

MICHIGAN YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEER CONFERENCE

2011 RULE BOOK

(As approved by the Board of Directors on April 18, 2011)

Section 1. Definitions

1. League: The Michigan Youth Football & Cheer Conference (MYFCC). It may also imply communication to a member of the MYFCC Executive Board.
2. Member/Unit: A member/unit shall be a duly incorporated non-profit body holding a franchise in this league, whose by-laws dictate the formation of a Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity football teams, at least one Cheerleading team and an optional Junior Freshman team(s).
3. Team: One of the football or cheerleading units within a member franchise.
4. Veteran: A child who has participated in the same franchise the previous year.
5. Player: A child who is properly registered and participating in football.
6. Cheerleader: A child who is properly registered and participating in cheerleading.
7. Participant: Either a duly registered player or cheerleader.
8. Coach: An authorized instructor, who is a member of a franchise unit, has acknowledged and understands the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Coaches, has submitted a signed copy of same to the League and whose name appears on the official roster submitted to the League.

Section 2. Eligibility Rules

A. Ages:

1. The age of the participants, 7 through 14, shall be their age before September 1st of the playing year.
2. Junior Freshman: Participants are to be seven (7) or eight (8) years old.
3. Freshman: Participants are to be eight (8), nine (9) or ten (10) years old.
4. Junior Varsity: Participants are to be ten (10), eleven (11) or twelve (12) years old.
5. Varsity: Participants are to be twelve (12), thirteen (13) or fourteen (14) years old. Varsity teams may have a maximum of six (6) fourteen year (14) olds on its roster. However, a player may not turn fifteen (15) before the date of the final game of the current playing year.

B. Weights:

The weight referred to herein shall be the weight of the player with full uniform consisting of at least, but not limited to, shoulder pads, a jersey, pants with knee and thigh pads, girdle with pads, jock with protective cup, socks and football shoes. After weigh-in a player will add a helmet. Also, a player may add protective gear such as arm, hand, rib, elbow pads, flak jacket, cold weather clothing and undershirts.

1. Junior Freshman – The junior freshman weight shall not exceed 120 pounds regardless of the age of the player.
2. Freshman – The freshman weight shall not exceed 130 pounds regardless of the age of the player.
3. Junior Varsity – The junior varsity weight shall not exceed 150 pounds regardless of the age of the player.
4. Varsity – The varsity weight shall not exceed 190 pounds for twelve (12) year old players, thirteen (13) year old players and fourteen (14) year old players that are in the eighth grade.
5. During the progress of the playing season there will be no additional weight allowances.
6. At its July or August meetings, the MYFCC Board of Directors may consider varying the age and weight rules on an individual basis upon the petition of a member organization. Also, the MYFCC Board of Directors may allow fourteen (14) year old ninth graders, who do not exceed 130 pounds, to participate in league play on an individual basis upon the petition of a member organization. Such variances should be limited in scope, should be granted only after considering the health, safety, welfare or maturity of the subject participant, and should not be petitioned for or granted to gain competitive advantage.

C. Other Eligibility Rules:

1. Overweight rostered players may practice (make contact).
2. All participants shall be responsible to the Unit Director or designated representative of the Unit Director.
3. Players or Cheerleaders participating or who have participated during the current season in a recreational, public, private or parochial school football or football cheerleading program are not eligible to participate in the MYFCC.

Section 3. Registration and Physical Exam

A. Registration:

The method of registration of players shall be determined by each member organization. However, each member franchise shall abide by the policy that there are no “try outs” to fill roster spots and recognize veterans’ rights/returning player status for all participants from the previous playing season.

B. Physical Examinations:

Prior to any conditioning, every participant must have an annual certification of good health signed by a physician and co-signed by parents within the current calendar year. These shall be on file with the member organization and open for inspection at all times.

C. Registrars:

Each member shall have a registrar who is responsible only to his/her organization for its teams' registrations and physical examination forms.

