



PIAA DISTRICT III CANCELLATION AND FORFEIT GUIDE – 2025-2026 (revised)

To all District III Athletic Directors and Coaches:

The PIAA Board of Directors clarified language related to the cancellation or forfeiture of scheduled regular season contests that have been postponed and not rescheduled or not played as scheduled for other reasons.

PIAA staff, in conjunction with the PIAA Strategic Planning Committee, developed the ensuing guidance that passed by Board of Directors unanimous vote. The new language is designed to eliminate misconceptions regarding the application of the PIAA By-Laws and Rules and Regulations regarding cancellations or forfeit for regular season contests. (Different rules and By-Laws apply to postseason contests, both within the District and in Interdistrict play; those will not be addressed here.)

In addition to the new guidance, the process by which unplayed contests are considered either a cancellation (No Contest) or a forfeit is covered by certain provisions of the PIAA By-Laws (Article XII and Article XIII) and the Forfeiture Of Contests section of the PIAA Rules and Regulations. The pertinent provisions from each section have been added at the end of this guidance and are highlighted in red.

SUMMARY

- 1) Cancellations may not be made unilaterally by a school that wishes to cancel or declare No Contest. Language in both the By-Laws and the Rules and Regulations states that both schools must agree to a cancellation and that any cancellation decision should only be considered after exhausting all available options as described in the ensuing points.
- 2) If a postponement is necessary, the affected schools must work diligently to reschedule the postponed or otherwise unplayed contest by finding a mutually agreeable date. (District III editorial note: EVERY effort must be made to reschedule before the power ranking deadline in every District III power-ranked sport. District III's position is that a contest scheduled must be played except under extreme circumstances.)
- 3) If the schools are unable to find a mutually agreeable date, a forfeit is mandatory as per the By-Laws and Rules and Regulations. (District III editorial note: If this occurs among league members, league by-laws addressing postponements, forfeits and / or cancellations apply first. If the league applies a forfeit, District III will apply that ruling to its power rankings. If the contest involves schools from different leagues, Item No. 2 of the guidance [listed below] applies.
- 4) The process for determining the application of a forfeit or a No Contest is spelled out in Item No. 2 of the new cancellation guidance passed on Sept. 15 (seen below), as well as other provisions of the PIAA By-Laws. If the schools agree to a forfeit, it will be applied. If the schools are in conflict on the matter, the District Committee will determine the ruling.
- 5) It is also noted both in the new guidance and in the By-Laws that if the District Committee determines that a contest has been postponed, canceled or added for a competitive reason (read: improving or protecting one's power ranking status), the District Committee may apply penalties as proscribed in Article XIII, Sects. 2 through 7 of the PIAA By-Laws.



2025-2026 PIAA REGULAR SEASON CONTEST CANCELLATION GUIDANCE

A key principle in the PIAA Philosophy provision of the PIAA By-Laws provides that attempts to “get around the rules” are actions that subvert the purposes of interscholastic athletics and are unacceptable. Similarly, Section 1B of the PIAA Sportsmanship and Unsportsmanlike Conduct section of the By-Laws specifies that it is unsportsmanlike conduct for a school to cancel or reschedule a Contest for an athletic purpose.

For these reasons, the following standards shall apply for the 2025-2026 school year:

- 1. In the event a Regular Season Contest is postponed for whatever reason, including Covid-19 issues, all attempts must be made to reschedule that Contest during the Regular Season. (District III editorial note: A “No Contest” designation is no longer automatic for Covid-related cancellations.)*
- 2. If the Contest cannot be rescheduled, the failure of a Team to participate in a scheduled Contest shall constitute **AN AUTOMATIC FORFEIT, REGARDLESS OF THE REASON(S) THEREOF**, unless the school not participating convinces the District Committee that it made reasonable efforts to avoid an outbreak and that its failure to participate was unavoidable, in which event the District Committee may treat the matter as if the Contest had not been scheduled (No Contest).*

(District III editorial note: The language above makes it clear that an automatic forfeit by the school unable or unwilling to participate in a scheduled contest, not a desire for No Contest, is the default position for all unplayed contests. Schools can no longer declare No Contest, without District III Committee or District III league approval.)

- 3. If a school has sufficient personnel who are not subject to quarantine to participate in a Contest, but chooses not to play, that school will forfeit the Contest.*

In any instance where a District Committee determines that a school postponed or cancelled a Contest for competitive reasons, the applicable Team and its school personnel may be subjected to any of the penalties described in Article XIII of the PIAA By-Laws.

BY-LAWS

ADHERENCE TO AND ENFORCEMENT OF PIAA BY-LAWS

The initial responsibility for adherence to and enforcement of the PIAA By-Laws by a PIAA member school, its students and personnel rests with the Principal of that school.

