



MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

PROMOTING SUCCESS ON THE COURT, ON THE FIELD, ON STAGE
AND EVERYWHERE ELSE UNDER THE BIG SKY SINCE 1921.

June 14, 2024

TO: MHSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

FROM: BRIAN MICHELOTTI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024 – 8:00 A.M.

Mr. Fitzgerald has directed that a conference call of the Executive Board be held at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 20th. 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** - The Board approved a new policy for baseball play-in contests in regard to the game ending procedures. [Click here to see the adopted language.](#)
 - b) **Basketball** - The Board approved a new policy for assigning offsite game locations for Saturday morning games at the state basketball tournaments. The gym assignments for Saturday morning contests will not be determined until after the Friday semifinal games are completed. The following factors would be used to determine which games are played at the main tournament site and which games are played at the secondary site:
 - A team will not play in their home gym.
 - Different gender teams from the same school should not play at separate locations.
 - Gym capacity could be considered for crowd sizeBrackets would be updated with gym assignments Friday night and affected teams would be notified as soon as possible.
 - c) **Football** - The Board approved a 4-year rotation for 8-Player football playoff brackets with the new 4-Division format. [Click here to view the 8-Player playoff brackets.](#)
 - d) The Board approved the timeline for football reclassification. [Click here to view this timeline.](#)
 - e) The Board approved a change to the process for awarding football conference trophies. In the future, conference presidents can request that trophies for football divisional winners be sent earlier so the trophy can be presented immediately after the final regular season contest.
 - f) **Softball** - The board re-aligned Manhattan High School to the East for B/C Softball.
 - g) **Track and Field** - The Board approved allowing schools to conduct non-high school track & field meets at the same time as high school district track & field meets. The high school and non-high school events must be conducted separately. This is being allowed to provide adequate rest time between races and to utilize the same workers. This change is effective for the 2023-24 MHSA Track & Field season.
 - h) **Wrestling** - The Board approved the State Wrestling Tournament to be scheduled as a 3-day tournament beginning in the 2024-25 school year. [Click here to see the proposed schedule.](#)
 - i) **Wrestling** - The board approved changes to the wrestling weight classes. The boys and the girls divisions will go to 14 weight classes. [Click here to view the new wrestling weight classes.](#)



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- j) The Board approved significant changes to the cooperative sponsorship (co-op) language.
- **Removed the 3-year contract** -The co-op shall be **continuous** unless an application for dissolution is submitted to the MHSA. However, the MHSA may terminate said agreement based upon valid reason as determined by the MHSA to become effective at the conclusion of a school year. An Application for Dissolution is required from only one member school of the cooperative. **Existing co-ops are grandfathered and do not need to be renewed this year.**
 - Schools in each co-op are allowed to have an official name recognized by the MHSA that is different from the combination of school names (Ex: Saco-Whitewater-Hinsdale could officially be called North Country in the MHSA Handbook and on tournament brackets).
 - February 1st is the application deadline for new co-ops and also for the dissolution of existing co-ops (for all sports except football).
 - Football co-ops will be reviewed on the same cycle as football reclassification (2-year cycle). Enrollment and participation data may be requested by the MHSA office to determine if a cooperative sponsorship will be dissolved or reclassified.
- k) The Board approved a new AED and CPR requirement for coaches. The MHSA requires completion of the NFHS Learn CPR & AED Training course prior to contact with student-athletes. Certification is good for a one-year period. *
- * The following courses/certifications can be substituted for the NFHS Learn CPR & AED course **(for two years)**:
 1. American Heart Association
 - Basic Life Support (BLS) CPR & AED Training
 - Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)
 - Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) for Experienced Providers
 - Heartsaver CPR/AED
 2. American Red Cross
 - In-person class and skills check OR online class and in-person skills check
 - Advanced Life Support (ALS)
 - Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
- l) The Board approved a change in security policy at all postseason events to utilize safety measures such as metal detectors and/or bag check procedures when available at the site.
- m) The Board approved a change to the MHSA Open Gym policy. One on one instruction will be allowed in open gyms as long as it is separate from the group activity.
- n) **Montana Officials Association** - The Board approved the following MOA items:
- 6-year MHSA / MOA regular season fee plan- [Click to Link](#).
 - 6-year MHSA / MOA postseason fee plan- [Click to Link](#).
 - Regular season change for officials' mileage - When an official is assigned a contest in the pool site city, but lives outside that city, they shall get paid round trip mileage and per diem from their home zip code to the pool city or zip code.
 - Regular Season per diem rate increased from \$0.12 per mile to \$.16 per mile.
 - Post Season per diem rate increased \$5.00.