1. Each participant shall furnish proof of age which must be checked by the Unit Director or Registrar. A birth certificate or passport is the only acceptable proof of age.
2. A copy of each participant's birth certificate or passport must be kept on file by the Unit Director or Registrar. Each Unit must bring these copies to every game and make them available for opposing Unit Director's inspection.
3. A copy of each participant's birth certificate or passport, registration form and a current picture with jersey number shall be supplied to the League for verification with their team roster. The participant's number may be clearly indicated on the picture with an adhesive sticker or permanent marker. All fourteen (14) year old participants shall provide substantiation of current grade placement to the League for verification with their team roster.
4. Each organization's Registrar shall supply the League and its opponents with a master roster list by teams which must include:
 - For football players: Name, age, weight and uniform number; and
 - For cheerleaders: Name and age.
5. Each team roster shall be submitted ten (10) days prior to the first scheduled league playing date. Copies of the roster must be submitted to the league by that date. Rosters must be filled out completely as defined by these rules. Units not in compliance with this rule will be subject to a \$100.00 fine.

D. Rosters:

1. No new player may be added after the third scheduled game.
2. Players may only be moved upward within an organization any time before the third scheduled game for any reason. Any upward movement of a player within an organization shall be final.
3. It will be the Unit Directors responsibility to notify the Rules & Eligibility Chairman by Thursday of a given week, of any new player added after the team rosters have been submitted or if a player is moved due to weight issues. This notification must be prior to the player participating in any game. A \$100.00 fine will be imposed for non-compliance with this rule.
4. Once a player receives a helmet or shoulder pads from a member organization, the player must remain with the member organization for the duration of that season, unless that player is involuntarily released. A player desiring to make a move to another member organization for legitimate

reasons, such as a change in family circumstances, may apply to the MYFCC Board for an exemption. The exemption will only be granted on a majority vote of the League Members.

Section 4. Practice Rules

A. Off Season Activities – Member organizations may participate in off season activities or training as long as those activities do not involve the use of protective football equipment and do not involve physical contact between participants. Off season activities such as weight training, physical conditioning, speed camps, and 7 on 7 or flag football are specifically allowed by MYFCC member organizations.

B. Opening Practice:

1. No formal organization-wide, supervised mandatory practice or conditioning shall be held before five (5) weeks prior to the first regularly scheduled game for any participant.
2. The optional week of practice for each player will be for physical conditioning purposes only.
3. Additionally, the first three days following the optional week, for each player will be for conditioning only.

C. Body Contact (players only):

No physical contact with other players shall be allowed during conditioning practice. Of the pads and equipment normally worn for contact practice, only the helmet, mouth guard, supporter and cup and cleats may be worn during conditioning practice. A player may hold a hand shield or tackling dummy for another player.

D. Prohibited Practice:

1. Prior to the first game there shall be no practice on one (1) day per week for all participants.
2. After the first game, there shall be no more than four practice days per week, except that there may be five practice days during a "bye week" when no games are scheduled.

E. Practice Duration – Night practices are allowed. However, no practice shall exceed two and one-half (2 1/2) hours in duration per day.

Section 5. Playing Rules

The football rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association shall apply except as herein after noted. The rules of this League shall be binding on all members without exception.

