OFFICIAL HANDBOOK

MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

2026-2027 Edition

Items changed since the <u>2025-2026 MHSA Handbook</u>

All rule and regulatory revisions and new items are shown in
bold italic print throughout this updated publication.

"The Montana High School Association fully supports the concept of equal opportunity for the youth of the State of Montana. There will be no discrimination with regard to gender, religion, race or ethnic origin in activities sponsored by the Association."

The Montana High School Association
is a member of the
National Federation of State High School Associations

OFFICIAL MHSA HANDBOOK

Montana High School Association

Member of National Federation of
State High School Associations
2026-2027

Published by the MHSA Executive Board

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Copies of this Handbook can be obtained from the Association Office for $10.00 per copy.

Foreword

This Official Handbook is an annual publication of the Montana High School Association. It is revised and updated each year. Two free copies are distributed to each member school at the beginning of each school year.

This Handbook contains the Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and other general information concerning the activities of the Association. It also contains information about the Montana Officials Association.

School administrators should make this Handbook available to those who are given responsibility in conducting interscholastic programs. It is recommended that one copy be in each school's library. Additional copies can be obtained from the Association office.

The answers to questions that arise concerning high school activities will be found in this Handbook. Everyone who receives this book is urged to read and to study it. If there are questions concerning any rule or regulation, clarification is available through the Association staff.

MHSA's Mission Statement

The mission of the MHSA is to assure that the membership is provided with leadership and support in advancing equitable MHSA interscholastic activities for the growth and educational experience for students.

A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

The Association is a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Montana, which provide for incorporation of organizations for certain purposes, including educational. A resolution authorizing the officers of the Association to proceed with incorporation was adopted at the Annual Meeting of the members in Missoula, on January 31, 1967.

A non-profit corporation has all the usual powers and authority of corporations generally, such as the right to contract, to acquire and to hold real property and other property, to use a corporate seal, and to be recognized as a continuing entity. Although it may not have pecuniary profit as an object of incorporation, carrying on of business activities to earn legitimate operating and administrative expenses is not forbidden.

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MEMBERSHIP ROLL – 2026-27

Absarokee
Alberton
Anaconda
Arlee
Augusta
Bainville
Baker
Beaverhead County
Dillon
Belfry
Belgrade
Belt
Bigfork
Big Sandy
Billings Central
Billings Senior
Billings Skyview
Billings West
Box Elder
Bozeman
Bridger
Broadview
Broadwater
Townsend
Brockton
Browning
Butte
Butte Central
Carter County
Ekalaka
Cascade
Centerville
Sand Coulee
Charlo
Chester-Joplin-Inverness
Chinook
Choteau
Circle
Colstrip
Columbia Falls
Columbus
Conrad
Corvallis
Culbertson
Custer
Custer County
Miles City
Cut Bank
Darby
Dawson County
Glendive
Denton
Dodson
Drummond
Dutton/Brady
East Helena
Ennis
Fairfield
Fairview
Fergus
Lewistown
Flathead
Kalispell
Florence-Carlton
Florence
Forsyth
Fort Benton
Frazer
Frenchtown
Froid
Fromberg
Gallatin
Bozeman
Gardiner
Garfield County
Jordan
Geraldine
Geyser
Glacier
Kalispell
Glasgow
Granite
Philipsburg
Grass Range
Great Falls
Great Falls C.M. Russell
Hamilton
Hardin
Harlem
Harlowton
Harrison
Havre
Hays-Lodge Pole
Hays
Heart Butte
Helena
Helena Capital
Highwood
Hinsdale
Hobson
Hot Springs
Huntley Project
Worden
Hysham
Jefferson
Boulder
Joliet
Judith Gap
Lambert
Lame Deer
Laurel
Lavina
Libby
Lima
Lincoln
Lincoln County
Eureka
Lockwood
Billings
Lodge Grass
Lone Peak
Big Sky
Loyola Sacred Heart
Missoula
Lustre Christian
Frazer
Malta
Manhattan
Manhattan-Christian
Medicine Lake
Melstone
Missoula Big Sky
Missoula Hellgate
Missoula Sentinel
MT School for the Deaf and Blind
Great Falls
Moore
Nashua
North Star
Rudyard
Northern Cheyenne
Busby
Noxon
Opheim
Park
Livingston
Park City
Plains
Plenty Coups
Pryor
Plentywood
Plevna
Polson
Poplar
Powder River County
Broadus
Powell County
Deer Lodge
Power
Rapelje
Red Lodge
Reed Point
Richey
Roberts
Rocky Boy
Box Elder
Ronan
Rosebud
Roundup
Roy
Ryegate
Saco
Savage
Scobey
Seeley-Swan
Seeley Lake
Shelby
Shepherd
Sheridan
Shields Valley
Clyde Park
Sidney
Simms
Stanford
Stevensville
St. Ignatius
St. Labre Indian Catholic
Ashland
St. Patrick's Academy
Great Falls
St. Regis
Sunburst
Superior
Sweet Grass County
Big Timber
Terry
Thompson Falls
Three Forks
Troy
Turner
Twin Bridges
Two Eagle River
Pablo
Valier
Valley Christian
Missoula
Victor
Westby
West Yellowstone
Whitefish
Whitehall
White Sulphur Springs
Whitewater
Wibaux
Willow Creek
Winifred
Winnett
Wolf Point

