



# NFHS & AIA BASEBALL

# AIA

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



## 2024 Baseball Rules Changes and Points of Emphasis

## 1-6-1 COMMUNICATION WRISTBANDS WORN ON WRIST ONLY



- **1-6-1...** Any wristband with defensive / offensive / pitching choices...It shall be worn on a players wrist or forearm and pitchers shall wear it on their non-pitching arm. ***\*\*The card can be placed in a pocket....***

- **PENALTY-** Umpire shall issue Team Warning and subsequent offenders **AND** Head Coach will be ejected.

## 1-6-1

COMMUNICATION WRIST BANDS & THE PITCHER....

- The wrist band has to be on the non-throwing forearm.
- It has to be one solid color OTHER than white or gray. This is not referencing the paper the signals are written on...
- The band should be worn such that the signals are on the bottom of the forearm. This prevents the card (white part) from being seen by the batter during the pitching delivery.





## 1-6-2 ONE WAY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

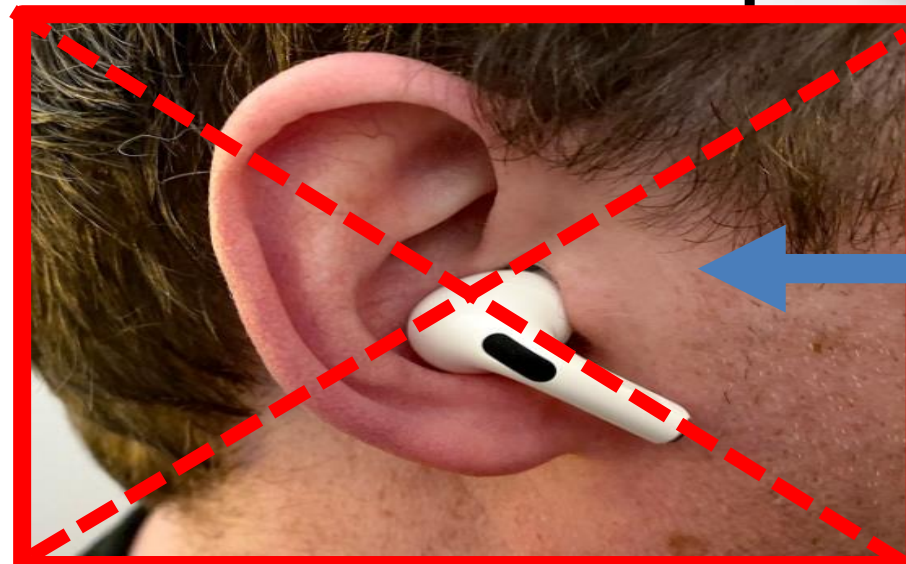


1-6-2....One-way electronic communication devices are permissible from the dugout to the catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. When using the communication device the coach cannot be outside the dugout/bench area.

**PENALTY:** The Umpire shall issue a team warning and the next offender & the Head Coach will be ejected.

1-6-2

## EXAMPLES OF ONE WAY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES



**ILLEGAL!!**

**This is a 2  
way device**

## 1-6-2 ONE WAY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES



### Key Concepts:

- One way from DUGOUT (only) to CATCHER (only).
- For the purposes of signaling or calling pitches (ONLY)
- Any other variation or purpose will result in a warning.





# AIA Baseball

POINTS OF EMPHASIS 2024





## MALICIOUS CONTACT

- While not a new topic, malicious contact registers as the third most discussed Point of Emphasis (POE) behind good sporting behavior and pitching restrictions. Malicious contact was a POE in 2006-2008 and also in 2014. The frequency of emphasis is not surprising. It is a topic that begs for a complete and understandable definition, but is unable to find one that captures every possible scenario.
- Contact or a collision is considered to be malicious if (1) the contact is the result of intentional (AVOIDABLE) contact with excessive force, and/or (2) there is intent to injure. There are other conditions that constitute malicious but this is a baseline for all of us to work from. AVOID contact when possible.
- Players that initiate AVOIDABLE contact will be in jeopardy of ejection if that contact is judged to be malicious or vicious in nature. Coaches are encouraged to teach players avoid UNNECESSARY contact when possible by sliding legally and or tagging runners in a traditional baseball fashion.





