



IHSA Esports Guide for Schools

The purpose of this document is to provide general information for schools establishing an esports team and preparing for the IHSA Esports State Series.

Starting an Esports Team

There is not one pathway to starting a team. However, if there are interested students and an adult willing to be the sponsor/coach, it is recommended to follow local processes for establishing a new extracurricular team, which could require local school board approval.

IHSA Esports Game Offerings (6 events) – updates for 2024-2025 are highlighted

Events	System	Format	Entries/Roster Size
Rocket League	PC	3v3	1 team of 3-5 players
Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Singles	Nintendo Switch	1v1	2 individuals per school
Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Crew Battle	Nintendo Switch	5v5	1 team of 5-9 players
Mario Kart 8 Deluxe	Nintendo Switch	4v4	1 team of 4-7 players
EA Sports FC	PS5	1v1	2 individuals per school
EA Sports Madden NFL	PS5	1v1	2 individuals per school

****Each student on a team may only compete in one of the six events in the IHSA state series.**

System Requirements

PCs (Game: Rocket League - 6 PCs required per match)

- Computer Specifications

- Minimum

- OS Windows 7 (64 bit) or Newer (64 bit) Windows OS
 - Processor 2.5 GHz Dual core
 - Memory 4GB
 - Storage 20GB
 - Direct X DirectX 11
 - Graphics NVIDIA GeForce 760, AMD Radeon R7 270Xm

- Recommended

- OS Window 7 (64 bit) or Newer (64 bit) Windows OS
 - Processor 3.0+ GHz Quad core
 - Memory 8GB
 - Storage 20GB
 - Direct X DirectX 11
 - Graphics NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1050, AMD Radeon RX 470

Nintendo Switch (Games: Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Singles, Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Crew Battle, and Mario Kart 8 Deluxe)

- Mario Kart 8 Deluxe requires 4 consoles and 4 monitors per match
- Super Smash Bros. Ultimate events require 1 console and 1 monitor per match

PS5 (Game: EA Sports FC and EA Sports Madden NFL – 1 console required per match)

Controllers and connectors

Per IHSA esports terms and conditions, participants may bring their own controllers that are limited to the following:

1. PC Games: First-party and third-party controllers with back paddles.
2. Console Games: First-party and third-party controllers with all extraneous paddles, macro switches, and any other programmable buttons are physically removed. Turbo buttons and functions are not permitted.

IHSA State Series

The IHSA State Series begins with a Sectional tournament. There are 8 Sectionals held at different sites around the state on Saturday of Week 42 of the IHSA calendar. The 1st and 2nd place finishers in each game at each Sectional qualify for the IHSA State Finals. Competitions are held in person unless the number of entrants in a tournament would require some rounds to be played online before the Sectional date. All tournaments are double elimination format.

Schools can enter the IHSA State Series through the IHSA Schools Center. Contact your school's Official IHSA Representative to enter. Please review the IHSA Esports Manual found on the IHSA esports webpage for complete tournament procedures, requirements, and game rules.

Esports Competitions

The IHSA only offers state series competitions as outlined in the above section.

Schools are free to engage in esports competition during the school year in a manner of their choosing. This may involve organizing competitions in person or virtually with other schools or registering with a third-party provider. There is no official start date and end date for schools to compete in esports during the school year.

Additional Resources and Considerations

Illinois High School Esports Association: www.ihsea.org

- The IHSEA endeavors to create and foster competitive esports programs in all Illinois high schools by providing assistance, organizing tournaments, and presenting information to schools and advisers.

North American Scholastic Esports Federation: www.esportsfed.org

- NASEF provides opportunities for all students to use esports as a platform to acquire critical communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills needed to thrive in work and in life.

Esports programs will want to consider uniforms (required per IHSA terms and conditions), accessibility to PCs and/or consoles, practice schedules, transportation to competitions, and best practices to establishing a competition lineup (i.e. tryout process).