FORMER MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, BOARD OF CONTROL AND/OR THE BOARD OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION AND/OR THE MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

G. A. Ketcham
B. E. Milliken
Leroy W. Beam
W. R. Wyatt
A. T. Peterson
J. A. Woodard
Fred Graff
Fred Ward
Payne Templeton
E. A. Hinderman
J. G. Ragsdale
C. B. Brown
Conrad Orr
W. F. Shirley
J. R. Culver
George Harris
Sam Rice
Armin Jahr
M. C. Gallagher
George Hayes
C. W. Grandey
R. H. Wollin
Homer E. Anderson
Roy Homme
P. C. Crump
George E. Haney
Bill Johnstone
Elmer Skeie
R. Rex Dalley
E. J. Nordgaard
C. H. Hancock
A. L. Cooper
S. O. Hefty
W. G. Rafter
Earl H. Fellbaum
Charles. E. Hood
Herb J. Goetz
James F. Watkins
Joseph H. Lutz
Homer V. Loucks
Hiney P. Lund
Emile L. Perey
William C. Greer
R. W. Swarthout
Elmore S. Smith
Charles P. Johnson
A. R. Collins, Jr.
Owen A. Loftsgaarden
Leonard A. Wollan
John B. Deeney
Donald G. Kieckbusch
Paul Stengel
T. Carl Johnson
Carl W. Dahling
James D. Bergene
Garfield O. Munson
Lawrence Sealy
Daniel W. Marinkovich
W. Vance Ramberg
Willard R. Wallace
Penny (Bullock) Copps
C. E. "Con" Murphy
James L. Koke
George "Jack" Copps
E.V."Gene" Lagerquist
Rita Heizer
Donald X. Driscoll
Karl A. Fiske
C. P. "Cliff" Johnson
C. J. "John" Kinna
James L. Kimmet
W. G. "Garry" Rafter
George Lippert
Richard Correll
James Wood
Richard Sirokman
Bill Vogt
Tammy Hall
Jim Anderson
Tom Warwick
Tony Tognetti
Dale Zorn
Dwight Moose
Margaret Basta
Rick Stuber
Cliff Hagfeldt
Robert McLeod
Sara Young
Mary Dunn
Ward Fifield
Leo Wohler
Mike Johnson
Steve Gaub
Pat Callbeck Harper
Angela Cooper Lind
Dave Shreeve
Gary Davis
Jerry Jimison
Cal Spangler
Alan Olson
Janice Frankino Doggett
Ken Stuker
Jeanette McKee
Joe Brott
Jack Regan
Lynn H. Mavencamp
Paul Johnson
Voyd St. Pierre
Glen Johnson
Gail Peterson
Mark Brajcich
Kathy Bramer
Herb Townsend
Jim Baldwin
Dave Fern
Fred Anderson
Glenn Hageman
Karen Sanford-Gall
Duane Walker
Doug Reisig
Dave Perius
Karen Underwood
Dennis Holmes
Lee Stiffarm
Malia Kipp Camel
Pat Lynch
Duane Walker
Mike Cutler
Peter Fusaro
Mark Ator
Dennis Murphy
Luke Kloker
David Cobb
Dinny Bennett
Hannah Dean
Doug Reisig
Luke Kloker
Steve Thennis
Krystal Zentner
Aric Harris
Jimmy Patelis

