



NEW HAMPSHIRE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

NHIAA MIDDLE SCHOOL LEAGUE

THE ADMINISTRATIVE PLAYBOOK & POLICY BLUEPRINT

A definitive guide to league structure, eligibility, and operations for athletic directors, coaches, and administrators.

EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETICS AS AN EXTENSION OF THE CLASSROOM

THE MISSION

“THE NHIAA SERVES MEMBER SCHOOLS BY PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETICS—WHERE SPORTS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF A STUDENT’S ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT.”

THE VISION DIAGRAM



STANDARDIZATION

Ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment with high school standards. Mandatory training establishes coaching consistency.

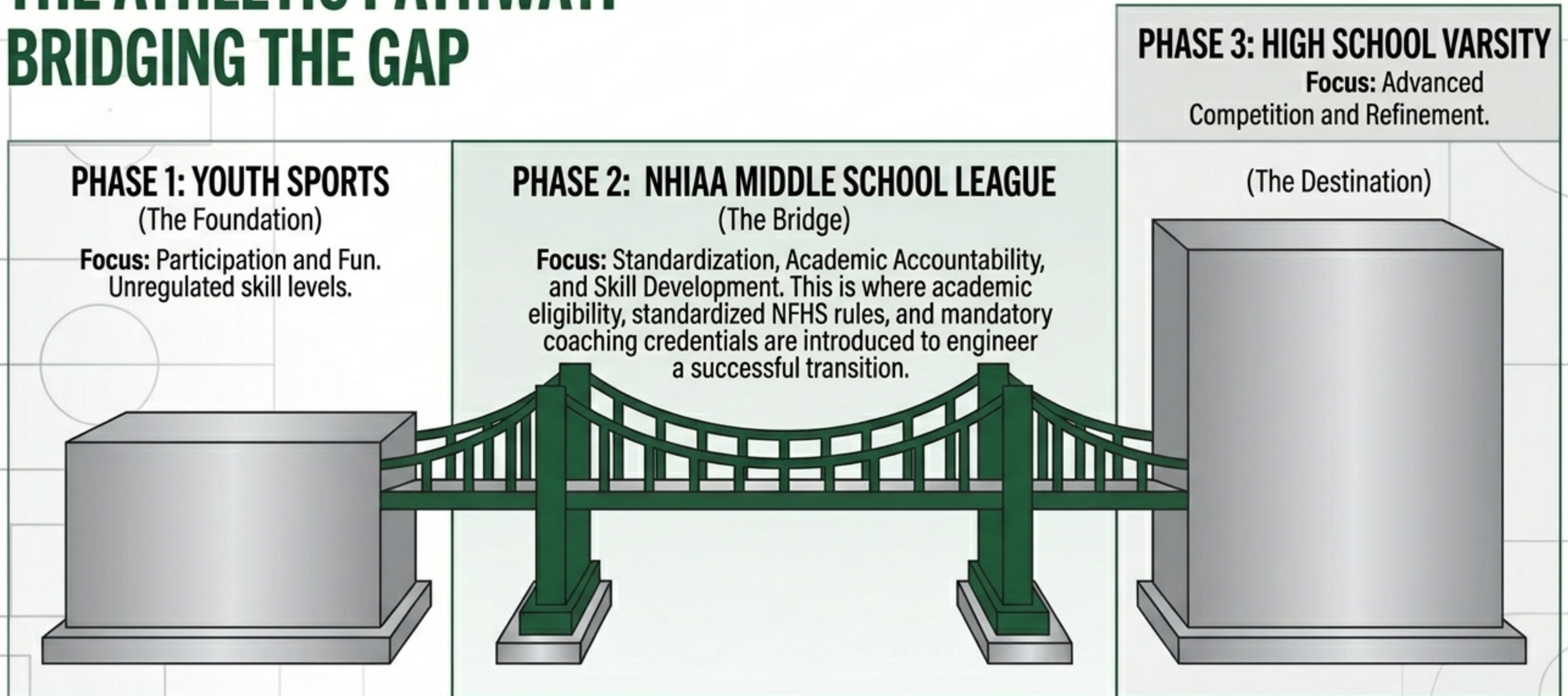
DEVELOPMENT
Focus on skill development, overall health, well-being, and essential life skills (teamwork, resiliency, discipline).



TRANSITION

Provide continuity and directly aid the student's transition between middle school and high school programs.

THE ATHLETIC PATHWAY: BRIDGING THE GAP



Disclaimer: If not explicitly stated in this manual, all NHIAA rules apply. The league is administered by the NHIAA Middle School Committee, governed by National Federation (NFHS) rules except where modified.

