

PLAINFIELD OPTIMIST



YOUTH FOOTBALL

2026 Program

Table of Contents

1. Football Board	3
2. Program Description	4
3. Players Qualifications	5
4. Coaching Requirements	6
5. Required Equipment	7
6. Evaluations and Draft	8
7. Practices	9
8. Special Rules for Playing the Game	10
9. Regular Season and Tournament Guidelines	18
10. All-Stars	18
11. Junior Red Pride Team.....	20
12. 2026 Schedule/Important Dates	21

1 Football Board

Cody Elliott	League Director Ph: (317) 554-9693 Email: cl Elliott12@gmail.com
David Mongan	Assistant Director/Treasurer Ph: (317) 431-3887 e-mail: dmongan@firstmerchants.com
Nick Terry	Rookie Coordinator Ph: (219) 381-6214 e-mail: terrynpurdue@gmail.com
Johnny Jay	Minor Coordinator Ph: (317) 306-6858 Email: johnny.jay@nufarm.com
Devin Hayes	Major Coordinator Ph: (317) 752-1393 e-mail: djhayes39@gmail.com
Justin Jezierski	All Stars Coordinator Ph: (317) 534-9109 Email: Jezierski@gmail.com
Brendon Bennett	Sponsorship/Concessions Coordinator Ph: (317) 432-5824 e-mail: sodeez.indy@gmail.com
Jake Jones	Equipment Coordinator Ph: (317) 964-3596 Email: Jacobjones@plainfield.k12.in.us
Tyler Bless	Board Member/Varsity Head Football Coach Ph: (317) 363-0015 Email: tbless@plainfield.k12.in.us
Greg Horn	Game Day/Rules Coordinator Ph: (317) 995-4378 Email: Gregory.horn.2@gmail.com
Tom Fox	Schedule/Social Media Coordinator Ph: (317) 800-3659 Email: foxthomasjoseph@gmail.com

2 Program Description

2.1 Introduction

The Plainfield Optimist Football Program is a service to the youth in the Plainfield Community. It is geared to provide an outlet of healthful activity and training under good leadership in the atmosphere of wholesome community participation. The program is dedicated to helping youth build a foundation for growth and development. We should try to establish for each youth the rudiments of hard work, teamwork and fair play.

2.2 Program Objectives and Values

- Sportsmanship
- Sound fundamental instruction
- Basic and general knowledge of rules, positions and techniques
- Physical fitness through individual sacrifice
- The challenge to compete to the best of their ability
- Establishing personal and team goals
- Providing guidance in achievement of said goals
- The values of team play
- Good citizenship
- Healthful and social associations with peers

2.3 Insurance

All coaches and volunteers are covered by the Club's general liability policy. However, the club does not maintain medical insurance. Accordingly, all participants and volunteers must have their own medical insurance coverage.

2.4 Director and Board Requirements

- The Optimist League Director is required to be an Optimist member.
- At least half of the Optimist Football Program board members must be an Optimist member.

2.5 Registration

- Registration will begin on April 1st and will end on June 1st. Late registrations will not be accepted once league uniforms have been ordered.
- Registration fees will be \$145 for Majors and Minors and \$135 for Rookies.

3 Player Qualifications

The league is divided into three (3) separate divisions: Major, Minor, and Rookie League.

Rookie League is made up of Kindergarten, first and second grade students. Any player that turns 9 years of age before August 1st of the current season is not eligible to play Rookie League Football and must play in the Minor Division, unless specifically authorized by the Football Board (hereafter referred to as "The Board."). Kindergarten students will be eligible to play in the Rookie league on an exception basis and must be approved by the Football Board.

The Minor Division is made up of 3rd and 4th grade students. Any player that turns 11 years of age before August 1st of the current season is not eligible to play in the Minor Division and must play in the Major Division, unless specifically authorized by the Board..

The Major Division is made up of 5th and 6th grade students. Any player that turns 13 years of age before August 1st of the current season is not eligible to play in the Major Football Division in the league, unless specifically authorized by the Board..

The football board reserves the right to request that a player who is eligible for a lower division be moved up a division. This process will be initiated by the Board and will be based on player weight, skill level, and risk to other players in the lower division. There will not be a process in place to allow parent requests to move a player up a division. If a player is moved up a division by the Board, he will only be eligible for the All Star teams that correspond with the grade levels that comprise the division to which the player was moved.

To be eligible to participate in the Plainfield Optimist Football Program, the player must reside in the Plainfield School District or be a student within the boundaries of the Plainfield School District. Students who attend private schools, or are homeschooled, and meet the above requirements will be deemed eligible. Anyone else seeking to participate must obtain approval to do so by the Plainfield Optimist Football Board. No exceptions will be granted after the official close of registration date.

