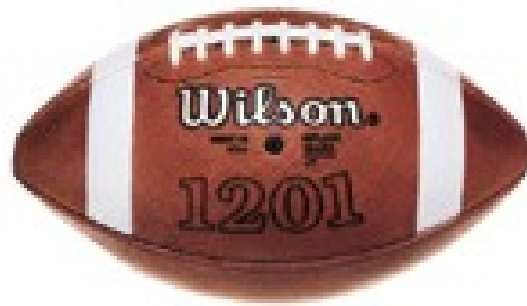


THE 2009 SOUTHWEST METRO LEAGUE FOOTBALL PLAYBOOK



Bloomington Football Association
Chaska Area Football Association
Eden Prairie Football Association
Edina Football Association

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SOUTHWEST METRO LEAGUE	3
FOOTBALL SIZES	3
WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS	4
FOURTH GRADE RULES	5
FIFTH GRADE RULES	6
SIXTH GRADE RULES	7
SEVENTH GRADE RULES	8
EIGHTH GRADE RULES	9
OFFENSE	11
DEFENSE	13
PUNT FORMATION	14
PUNT RETURN FORMATION	14
KICKOFF and KICKOFF RETURNS	14

SOUTHWEST METRO LEAGUE

The Southwest Metro League consists of football programs from

- Bloomington (5th-7th SWML)
- Chaska (4th-8th SWML)
- Eden Prairie (4th-8th SWML)
- Edina (7th-8th SWML)

The primary purpose of the inter-city program is to provide a learning experience for both football skills and sportsmanship. It is our hope that our coaches and parents will not only teach this to the children but also practice it during the games. Although we make an attempt to instruct the officials in “our rules,” they cannot be expected to understand all of the differences between our rules and high school rules. The only way it can work is that we all understand and follow the rules.

In addition, we must remember that the primary objective is not to win at all costs. All teams have players of varying abilities. Coaches must ensure that each player has a starting position on offense or defense for the game. Each player should play at least a minimum of 50% of the game. 50% minimum playing time of games is defined as each player has:

- a. One starting position on defense during one half.
- b. One starting position on offense during the opposite half.
- c. He should play that side of the ball during the relative half as much as possible except for disciplinary reasons.
- d. Special teams play does not count towards minimum playing time

Other specific playing time requirements, if any, will be determined by the grade level commissioners, and communicated to their coaches. Problems with playing time should be addressed with the grade level commissioner.

A coach may sit a player down for disciplinary reasons or call a player over to the sidelines for some coaching.

Situational substitutions are not allowed. A situational substitution is defined as bringing in a player or players to improve a team’s chances of stopping a score or first down or to pick up a first down or a score on the offensive side of the ball. Exceptions to this rule are kickers, punters and long snappers and injuries.

Teams will play 15-minute running quarters with the stop time rules being used during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will also be stopped for injuries and immediately after a score. Extra points will not be run against the game clock. Time is stopped until the ensuing kickoff. The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules.

FOOTBALL SIZES

3rd Grade plays with “Pee Wee” Size

4th -7th Grade plays with “Youth” Size (old 100 size)

8th Grade plays with “Junior” Size (old 200 size)

Each offense may use its own football as long as it is an official size and inflated to standard high school rules. If multiple balls are being used in a game, the kicking team must kickoff with opposition’s football.

WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Weights are determined at equipment pickup and weigh-in.

Ball Carrying Players (no stripes): Any player who weighs less than or equal to these weights will be called “Ball Carrying” players which can line up in a position to carry or receive the football (running backs, quarterbacks, flankers and ends). They can also play ANY position on defense.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Weight</u>
4	Under 85 lbs
5	Under 95 lbs
6	Under 110 lbs
7	Under 132 lbs
8	Under 148 lbs

Designated Players (Single Stripers): Players within these weight limits will be called “Designated Players”. These players may not carry the ball or line up in a backfield position, e.g., as a blocking back, at any time during the game. They can play ANY position on defense. Designated players may advance a fumble or an interception, but may NOT advance a punt or kickoff.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Weight</u>
4	85 lbs to 109 lbs
5	95 lbs to 124 lbs
6	110 lbs to 144 lbs
7	132 lbs to 171 lbs
8	148 lbs to 187 lbs