FOUR PILLARS OF LEAGUE OPERATIONS

LEAGUE INTEGRITY



SPORTSMANSHIP

Highest standards expected from athletes, coaches, and fans. Ejections trigger NHIAA By-Law Article IX consequences.



PLAYER SAFETY

Strict adherence to NFHS concussion protocols and NH SB402. Immediate removal upon symptoms; healthcare professional clearance required to return.



REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Teams must be properly equipped (e.g., mouthguards, eyewear).

Missing mandatory equipment results in an automatic NFHS rule forfeit.



UNIFORMS

Comply with NFHS rules. If opposing teams lack contrast, the home team must change or wear pinnies.

SANCTIONED ATHLETIC OFFERINGS

FALL

Cross Country **B/G** | Field Hockey **G** | Soccer **B/G** | Unified Soccer **C** | Volleyball **G**

WINTER

Basketball **B/G** | Unified Basketball **C** | Winter Spirit **C** | Wrestling **C**

SPRING

Baseball **B** | Lacrosse **B/G** | Softball **G** | Outdoor Track & Field **B/G**

Unified Sports Definition:

Teams consisting of students with and without intellectual disabilities competing together on the same team.

CLASSIFICATION & COOPERATIVE TEAM LOGIC

CLASSIFICATION RULES

- 2-year cycles based on October 1st enrollment.
- Counts incoming grades 7 & 8 only.
- Schools may only petition up (must be for all sports).

Are all involved schools NHIAA MS League members (Max 3)?

YES

Do all schools feed into the same high school?

AND/OR

Is there a corresponding cooperative team at the high school level?

YES

Can you confirm the involved schools could not otherwise support their own program?