Any exceptions to the above qualifications will have to be approved by the Board and the Optimist Club's board of directors.

4 Coaching Requirements

It is the goal of the Board to find and select coaches that best represent the values and objectives of our football program and community. Coaches have a significant impact on the players, parents and the football program. Therefore, the selection of the coaches should not be taken lightly. The Board will select the head coaches for each division. The head coach will select **no more than two (2) assistant coaches for that team.**

A team's coaching staff is in complete charge of a team whenever it is together on the practice or playing field or together for any team function. The coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach; other coaches are called Assistant Coaches. The following applies to all coaches:

- A Head Coach must be at least 18 years of age or a high school graduate.
- An Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age or a high school graduate. The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the Assistant Coaches.
- Coaches are to be selected by methods approved by the Football Board.
- Coaches / assistant coaches are subject to, and must submit to, a background check that will be governed by the "SSCI Background Screening Solutions."
- The governing Optimist Board must approve the appointment of all coaches in advance of the season.
- Coaching appointments are made on an annual basis only and do not carry over to any subsequent seasons.
- Coaches do not make League policy. Rather, they carry it out. However, on the playing and practice fields, the coaching staff is in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rule violations and any other conduct deemed by the Football Board to be contrary to the welfare of players.
- The Head Coach has final responsibility for his actions, those of his assistant coaches, players and parents.
- The Head Coach will be required to prepare a written Practice Plan to guide the activities of each practice throughout the season.

5 Required Equipment

The following items shall be worn by all players:

- Helmet: Only helmets bearing the NOCSAE Seal of Certification may be worn. All helmets must bear the current NOCSAE approved "Warning Label" in a visible position on the outside of the helmet.
- Shoulder Pads
- Pants: One Piece or shell
- Hip Pads
- Tail Pads
- Thigh Pads
- Knee Pads
- Jersey
- Mouth guard
- Athletic Support or Compression Shorts
- Shoes: Sneakers, molded rubber cleats (soccer style), or detachable rubber or plastic (football style) cleats are permitted. No metal cleats are permitted. Cleats may not exceed a 1/2" in length.
- Eyeglasses: When worn, shall be of athletically-approved construction with non-shattering glass (safety glass) or contact lenses.
- Jewelry of any type is prohibited, except religious or medical medallions, which must be covered by the player's uniform.
- The wearing of headgear containing knots, including beads and/or decorative hair ornaments is prohibited.
- Any face mask visors or plastic shields must meet NFHS requirements and must be clear plastic without tint or color. If medically required to wear a tinted visor written documentation from a doctor must be provided for review. Players eyes must be visible through the visor and the Plainfield Optimist Football Board will grant final approval after review.

6 Evaluations and Draft

Evaluations:

The evaluation process for all age groups will take place on a scheduled date and time. The High School coaching staff will complete the evaluation of each player and will provide their assessments to the league director to distribute to the Optimist coaches prior to the draft. The Optimist coaches for each age group are strongly encouraged to attend the evaluations to observe the players. We will hold a scheduled make-up evaluation date for players who are unable to participate in the primary evaluation date. Evaluation format will be all players K-6th grades for the regular scheduled evaluation date. Junior Red Pride tryouts will be held on a different date and will be open to all 6th grade players interested in trying out for the team.

Teams will be selected on a draft basis in order to allow a fair opportunity for the construction of each team. The primary purpose of the draft is to ensure equal player talent distribution among all teams in each division. Player evaluations and team assignments will be performed by the coaches of the respective divisions.

Procedure:

The Board will determine the placement of each coach's child on the draft board. After the evaluations, and before the draft, all head coaches need to submit their personal ranking of: the top 2 rounds of higher grade backs and top 2 rounds of higher grade linemen; top 2 rounds of lower grade backs and top 2 rounds of lower grade linemen to their divisional coordinator. The coordinator will then summarize all the rankings and send them to all the coaches before the draft.

Rounds 1-4:

The first two rounds of the draft will be used to draft the higher graded backs and the next 2 rounds (rounds 3-4) for picking the lower graded backs. These rounds will be used to draft the backfield positions.

Rounds 5-8:

The next two rounds (rounds 5-6) will be used to draft the higher graded linemen, followed by the lower graded linemen for the next two rounds (7-8).

Rounds 9 & Up:

Starting in round 9 will be an open draft for either grade.

