TRI-COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCE
CONFERENCE BY-LAWS
UPDATED IN RED 5/29/2026

1. Rowan County Middle School Conference Members

A. China Grove Middle - Red/White
B. Corriher-Lipe Middle - Black/Gold
C. Ellis Middle - Orange/Purple
D. Erwin Middle - Carolina Blue/Yellow
E. Knox Middle - Blue/Yellow
F. Mooresville Middle- Red/White/Black
G. North Davie Middle - Orange/Navy
H. North Rowan Middle- Blue/Black
I. Selma Burke Middle - Black/Yellow
J. South Davie Middle - Black/Orange
K. Southeast Middle - Navy/Gold
L. West Rowan Middle- Carolina Blue/White

II. Conference Organization

A. Chairman - elected for a two year term and must be a school athletic director. Ann Clark, elected April 23, 2025.
B. Secretary - appointed by the chairman
C. Board of Directors
1. The Board will consist of each member schools Principal or designee, the Chairman, and the Secretary.
2. Purpose: Settle any conference issues.
D. Voting - each school has one vote. The Director of Athletics for Rowan County, Mooresville and Davie County will break all ties.
E. Meetings - Will be held every month, more if necessary. Meetings will alternate every month per county.
F. Dues - $250 per school year. Dues are payable by October 1st of the school year.
G. Pay for Chairman for scheduling is $800 ($400 in Nov., $400 in June)
H. Plaques for the regular season division winners will be the responsibility of the chairman and paid for by the conference. Trophies for Tournaments will be purchased by the host school beginning with Fall of 2025 except for tennis, golf and xc.

III. General Rules

1. All rules as published in the handbook Middle/Junior High School Athletics in the North Carolina Public Schools will govern athletics in our middle school conference.

- The Chairman is to review the eligibility sheets to ensure that schools are complying with all requirements.
- An eligibility sheet must be turned in for any school sponsored athletic team.
- The eligibility sheet must be in the hands of the Conference Chair *prior to the first scheduled game.* The penalty for late submission is $25.00.

2. Each conference member must field a team in softball, football, basketball, wrestling, baseball, soccer, track, tennis and volleyball. Exceptions considered by the conference members.

3. ELIGIBILITY - Only students in grades 6**,** 7,and 8 may participation middle school interscholastic athletic competition.

- 6th graders are not eligible to play tackle football. In order to qualify for public school participation, a student must meet the following requirements:
- Medical - Each player must receive a medical examination by a physician licensed to practice medicine each calendar year (*every 395 days)* in order to be eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletic contests.
- All players are required to subscribe to school insurance or present an insurance waiver form.
- Academic - In grades 6**,** 7 and 8 a student must pass 70% of all classes taken, be in attendance 85% of the previous semester and meet promotion standards established by the LEA.
- Clarification on Middle School Eligibility:
  - Based on semester
  - Student can pass for the year but fail for the 2nd semester (Spring). Eligibility is based on S1 and S2 grades. Each school has the option of checking grades throughout the grading period
- No student may be eligible to participate at the middle school level for a period lasting longer that six (6) *consecutive semesters,* beginning with the student's entry into the 6th grade. The principal shall have evidence of the date of each player's entry into the 6th grade and monitor the six (6) consecutive semesters.

- **To be added to Middle School Manual**
  (6) No student shall participate in more than one season of interscholastic athletics per year in the same sport, regardless of the school on behalf of which the student participated in.

- Participating player - A player is defined as participating when he/she actually dresses for a contest as a player as defined by the rules of that specific sport. Any activity is prohibited in all sports on Sunday.

- If a student athlete quits a sport they cannot participate in another sport until the original sport is over. Hardships (grades, Injury, family etc. will be handled individually).

- Student-athletes that receive OSS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PRACTICE OR PLAY and will be enforced by the Principal, Athletic Director and COACH.
- If a student-athlete receives ISS, whether they may or may not practice or play in games will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Principal ONLY.

A. A middle school team member will not scrimmage or practice with or against a junior varsity or varsity high school team.

B. Jerseys: **Football:** Will wear color at home and white away
Basketball: Will wear white at home and color away

C. Rule interpretations should be referred to the Chairman of the Conference Misunderstanding and unsportsmanlike conduct is to be referred to the principals of the two schools involved for a solution.