A. Equipment and Facilities:

1. The game shall be played on a regulation football field 300' x 160'. In cases where there is an exception to this rule, procedures would be followed by mutual consent of the Unit Directors of both teams competing.
2. Flags or approved markers shall be required at the goal lines.
3. The home team shall have a qualified medic/trainer (M.D., R.N., E.M.T., C.A.T.) present on the field. No games will be played without a qualified medic/trainer in attendance on the field. A fine of \$250.00 shall be charged to any home team not in compliance with this rule. The home team medic/trainer in charge of the field shall make the determination as to the ability of a player removed from the game, due to injury, to return to the game. Unit directors shall place medic/trainer's certification information on their weekly game reports.
4. Each team shall have a first aid kit and phone at all practices and league games for emergency purposes.
5. The ball shall be a leather or composite Wilson K2 or equivalent for Junior Freshman, Wilson TDJ or equivalent for Freshman and Junior Varsity and a Wilson TDY or equivalent for Varsity.
6. All units are required before the start of each season to provide proof to the League that the player's helmets being used meet all NOCSAE requirements. Additionally, helmets may be checked for proper NOCSAE certification. Helmets without proper certification may not be used by players in any practice or game.
7. Numerals at least six (6) inches shall be required on the back of the jersey, and numerals of at least four (4) inches shall be required on the front of the jerseys. The colors of teams' uniforms (jerseys, pants, helmets) must be specified at the beginning of the season and cannot be changed during the season. The home team shall coordinate the jersey colors with the visiting team for each game.
8. Football shoes with unitized, molded rubber, or plastic composition soles with built-in or molded cleats or screw-in cleats shall be worn by all players. The shoe top may vary in height and cut, and may be made of canvas, leather, or other synthetic material. The wearing of metal-tipped cleats is expressly prohibited. Any player found wearing metal-tipped cleats, from the time of the official weigh-in through the day's game, shall be removed from the day's game and be suspended from playing in the next regularly scheduled or post-season game.
9. The wearing of a color mouth guard attached to the face mask shall be mandatory for all players. No clear mouth guards are allowed.
10. A protective cup shall be worn by all players.

11. Any player not wearing all required equipment in the proper manner shall not be permitted to weigh-in but may be allowed to weigh-in after any equipment issue is resolved pursuant to Section 5(B) below.

12. The use of headsets or other devices for communication between the sidelines and an elevated observation point for purposes of coaching during any game is allowed.

B. Weigh-ins:

1. At each game, the home team must furnish a beam-type scale, in good working order, for pre-game official weigh-ins. The home team must also provide a single certified weight (minimum of 50 lbs.) for purposes of verifying scale accuracy. The scale weight certification must be on the weight and be readable.

2. The official weigh-in shall be done in the presence of one official of each involved organization. Coaches are specifically prohibited from participating in the weigh-in for the team for which they coach. Weigh-ins shall occur away from spectators and parents.

3. The official weigh-in shall begin 30 minutes before the first game of the day. Thereafter, the official weigh-in shall begin at half-time of the preceding game and shall be completed no later than ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the game for which the weigh-in is being conducted. The early weigh-in of individual players is allowed upon mutual consent of the unit directors.

4. Any player may be weighed or reweighed up to ten (10) minutes prior to the start of each game. Players arriving after this time shall not be allowed to play during the first half of the game. Players arriving during the first half of their game shall be weighed-in and may play the second half. Players arriving after the start of the second half will not be allowed to play in that day's game.

5. A player is considered overweight when the beam of the scale rests on the upper frame of the scale.

6. Players, who are overweight after the official weigh-in or otherwise determined to be unfit to play in that day's game, shall remove his/her shoulder pads but may remain in their team's bench area.

7. All overweight players shall be reported to the league's Rules and Eligibility Chairperson by the opposing registrar within three days after each game in the game report.