- Coaches may not lock any players in the draft. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Board.
- All rounds will be in a snake fashion except for the last round. Team one (1) will have last pick, team two (2) will have the 2nd to last pick, etc.
- The number of teams will be determined by using a minimum number of 13 players per team for the minor and major division and 11 players per team for the rookie division.
- The first four (4) rounds (rounds 1-4) will be used for picking offensive/defensive back positions.
- The next four (4) rounds (rounds 5-8) will be used for picking linemen. The first pick in this section is made by the person with the last pick in the first round.
- A coach cannot select a player over the weight limit in the offensive/defensive back rounds.
- A coach is not required to select a player over the weight limit in the lineman rounds of the draft.
- Round 9 will begin "open" drafting to fill out team rosters.

* see draft template

Late registrations: Players who register after the draft is complete will be added to the team with the next pick in the draft or to a team who has a player quit before the season starts whichever happens first.

7 Practices

The following practice rules will be followed by all teams in each division.

- The week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday
- Practices may not exceed two hours for Minors/Majors. Rookie practices may not exceed 1.5 hours.
- A team may not participate in more than three (3) days of practice or games per week after school has started. (i.e., Practice Mon., Wed., Sat., or Practice Tues., Wed., games on Sat.)
- Prior to school starting, during the first week or weekend of practices, teams are allowed one extra practice.
- Teams will not be permitted to have more than (2) padded events the final 2 weeks of the regular season. (i.e. Padded Practice Mon., Unpadded Practice Wed., game on Sat.)
- All Star teams are permitted 1 additional unpadded walk-through instructional session per week in addition to the limits listed above after teams are selected at the end of week 3. Starting the last 2 weeks of the regular season the players can wear pads for the additional session and the session could also include playing a game. At the conclusion of the league season tournament teams can practice in pads at the same activity limits listed above.
- Any team found violating these rules for practices will forfeit a win from their final record (See section 12 for specific forfeiture rules).
- All teams must practice at their designated time and day slot. If a team wishes to move to another day, they must receive approval by the league director.
- No team is permitted to practice or scrimmage anywhere that has not been approved by the Plainfield Optimist Club.
- No team is permitted to practice or scrimmage with a non-Optimist team or club without Optimist Football Board approval.
- No team is permitted to practice or scrimmage with an Optimist team from another division unless the same Head Coach is coaching both teams and is an exception rather than common practice.
- Live scrimmages with another Optimist team are limited to 30 minutes per practice.
- Teams can come together for walk through instructional sessions or skill development practices at any time.
- Practices must be held at the Optimist Football Facility unless granted approval from the Optimist Football Board.

Heat Guidelines

- Practices will be cancelled if the Heat Index is above 105.
- If the index is between 100-105 practices will be limited to no helmets or shoulder pads.
- The Plainfield Optimist Club Sports Directors will make final call on cancelations and communicate their decision to the Plainfield Optimist Football Board.

8 Special Rules for Playing the Game

The Plainfield Optimist Youth Football League will follow the Official High School Football rules as published by the National Federation of School Associations, except as amended by this document.

8.1 Rookie Division Playing Field

The Rookie Division will play on one of the regulation-sized fields that will be split at the 50 yard line and have 2 games being simultaneously played.

8.2 Length of Periods

Rookie League.....10 minutes (4) rolling clock
Minors.....12 minutes (4) rolling clock
Majors.....12 minutes (4) rolling clock

Breaks between Quarters (all divisions)

Between 1st & 2nd; 3rd & 4th quarters.....2 minutes
Between 2nd & 3rd quarters.....5 minutes

Rookie League referees will keep the game clock on a handheld stop watch if scoreboard is not available.

Rookie League referees will administer a 1 minute play clock between downs; failure to comply with the play clock requirement may result in loss of down.

Minors and Majors clock will stop when a player scores and will not restart until the ball is set for play of the next possession unless a team is up by 18 points and at that point the clock will continue to run after the score.

8.3 Weight Limits

One weigh-in will occur on a designated date prior to evaluations. This weight will be used for the entire season.

8.3.1 Rookie Division

Any athlete in the Rookie League who weighs in excess of 80 lbs on the scale at the weigh-in site (without pads) must wear a single contrasting stripe, at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide, down the center of their helmet. In addition, any Rookie League league player in excess of 105 lbs (without pads) will wear a double stripe. No other players may have stripes down the center of their helmets. Any player weighing more than 125 lbs will not be allowed to play defense. This player will be considered a triple striper.

8.3.2 Minor Division

Any athlete in the Minor league who weighs in excess of 95 lbs on the scale at the weigh-in site (without pads) must wear a single contrasting stripe, at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide, down the center of their helmet. In addition, any minor league player in excess of 120 lbs (without pads) will wear a double stripe. No other players may have stripes down the center of their helmets. Any player weighing more than 145 lbs will be considered a triple-

striper. This player will only be eligible to play on the interior of the offensive line (Center or Guard), or defensive line (Defensive Tackle).

