclusively members of a school team but a school cannot sponsor practice or competition by its team out of season. Students may participate on a voluntary basis in any activity, as a member of a non-school team or on an individual basis. Neither the member school nor its coaches shall allow the out-of-season activity to be mandatory or to be any part of the basis for selection of the school team.

**4.4 SUMMER ACTIVITIES**

**4.4.1** Summer activities shall extend from the **47<sup>th</sup>** through the **5<sup>th</sup>** week of the NFHS calendar year regardless of whether school is in session or not. Other than restrictions prohibiting football players from working out in pads during the defined summer time span there are no restrictions on workouts in LHSAA sports during the summer months. Summer activities in all LHSAA sports at the school's facilities, use of school equipment and sport specific apparatus are subject to the approval of the school principal. **EXCEPTION:** Baseball and softball coaches, faculty and non-faculty, may coach an independent team beginning with the 46<sup>th</sup> week of the NFHS calendar provided the independent team is in a summer league.

- 4.4.2 During the defined summer period, any number of students from the same school, may play on an independent team without affecting his/her eligibility regardless of who coaches the independent team in a game(s) (faculty or non-faculty member). This allows high school coaches to coach his/her team in team summer camps and summer leagues.
- 4.4.3 LHSAA players participating in passing leagues during the summer months when school is not in session in the sport of football:
1. May be coached by their high school coach(es).
  2. May wear helmets.
  3. Shall not wear shoulder pads, hip pads and/or thigh pads.
  4. May play under the sponsorship of a non-LHSAA organization.
  5. May play on the high school grounds with the written permission of their principal.

#### 4.5 **PRACTICE AND OFF-SEASON STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING WORKOUT SESSIONS**

- 4.5.1 Strength and Conditioning Programs are permissible out of season if they are voluntary and not part of the team selection process and do not involve equipment which is specific to a sport conducted by on an interscholastic basis by the LHSAA. Activities shall be limited to running, weight training, and stretching exercises. Agility drills that do not involve specific skills of a given sport are permitted. Coaches cannot use this opportunity to teach athletes game or sport techniques. Examples of prohibited equipment include, but are not limited to, basketballs, volleyballs or nets, track starting blocks, batons, shots, discuses, hurdles, or high jump and pole vault standards; footballs, football pads, sleds or dummies; baseball/softball bats, balls, or bases; wrestling mats. Generic equipment such as cones, weights, jump ropes, and other fitness apparatus are permitted. Regardless of what they are called or where they are held, coach-conducted running sessions which involve the structure of distances and timing and/or teach sport specific techniques shall not be provided even on a voluntary basis if they are conducted by the school coaches of those sports.
- 4.5.2 Students who do not meet the requirements of the bona fide student rule shall not be allowed to engage in practice and/or off-season strength and conditioning workout sessions with any students of an LHSAA school during the school year. It shall be permissible for a school to allow ineligible bona fide students that could become eligible to practice with a school team during the school year.
- 4.5.3 Students who do not meet the requirements of the bona fide student rule shall not be allowed to engage in practice and/or strength and conditioning workout sessions at an LHSAA school during the summer months unless the student is officially registered for enrollment in the school for the next school year.
- 4.5.4 Schools that share the same attendance zone with another LHSAA school shall not allow any of its coaches to conduct practice and/or strength or conditioning sessions with any junior high school student(s) attending any junior high school located inside or outside the school's attendance zone during the school year.

#### 4.6 **CAMPS, CLINICS, & PRIVATE LESSONS**

- 4.6.1 The LHSAA shall not sanction, endorse, ratify, confirm, or approve any camps, clinics, or private lessons.
- 4.6.2 Bona fide sport camps/clinics are those sponsored by institutions or business enterprises including: colleges, individual schools or school districts, community school programs, etc. For a member school and/or coaches to sponsor a sports camp/clinic for students in grades 7-12, the camp/clinic must be promoted and advertised in public media and be opened to students from more than one school. Sports camps/clinics sponsored by member schools and/or coaches shall be allowed only during the summer period. The camp/clinic shall be from one to five days in length and all days must be consecutive.

- 4.6.3 Member schools and/or coaches shall not advertise and/or operate camps, clinics, private lessons exclusively for their own athletes.
- 4.6.4 Member schools and/or coaches shall not pay fees, meals, lodging, or other expenses on behalf of student-athletes. Free sports camp/clinics are permissible provided the camp/clinic is free to everyone.
- 4.6.5 It is permissible for member schools to donate, rent or lease their facilities for use by non-school entities, including coaches, in accordance with the rental/lease policy of the school or school system.
- 4.6.6 Student athletes in grades 7-12 may attend as many individual or team camps/clinics of their choosing during the out-of-season and summer periods on an unattached basis provided they do so at their own expense. Participation in a sports clinic/camp, during the high school sports season, provided the student is limited to participating in individual drills and refrains from participating in any type of team play. To do so would be a violation of the independent team rule. Exception: The sport of soccer is not subject to this rule. No student shall be prohibited from participating in any soccer camp or any other soccer showcase opportunity, including training applicable thereto, provided such participation complies with applicable law, policies, guidelines, rules and regulations with regard to college recruitment.
- 4.6.7 Students may take private lesson at any time provided they do so at their own expense.
- 4.6.8 Coaches may teach private lessons at any time if they are the owner, employee and/or volunteer of a club or non-profit entity operated separately from the school and school facilities. Private lessons are not to be competitive and comparable fees shall be charged to all participants.
- 4.6.9 Coaches may coach their son or daughter at any time on an individual basis. This does not give a coach the authority to coach an entire team that their son or daughter may be participating on.