C. Game Rules:

1. MYFCC games shall be administered by four (4) officials but not less than three (3) officials.
2. The officials will have their own time piece on the field and is identified as “stop time”. The home unit will provide a capable person to operate the scoreboard clock for all games. The officials shall insure that the time difference between the scoreboard clock and the “official time”, not exceed thirty (30) seconds during the final four (4) minutes of each half.
3. MYFCC games shall be played in four (4) quarters of twelve (12) minutes each. There shall be at least a ten (10) minute intermission at half-time. During homecoming games and championship games, the half-time intermission shall be up to fifteen (15) minutes. Periods may be shortened in an emergency by agreement of the unit directors or by the referee, provided it is done before the game begins and so that all periods are of equal length. Any remaining period may be shortened by mutual agreement of the unit directors and the referee during the half-time intermission.
4. The home team shall provide three (3) adults to work the down box and chains on the visitors’ side of the field being supervised by the on-field officials.
5. No team shall enter any team room, locker room or warming room without the same opportunity being granted to the opposing team.
6. Each team shall have a minimum of twelve (12) players dressed and ready to play, with approved equipment, for each game or the game shall be forfeited by the team with less than twelve (12) players.
7. Every player, who is in uniform for a game, must participate in each game unless the other team has been notified at weigh-in that a player cannot participate because of injury, illness, weight disqualification, or disciplinary action.
8. The minimum playing time for each player is determined by the number of players officially weighed-in, ready to play, and not otherwise disqualified from that day’s game as follows:
 - a. Four (4) plays per half if a team has 30 or more players.
 - b. Five (5) plays per half if a team has 20 – 29 players.
 - c. Six (6) plays per half if a team has 19 players or less.

For purposes of this rule, kick-offs, punts and extra point attempts shall be deemed to be a play, and “dead ball” penalties shall not be deemed to be a play.

9. At the Freshman level, each team shall receive four (4) one minute time-outs per half. At the Junior Varsity and Varsity levels, each team shall receive three (3) one minute time-outs per half. A brief official time-out shall occur at the four minute warning only for the purpose of complying with the minimum number of plays rule.

10. No uniform changes are allowed after weigh-in except for severe damage or in compliance with MHSAA rules with notice given to the opposing team prior to the player participating in the game.

11. The Unit Director shall be responsible to designate, on cards provided by the league, the five (5) best offensive players for each team. The card shall be given to the opposing unit director at each weigh-in.

12. When during the course of a regular season game, the difference in the scores of the teams becomes twenty-four (24) points or more, the five (5) designated players, set forth in the aforementioned rule, shall be removed from the game, but said players, may play defense to fulfill the minimum number of plays requirement. The five (5) designated players do not have to be removed from playing offense until the change of possession after the difference in the scores of the teams becomes twenty-four (24) points or more. The five (5) designated players may resume playing if the difference in the teams' scores becomes less than twenty-four (24) points.

a. The opposing team shall have the option of changing the players listed in compliance with this rule. This change may be made at any time during the game but may be made only once.

b. For those teams unable to remove all five (5) players because of the required eleven (11) players on the field, the opposing team will specify which player(s) may return. Also the opposing team will specify one injury player to be used for injury substitution only. This does not negate the option to make one change as specified in part (a) of this rule.

13. Point(s) after touchdown attempts shall be made from the three (3) yard line. The extra point(s) after touchdown shall be scored as: one (1) point for either a pass or run, if successful and two (2) points for a kick if successful.

14. If at the end of the fourth quarter the participating teams have identical scores, the referee will place the ball on the ten (10) yard line, and each team will have four (4) downs to score. If the score is identical after both teams have run their set of plays, the game shall end in a tie. During any playoff or championship game, the tie-breaking procedure will continue until a winner can be declared. No MYFCC playoff or championship game at the Freshman, Junior Varsity or Varsity levels shall end in a tie.