8.3.3 Major Division

Any athlete in the Major league who weighs in excess of 120 lbs. (without pads) on the scale at the weigh-in site, must wear a single contrasting stripe down the center of their helmet and follow the same rule stated above for the minor league. In addition, any Major league player in excess of 145 lbs., (without pads) will wear a double stripe. No other players may have stripes down the center of their helmets. Any player weighing more than 185 lbs will be considered a triple-striper. This player will only be eligible to play on the interior of the offensive line (Center, Guard, or Tackle), or defensive line (Defensive Tackle).

8.3.4 Stripers

The following rules govern the play of the stripers (both single and double stripers) in Rookie League, Minor or Major leagues:

- A. Stripers may not possess the ball at any time on offense or defense with the following exceptions; pass interception, fumble recovery, kickoff or punt. In these cases the ball is dead and the whistle is blown. No advancement permitted.
- B. No striper can play the deepest position on defense.
- C. On defense a double striper must line up within 1 yard of the line of scrimmage and cannot exceed the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. A triple striper must line up 1 yard of the line of scrimmage and can only play the interior of the defensive line.
- D. A team found illegally pulling stripers or illegally lining up stripers will be assessed a 15 yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.
- E. On offense, stripers must follow these rules:
 1. Rookies - A striper (single or double) may not be down field on any pass play. They are not eligible receivers.
Minors/Majors - A single striper may play a tight end, from a 3 or 4 point stance, catch the ball but not advance.
 2. A striper (single or double) may serve as the punter, but may not advance the ball if he fumbles the ball during the punt.
 3. A striper may serve as a kicker and as a holder for a kicker
 4. All double stripers must line up on the line of scrimmage. A single striper is allowed to line up one yard away and one yard back from the tackle or tight end (i.e. blocking wing back). Only single stripers are allowed to pull.
 5. All double stripers must play the interior line positions, either the center, guard, or tackle position. This means a double striper may not be lined up more than two (2) positions from the center.
 6. All triple stripers must play the interior line positions, either the center, guard, or tackle position. This means a double striper may not be lined up more than two (2) positions from the center.

8.4 Player Participation

Each team may start the game with 9 players and may continue to play as long as they have 9 players on the field. The opposing team must play with an equal number of players as their opponent.

Injured players must sit out at least one play. The referee may call time-out and order a player from the field for this reason.

All Player Shortage situations require the League Director's Approval. The team must have less than 13 players to request a player from another team. May not exceed 13 players if using players from another team. The player wears his original team's jersey (No-Switching of jerseys). If a team has 11 players from its own team they must play those players and a sub player does not enter the game unless an injury occurs or a player requests to come out due to fatigue.

8.5 Coach Interaction

In Rookie League each team may have 2 coaches on the field during the play. . [**Major coach's will not be allowed on the field of play at all, however they may come to the near hash marks to call a play or instruct after the play is over. Minor coaches will be subject to the rule below regarding coaches on the field**]. The coaches must stand at least 10 yards behind the deepest players and may not say anything once the offensive quarterback puts his hands under the center, or begins his cadence. Both the offensive and defensive coach must remain silent until the whistle blows the play dead. Failure to follow this could result in a warning, followed by an unsportsmanlike penalty. Repeat offenses could result in the coach being removed from the field of play.

Off field coaches can speak freely as long as rules of decorum and sportsmanship are maintained. Each team is limited to a maximum of three coaches, regardless of where they are located (game field or sideline), during the games.. Sideline coaches will be identified to the game officials at the beginning of each game and will wear lanyards/cards identifying them as such. No other adults are allowed on the sidelines during games.

8.5.1 Minor Division Field Coaches

In addition to the above rules, in the minor division only, coaches will be allowed on the field during play under the following schedule and guidelines:

- One coach for each team will be allowed on the field for offense/ in the offensive huddle during the entire game for the entire season including the tournament.
- One coach for each team will be allowed on the field for defense during the entire game for the entire season.
- Any violation of the above will result in a timeout being charged to the offending coach. If no timeout is available, an unsportsmanlike penalty will be charged against the offending team.

8.6 Kicking / Change of Possession

8.6.1 Rookie Division

The Rookie league will not utilize a kickoff. Each possession will start at the 40 yard line.

There is no punting in the Rookie division. If a team fails to convert a 4th down the ball will turnover on downs to the other team and they will start a new possession on the 40 yard line.

