



# CAAC Game Sheet

## Football

(Established: February 2022)

(Updated: September 2025)

### Start Times:

- Varsity games will be played on Fridays and start at 7:00 p.m.; games before Labor Day may be moved to Thursdays and will be at the host school's discretion
- Freshman and JV games will be played the night before the Varsity game and will start at 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., respectively
  - 20-minute warm up between games

### Pre-Game Warm-up:

- The field shall be available at least 90 minutes prior to the start of the Varsity game and at least 30 minutes prior to the Freshman (or JV) game
- Host schools are required to communicate to opposing school's AD at least 48 hours prior with a detailed Varsity Game Day Information Sheet, especially if the Varsity Pre-Game Schedule (below) is altered
- Varsity Pre-Game Schedule:

6:20 p.m.	35:00 on Game Clock	Clock Operator meets crew (in locker room / on the field)
6:25 p.m.	30:00 on Game Clock	Officials take the field
6:35 p.m.	20:00 on Game Clock	Coin toss
6:40 p.m.	15:00 on Game Clock	Teams vacate the field
6:55 p.m.	0:00 on Game Clock	National Anthem – Teams required to be on field

### Game Format:

- Games will be 4 quarters
- Each quarter shall be 12:00 in length for varsity and sub-varsity games
- Varsity halftime will be 15:00 + 3:00 minutes; halftime may be extended to 20:00 + 3:00 to accommodate special events, but host school must notify visiting AD and/or coach in advance
  - Sub-varsity halftime will be 12:00 + 3:00 minutes
- The 35-point differential rule is in effect for the second half for all varsity and sub-varsity games
  - The clock shall run continuously except for the following situations when it will be stopped (**TIPS**):
    1. Timeouts (charged to a team)
    2. Intermission (between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters, and after a score)
    3. Penalty enforcement (whistle to ready-to-play)
    4. Safety reasons (injuries, etc.)
  - Normal timing procedures shall resume if the point differential is reduced to less than 35 points
- The 50-point differential rule is in effect any time in the game for all varsity and sub-varsity games
  - The clock will run continuously except for officials' timeouts for injured players
- Running clock shall occur if either team is ahead by 35 or more points (in the second half) for all varsity and sub-varsity games
  - Clock stops on all injuries and official's timeout (indicated by a whistle and the official crossing their arms above their head)
- In sub-varsity contests, the clock shall start on the ready-for-play signal rather than the snap following a change of possession
- **Overtime Procedures**
  - There is no overtime for sub-varsity games
  - See below for varsity games

## Overtime Procedure:

- There will be a 3:00 minute intermission
  - Any carry-over penalties from the regulation contest will be assessed to start the overtime procedure
- At the end of the 3-minute intermission, there will be a coin toss, where the visiting team's Captain shall be given the privilege of choosing heads or tails before the coin is tossed
  - The winner of the toss shall be given his choice of defense or offense first, or of designating the end of the field at which the ball will be put in play for this set of downs; the loser will have his choice of the other option
- Each team shall be permitted one timeout during each overtime
- To start the overtime, the offensive team shall put the ball in play, first and goal, on the defensive team's 10-yard line or succeeding spot if carry-over penalty has been administered
  - The first offensive team shall have a series of four downs; that series shall be terminated by any score by the offensive team or if the defensive team has possession of the ball
- A field goal attempt is permitted during any down
- If the defensive team gains possession, the ball becomes dead immediately and the offensive team's series of downs is ended
- After the first team on offense has completed its series of downs, the first team on defense will become the offensive team with the ball in its possession at the same 10-yard line
- The same end of the field will be used for possessions by both teams during the two sets of downs to ensure equal game conditions and conserve time
- If the score remains tied after each team has been given one series of downs in an overtime, then the procedure shall be repeated with other overtime periods until a game winner is determined
  - In this case, there shall be an intermission of 2:00 minutes
  - At the subsequent meeting of Team captains, the loser of the overtime coin toss will be given first choice of the options
  - If additional overtime periods are required, then first options will be alternated with no coin toss
- The offensive team shall be awarded a new series of downs when anyone of the following occurs:
  - Offensive team recovers a scrimmage kick (field goal attempt) between the goal lines after it has been touched first by the defensive team beyond the neutral zone
  - Defensive team is guilty of any of the four roughing penalties (the only penalties in high school football that result in an automatic first down):
    - roughing the kicker
    - roughing the place-kick holder
    - roughing the snapper
    - roughing the passer
- Only the offense can score
- And unlike college games, in high school football, it is never required that a team go for a two-point conversion after a touchdown



