

To: All Boys' & Girls' Head Basketball Coaches  
From: Jerry Snodgrass, OHSAA Assistant Commissioner  
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*As you know, last season we began communicating directly with head coaches via a direct email. Though we are a long way from the start of the season, the "Summer Season" has taken on a life of its own. As a result, we felt it would be helpful to communicate a few current items to you know. Another will reach you in late July just prior to the start of the "no-contact period". We hope you find this helpful and also hope you have a productive summer while also getting away from it all for a while.*

### **The Summer's Most Common Question**

More than any other question, we are asked if '8<sup>th</sup> graders can play on a JV/Varsity team during the summer at a team tournament, shootout, etc.'. The answer is YES. Any of the hundreds of events that take place in the summer (or ANY time outside the season) are NOT school athletic contests that we regulate. So, we do not regulate 'who plays with who' at these events. Only during the actual season of play do we prohibit 7-8 graders from practicing or playing with 9-12 players. Ditto with 'transfer students'. Though more and more schools will only permit students enrolled in their school to participate in 'summer events', we have no jurisdiction over that – thus there is no violation of any regulation if a transfer student plays with your 'team' during the summer months.

### **"Major" Change in the OHSAA's No-Contact Rule**

As you know, the OHSAA's No-Contact Period was established to 'give kids (and coaches!) a break' and to permit fall sports to get a start without the pressure of fall sport athletes to participate in open gyms, fall leagues, etc. And, that "no-contact period" has always run for a period starting 28 days prior to Labor Day. At the time this was created, fall sports actually began about 28 days before Labor Day. However, over the past few years, fall sports actually start on August 1. So it would only make sense that the no-contact period would start at that same time. The OHSAA's Board of Directors actually agreed with me and beginning the 2016-17 school year, the No-Contact period will now be 'the month of August' – starting on August 1. And yes, realize it adds 3 days to the previous '28 days'. Sorry, it just makes more sense.

### **Another Significant Change in the OHSAA's Sports Regulations**

Another change that we were able to have our Board of Directors approve was a significant change in the out of season TEAM Coaching regulation. Currently, school coaches may not coach individuals in any team play (identified as anything involving more than 4 individuals) anytime outside the season of play except for 10 days during June and July. That regulation has been in place for some time and even prohibits are parent from coaching his/her son/daughter in any team (AAU, Travel, etc.) team play outside the season. However, we felt strongly there are more and more parents coaching at the Middle School/Junior High level. By rule, they cannot coach their son or daughter in 'AAU' ball in April or May. We felt they school coaches (not just parents – I did not want to get into DNA testing) MAY coach players from their school in team play outside the season of play – **with the 50% limitation still in effect – AT THE JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL ONLY**. So, as a school coach, if you wish to coach a group of 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders, I proposed (and it was approved by our Board of Directors) to increase this to 70 quarters for 7/8<sup>th</sup> graders beginning next season. Please keep in mind this permission is designed to help 'save' separate 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams by giving a little flexibility to using players more. It was NOT designed nor is it the intent to take the next LeBron James you have at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and move him/her up to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade team. He/She is only going to be an 8<sup>th</sup> grader the next year anyhow and would only be eligible at the 7/8<sup>th</sup> grade level the next year anyhow. You'll see this and other changes addressed in the Rules Interp meeting in the fall.

### **NFHS Rule Change Confusion**

There has been a significant amount of confusion regarding a recent rule change by the NFHS for the 2016-17 season involving free throws. Actually, there is NO change in that rule as far as Ohio is concerned since it has been enforced that way the past several years. Last year (for whatever reason) NFHS Rules went back to allowing individuals into the lane on free throws on the release by the shooter. However, it NEVER was intended for those in back of the shooter or on the very top spot of the lane to enter the 'circle' (semi-circle actually) that encompasses the free throw line. The language however, was omitted that would give rise to the belief a player COULD enter that semi-circle on the release. They CANNOT...and even though the language was omitted previously, Ohio has maintained enforcement they could not. Now language in the NFHS Rules clearly states it. The bottom line – since Ohio has enforced it that way anyhow, there is NO change in the free throw rule. You can read all the NFHS Rule Changes, Editorial Changes and Points of Emphasis at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/news/2014-15BasketballRulesPressRelease.pdf>

### **Are you a NEW Head Coach at Your School?**

Summer brings a period of time where there are many coaching changes. It also gives rise to many administrative questions for new coaches at a school. And...some often 'perceived' permissions that are usually not factual. Coaches that are new to a school often have many questions – often times assuming they have opportunities to extend the 10 summer days or that the no-contact period does not apply to them (both are NOT true!). The document posted at this link is designed to help you with those many questions at your new school, we think you will find it very helpful: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bk/ReboundersReport/BasketballCoachPermissionOverview.pdf>

### **Rebounders Report**

Many documents are posted on the Rebounders Report webpage at: <http://www.ohsaa.org/sports/bk/ReboundersReport/ReboundersReport.htm>

These documents are designed to help you find the answers to questions that you may not always know or do not encounter on a daily basis. Check them out. In addition, PLEASE make sure you check with your Athletic Director first – especially in cases with transfer student-athletes.054