Notwithstanding this initial responsibility for compliance, (1) the Principal of any PIAA member school, by written request or complaint to the Chairman of the appropriate District Committee or PIAA Office, may allege or bring to the attention of PIAA a violation of, or a failure to meet, applicable provisions of the PIAA By-Laws, and (2) a District Committee or the Board of Directors may, on its own motion, enforce the PIAA By-Laws in the absence of submission of the matter to it by the Principal of a PIAA member school.

Unless otherwise specifically set forth in a particular provision, this portion of the Handbook contains the PIAA By-Laws in effect as of July 1, 2020. Any subsequent amendments for 2020-2021 will appear on the PIAA Web site at www.piaa.org.

PIAA PHILOSOPHY

It is unconscionable that a school or any of its employees would subvert the high purposes of interscholastic athletics by condoning any violation of the rules. To involve boys or girls in any practice or procedure which "gets around the rules" is unworthy of a person associated with athletics.

ATHLETIC COURTESY

Athletics should foster clean sports. It is the privilege and duty of every person connected with athletics to exemplify these principles in that person's own actions and earnestly advocate them before others.

A. Contest rules are to be regarded as mutual agreements, the spirit or letter of which no honorable person would break. The stealing of advantage in sport is theft.

B. No advantages are to be sought over others except those in which the Contest is understood to show superiority.

C. Unsportsmanlike or unfair means are not to be used, even when opponents use them.

D. Visiting Teams are to be honored guests of the home Team, and should be treated as such.

E. No action is to be taken nor course of conduct pursued which would seem unsportsmanlike or dishonorable if known to one's opponent or the public.

F. Remember that student-spectators represent their school the same as student-athletes.

G. Any spectator who continually evidences poor sportsmanship should be requested not to attend future Contests.

H. Decisions of Contest officials are to be abided by, even when they seem unfair.

I. Contest officials and opponents are to be regarded and treated as honest in intention. In Contests when opponents conduct themselves in an unbecoming manner, and when Contest officials are manifestly dishonest or incompetent, future relationship with them should be avoided.

J. Good points in others should be appreciated and suitable recognition given.

K. The practice of "booing" is regarded as discourteous and unsportsmanlike.

SPORTSMANSHIP AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

Sportsmanship is a core principle in interscholastic athletics. Actions which are unethical or intended to demean, embarrass, intimidate or injure opposing contestants, teams, spectators and officials are considered unsportsmanlike and will not be tolerated since they are contrary to the purposes of PIAA and convey lessons incompatible with the reason why high school sports exist. While acts of misconduct occurring within the scope of competition are often addressed through sport specific rules, PIAA reserves the right to address any unsportsmanlike conduct and impose supplemental discipline as appropriate under the circumstances. The following conduct, and any conduct of a similar nature may subject actors to any and all remedial measures available to PIAA.

Section 1. Schools and Their Athletic Personnel.

A. A school knowingly or recklessly condones or supports unsportsmanlike conduct by its personnel, student-athletes, Teams, and/or supporters.

B. A school cancels, schedules or reschedules a Contest to gain a competitive advantage.

C. A school knowingly or recklessly recruits students for an athletic purpose.

D. A school fails to establish and enforce a code of conduct for student-athletes.

E. A school fails or refuses to cooperate with PIAA in investigating a possible violation of the PIAA Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations.

F. A school fails to treat a visiting Team as guests or fails to provide necessary and appropriate security for Contest officials, spectators and visiting Teams at Contests hosted by the school.

G. A school cancels, schedules or reschedules a Contest for the purpose of circumventing application, enforcement, and/or the intent of any provision of the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations of PIAA.

H. A school knowingly or recklessly certifies to the eligibility of a student or fails to conduct an appropriate investigation where there is question as to the student-athlete's eligibility.

I. A school knowingly or recklessly engages in conduct intended to increase hostile relations with opposing schools.

Section 2. Student-Athletes.

A. A student-athlete engages in conduct intended to injure an opponent or Contest officials.

B. A student-athlete uses profanity, obscene gestures, and/or obscene language immediately before, during or immediately following a Contest.

C. A student-athlete seeks to provoke opponents, Contest officials, or spectators to engage in improper conduct.

D. A student-athlete uses race, gender, ethnicity, religion or disability to bait, intimidate, or denigrate an opponent.

E. A student athlete who engages in unsportsmanlike behavior/conduct during medal/award ceremony.

Section 3. Coaches.

A. A Coach teaches student-athletes to win through illegitimate means. Striving to win at any cost is distinctly unethical.

B. A Coach fails to give opponents full credit when they win.

C. A Coach fails to control his/her temper immediately prior to, during, or after a Contest.

D. A Coach uses profanity, obscene gestures, and/or obscene language immediately prior to, during, or immediately following a Contest.