- **Any questions regarding sport-specific rules not specifically covered in the NCDPI handbook and/or the Conference By-Laws will be referred to the NCHSAA rules.**

D. Postponed Games: Any single contest postponed because of emergency reasons (bad weather, epidemics, heating system failure, mid term exams, or unavoidable mishaps) may be rescheduled and played in addition to the regular number of contests allowed per week.
Effective school year 2025-26 Reschedule games only if absolutely necessary AND it should be rescheduled for the next playing date. Games early in the season should be rescheduled as soon as possible. All cancellations and forfeits must be approved by the Conference President and a **$250 fine to the opponents.**

E. Admission prices: Schools will charge **$6.00** for general admission
School employee passes from Rowan County, Mooresville and Davie County passes will be honored at all regular season games. The host school for a tournament will charge **$7.00** for all admission. The only passes accepted at a tournament will be current NC Coaches Cards, Gold Cards and valid Employee ID's for employee only. ALL PASSES ARE ADMIT ONE ONLY.

F. Starting times for all sports involving MGSD and Davie County teams will be 4:30 .
Games between Rowan County schools will begin at 4:00pm.

G. A student-athlete can not participate in both Varsity Basketball and Wrestling in the same year.

H. Adding players to the team - Eligibility rosters should be final after your tryout date. The only exception should be for injury or someone moving into the school.

I. Athletic First Responders - Beginning in the fall of 2025 all schools will be required to have an athletic first responder at all of their home events with first aid supplies and an AED. An alternative to attending the clinic in Greensboro is to go to NFHSlearn and take the 10 hr. course to become certified.

No 8th grader will participate in JV sports. Exception has been made in JV wrestling Tournament. In 2025 we will revisit this rule for wrestling

Game Day Information Form - sent on Sundays for the week ahead to schools you will be hosting

That week.

Game Day Information LINK

Game Day Information FORM LINK

IV. Organization of Sports

It is required that if your school is participating in the semi-final or final round of a tournament an Administrator must be present. An administrator from the visiting team is not necessary at the 1st round of the tournament played at the higher seed

A. Tournaments - entry fees will be $75 per team beginning in Fall 2024

- Top 8 teams (4 from each division) will compete in the conference tournaments for softball, basketball, soccer, baseball and Varsity and JV volleyball
- Tournaments for softball, baseball, soccer and volleyball will no longer be played on Saturdays. First round games will be played at the higher seed on the first Thursday following the end of regular season games. Semifinals will be played the following Monday and Tuesday at the host school with Finals on the following Wednesday or Thursday at the host school.
- Wrestling tournament - starting in 2026 the Varsity and JV tournaments Will be on separate weekends and hosted by different schools. Varsity will be on the Friday following regular season, JV the weekend prior on Saturday.
- The basketball tournaments (V & JV) will have the first round games at the higher seed on Thursday following the end of regular season games, semifinals on the following Saturday at the host school and Finals on the following Monday and/or Tuesday at the host school
- As of 9/3/2025 tournament schedules may vary from the above based on yearly schedules
- Safety concerns with the number of fans in the middle school gyms. Both V and JV or just Varsity? Every effort will be made to have the Championship games at a high school for the Varsity. If a high school is not available the games will be played on separate days. JV will follow this if necessary.
- Exceptions are tournaments for football, xc, tennis, wrestling and track
    - Football - in 2025 football will play 6 games and then have a 2 game playoff.
    - Beginning in the fall of 2026 each school will play everyone in the Conference one time for a total of 11 games. 3 non-conference games will then be added.
    - Teams will be seeded 1-8 for tournament play. 1st round games will be scheduled #8 vs #1, #7 vs #2, #6 vs #3 and #5 vs #4.
    - Exception to this format are football (still Divisions, playing those in your division and then a 2 team playoff), tennis, XC and track.
    - Wrestling -top 8 wrestlers for each weight class for the Varsity Tournament If a wrestlers record does not put them in the top 8 they will wrestle in the JV tournament
        - **Tournament match times** - 1st Period 2 minute, 2nd and 3rd - 1 minute each. This is opposite the regular season