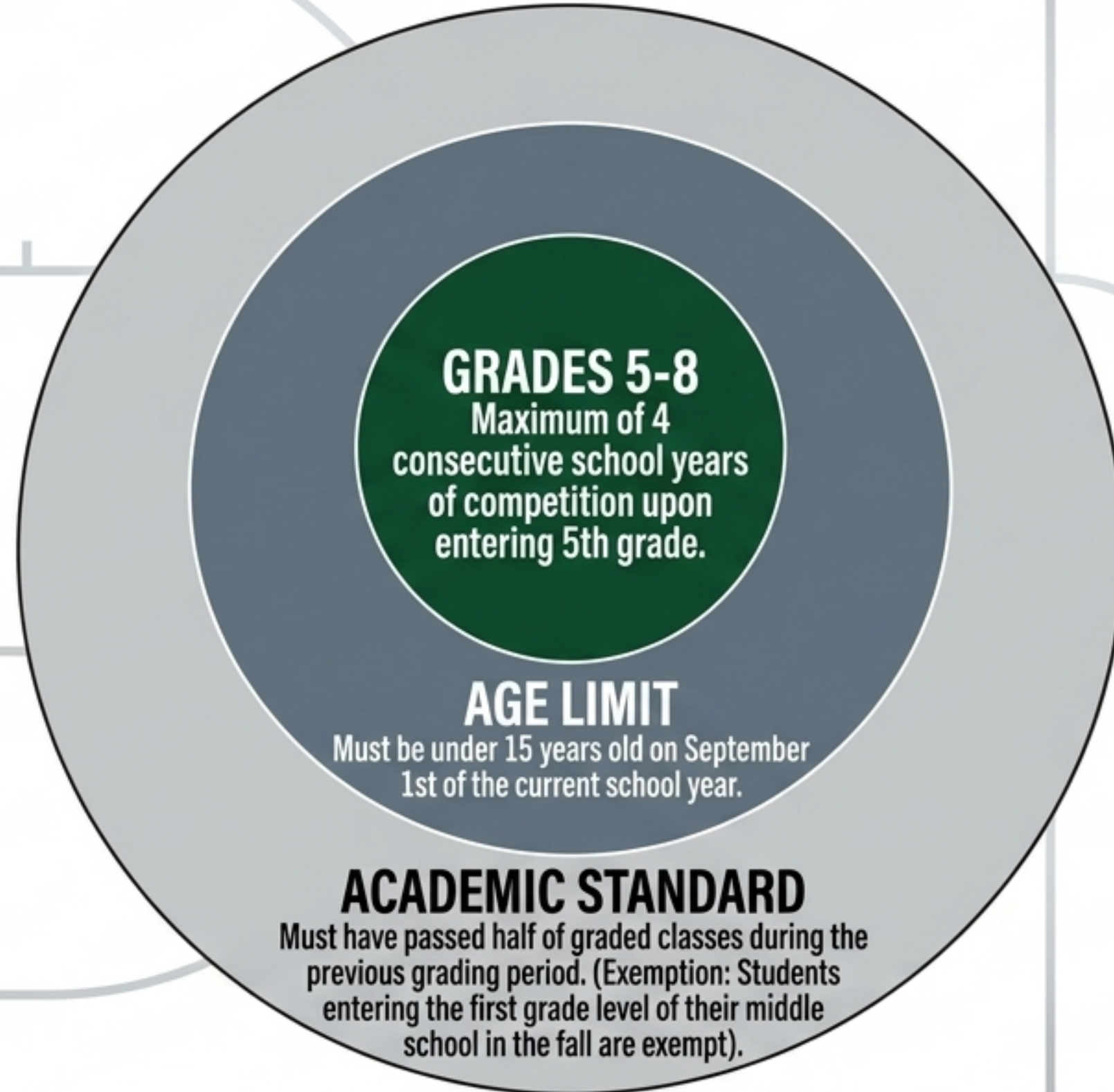
YES

Do you agree to a strict NO CUT POLICY?

YES

Executive Director may grant permission.

THE ATHLETE: BASELINE ELIGIBILITY



EXCEPTION HANDLING

Feeder School Petitions

Students in grade 5 or 6 not housed in the member school may petition to play IF they attend a direct feeder school AND are necessary to field the team.

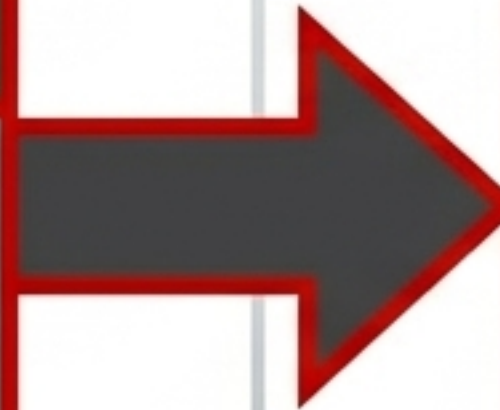
NON-SCHOOL COMPETITION & CLUB CONFLICTS

THE PRIORITY RULE

The middle school team priority rule is activated on the first date of practice. A bona fide team member cannot miss a school practice or game for an out-of-school event (tournaments, showcases, club practices). Conflict? The school team must be honored. (Waivers from Principal/AD are rare and for extraordinary circumstances only).

VIOLATION 1

Athlete is declared ineligible for the next 2 consecutive interscholastic events **OR** 2 weeks of a season (whichever is greater).