E. A Coach criticizes Contest Officials through the media or to student-athletes or spectators, rather than through the appropriate review process.

A student who has passed subjects which, in the aggregate, total at least four credits has passed the equivalent of four full-credit subjects.

Section 2. July 21, 1983; as amended December 7, 1985; and May 11, 2002.

ARTICLE X, Section 2 sets only the minimum academic standards for interscholastic athletic eligibility. Since the standards are minimum ones (passing "at least" four full-credit subjects), PIAA member schools may adopt higher or more stringent academic standards, but may not have lower academic standards.

Section 3.

In cases where a student's work in any preceding grading period does not meet the standards provided for in Section 2, said student is ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for at least fifteen (15) school days of the next grading period where the school has four (4) grading periods per school year, or for at least ten (10) school days of the next grading period where the school has six (6) grading periods per school year, beginning on the first day report cards are issued, except as provided in Section 5.

Section 4. New Students Must Meet Eligibility Requirements On Curriculum.

Students who are enrolled for the first time must comply with the requirements of the curriculum rules. The standing required for the preceding week, the preceding grading period or the preceding year shall be obtained from the records of the last school which the student has attended.

Section 5. Use of Final Credits at End of School Year.

At the end of the school year, the student's final credits in the student's subjects rather than the student's credits for the last grading period shall be used to determine the student's eligibility for the next grading period.

Section 6. Students With Disabilities.

Because PIAA is an educationally-based organization, achievement by all students, including those with disabilities, of the minimum academic standards set forth in this ARTICLE, is a fundamental prerequisite to athletic eligibility and these standards may not be waived except under the most limited of circumstances. Students with disabilities should work with their schools to obtain appropriate accommodations which allow them opportunities to meet the standards. If, despite accommodations provided by the school, a student is still unable to meet the requirements, a District Committee may, after an individualized assessment, grant limited relief by substituting alternative standards appropriate for a unique situation. Such relief may be granted only if the student demonstrates that:

(1) the student suffers from a physical, mental, or emotional disability which has been recognized by, and certified to by, a treating physician or psychiatrist;

(2) the certified to disability has had a direct and significant negative impact on the student's academic performance,

(3) the student has a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a Chapter 15 Service Agreement relating to the certified to disability, at the student's school;

(4) the student was meeting the requirements of the student's IEP,

(5) the student made demonstrable and diligent efforts to take advantage of available opportunities to meet the minimum academic requirements of this ARTICLE;

(6) the student was still unable to meet the minimum academic requirements of this ARTICLE; and

(7) the form of accommodation requested by the student is reasonable in that it would preserve the purposes, intent and expectations of the standards,

A student attending a Private School must meet each of the criteria in this Section, excepting that the Committee may

consider, in lieu of an IEP, a defined plan adopted by the school which identifies and addresses the student's disability needs, and which is, in most respects, comparable to an IEP.

INTERPRETATION

December 7, 1985; as amended May 11, 2002.

Students whose work does not meet the standards provided for in ARTICLE X, who attend summer school and correct their deficiencies, are eligible.

**ARTICLE XI
ASSUMED NAME**

A student who participates in an Inter-School Practice, Scrimmage, or Contest in a sport under a name other than the student's own is ineligible to participate in that sport for up to one year from the date of such participation under an assumed name. This penalty may be modified by the PIAA District Committee upon proof by the student of a lack of culpability by the student, that such participation was encouraged, arranged, and/or facilitated by a Coach of the student, and that the student's school has taken appropriate disciplinary action acceptable to the PIAA Board of Directors against those adults responsible for such participation.

Additionally, any person encouraging, facilitating, and/or assisting a student to participate in an Inter-School Practice, Scrimmage, and/or Contest in a sport under a name other than the student's own is, if the student does indeed so participate under an assumed name and regardless of discipline imposed by the school on said individual, ineligible to Coach any Team in that sport at any PIAA member school for up to one year from the date of such participation by the student under an assumed name.

**ARTICLE XII
ATHLETIC RELATIONS**

Section 1. Teams which PIAA Member Schools may Play.

A. No Inter-School Practice, Scrimmage, or Contest may be played with a Team not sponsored and controlled by a public school or Private School nor any school not belonging to PIAA, unless the non-PIAA member school's eligibility rules for school, Team, and contestants meet the requirements of PIAA or the non-PIAA member school is a member in good standing with its National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS)-member state high school association.

All Contests must be played pursuant to ARTICLE XVIII, Official Rules for Sports. This requirement does not apply to Contests played outside of Pennsylvania where the opponent school is not a member of PIAA.

