

# NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Program and Guidelines

**BACKGROUND:** The Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) Board of Directors authorized the creation of a committee to review the current weight management program for students participating in interscholastic wrestling in Nebraska. The committee met for the second time on April 27, 2007. The committee reviewed the current NSAA Weight Management Program, reviewed the history of weight management issues considered by the NFHS Wrestling Rules Committee, reviewed the interscholastic weight management plans adopted in several states and developed the following information and guidelines. The National Wrestling Coaches Association, who has worked with 35 states in the formation of weight management programs, was consulted during the creation, revision and review process.

**PHILOSOPHY:** The NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Committee believes one of the primary factors in promoting proper weight maintenance among high school wrestlers is the development of a program to determine a safe minimum weight class for wrestlers based on body fat testing combined with hydration testing. The NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Committee identified the following elements of the program:

1. Any changes in the Nebraska wrestling weight management program will support efforts to make participation in wrestling a **healthy and safe** experience for Nebraska students.
2. The intent of the program is to continue to provide students participating in wrestling with a process to identify the wrestler's minimum weight class for participation purposes that factors body fat testing while the student is properly hydrated;
3. The program identifies the minimum weight class, based on a body fat measurement of 7% for male wrestlers and 12% for female wrestlers, that is appropriate for the wrestler's natural weight as identified by body fat testing;
4. The program establishes a minimum weight class along with a maximum weight loss, on the average body weight descent of 1.5% per week,
5. The program contains nutritional information which will assist students in maintaining a healthy lifestyle during the interscholastic wrestling season. The NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Committee recognizes the issue of proper weight management for youth is NOT an issue exclusive to the sport of wrestling or to only those students participating in wrestling. The issue of weight management is an issue central to the sport of wrestling and the committee welcomes the opportunity to address this issue through a review of current medical information and adoption of a program that incorporates medical research.

The committee also emphasizes that proposed changes or modifications to the current NSAA weight management plan are **NOT**:

1. drug testing efforts;
2. attempts to create financial impediments to the continuation of interscholastic wrestling programs;
3. intended to reduce the number of students participating in wrestling;
4. designed to reduce the number of schools offering interscholastic wrestling as a sports option for students.

**PURPOSE:** The primary purpose of this body fat testing program is to determine the lowest, safe minimum weight for each wrestler in order to provide a safe wrestling environment for all high school wrestlers in Nebraska. **The NSAA is NOT encouraging wrestlers to attain their lowest minimum wrestling weight.** Wrestlers may find that they actually perform better while participating in a weight class that may be higher than their minimum weight class. A wrestler's minimum weight may not be his/her optimal competitive weight; it is simply the lowest weight at which a wrestler may compete.

**RATIONALE FOR A NSAA WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM:** The committee identified the following reasons for the program:

1. It is important to use a medical basis for establishing a wrestler's minimum wrestling weight;
2. It is important to develop a program that focuses on the health of the students participating in wrestling;
3. NFHS Wrestling Rule 1-5 mandates each state association to utilize a weight management program that assesses both body fat percentage and hydration;
4. It is important that NSAA member schools and wrestling coaches continue efforts to respond to weight management concerns to protect the integrity of the sport;

5. It is important to continue efforts in order to reduce the liability exposure to schools, coaches, and the NSAA;
6. Changes in the weight management methods in the sport of wrestling must be reasonable in cost and within member schools ability to administer;
7. The NSAA Weight Management Program and any subsequent changes in the weight management rules will support current efforts of NSAA member school coaches to teach/coach athletes in a responsible manner, and;
8. The NSAA and its member schools have a responsibility to safely promote the sport of wrestling.

**NSAA WEIGHT MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS:** The establishment of a minimum wrestling weight class based on 7% body fat for males and 12%, for females, as set by the NFHS, is required for all high schools in Nebraska. The NSAA will utilize the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) **Optimal Performance Calculator** as the mechanism to calculate the minimum wrestling weight for each wrestler. **This is now managed by Trackwrestling.** NSAA Approved Assessors will use the Optimal Performance Calculator as a data-reporting tool. Schools will utilize the site to receive and enter data. The NWCA program will also serve as nutritional supplement for coaches and athletes.