8.6.2 Minor Division

The Minor league will not utilize a kickoff. After a score, or the opening possession of each half, the ball will be placed at the team's own 35 yard line. After a touchdown is scored, either a 1 or 2 point conversion can be attempted from the 3 or 5 yard line. Running or passing for the conversion will count as 1 point from the 3 yard line or will count as 2 points from the 5 yard line. Kicking the conversion will count as 2 points. If kicking, the line of scrimmage will be at the 3 yard line, the holder must be 7 yards behind the line of scrimmage. The referee will place the ball next to the tee. When the referee blows his whistle, the holder may place the ball on the tee and the kick may take place. Should the holder drop the ball, or if the ball falls off the tee, then the play may continue. **In the Minor league, there shall be no rush. This same rule shall apply for field goals.**

There is no punting in the Minor League and a 25 yard walk off will take place. The ball can be placed no deeper than the 15 yard line in the opponents territory. There will be a 45 second run off if a coach chooses to punt. If the coach has exhausted his 45 second play clock then the clock stops at that point and an additional 45 seconds is not run off. During the last two minutes of the first half or game the clock run off will be 15 seconds in the event the opposing team calls timeout or the offensive player goes out of bounds and the clock is stopped.

8.6.3 Major Division

The Major league will not utilize a kickoff. The balance of the rules that apply to the Minor Division kicking game apply to the Major league as well.

There is no punting in the Major League and a 30 yard walk off will take place. All walk off timing and ball placement rules from the Minor League apply to the Major League as well.

8.7 Defensive Formations

8.7.1 Rookie Division

Rookie League will utilize a 4-4 scheme.

In all standard play, the offensive center will be uncovered. The defensive linemen (tackles and ends) shall be lined up directly across from an opposing player. Gap loop stunts are not permitted; the down defensive alignment must play either the inside or the outside gap of the player over which he is aligned.

Rookie League linebackers will be required to initially align four yards off the neutral zone and cannot advance until the ball is "snapped" into play. Upon the start of a "play" the inside linebacker may advance into any gap desired. Inside linebackers can be aligned in any gap but not be started outside of the widest "down lineman".

The safety will be aligned 8 yards deep over the offensive center.

In goal line situations, inside the 5 yard line only, linebackers can be within 2 yards of the LOS. The safety can be within 4 yards of the LOS.

There is no blitzing.

Mandatory formations for defense will be provided to the head coaches by the Board.

8.7.2 Minor Division

The Standard Defense used will be the 4-4 Defense.

- Four (4) defensive linemen and four (4) linebackers, two (2) corners and one (1) safety.
- Defenses may have only four (4) interior defensive players on the line of scrimmage. Defensive Ends must line up no wider than a half shade of the widest offensive linemen on the line of scrimmage. The Defensive Ends inside shoulder must be lined up directly across from the Offensive linemen's outside shoulder. Defensive Ends may not stand up at any time. All other players must be at least three (4) yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap of the football, unless the offense is running motion, to which the outside linebackers may adjust. The lineman or linebackers cannot cover the center.
- Linebackers must be four yards (unless offense is in running motion) deep and cannot move forward until the ball is snapped.
- The Safety must be the deepest player on defense.
- Corners must also be 5 yards wider or more than the widest player on the line and line up a minimum of 4 yards from the LOS.
- There is no blitzing.

Exceptions:

- More than four (4) defensive players on the LOS will be allowed during the following situations:
 - If the ball is on the goal line (2 yard line or closer), then the defense may bring additional players to the LOS, but the center must remain uncovered.

Penalty for infraction will be a 5 yards against the defense.

8.7.3 Major Division

The Standard Defense used will be the 4-4 Defense.

- Four (4) defensive linemen and four (4) linebackers, two (2) corners and one (1) safety.
- Defenses may have only four (4) interior defensive players on the line of scrimmage. Defensive Ends must line up no wider than a half shade of the widest offensive linemen on the line of scrimmage. The Defensive Ends inside shoulder must be lined up directly across from the Offensive linemen's outside shoulder. Defensive Ends may not stand up at any time. Defensive Tackles may line up on a half shade of the Offensive Guards inside or outside shoulder. They must make contact with the Offensive Guard prior to shooting the gap. All other players must be at least four (4) yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap of the football, unless the offense is running motion, to which the outside linebackers may adjust. In this case, the outside linebackers may walk up to the line of scrimmage. The lineman or linebackers cannot cover the center.
- Linebackers must be four yards deep and cannot move forward until the ball is snapped.
- The Safety must be the deepest player on defense.
- Corners must also be 5 yards wider or more than the widest player on the line.
- There is no blitzing.