Restricted Players (Double stripers): Players greater than these weights will be called Restricted Players can ONLY play center, offensive guard, offensive tackle or defensive guard, defensive tackle or nose guard (in 5-4 defense only).). Restricted players may NOT advance a fumble or interception or kickoff or a punt. The ball will be “down” at the spot where the Restricted Player obtains possession of the ball.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Weight</u>
4	Over 109 lbs
5	Over 124 lbs
6	Over 144 lbs
7	Over 171 lbs
8	Over 187 lbs

Designated and Restricted Players must be identified by the appropriate number of stripes being placed horizontally above the ear holes on the helmet. Stripes must be a minimum of 3 inches in length and clearly visible from the sidelines. Please use a dark colored tape on white helmets.

FOURTH GRADE RULES

Games will be officiated according to high school rules with the exception of the following modifications:

- One coach for the offense and one coach for the defense can be in the huddle and on the field during the plays. Once the ball is snapped, they cannot yell any instructions to the players.
- A no-huddle offense is not allowed unless it is in the last two minutes of either half.
- Teams will play 15-minute running quarters with the stop time rules being used during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will also be stopped for injuries and immediately after a score. Extra points will not be run against the game clock. Time is stopped until the ensuing kickoff. The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules.
- Each team will be allotted three time-outs per half.
- “Designated Players” may not line up in the backfield or carry the ball, receive a pass, or return a punt at any time during the game. If they catch a short punt, the ball is dead at that spot. However, a “Designated Player” may advance a fumble or interception.
- Teams do not rush the punter. The offensive team must announce that they are going to punt (no fakes allowed). They cannot rush the punter or leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The punter may take the ball from the center in any manner. Even if the ball is dropped, the punter may pick it up and punt the ball. The Punter must punt the ball between the tackles positions. Punt coverage cannot take place until the ball is kicked.
- “Designated Players” may punt the ball.
- A PAT which is run will be awarded 1 point. One which is thrown is worth 2 points.
 - If a ball is thrown into the end zone and caught by an eligible receiver, it's a 2 point conversion.
 - If the ball is thrown to the flat and caught by a RB, even behind the line of scrimmage, and run in, it would still be counted as pass receiving yardage and is therefore a 2 point conversion.
 - If a ball is thrown to a WR and lateralled to a RB (as in a hook and ladder play), it would be tabulated as rushing yardage by HS, college and Pros, and is therefore a 1 point conversion.
- Ties are decided by each team trying to score from the ten yard line. Each team gets four plays to score. The second team gets four plays to score, even if the first team scores on its first play. If a team scores, they also try an extra point from the three yard line. If a team loses possession of the ball, they cannot run any further plays. The team with the highest score wins the tiebreaker. If both teams are tied after one overtime, the game ends in a tie.
- QB sneaks. This is defined as taking the snap directly from underneath center and attempting to run behind the center or the guards.
 - There is NO QB sneak when the distance to a first down or goal line is 3 yards or less.
 - Taking the snap in a shotgun formation and running it DOES NOT constitute a QB sneak.
 - The rule is in place because the defense is restricted by the 3 yard linebacker rule.
- Only a 6-3 defense is allowed.
- Linebackers must be 3 yards off the line and defensive backs 8 yards off the line.
- Field size. Fourth grade plays on 80 yard fields. The maximum penalty is 10 yards.