## **I. HYDRATION TESTING**

- A. Hydration testing must be the first step the assessment process. It is essential for coaches to stress to wrestlers the importance of hydrating prior to the scheduled assessment date.
- B. Specific gravity assessment of the urine will determine whether a candidate may participate in the body fat assessment. If the wrestler has a specific gravity above the predetermined level, he/she may NOT be assessed for body composition. This is a pass/fail assessment based on a specific gravity 1.025 g/ml or less. The school will provide individuals to conduct the specimen collection and assist with the testing. Schools should make sure that each wrestler is tested individually to prevent urine exchange (the right to privacy must be respected).
- C. If the wrestler passes the specific gravity test, only then may he/she continue to the body fat test.
- D. If the wrestler fails the specific gravity test, he/she may not be assessed for 24 hours and must meet the Hydration requirement before the body fat test takes place.
- E. Once a wrestler has passed the Urine Specific Gravity Test, he/she must be body fat tested immediately, on that date, without any exercise or delays.
- F. Hydration Testing will be done using one of two methods:
  1. Refractometer; or
  2. HydraTrend Test Strips for specific gravity and pH in urine
- G. The athlete will use a cup to collect a urine sample for testing. NSAA Approved Assessors will then conduct the Hydration Test.
- H. NSAA Approved Assessors will follow the NSAA hydration testing protocol.
- I. The hydration test is NOT a drug test!
- J. It is possible that an athlete cannot reach the proper hydration level due to medical reasons. Verification by a medical professional would be necessary. Please contact the NSAA office.

**NOTE:** The Hydration Testing Policy was reviewed and approved by the NSAA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee on 12/02/09.

## **II. BODY FAT TESTING AND ESTABLISHING MINIMUM WEIGHTS**

**\*\*NOTE: An athlete may not proceed to the Body Fat Test until they have passed the Hydration Test.**

- A. One of the following body fat testing methods will be utilized to determine each wrestler's body fat percentage:
  1. Bioelectrical Impedance Analysis (BIA) by use of a Tanita Scale (TBF-300WA or TBF-300WA PLUS). If using the Tanita scale the assessor must use the **ATHLETIC** mode.
  2. Skin Fold Calipers: Plastic calipers will not be permitted.
  3. Hydrostatic (Underwater) Weighing.
  4. Air Displacement System (Bod Pod).
  5. Dune Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry (Dexa)

- B. Only measurements taken by persons who are NSAA Approved Assessors will be accepted. It is the responsibility of the school to contact an Assessor and arrange a time to have the wrestler(s) measured. No wrestler may compete without having a minimum wrestling weight established by the Optimal Performance Calculator (OPC). An athlete's participation in competition, at any level, prior to results being posted on the Trackwrestling web site by an assessor or the NSAA staff will make all results of an appeal or medical clearance null and void. The athlete's descent plan would be based upon the last successful body fat test (original Alpha Test or Body Fat Appeal Test).
- C. The lowest weight class a wrestler may compete at will be determined as follows:
1. One simple variance after a successful Alpha Test or Appeal will be utilized. All minimum weights will be given a 2% Body weight rounded down. Example: **Minimum Wrestling Weight (MWW)** before variance 149.81 = 146.81. **Minimum Wrestling Weight w/ Variance (MWWV)**. = 152 as the **Minimum Weight Class. (MWC)**
  2. NO descent variance to a weight class will be used. **The descent will begin on the day of the test. There will be NO post dating.**
  3. If the minimum weight, with the 2% variance, at 7% or 12% body fat, is exactly that of one of the adopted weight classes, that weight shall be the wrestler's MWWV.
  4. If the minimum weight, with the 2% variance, at 7% or 12% body fat, is .9999 of a pound or less from one of the adopted weight classes, that weight class shall be the wrestler's MWWV.
  5. If the minimum weight, with the 2% variance, at 7% or 12% body fat, is greater than .9999 of a pound from one of the adopted weight classes, the next higher weight class shall be the wrestler's MWWV.
  6. The OPC will indicate the Minimum Weight Class (MWC) for each wrestler after the assessor enters the hydration and body fat information.
  7. Only OPC verified alpha tests will be accepted by the NSAA for out of state transfers.

