

SOFTBALL STANDARDS

Coach Resources and Responsibilities

Coaches are responsible for adhering to and implementing information included in the following resources:

1. Sport-specific MCPS procedures described in the Standards section of the *MCPS High School Athletics Handbook*.
2. General MCPS rules and procedures described in the *MCPS High School Athletics Handbook* and on the MCPS Athletics web page.
3. State rules, regulations, and procedures described in the *MPSSAA Handbook* and the *MPSSAA Spring Tournament Bulletin* located on the MPSSAA website.
4. National rules and procedures described in the appropriate NFHS rules book for a particular sport.

Contact Information

Questions should be directed to the local school athletics specialist first and then to the appropriate MCPS sport director and/or MPSSAA District 2 representative. Contact information is included in the Contact Information section of the *MCPS High School Athletics Handbook*.

Questions regarding region tournaments should be directed to the appropriate region tournament director, as indicated in the *MPSSAA Spring Tournament Bulletin* located on the MPSSAA website.

Scores and results should be reported within 24 hours to the appropriate MCPS sport director and region tournament director.

Divisions

Division alignments are determined every two years, to coincide with MPSSAA reclassification years. Schools will compete in five divisions based primarily on enrollment (state classifications), geography, and MPSSAA region alignments. Teams play all division opponents at least once.

4A SOUTH
Bethesda-Chevy Chase
Richard Montgomery
Walt Whitman
Walter Johnson
Winston Churchill
4A WEST
Clarksburg
Gaithersburg
Northwest
Quince Orchard
Seneca Valley
4A EAST
Montgomery Blair
Northwood
Paint Branch
Springbrook
Wheaton
4A/3A
James Hubert Blake
Albert Einstein
John F. Kennedy
Col. Zadok Magruder
Watkins Mill
3A/2A
Damascus
Poolesville
Rockville
Sherwood
Thomas S. Wootton

There will be a varsity team champion in each division. The champion will be the school with the best win/loss record against division opponents. If a school plays another school in its division twice, only the second game will count towards the division title. In the event of a tie, the team that has

defeated the team(s) with which it is tied will be the champion. If there is still a tie, there will be co-champions. Each division champion will receive a trophy.

Restricted Dates for Practices and Contests

See Restricted Dates in the Calendar/Dates section of this handbook regarding restrictions on practices, two-a-day practices, contests, and meetings.

Practices/Scrimmages

1. Practice begins March 1, 2024.
2. The first scrimmage with another school may be held on the fourth day of practice. Scrimmages may only be conducted in accordance with MCPS and MPSSAA rules and regulations.
3. Coaches may hold morning practice for pitchers and catchers prior to the first game.

Contests

1. The first playdate for MPSSAA schools is March 21, 2024.
2. Games must be scheduled according to MPSSAA regulations.
3. If games are postponed because of inclement weather, one additional game may be scheduled that week with the approval of the athletics specialist. Doubleheaders may be played on Fridays or non-school days.
4. Postponed games shall be made up on the next available play date and rescheduled in accordance with state regulations.
5. The home school must notify the visiting school if there is a time change or if a game is to be played somewhere other than the school field. Permission to adjust times or game

locations must be obtained from the director of systemwide athletics, or designee.

6. Preparation of fields for games is the responsibility of the home team. Both teams will warm-up on the entire field for twenty (20) minutes. The visiting team will warm-up first.
7. A suspended game must be played from the point at which it was stopped unless it can be ruled an "official game" according to NFHS rules.
8. Game scores are to be reported to the sport director, region tournament director, and County Sports Zone immediately after each game.

Playing Rules

1. All scheduled games will be governed by NFHS rules except as amended by the MPSSAA and included in the *MPSSAA Spring Tournament Bulletin*.
2. Two spikes must be used with floating bases. Hollywood bases may be used.
3. Junior varsity teams will bat a maximum of 9 batters each inning. Runners left on base or their substitutes will resume their place on base in the subsequent inning. This rule applies through the sixth inning. A coach may decide to suspend the stipulation that his or her players resume their place on base in the subsequent inning for the remainder of the game.
4. The recommended minimum team size for junior varsity and varsity softball is 13.
5. In JV contests, a new inning will not start after two hours from the start of the game (the start of the game is defined as immediately following the pre-game conference).