## PROFANITY (DIRECT OR INDIRECT)

- Education-based athletics is a direct extension of the classroom. When the educational component is removed, then everything changes, and it becomes a completely different game, devoid of accountability and structure.
- Regardless of what is portrayed at other levels, this is not acceptable and should be addressed by the umpire(s). The rule support for this behavior is clear, the penalties are: (1) a verbal warning to the offender, (2) issuance of a written warning to the offender which warrants being restricted to the bench/dugout for the remainder of the game, or (3) eject the offender for a major offense.
- Any language that is profane, intimidating, insulting, demeaning or hurtful will not be tolerated. Coaches, school administrators and parent groups should work together to ensure that the game creates a positive environment for all involved. Profanity spoken loud enough to be heard is profanity that needs to be dealt with immediately.

## PACE OF PLAY

- The NFHS encourages students to participate in high school activities, learn from play and be better citizens from playing. While high school baseball does not have overall game-time restrictions, the NFHS is cognizant that extended games are part of baseball.
- Baseball games can be more efficient with a focus on time and time management. Pace of play involves several factors, and the NFHS believes that giving special attention to these five areas will assist with the flow and pace of our game.
  - 20 Second Pitch Clock
  - Time between half innings
  - Batter repeatedly stepping out of the box
  - Umpire Time Management
  - Excessive Player Conferences



## PACE OF PLAY- 20 SECOND PITCH CLOCK



- A pitch shall occur every 20 seconds, with or without runners on base according to our rules.
- The pitch clock is in place to ensure that the offense and the defense are equally responsible for pace of play.
- The Base Umpire is solely responsible for this timing.



# PITCH CLOCK- **THE UMPIRE**



- The Base Umpire (for all Varsity games) will carry either a Stop Watch or Belt Timer.
- They shall time all pitches in accordance with our Pitch Clock guidelines and Inning Changeover.
- They shall accentuate the start of the clock with a motion that leaves no doubt the clock has started.
- When enforcing at Pitch Clock violation the Base Umpire shall call time, point to his wrist and then to the offender (pitcher or batter). While doing this they will verbalize “pitch clock violation on the “...”.
- The Plate Umpire will then point to his wrist and verbalize “add a ball” or “add a strike” and say the new ball strike count.

## PITCH CLOCK- **THE PITCHER**



- 6-2-2-c...the pitcher shall not delay the game by failing to pitch or make a play, including a legal feint within 20 seconds of receiving the ball.
- Should the pitcher delay more than 20 seconds then a BALL is added to the batter's count.
- If no runners on base, the pitcher has to pitch within 20 seconds.
- Runners on base they can pitch or make a play (legal feint or pickoff ) attempt. A feint, to be legal, must include action that attempts to retire a runner.

## PACE OF PLAY- **THE BATTER**



- The batter must be ready to hit within those 20 seconds or a strike will be added to their count.
- The batter, due to the 20 second clock running, will no longer be allowed to call time and step out of the box.
- If the batter takes more than 10 seconds to be in the box and alert to the pitcher (eyes up), and the 20 second clock expires then it is a violation on the **BATTER**.



## PACE OF PLAY- THE COACH



- Coaches are encouraged to expedite the giving of signs to the batter and the pitcher/catcher to assist with our rule.
- If either the offense or the defense intentionally delays or attempts to circumvent this rule then they will be guilty of violating the 20 Second Pitch Clock.
- Umpires will be enforcing this rule as written for the 2024 season.

## PACE OF PLAY- CLOCK STARTS WHEN:



- **New batter** = Pitcher on the rubber with the ball, the catcher in box and the hitter in box ALERT to pitcher. All 3 have to be in position.
- **After a foul ball or time is called** = Pitcher on the rubber with the ball, the catcher in box and the hitter in box ALERT to pitcher. All 3 have to be in position.
- **In between pitches** (ball live) = When the pitcher receives the ball in the vicinity of the mound.
- **Immediately** = after a legal feint or pick off is completed i.e. batted returned to pitcher.

## PACE OF PLAY- CLOCK STOPS WHEN:



- **Pitcher** = Pitcher begins his motion to pitch. If in the Set position, the motion after he has come set.
- **Pitcher** = Picks or legally feints to a base with runners on base. Must be an ATTEMPT to retire a runner.
- **Team** = time is granted for a **charged** offensive or defensive timeout.
- **Umpire** = the Umpire calls time for any reason.