Exceptions:

- More than four (4) defensive players on the LOS will be allowed during the following situations:
 - If the offensive team lines up with wide outs, the defense may pull their DB's up in a press coverage.
 - If the ball is on the goal line (2 yard line or closer), then the defense may bring additional players to the LOS, but the center must remain uncovered.

Penalty for infraction will be a 5 yards against the defense.

8.8 Offense

8.8.1 Rookie League

The intent of the Rookie League is to be instructional; an official game score will not be kept.

Offensive line: the Rookie League will employ a base five man offensive line consisting of one center, two guards and two tackles. The maximum split between the linemen will be up to but no more than 12 inches. Offensive tackles cannot be declared eligible for ball advancement. The five offensive linemen are never eligible receivers, regardless of whether they are covered or not.

Pass plays are allowed and pass blocking / ineligibility rules will be enforced

Skilled positions: the offense may have no more than four players aligned off of the line of scrimmage. Backs may be aligned as:

- Quarterback can be directly under center or lined up in shotgun formation.
- Running backs directly behind or offset of the Quarterback
- Aligned as a "slot" or "wing"
- The fourth skilled position can be utilized as a tight end or split end and can be on the line of scrimmage.
- There will be a handout of approved formations given to all Rookie League coaches. These formations are the only formations that will be allowed in the Rookie League.

8.8.2 Minors/Majors Formations

The intent of the Minors/Majors is to provide an opportunity for players to participate in plays similar to what they will likely experience if they go on to play organized football for Plainfield Middle School/High School.

The Plainfield High School and Middle School coaches will provide an approved list of formations that will be distributed to the coaches at the beginning of the season and only those formations will be permitted during the season and tournament.

8.9 Blood-borne Pathogens Rule

Any player found to be bleeding during a game must be removed from play. That player cannot return to the game until the bleeding is stopped and blood found on his clothing is removed. A spare jersey will be provided to the coaches in this event.

8.10 Concussions

The league is taking a proactive stance on dealing with head injuries. Coaches or Game Officials may, at their discretion, remove a player from a practice or game if that player is suspected of having suffered any injury to the head. We will leverage information and guidelines available from USA Football to assess potential head injuries and react accordingly. Each coach will have a concussion guideline manual and a one page cheat sheet provided to them. These items will also be available in the field manual at each facility.

Upon being removed from activity based on suspected head injury, the player will be subjected to an assessment that includes a series of questions to be answered by the player. The answers to those questions will dictate whether the player is allowed to resume activity or is placed into the protocol that requires the player's activity to be suspended pending medical treatment.

Any player who has been removed from a practice or game as a result of suspected head injury MUST receive a medical release from a doctor or licensed medical professional prior to being allowed to resume football related activities. If the player has been suspended from activities, this release must be in writing and a copy on file with the director prior to resuming football related activities.

8.11 Heat Index

Games will be canceled if the heat index exceeds 105 degrees.

8.12 Lopsided/Intentionally Run-up Scores

Any time a team goes up by 18 points or more, the following will occur:

- The official clock will become a running clock and once started can only be stopped for injury of a player or at the discretion of a referee. It cannot revert to a game clock operation until the point differential is less than 18 points.
- Once an 18-point difference is obtained between the two opponents, the winning team must change out their offensive backfield including the quarterback. Those players can play on the LOS, they do not have to go to the sidelines.
- There will be no blitzing by the winning team once the clock becomes a running clock and the lopsided rule is in effect.
- The winning defensive team cannot advance a fumble or pass interception. The ball is blown dead immediately. The winning offense may start play from this point.
- The teams are still required to complete the mandatory play rule.
- An investigation will be conducted by the Football Board if a game ends with a score differential of 28 points or more.

8.12.1 Investigation by the Football Board

When the a game ends with a score differential of 28 points or more, the Football Board shall require the Head Coach and all Assistant Coaches of each team to submit written answers to the following questions:

- What in your opinion caused the lopsided score?
- Is there any ill will or animosity among the coaching staff of Team A toward the coaching staff of Team B?
- To your knowledge, have there been threats between and among the children prior to the game?

- Has the team ever been involved in a lopsided score before?
- What actions were taken by the coaching staff of Team A to prevent the score differential from reaching 28 points?
- In retrospect, is there anything you feel could have been done to prevent the score differential from reaching 28 points? If so, what?

Based upon the answers to the foregoing questions, the Football Board shall determine whether or not to conduct a formal meeting with the involved coaches.

