



South Central Conference Junior Football League

Official Rules & Regulations

Ratified January 18, 2026

It is our purpose to promote safe healthy competition, fair play, sportsmanship, physical and mental excellence, a better understanding, and love of the game of football. It is by our example and encouragement that we can best reach these goals. It is our objective to field teams as much as possible, that are comparable in size, age and ability.

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SECTION 1 — League Information

Providing Junior Football Opportunities to Children in the 5th through 8th Grades Only from the Communities of Greenville, Hillsboro, Litchfield, Vandalia, Carlinville, Gillespie, Staunton, Pana, Southwestern, and North Mac. The rules of the IHSA apply except for the detailed differences within this rule book.

Handheld communication devices are not allowed on the field (sidelines or playing field) for coaching purposes. Penalty of usage of communication devices for purposes of coaching will be forfeit of game.

SECTION 2 — League Governance

Discipline

Good sportsmanship and fair play will be demanded by the SCCJFL. Profanity and dirty play, i.e. Punching, Kicking, etc. will not be tolerated. Players or coaches found guilty of these activities will be subject to discipline by the SCCJFL. If a complaint is registered it will be investigated by the Board of Directors (President, Vice President and Secretary) and then brought forward to the SCCJFL directors for a vote. Film of the incident may be required. Those being disciplined will be notified by mail. Players or coaches who are ejected from a game shall not be allowed to participate in the next game. For discipline to be implemented it requires 2/3 majority vote yes. If discipline involves removal of following game, the coach / player cannot attend following weeks games (all games for that day).

SECTION 3 — Player Eligibility

Participants shall consist of individuals in the 5th through 8th grades Only, which will not turn (8th Grade 15 years), (7th Grade 14 years), (6th Grade 13 years), and (5th Grade 12 years) prior to Sept 1st of the season in which they desire to play. Participants are only eligible to play for 4 years in the SCCJFL. Only 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders are eligible to participate. Also, players are only eligible to participate within a grade classification for one year. 4th graders playing up can only play 2 years of 5th grade only. Players must play in the grade that they are currently in at school other than the situation described below.

Per IHSA rules players must play within the communities where they attend school. This does not apply to players where their community does not provide a football program for their age group or school sponsored program. If a player is in a situation where they move after the start of the season, the player has the option to finish the year on the team they started with or with the team where they now live. However, the player must play the following with the team where they attend school.

For example, if player plays on 6th grade team and then is either held back or fails the 6th grade school year, this player must participate on the 7th grade SCCJFL team the following year and must participate on the 8th grade SCCJFL team the year after that. The player would not be eligible to play their 8th grade season. Therefore, applying the rule of being eligible for four years of play.

Another example would be if a player only played one year as an 8th grader and either was held back or failed eighth grade; they would not be eligible to play the following season.

Participants are required to:

Have an athletic physical dated after October 1st of the year of participation.

Be covered by some insurance program, show proof of insurance and complete insurance waiver form.

Be outfitted with football equipment that meets current standards.

Have a birth certificate verifying date of birth.

SECTION 4 — Team Organization

Teams for SCCJFL play are divided into 4 classifications for league play as follows 8th Grade, 7th Grade, 6th Grade, and 5th Grade. It is realized that every town / team will have years when they may not have enough players in one level to make a complete team and would need to bring players up to complete a roster for 4 classifications.

Teams will be allowed to bring players up to complete 8th grade. If agreed to by town directors, players will be allowed to play down (to fill a fifth-grade team roster) or up (to fill all other team rosters). Teams can only bring up the required number of players to fill a 22-player roster.

If an organization combines grades due to low numbers and elects to play half games, both games will be forfeited for the combined team. Ex. Team has a combined 5th and 6th team and asks to play the first half 5th and the second half 6th. Both games would be forfeited for the combined team.

Coaches are required to play healthy eligible players within the age classification prior to utilizing players from another age classification. An agreement must be made by the respected town directors and coaches for the game in question prior to the beginning of the game.

SECTION 5 — Weight Rules & Weigh-Ins

Team participants remain as follows (There will be a 2 lb scale variance allowed by all participating teams):

8th grade (155 lbs limit on running backs, receivers, and quarterbacks)

7th grade (140 lbs limit on running backs, receivers, and quarterbacks)

6th grade (125 lbs limit on running backs, receivers, and quarterbacks)

5th grade (110 lbs limit on running backs, receivers, and quarterbacks)

Weigh-ins are 15 minutes prior to start of the game, then at half time for the following games. All skill position players must be weighed in. Players must present game jersey at weigh-in and bring helmet. Coaches must provide team rosters to each town director prior to beginning of each game, which shall include name, weight and jersey number. If a player has not weighed in by the start of their game, that player may not play a skill position. If a player who has not been weighed plays in a skill position at any time during that game, the coach will be ejected immediately for the remainder of that game, and the player will not be allowed to play any skill position for that game.