## BATTER STEPPING OUT OF BOX



- Rules allow for the batter to step out of the box with one foot in between pitches. However once the batter steps back into the box he must remain there ready to hit BEFORE the pitch clock expires or until the pitcher steps off the rubber.
- After stepping into the box, he can only be granted time for safety reasons or to call for an offensive charged conference.

## PACE OF PLAY- **ALERT TO PITCHER**



- While our clock is running: the Pitcher may not begin his delivery to the hitter UNTIL the hitter is alert.



Cannot pitch yet...hitter's eyes are **down**.



Hitter is alert and ready for pitch...

In both scenarios our 20 Second Pitch clock is running and both teams are committed to being ready for the pitch within 20 seconds.

## BATTER STEPPING OUT OF BOX



- If this scenario is simply the batter trying to disrupt the pitchers rhythm, then the Umpire would charge the batter a strike for violating the batters box rule.
- If Pitcher has started his motion to pitch, prior to the batter being alert (eyes up ready to hit) then the umpire would call time and instruct the pitcher to give the batter time. If an actual pitch were thrown then an illegal pitch would be charged.

## PITCH CLOCK **RUNNERS OR NO RUNNERS:**



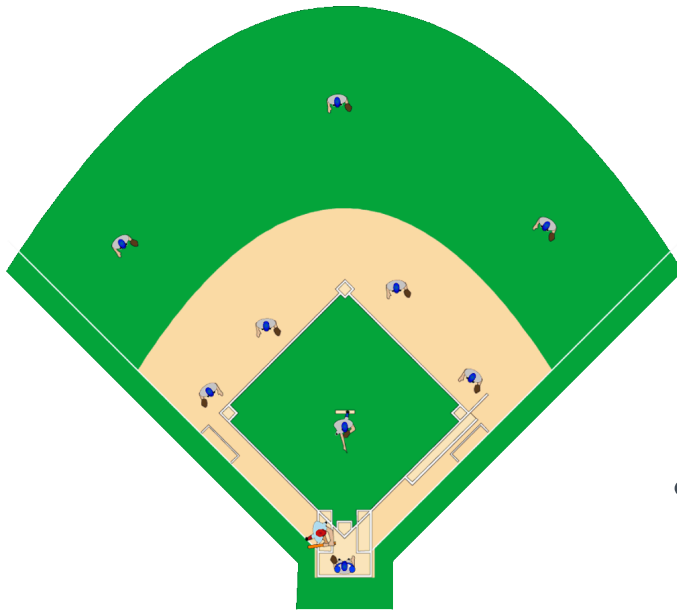
➤ **No Runners on Base:** Once the pitch clock has started there are no options for it to stop other than a legal pitch or charged defensive or offensive timeout.

1. If a pitcher steps off and the clock is running, it continues to run and the batter shall remain in the box.

➤ **Runners on Base:** Once the clock has started it can be stopped by:

1. **Defense** if they pitch, pick off or legally feint or ask for a charged conference
2. **Offense** if they ask for a charged conference.

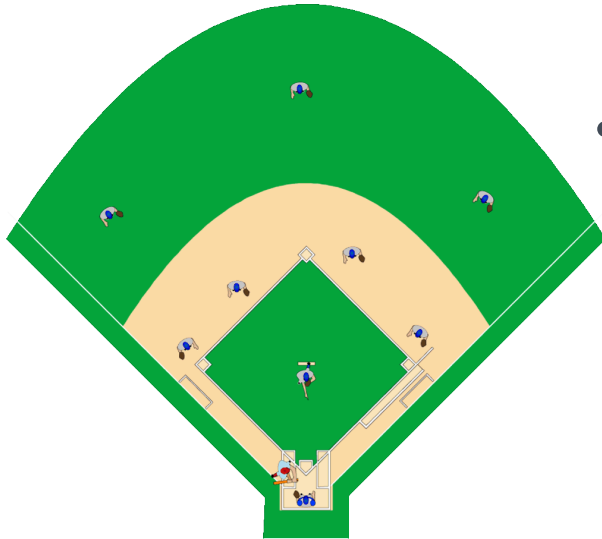
## PACE OF PLAY- **IN BETWEEN INNINGS**



- 6-2-2 EXCEPTION....states that each team, the offense and the defense, shall be ready to start the next half inning of play **1 min & 20 seconds** after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the previous half inning is recorded.
- Teams must be ready for a pitch to be delivered at the end of the 1 min 20 seconds i.e. batter in the box alert, and the pitcher ready to deliver a pitch.



