

# 2026 NEXT IN NATI RULES

## 1. Normal high school rules (per NFHS)

### 2. GAME CLOCK:

2<sup>nd</sup> – Varsity:

-20 minute running clock -- clock stops last (1) minute of the first half & last (2) minutes of the second half for all normal deadball stoppages. (unless 20pt lead in 2nd half

**- All games (including bracket play) are over with a 20+ lead and under 2 minutes to play & 15+ lead with 1 minute left to play.**

3. **TIMEOUTS:** (3) total timeouts per game – all timeouts are 45 seconds in length

4. **WARMUP** is 3 min in length. (or less dependent schedule is on time)

5. **HALFTIME** is 2 min in length (maximum)

### 6. OVERTIME - Elam Ending:

- a. The first team to 4 points is the winner
- B. no timed clock in overtime; all normal whistles
- C. no additional timeouts in OT & no carryover TO's.
- D. fouls do carryover into OT

7. **PLAYER FOULS** – each player fouls out on his/her 5<sup>th</sup> personal foul

8. **TEAM FOULS** – a team reaches the 1 and 1 bonus at 8 team fouls; no double bonus.

9. **HOME TEAM** -- listed on the bottom of the pool schedule & top of bracket is HOME TEAM and wears lighter colored jersey

10. **TWO (2)** technical fouls by a player/coach results in automatic ejection from the game, possibly from event

11. **FIGHTING** or any game disruption results in automatic removal of the entire event, NO EXCEPTIONS

a. THIS NO-TOLERANCE POLICY IS AT DISCRETION/FINAL CALL OF TOURNAMENT/SITE DIRECTOR

12. **BASKETBALL** -- grades 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> boys and ALL girls will use 28.5" basketball. ALL others will use 29.5" ball

13. **Boys will only play in boys divisions, and girls will only play in girls divisions.**

**TOURNAMENT SEEDING** from each pool is determined by win-loss record in pool play. In case of ties, head-to-head competition is the first tiebreaker. If 3 teams are tied, *point differential*, then head to head. If teams are still tied, *points scored* will determine tie break. If there is still a tie, points allowed will be the next tie breaker, if teams are still tied, a coin flip by the tournament director will decide the tie breaker. In case of disputes, the site director's decision is final.

**TOURNAMENT BRACKETS** -- At the end of pool play, check brackets on our app ('Bleacher Republic' in the app store). You are responsible for knowing where and when your team plays. You can always ask the site director to check for you at the gym where you finish pool play. You may forfeit if you do not arrive on time for your scheduled bracket game.

**AGE/ELIGIBILITY** – ALL teams must bring/provide proof of age and grade for ALL players with you to the tournament. 1. A player can participate in a maximum of two age/grade divisions and a maximum of two teams per tournament if they meet the age/grade requirements for both divisions. They cannot play on two teams in the same age/grade division. If a team loses, a player cannot switch to another team that is still in the competition.

**AGE/ELIGIBILITY QUALIFICATIONS BY DIVISION** -- Ages are based on the grade players are in during the CURRENT school year. The determining date is 9/1/2026

**9U/3rd Grade:** Players in the 3rd grade can be 9 or 10 years old but cannot turn 11 before 9/1/2026.

**10U/4th Grade:** Players in the 4th grade can be 10 or 11 years old but cannot turn 12 before 9/1/2026. **11U/5th**

**Grade:** Players in the 5th grade can be 11 or 12 years old but cannot turn 13 before 9/1/2026. **12U/6th Division:**

Players in the 6th grade can be 12 or 13 years old but cannot turn 14 before 9/1/2026. **13U/7th Grade:** Players in the

7th grade can be 13 or 14 years old but cannot turn 15 before 9/1/2026. **14U/8th Grade:** Players in the 8th grade can

be 14 or 15 years old but cannot turn 16 before 9/1/2026. **15U/9th Grade:** Players in the 9th grade can be 15 or 16

years old but cannot turn 17 before 9/1/2026. **16U/10th Grade:** Players in the 10th grade can be 16 or 17 years old but

cannot turn 18 before 9/1/2026. **17U / Varsity:** The 17U Boys and Varsity Girls divisions are considered “open

divisions.” This means: **Unsigned seniors** with remaining high school eligibility may participate, **as long as they do not**

**turn 19 before September 1, 2025. Players who have signed with a college** may only play **if the event is not**

**NCAA-sanctioned.** Unsigned **prep school players** are eligible to compete.

Players **who have signed a letter of intent (LOI)** are **eligible**, even if they are unsure about qualifying academically.

Players **who have attended a junior college or any college** are **not eligible** under any circumstances.

Tournament management reserves the right to exclude any senior from participating.

**INELIGIBILITY/PENALTIES** -- If a player is found to be in violation of the rules above after an event has started, the situation will be referred to the Site Director for an official ruling on the penalty to be assessed - up to and including possible expulsion from the tournament

- If any team or player violates any of the above rules, those games where the rules were violated will be deemed a 15-0 loss. If a game has already taken place in bracket play and the above rules are broken, that team will be eliminated

- Any player associated with breaking the above rules will have to sit for at least one game. If a player is found to be over age, they cannot play in that age group. If they have been found to play illegally on two teams and are the correct age, they must sit at least one game and then play only on one team for the remainder of the tournament

- If the tournament has progressed and a team forfeits per the breaking of a rule, the Site Director will decide the progression of another team advancing

- For ejection for fighting, there is no alternative to being removed from the tournament \*

**TOURNAMENT/SITE DIRECTOR HAS FINAL SAY ON ALL ELIGIBILITY ISSUES, WITHOUT EXCEPTION!**

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

- **NO** cursing, unsportsmanlike conduct, foul language, physical violence, or berating of fans, players, or officials.

These acts will not be tolerated. The game is for the kids. Maintain a positive atmosphere—win or lose. Anyone breaking this rule faces a technical foul for their team and possible ejection and suspension from the tournament.

This type of behavior may be penalized by a technical foul • **NO** foul language will not be tolerated by players, coaches, parents/guardians, and/or spectators. An automatic technical foul will be assessed if a player or coach uses foul language. A second violation in a game will result in ejection and a possible one or more game suspension.

Any spectator or parent using foul language will be issued a warning and possible ejection from the game and/or tournament • **ANY** coach, player, or spectator ejected for fighting will be suspended from participating in or watching the remainder of the tournament

- **NO** smoking or alcoholic beverages are permitted at any site

- **NO** bouncing of balls in the facility hallways is permitted

- **ANYONE** defacing or damaging the property of the facility, whether before, during, or after the game, will be automatically suspended from the tournament and held liable for all costs

- **PLEASE** keep all young children from running through the schools or facilities

- **PLEASE** keep all cheering in a positive manner and show good sportsmanship

#### **Protest**

Site supervisors have a copy of the rules pertaining to protest.

*This rule list is to be used at all Bleacher Republic events. There may be additional rules not listed that can be communicated by the tournament/site director of the event.*