

To All IESA Baseball Coaches:

As we near the end of the 20-21 school year, I want to mention a couple of items to everyone. Given how COVID changed the 2020 baseball season, we are anticipating a return to a traditional baseball season for the 2021 season. Certainly reaching the Phase 5 level of Restore Illinois gives hope that this will occur.

Be sure you, your players, and the parents of your players know the IESA bat regulations. Share these bat regulations with them:

<https://www.iesa.org/activities/bbb/bats.asp>

Here is a quick synopsis of the bat regulations:

\*\*Any bat with a BBCOR label is a legal bat.

\*\*If a bat does not have a BBCOR label, then it has to be 30 inches or under, a barrel diameter of 2 5/8, and must have a USA Baseball logo on the bat. This bat may have a greater than minus three differential i.e. 30 inches in length and 20 oz. or 29/20 or some other combination as long as the bat has a maximum length of 30 inches and the barrel is 2 5/8. Again, these bats must contain the USA Baseball logo.

\*\*Any bat with a barrel diameter of 2 1/4 is illegal.

\*\*Any bat 31 inches and over must have a BBCOR label. A 31 inch or over bat with a USA Baseball logo is illegal.

\*\*All bats with a USSSA logo are illegal.

\*\*Non-wood bats with a 2 3/4" barrel are illegal.

\*\*Wooden bats that meet NFHS regulations are legal.

Be sure your parents know these rules, as we do not need parents buying an expensive bat for the summer thinking that their son will also be able to use the bat in the fall only to find out that the bat is illegal in IESA. Remember, any player caught using an illegal bat is removed for the remainder of the contest.

Dates for 2021:

Practice may begin Aug. 2

Games may begin Aug. 11

Regionals Sept. 15, 18, 20

Sectionals Sept. 25

State Oct. 1-2 @ East Side Center, East Peoria

New rules for 2021

\*\* For regular season play only, no inning shall start 2 hours and 15 minutes after the first pitch of the game. Any inning in progress shall be completed. If teams are tied after the time limit has been reached, it shall be considered a tie game. The current 10 run, 12, run, and 15 run rules remain in place.

\*\* All regular season games that require extra innings to determine the winner shall start with a runner on second base and no outs. The runner placed on 2nd base shall be the player in the batting order position previous to the leadoff batter of the extra inning. Each team has the opportunity to bat each inning. The game is over when one team has the lead at the end of an inning.

\*\* The on-deck batter may use either on-deck circle. The on-deck batter may only move to the on-deck circle during a dead ball. The on-deck batter must remain in the on-deck circle unless the batter switches hitting positions at which time the umpire would have the discretion to allow the on-deck batter to change circles.

Since many schools did not participate in the 2020 season due to COVID, here is a review of the changes that went into effect last fall:

\*\*A game will be a complete game if a team is ahead by 12 runs (or more) after four innings.

\*\*Recommend that the regional championship game start at 4:00 p.m. unless the field has lights.

\*\*Schools may mutually agree before a regular season game begins to play a contest with a minimum of 5 innings that would still be considered a complete game. Such game would count toward a school's season record.

\*\*The third place game of the IESA finals shall have a time limit of 1 hour 45 minutes. No new inning can start after 1 hour 45 minutes. If the game is tied, both teams will be declared 3rd place winners. The game can end sooner if any of the 15, 12, or 10 run rules have been met.

If your school is interested in hosting a regional or sectional contest, you will need to log into the IESA Member Center and indicate your interest in doing so. This should be done before school is out for the summer. We always need hosts so if you have not already done so and you want to host, now is the time to indicate your willingness to do so.

Finally, in case you are not aware, I am retiring at the end of this school year. Nicole Schaeffbauer will be the new IESA Executive Director and Chris Frasco will be the administrator in the IESA Office who will have the baseball responsibilities. Any questions after June 30 should be directed to Chris. The IESA baseball activity is in very good shape. We have made many improvements over the years with the state series schedule, pitch counts, and the finals being played all at one site---such a great atmosphere. I thank each of you for all you do for the students in your program. I have been so lucky to be a part of so many exciting games and to see the activity grow. My best wishes to everyone.

Please contact me if you have any questions. Have a great summer!