



IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Football Memo

May 8, 2026

Good afternoon, football coaches and athletic directors –

As we head towards the end of the school year, I want to make sure all are on the same page for the 2026 season.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Family Week is Sunday, July 26 through Sunday, August 2 for all schools and programs.
- The rules meeting goes live on Monday, August 3.
- The first day of practice for all Week 1 playing schools is Monday, August 10 (August 3 for Week 0).
- Schools may scrimmage against other schools on or after Thursday, August 20 (August 13 for Week 0).
- The first competition date is Thursday, August 27 (August 20 for Week 0).
- Junior high practice can begin on Wednesday, August 19.
- Those students who must sit 20 days due to a failing grade regain eligibility on September 9.

The preseason practice schedule can be [found HERE](#).

There are no changes to the preseason schedule from past years. Team weightlifting sessions do not count as stand-alone practices or hours allowed during a practice session. Schools may offer a weightlifting session in the morning and bring athletes back in the afternoon for actual practice. No team weightlifting session can occur on Day 7 (August 16 [Week 0: August 9]) or the day opposite Day 12 of practice (August 22/23 [August 15/16]). Schools have the choice to either practice on Saturday, August 22 or Sunday, August 23; however, schools cannot practice on both days.

SUMMER CONSIDERATIONS

First off, I'd like to thank the schools who completed the summer activity survey that was sent in March. While the recommendation to change summer activities was ultimately denied, the data collected will be used as a reference for future conversations. With that all being said, coaches can have voluntary contact with their athletes on June 1. Prior to that day, high school coaches (paid/volunteer/head/assistant) cannot instruct, diagnose, prescribe, evaluate, assist, or direct student learning within the sport of football. Coaches can supervise open gym workouts. They cannot, however, be leading drills or coaching current 9-12 students in 7-on-7 activities. Non-sport specific strength and conditioning is allowed.

Just a reminder that students can wear helmets in out of season activities, but the student should be renting the helmet from the school district on a per use basis. Finally, during the summer, camps/clinics conducted by school personnel, whether employed or volunteers, must be non-contact with no player wearing more than a helmet and mouthpiece. Practice equipment such as dummies, sleds, ropes, etc., will be allowed for use during football camps/clinics.

PLAYOFF FOOTBALL

We have received a handful of questions about the new Wilson GRT football. Based on our contract with Wilson, schools have the option of using the following Wilson footballs for the playoffs: GST1003, the Omega or GRT.

REPLACEMENT GAMES

As shared earlier this winter, the advisory committee made a recommendation that was approved by our Board of Control regarding dropped games/schedules and schools being able to find replacement games or scrimmages to give kids the opportunity to compete. These replacement games would go down as "no contests" in terms of playoff qualification as the school who lost the opponent will receive a forfeit win and maximum playoff points, if applicable. We now have a link on our website with these replacement games, so schools are aware of what games will not be used for playoff qualifying purposes. <https://www.iahsaa.org/football/football-replacement-games/>

Again, do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions between now and the start of the season.

Jared Chizek