NFHS

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PERFORM.
COMPETE.
TOGETHER.

Authenticating Mark Program

NFHS Authenticating Mark

Dear Manufacturer/Distributor:

The NFHS Authenticating Mark Program, which officially began in the 2000-01 school year, ensures easy identification of inflated and non-inflated balls and pucks used in interscholastic competition for which the NFHS writes playing rules. All such balls and pucks are required to display the NFHS Authenticating Mark. The contract for participation in this program is available from K12 Licensing.

The threefold purpose of the NFHS Authenticating Mark Program is:

- First, the use of conforming equipment is essential to the integrity of contests played under the NFHS rules. This program helps to promote a level playing field by ensuring consistency in the equipment being used.
- Second, by requiring a modest fee to be paid by the participating manufacturers for use of the Authenticating Mark, the program generates revenue to support additional services to benefit student-athletes, athletic administrators, coaches and officials.
- Finally, the mark allows for the development of more sophisticated standards in balls and pucks and clearly communicates to administrators, coaches and officials that these standards are being met.

We hope that this standards manual provides you with the information you need to implement the program. We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions to improve the program and make it as efficient and cost-effective as possible.

Thank you for your participation and we look forward to working together with your organization to improve and enhance the great tradition of interscholastic sports.

Sincerely,

Davis A. Whitfield
Executive Director

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Highlights of NFHS Authenticating Mark Program

Fee Structure: *(In order to implement a fair allocation of Authenticating Mark-related expenses, the minimum royalty each quarter is $100.)*

All NFHS Authenticating Mark Program manufacturers are required to pay a standard royalty percentage for all production and sale of NFHS stamped balls/pucks (both inflated and non-inflated). **Effective January 1, 2025**, a standard royalty rate of 5% will be charged for all sales (Retail, Direct to Consumer and Wholesale) of NFHS stamped baseballs, basketballs, field hockey balls, footballs, ice hockey pucks, lacrosse balls, soccer balls, softballs, volleyballs, and water polo balls.

Contract:

For manufacturers enrolling in the program for the first time, please contact K12 Licensing at help@k12licensing.com to receive a link to apply.

Please forward to: K12 Licensing
NFHS Authenticating Mark Program
201 S. Capitol Ave, Suite 610
Indianapolis, IN 46225

Payments:

Payments should be forwarded to K12 Licensing within 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter, beginning with the first calendar quarter after execution of the agreement. Quarterly sales reports must accompany payments. Licensees must report sales online and submit documentation of the sales transaction; e.g., invoices, spreadsheets.

Testing:

Each manufacturer/distributor is responsible for submitting specimens of the products it seeks to license to a qualified testing laboratory (e.g., one that meets the standards of the American Council of Independent Laboratories or the American Society for Testing and Materials) and having pass/fail test results sent to K12 Licensing. Only one test is required per product model. Any test result submitted to K12 Licensing need only recite compliance, on a pass/fail basis, with the specifications outlined in the NFHS protocol.

Pass/fail results should be sent to Brandon Tucker (btucker@k12licensing.com) or uploaded into Direct Licensing Hub.

Graphics:

Artwork may be obtained and submitted for approval through Direct Licensing Hub.

Rule specifications:

This manual outlines the specifications for sports rules governed by the NFHS.

Use of the Mark:

This manual outlines approved uses of the NFHS Authenticating Mark. No deviation from the approved use of the NFHS Authenticating Mark is permitted. Please contact the NFHS if you have any questions concerning uses of the mark.

NFHS Ball and Puck Specifications

Baseball

The ball shall be a sphere formed by yarn wound around a core of cork, rubber or similar material and covered with two strips of white horsehide or two strips of white cowhide stitched together. It shall be 5 to 5¼ ounces in weight and have a circumference of 9 to 9¼ inches. The Coefficient of Restitution (COR) of baseballs shall not exceed .555. The ball shall meet the current NOCSAE standard for baseballs at the time of manufacture and is required on balls that will be used in high school competition (effective January 1, 2020).