# CAAC Event Management Policies & Procedures

## Football

(Established: February 2022)

(Updated: September 2025)

### General Procedures:

- When a host school conducts a special activity that will interrupt pregame or halftime, they shall be required to notify the visiting AD and/or coach no later than upon arrival
- No artificial noisemakers will be allowed
- Spectators will be prohibited from forming pep lines or tunnels on the field
- **Playing Rules**
  - All MHSAA and National Federation rules will be followed
  - Home teams shall wear dark uniforms; Visitor shall wear white uniforms
- **Film Exchange Policy**
  - By agreement of the CAAC Athletic Directors, league schools will share or allow access to a quality game recording of one game or scrimmage from the previous week to the upcoming CAAC opponents; coaches are responsible to provide recording by 12:00 p.m. the Sunday prior to the contest
    - This courtesy is not to be extended to non-CAAC schools unless required by the MHSAA
  - All schools will make their game video available to the CAAC officials' assigner for purposes of officials' evaluation and study
- **Officials**
  - A 7-person crew will be assigned for all varsity games (if possible)
  - A 5-person crew will be assigned for sub-varsity games
    - Individual host schools may request a 7-person crew for sub-varsity games if they choose
- **Make-Up Dates**
  - Postponed games will be made up on the next available date as determined by participating school ADs & coaches with every attempt made to make up on the next day
- **Media**
  - Bona fide media shall be provided access to the facility and press areas
  - Photography restrictions will be established by the host school consistent with similar outdoor events
- **Results**
  - Host school will report results to local media and/or post on social media
- **Host School Expectations**
  - Provide a chain or line-to-gain crew of adults to work on the visitor sideline
  - Provide both teams with space in the press box for a minimum of 2 coaches (on the same level, if possible)
  - Provide both teams with space for videotaping (inside, if possible)
  - Provide space for 2 scouts from visiting teams (if possible and upon request in advance)
  - Water and ice for both teams
  - Locker room facilities for the visiting team
  - Changing area for officials
  - Certified athletic trainer and an on-site doctor (if possible); on-site medical transport is recommended
  - Host school trainers will tape the visiting team (if asked), and as a courtesy, the visiting team should bring taping supplies
  - Have Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) in place for participating team(s) & officials

- **Field Phones and Other On-Field Communication**
  - Each school is responsible for their own field communication system
- **Marching Bands**
  - Any deviation from the Varsity Pre-Game Schedule listed above (i.e. marching bands entering the field before 6:40 p.m. or with 15:00 on the clock), the host school must communicate in advance to the visiting AD, preferably on the Varsity Game Day Information Sheet
  - Visiting bands may perform on the road only at the invitation of the host school; in this case, each school would receive 7:30 minutes on the field at halftime (unless there is mutual agreement to extend halftime)
- **Weather Policies & Suspensions**
  - Host school management will determine if a game is to begin if field conditions are affected by weather
  - If a game is to be cancelled in advance due to poor field conditions the visiting team shall be notified prior to 2:00 p.m.
  - Once a game begins, the decision to suspend lies with officials; resumption of play will be determined by host school management
    - Play shall resume from the point of suspension
  - Delays for contests scheduled prior to 3:00 p.m. must not exceed 3 hours; delays for contests scheduled for 3:00 p.m. or later must not exceed 90 minutes
    - Delays on nights not followed by school from all the competing teams may be longer by mutual agreement of participating schools
  - Should severe weather force suspension or cancellation of varsity football games, the following steps shall be followed to secure officials for rescheduled/resumed games:
    1. If the assigned crew is available for the rescheduled/resumed game, that crew shall work the game without any need for approval or contact with the CAAC assigner
    2. If the assigned crew is unable to work the rescheduled/resumed game due to the start time (likely on a Saturday), efforts should be made to select a game time that is satisfactory to both schools and the assigned crew; no approval is necessary from the CAAC assigner
    3. If the assigned crew is unable to work the agreed upon date/time for the rescheduled/resumed game, the host school athletic director should contact the CAAC assigner for assistance in securing an alternate crew; such communication should first be by text message, with voicemail/email as a secondary means of communication
    4. The host school athletic director should first contact the CAAC assigner (Mike Conlin); if Mike Conlin is unavailable, the host school athletic director may also communicate with Jeff Spedoske of the CAO for assistance in securing an alternate crew
    5. If the assigned crew is unable to work the agreed upon date/time for the rescheduled/resumed game, the host school athletic director may secure an alternate crew on his/her own without assigner assistance
    6. If severe weather is forecast, host school athletic directors should communicate in advance with their assigned crew and the CAAC assigner to discuss options, alternate dates/times, and/or alternate crews to be prepared prior to the game date
    7. A rescheduled/resumed game may be worked with less than a 7-person crew
      - **When the host athletic director secures officials, communicate with the CAAC assigner via text with the names of the crew that will work the rescheduled/resumed game**