Montana High School Association

Executive Board

President Kara Triplett, Superintendent – Lambert
Class C Representative
Term Expires 2028

Vice-President Joe McElroy - Missoula
State Superintendent's Representative
Term Expires 2027

Travis Blome, Activities Director – Hamilton
Class A Representative
Term Expires 2027

Dan Mills, Principal – Bozeman
Class AA Representative
Term Expires 2029

Dustin Gordon, Superintendent - Fairfield
Class B Representative
Term Expires 2030

Allan Labbe – Superior
Governor's Representative
Term Expires 2030

Iris KillEagle - Dodson
MTSBA Representative
Term Expires 2029

TBD
American Indian Representative
Term Expires 2028

Executive Staff

Brian Michelotti
Executive Director

Kip Ryan
Senior Associate Director

Scott Wilson
Associate Director

Amy Bartels
Assistant Director

Greta Buehler
Assistant Director

Articles of Incorporation

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS that we, the undersigned, Owen A. Loftsgaarden, of Power, Montana, Leonard A. Wollan of Laurel, Montana, and R. Rex Dalley, of Helena, Montana, as president, vice president and secretary respectively of the Montana High School Association, an unincorporated association, do hereby make and execute these articles of incorporation for a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Montana, as authorized by Chapter 14 of Title I5, Revised Codes of Montana, 1947, and we do hereby certify as follows:

ARTICLE I

The name of this non-profit corporation shall be the Montana High School Association, which is the name of the existing unincorporated association to now be incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Montana.

ARTICLE II

The purposes and objects for which this corporation is formed are and shall be as follows:

1. To form a voluntary organization of high schools of the State of Montana having a common interest in interscholastic, amateur athletics, contests and activities and other interscholastic participation contests, activities or programs.

2. To encourage and to stimulate interest and participation in all things having to do with amateur athletics and other interscholastic participation contests, activities or programs of the high schools in the State of Montana, and to assist and to promote in every legitimate and appropriate manner to further the interests of its members in such activities.

3. To supervise, control, regulate and administer athletic and other interscholastic activities, programs, contests and tournaments among member schools of this Association, and to cooperate with other organizations or individuals interested in or organized for similar or compatible purposes.

4. To promulgate, adopt, publish, enforce and interpret such rules and regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the objectives of the Association, including investigation of infraction and protests, determination of disputes and violations, and imposition of penalties.

5. To establish, maintain and administer insurance programs, pension programs, and mutual accident benefit plans, for the benefit of its members and the students in such member schools.

6. To establish, operate, supervise and administer related programs, and activities, including but not limited to athletic officials' organizations, rules clinics, study clubs, music festivals and speech meets.

7. To prepare, publish, sell, distribute and promote publications for the use or benefit of member schools and others, including handbooks, rule books, bulletins and others.