### III. BODY FAT APPEALS

#### 1. Step #1 Alpha Test

- a) If the coach and athlete are satisfied with Body Fat results; the process is complete.
  - (1) Coach prints the Alpha Test Results
  - (2) Athlete and Coach sign the Alpha Test
  - (3) Coach keeps the signed results on file
  - (4) If the coach or athlete is not satisfied with Body Fat results – the athlete may proceed to Step #2.

#### 2. Step #2 Body Fat Test Appeal

- a) The athlete must wait a minimum of 24 hours to Appeal.
- b) The cost of the appeal is to be paid by the school or the wrestler depending on the school's policy.
- c) No athlete may compete at any weight or level until all appeal data is entered by a registered NSAA Assessor. The athlete's appeal results must be within the Trackwrestling OPC to appear on a pre-meet weigh in form.
- d) An athlete may appeal to the same NSAA registered assessor or a different NSAA registered assessor.
- e) Athlete may use the same or a different method of assessment.
- f) The athlete must pass the hydration test prior to the weight being recorded by the assessor.
- g) If the athlete fails the hydration test, the athlete must wait 24 hours to begin the Body Fat Test Appeal again.
- h) The athlete is appealing the Body Fat test results only – any weight loss greater than 1.5% per week, calculated daily, will result in a failed appeal test. An athlete that fails the appeal test will have two choices: (Coaches – Refer to Individual Weight Loss Plan).
  - (1) Use the first Alpha Test results.
- i) No other appeals will be granted.
- j) The testing results of the appeal, even if it is higher than the minimum weight of the initial test, shall be final.
- k) An athlete's participation in competition, at any level, prior to results being posted by the registered NSAA assessor will make all results of the Body Fat Appeal test null and void. The athlete's descent plan will be based upon the original Alpha Test.
  - (1) If the coach and athlete are satisfied with Body Fat Appeal Test results; the process is complete.
  - (2) Coach prints the Body Fat Appeal Test results
  - (3) Athlete and Coach sign the Body Fat Appeal Test results
  - (4) Coach keeps the Body Fat appeal Test on file

#### IV. TIME PERIOD FOR MEASUREMENTS

- A. No wrestler may compete until he/she has participated in an initial Hydration and Body Fat Test, and his/her name and data are included on the school Alpha Master Form.
- B. If a wrestler is unable to participate in the Hydration and Body Fat tests because of factors outside of his/her control, NSAA staff will determine the appropriate alternative Hydration or Body Fat testing methods [(TBF-300WA or TBF-300WA PLUS), Skin fold, Bod Pod, Hydrostatic Weighing, or Dexa] that will be used to determine the minimum wrestling weight for the wrestler.
- C. Hydration and Body Fat Testing may begin on the Monday prior to the official start of the NSAA wrestling season. Wrestlers may be measured any time on or following this date to establish a minimum wrestling weight. All wrestlers, including those coming out late, must have their minimum wrestling weight established prior to competing.
- D. The Saturday of Week 31 of the Standardized Calendar (**February 6, 2021**) is the deadline to establish a minimum wrestling weight. Exception: A wrestler who has not been medically released to participate, upon proper release, must complete an Alpha Test by an NSAA Approved Assessor. The weight class in which the wrestler officially weighs in at for the first time on the first day of district wrestling, will be considered his/her minimum wrestling weight class.
- E. Saturday, February 6, 2021, will be the last day an Alpha Test result may be entered into the Trackwrestling website.
- F. Unusual situations must be arranged with the NSAA in writing before deadline or due dates.

