

Guidelines for Athletic Directors: WIAA Out of Season Rules

Applicable Rule(s): from the 2018-2019 WIAA Handbook

PHILOSOPHY OF THE OUT-OF-SEASON REGULATIONS: The out-of-season regulations are established to limit the involvement of the school and school coach to the WIAA designated season, thereby providing student athletes the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities during the school year and ensuring that each school has an equal opportunity to provide fair competition.

17.5.0 OUT-OF-SEASON - DEFINITION – Out-of-season is that time during which paid or volunteer coaches cannot coach present or future squad members.

HIGH SCHOOL - Out-of-season for all high school sports shall be from August 1 until the first day of the specific sport turnouts and from the final day of the state tournament in that classification for that sport until the conclusion of the final spring sport state tournament. The August 1 cutoff date is waived for school coaches who coach during the summer in non-school programs provided that team has qualified for the next level of competition which ultimately leads to the state/regional/national championship/World Series in baseball and softball.

MIDDLE LEVEL – Out-of-season for middle level sports shall be from August 1 until the first day of the specific sport turnouts and from the conclusion of the final league contest of that specific sport season until the conclusion of the middle level spring league schedule, or the final spring school contest in the event the school is not a member of a league in that sport, or the final day of the high school spring state championships, whichever is later.

17.5.1 For the purposes of the out-of-season regulations, the WIAA has determined that slow pitch and fast pitch softball; interscholastic/collegiate/folk style/ USA wrestling, freestyle wrestling, and Greco-Roman wrestling; and unified sports teams shall be considered separate and distinct sports.

17.5.2 School sponsorship or promotion of practice and/or participation is restricted to the WIAA designated season for that sport.

- A. ASB funds cannot be used for an out-of-season event.
- B. School wide posting or distributing of information pertaining to a specific event or activity is permissible.

17.5.3 Practice shall be limited to each sports season as defined under each sport.

17.5.4 Use of school equipment, facilities and/or transportation is contingent upon local school district written policy.

- A. School uniforms may be worn ONLY during the WIAA season for that sport except during Washington State Coaches Association feeder or all state contests. NOTE: Uniforms are considered to be the school issued contest uniform (practice or shooting shirts are not classified as school uniforms) and are defined in the adopted rule book for each specific sport.
- B. Football helmets and shoulder pads may be worn only during the WIAA season for that sport except as approved through the local school district policy.
- C. Coaches may not transport current and/or prospective athletes to an out-of-season event in their particular sport.

17.5.5 A coach of a school team (paid or volunteer) may coach only during the WIAA sport season.

17.5.6 DEFINITION OF COACHING

- A. Coaching is defined as overseeing any regularly scheduled team physical activity designed for the preparation of athletes for the ensuing sports season.
- B. Coaching is further defined as any attempt by the coach of a school team (paid or volunteer) to teach any phase of a game or activity to their squad or part of their squad or have their squad or part of their squad engage in drills under the supervision of that coach, or from directions provided by that coach.
- C. Any adult or non-school personnel coaching during a scheduled team practice or contest is considered to be a coach for that team.

17.5.7 PRESEASON MEETINGS

- A. A coach may have one (1) organizational meeting with the incoming freshmen or sophomores at each middle or junior high school or at the high school for students who are enrolled in the middle or junior high school whose attendance area is within the high school's attendance area to cover information that is not sport specific.
- B. A coach may have two (2) additional meetings with the squad prior to the opening day of practice to issue equipment, to explain to the participants such issues as insurance, physical examinations, season's plans, training regulations, summer activities, leadership training, or any other pertinent information deemed necessary by the coach
- C. This restriction does not apply to fundraising activities unless the fundraising activities include the students participating in skills that are specific to the sport being coached 1. Fundraising activities are subject to the approval and rules of the participating school districts and/or Association Student Body governments. 2. Participating in fundraising activities cannot be a requirement, incentive for, or a condition of participation on a team.
- D. Organization or implementation of the wrestling weight management program is not considered to be the one (1) organizational meeting.