8.13 Gameday Conduct of Coaches, Players, and Parents

All coaches and players will strive at all times to display sportsmanlike behavior and obey the authority of the referees. All calls by the referees are final and are not debatable by the coaches or players. If a coach or player is disqualified (ejected by the referee) for being unsportsmanlike during a game, the following penalties will be enforced by the Board:

Disqualified from one game:

The coach or player that is disqualified will not be permitted to coach or play in the next scheduled game. The coach or player will not be allowed to watch the game from the bench, sidelines or press box. If the coach or player attempts to circumvent these rules, it will result in an investigation by the Board and possible expulsion from the league.

Disqualified from two games:

The coach or player that is disqualified from a second game during the same season will automatically be rendered no longer eligible to coach or play for the remainder of the season. They will be notified by the Board of that result, but notification is only as a courtesy and does not affect this result in any way.

Parents/Families: A core value of the Optimist Football Program is Sportsmanship. That behavior will be expected of all who attend the football games as well. The expectation is that all attendees will demonstrate good sportsmanship towards the opposing team's players and the game officials. Any attendee who attempts to engage in any sort of confrontation with any coach or game official by stepping onto the field of play before, during, or immediately after any game, will be prohibited from attending the game of the player they are affiliated with for one game. If another episode occurs, that attendee is prohibited from attending any further games that season. Refusal to abide by this rule will render the affiliated player ineligible to participate in all subsequent games.

Parents and non-players are not permitted to enter the restricted neutral zone as marked along the team sidelines from the 10 yard line to the 10 yard line. Spectator seating is available anywhere outside the restricted neutral zone.

9 Regular Season and Tournament Guidelines

9.1.1 Rookie Division

The Rookie division will play a six game regular season schedule. There will be no seeding, tournament or championship games in the Rookie division.

9.1.2 Minor/Major Division

The Minor and Major divisions will play a minimum of 6 regular season games. No overtimes will be played in the regular season (only the playoffs). At the end of six games, the teams will be seeded 1 through X based on overall record in the Plainfield league (games outside of the league do not count towards seeding). Tie-breakers will be addressed using the established rules in section 9.2.

9.2 Seeding Tie-Breakers

- 9.2.1 Overall record
- 9.2.2 Head to head
- 9.2.3 Least points allowed
- 9.2.4 A three way tie (or more) would be decided by "Least points allowed".
- 9.2.5 If tie still exists final tie breaker will be coin flip

10 All-Stars

10.1 All-Star Coordinators

10.1.1 Coordinator Selections-

- a. The Director will recommend two (2) members of the football board to manage and execute the All-Star nomination and voting process, one (1) for each division.
- b. Ideally, the individual should not have a child eligible for or interested in All-Stars
- c. If the above is not possible, the individual with an eligible child will manage a division that their child does not play in.

10.2 Player Selection

10.2.1 Player Qualifications

- a. Players must have played in a minimum of 2 league contests in the current season in Rookie, Minor, or Major division.
- b. Players will only be eligible for an All-Star nomination to one of the two grades comprised from the division that they played in throughout the regular season
- c. A player will be nominated based on the position that he/she is qualified to play under tournament running weight rules
- e. Any adjustment to this list of qualifications must be approved by the Board.

10.2.2 Player Nominations

- a. Coaches will submit player nominations no later than Tuesday following the 2nd week of play.
- b. All nominated players will be slated and the slate will be sent to the respective Rookie, Minors, and Majors division coaches for consideration.

Plainfield Youth Optimist Football

- c. Players that participate in the regular season are eligible to be nominated at the end of the season to be added to the Junior Red Pride team to participate on the post season All-Star team.

10.2.3 Player Campaign and Voting

- a. Coaches will be required to attend a player campaign and All-Star voting meeting following the 3rd week of play with the exception of 6th Grade.
- b. Campaign- Each Coach will have the opportunity to promote his nominees in front of all other division coaches prior to the voting process
- c. Voting- Each Coach shall designate nominees as either skill player or lineman and rank ALL nominees (1-?) with 1 being the player who most deserves to be selected to the All-Star team, 2 second most deserving and so on.
- d. Coaches are to maintain the confidential nature of any All Star discussions/selections as it is expected to be an honest exchange/assessment of each player's abilities with the intent to field a team of the best talent available in each respective grade.

10.2.4 Selection

- a. The All-Star Coordinators shall tally the votes, throw out the highest and lowest vote for each player and calculate an average score that will be assigned to each player.
COACHES MAY VOTE FOR THEIR OWN PLAYERS.
- b. The Board will take into account the Coaches' vote while ultimately making the player selections by picking the best overall TEAM that can be put forth in each age division of All Stars. The seven (7) Backs and six (6) Lineman selected by the Board will be granted a position on the roster.
- c. Additionally, each All Star coach may add up to three (3) players to his roster by selecting from the slate of players nominated by the coaches from each division.
- d. Players will be responsible for their portion of the team's entry fee to any tournament as well as the cost for any jerseys and equipment specific to the All Star teams.

