

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

High School Baseball Rules Changes

Focus on Player Safety

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Hopkins

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 3, 2017) — Effective January 1, 2019, all balls used in high school baseball competition shall meet the NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) standard at the time of manufacture.

This revision in Rule 1-3-1 was one of the four changes recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Committee at its June 4-6 meeting in Indianapolis. All changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“We are excited that our membership will now have equipment that meets a standard that is consistent across the country,” said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports and student services and staff liaison for baseball. “We are comfortable knowing that all baseballs for high school play will be the same size, same weight and have similar playability.”

The committee also revised Rule 1-5-3, which will require the catcher to wear a chest protector that meets the NOCSAE standard at the time of manufacture, effective January 1, 2020. The NOCSAE standard has been developed to protect the heart and the cardiac silhouette from commotio cordis, which continues the committee’s focus on minimizing risk of injury for players.

“Being aware that a standard exists to protect players, this decision was easy to make,” Hopkins said. “When our catchers wear this chest protector, we are confident that the best protection for their heart is constructed into this equipment.”

The Baseball Rules Committee also modified Rule 1-3-2a2 regarding the components of a bat. The modified language states that bats “not have exposed rivets, pins, rough or sharp edges or any form of exterior fastener or attachment(s) that would present a potential hazard.”

A modification was also made to Rule 8-2-7, which strikes the language preventing a player who is awarded first base on a base on balls the ability to over-run the base and return safely.

A complete listing of the baseball rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page, and select “Baseball.”

According to the 2015-16 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, there are 488,815 boys participating in baseball at 15,956 schools across the country, and 1,290 girls playing the sport in 254 schools.

This press release was written by Marisa Miller, a 2017 summer intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. She is a junior journalism and English major at Butler University.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 16 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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