FIFTH GRADE RULES

Games will be officiated according to high school rules with the exception of the following modifications:

- One coach for the offense and one coach for the defense can be in the huddle and on the field during the plays. Once the ball is snapped, they cannot yell any instructions to the players.
- A no-huddle offense is not allowed unless it is in the last two minutes of either half.
- Teams will play 15-minute running quarters with the stop time rules being used during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will also be stopped for injuries and immediately after a score. Extra points will not be run against the game clock. Time is stopped until the ensuing kickoff. The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules..
- “Designated Players” may not line up in the backfield or carry the ball, receive a pass, or return a punt at any time during the game. If they catch a short punt, the ball is dead at that spot. However, a “Designated Player” may advance a fumble or interception.
- Teams do not rush the punter. The offensive team must announce that they are going to punt (no fakes allowed). They cannot rush the punter or leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The punter may take the ball from the center in any manner. Even if the ball is dropped, the punter may pick it up and punt the ball. The Punter must punt the ball between the tackles positions. Punt coverage cannot take place until the ball is kicked.
- “Designated Players” may punt the ball.
- A PAT which is run will be awarded 1 point. One which is thrown is worth 2 points.
 - If a ball is thrown into the end zone and caught by an eligible receiver, it's a 2 point conversion.
 - If the ball is thrown to the flat and caught by a RB, even behind the line of scrimmage, and run in, it would still be counted as pass receiving yardage and is therefore a 2 point conversion.
 - If a ball is thrown to a WR and lateralled to a RB (as in a hook and ladder play), it would be tabulated as rushing yardage by HS, college and Pros, and is therefore a 1 point conversion.
- Ties are decided by each team trying to score from the ten yard line. Each team gets four plays to score. The second team gets four plays to score, even if the first team scores on its first play. If a team scores, they also try an extra point from the three yard line. If a team loses possession of the ball, they cannot run any further plays. The team with the highest score wins the tiebreaker. If both teams are tied after one overtime, the game ends in a tie.
- QB sneaks. This is defined as taking the snap directly from underneath center and attempting to run behind the center or the guards.
 - There is NO QB sneak when the distance to a first down or goal line is 3 yards or less .
 - Taking the snap in a shotgun formation and running it DOES NOT constitute a QB sneak
 - The rule is in place because the defense is restricted by the 3 yard linebacker rule.
- Only a 6-3 defense is allowed.
- Linebackers must be 3 yards off the line and defensive backs 8 yards off the line.
- Field size. Fifth grade plays on 80 yard fields. The maximum penalty is 10 yards.

SIXTH GRADE RULES

Games will be officiated according to high school rules with the exception of the following modifications:

- Coaches can come onto the field only during time-outs.
- A no-huddle offense is not allowed unless it is in the last two minutes of either half.
- Teams will play 15-minute running quarters with the stop time rules being used during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will also be stopped for injuries and immediately after a score. Extra points will not be run against the game clock. Time is stopped until the ensuing kickoff. The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules..
- Each team will be allotted three time-outs per half.
- “Designated Players” may not line up in the backfield or carry the ball, receive a pass, or return a punt at any time during the game. If they catch a short punt, the ball is dead at that spot. However, a “Designated Player” may advance a fumble or interception.
- Teams do not rush the punter. The offensive team must announce that they are going to punt (no fakes allowed). They cannot rush the punter or leave the line of scrimmage until the ball is punted. The punter may take the ball from the center in any manner. Even if the ball is dropped, the punter may pick it up and punt the ball. The Punter must punt the ball between the tackles positions. Punt coverage cannot take place until the ball is kicked.
- “Designated Players” may punt the ball.
- A PAT which is run will be awarded 1 point. One which is thrown is worth 2 points.
 - If a ball is thrown into the end zone and caught by an eligible receiver, it's a 2 point conversion.
 - If the ball is thrown to the flat and caught by a RB, even behind the line of scrimmage, and run in, it would still be counted as pass receiving yardage and is therefore a 2 point conversion.
 - If a ball is thrown to a WR and lateraled to a RB (as in a hook and ladder play), it would be tabulated as rushing yardage by HS, college and Pros, and is therefore a 1 point conversion.
- Ties are decided by each team trying to score from the ten yard line. Each team gets four plays to score. The second team gets four plays to score, even if the first team scores on its first play. If a team scores, they also try an extra point from the three yard line. If a team loses possession of the ball, they cannot run any further plays. The team with the highest score wins the tiebreaker. If both teams are tied after one overtime, the game ends in a tie.
- QB sneaks. This is defined as taking the snap directly from underneath center and attempting to run behind the center or the guards.
 - There is NO QB sneak when the distance to the goal line is 3 yards or less QB sneak is allowed anywhere else on the field at ANY time.
 - Taking the snap in a shotgun formation and running it DOES NOT constitute a QB sneak
 - The rule is in place because the defense is restricted by the 3 yard linebacker rule.
- Either a 5-4 or 6-3 defense is allowed.
- Linebackers must be 3 yards off the line and defensive backs 8 yards off the line.
- Field size. 100 yard fields.