## **Division Championship Determination**

- Division Championship will be determined by overall division record after completion of a single round-robin schedule; a win is worth 2 points in the standings, a tie 1 point, and a loss 0 points
- The team with the highest point total will be declared the champion (if 2 or more teams earn the same final number of points, they will be named co-champions)

## **All-Conference Selection Format**

- Each division will select All-Conference Teams for CAAC recognized sports
- Players will be selected to the CAAC Divisional All-Conference Team
- There will not be a designation of first team or second team
- When athletes are voted to an All-Conference Team, it shall be primarily based on their performance in divisional games and contests; overall season performance may also be considered
- On a rotating basis, each school will host the All-Conference selection meeting; in most cases, the host Athletic Director will chair the meeting
  - All Conference medals and certificates will be provided by the CAAC and distributed to each school; each school shall distribute medals and certificates to the athletes
- The CAAC Commissioner will release All-Conference results to the media when CAAC teams are no longer competing in MHSAA tournaments

## **Team sports (voted by division coaches)**

- Football: 44 players + 2 kickers
- All-Conference athletes will receive gold medals plus a certificate
- All-Conference Honorable Mention athletes will receive a certificate

## **All-Conference Meeting**

- Host school will distribute nomination forms to division ADs
  - Coaches shall submit a ranked list of All-Conference nominees from their respective teams to their Athletic Director for approval; the Athletic Director or designee of each school shall submit nominees to the host school
  - Nominees should be only those players worthy of All-Conference consideration; coaches should not include honorable mention athletes in their nominations
  - All nominations will be kept in confidence and should not be shared publicly
- Coaches will meet at a predetermined site to select All-Conference Teams; a coach or a school representative must be present in order to vote for All-Conference Teams
- The host athletic director will prepare the official ballot and chair the selection meeting
- Coaches will determine the make-up of the All-Conference Team, by position, before the vote is taken; the positional make-up of the All-Conference Team may change from year to year by consensus of the coaches
- Each coach must vote a complete ballot and may not vote for his or her team members
- Coaches will vote a secret ballot; the host athletic director will tabulate the votes and announce the results (Coaches will not be allowed to assist with tabulations)
- In case of a tie, a second ballot will be prepared for coaches who are not involved in the tie; if the tie remains after a second ballot, the players involved will be placed on the All-Conference Team and additional medals will be awarded
- Honorable Mention will be awarded to those who receive at least one vote

## **All-Conference Meeting Format**

The athletic director in charge of the division will:

- Review policy as stated in the CAAC Constitution
- Each coach will present the athletes from their school in order of those most deserving
- Pass out prepared ballots
- Review voting policy:
  - Vote full ballot
  - There can be no additions to the original ballot once the voting starts
- Check that all coaches have voted a full ballot
- Any athlete receiving a vote who does not earn All-Conference will receive Honorable Mention
- Announce All-Conference and Honorable Mention honorees
- Confidentiality is essential
  - All nominations and discussions must remain in confident and not shared in public; this is done to protect the integrity of the process
- Before adjourning the meeting, coaches will discuss any recommendations coaches may want to make to the athletic directors for future consideration
- Distribute medals
- Pass out championship trophy (if possible)
- Coaches may reveal their All-Conference selections only; all other All-Conference selections will not be released publicly until after the MHSAA State Tournament concludes
- Save paperwork until July 1
- Send information to CAAC Commissioner

## **Academic All-Conference Award Criteria**

- Award will be presented at the end of each season
- Athlete must have a 3.5 cumulative grade point average
- Athlete must have been awarded a Varsity Letter

