

In October of 2015, the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) recommended that “member state associations move toward using pitch counts in Baseball, and that pitchers do not throw to fatigue in both Baseball and Softball. At that time, the VHSL staff devised a timeline for transitioning our state from our current Baseball pitching policy that is based on innings pitched to a policy based on pitch counts. The original timeline was to include input from coaches and vetting of any proposed policy by VHSL member schools during the 2016-17 school year, prior to implementation of such a policy for the 2018 or 2019 season. However, during the June 2016 meeting of the NFHS Baseball Rules Committee, the committee approved a change in the rules book that mandates a pitching policy based on pitch counts and the rule will be effective for the 2017 baseball season (this coming spring). In as much, our timeline for development of a new pitching policy based on pitch counts has been accelerated but will still allow for coaches’ input and vetting by member schools.

The intended timeline is as follows:

1. **Late August** – Conduct a survey of VHSL baseball coaches to obtain data on pitch-count ranges currently used by our coaches.
2. **September 7** – VHSL Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) meets.
3. **Mid-September** – Convene the original pitching policy committee with additional representatives to ensure that each of the 12 regions is represented.
4. **September 21** – Present the intended process and timeline to the Executive Committee.
5. **Early October** – Using data from the survey and other available information, through the re-convened pitching policy committee, develop a DRAFT pitch-count-based policy for membership review prior to the October membership meetings.
6. **October 13** – Discussion and possible break-out session regarding pitch-count during the membership meetings.
7. **Late October** – Modify DRAFT policy, as appropriate, based on membership discussion and feedback for dissemination and additional discussion in the regions prior to December Executive Committee meeting.
8. **December 7** – Submit pitch-count legislation as “emergency legislation” to the Executive Committee, after vetting throughout the fall.

While it was not our intention to submit this change as emergency legislation, it is the only way that we can develop a policy with membership input and implement the policy for the 2017 season. It is our hope that the dialogue that typically occurs during the normal two-vote process will take place prior to the legislation’s submission as emergency legislation.

Should you have any questions regarding the intended process and/or timeline, please contact Shawn Knight (sknight@vhsl.org) in the League office.