Softball

The ball(s) shall be an optic yellow sphere formed by either solid cork, rubber, polyurethane or similar material, and covered with a flat surface or a smooth seam stitch. The cover of the ball shall be made of number one chrome-tanned, horsehide or cowhide that will be solidly cemented to the ball. The cover is also sewn on the ball with a waxed cotton or linen thread. Synthetic composition material may also be used for the cover. The coefficient of Restitution (COR) and compression shall be labeled on all softballs.

The ball specifications shall be:

Play	Size	COR	Compression	*Dynamic Stiffness	Weight & Circumference
Slow Pitch	11″	.44 max	375 lbs. max	9,500 lbs./inch max	5⅞ to 6⅛ ounces 10⅞ to 11¼ inches
Slow Pitch	12″	.44 max	375 lbs. max	7,500 lbs./inch max	6¼ to 7 ounces 11⅞ to 12¼ inches
Fast Pitch	12″	.47 max	325 lbs. +/-50	7,500 lbs./inch max	6½ to 7 ounces 11⅞ to 12¼ inches

Notes:

1. The dynamic stiffness of 12-inch softballs shall not exceed 7,500 pounds/inch and 11-inch softballs shall not exceed 9,500 pounds/inch when tested under current proposed ASTM test methods.
2. (S.P.) By state association adoption, an 11-inch ball shall be used in girls slow pitch and the bases shall be 65 feet.

NFHS Ball and Puck Specifications

Volleyball

The ball shall be spherical with a laceless molded cover of 12 or more basic, rectangular-shaped panels of equal size and genuine or simulated smooth leather (not suede). All panels of the ball shall be solid white or a maximum combination of three colors (with each panel being a solid color) and of which at least one-third of the panels shall be solid white. It shall measure at least 25 inches but no more than 27 inches in circumference, with a weight of 9-10 ounces when inflated with 4.3-4.6 pounds per square inch of air pressure.

Note: Beginning in 2026-27, by state association adoption, the volleyball may be spherical with a laceless molded cover of genuine, simulated textured leather (not suede) panels. No limitation on color combinations or number and shape of panels. All measurements and weight requirements still apply.

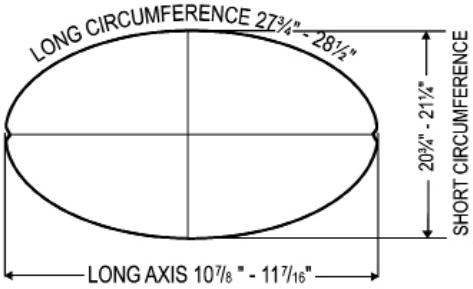
Water Polo

The ball shall be round and have the traditional 18 panels. It shall have an air chamber with a self-closing valve. It shall be waterproof, without external strappings or any covering of grease or similar substance. The colored panels must be as manufactured (not hand painted). The ball must be of a color that contrasts with the colors of the players' caps and is clearly and safely visible.

The weight of the ball shall be not less than 400 grams and not more than 450 grams. For boys competition, the circumference of the water polo ball shall be not less than 0.68 meters and not more than 0.71 meters. It shall be inflated to a maximum air pressure specified by the manufacturer. For girls competition, the circumference of the ball shall be not less than 0.65 meters and not more than 0.67 meters. The ball shall be inflated to a maximum air pressure specified by the manufacturer.

NFHS Ball and Puck Specifications

Football



The ball shall meet the following specifications:

a. A tan-colored cover consisting of either pebbled-grain, cowhide or approved composition (leather or rubber) case without corrugations other than those formed by the natural seam grooves and the lace on one of the grooves.

b. One set of either 8 or 12 evenly spaced laces. The length of the lace shall be confined to within 3¾ inches measured linearly from each end of the ball and not in the nose indentation. The laces shall extend from the center of the ball to at least the line which shall be 3¾ inches measured linearly from each end of the ball and not in the nose indentation.

c. A continuous 1-inch white or yellow stripe centered 3 to 3¼ inches from each end of the ball free from decorations or logos added during or after production. The stripes shall be located only on the two panels adjacent to and perpendicular to the seam upon which the laces are stitched.

d. Conforms to the shape and dimensions as shown in the diagram.

e. Weighs between 14 and 15 ounces.

f. Inflated to a pressure of 12½ to 13½ psi (pounds per square inch) or 878.8 to 949. 1 grams per square centimeter.

g. The ball for 9th grade and above, shall include the NFHS Authenticating Mark.