8. To have and to exercise all powers granted to non-profit corporations by the laws of the State of Montana, and to include but not necessarily be limited to the power to buy, lease, rent, sell, mortgage, and otherwise procure, own, manage, use and dispose of such real and personal property as may be necessary and proper for furthering the purposes of this Association.

9. To have full power to engage in any other activity and to do any other things in connection with the objects and purposes above mentioned, which may be necessary or proper to successfully accomplish or promote said objects and purposes, but without contemplation of pecuniary gain or profit to any member or group of members of this corporation at any time.

ARTICLE III

This corporation shall have perpetual existence as a corporation and shall have the right to sue and be sued in its corporate name in all proper courts.

ARTICLE IV

The principal place of business of said corporation, and the principal office for the transaction of its business, shall be in the City of Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana, with its post office and mail address as P.O. Box 798, Helena, Montana 59601.

Note: The current address is: 1 South Dakota Avenue, Helena, Montana 59601 as shown by the Annual Report filed with Montana's Secretary of State.

ARTICLE V

By-laws of this corporation shall be adopted, and may be amended or repealed, at any regular meeting of the members thereof, or at any special meeting called in accordance with the provisions of said by-laws.

ARTICLE VI

The number, name or designation of officers of this corporation, their qualifications, duties, and terms of office, and the manner and time of their election or appointment, shall be as prescribed in the by-laws to be adopted by the members of this corporation, which shall also provide for the qualification of members, mode of election, and terms of admission to membership, the qualifications of members of the Executive Board, the mode of their election, the property, voting and other rights and privileges of each class of membership, the number of members to constitute a quorum at any meeting of the corporation, expulsion and suspension of members and their restoration of membership, the contracting, securing, paying and limiting the amount of indebtedness, and such other regulations pertaining to general operation and management of the corporation and its property and activities as shall be compatible with the objectives of the corporation and not repugnant to the laws of the State of Montana.

ARTICLE VII

This corporation shall never issue shares of stock and shall never distribute pecuniary gains or dividends to any member or group of members thereof.

ARTICLE VIII

The names and addresses of the persons who are to act in the capacity as members of the Executive Board for the first three months or until their successors are elected and qualified are Owen A. Loftsgaarden, of Power, Montana, Leonard A. Wollan, of Laurel, Montana, A.R. Collins, Jr., of Billings, Montana, Paul Stengel, of Wolf Point, Montana, and R.W. Swarthout, of Great Falls, Montana.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have hereunto set their hands and to a duplicate of like tenor and effect this 31st day of January, 1967.

(Signed) Owen A. Loftsgaarden
(Signed) Leonard A. Wollan
(Signed) R. Rex Dalley

(Acknowledgement of Signatures)

Note: The current officers and directors as shown on the Annual Report filed with Montana's Secretary of State are as follows:

President:	**Kara Triplett, Lambert**
Vice-President:	**Joe McElroy, Missoula**
Executive Director-Treasurer:	**Brian Michelotti, Helena**
Directors:	**Dan Mills, Bozeman** **Dustin Gordon, Fairfield** **Travis Blome, Hamilton** **Allan Labbe, Superior** **Iris KillEagle, Dodson** **TBD**

By – Laws

ARTICLE I

Section (1) MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Any accredited high school may become a member of this Association by meeting the following requirements:

a. Must be accredited by the Montana State Board of Public Education under one of the following categories:
   1. Regular accreditation
   2. Accredited with advice
   3. Accredited on probation

b. Must have itts membership in this Association authorized annually by school board resolution.

c. Must pay its annual membership dues.

d. Must file with the Executive Director a completed annual membership form.

In becoming a member in the Association, such member school recognizes the authority of the Association and agrees to comply with its rules. A high school or secondary school is any combination of grades 9, 10, 11 and 12.

1.2 Any member school will not be permitted to participate in any interschool athletic contest with a school, club team or other groups (teams) that are not accredited by the State Board of Public Education in the state of Montana and, hence, not eligible for membership in the MHSA, if more than two schools would be participating in the event. If a member school does participate in an interschool contest with a non-accredited school, club team or other groups (teams) and more than two schools are involved, the member school or schools will be subject to penalties under Article VIII.