## PACE OF PLAY- **IN BETWEEN INNINGS**



- If the **pitcher** is not ready then a ball is awarded to the batter. If the **hitter** is not ready then a strike is added to the batter.
- **Exceptions** will be made for extenuating circumstances such as the Pitcher or Catcher being on base the previous half inning etc. As long as the delay is reasonable, Umpires will make adjustments.
- Umpires are instructed to enforce the changeover time limit between innings for the 2024 season.

### PACE OF PLAY-

# UMPIRE TIME MANAGEMENT



- **Plate Umpire** will ACTIVELY manage the inning changeover by counting warmup pitches. They shall notify the pitcher when there are 2 pitches left and then the on deck hitter when 1 pitch is left.
- **Base Umpire** will ACTIVELY manage the time in between innings. At 30 seconds they will hold one arm up above their heads and verbalize “30 seconds left”. At one minute they will point to the Plate Umpire and verbalize “time’s up”.
- The Plate Umpire at that time will instruct the hitter to get in the box and the pitcher to “play”. The pitch clock has now started.

### EXCESSIVE PLAYER CONFERENCES



- The NFHS supports teammates encouraging each other and developing that camaraderie. That is part of the lesson one learns from playing a team sport. However, when team bonding becomes excessive and it begins to delay the game, then the umpire needs to step in and expedite the conclusion of the meeting or prevent them at all.

## AIA STATE RULE:

### DEFENSIVE CONFERENCES 3.4.1



3.4.1- Each team when on defense may not be granted more than 6 charged defensive conferences during a 7-inning game, without penalty, to confer with the pitcher or defensive players.

- A coach may not be involved in more than three of the six charged conferences allowed. A defensive player, without a coach present, may not be involved in more than three of the six.
- A team that has used all 3 of the coach visits must change the pitcher on all subsequent coach visits.
- If a player is inadvertently granted time and visit the pitcher for a fourth time, the coach will be advised and a COACH visit is charged. If no coach visits remain then the pitcher must be changed.

### AIA EXPERIMENTAL RULE: **BALK CHANGES FROM DEAD BALL ENFORCEMENT TO LIVE BALL...**



6.2.4- The penalty for a balk shall require the ball to remain live and in play, if the pitcher pitches to the batter or throws the ball to the base in an attempt to retire a runner the ball is live and in play until a fielder catches the immediate throw or pitch.

At the ending of playing action if all runners, including the batter runner, have advanced one or more bases then the balk is ignored and the result of the play stands.

- If no pitch or play, time is called and balk is enforced.



### AIA EXPERIMENTAL RULE: **BALK CHANGES FROM DEAD BALL ENFORCEMENT TO LIVE BALL...**



- If all runners including the batter runner do not advance one base, then time is called and the balk penalty is enforced. All runners advance one base from their TOP base and if a pitch was thrown to the batter that pitch is nullified and the batter returns to the previous ball strike count.
- Any runner who, during the live ball, advances beyond their advance base and is then putout, that out shall stand, even is the balk is enforced due to other runners not advancing



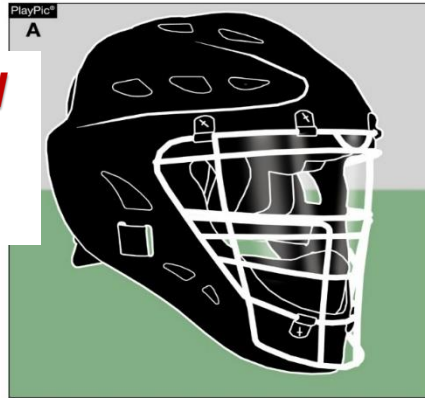
# AIA Baseball

RECAP FROM 2023 CHANGES



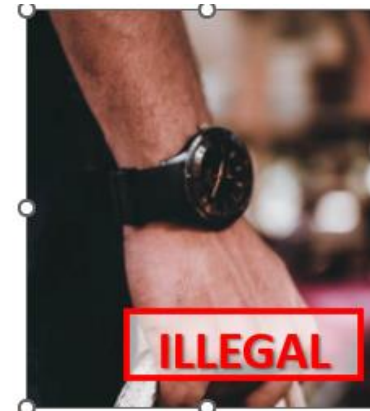
## 1-5-4: PLAYER EQUIPMENT- CATCHER'S HELMET AND MASK