The ball can contain only the following permissible items:

a. Ball manufacturer's name and/or logo;

b. School name, logo and/or mascot;

c. Conference name and/or logo;

d. State association name and/or logos; and

e. NFHS name and/or logos.

Method of Measuring

a. All measurements shall be made after the ball is inflated to 13 psi.

b. The long circumference should be measured 90 degrees from lace around the ends of the ball, over the groove but not in the groove.

c. The long axis should be measured from end to end but not in the nose indentation.

d. The short circumference should be measured around the ball, over the valve, over the lace, but not over a cross lace.

e. The laces must extend from the center of the ball to at least the line which shall be 3¾ inches measured from each end linearly and not in the nose indentation.

NFHS Ball and Puck Specifications

Soccer

Game balls shall be spherical with a circumference of at least 27 inches but no more than 28 inches (0.68m to 0.71m). The weight of the balls at the start of the game shall be at least 14 ounces but no more than 16 ounces (396g to 453g).

The outer casing of the ball shall be leather or other similar material that is weather resistant.

The ball shall be inflated to the manufacturer's recommended pressure.

Field Hockey

The ball shall be spherical with a plastic seamless outer surface. It may be of any solid color which contrasts with the playing surface. The ball shall be hard, solid or hollow and may be smooth or with indentations. The inner portion of a solid ball may consist of any natural or artificial material in any composition or mixture. The weight of the ball shall be 5½-5¾ ounces. The circumference must be 8¾ – 9¼ inches.

NFHS Ball and Puck Specifications

Ice Hockey Puck

The puck shall meet the following specifications:
The puck shall be a vulcanized black rubber disc, uniformly 1 inch (2.54 cm) in thickness and 3 inches (7.62 cm) in diameter, weighing from 5½ to 6 ounces (155.92 to 170.1 g), and free from cuts and indentations.

It is recommended that pucks be slightly beveled or rounded on the edges and that they be chilled before being placed in competition.

Boys Lacrosse

The ball shall be white, yellow, orange or lime green and meet the current NOCSAE lacrosse ball standard at the time of manufacture. White balls shall be used unless both coaches agree prior to or during the game to use a yellow, orange or lime green ball.

Girls Lacrosse

The ball shall be yellow, lime green or bright orange color, and meet the current NOCSAE lacrosse ball standard at the time of manufacture. The same type and color ball must be used throughout the game unless both coaches agree to change.

Note: Alternative mark size/orientation (shown) may be used for Boys and Girls Lacrosse only.

NFHS Ball and Puck Specifications

Basketball

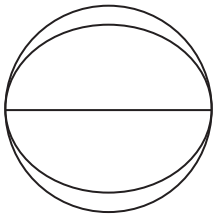
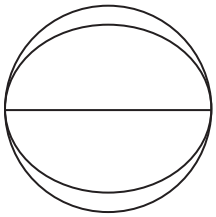
The ball shall meet the following specifications:

a. Its solid color shall be Pantone Matching System (PMS) Orange 151, Red-Orange 173 or Brown 1535.
b. It shall be spherical.
c. It shall have a deeply-pebbled, granulated surface with horizontally shaped panels bonded tightly to the rubber carcass.
d. The circumference shall be:
   1. Within a minimum of 29½ inches to a maximum of 30 inches for high school boys competition.
   2. Within a minimum of 28½ inches to a maximum of 29 inches for high school girls competition.
e. The weight shall be:
   1. Within a minimum of 20 ounces to a maximum of 22 ounces for high school boys competition.
   2. Within a minimum of 18 ounces to a maximum of 20 ounces for high school girls competition.
f. The black rubber rib separating the panels shall not exceed ¼ inch in width.