- Beginning with 2025 - the JV Wrestling tournament will be single elimination and the Varsity tournament will be double elimination.
- All weight classes in the Varsity tournament must be filled before a school can enter a wrestler in the JV tournament.
- Beginning in 2025 matches female vs female will follow the new weight classes for them and will wrestle first. Female vs Male matches will follow males weight class.
- Female division of the wrestling tournament will depend on the number of female wrestlers
- Entry fee for the wrestling tournament will be **$75 beginning in 2024** for a total of 18 wrestling (JV or Varsity) **$150 beginning in 2024** for more than 18 wrestlers.
- Beginning in 2025 all schools must have a certified wrestling scale and all wrestling scales must be calibrated each year

ALL OTHER TOURNAMENTS WILL HAVE A $75 ENTRY FEE PER TEAM
Softball and Baseball will have each participating team provide two balls per game.
Seeding rules for tournament play will be determined as explained in the NCHSAA handbook. Tournaments rotate among the schools in alphabetical order.
TRACK & CROSS COUNTRY - will have an entry fee if the Timing group is used. Amount will vary depending on the number of schools participating.

B. Fall Sports

Practice may begin no earlier than ten (10) school days prior to the opening of the school term or the week of August 1st for late academic calendar situations. This includes tryouts.

1. Softball -
   - Fast pitch National Federation Rules will apply.
   - Pitching distance will be 43 feet and ***l***ength between bases will be 60 feet.
   - One 7 inning game will be played with no time limit. Ten run rule after 5 innings and 15 runs after 3 innings. An athlete may step off the base early to create an out
   - At the start of the third extra inning the International tiebreaker rule will be in effect. The runner at 2nd base to start the third extra inning must have made the last out.
   - Coaches must wear a helmet while coaching bases.
   - Conference Tournament - Finals shall have 3 umpires

2. Football -
   - We will only schedule for schools to have one team and those games will be played on Tuesdays.
   - Fifth quarter is an option. 10 plays, FB on 40 yard line, Coaches on the field.
   - The length of the quarters will be 8 minutes.
   - A tie will be resolved by the method of the 10 yard line overtime procedures as set forth by the National Federation Rule Book with three periods being the maximum.

- There is a maximum of 8 games per season.
- Season schedule - 6 games, two playoff games with everyone playing both weeks
- The minimum amount of markings on the field should be every 5 yard line, hash marks, three yard line and the team box.
- All extra points are 2 points, whether run or kicked.
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Starting Fall 2024- ALL Football Coaches required to take the NFHS Learn Football Tackling Course before first practice - It includes information on equipment fitting as well as tackling techniques. Coaches can take the Free course any time between now and first practice.
Also suggested that someone video the first day that tackling is taught

Mercy rule - A running clock will be used when the point spread is at 28 points at any point in the game. The clock can be stopped only by a timeout to allow for substitutions or injuries.

3. Girls and Boys Tennis
   - Each tennis match will consist of 6 singles and 3 doubles matches. Changes for Fall of 2025 tennis matches will be 6 game matches Win by one.
   - The home team provides new tennis balls for home matches.
   - Any variation in the length of the match can be determined prior to the match by agreement of both coaches.
   - To win a match a school must win 5 or more matches.
   - All High School State rules on pairings of singles and doubles must be followed.
   - Beginning in the Fall of 2024 tennis will host a tournament on the Saturday following the last regular season match. This will include the top 2 boys singles the top 2 girls singles and the top boys doubles team and the top girls doubles. That would be a total of 8 from each school. They cannot play both singles and doubles.

4. Cross Country -
   - Meets will be scheduled about once a week.
   - Boys and girls will run separately unless numbers are low.
   - The Conference Meet will use the timing company and all schools participating will pay an entry fee to pay for the timing company
   - An athlete MUST run in at least two XC meets during the regular season to be eligible to run in the Championship Meet.

5. **Cheerleadin**g
   - All cheerleading coaches must take the USA Cheer Spirit Safety Certification class located on the NFHS web site. This allows their team to Stunt.
   - Stunting must be performed on mats and following all safety protocols. If the coach has not taken the above course, the cheerleaders will only dance on the floor, no stunting at all.

- Beginning in October of the 2024-2025 school year the Conference will host Cheerleading competition to be held at a high school. An entry fee will be charged, vendors invited.

C. Winter Sports

Practice may start no earlier than October 1st for Varsity/JV Basketball and Wrestling A student-athlete can not participate in both Varsity Basketball and Wrestling in the same year.

