

**GILBERT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUPERSTITION JUNIOR HIGH CONFERENCE
FLAG FOOTBALL GUIDELINES
2015-2016**

OBJECTIVE:

Flag Football is similar to regular football in a variety of skills; however, it is designed to be a recreational activity utilizing as many participants as possible. The intent is to make this activity non-contact in nature. Hitting, tackling or any other tactic that may resemble tackle football is not permitted. Blocking schemes shall be of a screening nature and not designed to create physical contact.

STARTING THE GAME:

A coin toss determines first possession. The game officials will meet with the team captains at midfield to begin the game with a coin toss. The winner of the toss will have a choice to either receive the ball or to defend a particular goal. Start of game is by free kick (punt or tee assisted). Ball must travel 20 yards, fielded cleanly then may be advanced by the return team.

1. Any ball that does not travel 20 yards because of lack of momentum, control by receiving team or control by kicking team is down at the spot of control or where the ball rests. Any ball that travels 20 yards or more may be fielded by the receiving team and advanced. If kicking team gains control, ball is dead at the spot of control.

After a score, the ball will be placed on the 20 yard line. There will be no down field blocking by the receiving team as they advance the ball down field. The ball may be advanced by running. Lateralizing the ball to a teammate is permissible. The ball will remain in play until the receiving team's flag is removed. The ball is put into play at the point where the flag is removed from the ball carrier. Each team is given 4 downs to move the ball twenty (20) yards. If they are successful, they are awarded another series of downs. If a 4th down conversion is not completed, the defensive team takes over at the spot of the ball.

If the ball is intercepted by the defensive team, the ball will be put into play at that point and the defensive team may advance the ball down field until such time that the ball carrier's flag is removed. If it is only a short distance to the next first down conversion zone, the defensive team now becomes the offensive team and will have the opportunity to gain an additional first down at the next conversion zone. All 4th down situations will be declared (punt or conversion) by the Captain to the official.

The ball will be hiked from the line of scrimmage or a shotgun formation is permitted. Ball carriers are instructed by their coaches to avoid direct contact or collisions with their opponents when advancing the ball.

The objective of the defense is to pursue the ball carrier and to remove his flag as close to the line of scrimmage as possible. Tackling a ball carrier or physical contact deemed unnecessary by the official will warrant a penalty or player disqualification.

RULE #1: PLAYERS

- Section 1. The game of flag football is played with teams consisting of nine players.
- Section 2. Flags will be worn by all players on OFFENSE and DEFENSE, with the exception of the center. If a player intercepts a pass and is not wearing a flag, the ball is dead at the spot of interception. The Center is not an eligible ball carrier or receiver.
- Section 3. A 5-yard penalty is given for any infraction of Section 2 above.
- Section 4. There must be five (5) defensive linemen on the line of scrimmage during a punt.
- Section 5. Players and coaches must stay inside the 20 yard line areas, 2-3 yards away from the sideline. A 5-yard penalty is given for this infraction. Coaches must stay within the "Coach's Box".
- Section 6. There must be five (5) players on the line of scrimmage on offense.

RULE #2: EQUIPMENT

- Section 1. Shoes: Tennis shoes or soft molded cleats (soccer or Pop Warner style) may be worn. Metal cleats, hard molded cleats, street shoes, stocking feet or bare feet will not be allowed. No regular football cleats will be allowed.
- Section 2. Uniforms: Hard surface padding such as shoulder pads or hip pads MAY NOT BE USED. Forearm pads are also illegal.
- Section 3. BALL: The official ball for games shall be an intermediate size football. Teams may use a "runner" to bring their game ball into the game when possession changes.

Section 4. Flags: Flag belts must be manufactured and designed for the game of flag football. In October, 1988, a rule was passed that a team may wear flag belts that have three (3) flags that are attached to the belt and have a clip that holds the belt onto the player. This belt is not mandatory, but is allowed in the league tournament.