***Tinted Shield  
attached =  
ILLEGAL***



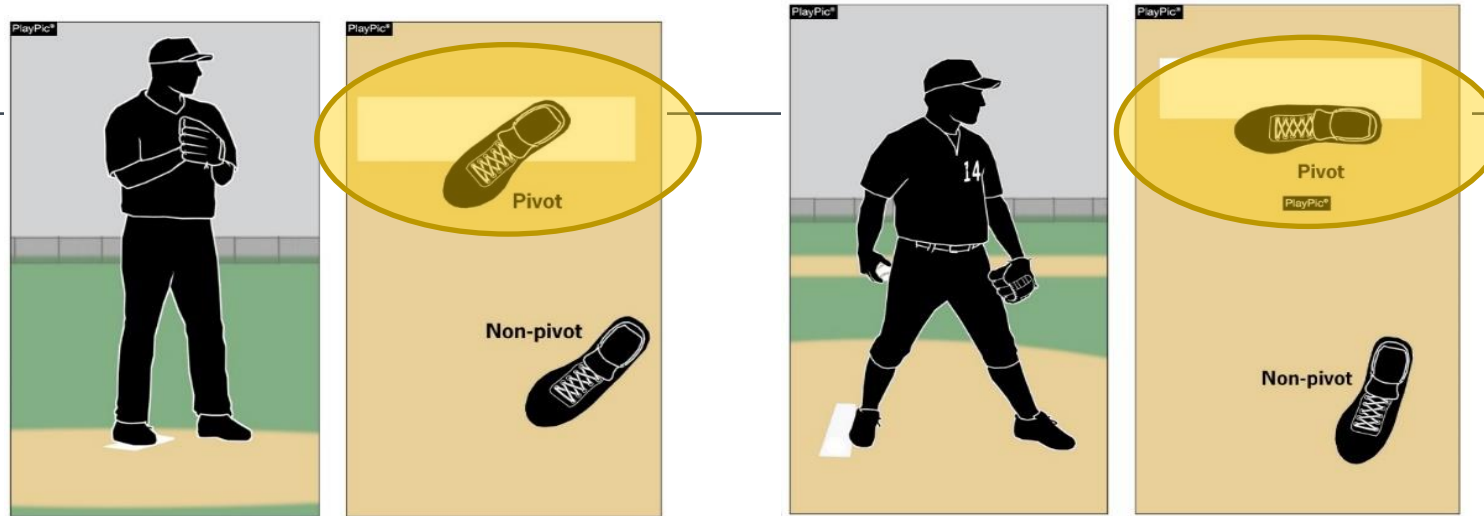
***Sunglasses  
worn under =  
LEGAL***

## 1-5-12 PLAYER EQUIPMENT – WEARING OF JEWELRY





## 6.1.1 & 6.1.2: PITCHING POSITION DEFINED



## 1-2-4 DUGOUT EXTENSIONS



## AIA APPROVED RULE: COACH'S MUST WEAR A HELMET IN COACHING BOXES





The word "fan" as in a fan of a sports team, came from the word FANATIC.

**IGNORE** the fans....they are going to say STUPID things because they are uneducated to what we do on the field.

Don't give them power....ignore STUPID people.

Umpires should only take action is if a fan is **THREATENING YOU** or **TAUNTING the opponent**.

\***Notify** Game Administration and have them address...