D. Member and Unit Director Responsibilities:

1. It is the duty of each member organization to see that their coaches are giving players and cheerleaders proper opportunities for participation in practices and games.
2. It is the duty of the Unit Director or representative to advise the opposing Unit Director or representative, at weigh-in, as to what players will not play according to Section 5 (C)(8), the minimum participation rule.
3. A specific individual or individuals within the unit should be charged with the responsibility of checking game participation and determining by four (4) minutes prior to the ending of each half which players have not received their minimum plays and to inform the team's coach or other official which players have not received minimum game participation.
4. At the four (4) minute time out in both halves of the game, Unit Directors or their designee shall confirm that all players have obtained the minimum number of plays in that half. Unit Directors or their designee shall have the coaches make the required substitution at this time to insure all players meet the minimum participation requirements. Any team found in violation of the minimum participation rule for a specific game shall forfeit that specific game.
5. Coaches proven to be in violation of the minimum participation rule shall be removed by League Members upon proof of a second violation in one season. Any team found in violation of the minimum participation rule for a specific game shall forfeit that specific game.
6. Each member organization shall distribute copies of these rules to all coaches and those responsible for the presentation and conduct of the organization's practices and games.
7. Each member organization is to police and discipline their own personnel, players, coaches, parents, relatives and fans. If the MYFCC Board finds the member organization's penalties inappropriate, the Board may assess additional sanctions against the party or member organization being disciplined.

Section 6. Compliance

Member organizations failing to comply with these rules and philosophy may be subject to disciplinary action for each violation at the discretion of the League Members after due hearings. All suspected violations must be in written form, signed by the Unit Director and submitted to the Rules and Eligibility Chairman. Any interested person may file a written notice of violation and request for investigation under the following procedure.

A. Procedure for Violation Investigation & Hearing:

1. All violations must be reported by telephone or e-mail to the Rules & Eligibility chairman on the first Monday following the game. The parties involved will be advised by telephone and e-mail, immediately, upon receipt of complaint and requested to present their case in writing to the Rules & Eligibility Chairman and the Rules Enforcement Committee. The Rules & Eligibility Chairman shall call a special meeting of the executive board and Rules Enforcement Committee before the next game.
2. Each team will have one (1) representative designated for the Rules Enforcement Committee. Five (5) members will be randomly selected from the pool of Rules Enforcement designates from each team. No team shall have a representative selected for that hearing if they are involved in the infraction. Once a units representative has been selected for a session, that unit will be removed from the pool until all designates have been selected for a hearing. Once all have been selected the unit will be placed back in the pool. All violations will be heard and adjudicated by the Rules Enforcement Committee majority vote.

B. Penalties – Player/Coaches Violations:

The penalty for violation of any specific rule shall result in the following steps of disciplinary action. Exceptional circumstances may dictate more severe penalties at the discretion of the League Members. A year is determined to be from February to January, based on the annual review of franchises.

The penalties for non-compliance of all MYFCC rules published and amended or agreed to by the Michigan Youth Football & Cheer Conference are as follows:

1. First Violation – Written letter of advisement to franchise stating the violation and/or the imposition of a minimum \$50.00 fine, not to exceed \$100.00
2. Second Violation – for the same violation, a fine of \$200.00 maximum and/or the head coach is suspended for the next game.
3. Third Or Subsequent Violation – for the same violation, a fine of \$300.00, head coach is suspended for the remainder of the season, and franchise is put on probation.

C. Unit Violations:

These penalties are for administrative non-compliance issues as well as playing rules violations, and are in addition to any specific rules violations penalties noted within these rules.

Section 7. Sportsmanship

- A.** Any player, cheerleader, coach, chain-gang member or Unit Director that issues a threat against an official during or after a game, shall be suspended until a hearing is held.
- B.** Any player, cheerleader, coach, chain-gang member or Unit Director or official that uses abusive language, gestures or issues any personal threat to any participant on or off the playing field on game day shall be deemed in violation of League sportsmanship rules and shall be subjected to the following options:
1. Ejection from the game in progress by the referee.
 2. Ejection from the game in progress by a Unit Director and/or Unit President of his/her particular unit.
 3. Termination of game in progress by joint agreement of Unit Directors and/or the referees.
 4. Termination of future participation during the season in progress by action of the League Members.
- C.** All coaching personnel are held responsible for upholding the principles established in the MYFCC Code of Conduct for Coaches. Unit Directors are to distribute copies of the MYFCC Code of Conduct for Coaches to all unit coaches prior to the first practice every season.