1.3 If a member school wishes to invite a non-accredited school or accept an invitation from the school to participate in a two-school contest, this would not be a violation of this section.

Section (2) DUES

2.1 The annual membership dues shall be according to the following schedule. For each individual MHSA activity in which it participates, a school will pay $250. The activities listed below are sanctioned by the MHSA and payment of the $250 fee is required for participation:

Baseball	Soccer-boys
Band	Soccer-girls
Chorus	Softball
Drama	Swimming-boys
Orchestra	Swimming-girls
Speech	Tennis-boys
Basketball-boys	Tennis-girls
Basketball-girls	Track & Field-boys
Cross Country-boys	Track & Field-girls
Cross Country-girls	Volleyball
Football	Wrestling-boys
Golf-boys	Wrestling-girls
Golf-girls	

The following activities are classified as emerging sports/activities and payment of the $250 fee is required for participation: Girls Flag Football ***(extended for 2026-27 and 2027-28).***

Non-Sanctioned MHSA Activities: Cheerleading

2.2 Annual dues are payable on or before July 15 of each year of membership. Any schools failing to pay the annual dues on or before August 1 of each year of membership shall become ineligible from that date until such dues are paid and shall be required to pay a penalty of fifty dollars ($50.00) in addition to the regular dues before reinstatement.

Note: Refunds will be made, upon written request, up to and including the first allowable date for competition in that sport/activity.

2.3 Distribution of Net Profit of Athletic Playoffs
Any net profit, after allowable expenses and charges have been deducted, is to be divided as follows:

Football:
Class AA — All profits from all playoffs and state championship will be divided equally among the schools participating in the football program in Class AA.

Classes A, B & ***C six-player***— Home Management expenses and visiting team travel expenses incurred during the playoff series will be satisfied to the extent possible through gate receipts for each game and will be distributed by the host school. Profit, if any, after expenses will then be sent to the MHSA office to be placed in a reserve pool (escrow account) from which any unmet expenses of other playoff games, within that classification, will be distributed. In Class A, after all approved expenses for the playoff and state championship games within that classification have been satisfied, the reserve pool monies will then be equally divided among all schools within that classification that participate in the football play-offs. In Class B, after all approved expenses for the playoff and state championship games within that classification have been satisfied, the reserve pool monies will then be equally divided among all schools within that classification that participate in football. ***In Class C Six-Player, after all approved expenses for the playoff and state championship games within that classification have been satisfied, the reserve pool monies will then be equally divided among all state playoff qualifying teams.***

NOTE: Refer to the Football section for eight-player finances.

Soccer:
Classes AA and A — In the event that profits are great enough that all travel expenses are covered during a playoff contest(s), any remaining profits will be forwarded to the MHSA to be equally divided among Class AA or A schools that sponsor soccer and had teams qualify for post season play.

All Other Athletic Playoffs (Except Track and Field):
District — All profits to be divided equally among those schools participating in the district tournament.

Divisional — All profits to be divided equally among those schools participating in the division.

State — All profits to be divided equally among all schools in their particular class (AA, A, B, C) participating in that activity. Exception for Class A, B and C state basketball – in the event that profits are great enough that all expenses are covered for the state tournament, any remaining profits will be equally divided among all teams which qualify for the state tournament.

Track and Field:
The MHSA office shall retain all profits from state meets.

2.4 Each school in a cooperative sponsorship agreement will share equally with all other schools in the district, division or state.

NOTE: Teams who request to participate as a J.V. only team and are not approved to participate in the postseason will not receive a share of any profit for that sport.

Section (3) MEETINGS

3.1 There shall be one (1) regular annual meeting of the Association at the time and place designated by the Executive Board.