1. Flags/belts must be left in an unaltered state (that is in the original manufacturer's state) throughout the entire match. Any player having an altered flag/belt to include but not limited to, tying of knots, twisting or any other alteration will be immediately ejected from the game. If the infraction occurs during the tournament, the player will be ejected for the entire tournament.
2. Flags are not to be less than 15 INCHES in length from the top of the belt.
3. Flags must be contrasting color from the pants or shorts that are worn.
4. When a player crosses the goal line, he must hold the ball above his head with both hands until an official checks the player's flags and at that time the official will award the player the touchdown.

Section 5. All players must keep their shirts tucked in their shorts or pants at all times. The official will warn the player(s) first and then if the problem continues they will penalize each team member in violation 5 yards.

Section 6. The coach should never keep the TIME or work the DOWN MARKER. The home team provides the time keeper, down marker and the people to staff these positions.

Section 7. It is the home team that will adjust to another color if the visiting team is wearing the home team's colors.

Section 8. A first aid kit should be available at the field for all practice sessions if an EMT is not available.

RULE #3: THE PLAYING FIELD

Section 1. The field shall be a rectangular area with lines and zones as shown. If chalk is used, it must be done prior to each game. Goal lines must be marked by flags or an equivalent.

Length: 80 yards
Width: Regular football field
Midfield: 40 yard line

RULE #4: TIME FACTORS

- Section 1. Playing time shall be forty (40) minutes, consisting of four (4) ten (10) minute quarters with a running clock. Half-time shall be five (5) minutes.
- Section 2. Half-time shall start with kickoff by the team that lost the coin toss in the first half.
- Section 3. The clock shall start on the ensuing snap from scrimmage. The clock is stopped for:
- a. Time-outs.
 - b. Touchdowns and during extra points.
 - c.* A dead ball (i.e., incomplete pass, fumble, out-of-bounds).
 - d.* Penalties.
- (*c & d are during the last two minutes of the half and end of the game)
- Section 4. Time will be kept by an official time keeper, provided by the host team, as well as the head official. The Head Official's time will be the official time.
- Section 5. Time-outs may be called by the captain on the field. A one (1) minute time-out is allowed. Each team is allowed two (2) time-outs per half. Time-outs from the first half may not be carried over to the second half.

RULE #5: SUBSTITUTIONS

- Section 1. Substitutions are unlimited; however, no substitutes shall enter while the ball is in play. Players entering the game must report to the huddle. There will be a penalty of 10 yards and loss of down (unsportsmanlike conduct) if a substitute player does not report to the huddle.

RULE #6: TIE BREAKER

- Section 1. Games that are tied at the end of regulation play will be resolved as follows:

Overtime begins with a coin toss. The visiting team will call the toss. The winner of the toss may choose to start with the ball or defend first. The game clock does not run during overtime, but the play clock is enforced.

The team that starts with the ball will start at the 20 yard line and have four attempts to score. The team will keep the ball until it scores a touchdown, turns the ball over (via a fumble or interception), or fails to score. There are no defensive touchdowns in overtime. Once the first team has scored, failed to score, or turned the ball over, the

second team gets that ball at the 20-yard line and attempts to score. The teams must attempt a 2 point conversion for all point after attempts during overtime. The overtime will continue until one team has more points than the other.

RULE #7: PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

- Section 1. The winner of the pre game toss shall have the choice of kicking off to the other team or given a choice of goal to defend. At half-time, the loser of the pre game toss shall now protect the opposite goal and the team that did not kick off to start the game will begin the second half with a kick off.
- Section 2. Teams have thirty (30) seconds to put the ball in play from the time the official spots the ball and starts the clock. Penalty - 5 yards.
- Section 3. In order to begin a play from the line of scrimmage, the ball must be snapped from between the legs of the center.

RULE #8: SCRIMMAGE KICKS

- Section 1. All the 4th down punts must be declared and neither team may cross the line of scrimmage until after the ball has been kicked. The punter has five (5) seconds to kick the ball. Penalty - 5 yards for delay of game.
- Section 2. The ball must travel 20 yards from the original line of scrimmage to be advanced. Any ball that does not travel 20 yards because of lack of momentum, control by receiving team or control by kicking team (inside the 20 yard zone) is down at the spot of control or where the ball rests. Any ball that travels 20 yards or more may be fielded by the receiving team and advanced. If the kicking team gains control, the ball is dead at the spot of control.
- Section 3. Free Kick: A free kick must be punted following a safety. The team that was scored against must punt from their own 20 yard line. The receiving team must line up behind midfield (40 yard line). The ball may be advanced if caught in the air, but if not, the ball is declared dead. Both teams must stay behind restraining lines until the ball has been kicked.