Section 8. Scheduling Rules

A. Schedule Establishment:

1. Scrimmages. All scrimmages shall constitute a regular practice session. All scrimmages must be reported to the League at least forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled event. The report must include the date, time, location and teams participating.
2. All games will be scheduled and approved by the members of the league.
3. Games shall be scheduled only on Saturday afternoon, Saturday night or Sunday. The home team has the option of setting actual dates and time within the limits outlined below.
 - a. Day Games – The first game of all day games shall not start prior to 9:00 AM nor later than 1:00PM. Any date affected by Daylight Savings Time shall start no later than 12:00 noon.
 - b. Night Games – Night games may be scheduled only on Saturday nights provided the freshman games start prior to 4:00 PM.

4. Games will be played in this order: Junior Freshmen, Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity. Changes to this order can be made only by prior agreement of both Unit Directors.

5. The regular season shall consist of eight (8) games.

B. Post-Season Play:

1. The top team in each division (the division winner) will participate in the Playoffs. Each team's divisional win/loss record will be used to determine standings within the division.

2. If there are three (3) divisions, the team with the best overall record that is not a division winner will compete as the wild card winner.

3. If there are nine (9) or fewer teams participating in the League in a given year, four (4) teams or a greater number of teams established by the Board of Directors shall participate in the playoffs. If there are 10 – 13 teams participating in the League in a given year, six (6) teams or a greater number of teams established by the Board of Directors shall participate in the playoffs. If there are 14 or more teams participating in the League in a given year, eight (8) teams shall participate in the playoffs.

4. In case of a tie for either division winners or wild card winners, the following methods will be used to break the tie (listed in order of use).

- a. the team with the fewest losses and/or ties in their division will be given a higher ranking (not applicable if teams don't all play the same number of games).
- b. the winner of a game between the tied teams will be given a higher ranking (not used if three or more teams are tied).
- c. the team with the fewest points scored against them in divisional games will be given the higher ranking.
- d. the team with fewer losses and/or ties in their overall record will be given a higher ranking.

5. A post-season football tournament will be played as follows and must be completed by November 15th. The following applies if there are eight (8) teams in the playoff/tournament.

- a. The top four teams in each of the two divisions will play in playoff games.
- b. Playoff round 1 will be 1 vs. 4 and 2 vs. 3 seed in each division.
- c. Playoff round 2 will pit the winners of the Playoff round 1 contests with the highest seeded remaining team in Division A playing the lowest seeded remaining team in Division B and the highest seeded remaining team in Division B playing the lowest seeded remaining team in Division A.
- d. The winners from the two (2) games described above in (5c) will play in the final tournament game (Super Bowl).

6. The following applies if there are six (6) teams in the playoff/tournament.

- a. The top three teams in each of the two divisions will play in playoff games.

- b. Playoff round 1 will be 2 vs. 3 seed in each division. The top seeds in each division will have a bye during Playoff round 1.
 - c. Playoff round 2 will be the top seed in division A will play the Playoff round 1 winner from division A, and the top seed in division B will play the Playoff round 1 winner from division B.
 - d. The winners from the two (2) games described above in (6c) will play in the final tournament game (Super Bowl).
7. The team assignments to playoff sites will be determined by random drawing. The Executive Board may give preference to units with more than one team in the playoffs or to playoff host units.
 8. The host field shall not charge admission but shall provide a concession stand, with all the proceeds going to the host unit.
 9. The host team will provide an announcer, scales, chain-gang and medical personnel.
 10. Post-season tournament games will include Freshman, Junior Varsity and Varsity teams.
 11. A post season cheerleading competition will be held on the ninth Saturday of the regular season and will include all League franchises.

Section 9. Weather Rules

A. To Play or Not to Play:

1. The decision as to whether or not a game should be played in inclement weather shall be in the hands of the officials and both unit directors.
2. Once the decision is made, it shall be considered final and received in the spirit of good sportsmanship.