1. **Basketball -**
   - Once Varsity and JV basketball teams are selected the JV teams may start practice on November 10th.
     Each team will play all 11 other teams and then play 3 non-conference games.
   - Games will be played on Monday and Thursday with 7 minute quarters for Varsity and 6 minute quarters for JV.
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   - The Varsity season will be first, followed by the JV season.
   - Girls will play first on Monday or Tuesday and Boys will play first on Wednesday or Thursday.
   - Mercy rule: if a team is ahead by 28 points AFTER HALFTIME it will be a running clock and **no half court or full court press by the team that is ahead.**
   - If the score goes below 28, the winning team can press again. Clock stops for fouls, time-out and injuries.
   - Half time will be 10 minutes and warm ups will be 10 minutes.
   - 8th graders are not allowed to play on JV.
   - Players may only play one season in basketball (JV or Varsity, not both).
   - Conference Tournament - Finals shall have 3 officials

   Every effort will be made to have the Championship games at a high school for the Varsity if it is felt that the middle school gym cannot handle the crowd. If a high school is not available the games may need to be played on separate days. JV will follow this if necessary.

2. **Wrestling -**
   - Scales - all wrestling scales must be calibrated each year prior to the season.
   - Matches will be played on Monday and Thursdays against the same opponent as basketball at the opposite site unless it is a tri-match.
   - During the regular season the length of each period is 1st - 1 minute, 2nd and 3rd periods - 2 minutes.
   - Championship Tournament the length of each period is 1st - 2 minutes, 2nd and 3rd periods - 1 minute each
   - A contestant shall not wrestle in a weight class more than one above his verified stripped (must wear singlet) weight.
   - A contestant that wrestles in one weight class three or more times during a season can wrestle in that weight class at tournament time.
   - Tournament - beginning in 2025, the JV Wrestling tournament will be double elimination **IF** the host site can run 4 mats, otherwise it will be single elimination and the Varsity tournament will be double elimination.

- Seeding for tournament purposes for ties is determined by NCHSAA rules. The top 8 wrestlers in each weight class will be seeded in the varsity tournament.
- All weight classes in the Varsity tournament must be filled before a school can enter a wrestler in the JV tournament.
- The remaining wrestlers in that weight class will wrestle in the JV tournament.
- A wrestler can only wrestle in one of the conference tournaments- either JV or Varsity.
- The weight classes are as follows: 76, 83, 90, 98, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 144, 150, 157, 165, 175, 190, 215, 250 heavyweight. (minimum wt 190.1)
- Minimum weight for the 76 lb. class is 61 lb ,for 83 lb. class is 68 lbs., and for the 90 lb. class is 76.1 (changed for 2026) lbs.
- The maximum for heavyweight will be 250 lbs. and the minimum is 190.1 (changed for 2026)lbs.The exact weight at weigh in will be used in singlet and must be worn during weigh in.
- **Girls** (Pounds) 70 (minimum wt 55), 77 (minimum wt 62), 84 (minimum wt 70.1), 92, 100, 107, 114, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 165, 185, 235 (minimum wt 180)
- Female vs female wrestlers will wrestle first
- No wrestler should lose more than 3 pounds a week.
- A pound will be added for each weight class after Thanksgiving.
- If your team wrestles back to back matches both teams get a pound.

D. Spring Sports

Official start of practice and tryouts will be February 1st.
No 8th Grader can play on JV teams.

- A volleyball, baseball or soccer player must participate in a minimum of 2 track meets to participate in the conference track meet.
- Players must be on both eligibility lists.
- A track athlete that participates in volleyball, baseball or soccer must play in a minimum of 4 contests to be eligible for the tournament.

1. **Track -**

- 6th, 7th and 8th grade boys and girls track. Meet days will vary according to the high school track schedules.
- The schedule will begin in March and there will be at least 6 meets plus a conference meet.
- The order of events will be: 4:15pm the field events start and the running events will start at 4:30.
- In the conference meet team trophies will be awarded for 1st place and the runner up.
- Plaques will be awarded for Most Outstanding Runner (boys and girls) and Most Outstanding in Field Events (boys and girls) determined by total points for each person.
- **Medals** will be given for 1st through 3rd place.
- **Ribbons** will be given for 4 - 8th place.
- Beginning in the Spring of 2025 the Conference Track Meet will be held on two afternoons. The first afternoon will be boys and girls field events (no finals). The

second afternoon will be the running events. This can be switched to have a timing company.

