



2026-27

NORTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

NORTH DAKOTA MODIFICATIONS

Football

1. Free Blocking Zone
 - a. The free blocking zone in North Dakota is limited to the center and two players on either side of the center for 11 man football, and the center and one player on either side of the center for 9 man games. As long as all free blocking zone criteria are met these players would be able to block below the waist on initial movement.
2. Music played between plays
 - a. In NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) high school football, music played by bands or through sound systems is generally allowed during stoppages, but not during live-ball situations (which includes in-between plays). If music interferes with play or communication, a warning is issued, and a second offense can result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against the offending team.
3. Mercy Rule
 - a. When the point differential reaches 30 points or more in the 2nd half, the clock will go to running time. While the mercy rule is in effect, the clock will be stopped only for TIPS events – T(team time outs), I(injuries), P(penalties) or S(scores). Regular timing rules will be used if the point differential drops back to less than 30 points. **Note:** Rule 3-1-3 remains in effect – this allows the game to be shortened or terminated at any time, by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee.
4. Overtime
 - a. Both 9 and 11 player: If at the end of the fourth period, the teams have identical scores, the tie will be resolved using the “10-yard” overtime procedure as outlined in the NFHS Rules Book. In situations where penalty enforcement would call for 1st and 10, the line-to-gain equipment will be used.
 - i. If the start of either possession in overtime is influenced by pre-possession penalties, where first and goal is greater than ten yards, the line -to-gain equipment will be used.