RULE #9: DOWNS

Section 1. A team has four (4) scrimmage downs to advance the ball to the next conversion zone.

RULE #10: DOWNED BALL

Section 1. In all cases, any ball that hits the ground is ruled dead. Exceptions to this rule are free kicks.

RULE #11: DEAD BALL

Section 1. In all cases, any ball that hits the ground is ruled dead. Exceptions to this rule are free kicks. Anytime a ball carrier's flag is removed, all play stops and the ball is dead.

RULE #12: SCORING

Section 1. Touchdown - six (6) points

Section 2. Extra Point Conversion - from the two (2) yard line --- one (1) point from the five (5) yard line --- two (2) points
The try for an extra point or points is made either by running or by passing the ball into the end zone.

Section 3. Safety --- two (2) points

It is a safety when an offensive player causes the ball to go behind his goal line and his flag is pulled or the ball hits the ground.

RULE #13: THE BALL CARRIER

Section 1. The ball carrier shall strive to avoid the defense. Any attempt by the ball carrier to RUN OVER, CHARGE, STRAIGHT ARM or STEER HIS BLOCKERS shall be illegal.

PENALTY: 10 yards from the point of the infraction/loss of down/disqualification from the game.

NOTE: Officials, in judging "running over" by the ball carrier, will keep in mind the charging rule as applied to basketball.

Section 2. Spinning - spinning is allowed.

Section 3. Hurdling - Hurdling is not permitted, as the ball carrier must have one foot in contact with the ground at all times.

Section 4. Diving - Diving is the act of the ball carrier attempting to advance the ball by diving through the air over a defensive player. No player may dive to advance the ball.

EXAMPLE: It is illegal for the ball carrier to dive over the first down or goal line to gain the first down or to score.

PENALTY: 10 yards from the infraction/loss of down.

Section 5. Spearing - The ball carrier may not run with his head down, (i.e., as a battering ram). Penalty - Player will be disqualified.

Section 6. A ball carrier is down whenever he loses his flag or when the flag is pulled off by an opponent, except in special situations, as explained in Section 7 and 8.

Section 7. When the ball carrier releases the ball and his flags are pulled and the ball is then returned to him, the ball will be declared dead.

Section 8. Premature flag pulling by the defense on purpose, in the judgment of the officials, carries a 10 yard unsportsmanlike penalty and down is played over. The penalty may be refused by the offense and the gain may be taken where the receiver catches the pass.

Section 9. Any unsportsmanlike conduct (spiking, throwing the ball into the air, or language that is deemed as not appropriate by a player or coach on or off the field of play) is not allowed. This also includes parents/fans of the players that are on the side lines. The penalty is 10 yards on the next possession if a score was made, or 10 yards from the point of the infraction.

Section 10. Quick Whistle:

a. Behind the line of scrimmage or when the ball is in the air, the play is dead and goes over.

b. Beyond the line of scrimmage, the ball is dead where it is when the whistle is blown.

RULE #14: PROTECTING THE FLAG

Section 1. The ball carrier cannot protect his flags by guarding, hacking, or holding the flag.

PENALTY: 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a loss of down.

RULE #15: BLOCKING

Section 1. All players are limited to an "Alligator Arm" style of blocking or rushing in which arms are more bent than straight. Hands should remain at equal distance from the chest and should make as little contact with the opposing players as possible. The rationale of this rule is that players should try and impede the progress of the rush, but should not joust, hold or cause undue contact, likewise, the rushing player shall maneuver in such a way into FREE SPACE as not to initiate unnecessary contact. Any rough tactics, such as attempting to run over or batter down an opponent, must be penalized as unnecessary roughness. Unnecessary roughness must be declared if the blocker uses his knees or elbows in blocking.