3.2 Written notice of annual meeting shall be given to each member school at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of such meeting.

3.3 A special meeting of the Association may be called by the Executive Board upon giving written notice at least ten (10) days prior to such meeting to each member of the Association.

3.4 Each member school of the Association shall be represented at meetings of the Association by the administrative head of the school and each school shall be entitled to one (1) vote and no proxies shall be recognized at any meeting. However, the administrative head of a member school may designate in writing a full-time certified employee of the member school to represent such member school at any meeting unless the school board designates, in writing, a school board member to be the voting delegate.

3.5 All business of the Association may be transacted by a majority vote of the member schools in each classification attending and voting at any meeting; The Resolutions Committee shall indicate which proposals relate only to specific classifications and only those schools in that classification may vote on that proposal. The Resolutions Committee shall also indicate which proposals relate to the entire membership. The Resolutions Committee's decision may be overridden by a simple majority vote of the member schools present and voting.

3.6 Any proposal forwarded to the Executive Board to be included on the agenda for the annual meeting must be presented on the floor in its original form.

3.7 Any proposal which has fiscal implication for the Association must be accompanied by fiscal notes.

3.8 All meetings of the Montana High School Association membership will be open to the public. Those persons of the general public will be allowed to offer testimony on any of the proposals presented by the membership. The presiding chair has the authority to limit discussion by all individuals. Members of the general public must follow the same restrictions as member school representatives, and if meeting fees are required, they shall be applied uniformly to all those who attend.

Section (4) ADMINISTRATION

4.1 The regulation and administration of the affairs of this Association shall be vested in a body of eight (8) persons known as the Executive Board.

Each member of the Executive Board shall be elected at each annual meeting of the Association for four (4) years, except as is hereinafter provided. The elected members of the Executive Board shall be superintendents, high school principals, or activities directors from the following:

a. One (1) of which shall be elected from a school playing Class AA basketball;
b. One (1) of which must be elected from a school playing Class A basketball;
c. One (1) of which must be elected from a school playing Class B basketball;
d. One (1) of which must be elected from a school playing Class C basketball;
e. One (1) of which must be elected as an American Indian superintendent, high school principal or high school activities director from an American Indian member school. American Indian school shall be defined as any MHSA member school with an American Indian student population of at least 50% in grades 9-12 as reported to the Office of Public Instruction.

In addition to the elected members of the Executive Board, the following appointees will serve on the Executive Board:

a. The Governor of the State of Montana shall appoint one person.
b. The Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Montana shall appoint one person.
c. The Montana School Board Association shall appoint one person.

The terms of the appointed members of the Executive Board, except as provided for above, shall be four (4) years. No member of the Executive Board shall be elected to successive terms, except an appointed school board member who is a Montana School Boards Association Director may be selected by the Montana School Boards Association at its annual meeting for an unexpired or a subsequent four (4) year term(s). The Montana High School Association permits those persons who are appointed to fill the unexpired term of a board member who dies or resigns to be eligible to succeed themselves at the next Annual Meeting of the Association, provided that the appointee is not filling more than half of the unexpired term of the board member who dies or resigns.

4.2 All classifications of school hereinabove set forth shall be determined by the Executive Board and outlined in the rules and regulations of this Association.

A majority vote of the members present and voting at the annual meeting shall select a superintendent, high school principal, or activities director. Suppose no majority is on the first ballot. In that case, a second ballot shall be spread on the two candidates receiving the most votes, plus any other candidate receiving twenty percent (20%) of the votes on the first ballot (if any). The third ballot will be spread between the two top candidates if necessary.

Any Board member's term shall expire with the reorganization of the Board no later than the last day of the next regularly scheduled meeting following the annual meeting.

4.3 Any elected Board member's term shall expire upon the failure to receive a two-thirds majority vote of confidence from his or her classification at any annual meeting where twenty-five (25) percent or more members of that classification request such a vote of the Executive Director no less than ten (10) days before the annual meeting. An election will be held before adjournment of the annual meeting to fill any unexpired term(s) so created.