17.5.8 In the sport coached, a school coach may not sponsor, coach or direct activities which resemble out-of-season practices or contests to any student at that high school or any feeder school(s) for that high school in the school district except during the designated season for that sport until after the final spring WIAA tournament is completed (high school) or until after the completion of the final spring sports season (middle level.) A feeder school may be either grades 7 and 8 or grades 7, 8 and 9.

- A. A coach may coach his/her child at any time provided no other students who attend or feed into that school are involved, individually or as members of a team.
- B. Following the completion of the school season for that sport, a school coach may coach high school seniors.
- C. Public School District defined: The school district for public schools is defined by public school boundaries.
 - 1. If a school district has specific boundaries for its high school(s) and middle school(s), a high school coach may coach students in the high school and the middle school(s) that feed directly to the high school only during their designated season (when the high school and middle level programs overlap or if that coach is contracted to coach at both the high school and middle level) or during the summer.
 - 2. During the out-of-season time period, the coach could coach high school students attending a different high school or a middle school that does not feed directly to the high school in which that coach was hired to coach.
 - 3. If a school district has an open enrollment policy, then a high school coach may coach students in the high school in which the coach is contracted to coach during the designated high school season, middle level students within that school district during the time period the high school and middle level season overlap or if that coach is contracted to coach at both the high school and middle level, or during the summer.
- D. During the out-of-season time period, a private high school coach may not coach prospective middle level students. Prospective middle level students include:
 - 1. Middle level students who attend a designated private feeder school owned and operated by the high school where the coach is contracted to coach; or
 - 2. In the case where no designated private feeder school exists, middle level students who reside in the public-school district where the private high school is located.
- E. Exception: A coach, on an annual basis, may coach an individual(s) that has been invited to participate or has qualified for a national event which has been approved by the Association. The number of allowable practices, contests, and student athletes to be involved will be determined by the Association.

17.5.9 STUDENTS AS MANAGERS OF HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS

- A. A manager of a team is limited to preparing water/drinks, keeping statistics, and providing supplies to the coach and/or players.

B. Managers are not allowed to participate in any warm-up or practice drills in the same role as the athletes.

17.5.10 SQUAD MEMBERS AS VOLUNTEER COACHES – High school players may serve as middle level assistant coaches/volunteers during the designated middle school season. These high school students must meet WIAA coaches standards minimum requirements as stipulated in Article 23.0.0.

17.6.0 PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES: A member school makes decisions regarding curriculum content and teachers and may limit the involvement of its coaching staff in teaching specific courses. Coaches may teach physical education classes provided all of the following conditions are met:

17.6.1 The class must include students who do not participate in the sport the coach coaches.

17.6.2 A variety of sports must be taught during the quarter or semester.

17.6.3 A variety of offensive and defensive strategies in each sport should be emphasized. Class time should not be used to teach offensive and/or defensive strategies that will be implemented by the school team, particularly if the defensive strategies are designed around a specific opponent from another school or another school team.

17.6.4 Videotapes or films may be shown to the entire class for group instruction. Videotapes or films of interscholastic contests should not be viewed on a one-to-one basis during class time.

17.6.5 Class members may not challenge one another for positions on the varsity squad in a specific sport. Example: A high jumper jumping during class time for his/her class grade would be allowed, as long as he/she does not challenge another student for a position on the varsity track team.

17.6.6 Class time may not be used to choreograph, critique, nor judge/officiate a competitive routine.

17.7.0 OFF SEASON CONDITIONING - A member school may organize and supervise an off-season conditioning program to include weight training, running and exercising provided all of the following conditions are met:

17.7.1 Participation in off season conditioning cannot be a requirement, incentive for, or a condition of participation on a school team;

17.7.2 It is open to all students;

17.7.3 Instruction in specific sports skills is not provided.

17.8.0 OPEN GYM - Schools may conduct open athletic facilities (gym, pools, field, and track) in the off season if all of the following conditions are met:

17.8.1 The program is part of the school district organized recreational or activity program; and

17.8.2 Activities are open and advertised to all members of the student body of that school; and

17.8.3 Students have a choice of activities; and

17.8.4 No coaching or drilling of the athletes attending occurs; and

17.8.5 Supervision is provided by any individual approved by the school district; and

17.8.6 Participation in open gym cannot be a requirement or condition of participation on a school team.

17.9.0 SPORT CAMPS OR CLINICS - Participants in a school-sponsored sport may attend camps or clinics.

17.9.1 If the participant's coach is an organizer of a camp or clinic, the participant may attend only if it is offered during the summer or during the season in which that sport is offered.