B. Regular Season Scrimmages and/or Contests with alumni, where authorized by the school, are permitted in all sports except in Football and Wrestling. Such Scrimmages and/or Contests count against the maximum permitted number of Regular Season Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and/or Contests in the applicable sport.

INTERPRETATIONS

Section 1A. May 11, 2002.

Where it is deemed necessary by the respective School Boards, and/or Boards having jurisdiction over the schools, for students and/or Teams from different schools to share facilities at the same time, those students and/or Teams are not considered to be engaging in a Contest, Scrimmage, or Inter-School Practice so long as the students and/or Teams do not interact by competing against or Practicing with each other.

Section 1A. July 27, 2006; as amended October 8, 2010.

PIAA member senior high schools may participate in Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and/or Contests against non-PIAA member senior high schools that (1) are in good standing with their respective National Federation of State High School

Association (NFHS)-member state high school associations and (2) have on their Teams' rosters junior high or middle school students enrolled in the 7th and/or 8th grades. However, PIAA member senior high schools are not permitted to use students enrolled in the 7th and/or 8th grades on their Teams in such Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and/or Contests, unless otherwise authorized under these By-Laws.

Section 1B. July 24, 2009.

Except as provided in ARTICLE XII, ATHLETIC RELATIONS, Section 1B and ARTICLE XIV, COACHES, Section 2, What Constitutes Coaching, of the PIAA By-Laws, no person who has graduated or withdrawn from high school is eligible to participate in Practices, Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and/or Contests.

Section 2. Practices, Inter-School Practices, Scrimmages, and Contests Limited to Six Days Per Calendar Week During Preseason and Regular Season.

No Team, no individual member or members of such Team, and no individual representing any PIAA member school, may Practice or participate in an Inter-School Practice, Scrimmage, and/or Contest on more than six days in any Calendar Week during the Preseason and Regular Season.

Section 3. Requirements of Written Contract.

Except where scheduling is done by or pursuant to the authority of the District Committee, all schools must enter into either paper or electronic contracts for all Contests in which they participate. All contracts must be on the official contract form entitled "Contract for Contests Under PIAA Rules", or an equivalent electronic version thereof. Where the opponent is not a member of PIAA, or a member in good standing with their respective NFHS-member state high school association, the school must also enter into a supplement to either a paper or an electronic contract on the official form entitled "Supplement to Contract for Contests Under PIAA Rules Involving Non-PIAA Member Schools", or an equivalent electronic version thereof. Disputes arising from oral agreements will not be considered by PIAA.

Section 4. Contracts of Suspended/Withdrawn School Null and Void.

A. Contracts with Suspended School.

The suspension of a school from PIAA renders its contracts with PIAA member schools null and void for PIAA purposes.

B. Contracts with Withdrawn School.

The legal withdrawal of a school from PIAA, approved by the PIAA Board of Directors, shall render its contracts with PIAA member schools null and void for PIAA purposes.

INTERPRETATION

Section 4B. May 21, 1948.

The membership of a school in PIAA terminates when the school ceases to exist and, as a result, the contracts of the school with other schools then become null and void for PIAA purposes.

Section 5. Failure to Participate in Contest.

PIAA member schools develop their own Regular Season schedules in each sport through their own scheduling, joining local leagues, conferences and/or schedules prepared by a District Committee. Consent to accept such a schedule commits the school to participate in Contests as scheduled. Absent good cause shown, and as more fully discussed below, a voluntary forfeiture of any Contest subjects that school to penalties under ARTICLE XIII of the By-Laws.

Additionally, no PIAA member school is required to enter District or Inter-District Championship Tournaments. Entry and participation in such tournaments is voluntary and entry signifies that the member school accepts the fact that the District Committee (for District Tournaments) and the PIAA Executive

Director, or the Executive Director's designee (for Inter-District Tournaments), has the right to schedule and make changes in the date of Contests, location of Contests, management, operation, and schedule of the tournaments. Absent good cause shown, and as more fully discussed below, a voluntary forfeiture of any Contest or withdrawal from the tournament may subject that school to penalties under ARTICLE XIII of the By-Laws.

A. Failure to Participate In Scheduled or Contracted Contest.

If a Team fails to participate in a Contest which it has agreed or been scheduled to play or otherwise fails to fulfill any of the material terms of a contract for Contest, the breaching school may (except by written mutual consent or due to the suspension of one of the schools) be subject to any of the penalties described in ARTICLE XIII, Sections 2 through 7, of the PIAA By-Laws.

If a Team fails to participate in any Regular Season or Post Season Contest scheduled by a District Committee, the offending school may except by written mutual consent and the permission of the District Committee or its authorized designee, or due to the suspension of one of the schools) be subject to any of the penalties described in ARTICLE XIII, Sections 2 through 7, of the PIAA By-Laws.

