



# COACHING MSHSL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

This document is intended to provide specific information regarding your high school coaching assignment and Minnesota State High School League bylaws pertaining to student eligibility. Review the following League bylaws which may affect your contact with your athletes outside of the high school sports season.

Contact your athletic/activities director or the League if you have any questions about these bylaws.

## Bylaw 203

### Camps/Clinics

#### DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

During the school year, members of the high school coaching staff (full time, part time, head coach, assistant coach, volunteer coach, salaried or non-salaried) may not own, organize, administer, direct, or coach a camp or clinic, league, or tournament that is attended by players from the coach's school in that sport.

#### SUMMER WAIVER

High school student athletes may attend a camp or clinic owned or coached by a member of his or her school's coaching staff provided the coach has been approved for a summer waiver. Consult with your athletic director for the summer waiver criteria.

**NOTE:** Camp/clinic participation fees must be paid by the student or student's parent or guardian. Coaches and/or booster clubs cannot pay for a student to attend a camp/clinic or participate on a non-school team. Schools may not issue school uniforms for non-school use. Schools may rent or lease equipment, i.e. shoulder pads, football helmets, etc. to students for their personal use in camps, clinics, or leagues during the summer.

#### Penalties:

- 1. First Violation:** After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility IN THAT SPORT for the next two consecutive interscholastic contests or two weeks of that season, whichever is greater. If there are fewer than two events remaining in that sport, the loss of eligibility will continue into the next season in that sport.  
**NOTE:** This means that a senior who violates the bylaws at the end of a sport season will lose eligibility for two games in the next sport season in which the student participates.
- 2. Second Violation:** After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility IN THAT SPORT for the next six consecutive interscholastic contests.
- 3. Third Violation:** After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility IN THAT SPORT for the next twelve consecutive interscholastic contests.
- 4. Consecutive Penalties:** Penalties shall be consecutive beginning with the student's first participation in a League activity and continuing through the student's high school career.

## Bylaw 208

### Team and Individual Sports

#### 1. During the high school season:

- Students may receive coaching, training or lessons in that sport from a source other than the school's coaching staff. Training shall be defined to include receiving instruction in the techniques and skills of a particular sport.
- Non-school training during the high school season for athletes who qualify as individual competitors to the state tournament:** (*Swimming, Cross Country, Tennis, Skiing, Gymnastics, Wrestling, Synchronized Swimming, Golf, and Track and Field*)

**Lessons/Training:** During the MSHSL high school season athletes may take lessons from professionals and other non-school coaches without limit as to where, when or who may provide the training. Athletes may not miss a high school practice, game, or meet to take a lesson or train for a non-school event.

**Competition:** Athletes will be able to compete in non-school events/competitions that do not match the events in which athletes currently compete in high school competition.

- Coaches may continue to conduct practice and training for all squad members, including the students who have been eliminated from tournament competition, until completion of the state tournament in that sport.

**Season Definition:** The season begins with the official opening date of practice and ends when the student or student's team is eliminated from further MSHSL tournament competition.

#### 2. During the school year, prior to and following the high school sports season:

- Coaches shall not influence or direct a student to participate as a member of a team or as an individual competitor in a non-school league, camp, clinic, or to take private or group instruction or lessons.
- A student who has been a member of a high school team (B-squad, junior varsity or varsity) may not receive coaching, training or private lessons from a salaried or non-salaried member of the school's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity coaching staff in that sport.

#### 3. During the summer vacation period:

During the summer vacation period, member schools may waive "2-B" above and permit students to receive coaching from a member of the high school staff under the provisions of the summer coaching waiver. Contact your athletic director for additional information.

#### Summer Vacation Definition:

With the exception of Baseball and Girls' Softball, the summer waiver period also includes a one-week no-contact period in July the week of July Fourth.

#### Captains Practice:

Captains practice is primarily for the purpose of physical conditioning and salaried or non-salaried school personnel may not be involved in any capacity. It is the responsibility of school officials to become aware of the pre-season activities in their school district and to verify that the spirit and intent of the League rules are respected.

#### Open Gym:

Open gym refers to the use of the school facilities for recreational activities. The characteristics of an open gym are that:

- The school facilities are available for students to participate in a number of activities;
- The recreational activities are open to all students;
- There is no coaching of the skills and techniques of activities provided in the school interscholastic athletic program;

- There is no requirement for students to attend open gym activities as a prerequisite for membership on a high school team.