B. Results of Called Games in Progress:

1. A game called before halftime is considered no contest.
2. A game called after half-time will be considered completed as the score stands at the time of calling.

C. Rescheduling of Called Games:

A called game may be rescheduled upon mutual agreement of the teams on any open date during the season. A sincere effort on both teams involved must be made to reschedule this game within the limitation imposed by previous commitments as to Section 8, above.

Section 10. Game Reports

It shall be mandatory by Tuesday following each game, that Unit Directors file a report of the game and that the officials be rated. A \$50.00 fine shall be imposed on any team if the game report is not received by the Rules & Eligibility Chairman by the Tuesday following the game.

Section 11. Code Of Conduct For Coaches

The purpose of this Code of Conduct for Coaches is to insure a uniform organizational structure for the Michigan Youth Football & Cheer Conference. The guidelines set forth herein will be enforced and any deviation will result in appropriate action being taken by the Unit affected.

Responsibility:

All coaches of football players, all cheerleading directors and cheerleading coaches are to adhere to all the principles set forth herein.

All coaches acting as assistants are responsible to the head coach of the team for which they assist.

All head coaches are responsible to the Unit Director or his/her particular Unit for his/her actions and the actions of his/her assistants.

Head coaches are to inform the Unit Director of any serious problems relating to his/her team.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

Responsibility to the Participants

In their relationship with players or cheerleaders under their care, the coach should always be aware of the tremendous influence they wield, for good or bad. Parents entrust their dearest possession to the coach's charge, and the coach, through their own example, must always be sure that the players or cheerleaders who have been coached by them are finer and more decent people for having done so. The coach should never place the value of a win over that of instilling the highest desirable ideals and character traits in their players or cheerleaders. The safety and welfare of their players or cheerleaders should always be foremost in their mind and must never be sacrificed for any personal prestige or selfish glory.

In teaching the game of football or cheerleading, the coach must realize that there are certain rules designed to protect the player and provide common standards for determining a winner or loser. Any attempt to beat these rules, to take unfair advantage of an opponent or teach deliberate unsportsmanlike conduct, has no place in the game of football or in cheerleading. Any coach, who is guilty of such teachings, has no right to call themselves a coach. The coach shall set and example for winning without boasting and losing without bitterness.

A coach who conducts themselves according to these principles need not fear failure. For in the final analysis, the success of a coach is measured in terms of the respect they have earned from their players or cheerleaders and from their opponents.

The diagnosis and treatment of injuries is a medical problem and should not be considered a province of the coach. A coach's responsibility is to see that the injured players are given prompt medical attention and that the physician's or qualified medical person's orders are carried out.

Under no circumstances should a coach authorize the use of medicates, stimulants or drugs except authorized by a physician.

A player's or cheerleader's future should not be jeopardized by any circumvention of any eligibility rules.

A coach should not make demands of their players or cheerleaders that will interfere with their players or cheerleaders opportunities for achieving academic success.

Responsibility to the Unit

The function of the coach is to educate young people through participation in the game of football and cheerleading. This primary and basic function must never be disregarded.

A coach shall conduct themselves so as to maintain the principles, integrity and dignity of their Unit.

A coach should discuss their problems with their Unit Director in a friendly manner and then accept and support the decisions that have been reached.

It is highly important that a coach support the Unit in all policies, rules and regulations regarding football or cheerleading.

Rules of the Game

Each coach should be acquainted thoroughly with the rules of the game and the League. It is the coach's responsibility for having the rules taught and interpreted for their player and all assistants.

Both the letter and the spirit of the rules must be adhered to by the coaches

A coach must always remember that it is not the purpose of football to hurt or injure an opponent by legal or illegal methods.

Good sportsmanship is developed on the practice field. When coaches permit, encourage or condone performance which is dangerous to an opponent, they are derelict in their responsibility to fair play and sportsmanship. This aspect of coaching must be attacked as vigorously as the teaching of offense and defense, and to the players it is far more important than all the technical aspects of the game combined. Any coach who fails to stress this point or who permits, encourages or defends the use of unsportsmanlike tactics shall be considered guilty of the most serious breach of football or cheerleading coaching ethics.