If a Team enters a PIAA Inter-District Tournament but fails to participate in any Contest scheduled by PIAA for that tournament, the offending school may (except by written mutual consent and the permission of the PIAA Executive Director or his/her authorized designee, or due to the suspension of one of the schools) be subject to any of the penalties described in ARTICLE XIII, Sections 2 through 7, of the PIAA By-Laws.

B. Temporary Closure of School.

A school which is closed may participate during the period the school is closed, at the discretion of the local School Board or Board having jurisdiction over the school.

Normal Practice sessions are permitted if the local School Board or Board having jurisdiction over the school permits such action. Normal Practice sessions may not exceed that which would be normal if the school were in session.

Contests scheduled during the period of closing may be rescheduled by mutual agreement of the affected schools. In such cases, the rescheduled Contest must be in conformity with the rules and regulations of the local School Board or Board having jurisdiction over the schools and PIAA.

Inability to reschedule the Contest shall result in a forfeiture by the closed school.

NOTE: Please refer also to ARTICLE XVI, SEASON AND OUT-OF-SEASON RULES AND REGULATIONS, October 5, 1994, as amended January 29, 2005 Interpretation; and "Procedures During Strikes" in the Policies and Procedures Section of the PIAA Handbook.

C. Disbandment of Team.

If the failure to play a Contest as scheduled is due to the disbandment of a Team by the Principal, forfeiture of the Contest may or may not be imposed, provided that the Principal immediately notifies the PIAA Board of Directors, the District Committee, and the Principals of such schools as the school's Team is scheduled to play, stating the reason for disbandment.

D. Inclement Weather.

If the failure to play a Regular Season Contest is due to inclement weather, the schools shall attempt in good faith to reschedule the Contest. If unable to do so, neither Team shall be required to forfeit the Contest.

If the failure to play a District or Inter-District Contest is due to inclement weather, the PIAA Policy Relating to Inclement Weather During District and/or Inter-District Championship Tournaments shall apply.

Section 6. Failure to Agree Upon Officials for Contests.

If the schools fail to agree upon the officials fifteen days prior to the date of the Contest, it is the duty of the Principals of the two schools to notify the District Chairman of such failure. The District Chairman shall then appoint the officials for the Contest, and the fees of the said officials shall be borne by the schools as originally provided in their mutual contract or otherwise. If the Contest is scheduled between schools located in different Districts, the Executive Director of PIAA shall appoint the officials.

ARTICLE XIII PENALTIES

Preamble

As a guiding principle, a penalty imposed by PIAA should be broad and severe if the violation or violations reflect a general disregard for the PIAA Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations; in those instances where the violation or violations are isolated and of relative insignificance, then the penalty should be more specific and limited. Previous violations of the PIAA Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations are a contributing factor in determining the degree of penalty.

All PIAA member schools are required to cooperate fully with PIAA District Committees, Regional Panels, and/or the PIAA Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions, to further the objectives of PIAA and to investigate incidents relating to disciplinary matters and application of the PIAA Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations. All PIAA member schools must make available, upon request by the District Committee, Regional Panel, and/or the Board of Directors, documents relating to a particular incident and must further make available for questioning Principals, Athletic Directors, Coaches, student-athletes, and other school and/or Team personnel whose testimony may be desired by the District Committee, Regional Panel, and/or the Board of Directors.

Section 1. Expulsion.

A school that has been expelled from membership in PIAA may not apply for readmission for a period of three (3) school years following expulsion. Thereafter, and upon demonstration to the satisfaction of the PIAA Board of Directors that the reasons for expulsion have been remedied, the expelled school may be readmitted to membership.

A school may be expelled:

A. If the Principal is not responsible for the control of interscholastic athletics in the PIAA member school.

B. If it refuses to abide by the decisions of the District Committee, Regional Panel, or the Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions.

Section 2. Suspension.

Suspension may consist of suspension of a school from membership in PIAA, or suspension of one or more of a school's Teams from interscholastic athletic competition with PIAA member schools.

A school or its Team(s) may be suspended:

A. For breach of contracts with other schools.

B. For playing a suspended school.

C. For persistent breach of contracts with Contest officials.

D. For knowingly using an ineligible Coach and/or contestant.

E. For neglecting to provide reasonable safeguards for the protection of Contest officials and visiting Teams.

F. For flagrant violation of the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations of PIAA.

G. When the conduct of its administration, faculty, Coaches, Teams, students, or Team followers is unsportsmanlike and results in actions which are detrimental to individual, school, and/or public welfare and/or which are prejudicial to the purpose of PIAA.

H. For refusal or failure to abide by the decisions of the District Committee, Regional Panel, or the Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions.