10.3 All-Star Coaching

10.3.1 Coaching Qualifications

- a. To coach, an individual must have been a head coach throughout the current season
- b. A coach must make his/her interest known to the All-Star Coordinator with submission of his All-Star player nominations

10.3.2 Coaches Selection

- a. The All Star coach for each team will be selected by the Board. Any such coach will be highly qualified in the opinion of the Board. Preference will be for those coaches who also have a child selected as a member of the respective All Star team. However, at the Board's discretion, a coach could be selected who does not have a child on an All Star team.
- b. Assistant Coaches- Assistant Coaches will be selected by the head coach. Selection of assistants shall be approved by the Board prior to notification.

10.3.3 Multiple All Star Teams

- a. Should the number of players nominated as All Stars warrant it, the Football Board will consider having more than one All Star team per respective age group. (i.e. 2 third grade teams). However, players will only be allowed to play for the team for which they are selected.

11 Junior Red Pride Team

Overview:

The Plainfield Optimist Junior Red Pride football team is for players who want an opportunity for more development through game play against competitive teams from surrounding communities. The Junior Red Pride football team will be challenged more, and introduced to new skills that will help prepare them for football experiences at the next level. It is anticipated that team will have additional practices and workouts focusing on individual and team skills and technique. The Junior Red Pride team will not participate in the normal Plainfield Optimist Football regular season.

Team Registration Fee:

All players participating on the Plainfield Optimist Junior Red Pride team will pay the normal \$145 program registration fee. The Optimist Football league will cover the cost of one team jersey and provide equipment (helmet and shoulder pads). If the team decides to purchase any additional uniforms or equipment the team will have to cover the additional cost. Any additional cost will be collected by the Plainfield Optimist Club and distributed accordingly.

Coach Selection:

The Plainfield Optimist Football Board will accept applications for the Junior Red Pride Head Coach and will select and approve after reviewing all candidates.

Tryouts and Team Selection:

The team will consist of kids that are currently in 6th grade only. The team will be selected during a tryout in which all registered 6th grade players are eligible to participate. All players must meet the requirements to play in the Plainfield Optimist Football program and have completed the registration process in order to tryout. The team will be selected by the Plainfield Optimist Football Board along with the Junior Red Pride Head Coach.

Practice Schedule:

The Plainfield Optimist Junior Red Pride will be permitted to have 3 padded contact practices and 1 game per calendar week. The team is permitted to have an additional unpadded walk through during the calendar week if they choose. Calendar week is defined as Sunday – Saturday.

Post Season All-Stars:

The Plainfield Optimist Junior Red Pride team is eligible to participate in the normal Plainfield Optimist Football post season all-star season. Additional 6th grade Optimist Football players that are nominated by their coach can be added to the team for post season all star tournament play.

12 2026 Schedule/ Important Dates(All Dates are Subject to Change)

Registration/Online Sign Ups – April 1st – June 1st

Spring Red Pride Camp – Plainfield High School - April 13, 20, and May 4 - 5:45-7:00

Evaluations/Weigh Ins – Plainfield High School - June 1st

6:00 – 6:30 Rookies (All Players)

6:30 – 7:15 Minors/Majors (All Players)

Junior Red Pride Tryouts – Plainfield High School – June 3rd - 6:00 – 7:00

Make Up Evaluation Date – AI and Jan Barker Sports Complex - June 10th

Draft – Week of June 15th – Location TBD
(Players Do NOT come to this)

Equipment Distribution – AI and Jan Barker Sports Complex

June 24th – 5:30 – 7:00

July 9th – 5:30 – 7:00

Red Pride Camp – Plainfield High School

July 6th, 7th – Rookies – 5:30 – 6:30

July 6th, 7th, 8th – Minors/Majors 6:30 – 8:00

Red Pride Coaches Clinic – Plainfield High School – July 8th – 7:00

Dicks Sporting Goods Weekend – TBD

Picture Day – TBD

Youth Night at PHS – September 4th

2025 Football Season Schedule

First Practices Week of July 13th (Practice dates and times are at head coach’s discretion)

Game Days:

August 1st (scrimmage)

August 8th

August 15th

August 22nd

August 29th

No Games Over Labor Day

September 12th

September 19th/20th – Games Played at Plainfield High School (Rookie Last Game)

September 26th - Tournament Opening Round

September 28th - Finals *PHS possible location

Teams could have games scheduled on a weeknight and also play games at other youth program facilities. Examples – Mooresville, Whiteland, Martinsville, Perry Meridian, Franklin etc.