Game Day

On the day of the game, officials should be treated in a courteous manner. If problems arise during a game situation with an official, the coach is to ask the Unit Director to intercede and address the problem to an official.

It is vitally important a coach's actions and behavior at all times bring credit to themselves, their team and the game of football or cheerleading.

Before and after a game, rival coaches should meet and exchange a friendly greeting.

Coaches are accountable for the conduct of their players or cheerleaders on and off the playing field. Discipline is part of football and cheerleading and should be taught by all coaching staffs.

Section 12. Junior Freshman Rules

The purpose of this section is to set forth rules to be used specifically at the Junior Freshman level only.

1. During the regular season, there will be no more than six (6) hours per week for practice.
2. A junior freshman game will consist of four (4) quarters of twenty (20) minutes each, with a continuous running game clock, no time outs (except injury only), and a 45 second play clock between plays once the ball is set. There will be one (1) minute(s) between quarters and eight (8) minutes for half time. The entire game will be restricted to ninety (90) minutes total.
3. No score will be kept at the Junior Freshman level.
4. Two coaches from each team shall be allowed on the field on each side of the ball for instruction purposes.
5. Officials. The home team and visiting team will each provide one parent or a coach to officiate the games. Coaches on the field will assist the officials in making the right calls and ensuring the game is played in a fair and fun manner.
6. Penalties should be called only if the infraction directly affects the outcome of the play or play results in a score, or the infraction could result in an injury such as clipping, spearing or fighting.
7. A team shall receive 2 warnings per game before that team is penalized for infractions that occur before the play has started.
8. All penalties will be limited to loss of down and 5 yards from the line of scrimmage after the ball has been snapped or 5 yards prior to the ball being snapped.

9. To begin a junior freshman game, the home team will start on offense. The visiting team will start on offense in the third quarter. There shall be no special teams played at the junior freshman level.
10. When on offense the team will start on their 40 yard line. Play will be by normal MHSAA rules they will have 4 plays to get a first down or score. If they don't get the first down the ball turns over and the opposing team will start on their 40 yard line.
11. A fumble is a live ball; if the offense recovers - they have possession at that spot. If it was a fourth down play, the offense would need to recover the ball beyond the first down mark to retain possession. If defense recovers - they take possession of the ball at their own 40 yard line.
12. An interception is a live ball. The defense may attempt to return an interception for a touchdown. If the defense does not return an interception for a touchdown, they will take possession of the ball at their own 40 yard line.
13. Blitzing from any defensive backfield position (LB, Corner, Safety, etc.) is prohibited.
14. No defensive player can be positioned head-up on the offensive center. Defensive players may not be positioned in either "A" gap and shall not double team the center from the "A" gaps. No quarterback sneaks allowed.
15. There shall be no more than 6 defensive players on the line of scrimmage. Linebackers and defensive backs must be a minimum of two (2) yards back from the line of scrimmage.
16. **Minimum Play Rule:** On teams with thirty (30) players or less, all players shall receive a minimum of eight (8) plays per half. On teams with thirty-one (31) or more players, all players shall receive a minimum of six (6) plays per half.
 - a. All players shall play at least half of their minimum plays on offense and defense in each half.
 - b. All players must sit out a minimum of four (4) plays each half.
 - c. No player shall be allowed to run the football more than sixteen (16) times per game.
17. There will be a meeting between the Unit Directors or their designee, the Head Coaches and Game Officials from each team before each game.
18. The Unit Directors or their designees from both teams shall confer on all disputes. If a solution to the dispute cannot be agreed upon, the dispute will be settled with a flip of a coin with the visiting team calling the toss.
19. The Junior Freshman Conference will play no more than an eight (8) game schedule during the season.