I. For violation of terms of probation imposed by the District Committee, Regional Panel, or the Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions.

A suspension may be for a defined period of time or may be indefinite. If the suspension is for an indefinite period of time, the District Committee, Regional Panel, or the Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions, may also impose conditions which must be met prior to the lifting of the suspension and the suspended school must apply to the body imposing the suspension to lift the suspension.

Section 3. Forfeiture of Contests.

A. Mandatory Forfeiture.

To remedy any possible harm to opponents from participation by an ineligible student or Coach, and to remove any incentive for such participation, a school is required to forfeit all Contests in which an ineligible student participated and/or an ineligible Coach coached on behalf of the school, regardless of whether the ineligibility was known at the time of participation and/or Coaching or discovered later. The burden of ensuring that a student is eligible to participate and/or a Coach is eligible to Coach rests entirely on the student, Coach, and Principal of the school. For a Coach, participation in a Contest, after which the Coach is disqualified, includes any contact by the Coach with members of the Team, including other Coaches, between a reasonable time after the Coach is disqualified and the conclusion of the Contest.

B. Discretionary Forfeiture.

A school may be required to forfeit a Contest for flagrant misconduct and/or other violations of the Constitution and/or By-Laws of PIAA.

C. Effect of Forfeiture on District Championship Title.

If a forfeiture of a District Championship occurs, that title shall be vacant for that year unless the forfeiture is determined prior to the first Inter-District Championship Contest, in which instance the runner-up shall be declared District Champion.

D. Effect of Forfeiture During Postseason.

If a Team required to forfeit a Postseason Contest has won a Contest:

1. during the District Championship Tournament, the Team most recently defeated by the forfeiting Team shall be invited to replace the forfeiting Team in the next round of the District Championship Tournament;

2. following the District Championship Tournament but before the start of the Inter-District Championship Tournament, each Team in the District otherwise finishing below the forfeiting Team will improve its seeding by one;

3. during the Inter-District Championship Tournament, other than the final Inter-District Championship Contest, the Team most recently defeated by the forfeiting Team will be invited to replace the forfeiting Team in the next round of the Inter-District Championship Tournament; or

4. following the final Inter-District Championship Contest, the championship in that sport will remain vacant for that year.

In circumstances (1), (2), and (3) above, should the invited Team decline to participate, the District Chairman or Executive Director of PIAA, as appropriate, has discretion as to whether to invite the next possible qualifying Team or provide for a bye in the schedule.

Section 4. Suspension of Athletic Relations.

Two schools may be required to suspend athletic relations when relationships between the schools have been so contentious and unsportsmanlike as to jeopardize school and public welfare.

Section 5. Forfeiture of Championship Rights.

A school may be required to forfeit championship rights for flagrant misconduct and/or any violation of the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations of PIAA, for participating in a non-approved or a disapproved Tournament in a sport, or in lieu of penalties which could be imposed under Sections 1 and/or 2 of this ARTICLE.

Section 6. Public Censure.

In addition to, or in lieu of, such other discretionary penalties as provided by the By-Laws, a school and/or the individual(s) responsible for the violation(s) may be publicly censured.

Public censure is intended to manifest strong disapproval of the actions which led to the imposition of this penalty, and is effected through its inclusion in the decision letter.

Section 7. Probation.

In addition to, or in lieu of, such other discretionary penalties as provided by these By-Laws, a school may be placed on probation.

Probation is an intermediate penalty which may be imposed:

1. upon a finding of a violation of the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations of PIAA,
2. to ensure that steps are taken by schools to minimize the risk of future violations by a school of the Constitution, By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and/or Rules and Regulations of PIAA, and/or
3. to address deficiencies in administrative oversight of the interscholastic athletic program or particular Team at a school.

If probation is imposed, it must be for a specified period of time of not less than one year.

The District Committee, Regional Panel, and/or the Board of Directors may identify conditions that a school must satisfy during a probationary period. Such conditions shall be designed on a case-by-case basis to focus on the school's administrative weaknesses detected in the case and must include, but not be limited to, written reports from the school pertaining to areas of concern to the District Committee, Regional Panel, and/or Board of Directors. Conditions of probation may focus on a particular Team. If the school placed on probation fails to satisfy one or more conditions of probation, the District Committee, Regional Panel, and/or Board of Directors may reconsider the penalties in the case and may extend the term of probation and/or impose additional applicable penalties on the school and/or a particular Team.

Section 8. Disqualification From Next Contest(s).**General Rule. Preamble**

Sportsmanship is a core principle in interscholastic athletics. Actions which are unethical and/or intended to demean, embarrass, intimidate or injure opposing contestants, Teams, spectators and/or officials are considered unsportsmanlike and will not be tolerated since they are contrary to the purposes of PIAA and convey lessons incompatible with the reasons why high school sports exist.