#### V. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE MEASUREMENT PROCESS

- A. Each school will be required to pay an additional \$150 to the NSAA at the time of registration and in return the school will receive at no additional charge:
  - a. Access to the OPC weight management program (was a \$30 fee) which also includes a membership to the National Wrestling Coaches Association.
  - b. Be able to utilize the Trackwrestling Stats program (was a \$50 fee) – All tournaments that are run on Trackwrestling automatically collect this data and you are now able to access those stats at no additional cost.
  - c. All NSAA high school wrestling teams would be able to utilize the Trackwrestling Event Management platform to run any regular season HIGH SCHOOL competitions (varsity, JV or freshman) at no additional charge (average cost of \$115-\$125).
- B. Schools will receive results from the NWCA Optimal Performance Calculator. **The NSAA reserves the right to have any wrestler re-tested.**
- C. The NSAA recommends the standard fee for testing per athlete NOT exceed \$5 per wrestler. The fee may be paid for by the wrestler, school, booster club, or sponsor.
- D. Schools choosing to contract with an NSAA Approved Assessor to test athletes at their own school will be required to have at the time of assessment:
  1. NSAA Hydration and Body Fat Test Data Forms
  2. Adequate personnel for hydration testing (coach, teacher, AD, parent, etc...) who will:
    - a. Assist with measuring height (only if using Tanita scale)
    - b. Assist with the recording of data.
    - c. Assist with urine specific gravity testing.
    - d. Wrestling coaches may NOT take part in any part of the recording of Alpha test results.
  3. Urine Specific Gravity Test Strips or (refractometer testing which could be provided by the assessor) for Specific Gravity Hydration Testing. Purchasing of the test strips are the responsibility of each school.
  4. Hydration and Body Fat Tests shall not be conducted by any active wrestling coach at any level.

#### VI. NON-VARSITY COMPETITION

##### ❖ **Non-Varsity Home Weigh-Ins**

1. Nebraska schools will be allowed to use home weigh-ins for non-varsity competition only.
2. Coaches must create and use a Pre-Meet Weigh-In Form through the Trackwrestling site.
3. Schools must send electronically or present the completed weigh-in form on site.
4. The weigh-in must take place on the same day as the competition.
5. Host schools must use NFHS established weight classes.
6. Coaches must enter all weigh-in data into the Trackwrestling web site prior to the next competition at any level.
7. Home weigh-ins for Junior Varsity should not be used for the purpose of establishing the lowest allowable weight class for districts.



## VII. GROWTH ALLOWANCE:

- A. The NSAA awards a two pound growth allowance on December 25, 2020 for ALL wrestlers who have COMPLETED THE INITIAL ALPHA TEST OF THE WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (OPC).
- B. The growth allowance may not be utilized to achieve a lower weight class THAN THE WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN ALLOWS.
- C. In order to utilize the growth allowance AT THE DISTRICT TOURNAMENT, a wrestler shall WEIGH-IN AND COMPETE AT LEAST ONCE AT THE DESIRED WEIGHT CLASS BEFORE THE DESIGNATED DEADLINE. (An exception to this requirement would be injury or illness. This must be verified with the NSAA.)
- D. IF A RESPECTIVE WEIGHT LOSS PLAN STATES THAT THE WRESTLER IS ELIGIBLE FOR A DESIGNATED WEIGHT CLASS ON THE SPECIFIC DAY OF THE WEIGH-IN, THEY ARE ELIGIBLE TO WEIGH-IN AND COMPETE AT THAT WEIGHT CLASS.