**UMPIRES do not talk to or eject FANATICS.**  
**Game Administration has that responsibility...**

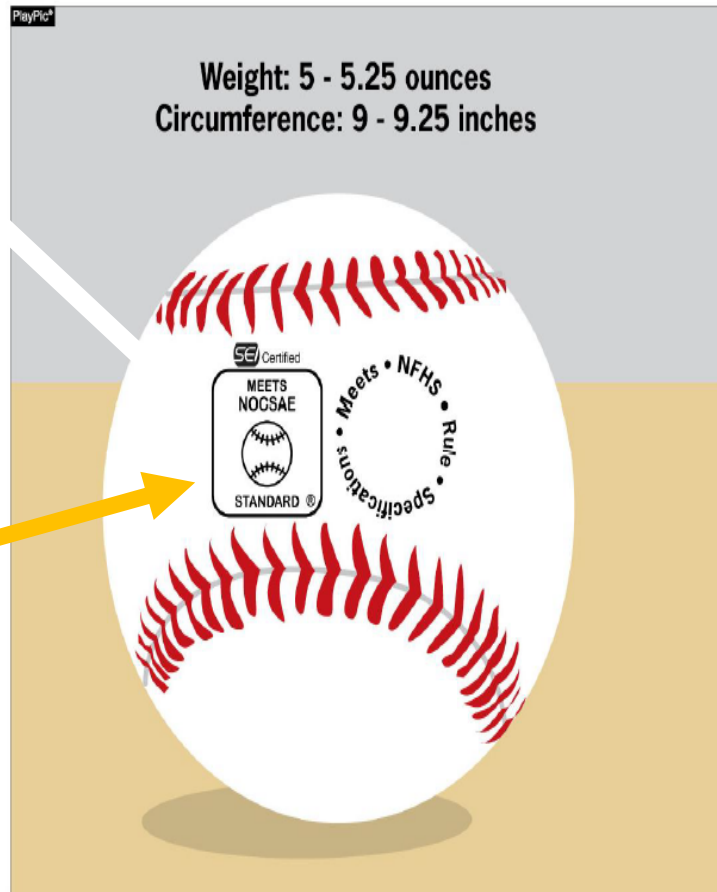
# AIA First Pitch Presentations:

## AIA State Rules & Policies



## COMPLIANT BASEBALL

NFHS notified AIA and affiliate Schools in 2017 of this pending change.



**AIA has determined that if the Home Team does not have approved NOCSAE baseballs, the Home Team Head Coach is RESTRICTED to the dugout for the game.**

**Additionally Umpires are to file an Incident Report with AIA.**



# All base coaches must wear a helmet



- Adult base coaches must wear an approved helmet when occupying a coaches box.
- The helmet may or may not have ear flaps, either is acceptable.
- PLEASE note that there is no penalty other than they simply cannot be in the coaches box.
- **DO NOT ALLOW a player / student to wear a flapless helmet at any time!**

# Time Limits

- Varsity REGULAR SEASON games do not have a time limit.
- Most Regular Season Tournament games will have a time limit.
- Freshman & JV games have a 2 hr time limit. No new inning may start after 2 hours. Umpires will keep and announce the time. The time starts at the conclusion of the plate meeting.