A. Mandatory Disqualification. One Game Suspension.

Any Coach and/or contestant who, while Coaching or competing for a PIAA member school, is ejected from a Contest by a state high school association recognized and/or registered official in that sport for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant misconduct is disqualified from Coaching and/or participating for the remainder of the day and in all Contests on the next Contest day of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition from which the Coach and/or contestant was previously disqualified. For a Coach, participation in the next Contest includes any contact by the Coach with members of the Team, including other Coaches, between the time that the Team arrives at the Contest site and the conclusion of the last Contest of the

day. The Principal must direct the Coach not to attend all of the Contest(s).

B. Supplemental Disqualification. Two Game Suspension.

Any Coach, team personnel and/or contestant who, is ejected from a Contest by a state high school association recognized and/or registered official and a component of the ejection is confronting, contacting or addressing a Coach, contestant or official using foul or vulgar language, ethnic or racially insensitive comments or physical contact will be disqualified from competition for the remainder of the day and for the next two (2) Contests including all Contests on the next two (2) Contest days of the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition from which the Coach and/or contestant was previously disqualified. For the purposes of this provision, the jurisdiction of the official(s) to apply and enforce this rule begins upon the official's arrival at the Contest site and ends when the official (or the last of the team of officials) leaves the Contest site. The Contest site is defined as premises on which the competition surface is located and includes the entirety of the premises and parking areas.

When the Supplemental Disqualification implicates a contestant, and in addition to the two (2) Contests disqualification, the contestant may not return to competition representing the contestant's school until the contestant completes the NFHS Sportsmanship program at NFHSLearn (online) and provides a certification of completion of this program to the student's Principal and the Principal submits the certification to the PIAA District Sport Chairman. A Coach and/or Team personnel disqualified under this provision may not return to competition representing the Coach's/Team personnel's school until the Coach/Team personnel complete the NFHS Sportsmanship program and Teaching and Modeling Behavior program at NFHSLearn (online) and provides a certification of completion of these two programs to the Coach's/Team personnel's Principal and the Principal submits the certification to the PIAA District Sport Chairman.

A disqualification under this provision supersedes a disqualification under A. above. A PIAA District Committee may, at its discretion, convene a hearing to address any and all disqualifications and may provide additional penalties as warranted by the circumstances.

C. Discretionary Disqualification. Upon the finding by a PIAA-Appointed Tournament Director, Contest Manager, District Committee, Regional Panel, or, if the conduct occurred in an Inter-District Contest, by the Executive Director or Board of Directors, within their respective jurisdictions, that a student-athlete, Coach, and/or Team, while Coaching or competing for a PIAA member school, engaged in flagrant misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct/behavior **before, during or after the Contest including** the medal/award ceremony and while on the premises where a Contest is conducted, said student-athletes, Coaches, and/or Teams may be disqualified from participation in the next scheduled Contest following said determination or any other penalties as determined under ARTICLE XIII.

D. Disqualification from Last Contest of a Season.

Any Coach and/or contestant ejected from the last Contest(s) in that sport in a sport season is disqualified from Coaching and/or participating in the first Contest(s) in that sport in the subsequent sport season, at the same level (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition, at any PIAA member school or, if the Coach and/or student changes levels of competition, such as from junior varsity to varsity, the first Contest(s) in that sport.

E. Reporting of Disqualification.

The official must file a report with the PIAA Office on the form prescribed for the sport involved, within twenty-four (24) hours following the completion of the Contest in which the ejection

DEFINITION OF AN INTER-SCHOOL PRACTICE

All of the following elements must be present for an Athletic Event between two or more schools to be considered an **Inter-School Practice**:

1. The involved schools agree, in advance of the Athletic Event, that the Athletic Event will be an Inter-School Practice
2. No admission is charged.
3. The Teams participate only in conditioning exercises and/or limited and closely controlled drills.
4. The Teams are dressed in Practice uniforms only.
5. No score may be displayed or recorded.
6. The results of the Inter-School Practice shall not be counted as a part of the involved Teams' season win and loss records.

Any Athletic Event involving two or more schools must be considered a Scrimmage or Contest unless it meets all of the criteria listed above.

DEFINITION OF A SCRIMMAGE

All of the following elements must be present for a school to consider an Athletic Event with other schools as a **Scrimmage**:

1. The involved schools agree, in advance of the Athletic Event, that the Athletic Event will be a Scrimmage rather than an Inter-School Practice or a Contest.
2. No admission is charged.
3. The head Coaches of the involved Teams may stop the activity at any time to provide instruction or to make substitutions.
4. There are no restrictions concerning the number of times a player/contestant enters or leaves the Scrimmage.
5. No score may be displayed or recorded.
6. The results of the Scrimmage shall not be counted as a part of the involved Teams' season win and loss records.