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- 2) Spring Tournament Evaluations
 - a) State Baseball – Aric and Scott
 - b) State Tennis – Class AA, - Greta; Class A – Aric and Greta; Class B-C – Joe and Greta
 - c) State Golf – Class B- John and Brian, State C – Joe and Brian
 - d) State Softball – Class AA – Jenise and Amy, State A – Amy & Brian, State B-C – Amy & Brian
 - e) State Track – Class AA -C – Kara, Krystal and Kip, State A-B - John and Scott

- 3) Class AA Requested Changes for 2024-25 and information from Summer Meeting - 2024 Proposals from AD's to **Principals – June 2024**
 - a) **Golf** - Host schools for Divisional or State events will be responsible for securing enough markers for the event. All participating schools will be responsible for securing one back-up marker for the event to be used if needed. 16-0 AD, 16-0 Admin
 - b) **Swimming** – Assurance of 48 swimmers for each event at state. This means that if the A/B does not fill a heat for an event additional AA swimmers will be allowed to fill lanes. This will have minimal change to the entry process. 16-0 AD's 16-0 Admin
 - c) **Track** - All FAT meets will be viewed as a qualifying event for state meet competitions at AA level. 16-0 AD, 16-0 Admin
 - d) **Track** – AA conference will request that MHSA allow for the addition of an additional relay event be allowed as a exhibition event at the Optimist and Dahlberg events. Recommendation was for a 200,200,400,800-type medley. 16-0, 16-0 Admin
 - e) **See MHSA Items on this item - Track** – Recommendation made to MHSA to run the 3200 for all classes on Thursday of the state meet. 16-0 AD, 16-0 Admin
 - f) **Track** – Adjustments to the qualifying standards be included in the AA handbook using the recommendations that came to us from the track coaches. 16-0 AD, 16-0 Admin
 - g) **Softball** – Proposal from AD's - Adjust the softball regular season maximum games to a total of 20. This will be achieved by playing 14 conference games, 2 games in the crossover event, and 4 non-conference games. 16-0 AD, 16-0 Admin
 - h) **Tennis** – Proposal from AD's - For all postseason events, no match will begin later than 10:00 PM. Additionally, if conditions will not allow for the completion of a minimum of 40 matches on the opening day, the event will become a 3-day event. 16-0 AD, 15-1 Admin
 - i) **Wrestling** – Move to boys state scorers from 13 to 14 in the post season.
 - j) **Proposal to advance all team sports to state level post season in a similar manner. Additional proposal from AD's requiring Admin and Superintendent support** - Proposal from AD's Passed our group 15-1, passed Admin 15-1

Proposal – In phase 1, the proposal would eliminate divisional tournaments for volleyball and basketball as well as reduce the number of softball teams advancing to the state tournament from 12 to 8. Our first phase will allow all team sports to advance beyond the regular season in a similar manner.



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Rationale – The AA conference AD's feel a need to take a proactive step to address current and pending budget shortfalls in our districts. Would like to take a two-phase approach to searching out potential cost savings to be implemented at all AA schools.

- Phase 1 discussed at both the winter and summer meetings of 2024 meeting to impact team sports.
- Phase 2 to be developed during school year 24-25 and brought forward at the June 2025 admin meeting would be a look at all remaining individual sports and activities.

Phase 1

All team sports will advance to postseason play in a similar manner. Teams finishing first and second in their respective conference will advance to the state event. Teams finishing seventh or eighth in their conference would have their seasons end. Play in games would take place involving all teams, finishing third, fourth, fifth, and sixth in their respective conferences after regular season play. This will bring consistency to the advancement to post season play used for all team sports. All team sports will have play in games for the final two conference entries to state events as well as eight total AA teams advancing to state level play.