No striped player will be allowed to punt. They can never be put in a position to offensively advance the ball.

Medical Grade Scales must be used for weigh-in. No bathroom scales will be allowed.

All players not in the front row of kick return team must be within the weight limitations. If ball is kicked past front row of kick return team, the front row players cannot advance the football if the front row players are striped players. Striped players must be within 5 yards of the line on all punt returns.

It is agreed that any defensive player that may perform any defensive take away e.g., fumble recovery, interception, etc. will be allowed to advance the ball until stopped by the opposing team. Any player in the front row of the kickoff team who receives an errant kick off will also be allowed to return / advance the ball as if a takeaway possession.

SECTION 6 — Game Administration

One coach will be allowed on the field during the 5th, 6th, and 7th grade games to help set up the offense and defense. His verbal and physical help shall not continue after the center is over the ball of during the running of any play. No coach will be allowed on the field during the 8th grade games. On field coaches shall refrain from disputing official's calls. They are on the field to coach only. Interference by the on-field coach during the running of a play shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct (15 Yards). Per IHSA rules, if coach is removed by official, the coach is not allowed for the remaining games that day or the following week's games. If coach is present at following week's game the team must forfeit that game.

Time for Saturday Games

8th Games will consist of Four 10 Minute quarters.

7th Games will consist of Four 10 Minute quarters.

6th Games will consist of Four 15 Minute rolling quarters.

5th games will consist of Four 15 Minute rolling quarters.

Game times should be 10 a.m. (5th & 6th Grade), 11:30a.m. (7th Grade) and 1:30 p.m. (8th Grade). These times may be adjusted accordingly with home team needs. Any changes to these times must be coordinated between the town directors for the affected teams. Each Team will have thirty seconds to call and initiate the next play from scrimmage. Clock will be stopped in accordance with IHSA rules. Half time of each game will last 5 minutes for 5th and 6th games and 10 minutes for 7th and 8th games. Teams who play in the next game should begin warm up prior to their scheduled games. As time between games will be 10 minutes. In the event a team is 24 points or more ahead at half time or anytime during the second half, the clock will run continuously in the second half, stopping only for time outs, touch downs and injuries.

If games are rained out on Saturday's, the games are automatically rescheduled for Sundays with the understanding that games can be made up by Tuesday of that week's games. Make up games can also be completed during the open week at the end of the season.

Following footballs are to be used:

5th Grade K2 7th Grade TDJ

6th Grade TDJ 8th Grade TDY

At least one certified official is required for all games. It is understood that 48 hours notification that all attempts to acquire a certified official have failed with nullify this rule.

Game admittance fee is as follows: \$4.00 adults and \$3.00 students.

SECTION 7 — Playing Rules

Time Outs

Each team will receive three-time outs per half lasting forty-five seconds in duration.

Rules / Considerations

Kickoffs will be live in 7th and 8th grades with kickoff occurring from the 40-yard line. Punts will be live with rush in 8th grade only. Punts in 7th grade will be dead ball punts with the defensive line standing with outreached hands on the line of scrimmage (not allowed to jump) with no rush. The punt is not live and if the snap is bad the punter will be allowed to retrieve the ball and return to his mark to kick away (without any rush). Once the ball is punted it will be considered down where it is received or comes to rest or goes out of play. The receiving team must make every possible effort to receive the ball and may not snap the ball forward. If the receiver errors in the attempt to catch the ball, it will be marked down on the spot where the ball comes in contact with the player. Kicking Team may not proceed down the field with the kick. All punts, except for 8th grade, may not exceed the opponent's 20-yard line.

On 7th grade punts, only 2 players may fall back to receive punt.

8th and 7th grade Extra Point / Field Goal kicks will be attempted live. There will be no fakes allowed and if the snap is bad the play will be considered a failed PAT / Field Goal. Kickers are allowed 3 yards to approach the kick. Extra point conversion (non-Kick) will be live on all 4 levels with successful attempt worth 2 points. (e.g., Run or pass play). A striped player must be within 5 yards of the line on all punt returns.

In the event a team is up by a 24-point margin, at any point, the winning team will be forced to punt on 4th down. There will be no rush and the play is not live until the ball leaves the punter's foot.

40-point mercy rule ends the game at halftime or anytime in the second half.

All other rules will follow IHSA rules.

Rules may be modified, deleted or added. A vote of 2/3 majority in favor of change is needed. (One town. One vote)

Offensive formations:

Offensive teams at all grade levels shall have a minimum of 6 players who make the weight limit for ball handlers. Offensive formation must have players in their position from tackle to tackle. Tackle to tackle must be within arms length. Must have guard and tackle on both sides of center. Tackles must be covered on both sides. Any player who lines up within the tackle-to-tackle positions, is not eligible to carry the football regardless of their weight (striped player). Penalty for illegal formation is 15 yards. Examples of legal formations are:

TE T G C G T TE

O O O X O O O

O O

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O O

Example of Illegal formation:

TE G C G T T TE
O O X O O O O
O O
O O

All town directors will choose which sidelines the chain gang shall be on.

Overtime will be the same as IHSA. The ball is placed on the 10-yard line, and each team will get four (4) downs to try and end the tie. 5th and 6th will get 4 downs from the 10-yard line. If it's still a tie, they will go to the 2-point conversion line with one try alternating possessions until there is a winner with each team getting a chance to score. Games should never end in a tie. For further details please refer to the IHSA Rule Book.

All coaches or directors will either call or email weekly scores for all games to the South Central JFL Secretary no later than the Monday following the games.

All rosters need to be given to the Athletic Director before the beginning of the first game.

If a skill position player has not been weighed by the beginning of their game, they will not be allowed to play in a skill position for that game. If they are put in to play a skill position without being weighed, the coach will be immediately ejected from that game, and the player will not be allowed to play in that skill position for that game.

7th grade field goals and extra points will be played the same as the 8th grade, and these will be considered a live ball. However, if the snap is bad and a player must move from their stance in order to retrieve the ball, the ball is considered "dead". Punts will remain the same as they have been in the past.

The following special game rules are contained within the adopted playing rules and are retained here for quick reference:

- Running clock after a 24-point lead in the second half.
- 40-point mercy rule ends the game at halftime or anytime during the second half.
- Overtime procedures for all grade levels.

- All face masks are 15 yards.

- Head tackles are 15 yards.
- Horse Collar tackles are not legal. If a player conducts a horse tackle the penalty is 15 yards.
- Crack Back Blocks are 15 yards.

SECTION 8 — 5th & 6th Grade Quick Reference

Rules for 5th and 6th Grade Jamboree 2016

4-15-minute rolling quarters and 2 timeouts per half. The only time the clock will stop is if there is a timeout or touchdown in the last 2 minutes of the 2nd and 4th quarter and if there is a major injury on the field. (Ex. The clock will not stop when a time out is taken outside of the last 2 minutes of each half) With time potentially differing between the 5th and 6th grade in the last 2 minutes of each half, the head official will keep 5th grade time unless each game has a scoreboard.

Coin flip still applies to see who gets the ball first. The ball will be placed on the 40-yard line going toward the goal.

All other football rules will apply. Ex. You can get a first down after ten yards.

You must go for it on 4th down since there are no punts. If at anytime a team is up by 24 points, the winning team will turn the ball over after 3 downs.

40 point mercy rule ends the game at halftime or anytime in the second half.

If the offense would happen to turn the ball over. The play is dead immediately and the opposing team will start from the 40-yard line.

If there is a penalty that occurs within the first 10 yards going toward in, we will treat this like we are going into the in zone. It will be half the distance back toward the 40 yards. If the penalty is a loss of down that that applies, if it is a penalty that is replay of the down than that applies. If ball is still on the 40 and penalty cannot be accessed, it will be a loss of down. Under no circumstance does the ball ever cross the 40 yard headed in the other direction.

We are still going to run at least 3 man officiating crews. The 5th grade will have one official and the 6th grade will have two. It will be up to each school if they would like to have a coach help spot the ball in the 5th grade game.

SECTION 9 — League Officers & Representatives

Ratified Date; 01/18/2026

Board

President; Ron Anglin

Vice President; Neal Owens

Secretary; Cody Younker

Program Representatives

Carlinville; Craig Reed

Gillespie; Jerrod Herron

Greenville; BJ Wittig

Hillsboro; Alex Holtschulte

Litchfield; Cody Younker

North Mac; Brett Vanhuss

Pana; Ron Sims

Southwestern; Neal Owens

Staunton; Mike Brown

Vandalia; Joe Kirk

Let us all strive to work together for the children that have put their faith in us to be adult leaders. Let us help them learn about football, team sports, attitudes, and winning. Let us all work together to make the SCCJFL a showcase for young athletes.

Rule changes that were ratified at Directors meeting on 01/18/2026

If an organization combines grades due to low numbers and elects to play half games, both games will be forfeited for the combined team. Ex. Team has a combined 5th and 6th team and asks to play the first half 5th and the second half 6th. Both games would be forfeited for the combined team.

In the event a team is up by a 24-point margin, at any point, the winning team will be forced to punt on 4th down. There will be no rush, and the play is not live until the ball leaves the punter's foot.

40-point mercy rule ends the game at halftime or anytime in the second half.

5TH/6TH

If at any time a team is up by 24 points, the winning team will turn the ball over after 3 downs.

40-point mercy rule ends the game at halftime or anytime in the second half.

Board and Director changes

Cody Younker – Secretary
Ron Sims – Pana Director