Field Events

- Shot Put - Boys 4kg(8.8lb) Girls 4 kg(8.8lb)
- Discus - 1 kg(2.20lb)
- Qualifying distance for Conference Meet in shot, discus, long and triple jump.
- **High Jump -**
- **REGULAR SEASON MEETS - The bar may be lowered after it has been raised**
- **During regular meets girls start at 3'2" increase by 2" until 4' then by 1"**
- **During regular meets boys start at 4'2" increase by 2" until 5' then by 1"**
- **CONFERENCE MEET:**
- **ONCE THE BAR IS RAISED IT CANNOT BE LOWERED**
- **Girls start at 3'6" increase by 2" until 4' then by 1"**
- **Boys start at 4'6" increase by 2" until 5' then by 1"**
- Long Jump & Triple Jump -athletes may jump from different lines.
- A line can be added with tape or chalk. 2 lines allowed at 4' and 8' from the pit.
- in getting steps for long and triple jump athletes may ONLY go in the direction of the pit. Suggestion to have your athletes find their distance at practice and take a tape measure and record that distance. When getting to a meet measure for their take off spot.
- Do not run heats in the 800. Should be a waterfall start with all girls running at the same time and all boys running at the same time.
- Running Events
    - 100 m hurdles - girls
    - 110 m hurdles - boys
    - 100 m dash
    - 800 m relay
    - 1600 meter run
    - 400 m relay
    - 400 m run
    - 300 m hurdles
    - 800 m run
    - 200 m dash
    - 1600 m relay
    - 600 m run - optional is not scored, to be run first. Not included in the Conference meet

Each school needs to send a representative for a pre-season meeting to go over appropriate measuring, timing, and techniques.

2. **Baseball -**
    - National Federation Rules will apply.

- *Starting spring of 2020 baseball will be played on Monday and Thursdays.*
- Pitching distance will be 60'6" and length between bases will be 90'.
- One 7-inning game will be played with no time limit.
- Ten run rule after 5 innings and 15 run rule after 3 innings.
- Official ball and bat will be used. The bat will be no more than a minus five in weight.
- **The barrel can be 2 ⅝" or 2 ¾"**
- If there is a tie then play 2 extra innings normally then on the third extra innings the International Tie Breaker will be used. The runner placed on 2nd base must be the last out.
- Game Changer to be used to count pitches beginning in the Spring 2024.
- An adult shall use Game Changer
- Game changer will provide the conference with a place to view all games and pitching totals. (Adopted September 2023)
- An athlete can pitch no more than 10 innings a week
- Coaches are required to complete the Pitch Count Spreadsheet after each game

APPROVED PITCH COUNT
MAXIMUM PITCHES ALLOWED PER DAY

The following rest periods are based on the following pitch window:

If a pitcher throws 76 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest are required.
If a pitcher throws 61 - 75 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest are required
If a pitcher throws 46 - 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest are required
If a pitcher throws 31 - 45 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest is required
If a pitcher throws 1 - 30 pitches in a day, zero (0) calendar days of rest are required
1 day of rest for any pitcher appearing 2 consecutive days regardless the number of pitches

- *Pitch count applies only to pitches during an at bat.*
- *Allow a pitcher to complete an at bat if he reaches 105.*
- *Coaching helmets must be worn while coaching the bases.*
- Conference Tournament - Finals shall have 3 umpires

3. **Soccer -**

- Boys and girls soccer will be played as double headers on Mondays and Thursdays.
- Girls will play first on Monday and Tuesdays and boys will play first on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- Games will be 30 minute halves.
- Mercy rule will be 7 goals at halftime or later.
- Conference standings will be determined by a point system with 3 points for a win and 1 point for a tie.
- Each team will play everyone in the conference and then 3 additional games to be counted as non-conference games.

- If there is a tie at the end of regulation in the Conference Tournament there will be 2 - 3 minute overtimes.
- If it is still a tie then penalty kicks will be used to determine a winner.
- Conference Tournament - Finals shall have 3 officials

4. **Volleyball** -
    - Matches will be 2 out of 3 games. The first 2 games played with rally scoring to 25, must win by 2. The last game will be played to 15 must win by 2.
    - Each team must supply a line judge to be located on the opposing endline.
    - Home team will warm up first.
    - Warm up time is to be 5-5-2.
    - No 8th grader may play on JV.
    - JV players may move up, but they must stay up on Varsity.
    - JV plays first followed by the Varsity
    - Conference Tournament - Finals shall have 2 officials.