Any Athletic Event involving two or more schools must be considered an Inter-School Practice or Contest unless it meets all of the criteria listed above.

METHOD OF COUNTING AN INTER-SCHOOL PRACTICE OR A SCRIMMAGE

The method of counting an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage is as follows: each Team, at all levels (varsity, junior varsity, or otherwise) of competition, is limited to one (1) Inter-School Practice or Scrimmage per day. The Inter-School Practice or Scrimmage activity in which the Team participates may not exceed two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes from the start of the Inter-School Practice or Scrimmage activity until the Inter-School Practice or Scrimmage activity ends, for that particular Team. For example, Varsity Team A may participate in an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage for a maximum of two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes on a given day. Varsity Team B may participate in an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage for a maximum of two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes on a given day. Similarly, Junior Varsity Team A may participate in an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage for a maximum of two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes on a given day. Junior Varsity Team B may participate in an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage for a maximum of two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes on a given day. The number of schools or Teams participating in an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage does not affect the method of counting an Inter-School Practice or a Scrimmage as each Team's participation is controlled by the regulations stated above.

FORFEITURE OF CONTESTS

Except as otherwise noted, the following rules govern situations in which schools shall or may be required to forfeit a Contest.

1. The failure of a Team to participate in a Contest shall constitute an automatic forfeit, regardless of the reason(s) thereof, unless the school not participating convinces the District Committee that its failure to participate was unavoidable, in which event the District Committee may treat the matter as if the Contest had not been scheduled.
2. A forfeit constitutes a loss for the Team school not participating and a win for its opponent for purposes of records, standings, and eligibility for playoffs.
3. A forfeit is not subject to refusal by an opponent.
4. Schools may voluntarily agree to terminate a contract for a Contest, in which event the matter shall be treated as if the Contest had not been scheduled. In Districts in which scheduling is done by or pursuant to the authority of the District Committee, permission of the District Committee or its authorized designee shall be required for failure to participate to be treated as if the Contest had not been scheduled.
5. Schools may agree to reschedule a Contest which was not or will not be played at the scheduled time, in which event the failure to play the Contest at the originally scheduled time shall be treated as if the Contest had not been scheduled to be held at that time. In Districts in which scheduling is done by or pursuant to the authority of the District Committee, permission of the District Committee or its authorized designee shall also be required for rescheduling of a Contest.
6. When a Coach has been disqualified from a Contest but fails to leave the vicinity of the competition area, resulting in the termination of the Contest, the Contest shall be forfeited to the opponent.
7. Except as otherwise provided in "Forfeiture of Contests", provisions of the official rules for sports in which PIAA member schools participate, which relate to forfeits of Contests, shall apply according to their terms.
8. ARTICLE XII, ATHLETIC RELATIONS, Section 5B, Temporary Closure of School, of the PIAA By-Laws, governs situations in which schools are closed, and Procedures During Strikes (set forth in the PIAA Policies and Procedures) governs situations in which a school is affected by a professional labor dispute.

The following should also be noted in connection with the forfeiture of Contests:

1. ARTICLE XII, ATHLETIC RELATIONS, Section 3, Requirements of Written Contract, of the PIAA By-Laws, requires that, except where scheduling is done by or pursuant to the authority of the District Committee, all schools must enter into either paper or electronic contracts for all Contests in which they participate. All contracts shall be on the official contract form entitled "Contract for Contests Under PIAA Rules", or an equivalent electronic version thereof. Where the opponent is not a member of PIAA, the school shall also enter into a supplement to either a paper or an electronic contract on the official form entitled "Supplement to Contract for Contests Under PIAA Rules Involving Non-PIAA Member Schools", or an equivalent electronic version thereof. Disputes arising from oral agreements will not be considered by PIAA, and the foregoing rules governing "Forfeiture of Contests" shall not apply under such circumstances.
2. ARTICLE XIII, PENALTIES, Section 3, Forfeiture of Contests, of the PIAA By-Laws, which provides for forfeiture of Contests under certain circumstances, is not affected by the foregoing.
3. A Team must be accompanied and supervised by a Coach from the member school that the Team is representing. ARTICLE XIV, COACHES, Section 1, Who May Coach, of the PIAA By-Laws, relevantly provides that a Coach is a person (including volunteer high school alumni, professional athletes, and citizens of the community) engaged, either for an entire season or any part thereof, by a school to provide Coaching to a Team. If a disqualification and ejection of a Coach leaves a Team without supervision by a Coach approved by both the Principal and the Athletic Director, the Contest shall be forfeited to that Team's opponent.