#### Interpretation:

- Can high school coaches participate as a player on a non-school league team or in games during open gym with students they coach on their high school team.  
*A. No. It is the philosophy of the Minnesota State High School League that students should have the opportunity to engage in a variety of activities prior to and following the high school sports season provided that these activities are voluntary and not influenced or directed by a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's high school coaching staff. The presence of the student's high school coach as a participant violates the intent of the rule which seeks to prevent school personnel from exerting undue influence on students to participate on non-school teams or attend open gym.*

## Bylaw 307

### Undue Influence on Students

A system of fines shall be imposed for schools whose personnel exert undue influence on students to participate on non-school teams or to attend camps, clinics, open gym, captains practice, weight training or other related activities.

## Bylaw 308

### Undue Solicitation of a Student

Any verbal or written contact initiated by a representative of another school resulting in the transfer of a student will be considered as asserting undue influence, for which the school may be publicly censured, removed from tournament competition, suspended from the League, or fined.

## Bylaw 406

### Physical Development Programs

Group and individual physical development programs open to all students between the close of one season and the opening of the next season are encouraged. The use of high school gymnasiums and other athletic facilities during the same period is also encouraged. National Federation guidelines for conducting programs for physical development will apply. This means that coaching of sport techniques and skills to students who have participated on high school teams is a violation of the bylaw and must not be included in the program which would emphasize physical development rather than skills and techniques of specific sports. Chalk talks or "skull sessions" emphasizing sport skills and techniques are violations of the bylaw. There shall be no compulsion on athletes to participate in the program as a qualification for being on a high school team.



**COMPLETION OF ONLINE RULES MODULES & CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

All sport coaches and fine arts coaches and directors in speech, debate and one-act play are required to complete the League’s Continuing Education Requirement (CER) once every three years and complete the general and activity specific rules modules on an annual basis.

**CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES**

A coach will be in violation of the standards for good sportsmanship established by the Minnesota State High School League by:

- A. making degrading/critical remarks about officials during or after a contest either on the field of play, from the bench, through any public news media, social media or other electronic media;
- B. detaining the officials following the contest to request a ruling or explanation of actions taken by the official; or
- C. being ejected from any contest.

**Actions and Response:**

Negative actions by a coach shall be reported to the League by the school and by the head contest official. The school shall document the results of their investigation and actions taken, where necessary and appropriate.

**Penalties:**

Penalties for violation of these standards may include, but are not limited to, reprimand, censure, fines, or other actions as deemed appropriate by the League Board of Directors.

**PRIOR TO AND FOLLOWING THE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SEASON, A COACH:**

**MAY**

- Conduct a pre-season meeting to review team registration, MSHSL rules, tryout information and other administrative items. No coaching or instruction in the skills or strategies of the sport is permissible.
- Provide camp and non-school team information to athletes if approved for a summer waiver and authorized by your athletic director to do so.
- Provide coaching during the summer vacation period if approved for summer waiver. *Ref. Bylaw 208.*

**MAY NOT**

- Provide coaching, instruction, training, etc. to athletes of their high school B-squad, junior varsity, or varsity teams (unless approved for and during summer waiver period).
- Direct athletes to play in a league or to attend a camp or clinic.
- Place athletes on a roster, develop or organize a team roster, draft players for a team, select, secure, or otherwise influence the placement of athletes on a team for leagues, tournaments, camps, or clinics, other than those athletes approved for a summer coaching waiver.
- Direct or unduly influence an athlete to participate in open gym, captains practice, or on non-school teams, leagues, camps, clinics, or weight training.
- Organize, supervise, direct, or otherwise participate in the organization of captains practice.

**LAST DATE TO JOIN A TEAM**

- A. To be eligible for section and state competition, a student must be a member of that school’s team not later than the fourth Monday (the 22nd calendar day) from the official start of that sport season.
- B. Membership Defined: A student must:
  - 1) Be practicing with the high school team;
  - 2) Be on the school’s master eligibility list; and
  - 3) Be under the bylaws of the League.
- C. Exceptions: At the member school’s discretion, students may be allowed to join a team after the fourth Monday (the 22nd calendar day) from the official start of the that sport season and be fully eligible for post-season competition if they meet any of the three conditions (1, 2 or 3) below.
  - 1) Transfer students who become eligible in their new school.
  - 2) Students, who are participating in another sport and wish to drop that sport or participate in a second sport during that same sport season, provided they have not delayed their membership in order to gain a competitive advantage.
  - 3) Students who were under the care of a physician and were medically unable to join the team by the specified date. Students must have written documentation from the physician.
- D. Students who join a team after the fourth Monday (the 22nd calendar day) from the official start of the that sport season, but who also meet any of the three conditions (a, b or c) below are eligible **ONLY** for regular season competition, not post-season competition.
  - 1) Participated on a non-school team or as an individual competitor;
  - 2) Participated in a camp or clinic; and/or
  - 3) Received private instruction in that sport during the high school season.