- 4) **Class A Requested Changes for 2024-25** and information from Summer Meeting - These changes have been voted upon by all member schools at the 2024 summer meeting in Fairmont.
- a) Football
 - i. MHSA Handbook: Flip the playoff bracket so West will be #1 seed. First round of the playoffs the teams will not crossover. - [2024 Class A Football Bracket](#)
 - ii. All Class A Football Playoffs and the State Championship will be played on Saturday unless another time is mutually agreed by the two schools involved. (Pg.72 MHSA Handbook). Change to 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. **24-0 in Favor.**
 - b) Golf (Coaching) and Cross Country (minimum times) – **See MHSA Proposals**
 - c) Soccer
 - i. The championship series will consist of nine (9) teams, three (3) teams from the Southern division and Northern division, and three (3) teams from Eastern division, unless the criteria from #2 below is in effect. (bracket should reflect the 2021 bracket, east to the top and east has play-in)
 - 1. The higher seed will host each playoff game. If like seeds play each other, the bracket determines the host site.
 - 2. If the two (2) seed has beaten the three (3) seed twice during regular season conference play, then there is no play-in game. **14-0 in favor**
 - ii. Increasing the postseason roster from 20 to 22. This matches the AA and we would like to allow this on our Class A financial form - III - TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS - No more than twenty-two (22) players in Class AA and Class A can be in uniform for any tournament/playoff game. **14-0 in favor**



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- d) Softball - The Western A has voted to discontinue the divisional softball tournament. They will use play-in games to get our 6 qualifiers to state.
- e) Speech and Debate - New Events added to Class A and B/C Postseason (AA has the events currently) – 1 - Program Oral Interpretation of Literature - solo event and Program Oral Interpretation - **21 in favor, 2 against**
- f) Tennis –
 - i. Each Class 'A' school choosing to participate in their state tennis tournament will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament at a maximum rate of \$20/participant. **(Raising the fee from \$15 to \$20)** - 17-1 in favor
 - ii. Conference Realignment for Tennis 17-1 in favor of realignment - [Proposed divisions for Class A Tennis](#)
- g) Track & Field
 - i. Class A will allow each division to set their own divisional qualifications. 24-0 in favor
 - ii. **See MHSAA Proposals** - 3200 moved to Thursday
- h) Volleyball - Increasing the postseason roster from 12 to 14. This matches the AA language. **23-1 in favor**
- i) Wrestling
 - i. Moving State Wrestling in 2026 to 2/19-2/21 - 24-0 in favor
 - ii. Changing boys divisional qualifiers from 17 to 18. 17-1 in favor
- j) Conference/Division Alignment for 24-25 season
 - i. Soccer Divisions:

East:
 Billings Central
 Laurel
 East Helena
 Lockwood
 Lone Peak
 *Park/Sweetgrass

South:
 Corvallis
 *Frenchtown/Loyola (co-op is boys only)
 Hamilton
 *Stevensville/Florence-Carlton
 *Loyola/Valley Christian (girls)
 Polson

North:
 Bigfork
 Columbia Falls
 *Libby/Troy
 Whitefish
 *Thompson Falls/Plains

ii. Tennis Divisions:

Northwest -
 Columbia Falls
 Whitefish
 Libby
 Bigfork
 Polson

Southwest –
 Ronan
 Stevensville
 Corvallis
 Hamilton
 Beaverhead County

Browning
 Havre
 East Helena
 Fergus

Central



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Butte Central

Billings Central

Hardin

Custer County

Dawson County

East -
Park

- k) FYI – No Action Required -
 - i. We also discussed realignment for football only. We are looking to balance up the conferences and possibly allow for more non-conference games. We have tabled it until January but are hoping if we do adopt new divisions, we can implement them in 25-26.
 - ii. 2025 Summer Meeting - 2025 Class 'A' summer meeting will be in Big Sky June 8-10: 24 for, 0 opposed

5) **Class B Requested Changes for 2024-25** and information from Summer Meeting

- a) Qualifying rotation for Volleyball and Basketball beginning with the 2025-2026 Seasons (Vote was 32 in favor and 6 against)
 - i. 2025-26 - 4 South - 2 North - 2 West
 - ii. 2026-27 - 3 South - 3 North - 2 West
 - iii. 2027-28 - 3 South - 3 North - 2 West
- b) State Wrestling Qualifiers (Vote was 27 in favor and 2 against) - Each School will be able to wrestle and score up to 17 wrestlers per school at Divisional and State Tournaments (max 2 per weight class)
- c) State Tennis Qualifiers (Vote was 15 in favor and 0 against) - Change from 32 Doubles Girls teams to 24 Doubles Girls Teams that qualify for the State B/C Tournament. The Singles girls (32), Doubles Boys (16), and Singles Boys (16) state qualifiers will remain the same.
- d) Post-Season Track (Vote was 15 in favor and 6 against) - Allow all athletes who meet the state qualifying times-heights-distances to be allowed to enter the state meet even if there are more than five contestants from the same school. Individual athlete event caps would still apply.
- e) Post-Season Track High Jump and Pole Vault (Vote was 29 in favor and 5 against) - Gather qualified heights from divisional results and make starting heights in High Jump and Pole Vault one height lower than the lowest height qualified.
- f) Postseason Golf (Vote was in 21 favor and 9 against) - Top 25 Individuals, both Boys and Girls from the West, North, and South Divisional advance to the State B Meet. No auto team-qualifying for the state B tournament. If a team qualifies four individuals from their school they may bring their fifth golfer as an alternate at the state tournament.
- g) Postseason Cross Country (Vote was in 21 favor and 8 against) - Changing the State Cross Country Qualifying times to 27:00 Girls and 22:00 Boys
- h) Postseason Cross Country (Vote was 17 in favor and 11 against) - Divisional Cross-Country Meet - Cross Country Divisions will mirror golf divisions with Top 15 places receiving All Conference and Top 3 Teams receiving team trophies for both boys and girls.
- i) State Qualifying - Top 25 Places at the North, West, and South Divisional Meet, both boys and girls will Qualify for the State Meet or a runner can Auto Qualify for State Meet with Qualifying Time Throughout the Season.
- j) FYI – No Action Required



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- i. Class B votes unanimously 38 to 0. To recommend Dee Pretty on Top (Lodge Grass) as the Native American representative on the MHSA executive board.
- 6) **Class C Requested Changes for 2024-25** and information from Summer Meeting
 - a) Discussion of combined B/C Division—Eliminate the combined B/C trophy and award Class C team trophies at the Divisional level that match the team trophies at the state level. Teams based on a match has been won - 8 in favor, 0 opposed, motion passed
 - b) State Basketball Tournament Bracket—moving start time of Saturday’s game to move the starting times to Consolation (4:00 & 5:30) and Championship (7:00 & 8:30), This will go into effect for the 2024-2025 season.
 - c) Golf - Move golf back one week to the same week as other spring state events) 24 in favor, 5 opposed, motion passed.
- 7) **MHSA proposal seeking feedback from Classes:**
 - a) Cross Country - Consideration of new-minimum state meet times-boys: 22 minutes; girls: 27 minutes - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 8 in favor, 20 opposed
 - ii. Class B – 21 in favor, 8 opposed
 - iii. Class A – Not in Favor
 - iv. Class AA – All in favor
 - b) State Volleyball-go to Wed-Fri when Cat game is in Bozeman – Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 22 in favor, 13 opposed
 - ii. Class B – Only 1 opposed
 - iii. Class AA – All in favor
 - c) Wrestling - Option for Metra to bid state the following week - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 6 in favor, 2 opposed
 - ii. Class B – Questions about district basketball and moving practice start after Thanksgiving
 - iii. Class AA – All in favor
 - d) If 14 weight classes are approved, A and B/C discuss allowing one more entry in divisional boys’ tournament - **Addressed in A and B/C Section**
 - e) Basketball - Remove signs for any spectator seating at post season events. Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 14 in favor, 10 opposed
 - ii. Class B – in favor for state only
 - iii. Class A - Chad would like to see additional signage in the areas right behind the benches, rather than eliminate it at state tournaments... to help with getting the fans in the right spot.
 - iv. Class AA – All in favor
 - f) Basketball Remove Master Basketball Scheduling requirement - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 2 in favor, 36 opposed
 - ii. Class B – Unanimously opposed
 - iii. Class AA – All in favor
 - g) Golf - Coaching on the course? Should we allow coaching on the greens? Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 20 in favor, 3 opposed



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- ii. Class B – 2 in favor, 15 opposed
- iii. Class A and AA – Not in favor
- h) Track & Field - 3200 on Thursday of State, along with the PV? Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 10 in favor, 29 opposed
 - ii. Class B – not in favor, but no official vote
 - iii. Class A - 3200 moved to Thursday Evening of State - Thursday night - 14-8 against – if moved to 9:30am- 22-2 in favor
 - iv. Class AA – All in favor – From AA - Recommendation made to MHSA to run the 3200 for all classes on Thursday of the state meet. 16-0 AD, 16-0 Admin
- i) Track & Field - Impound implements after being weighed in? - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 41 in favor, 0 opposed
 - ii. Class B - opposed
 - iii. Class AA – All in favor
- j) Track & Field - Coaches' box? At the discretion of the facility? - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 35 in favor, 3 opposed
 - ii. Class AA – No or individual site decides
- k) Track & Field - \$100 fine for late entries at State Track, as well as State XC - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 36 in favor, 4 opposed
 - ii. Class B – Unanimously approved
 - iii. Class AA – All in favor
- l) Tennis – Forfeit, disqualification or default at divisional and state will 2 points in the winners bracket – All if favor.
- m) Allowable items-post season and regular season - MHSA will try to send out more communication during the regular season clarifying what items are allowed to be used by fans, hopefully creating continuity leading into the post season.
 - i. Class AA – All in favor
- n) Ejections Policies - Video to see if players left the bench area during an altercation - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 36 in favor, 1 opposed
 - ii. Class B – Unanimously in favor but have questions about who watches film and makes decisions
 - iii. Class AA – approved
- o) MHSA authority to implement further sanctions to students or coaches if ejection occurs after a game or if deemed egregious (suggestion to possibly add fans to this) - Straw poll results:
 - i. Class C - 38 in favor, 0 opposed
 - ii. Class B – Unanimously in favor, but want clearly defined rules-especially at tournaments
 - iii. Class AA – Approved with caution
- p) Speech, Drama, Debate-Class A, B/C only
 - i. Divisional fee increase–additional \$20 fee - *At Divisional meets, an entry fee of up to \$5 for each participant in the competitive events in Speech and Drama may be charged by the host school. The host school shall be allowed to assess a drop fine of \$5 for each



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- contestant dropped by a registered school the day before or the day of the Divisional tournament. An additional \$20.00 school registration fee at the divisional tournament may be charged.
- ii. New events added to postseason - Program Oral Interpretation of Literature—solo event and Program Oral Interpretation
 - iii. both of the above recommendations, Class A in Favor and Class C - 37 in favor, 0 opposed, motion passed.
 - iv. Class B – unanimously in favor of both
 - v. All approved by A & B/C, does not effect AA
- 8) Basketball – remove 5 second closely guarded language – See attachment
 - 9) Softball – 15-run Rule added to Postseason
 - 10) Class C Western Division Basketball Bracket and Play-in games – Jesse Allen – See attachment
 - 11) MHSA Handbook Clarifications and Additions or **definitions**
 - a) Interpretations -
 - 12) Student Advisory Committee Update
 - a) New members
 - 13) 2023-24 Budget Close Out
 - a) Budget Items:
 - Year End Purchases
 - Reserve amounts
 - Other items –
 - 14) State Tournament Bids
 - a) 2024-25 Class B State Golf Bid
 - b) 2024-25 Class AA State Tennis Bid
 - 15) MHSA Office - Staff responsibilities updates
 - a) Hotels – Kip to Jenise
 - b) Handbook – Scott to Greta
 - c) Social Media – Amy to Ryan
 - 16) Charter School in Corvallis –
 - 17) Music Festival Calendar Change
 - 18) Administrator attendance requirement at State Events
 - 19) Eighth grade participation in Drama, Speech & Debate
 - 20) Additional items?