## MHSAA Handbook Regulations

- Football Practice and Competition – Early Season Practice and Scrimmage Sessions (p. 65-66):
  - A school team shall not play a game of football until it has practiced for a period of 16 calendar days during which practices are conducted on at least 12 separate days; the first varsity game may be played on Thursday or thereafter of the 13th week before Thanksgiving
    - The first freshman or junior varsity game may be played on the day before that Thursday varsity game
  - A school may not take part in an interscholastic scrimmage session with other schools until the Wednesday of the second week of practice as long as the team has conducted football practice on at least seven (7) separate previous days; a joint practice session with two or more schools is considered a scrimmage session and cannot take place until a team has conducted football practice at least seven (7) different days previously
  - There shall be no varsity football scrimmages or contests except between teams composed exclusively of senior high school students who represent high schools in such scrimmage or competition; sub-varsity high school teams are permitted to schedule games with non-school teams
  - During the four days of practice required without full pads (see page 123), schools may use equipment such as goal posts, ropes, dummies, hand shields and sleds
  - Preseason football practice where more than footballs, helmets and football shoes are used shall be conducted at the place where practice will be held after school starts; preseason scrimmages with students from more than one school may take place on any facility selected by the host school
  - Schools may conduct formal practice only during the specified dates; spring football practice is prohibited under this Regulation
  - If a school offers instruction in football skills as part of its regular school year curriculum (first or second semester), it must be open to all students, and football must be no more than one-third of the course content taught to all students in the course in nearly equal portions of any trimester or semester; no regular or improvised football equipment other than a football may be used and no offensive and defensive plays and schemes of the interscholastic football team may be taught except during the football season as defined in Section 9 (A)
    - There is to be no summer school instruction in football skills (see Regulation II, Section 11(H)6)
  - No games or scrimmages in varsity football may be arranged by high schools with college varsity, college reserve, or college freshman teams, junior college teams, non-school teams, independent teams, or alumni teams; the only varsity football scrimmages or varsity football games in which high school students may engage are those against teams composed exclusively of high school students representing high schools which are members of their state or provincial high school association if eligible (see last sentence of Section 9 [D])
    - It is to be understood, however, that this school team restriction applies only to varsity football; competition between non-member school teams located within Michigan in other sports is a matter for local school determination
  - Non-varsity senior high school and 9th grade junior high/middle school football teams may play their first football games on Thursday of the third week of regular-season practice, or on Wednesday if the varsity team plays on Thursday

## MHSAA Handbook Regulations (continued)

- Football Practice and Competition – Early Season Practice and Scrimmage Sessions (p. 65-66):
  - Regardless of the location or time of year, after once representing an MHSAA member school in competition in any MHSAA sport, an individual student(s) shall not participate in any out-of-season football camp, competition, clinic or combine with equipment of more than football helmets and football shoes; out-of-season during the school year and summer (except as prohibited during the summer dead period), participation by a student in football practice involving physical activity which may be offered as part of an out of season or summer camp combine, competition or clinic is not a violation of this section as long as player equipment is limited to football shoes, helmets and footballs; the one exception is that shoulder pads may be worn at college summer camps sponsored and run directly by the NCAA/NAIA institutions which must be an individual athlete camp sponsored and run directly by the institution; team camps or schools that rent or use college facilities out of season may never wear shoulder pads (full shoulder pads or “spider” pads) and are subject to all off-season and equipment rules (see Regulation II, Section 11(H) 2.b. (1) (2) and (3))
  - In addition to summer out-of-season practice and competition regulations (7-on-7) of Regulation II, Section 11 (H), informal activities (with footballs, helmets and football shoes – not sleds and dummies) may take place on any number of days during the summer (prior to Aug. 1) as long as no more than seven students in grades 7- 12 of the district are assembled with a football coach of that district (see Regulation II, Section 11(H) 2.b.(2) for the 15 activity days permitted in the summer)
  - Teams may, by game contract or league and conference adoption, follow National Federation rules for less than 11-person football
- A team shall participate in no more than one game of interscholastic football in five consecutive calendar days, in no more than four interscholastic scrimmages and in no more than nine games in a season, exclusive of the MHSAA tournament (p. 67)
  - A student shall participate in no more than four interscholastic scrimmages and in no more than nine games in a season, exclusive of the MHSAA tournament
  - A student may participate in no more than four quarters in a day and in no more than five quarters in a week
    - Five or fewer quarters in a week shall constitute one of the nine allowed games; for the purposes of this regulation, a “football week” is defined as Wednesday to Tuesday
- A contestant in any sport shall not participate on two different teams on the same date in the same sport, except baseball, bowling, and wrestling; students can participate on two different teams in sports that allow a “fifth quarter” of participation on a day (basketball, field hockey, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, and soccer) or in a week (football); for fifth quarter purposes, overtime is considered an extension of the fourth quarter (p. 70)
- Competition Against Non-school Teams (p. 116):
  - Only sub-varsity football teams may schedule games with non-school teams as is currently allowed in all other sports; Regulation II, Section 9 (D) requires senior high school varsity teams compete only against teams composed exclusively of high school students and representing high schools
- Casts (p. 165):
  - Authorization for players to compete while wearing a legally padded cast must be in writing from an M.D., D.O., Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner

## MHSAA Handbook Regulations (continued)

- Football Practice Policies: During the first week of practice of the season, only helmets are allowed the first two days, only shoulder pads may be added on the third and fourth days, and full pads may not be worn until the fifth day of team practice (p. 123)
  - New Definitions: “Collision” practice is one in which there is live, game-speed, player-vs.-player contact in pads (not walk-throughs) involving any number of players executing full tackles at a competitive pace, taking players to the ground
  - New Limitations:
    - First two weeks of practice before first contest: Collision contact is limited to no more than 6 hours in a week (Monday – Sunday); inter-squad scrimmages will calculate collision contact based on  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the total time (2-hour scrimmage = 1 hour of collision contact, 3 – hour scrimmage = 1.5 hours of collision contact
    - Thud: Full speed, contact above the waist only, with no player being taken to the ground; there is no winner or loser, predetermined or otherwise; coaches are not grading physical domination in thud
      - Teammates are merely trying to give each other a simulation of full-speed game action; thud is not collision contact and is an alternative to live/full contact; thus drills and segments are unlimited during the football season
  - Note: Thud tempo drills and activity is not considered Collision contact and is unlimited
    - During any additional practice sessions, players may wear helmets and other pads (neither is mandatory); blocking and tackling technique may be taught and practiced; however, full-speed contact is limited to players vs. player in thud activity or calculated in collision practice
  - After the first regular-season game, teams may conduct no more than 30 total minutes of collision practice in any week, Monday through Sunday; during other practice sessions, players may wear helmets and other protective pads (neither is mandatory); blocking and tackling technique may be taught and practiced
  - No single practice may exceed three hours, and the total practice time for days with multiple practice sessions may not exceed five hours
    - Warm-up, stretching, speed and agility drills and cool down are all considered part of practice; neither strength/weight training activities nor video/classroom sessions are considered practice for the purposes of the three- or five-hour limits

## MHSAA Handbook Regulations (continued)

- Football Practice Q & A (p. 121):
  - Do the policies apply at both the high school and junior high/middle school levels?
    - Yes.
  - Is the purpose of the proposals to improve student-athlete acclimatization or reduce head trauma?
    - Both.
  - Are “girdle pads” allowed during the first week of practice?
    - Girdle pads may be worn under or in place of shorts during the first four days of acclimatization practice that precede the first day in full pads.
  - Does the three-hour limit on single practices and the five-hour limit for multiple practices on the same day apply only to football?
    - Yes. The MHSAA recommends that the limits be added as soon as possible to the MHSAA “Model Policies for Managing Heat & Humidity” and apply to all sports.
  - How much time is required between sessions on days with multiple practices?
    - Because practice venues differ greatly and some may raise questions regarding supervision and the possibility of injury risks as great off the field as on, the Task Force declined to set a maximum and minimum length of rest periods. However, one hour between practices when there is no physical activity is the minimum recommendation. Classroom sessions would be allowed during the period of physical rest. To be clear, break time is not included in the five-hour limit
  - Can a team have different collision practices for different levels of players?
    - If varsity and sub-varsity squads practice separately, their collision sessions may be different. However, if the squads practice together, then their collision sessions must be the same.
  - How are the 6-hours or 30-minutes of collision practices per week calculated?
    - Any part of a full contact drill or live scrimmage where players are taken to the ground constitutes time that should be included in the 6-hour or 30-minute total. Team breaks or time out from the collision portions of practice where players are being given instruction or resting from contact, need not be included in the 6-hour or 30-minutes. Moving from a huddle to the line of scrimmage or standing in line to enter a full contact segment of a drill are to be counted as part of the 6-hour or 30-minute total. The calculation is to the team or portion of a team within a week. It is not intended that time be counted and recorded separately for each individual player. See points 2 and 3 in the practice policies for the criteria of a Collision vs. Thud practice.