MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8
Baseball Sport Handbook – Spring 2026

Section 1: RULES

A. GENERAL

1. All contests under the jurisdiction of the RIIL Middle School 6-8 shall be played according to the National Federation of State High School Association Baseball Rules, except for any special rulings adopted by the Principals Committee on Athletics.
2. Prior to any competition, all Eligibility Lists must be received by the RIIL Office, and all Assumption of Risks forms must be on file with the school.
3. Definition of a Game/Scrimmage: Article 7, Section 2
4. Sportsmanship Expectations for Coaches, Student-Athletes, and Spectators: Article 12, Section 3
5. Loyalty to Home School: Article 7, Section 5
6. Penalties for Ejections: Article 6, Section 7
7. Protest Procedure: Article 5

B. SPORT SPECIFIC

1. Start of Season:
   With the approval of the school's administration, teams may allow two (2) catchers and up to eight (8) pitchers to report one week prior to the start of the spring season. (March 16, 2026)
   a. Pre-season conditioning is for 5 days only.
   b. Grades 6 – 8 may participate.
   c. Recommend a pre-season conditioning program developed and coordinated by a certified athletic trainer or other medical doctor
   d. All student-athletes must be eligible by the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Rules.
2. The RIIL Middle School 6-8 Pitching Limitations Rules
   The RIIL recommends the following guidelines by Pitch Smart USA
   a. Make sure to properly warm up before pitching.
   b. Follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods.
   c. Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time.
   d. Avoid playing catcher while not pitching.
   e. Avoid pitching in multiple games on the same day.

f. Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous.
g. Do not exceed 100 combined innings pitched in any 12-month period.
    a. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the parent and the student-athlete to ensure that the player follows the guidelines over the course of the year – given that he/she will oftentimes play in multiple leagues with different affiliations covering different times of the year.

3. The RIIL Middle School 6-8 Pitching Limitations Rules are as follows:
    a. All teams will maintain a pitch count log for all pitchers during the middle school baseball season.
    b. The pitch count is based on the number of pitches thrown to batters during the batter's time at bat. Warm up pitches allowed before the game, in between innings or allowed by the umpire in case of injury or game delay do not count.
    c. These are a maximum standard for pitch counts. Individual Schools may choose to utilize stricter standards at their discretion, which will be supported by the RIIL.
    d. Pitches are counted and when the number of pitches reaches a certain level, the pitcher must take off the required days of rest.
        i. **Maximum Number of Pitches = 95**
        ii. Required Days of Rest (Pitches)
        iii. 1-20 pitches = 0 days
        iv. 21-35 pitches = 1 day
        v. 36-50 pitches = 2 days
        vi. 51-65 pitches = 3 days
        vii. 66+ pitches = 4 days
    e. When the pitcher reaches 95 pitches, he may not pitch to another batter. He may only finish pitching to the current batter.
    f. A maximum of 175 pitches may be thrown in a 7-day period.
    g. The pitching rule applies even if a game is called (ended) by the umpire because of darkness, rain or some other factor before it has become an official game.
    h. At the pregame meeting, coaches should have a copy of their pitch count log for any questions about pitcher status. Each team will designate a pitch count person for their team. It is recommended (but not mandatory) that a responsible individual be a separate pitch recorder who will also record pitch counts from an area behind home plate.
    i. At the end of each complete inning, coaches (and pitch count recorder if present) will meet at a location designated by the team host and/or umpire to review pitch counts. If there is a difference, the coaches must resolve the difference before beginning the next inning
    j. If the counts differ, the following will be used to determine the pitch count:
        viii. If a pitch count recorder is present and two of three agree, the majority will be considered official.

ix. If a pitch count recorder is present and none of the three agree, the pitch count recorder will be considered official.

x. If a pitch count recorder is not present, the home counter will be considered official.

k. At the conclusion of the game, both head coaches and pitch counter, if present, will sign the pitch count chart.

l. It is not the responsibility of game officials to enforce the pitch count rule. Schools must report violations to the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Director of Baseball following competition. Violations are considered in the same manner as a school using an ineligible student. The minimum penalty for such violations is forfeiture of the game.

m. **If a pitcher exceeds their pitch count according to the official book, then the Head Coach will be ejected from that game at the time of the violation and be subject to an additional two game suspension to be served in the next two league games. The RIIL recommends that the home team alert the visiting team when any pitcher's pitch count gets to 90 pitches.**

3. Home Book (Official Book)

4. Coaches in Uniform

It is recommended that all coaches, when on the field, must be in a team uniform or jersey with baseball pants that are the same color as the teams.

5. The home team will be responsible for the condition of the field. The bases, base line, foul lines, home plate, and pitcher's mound will all be prepared according to the rules.

6. All coaches are required to submit a RIIL approved baseball game report.

7. Rule 4-2-2. Any game (regular season or playoff) shall end:

a) when the Visiting team is behind by 15 after two and half (2 ½) innings/three (3) innings if Home Team is behind.

b) when the Visiting team is behind by 12 after three and half (3 ½) innings/ four (4) innings if Home is behind.

c) when the Visiting team is behind by 10 after four and a half (4 ½) innings/five innings if Home Team is behind.

d) **GAMES ARE A MAXIMUM OF 2 HOURS. AN INNING WILL BE ALLOWED TO BE COMPLETED, BUT ANOTHER INNING CANNOT START AFTER THAT TIME.** Time will commence when Umpire says Play Ball. If a player is injured the Umpire will stop the clock.