17.9.2 Participation in a sport camp or clinic cannot be a requirement or condition of participation on a school team.

OUT OF SEASON SCENARIOS

- **A new baseball coach has been named in October. May he coach/instruct/direct his athletes from November thru February since he has not yet signed a contract?**

WIAA Response: Because he was hired after the WIAA year began (August 1), this coach could fulfill his/her responsibilities with a non-school team, even if it included athletes from the school where he/she would coach prior to being named a school coach. The involvement of any additional student athletes from that school would be a violation of the WIAA out-of-season rules. Following the conclusion of the baseball season, all WIAA out-of-season rules would apply.

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.5 COACHES ARE ALLOWED TO COACH ONLY DURING THE SEASON

WIAA Handbook P.93 **Q&A-2: At what point does an individual become a “coach” and at what point does the out-of-season rule apply to that new coach?** A newly hired coach is considered a coach when a verbal/written agreement is made with the school district. 1) If the new baseball coach was hired by the school district **after August 1** for that school year, then he/she may continue to meet previous non-school coaching commitments through the school year up to and through the baseball season. No new programs may be added, unless already a member of the non-school program, any students from that school may not join the team, and practice with current and/or potential athletes attending that school may not be held. 2) If the new basketball coach was hired by the school district in the spring for the proceeding school year, that coach may not begin coaching current and/or potential athletes before the first day following the spring sport championships and must end involvement with current and/or potential athletes on July 31.

WIAA Handbook P. 96 **Q&A-30: If we hire a club softball coach for the high school, can she continue coaching the club athletes?** **If the club coach was hired after August 1 for that school year, then she may continue her non-school commitment and continue to coach the club athletes up to and through the spring sports season. If any of the club athletes are also students at the school where she is hired to coach, they could continue with the club team coached by that coach, but no new students from that school could be added to the team.**

- **A program plans to add a volunteer (or paid staff member) to their basketball staff. May that coach work with and/or coach student/athletes in the fall leading up to the start of the season?**

WIAA Response: WIAA rules apply only to the coaches at WIAA member schools. The point at which the WIAA rules apply are dependent upon when the agreement with the school district is set. WIAA rules apply equally to paid and volunteer coaches.

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.5 COACHES ARE ALLOWED TO COACH ONLY DURING THE SEASON

WIAA Handbook P. 93 **Q&A-4: We have a former NBA player now living in our community. Is it permissible to bring him in to assist in practices once in a while?** This person **would be considered a volunteer coach** and must be approved as a volunteer according to local school district policies. Volunteer coaches are subject to the out-of-season rules and coaches standards in the same manner as paid coaches.

WIAA Handbook P. 94 **Q&A-5: Are there any restrictions regarding alumni returning to the school during the winter break to assist with the wrestling program?** Alumni assisting in any manner with a school sports program must be **approved volunteer coaches according to local school district policies and are subject to the out-of-season rules and coaches standards.**

- **May a booster club hire a coach (not on staff) to work-out their players in sport specific drills if these workouts are open to all? If so, what are the restrictions or expectations?**

WIAA Response: The relationship between a school and its booster club(s) vary greatly. If a booster club is acting on behalf of a school, sponsoring an out-of-season activity would violate the WIAA out-of-season rules. WIAA member schools may sponsor off-season conditioning programs, provided it is advertised and open to all students at the school and that sports specific skills and drills are not taught.

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.4 OUT-OF-SEASON

WIAA Handbook P. 92 Q&A-4: Could the school provide the insurance or assist in promoting an out-of-season tournament sponsored by that school’s booster club? NO; providing insurance indicates school sponsorship, which would be a violation. It would be a violation for any agent of the school to promote an out-of-season event.

