

SOFTBALL



2023-2024 AACPS Sport Bulletin

As needed, in consultation with schools and sport commissioners, AACPS Athletics reserves the right to make adjustments to this bulletin.

Coach Responsibilities

1. Adhere to all policies, procedures, rules and regulations in the AACPS Athletic Handbook.
2. Adhere to all policies, procedures, rules and regulations in this AACPS Bulletin.
3. Adhere to all policies, procedures, rules and regulations MPSSAA Handbook.
4. Adhere to all policies, procedures, rules and regulations in the MPSSAA Bulletin.
<https://www.mpssaa.org/information-center/mpssaa-publications-and-content/>
5. Adhere to all policies, procedures, rules and regulations in the appropriate NFHS rule book.
Rule Changes for all applicable sports available at:
<https://www.nfhs.org/sports-resource-content/softball-rules-changes-2024/>
MPSSAA rule clinic courses for baseball, softball, lacrosse, track & field
<https://nfhslearn.com/courses/maryland-rules-clinic-2023-2024>
6. Participate in Coaches All- County Selection process. It is the responsibility of the head coaches of each sport to determine the process for their all county selections. It is recommended that a head coach or two from around the county volunteer to take the lead in organizing and facilitating the Coaches All-County. An agreed upon process should be communicated to all schools in writing before the season starts. End of season communications and/or a meeting (in-person or virtual) should be used to implement the agreed upon process.

Notes:

- a. *AACPS Athletics does not sponsor or provide oversight for the Coaches All-County selection process.*
- b. *Sport Commissioners may help to facilitate the date, time, and location of an end-of-season meeting for this purpose. They may attend for note taking, questions, and general support. However, they will not lead, control, or provide oversight on the process.*

Contact Information

1. Questions should initially be directed to local school athletic directors.
2. Then, questions should be directed to:
 - a. Sport Commissioner - Kenny Miller, Northeast, kfmiller@aacps.org 410-271-3127
 - b. District V Representative - Tim Williams, South River, tdwilliams@aacps.org 410-507-0039
 - c. AACPS Office of Athletics 410-222-5463
3. Regional Tournament Directors:
<https://www.mpssaa.org/state-championships/softball/softball-state-committee-and-regional-directors/>

Classifications

4A		3A	2A
<u>East Region I</u>	<u>East Region II</u>	<u>East Region I</u>	<u>West Region II</u>
Glen Burnie	Annapolis	Chesapeake	Southern
Meade	Broadneck	Northeast	Centennial
North County	North Point	Arundel	Hammond
Old Mill	Leonardtown	Severna Park	Wilde Lake
Crofton	Bowie	South River	Damascus
	Suitland	JM Bennett	Poolesville

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Important Dates

February 2024

- February 15 - Spring Coach Kickoff (North County HS)

March 2024

- March 1 - Sports start; Academic Assistance Sessions begin
- March 2 - Testing Date - Nothing mandatory before 2pm
- March 7 - AACPS 1st scrimmage date
- March 9 - Testing Date - Nothing mandatory before 2pm
- March 19 - 2hr early dismissal - PD Unity Day. With approval from the AD and principal, teams with paid, non-AACPS employee coaches may practice during established teacher work hours.
- March 20 - Academic Assistance Sessions end and Grade Check
- March 21 - MPSSAA First play date and Eligibility Rosters due (ADs)
- Mar 25 - Apr 1 - Spring Break - All Schools & Central Offices closed

April 2024

- Mar 25 - Apr 1 - Spring Break - All Schools & Central Offices closed
- April 4-5 - 2hr early dismissals - end of 3MP. With approval from the AD and principal, teams with paid, non-AACPS employee coaches may practice during established teacher work hours.
- April 6 - Testing date; Nothing mandatory before 2pm
- April 8 - Beginning of 4th MP
- April 9 - Eid al-Fitr - No Athletics after sundown
- April 10 - Eid al-Fitr Schools closed - No Athletics at all
- April 13 - Testing date - Nothing mandatory before 2pm
- Week of April 15 - MPSSAA Officials Appreciation
- April 18 - 3rd MP report cards (tentative)

May 2024

- May 2 - Unified Bocce County Championship (NC)
- May 4 - Testing Date- No mandatory practice or contests before 2pm
- May 6 - Lacrosse County Championship (GB)
- May 7 - Baseball County Championship (Joe Cannon) & Softball County Championship (Bachman)
- May 8-9 - Outdoor Track County Championship (CR)
- May 7-10 - Tennis County Championship (AN)
- May 14 - Primary Election Day (follow AACPS Election Day Guidelines)
- May 23 - Last day for Seniors
- May 27 - Memorial Day

Contests

- Scrimmages:
 - 3 preseason scrimmages allowed
 - Teams are allowed one postseason scrimmage (in between last game and first playoff game)
- MPSSAA Season Limitations:
 - 18 contests or 20 with designated optional tournament;
 - No more than three games per week;

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- A team may elect to play in a designated optional three-game tournament, only 17 regular season games may be scheduled; and
- If a team elects to play in the designated optional two or three-game tournament, a fourth game may be played during that week
- AACPS Scheduling Scheme:
 - The base county schedule provides all schools with 13 or 14 games. Each school plays every other school once and has 1 or 2 additional crossover games.
- AACPS Contest Procedures:
 - AACPS county games are scheduled to start at 4:45 pm.
 - When possible, JV contests that end in a tie after regulation will play extra innings until a winner is determined.
 - In alignment with the MPSSAA bulletin, each team will be given a minimum of 20 minutes of on-field warmup time, with the home team typically going first and the visiting team typically going second. The visiting team's on-field warmup should end by 4:40, to allow time for the pregame meeting at the plate and any other logistics. Teams may use their 20 minutes how they see fit.
 - Each school's location in the county, transportation services, and facility situations are different. With that in mind, for away games schools may - at their discretion with admin approval - leave school early to ensure they arrive in time to get to the field and warmup. In those cases, efforts should be made to minimize the disruption and impact on academic time as much as possible.
 - Who can be in the dugout? Only contracted coaches, student-athletes, and designated team managers can be in the dugout. Parents/spectators who are assisting with scorekeeping or other volunteer activities must be positioned outside the dugout area.
 - Music. Visiting teams are not permitted to play music with portable/rolling speakers or other devices while visiting away sites.
 - Darkness/Weather/Postponements
 - Officials may end games due to darkness. In those cases, we will use the NFHS rules, as stated here. Due to the nature of our schedules, we will not bring schools back together to finish games that have met these rule standards.
 - *Softball NFHS Rule 4-2 Art. 2: If a game ends because of weather conditions, or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game provided: a) five full innings have been played; or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in four or four and a fraction turns at bat than the visiting team has scored in five turns. b) play has gone beyond five full innings and is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turns at bat. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team, in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.*
 - Incomplete contests postponed due to weather should be made up the following day whenever possible. Specifically, such postponed contests take precedence over any other preemptive plans for adjustments to future contests schools may be considering.

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County Championship and Awards

- An in-season county champion will be determined per the guidelines in our handbook on page 78.
- The top two teams from the regular season based on the results of the 12 games identified on the schedule that is maintained by the sport commissioner will play for the County Championship at Bachman on May 7th. Handbook criteria will be used for tie breaks as needed.
- 25 medals per varsity team, County Championship game plaque/Head Coach Plaque
- If tied at the end of seven innings, play extra innings until a winner is determined
- JV County Championship criteria:
A JV player is eligible to participate so long as they have entered no more than two regular season varsity contests (excluding tournaments – they may also play in varsity tournaments)

MPSSAA Playoffs

Note - Every MPSSAA school is automatically entered into the region tournament unless the MPSSAA office receives written notification to the contrary. All schools must adhere to the MPSSAA bulletin.

- **Point of Emphasis: Egregious Ejections:** Any ejection during the state tournament that is classified as egregious now results in a two-game suspension. The MPSSAA has established criteria based on definitions of egregious behavior that will be used during the regional and state tournaments to elevate any ejections under this category to a minimum of two contest disqualification from the current state tournament, next sport season, or the succeeding year's tournament based on the circumstances of the situation (Example of student whose team loses the first round of the next season. Egregious behavior is being defined as:
 - *Fighting*
 - *Physical or verbal personal attacks directed towards an official, coach, student-athlete, spectator, or school personnel*
 - *Use of racial, ethnic, homophobic or other derogatory or discriminatory language, slurs or practices.*
- **Dates:**
MPSSAA championship info
<https://www.mpssaa.org/state-championships/softball/>

○ May 6	Last play date for seeding
○ May 7	Tournament seeding
○ May 8	Last play date
○ May 9	Region Quarterfinal
○ May 13	Region Semifinals
○ May 15	Region Finals
○ May 17-18	State Quarter Final
○ May 21	State Semifinals
○ May 24-25	State Finals

University of Maryland College Park