8. Protest(s) are permitted under Article 5 rules of the RIIL.

Section 2: MANDATORY COACHES CERTIFICATION & CONTINUING EDUCATION

A. ALL Coaches must be appointed by their School Administration. A coach is any adult with access to student-athletes through an education-based athletic program.

a. Including, but not limited to: Volunteer Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Head Coaches.

B. Coaching Requirements: Article 13

Section 3. SCHEDULE/GAMES

A. The RIIL shall make up the schedules and order of games.

B. Division Breakdown:

Middle School	Division	Middle School	Division
Barrington Middle School	East	Broad Rock Middle School	South
Gaudet Middle School	East	Chariho Middle School	South
Kickemuit Middle School	East	Cole Middle School	South
Martin Middle School	East	Davisville Middle School	South
Portsmouth Middle School	East	Exeter West Greenwich Jr. High School	South
Providence Country Day School	East	Feinstein Middle School	South
Riverside Middle School	East	Jamestown Lawn School	South
Thompson Middle School	East	Narragansett Pier Middle School	South
Tiverton Middle School	East	Westerly Middle School	South
Birchwood Middle School	North	Wickford Middle School	South
Blackstone Valley Prep Junior High School	North	Bain Middle School	West
Burrillville Middle School	North	Bishop Hendricken 8th Grade Select	West
Gallagher Middle School	North	De La Salle Middle School	West
Lincoln Middle School	North	Deering Middle School	West
McCourt Middle School	North	Ferri Middle School	West
North Cumberland Middle School	North	Hope Highlands Middle School	West
North Smithfield Middle School	North	Park View Middle School	West
Ponaganset Middle School	North	Warwick Veterans Memorial MS	West
Ricci Middle School	North	Western Hills Middle School	West
Scituate Middle School	North	Winman Middle School	West
Woonsocket Middle School Co-op	North		

C. Regular RIIL Middle School 6-8 baseball games shall be seven innings.

D. The home school is responsible for providing adequate crowd control measures. There is a need for increasing vigilance in this matter. Schools must make every effort to ensure that players, officials, and spectators are protected. Schools should take the following measures to secure a safe environment by:

   a. utilizing bleachers for fans to sit and watch the game(s) where space permits.
   b. providing an easily identifiable school supervisor **who is preferably an administrator or athletic director.** The school supervisor shall not be a student, nor a coach involved with the game. The supervisor will introduce him/herself to the visiting coach and the umpires thirty (30) minutes prior to the game, and will assist in the supervision of the game both on and off the field before, during, and after the game.
   c. holding mandatory meetings before the first game of the season for all coaches, athletes and their parents/guardians to review the RIIL Middle School 6-8's policy on sportsmanship and fan behavior during RIIL Middle School 6-8 sanctioned events.

E. Important Dates:

   a. Coaches Interpretation Meeting, Wednesday, March 5th, 5:30 pm, Cumberland Hugh School

b. Preseason:
    i. Pitchers and catchers: Monday, March 16, 2026
    ii. First Day of Practice: Monday, March 23, 2026
    iii. First Day to schedule a Scrimmage: Saturday, March 28, 2026
c. Regular Season:
    i. Week #1: begins on Monday, April 6th
    ii. Week #2: begins on Monday, April 13th
    iii. Week #3: begins on Monday, April 27th
    iv. Week #4: begins on Monday, May 4th
    v. Week #5: begins on Monday, May 11th
    vi. Week #6: begins on Monday, May 18th
    vii. Last Day of the Regular Season: Monday, May 19, 2026
d. Postseason:
    i. Preliminary Games: May 20 or 21, 2026
    ii. Quarterfinals: May 22 or 26, 2026
    iii. Semifinals: May 28 or 29, 2026
    iv. Championships: Tuesday, June 1st , Rhode Island College

F. Game Cap: 12 Regular Season Games prior to the start of the playoffs
G. Home teams shall set a date/time for all contests.
    a. If there is a conflict in the date/time of the contest with the visiting team(s) and mutual agreement cannot be reached, the Principals of each school should resolve the conflict.
    b. Once the Home Confirmation Schedule is submitted, *changes will not be allowed unless there are extenuating circumstances*.
H. Postponement of Regular Season Games after the confirmation deadline:
    a. League Games must be rescheduled for the next day unless mutually agreed upon by both schools and within all other guidelines contained in this handbook. League games must take precedent over non-league games or lesser events
    b. Additional Officials Fees for Games Changed within Two Weeks of original date/time
I. Practice Limitations:
    a. Scrimmages allowed after 5 days of practice
    b. Games allowed after 10 days of practice, not including Sundays
J. Rosters shall be completed via the RIIL website and made available to the public no later than 10 days after the start of practice. Rosters must be updated when students are added/removed from the team.
    a. Rosters must include: name, grade, and jersey number.
K. The visiting team is entitled to the field for practice thirty minutes prior to the game's start time and may continue until 10 minutes prior to the first pitch (20 minutes total). The home team will then have the field for five minutes, ten minutes prior to the first pitch. If the visiting team does not arrive in time to practice at the stated period, the home team may continue to use the field but must leave the field immediately when the visiting team does arrive.