SEVENTH GRADE RULES

In general, the differences from the high school rules are much more limited. These differences are:

- No coaches on the field. Plays must be signaled in or use a player to run the play in.
- A no-huddle offense is not allowed unless it is in the last two minutes of either half.
- Teams will play 15-minute running quarters with the stop time rules being used during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will also be stopped for injuries and immediately after a score. Extra points will not be run against the game clock. Time is stopped until the ensuing kickoff. The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules..
- Each team will be allotted three time-outs per half.
- A “Designated Player” may play a tight end position and may receive a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage. This “designated player” tight end cannot split out wide at any time. The designated player may not receive a lateral or a handoff anywhere on the field.
- “Designated Players” may not line up in the backfield at any time, they may not receive a handoff on an “end around” play, may not receive a screen or shovel pass behind the line of scrimmage, and if they punt the ball can only act as a punter (cannot advance the ball by running or passing). If they catch a short punt, the ball is dead at that spot. However, a “Designated Player” may advance a fumble or interception.
- Teams may rush the punter. Again, “Designated or Restricted Players” may punt the ball, but they cannot pass, lateral or advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. When a “Designated or Restricted Player” receives the snap from the center in punt formation, they may only punt the ball. A “Ball Carrying Player” in a punt formation may do any of the items allowed by the rules, e.g., run, pass, lateral, punt, etc.
- A PAT which is run will be awarded 1 point. One which is thrown is worth 2 points.
 - If a ball is thrown into the end zone and caught by an eligible receiver, it's a 2 point conversion.
 - If the ball is thrown to the flat and caught by a RB, even behind the line of scrimmage, and run in, it would still be counted as pass receiving yardage and is therefore a 2 point conversion.
 - If a ball is thrown to a WR and lateralled to a RB (as in a hook and ladder play), it would be tabulated as rushing yardage by HS, college and Pros, and is therefore a 1 point conversion.
- Ties are decided by each team trying to score from the ten yard line. Each team gets four plays to score. The second team gets four plays to score, even if the first team scores on its first play. If a team scores, they also try an extra point from the three yard line. If a team loses possession of the ball, they cannot run any further plays. The team with the highest score wins the tiebreaker. If both teams are tied after one overtime, the game ends in a tie.
- As long as the offense is balanced (four on one side and five on the other) the offense may put 2 players into a wide, or split formation. These may be either running backs or ends. Each wide out player must be on opposite sides of the ball.
- QB sneaks. This is defined as taking the snap directly from underneath center and attempting to run behind the center or the guards.
 - There is NO QB sneak when the distance to the goal line is 3 yards or less. QB sneak is allowed anywhere else on the field at ANY time.
 - Taking the snap in a shotgun formation and running it DOES NOT constitute a QB sneak
 - The rule is in place because the defense is restricted by the 3 yard linebacker rule.
- Either a 5-4 or 6-3 defense is allowed.
- Linebackers must be 3 yards off the line and defensive backs 8 yards off the line.
- Field size. 100 yard fields.

EIGHTH GRADE RULES

Eighth grade teams will use high school football rules (e.g., no restrictions on offensive formations or defensive alignments other than high school rules). The only modifications to high school rules are:

- Weight limits for “Designated Players” listed at the front of this document.
- No coaches on the field. Plays must be signaled in or use a player to run the play in.
- Teams will play 15-minute running quarters with the stop time rules being used during the last two minutes of each half. The clock will also be stopped for injuries and immediately after a score. Extra points will not be run against the game clock. Time is stopped until the ensuing kickoff. The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules.
- The 25 second clock will be started by the officials for extra points, with delay of game receiving the usual 5 yard penalty. The game clock will re-start on the kick-off as in High School rules. Each team will be allotted three time-outs per half.
- No unbalanced lines are allowed on offense, i.e., no unbalanced line from tackle to tackle (must have a center and one guard and one tackle on each side of center), but all other legal offensive formations are allowed (shotgun, double wing, split both ends, etc.)
- A maximum of six defensive personnel in the line box are allowed, a minimum of four. A team is required to have a minimum of two defensive backs. “In the box” is defined as within the range of the outside edge of offensive line including two tight ends. Even if there is no TE’s, the “6 in the box” rule applies.
- Defensive lineman CAN line up in the gaps and can line up outside the end.
- Linebackers may be stacked or in the gaps and must be 3 yards off the line and defensive backs 8 yards off the line. .
- A “Designated Player” may play a tight end position and may receive a forward pass beyond the line of scrimmage. This “designated player” tight end cannot split out wide at any time. Tight end must be no more than one yard from the nearest tackle. The designated player may not receive a lateral or a handoff anywhere on the field.
- “Designated Players” may not line up in the backfield at any time, they may not receive a handoff on an “end around” play, may not receive a screen or shovel pass behind the line of scrimmage, and if they punt the ball can only act as a punter (cannot advance the ball by running or passing. If they catch a short punt, the ball is dead at that spot. They may advance a fumble or interception.
- Teams may rush the punter. Again, “Designated or Restricted Players” may punt the ball, but they can not pass, lateral or advance the ball beyond the line of scrimmage. When a “Designated or Restricted Player” receives the snap from the center in punt formation, they may only punt the ball. A “Ball Carrying Player” in a punt formation may do any of the items allowed by the rules, e.g., run, pass, lateral, punt, etc.
- A PAT which is run will be awarded 1 point. One which is thrown is worth 2 points.
 - If a ball is thrown into the end zone and caught by an eligible receiver, it’s a 2 point conversion.
 - If the ball is thrown to the flat and caught by a RB, even behind the line of scrimmage, and run in, it would still be counted as pass receiving yardage and is therefore a 2 point conversion.
 - If a ball is thrown to a WR and lateraled to a RB (as in a hook and ladder play), it would be tabulated as rushing yardage by HS, college and Pros, and is therefore a 1 point conversion.
- Ties are decided by each team trying to score from the ten yard line. Each team gets four plays to score. The second team gets four plays to score, even if the first team scores on its first play. If a team scores, they also try an extra point from the three yard line. If a team loses possession of the ball, they cannot run any further plays. The team with the highest score wins the tiebreaker. If both teams are tied after one overtime, the game ends in a tie.
- QB sneaks. This is defined as taking the snap directly from underneath center and attempting to run behind the center or the guards.
 - There is NO QB sneak when the distance to the goal line is 3 yards or less .
 - QB sneak is allowed anywhere else on the field at ANY time.
 - Taking the snap in a shotgun formation and running it DOES NOT constitute a QB sneak
 - The rule is in place because the defense is restricted by the 3 yard linebacker rule.
- The fairness rule also applies to this grade. Each child must have and maintain a starting position on offense and defense.
- Field size. 100 yard fields.

OFFENSE

Keys to Utilizing a valid formation:

- **Wide Out Rules:** For 4th, 5th and 6th grades, only 1 player can be split wide, either at the start of the formation or as a result of being put into motion. The player split wide must be a flanker; he may not be an end. There must be 7 men in the box at the start of each play. If you already have 1 player split wide and you send one of your backs into motion, they cannot be outside the tight end position at the snap of the ball. 7th and 8th grade may have 2 players wide. See the grade sections for more guidelines.
- **Balance Rules:** Excluding the center and the QB, who compromise the center of the formation, you must have 4 players on one side of the formation and 5 players on the other side of the formation. The exception is the “I” formation. The “I” formation is balanced similar to all other formations in that 3 players (instead of 4) are on one side and 4 players (instead of 5) are on the other side. In other words, one side of the formation can only have 1 more player on that side of the ball than exists on the other side of the ball (with the exception of the Double formation, which is completely balanced).