PENALTY: 10 yards and loss of down if by the offense
10 yards and first down if by the defense

Section 2. There can be no defensive player lined-up on the line of scrimmage between the following zones: one (1) yard on each side of the offensive center and three (3) yards in front of the center.

PENALTY: 10 yards for unnecessary roughness

Section 3. No player is permitted to use a 3 or 4 point stance.

RULE #16: DEFENSIVE ROUGHNESS AGAINST THE BALL CARRIER

Section 1. Pushing out of bounds is illegal.

Section 2. If the first defensive man between the ball carrier and the goal line is guilty of the above violation, the ball carrier shall be given the score he would have attained if he was not fouled.

Section 3. Any contact other than that of pulling the flag is illegal.

EXAMPLES: Holding, grabbing the arm of the ball carrier or tripping are all causes for unnecessary roughness.

PENALTY: 10 yards from the spot of the foul/down remains the same.

SPECIAL POINT OF INTEREST

FORWARD PASS - A forward pass may be thrown by the team which has put the ball in play from the line of scrimmage. There may be more than one legal pass during down but each must be thrown behind the line of scrimmage. The passer is declared down if his flag is withdrawn by a defensive player or if the passer accidentally pulls his own before his arm is in a forward motion.

FUMBLE - Any ball fumbled is down and spotted at the place in which the ball carrier lost control of the ball. Exception: When fumbling the ball forward and it lands in the end zone, the fumbling team must start the next play at the opposing team's 20 yard line. If it was 4th down Defending team takes possession on their own 20 yard line.

Any player intentionally fumbling/lofting the ball into the end zone will be automatically ejected for remainder of the game. If during tournament, they will be ejected for the remainder of the tournament.

PASS RECEIVING - A receiver needs to have only one foot in bounds when catching a pass.

PASS INTERFERENCE - A 10 yard penalty will be assessed from the original line of scrimmage and an automatic first down.

ELIGIBILITY:

The Superstition Conference Flag Football program is designed to accommodate both boys and girls as a co-ed program. Teams will be organized so that they are divided evenly where both girls and boys are participating.

All students will be required to complete a waiver of liability or provide proof of student accident coverage. Students will be required to meet district and state eligibility requirements.

SEASON OF SPORT

The sport will begin with student registration the first week of school. All students will be required to complete an eligibility clearance packet prior to participation in the program.

Maximum eight (8) teams per school
12-20 students per team

FIELD INFORMATION:

1. Dimensions:

80 yards in length, 54 yards wide
20 yard down increments
40 yard line = midfield

FIELD EQUIPMENT:

1. Eight 24" cones
2. Four Goal Line flags

GAME EQUIPMENT:

1. 20 Scrimmage Vests per team
2. One Air horn
3. One Time clock
4. 40 Flag Belts (two colors)
5. Intermediate-sized Football

INTER-SCHOOL GAME UNIFORM:

1. T-Shirts (different colored shirts for each team)
2. Dark Shorts
3. Shoes, tennis shoes or soft molded cleats (soccer/Pop Warner style) may be worn. Metal cleats, hard molded cleats, street shoes, stocking feet or bare feet will not be allowed. Football cleats will not be allowed.

CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT UNIFORM:

1. School's existing 7th grade jersey/football pants.

Bylaw 11 - Flag Football

Refer to the Gilbert Public Schools Superstition Conference Flag Football Guidelines for complete rules and regulation for flag football. Flag football is an intramural sport. Coaches shall officiate all regular season games.

1. Selection of the All-Star team will not occur prior to **October 9, 2015**.
2. Scrimmages will be limited to three (3) per season. Only one scrimmage per school will be allowed after the all-star team is selected.
3. Tournament: Rotation of Seeding

2015 Seeding

Highland JH
South Valley JH
Mesquite JH
Greenfield JH
Desert Ridge JH
Gilbert JH

2016 Seeding

South Valley JH
Mesquite JH
Greenfield JH
Desert Ridge JH
Gilbert JH
Highland JH