Section 4. POSTPONEMENTS

A. If a game is postponed for any reason, other than inclement weather, it must be postponed to a definite date with the consent of the schools and permission of the Director of Baseball.
B. Where unusual circumstances prevail or where conditions are unfavorable, a game may be postponed by mutual consent of the opposing school's Principals, or authorized agents of the schools involved.
C. The Director of Middle School Baseball is empowered to exercise the right to postpone a game if the opposing school's Principals cannot agree. If in the judgment of the Plate Umpire, playing conditions at game time are too hazardous; the umpire may postpone the game without mutual agreement.
D. The RIIL game ending procedure is as follows: To interpret NFHS Rule 4-2-Sec.1, 2, 3 & 4:
    a. If a REGULATION game (4 (four) and ½ innings if the home team is ahead or 5 (five) complete innings if the visiting team is ahead) during the REGULAR SEASON (not a state tournament playoff game) is stopped for any reason other than forfeiture and a winner cannot be determined, the game is considered SUSPENDED and will be completed at a later date from the exact point of suspension. Only student-athletes listed on the original scorecard are eligible to participate in the suspended game's resumption. Only student-athletes eligible by all RIIL and school rules are eligible to be listed on a scorecard.
    b. Games that have not reached REGULATION length prior to suspension are considered NO GAME and must be replayed from the beginning.
    c. All state playoff games are SUSPENDED from the first pitch regardless of the inning or score and must be continued from that point to completion.

Section 5. UMPIRES

The umpire's authority extends to pre-and post-game oversight. Fighting and unsportsmanlike penalties will always be within the authority of the umpires at the contest site. The umpires shall have jurisdiction over the playing facility areas from thirty minutes before the game until the game is finished and the teams have departed. Umpires will be assigned by the RIIL Middle School Baseball Assignor.

Section 6. PLAYOFFS

The Playoffs will be conducted under the direction of the Middle School Baseball Sport Director using a format determined by the RIIL Executive Director and the Middle School Sports Coordinator and published with the RIIL Middle School 6-8 Baseball Schedule.

A. Baseball Tie Breaker within the Division for Playoff Seeding: A tie-breaker will be used to seed teams with identical W-L records for the regular season:
    1. Head-to-Head
        a. Three or More Teams: *Pool Play head-to-head – most wins in games played among those teams that are tied.*
    2. Power Ranking/Strength of Victories: (*starting with 1st place team in the division and moving down*)

3. Coin Toss/Draw

B. The top four teams in each Division will qualify for the playoffs (16 teams total).
    A. The playoffs will follow a standard bracket

Section 7: Medical Coverage/Emergency Action Plans

A. Home team medical coverage shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting school provides its own medical coverage.
B. The judgment of the medical person will be final with regard to the medical condition of a player. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice under any circumstance.
C. An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practice protocols should be developed and in place at every school. When possible, an athletic trainer should be present at all practices and games.
    a. *Rationale*: An effective emergency action plan (EAP) should be in place as a prompt and appropriate response to any emergency situation that can save a life. The EAP should be designed and practiced to address all teams (freshman, junior varsity, and varsity) and all practice and game sites. An athletic trainer is a key component in any strategy to minimize injury risk and optimize safety for all participants.
D. Levels of Medical Coverage:

Medical Professional Legal Limitations
A. Education/Schooling/Training & Licensure *B. Scope of Practice* *C. Able to Return to Play*
Medical Doctors-MD/DO or Advanced Practice Provider-NP/PA
A. Advanced degree (Medical School/Successfully passed the licensing board, and RI Licensed) B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play – Yes
Athletic Trainer (RI Licensed)
A. Minimum Bachelor's Degree (Successfully pass the BOC exam, and RI licensed B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Assessment of injury, referral for further diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES
Physical Therapist (RI Licensed)
A. Degree varies from BS, MS to DPT (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed.) B. Preventative Care, Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO
Physical Therapist w/ Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) credential (RI Licensed)
A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the OCS exam, and RI licensed) B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On the field coverage - not qualified, no emergency training incorporated into initial certification or required to be annually updated. C. Can they Return to Play – NO (During a Game/Contest), Yes (In Clinical Setting)
Physical Therapists w/ Sports Certified Specialist (SCS) credential (RI Licensed)
A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the SCS exam, and RI licensed) B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On-the-field coverage – Qualified C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES
EMT - Basic, Intermediate & Paramedic
A. Successfully complete the EMT program, pass the board exam, and RI licensed) B. Emergency care C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? - NO, per RI EMS laws/regulations/protocols
School Nurse (RN)
A. Successful completion of a nursing program (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed) B. Emergency care, referral for further treatment/diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO