



MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

PROMOTING SUCCESS ON THE COURT, ON THE FIELD, ON STAGE
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June 25, 2025

TO: MHSА EXECUTIVE BOARD

FROM: BRIAN MICHELOTTI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 2025 – 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Fitzgerald has directed that a conference call of the Executive Board be held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 25th. The following are the agenda items for consideration:

- 1) **Final action on two-week notice items from the April meeting** (we did not receive any comments on any of the items):
 - a) Baseball
 - i. The Board approved a change to the postseason procedures in baseball. Beginning at the 2025 MHSA State Baseball Tournament in Hamilton, if the host school or a school from the host site city is the number one seed from their division, the state baseball bracket will be switched so that the host school/city school plays the last game of the first day of the tournament. All matchups and future matchups will remain the same.
 - b) Basketball
 - i. The Board approved requests from Districts 1B, 2B, 3B, and 4B (5B was approved previously) to move district basketball tournaments a week later to avoid a conflict with the State Wrestling Tournament.
 - c) Softball
 - i. The Board approved an updated bracket and rotation for Class A State Softball. [Click here to view the information.](#)
 - d) Speech, Drama and Debate
 - i. Montana Forensic Educators Association Proposal Items
 1. Online Scrimmage Participation - The MHSA Executive Board approved students to participate in online competition. Online competitions would not count towards the student allotted number of competitions during the regular season. Any cost incurred due to participation in these events will be the responsibility of the individual competitor.
 2. The MHSA Executive Board approved all the 2025-26 MFEA proposal items. Visit the MHSA website to view all MFEA approved items. [Click here to view the information](#)
 - e) Tennis
 - i. The Board approved a recommendation from the B/C State Tennis committee for the following qualifying numbers for the State B/C Tennis Tournament, starting in 2025-26:
 - Girls' singles - 32 participants
 - Girls' doubles - 24 participants
 - Boys' singles - 16 participants



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Boys' doubles - 12 participants

- ii. The Board approved a proposal for Class B/C to use the 10-point tiebreaker in lieu of a full third set for all postseason matches, beginning with the 2025 postseason.
 - f) Wrestling
 - i. The Board approved the following proposals for wrestling.
 - 1. The growth allowance will change to 2 lbs. on January 1st with no growth allowance in February. A weigh-in cannot exceed +4 lbs from scratch weight.
 - 2. A change will occur for girls' placing from the current six (6) placers at state to top eight (8) placers at state girls' tournament.
 - 3. All boys' and girls' classifications give max points when 2 wrestlers from the same school wrestle in the postseason. Max points are defined as advancement points (two points for the championship bracket or one point for the consolation bracket), place points and two match points.
 - g) General
 - i. The Board approved an extension to the agreement the MHSA has with our Digital Ticketing partner GoFan. GoFan will continue to be optional for all MHSA schools and we encourage schools to consider this option for regular season contests.
 - ii. The Board approved a bid from 5518 Designs from Butte to rebrand the MHSA and MOA logos to ensure for future copyright and trademark compliance in the future.
 - iii. The Board has approved the removal of the 5-year requirement for the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching. New coaches now need to complete this course only once in their coaching career. Instead, an annual online continuing education requirement will be added, covering topics like Mental Health, Sportsmanship, and Bullying. This initiative aims to enhance the professional development of coaches and foster a positive environment in sports.
 - iv. The Board approved a change to the NFHS Network regular season streaming policy for Softball, Baseball and Soccer events. Beginning immediately the following changes in bold below will change:
 - 1. All video streaming of regular season **home** events must be approved by the MHSA Executive Director. The NFHS Network is the preferred service of the MHSA. If a school uses a different commercial company for streaming their regular events, these events must also be live parallel streamed on the NFHS Network. **There is now exceptions for soccer, softball, and baseball. These state if the host site does not have a Pixelott camera available, school(s) can request streaming with a different commercial company without the NFHS Network parallel streaming requirement.**
- 2) **Class AA Requested Changes for 2025-26 and information from Summer Meeting**
- a) Golf
 - i. Action - Proposal from Coaches - No Spectators on the course for State Practice Round. Passed AD 16-0, Passed Admin 16-0



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- ii. Action - Proposal from Coaches - State Qualifying from AA – Advance the top 4 teams and the next 8 (Was 10) highest scores not included in those teams to state. Passed AD 14-2, Passed Admin 15-1
- b) Wrestling –
 - i. No Action - Proposal From AD - to go to a one day seeding/divisional tournament. Passed AD 14-0 (Bozeman gone), Passed Admin 16-0
 - ii. Action - Proposal from AD– Proposal to request that MHSA survey all member schools regarding choosing between current 14 MHSA recognized weight classes and moving to the NFHS recognized weight classes for the 25-26 season. Additionally we request that MHSA shares with all member schools that the AA supports such a change. Passed AD 15-0 (Belgrade no vote), 16-0 Admin
- c) Basketball-
 - i. Action - Proposal from Coaches - Play Off Game Official Selection – Playoff game officials will be selected in the following manner:
 - Host City Pool who are working state tournament
 - Host City Pool who received state tournament votes
 - Neutral City Pool of officials
 - Motion made to pass coaches suggestion for the selection of officials for playoff games with a friendly amendment to drop coaches #2 of proposal regarding scheduling of games. AD’s felt we needed to keep scheduling of game flexible.
 - **Motion included that this same language added to softball and volleyball sections of AA Handbook as well.** Passed AD 16-0, Passed Admin 16-0
- d) Track
 - i. No Action - Proposal from AD – Move to a one-day divisional track meet. Two AD’s and two coaches will work to develop a one-day divisional track schedule. 14-0 (Bozeman gone), 16-0 Admin
 - ii. Action - Proposal from coaches- to score 8 at divisional and 8 at state
 - Discussion took place around we are advancing 8 so we should score 8 at our divisional meet. Could impact end results for teams with more depth. If passed we can put into place for AA meet but must have MHSA approval to count in state meet. Passed AD 15-1, Passed Admin 12-4
 - iii. No Action - Procedural Manual – From Coaches - to start pole vault earlier and run some track on Thursday at State
 - MHSA issue with schedule. Their issue to adjust schedule. Last year we made the recommendation to them and it is being considered. No new motion
 - iv. No Action - Proposal from Coaches - Refine the State Meet appeal process to allow for rerun of a race at State Meet.
 - MHSA issue best left to their rules and meet committee. No motion



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- v. ? - Proposal from coaches - to allow for ¼ inch spikes instead of a maximum of 1/8 inch.
 - Discussion regarding safety, track surfaces and recommendations took place. Passed AD 16-0, Passed Admin 16-0
 - vi. No Action – Procedural Manual - From Coaches - Advancement from trial to finals – coaches would like to see top 10 times make finals rather than current model that takes set top number from each heat and the next few.
 - Discussion about impact on sport and comparison to what is done in other sports took place. Passed 16-0 AD’s, Passed Admin 14-2
- e) Softball –
- i. Action Proposal from Coaches, State Championship Game Language regarding home team. Undefeated team will be home team for game 1 of state championship. If game #2 is needed the winning team from game #1 will be home team for the second game. Passed AD’s 16-0, Passed Admin 16-0
 - ii. No Action - Proposal from Coaches – Modify Playoff Series format from best of 3 series to a 2 game playoff. Higher seed wins one game and will advance to state, lower seed must win both games to advance to state. Host team is home team for game 1. Game 2, if needed, then the visiting team is designated as home team. Passed AD 16-0, Passed Admin 16-0

3) Class A Requested Changes for 2025-26 and information from Summer Meeting

- a) Baseball
 - i. Schools have the options of limiting JV to no new inning after 1:45 minutes (mirror softball language)
 - ii. Straw vote on if we split baseball conferences to have it mirror the softball conferences. 18-0 Vote
- b) Cheerleading
 - i. Adopted the following Language to Class A Handbook [Spirit Rules \(Handbook\)](#) Vote 24-0
- c) Football
 - i. MHSA Handbook: New Bracket [2025 Class A Football Bracket](#)
 - ii. First-round playoff games will be played on Friday (as long as first-round is not a crossover) The remaining games will be played on Saturday unless mutually agreed upon by the two schools involved. (Pg.72 MHSA Handbook)
Change to: All games will be on Friday at 7pm unless mutually agreed upon for a different day and time. Higher seeds host in all playoff games, like seeds will follow the bracket. 23-1 in Favor
- d) Golf
 - i. Change Language to allow 2 coaches per gender on the course at a time. 23-1 in favor
- e) Soccer
 - i. "Participation Limits: If a team is scheduled for a single varsity contest in addition to sub-varsity contest(s) on any given date, each player will be limited to participation in



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three separate halves of the scheduled games. Regardless of the order in which the games are scheduled, a player who participates in a sub-varsity contest cannot start the varsity (or next) game. A player who starts the varsity game is not eligible for participation in a sub-varsity contest scheduled on the same day.

If a team is scheduled for two varsity contests on any given date with no schedule sub-varsity competition, each varsity eligible player will be allowed participation in four separate halves of the scheduled varsity games" Language Change in Class A Vote 14-0 Favor

- ii. In both Class AA and Class A, no more than twenty-two (22) players can be in uniform for any tournament/playoff game. (MHSA Handbook Change) We changed this last year unanimously but it never made it to the MHSA Handbook.
 - iii. Playoff Change- Voted to change the Class A Soccer Playoff Bracket- Modified the Play-In Game. The highest ranked #3 seed automatically gets into the playoffs while the remaining two #3 seeds will have a play-in game the Tuesday before the start of the playoffs. Vote 9-7 (Thompson Falls did not email in a vote).
- f) Softball
- i. Schools have the option of limiting JV to no new inning after 1:45 minutes Vote 23-1 in Favor
 - ii. [2025-2026 Softball Bracket](#)
 - iii. [2026-2027 Bracket](#)
- g) Swimming
- i. Class A-B Relay teams will only score the top six teams for team points. Vote 9-0 in Favor
- h) Tennis
- i. Coaches would like to stay at one site for a 3 day state tournament.
 - ii. Conference Alignment for Tennis- Please add conferences to the MHSA Handbook [Proposed divisions for Class A Tennis](#)
- i) Track & Field
- i. Moving the 3200 and 4x100 Prelims to Thursday of State Vote 24-0 in Favor
 - ii. Every Pre-Qualified Athlete needs to go to State regardless of entry limits at Divisionals West vote 13-0 / East vote 11-0
 - iii. Ten (10) individuals from the Eastern and Western divisionals will qualify for the final in the 100m at the divisional meet. If an individual false starts or does not compete in the 100m final at the divisional meet, they will still advance to the state meet but will be seeded at state with NO Time (NT) unless they have a qualifying standard time they can use to seed State. Vote 24-0 In Favor
- j) Summer Meeting
- i. 2026 Class 'A' summer meeting will be in Big Sky June 14-16: 24 for 0 opposed
- 4) **Class B Requested Changes for 2025-26 and information from Summer Meeting**
- a) Wrestling
- i. 39 to 2 in favor of eliminating the 50-match limit
 - ii. 33 to 1 to expand the competition limit from 18 to 20



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- b) Softball
 - i. Class B would like to see MHSA purchase and provide the highest quality bat testers at each of the Divisional Tournament locations for all Classifications of Softball. Train and make it a requirement for the Crew Chief to be in charge of the bat testing at the Divisional (or postseason) site. The Crew Chief then places an MHSA bat approved sticker on it that is good for both Divisionals and State tournaments.
- c) Tennis
 - i. Class B would like MHSA to require schools to have at least one Coach at each site when genders are playing at split locations for postseason play.
- d) Football
 - i. Discussion was held and Class B would like consideration to be made from "8 quarters per week" to "8 quarters in 3 days". The rationale is that teams are already playing Varsity Friday night, JV on Saturday, take ONE day off, and then play a Monday JV game and it is legal by current MHSA rule. But then teams are not allowed by current rule to Play JV on Monday, take THREE full days off, play Varsity on Friday, and the JV Game on Saturday. (Only because the clock starts over on a Sunday for that week). Bare minimum there is a request on the table to receive MHSA permission for 12 quarters on those rare occasions where teams may have a JV game on a Monday and a Friday or a Saturday of the same week, alongside a player's minimal varsity action on Friday night.
 - ii. A Straw poll was taken and results were favorable (12 to 9) to move from a 16 team to a 12 team playoff bracket in Class B Football. We will take an official vote at the Summer 2026 Meeting in Big Sky.
 - iii. A Straw poll was taken and results were favorable (23 to 4) to move to a Neutral Site State Championship Double Header WITH Class A. We will visit with Class A and maybe hold official votes on this topic at our Caucuses in Helena in January.
- e) Volleyball
 - i. Class B votes to begin a Class B Master Volleyball Scheduling Committee. Mike Schmitt (1B), Sara Marsh (2B), Tim Kaczmarek (3B), Ron Osborne (4B), Sarah Layng (5B), and Dakota Norris (West) will be the initial committee members. (Please place in MHSA handbook)
 - ii. 41 to 0 to allow two sub-varsity players to start the varsity match per mutual agreement between school administration.
- f) Track and Field
 - i. Discussion was held about Coaches being in favor of running the 3200 M races on Thursday night alongside the pole vault that is already taking place.
 - ii. Class B was unanimous in saying that Athletic.net LIVE needs to be mandatory at all State Track & Field sites.
- g) Basketball
 - i. 41 to 0 in favor of increasing quarter limits from 5 to 6 mirroring the Class C model. Please adopt Class C by-law language for this process.
 - ii. ALL Districts and Divisions in Class B have now agreed to move their postseason events back one week due to the change in the MHSA Wrestling Schedule. The plan is to keep that in place moving forward. The annual schedule should flow as follows for five straight weeks:



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Divisional Wrestling, State Wrestling, District Basketball, Divisional Basketball, State Basketball. Please change this on the Annual MHSA Calendar to reflect this change.

- iii. Much frustration about the NFHS Network issues during culminating postseason events in all sports and specifically Basketball. With comparisons to our neighbors in North Dakota we are not in the same stratosphere for professional coverage of events. Would the executive board consider tweaking the current NFHS Network deal to allow state or regional TV stations to carry the games and put on a more professional product we can be proud of? This would be of course provided there is an agreement that their feed needs to also be fed into the NFHS Network at the same time.
- h) Golf
 - i. 37 to 1 in favor of moving from the current postseason qualification standards of "Top 4 teams and Top 15 Individuals to State" to "Top 3 Team and Top 20 Individuals to State" for next season. (top 15 at Divisionals would still remain all-conference)
 - ii. It was also agreed that Class B will have further discussion at the January Caucus meeting and/or next summer about either supporting a "Cut Line" after Day 1 of the State Tournament or ways to eliminate the 5th golfer (alternate) on some of the 9 teams that qualify for the State tournament out of the Divisionals. This may be based on overall score at Divisional or Stroke Gap between a team's 4th and 5th golfer.
 - iii. Class B would like MHSA to strongly consider expanding the number of coaches a school is allowed to have at a State Meet or eliminate this together provided the Coach is employed by the school and has all the proper training and paperwork in place. Many commented that Golf is the only sport where MHSA is limiting how many coaches a school can have at a postseason event. (No limit in any other individual sport)
- i) Cross Country
 - i. 38 to 1 in favor of dropping the Minimum State for State Qualification to 27:00 for Girls and 22:00 for Boys
 - ii. Class B formed a Divisional Cross Country Committee. (Class C did the same this week). Both B and C are strongly considering Divisional Cross Country Meets to begin AFTER the 2025 season. The XC committee will discuss how many individuals would auto-qualify out of each the three hypothetical Divisional meets based on their overall finish. They will also consider regular season "State Qualifying" marks similar to Track & Field. The mark would likely be high (like last year's Top 15 All State time at the State Meet). The strongest argument in favor of a Divisional Cross Country Meet may be equity. Currently Cross Country is the only sport that does not offer Student-Athletes and schools an opportunity at Divisional Accolades at the A, B, and C level. This would give kids an opportunity to earn individual All-Conference like they can in all other sports and give schools an opportunity to earn a Divisional Championship or a Divisional Trophy like they can in all other sports. The XC Committee will be 1B - Cut Bank, 2B - Harlem, 3B - Baker, 4B - Joliet, 5B - Broadwater, 6B - Florence, 7B - Thompson Falls with John O'Dell as the Chairman
- j) Class B Representative
 - i. The Class B Association votes unanimously to support Dustin Gordon (Fairfield) for the upcoming Class B seat on the MHSA Executive Board.



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5) Class C Requested Changes for 2025-26 and information from Summer Meeting

A. Cross Country:

- **Executive Board Action requested** – A motion was made to change to NCAA displacement scoring at the state event, which removes individual finishers from team points.
- **No Board Action required at this time** - Cross Country is only sport that does not have a divisional qualifier for State. Class C would like to mirror the qualifications for Golf. An athlete may not qualify as an individual but could qualify with a team. Will still limit the numbers at state but with lower auto qualification standards, (i.e. 20 minutes for Boys.)
Committee formed for possible implementation in 26-27

B. Football:

- **Executive Board Action requested** - A motion was made to raise the host team allowance to \$500 (From \$100) for each 6-Player post season game.

C. Wrestling –

- State Wrestling is a week later (Feb 19-21, 2026) discussion on eliminating the 50-match rule without increasing contested events from the current 18 to 20.
 - (1) Eliminating the 50-match rule – 0 against
 - (2) Increasing to 20 games – 0 in favor

D. Tennis – **No Board Action required** – Class C Supports the new qualifiers for State Tennis –

E. Basketball – **No Board Action required** - Potential 3-day state tournament vs the current 4-day format Class C went to a 4-day format to provide a better experience for the athletes and cut down on finding a separate venue on Saturday for loser out games. Motioned to change back to a 3-day format for the State Tournament to implement the 25-26 school year, 20 for and 25 against, motion failed.

F. Golf: **Executive Board Action requested on the following 3 items:**

- A motion was made to qualify students with a minimum score of 115 for boys and 130 for girls to compete at Divisionals for individuals.
- A motion was made to qualify as a team, must have at least two individuals qualify individually, then may add a third individual to form the team
- A motion was made to change from the top 20 to the top 18 individuals who qualify from divisionals to state.

G. Golf Divisions – There was discussion on moving to 3 divisions in the future – **No Board Action required**

6) Building Update

7) MHSA Handbook Clarifications and Additions or definitions

- a) By-law Changes due to Montana State Government Legislation
 - i. SB 350 – US Citizen
 - ii. HB 869 – AED's and EAP's
 - iii. HB 300 - Gender Participation

b) Interpretations -

8) 2024-25 Budget Close Out



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- a) Budget Items:
 - Year End Purchases -
 - Reserve amounts
 - Other items –
- 9) State Tournament Bids - None
- 10) MHSA Office - Staff responsibilities updates
- 11) MFEA Handbook – Speech, Drama & Debate
- 12) MHSA Sports Medicine Items
 - a) AED Postseason Requirement
- 13) Open Gym Update
- 14) Wrestling
 - a) Eliminate the 50-match limit rule
 - b) Increase contested events language from eighteen (18) to twenty (20).
- 15) Spirit Postseason Ticket Distribution
 - a) Spirit Teams will check in each day of postseason tournaments and no longer receive an individual ticket.
- 16) Summer Coaching Rule Handbook change.
- 17) Tennis addition to NFHS Network Streaming Rule
- 18) NFHS Network Contract Extension
- 19) Additional Items