

4/25/2023

To: Mr. Gregg Simon
Associate Executive Director and Liaison to the CO-OP Committee.
Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference

From: Joseph Blake
Principal, Coventry High School
Coventry, CT

Re: Co-Op Consideration for Wrestling

Request:

Please consider changing limits on the maximum number of wrestlers allowed to participate on a CIAC CO-OP team from 13 to up to 21.

Rationale:

Interscholastic wrestling in Connecticut has 14 weight classes and therefore requires 14 athletes to bring a full team to competition. The current limit means that a CO-OP wrestling team can never compete or even train with a full complement of athletes.

In most other sports, the CIAC not only allows for a full complement of athletes to exist on a Co-op team for competition, but additionally allows for additional athletes in Co-op sports, I would assume, to allow for the injury or sickness of a given athlete, as well as to have a sufficient number of athletes to have a high-quality practice experience. Please find a list of CIAC sports below with the number of athletes minimally required to have a full team followed by the size of the Co-op allowed.

Baseball 9/14, Basketball 5/8, Field Hockey 11/16, Football 22/32, Hockey 6/15,
Lacrosse 10/16, Soccer 11/16, Softball 10/14, Volleyball 6/10, Wrestling 14/13

As shown, in cases where the number of players required to have a complete team is fixed, the CIAC generally allows for 1.5 times that number to populate a Co-op team. For wrestling, a comparable number of allowable athletes would be 21.

Please note this additional consideration regarding weight classes: In nearly all other sports, one player may replace another, though it is admitted that it may be less than optimal for a first baseman to sub for a third baseman or a tight end to sub for a quarterback. In wrestling, since the 14 positions exist in regard to assigned and medically certified weights, it is not possible for a wrestler in the 190 lb. weight class to sub in for one in the 132 lb. weight class, and so on. This adds further reasoning that a wrestling team should be, minimally, of a certain size if it is to fill 14 weight classes required to have a full team. Even at my suggestion of expanding the Co-op team size limit to 21 (to be consistent), it is statistically unlikely that these 21 students will neatly fall into the 14 different weight classes approved by the NFHS and CIAC.

I appreciate the CO-OP committee's consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Joseph Blake