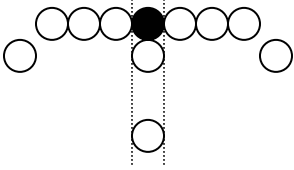
Limitations:

- Teams may have split ends, flankers or wingbacks with certain limitations. It is important to understand the definitions of each before we go into formations. We define a flanker as a back/wingback that is split wide of the formation. A split end is either end that is split wide of the normal spacing from the offensive tackle. A wingback is a back that is outside of either a tight end or tackle, but is within three feet of either. The difference between a wingback and a flanker is that the flanker is split wide of the formation and the wingback is tight to the formation. A flanker or a wide out is a player that is more than 2 yards or more outside of the closest offensive lineman. Both are off the line of scrimmage.
- Motion players are allowed depending on whether or not they will violate the Balance and Wide Out Rules. Check the formations below for more detailed information.

Valid Formations:

- The formations below are for illustrative purposes as well as a point of reference for any formation which might be disputed by another coach.
- Quarterbacks must be under center OR any player (QB included) receiving the snap in the “shotgun” formation must be a minimum of 3 yards behind the center.

1 back formations

<p>Double wing</p> 	<p>1 wingback on the left and 1 wingback on the right, a single running back can be behind, or on either side of the center</p>	<p>A single tight end or wingback may be split out wide. Motion out of the running back behind the center is allowed to either side of the formation. One of the other two backs (wingbacks) can go in motion, as long as they don't cross the center of the formation and create an unbalanced formation.</p>
<p>Double wing (with shotgun)</p>	<p>1 wingback on the left and 1 wingback on the right, a single running back can be on either the left or right side of the formation</p>	<p>A single tight end or wingback may be split out side. Motion out of the running back behind the center is allowed to either side of the formation. One of the other two backs (wingbacks) can go in</p>

		<p>motion, as long as they don't cross the center of the formation and create an unbalanced formation.</p>
--	--	--

2 back formations

<p>I</p>	<p>Fullback and halfback are directly behind the QB</p>	<p>A single tight end or wingback may be split out wide.</p>
<p>Wing (split backs)</p>	<p>1 running back on the left side of the formation and 1 running back on the right side of the formation</p>	<p>A single tight end or wingback may be split out wide. If no tight end or wingback is split wide, then one of the running backs may be split wide or go in motion outside the tight end on the same side.</p>
<p>Shotgun</p>	<p>Same as the split backs formation only the QB is lined up 3-4 yards behind the center and between the two running backs</p>	<p>A single tight end or wingback may be split out wide. If no tight end or wingback is split wide, then one of the running backs may be split wide or go in motion outside the tight end on the same side.</p>

3 back formations

<p>Full House</p>	<p>3 running backs in the backfield, no wingback. One directly behind the center and one on either side</p>	<p>A single tight end may be split out wide or one of the backs may go in motion. The back behind the QB can go in motion to either side of the formation. The other backs must go in motion to the same side in which they lined up to start the play.</p>
<p>Wishbone</p>	<p>1 full back directly behind the center / QB and 1 running back on each side of the formation</p>	<p>A single tight end may be split out wide or one of the backs may go in motion. The back behind the QB can go in motion to either side of the formation. The other backs must go in motion to the same side in which they lined up to start the play.</p>
<p>Strong/Power I</p>	<p>Same as I formation with the wingback directly behind the Guard or Tackle on either side</p>	<p>A tight end or running back may be split wide. A running back can be put in motion keeping in mind the Balance Rules.</p>