## VIII. WEIGHT LOSS PER WEEK:

- A. An average weight loss limit of 1.5% of body weight at the time of initial Body Fat Test per week will begin once the athlete has successfully completed an Alpha Test, Appeal Test, or Medical Clearance. A season-long weight loss plan, calculated daily, will guide his/her weight loss during the season.
- B. Nebraska will utilize the Optimum Performance Calculator (OPC), now managed by Trackwrestling, into which wrestlers' weights will be entered to chart the 1.5% descent plan. A wrestler's descent plan will detail at which weight classes a wrestler may participate each day based upon each official weigh-in.
- C. For each high school varsity and non-varsity competition, coaches must present their Pre Meet Weigh-In Form **at weigh-ins**. If a coach cannot or does not produce Alpha Master Forms, it shall be reported to the NSAA office by the host school. Coaches failing to have the Pre Meet Weigh-In Form available at a weigh-in will be suspended from the next contest at that level of competition.
- D. A wrestler will not be allowed to wrestle at any time in a weight class that would require him/her to lose more than 1.5% per week, calculated daily, from the original date of a successful measurement.
- E. **Coaches will be required to enter all official weigh-in weights into the OPC after each competition at any level. All data entry must be completed prior to creating the next pre-meet weigh-in form.** This will recalculate the wrestler's descent plan for the remainder of the season automatically. This may or may not affect the wrestler's minimum weight class for the remainder of the season.
- F. At any level of competition, a record of weigh-ins must be provided by the host school. This record must include all wrestlers who officially weighed-in. Coaches should keep weigh-in records on file for documentation should any wrestler's lowest minimum wrestling weight be challenged.
- G. **PENALTY**--A wrestler who participates at a weight class below the weekly eligible weight classes defined by the weight loss plan shall be suspended for the next contest at that level of competition and all other levels in the interim. The coach shall also be suspended for the next contest at that level and all other levels in the interim. Each individual match will result in a forfeit by the ineligible wrestler. The eligible wrestler shall receive an individual match win. The ineligible wrestler shall not receive a win or loss. No individual or team placement within a tournament will be changed due to the forfeit. In a dual competition, team scores may be corrected within 30 minutes after the conclusion of the dual meet – NFHS rule 6-6-4
  - b. The forfeit shall have no influence on district seeding other than each wrestler's win/loss record.
- H. **PENALTY** --If a wrestler competed at a weight class below his/her minimum weight class during the season, and it is discovered after the start of the district seeding meeting or any time before the start of competition in the district tournament, the head wrestling coach will be suspended for the remainder of the district tournament. If it is discovered after the start of district competition, the head coach will be suspended for the remainder of the district tournament and the entire state championship.

## **IX. PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING A MINIMUM WEIGHT CLASS:**

- A. The Body Fat Test or Body Fat Appeal Test will determine the final minimum weight at which each wrestler may compete for the rest of the wrestling season. The Alpha Test must show that the wrestler can make that weight.
- B. A wrestler may compete at a weight as long as their respective weight loss, descent plan allows him/her to make the designated weight with the allowance. **EXAMPLE:** A wrestler wishes to compete at the 120 pound weight class but the weight loss plan only allows him/her to make 120.8, however there is a one pound (consecutive day of competition) allowance. The wrestler is allowed to compete at the 120 pound weight class because the actual weight (121) is allowed according to the descent plan on that date.
- C. Each wrestler must compete at least once at their minimum weight class during the regular season prior to the NSAA District Wrestling Tournament, in order to be eligible for that weight class. Wrestlers are always allowed to move up weight classes as long as their weight, at the time of weigh-ins, qualifies them for the specific weight class.
- D. A wrestler cannot use the 2-pound growth allowance to get to a weight class if the weight class is lower than the Lowest Allowable Weight class on the original alpha test. **(\*The coach must check the “consecutive day allowance” box when creating the weigh-in sheet in order for the plan not to reset.)\***
- E. Consecutive day allowance will not reset the weight loss plan of a wrestler if it is used as an allowance to make a specific weight. As long as the individual weight loss plan allows the wrestler to be at the designated weight for the weight class on the date of the weigh-in.

## **X. NSAA APPROVED ASSESSORS:**

- A. NSAA Assessors will register and receive training on-line. (Open in October)
- B. The cost to become an approved NSAA Assessor shall be \$30.
- C. A person will not be registered for the current school year until they have registered and viewed the online training PowerPoint.
- D. Only NSAA Approved Assessors will be allowed to conduct the testing and enter the results online into the OPC.
- E. Every school or school district will have the opportunity to register individuals that will be responsible for Hydration and Body Fat Testing. Persons eligible to be trained as NSAA Approved Assessors include physicians, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified athletic trainers, physical therapists, physicians’ assistants, nutritionists, health educators, exercise physiologists or other persons approved by the NSAA. However, wrestling coaches may not assess their own wrestlers, and parents of wrestlers may not assess wrestlers from their son or daughter’s school.
- F. If schools elect not to register an NSAA Approved Assessor, then they must coordinate athlete testing with an approved Assessor.