- **May the Girls’ Basketball coach run the Boys through basketball drills and sport specific practices in the fall before practices begin? This would also mean that the Boys’ basketball coach would coach the girls during this time as well?**

WIAA Response: WIAA rules are sport and gender specific. Girls basketball and boys basketball are two separate and specific sports. WIAA rules would not prohibit a girls basketball coach from coaching boys from that same school (and vice versa) during the out-of-season time period. WIAA rules would prohibit the girls basketball coach from coaching boys from that same school (and vice versa) during the out-of-season time period should the school sponsor the activities or if the coaches took direction from their counterpart (e.g. boys coach provides the girls coach with a plan to work with the boys during the winter).

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.5 COACHES ARE ALLOWED TO COACH ONLY DURING THE SEASON

WIAA Handbook P. 94 Q&A-6: Could a middle level coach work with the high school team at any time during the WIAA school year? NO, not unless the person has a written agreement with the school district to coach at both levels and then, only during the designated season for each level. The specific sports coaches are considered to be coaches of all student athletes within that school district.

WIAA Handbook P. 94 Q&A-8: May a softball coach of a school team coach a member of that school’s basketball team in an AAU league during the softball season? YES; as long as he/she is not under the direction of the school’s basketball coach.

17.8.0 OPEN GYM

WIAA Handbook P. 99 Q&A-6: Is it legal for our school to sponsor basketball intramurals in the spring and have the basketball coach supervise? NO; school sponsorship and promotion in a given sport is restricted to the WIAA designated season for that sport.

- **What are the minimum requirements to be considered “open to all”?**

WIAA Response: Advertised through the typical school communication process – public address announcements, school newspaper, flyers posted outside the office of the athletic director, notification emailed to every student in the school, etc. Inviting only a specific team or group would not be open to all.

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.7.0 OFF SEASON CONDITIONING: all of the following conditions are met:

17.7.1 Participation in off season conditioning cannot be a requirement, incentive for, or a condition of participation on a school team;

17.7.2 It is open to all students;

17.7.3 Instruction in specific sports skills is not provided.

WIAA Handbook P. 98 Q&A-1: Could a football coach supervise the weight room in August? Schools may sponsor an off season weight training and conditioning program that must be open to all students and cannot include instruction in specific sport skills and/or drills. Each school has the authority to determine who will supervise the weight room.

WIAA Handbook P. 98 Q&A-2: My school has advertised in the school bulletin that the weight room will be open for wrestlers beginning October 1st. Can students not interested in wrestling be denied access to the weight room? NO; access to the weight room is considered to be part of a year-round conditioning program and must be posted and advertised as being open to all students within the school.

- **Can a group of fathers open up the batting cages in the off-season and instruct batting and run drills on the field simulating game conditions?**

WIAA Response: Each school district determines if it will allow non-school personnel to use school equipment (batting cages, track hurdles, volleyball standards and nets, etc) or facilities (gym, pool, softball field, etc), under what conditions (only if school supervisor is provided and on site, verification of insurance must be provided, rental fees prepaid, etc). The WIAA out-of-season coaching rules would not apply to non-school personnel (fathers.)

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.2 School sponsorship or promotion of practice and/or participation is restricted to the WIAA designated season for that sport.

17.5.8 OUT-OF-SEASON COACHING RESTRICTIONS

WIAA Handbook P. 97 Q&A-2: Could a middle level softball coach hit balls with his/her daughter in the neighborhood park? YES; WIAA out-of-season rules do not prohibit immediate family obligations. However, if another member of the daughter's team participates, the out-of-season rules would be violated except during the season or during the summer.

- **Can a coach at one school run practices in the off-season at another school paid or unpaid?**

WIAA Response: A high school coach is only restricted from coaching the students in the high school where he/she coaches, as well as the middle school students that feed into that high school. WIAA rules do not prohibit a high school coach from coaching students attending schools in a different school district. If a high school coach conducts a practice at any other high school, he/she would be considered the same as any other non-school person and must meet the school district requirements (facility rental, insurance, etc.)