# Run Rules

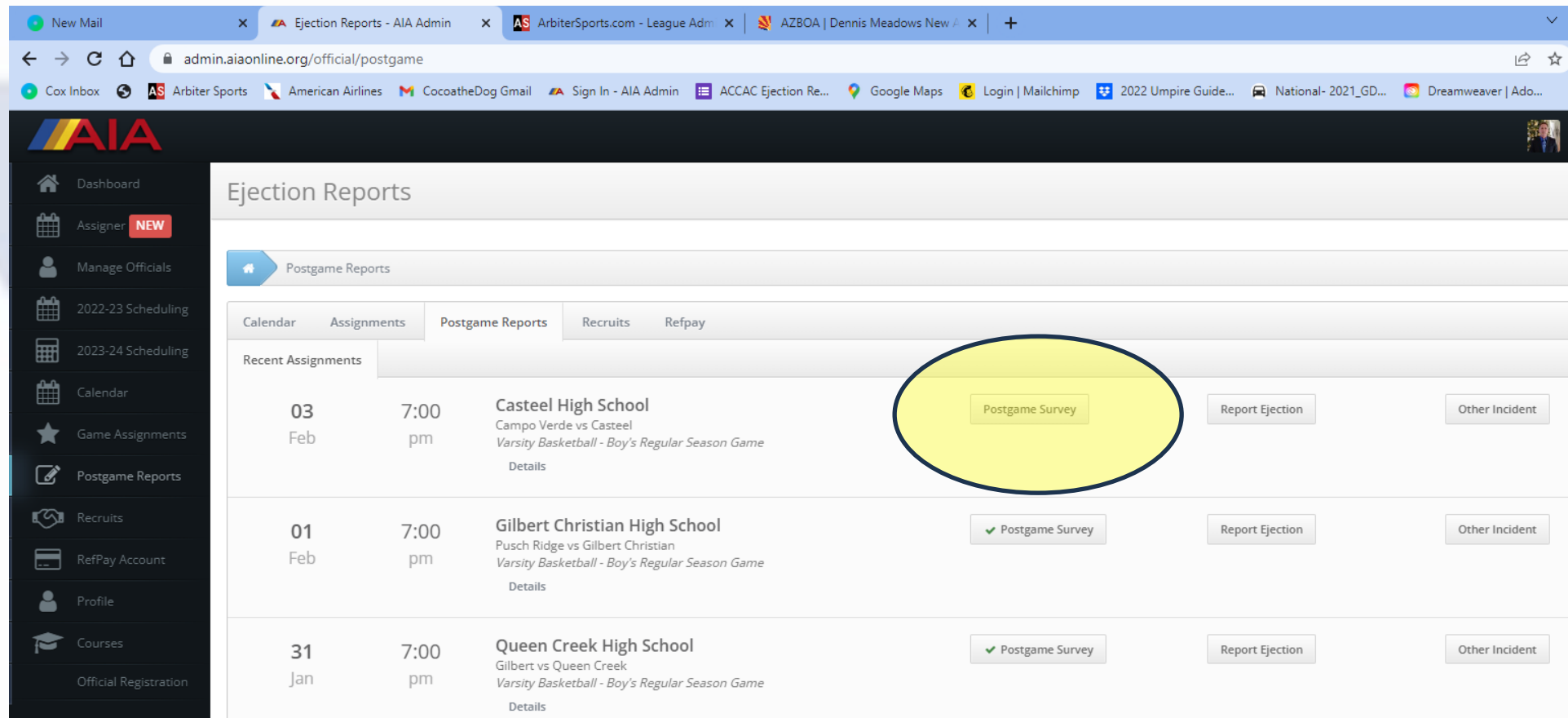
10 Run Rule after 4 ½ if home team ahead or 5 innings.

15 Run Rule after 3 ½ if home team ahead or 4 innings IF losing coach agrees. They can agree to the 15 run rule anytime, at the plate meeting or later in the game.



# Sportsmanship / Postgame Survey

**Umpires are strongly encouraged to complete the Sportsmanship survey after each game.**



The screenshot shows the AIA Admin interface. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Dashboard, Assigner (NEW), Manage Officials, 2022-23 Scheduling, 2023-24 Scheduling, Calendar, Game Assignments, Postgame Reports, Recruits, RefPay Account, Profile, Courses, and Official Registration. The main content area is titled 'Ejection Reports' and has tabs for Calendar, Assignments, Postgame Reports, Recruits, and Refpay. The 'Postgame Reports' tab is active, showing a table of recent assignments. The first row is highlighted, and the 'Postgame Survey' button is circled in yellow.

Calendar	Assignments	Postgame Reports	Recruits	Repay
03 Feb	7:00 pm	<b>Casteel High School</b> Campo Verde vs Casteel Varsity Basketball - Boy's Regular Season Game <a href="#">Details</a>	<a href="#">Postgame Survey</a>	<a href="#">Report Ejection</a> <a href="#">Other Incident</a>
01 Feb	7:00 pm	<b>Gilbert Christian High School</b> Pusch Ridge vs Gilbert Christian Varsity Basketball - Boy's Regular Season Game <a href="#">Details</a>	<a href="#">✓ Postgame Survey</a>	<a href="#">Report Ejection</a> <a href="#">Other Incident</a>
31 Jan	7:00 pm	<b>Queen Creek High School</b> Gilbert vs Queen Creek Varsity Basketball - Boy's Regular Season Game <a href="#">Details</a>	<a href="#">✓ Postgame Survey</a>	<a href="#">Report Ejection</a> <a href="#">Other Incident</a>



## Uniforms

**\*This is mandatory for all AIA Varsity Games**

**\*Sub Varsity games umpires MAY wear a blank (no logo) version of this however this is the last year.**

**Effective 2024 ALL GAMES at ALL LEVELS will wear this uniform.**