## **XI. DATA COLLECTION:**

- A. The NSAA will provide all of the reporting forms on the NSAA web site.
- B. The NSAA Approved Assessors will conduct all of the Hydration and Body Fat Tests.
- C. If necessary, schools will provide the strips, cups or other approved instruments to conduct the urine Specific Gravity Test.
- D. The NSAA Approved Assessors will record and post all data in the Trackwrestling website.
- E. Wrestlers failing the hydration component will not be recorded in the OPC on the Trackwrestling website.

## **XII. COSTS:**

All costs incurred for initial Hydration and Body Fat Tests, appeal process, and OPC are the responsibility of the school or parent.

- A. Testing of Athletes: \$5 per wrestler (recommended by the NSAA)
- B. Test Strips for Specific Gravity Hydration Testing should be purchased and provided by the school.
- C. Disposable cups and gloves for hydration assessor.
- D. Each school is required to pay a \$150 Administration fee at the time of Registration.

### **XIII. THE NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM: EDUCATING THE STUDENT AND PARENT**

- A. We recommend that each school annually provide wrestlers with a one-hour nutrition education seminar. This seminar is available on the NWCA website at [nwcaonline.org](http://nwcaonline.org).
- B. It is recommended that an education seminar be presented by any person who may be a dietitian, health educator, nutritionist, physician, nurse or others with a background in nutritional science.
- C. The one-hour seminar shall include a discussion on each of the following topics:
  - 1. Nutrition education will emphasize proper growth as well as healthy weight-reduction approaches.
  - 2. Students and parents will be encouraged to resist unhealthy weight-reduction practices.
  - 3. The impact on growth, development, and lifelong health will be primary in the education of the student.
  - 4. Emphasis will be placed on eating reasonable amounts of proper foods to maintain healthy bodies rather than to binge and purge.
  - 5. The dangers of dehydration will be explained and the practice of dehydrating to achieve a weight will be discouraged.
  - 6. Using the NWCA Optimal Performance Calculator through Trackwrestling as an aid to develop an appropriate nutritional plan.
- D. The NWCA web site provides educational materials that promote appropriate nutritional practices and support development of a nutritional plan.
- E. Schools are encouraged to have monthly follow-up programs throughout the season to assist parents and wrestlers in handling the demands of the season.

#### **NWCA OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE CALCULATOR – NUTRITION COMPONENT**

- A. The NWCA in conjunction with the NCAA and the NFHS have developed the interactive on-line program to allow parents and students to work together to build an appropriate nutritional plan. This component is part of the OPC, managed by Trackwrestling, and is available to every wrestler that participates in the NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Program.
- B. The site bases menus on a 55% carbohydrate, 30% fat and 15% protein dietary profile and uses specific volumes and serving sizes. The program also recommends diets and sample menus and offers choices based on personal preferences.
- C. After Body Fat Test results are input the OPC automatically issues every wrestler a code and password that allows access into the nutrition program. Coaches have the ability to print and distribute these codes to each wrestler after their initial assessment has been completed and their data is entered into the program.
- D. Parents are encouraged to participate in the development of an appropriate nutritional plan. Parents can visit the NWCA website at [www.nwcaonline.com](http://www.nwcaonline.com).

**RESOURCES:** The NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Program and Guidelines was developed by the NSAA Wrestling Weight Management Committee utilizing information and guidelines from the following: National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA); Missouri State High School Activities Association, Kansas State High School Activities Association; Iowa High School Athletic Association; Michigan High School Athletic Association, New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association, North Dakota High School Activities Association; Oregon School Activities Association; Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association; Pennsylvania Interscholastic Association, and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).