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.5 COACHES ARE ALLOWED TO COACH ONLY DURING THE SEASON

WIAA Handbook P. 95 Q&A-16: May a high school coach serve as the head or assistant coach for an AAU basketball team comprised of high school players from different high schools? YES; a high school coach could coach an AAU basketball team if the athletes are not from the coach's high school team or if the coaching takes place during the summer.

- **May a program offer sport specific training in the weight room as long as it is open to all? Students or their parents would pay the booster club and the booster club would pay an independent contractor to run this program? The booster club would rent the facility and purchase insurance for this.**

WIAA Response: Each school district determines if it will allow non-school personnel to use school equipment (batting cages, track hurdles, volleyball standards and nets, etc) or facilities (gym, pool, softball field, etc), under what conditions (only if school supervisor is provided and on site, verification of insurance must be provided, rental fees prepaid, etc). The WIAA out-of-season coaching rules would not apply to non-school personnel (fathers.)

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.2 School sponsorship or promotion of practice and/or participation is restricted to the WIAA designated season for that sport.

- **If a football program is involved in an out of season passing league or series of clinics, what are the restrictions on the football coaching staffs?**

WIAA Response: They cannot be involved in selecting or evaluating players in terms of placement on a team, cannot coach any athletes from their own school district (grades 7-12), cannot provide instruction to individual(s) to coach on their behalf and cannot be standing on the sidelines during a practice or game.

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.5 COACHES ARE ALLOWED TO COACH ONLY DURING THE SEASON

WIAA Handbook P. 96 Q&A-28: As a state championship basketball coach, I have been asked to assist in the drafting of high school players for an all-star spring basketball tournament? Is that OK? You may assist in evaluating and drafting players onto all-star teams only if none of your players are involved. Analyzing players on their performance and ability is a primary function and a regular responsibility of a coach during a practice and is permissible only during the designated WIAA season.

WIAA Handbook P. 95 Q&A-21: A coach organizes an after-school team of students for a summer league. Is this a violation? No WIAA rules would be violated if a coach organizes a summer league team during the summer.

WIAA Handbook P. 95 Q&A-22: Is it OK for a coach to organize students during the school year to attend summer "team" camp? YES; provided it is understood that participation is optional and not a requirement or prerequisite to turning out for the sport the following year.

WIAA Handbook P. 95 Q&A-23: A coach organizes squad members to participate in a non-school activity out of the specified sport season during the school year. Is this a violation? YES. *Note: This Q&A relates directly to conversations many AD's have recently had focused on Fall League Basketball. As this Q&A reads, a coach cannot organize squad members to participate basketball activities outside of the winter sport season. So, if a coach organizes players in the winter (or in the summer) to participate in a Fall or Spring Basketball League it would be a violation.*

- **A staff member has a leadership council that involves leaders from each athletic program at their school meeting a couple times a month for 35-45 minutes. Is this a violation?**

WIAA Response: WIAA out-of-season rules apply to school coaches (not staff members) coaching student athletes (grades 7 -12) during the out-of-season time period. The school cannot sponsor out-of-season activities. Meeting to discuss leadership qualities with students who traditionally participate in a variety of sports would not violate WIAA out-of-season rules.

Applicable Rule and Additional Handbook Language

17.5.7 PRESEASON MEETINGS

- A coach may have one (1) organizational meeting with the incoming freshmen or sophomores at each middle or junior high school or at the high school for students who are enrolled in the middle or junior high school whose attendance area is within the high school's attendance area to cover information that is not sport specific.
- A coach may have two (2) additional meetings with the squad prior to the opening day of practice to issue equipment, to explain to the participants such issues as insurance, physical examinations, season's plans, training regulations, summer activities, leadership training, or any other pertinent information deemed necessary by the coach
- This restriction does not apply to fundraising activities unless the fundraising activities include the students participating in skills that are specific to the sport being coached 1. Fundraising activities are subject to the approval

and rules of the participating school districts and/or Association Student Body governments. 2. Participating in fundraising activities cannot be a requirement, incentive for, or a condition of participation on a team.

- D. Organization or implementation of the wrestling weight management program is not considered to be the one (1) organizational meeting.