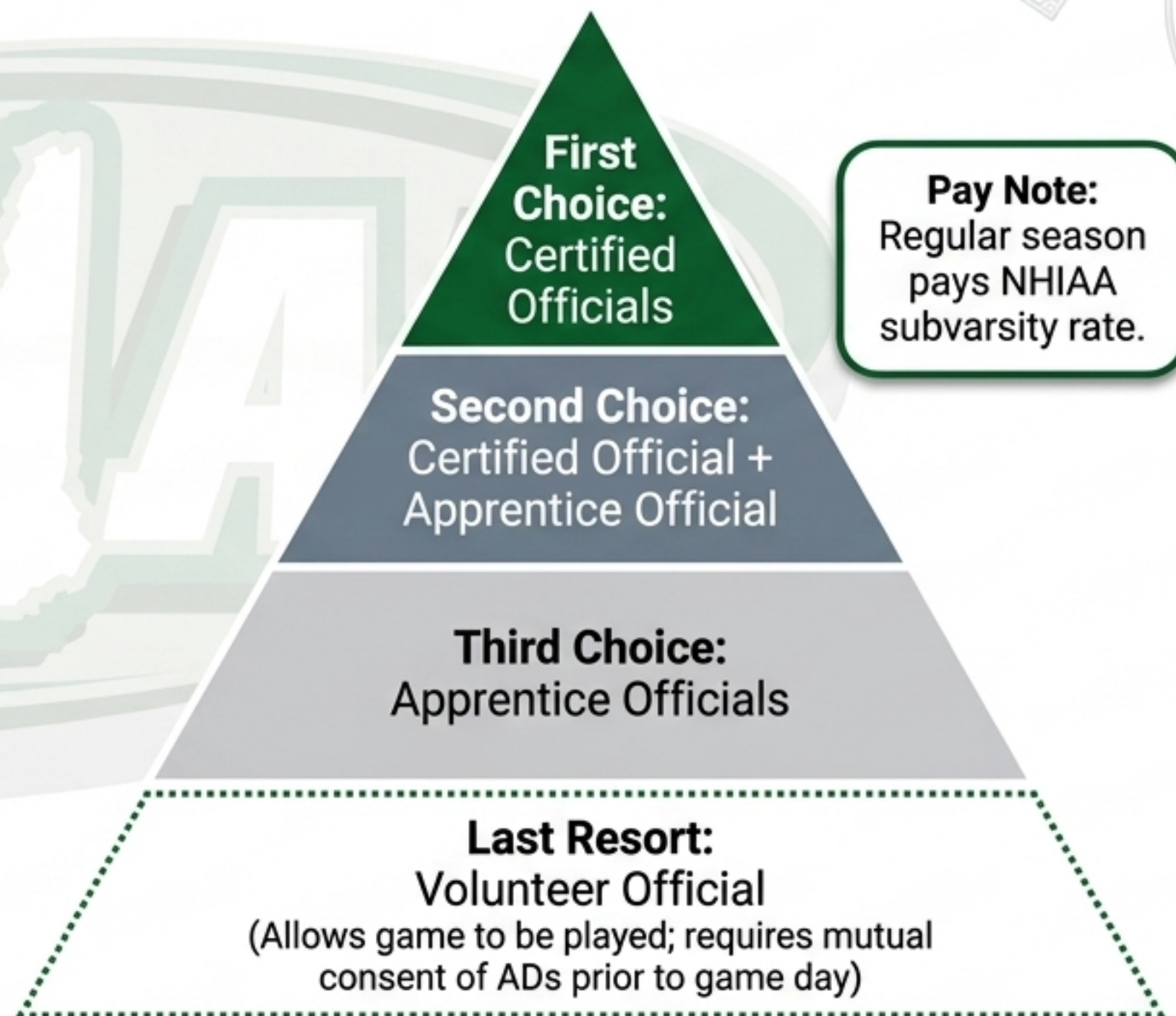
VIOLATION 2 (SUBSEQUENT)

Athlete is declared ineligible for participation in **ANY** middle school sport for the balance of the entire school year.

PROGRAM LEADERSHIP: COACHES & OFFICIALS

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Must meet NHIAA By-Law Art I Sec 32 eligibility.
- ☐ Coaching Principles requirement is satisfied by the NFHS Middle School Coaching course.
- ☐ Middle school coaches are exempt from Out of Season Contact rules (Art II Sec 9).



STRUCTURING THE SEASON: SCHEDULING & TOURNAMENTS

REGULAR SEASON CONSTRAINTS

CONTEST LIMITS

Teams may play up to the maximum number of contests.

TOURNAMENT ALLOWANCE

Allowed up to 2 tournaments/jamborees (these do NOT count toward records, standings, or maximum event limits).

SCHEDULE INTEGRITY

Sanctions apply for consistently dropping league games.

POST-SEASON QUALIFICATION FLOW

STEP 1: MEET MINIMUMS

Schedule and play the required minimum games vs NHIAA MS League members.

STEP 2: SUBMIT RESULTS

Provide in-division results to verify qualification.

STEP 3: DECLARE INTENT

Declare intent to participate upon the last date to compete. (All schools meeting standards are eligible regardless of record)

STEP 4: SEEDING

Random draw; regional brackets for early rounds.

THE OPERATIONS MATRIX: REGULAR SEASON VS. POST-SEASON

ROW LABELS	REGULAR SEASON	POST-SEASON CHAMPIONSHIP
OFFICIALS SOURCING	Secured by home site (hierarchy pyramid).	Assigned directly by NHIAA Middle School League.
OFFICIALS PAY RATE	Subvarsity Rate.	Varsity Rate (Championship events).
GAME MANAGEMENT COSTS	Handled by home school.	Schools cover rounds prior to championship; NHIAA handles championship.
ADMISSION FEES	Optional (Cannot exceed NHIAA Art I Sec 18 limits).	\$5 Students/Seniors, \$10 Adults for Championship events.

LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION: DUES, FEES, & DEADLINES

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

\$100 **Base School Dues:**
per school.

\$100 **Sport Fees:** per sport, per
gender (e.g., Boys Soccer +
Girls Soccer = \$200).

\$25 **Coach Enrollment:**
per coach.

COMPLIANCE DEADLINES

**May
1st**

Registered Sports Form Due
(Declaring intended offerings).

**August
1st**

Agreement to Join Form Due.

Ongoing

Due Process available for
appeals and dispute resolution
(NHIAA By-Law Art V).