Note: By state association adoption, either legal-size ball may be used for boys junior high school competition.

The ball shall be inflated to an air pressure such that when it is dropped to the playing surface from a height of 6 feet, measured to the bottom of the ball, it shall rebound to a height, measured to the top of the ball, of not less than 49 inches when it strikes on its least resilient spot, nor more than 54 inches when it strikes on its more resilient spot.

Note: To be legal, the air pressure which will give the required reaction must be stamped on it. The pressure for game use must be such as to make the ball bounce legally.

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS		HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS
29½ – 30 Inches	CIRCUMFERENCE	28½ – 29 Inches
		
20-22 Ounces	WEIGHT	18-20 Ounces

Authenticating Mark Maximum and Minimum Sizes

For all inflatable and non-inflated balls and pucks, this format should be used:

Primary Mark

Do not use the NFHS Authenticating Mark without prior written approval from the NFHS. This mark is for use of licensees only.

- **Maximum size:** you may use the NFHS Authenticating Mark as large as you deem appropriate.
- **Minimum size:** do not reduce the mark any smaller than 2½" in length for inflatable balls and 1¼" in length for non-inflatable balls. The ® of the trademark should be clear and readable in any size you use. When re-sizing the mark, the ® must always remain in close proximity to the graphic. (If silk-screening the mark or imprinting on a heavy texture, enlarge the ® to a readable size.)
- On a ball or puck, the NFHS mark may be smaller than manufacturer's logo, but should be placed in proximity to the manufacturer's name for easy identification. Allow enough space around the mark so it can be easily recognized as distinct and separate.
- Reproduce the mark only from the vector artwork provided on Direct Licensing Hub. Do not copy, scan art electronically or use as a template to redraw the symbol.

Note: If sizing or specifications do not work well in your particular design situation, contact K12 Licensing.

Authenticating Mark Color Options and Applications

Do not use the NFHS Authenticating Mark without prior written approval from the NFHS or K12 Licensing. This mark is for use of licensees only.

On inflatable, non-inflated balls and pucks:

- Print in solid black or white on balls or pucks – whichever is most easily readable. Hot stamp or emboss into the surface if possible. To avoid unnecessary expense, contact K12 Licensing for permission before using the NFHS Authenticating Mark in any other form or color.
- The NFHS Authenticating Mark should be used as a solid; do not screen back any part of the mark.
- Do not separate individual parts of the mark from one another.
- On a ball or puck, place the NFHS Authenticating Mark in proximity to the manufacturer's logo or imprint for easy identification; but allow enough space around the NFHS Authenticating Mark so it can be easily recognized as distinct and separate.
- Reproduce the mark only from the vector artwork provided on Direct Licensing Hub. Do not copy, scan art electronically or use as a template to redraw the symbol. For electronic art files, contact K12 Licensing.

On packing and brochures:

- The NFHS Authenticating Mark may be used on packaging for product information.
- The phrase, "This product bears an NFHS Authenticating Mark certifying that it is in compliance with NFHS rules," may be used on packaging and brochures in combination with the NFHS Authenticating Mark (See page 11).
- The minimum size for the NFHS Authenticating mark is 1¼" in length, and the minimum size for the phrase, "This product bears an NFHS Authenticating Mark certifying that it is in compliance with NFHS rules," is 8-point type.
- The ® must appear and remain in close proximity to the mark.
- The maximum size for the NFHS Authenticating Mark is 2½" in length, and the maximum size for the aforementioned phrase is 12-point type.
- The NFHS Authenticating Mark should be used only as a solid; do not screen back any part of the mark.
- Do not separate the individual parts of the mark from one another.
- Allow enough space around the mark to separate it from surrounding text or graphics; it should be easily recognized as distinct and separate.
- Reproduce the mark only from the vector artwork provided on Direct Licensing Hub. Do not copy, scan art electronically or use as a template to redraw the symbol. For electronic art files, please contact K12 Licensing.

For more information, please contact:
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