DEFENSE

- Defensive Lineman in the box (between the tackles): For 4th through 7th grade, lineman may not move after they are set in their stance (high school rules apply to 8th grade). In all cases, the lineman must line up directly in front of the offensive lineman (helmet to helmet). They may not line up in the gap. Defensive ends lined up on split ends or flankers are allowed to move prior to the snap as long as the player does not violate the neutral zone. Defensive ends may not line up inside of the head of the furthest outside offensive lineman that is not split out wide.
- Linebackers: Must play 3 yards off the line of scrimmage and not behind a defensive lineman, i.e., no stacking of linebackers. They must remain stationary until the snap of the ball although the linebackers or defensive backs may move laterally to react to a man in motion. Please have ALL linebackers step off the 3 yard distance.
- Safeties: Must be 8 yards back (or farther) from the line of scrimmage.
- Goal line defenses or “cheating” forward of the linebackers in short yardage situations are NOT allowed. The safeties may limit their 8 yard distance to 5 yards when on or inside the 10 yard line.
- No blitzing or forward movement prior to the snap of the ball. Ends and linebackers may rush in after the snap.
- Defensive ends may be in a 2, 3, or 4 point stance.
- Stunting is allowed. Stunting is defined as a defensive lineman shooting the gap or crossing two defensive linemen or blitzing linebackers.

Valid Alignments:

6-3

- 6 players on the line of scrimmage: 2 defensive guards, 2 defensive tackles and 2 defensive ends. Defensive guards/tackles must be lined up helmet to helmet (head-up) with the offensive guards/tackles. Defensive ends can be lined up on the outside shoulder of the tight end (or wingback if a wingback is on the same side).
- 3 linebackers: 2 outside linebackers and 1 middle linebacker. Linebackers cannot be stacked (lined up behind a lineman). Place outside linebackers on the outside shoulder of the defensive end or as far outside as you would like. But, you cannot move them inside any further. The middle linebacker must be over the center prior to the start of the play.
- Safeties can line up as far wide, inside or back as you would like. They must be at least 8 yards from the line of scrimmage.

5-4

- 5 players on the line of scrimmage: 1 nose guard (lined up on the center), 2 defensive tackles (lined up on the offensive tackles) and 2 defensive ends. Defensive ends can be lined up on the outside shoulder of the tight end (or wingback if a wingback is on the same side).
- 4 linebackers: 2 outside linebackers and 2 middle linebackers. Linebackers cannot be stacked (lined up behind a lineman). Place outside linebackers minimally (cannot be inside of this position) on the outside shoulder of the defensive end or as far outside as you would like. You cannot move them inside any further. The middle linebackers must be over the guards prior to the start of the play.
- Safeties can line up as far wide, inside or back as you would like. They must be at least 8 yards from the line of scrimmage.

4-4-3

- 4 players on the line of scrimmage: 2 defensive tackles and 2 defensive ends. Ends must be lined up over the widest offensive lineman. Tackles can be lined up over guards or tackles. No nose guard allowed. Lineman must be balanced, two on either side of the ball.
- 4 linebackers: 2 outside linebackers and 2 middle linebackers. Linebackers cannot be stacked (lined up behind a lineman). Outside linebackers must be on the outside shoulder of the defensive end or wider. You cannot move them inside any further. Linebackers may not be used to play 'press coverage' on wide receivers (they are linebackers, not defensive backs).
- Defensive backs can line up as far wide, inside or back as you would like. They must be at least 8 yards from the line of scrimmage.

PUNT FORMATIONS

- Use the offensive team on the field as your punting team. The exceptions to this rule are punters and long snappers.
- Punt formations must also follow the Wide Out Rules and Balance Rules.
- Recommended formation would be to utilize a Shotgun formation with the QB position becoming the punter. Any player may punt the ball but ball carrying restrictions do apply at each grade level.
- A punt that hits a defensive player at the line of scrimmage "neutral zone" is not considered a live ball. The ball is down on contact and turns over to the receiving team.

PUNT RETURN FORMATION

- Use the defensive team on the field as your punt return formation.
- No additional restrictions other than meeting defensive formation restrictions.
- No limit on how far back the linebackers/safeties can be for punt returns. Must have 6 players on the line of scrimmage, in a 6-3 defense or 5 players in a 5-4 defense (only 5-4 for 6th grade and higher).
- Only 7th and 8th grade can rush the punter.

KICKOFF and KICKOFF RETURNS

- Special teams do not count toward players having a 'starting' position. Each player has to have a 'starting' position on offense or defense.
- No special limitations on Kickoff.
- Only "Ball Carrying Players" may field and advance a kickoff return or on-side kick.