4.4 One of the intentions of the Association is to establish and maintain, either by election or by appointment, equal and constant representation on the Executive Board by athletic classification (C, B, A and AA as stipulated in 4.2). Therefore, the term of any elected member of the Executive Board shall automatically expire when (1) as a result of a change of position from one district to another, the member in question is no longer employed in a required position by an Association member school in the same classification from which he/she was elected; or (2) when the school district from which a member was elected changes athletic classification in basketball. In the event such a vacancy occurs, the Executive Board shall have appointment power as stipulated in 4.6, said appointment to remain in effect until the next Annual Meeting. At that meeting, an election shall be held to fill the vacancy, selecting a qualified member from the athletic classification which was originally deprived of elected membership.

4.5 Should a member of the Executive Board cease to hold such a position required for qualification as member of the Executive Board, the term of office for that member shall there by automatically expire and the office will be considered vacant.

4.6 Vacancies on the Executive Board may occur in two categories: elected positions or appointed positions. Procedures for filling each category of vacancy shall be as follows:

Vacancies in elected positions: Utilizing the qualification criteria of 4.2, the Executive Board shall appoint a member who is

employed by a member school in the same athletic classification in which the vacancy occurred. That appointment shall be made not later than the first regular Board meeting following the occurrence of the vacancy and shall be in effect until the next Annual Meeting of the Association.
Vacancies in appointed positions: In the event a vacancy occurs in either of the positions filled by appointment by the Governor or the State Superintendent, the Governor or the State Superintendent, whoever is applicable, will fill by appointment such vacancy at which time the member appointed shall complete the unexpired term. In the event the appointee is not filling more than half of the unexpired term of an appointed board member who dies or resigns, the appointed board member may be appointed for an additional new four year term.

The Executive Committee of the Montana School Boards Association shall have the power to fill a school board member vacancy which may occur in the Executive Board by appointment of a school board member to serve until the next annual meeting of the Montana School Boards Association, at which time a member shall be elected to complete the unexpired term.

4.7 The officers of the Executive Board shall be the President and the Vice President. Annually, the members of the Executive Board shall elect the President and Vice President from among their members. The President shall serve one term but may be re-elected.

The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a term of office of one to three years, but shall not be a voting member of the said Executive Board, and shall be eligible for reappointment at the will of the Executive Board.

4.8 The officers of the Executive Board shall serve in similar capacity respectively as officers of the Association.

Section (5) EXECUTIVE BOARD

5.1 The Executive Board shall have general supervision over all activities of member schools which are within the objectives of the Association.

5.2 The Executive Board shall have the authority to adopt and make changes as deemed necessary in the rules and regulations of the Association except the By-Laws adopted by the general membership. The Executive Board may not vote to adopt any proposed change(s) in the rules and regulations until all member schools have received at least a two week notice of the proposed change(s).

5.3 The Executive Board may authorize the Executive Director to make decisions as necessary for the proper operation of Association business. The Executive Board shall hear all appeals of decision by the Executive Director and may affirm, reverse or modify a decision of the Executive Director. On appeal, the Executive Board may, at its sole discretion, waive or modify the application of a rule in emergency or exceptional circumstances if it determines that the application of a rule as written would not substantially serve the intent or purpose of the rule. However, in no event may a rule be waived or modified by the Executive Board unless all of the following conditions are affirmatively shown to clearly exist:

a. The emergency or exceptional circumstances were entirely beyond the control of the student, the student's parents or guardians, and, if relevant, the student's school; and
b. The granting of relief will not prejudice the rights or opportunities of other students or other member schools; and
c. The granting of relief will not violate any parts of the underlying purpose of the rule involved.

5.4 There shall be four (4) regular meetings yearly of the Executive Board. One of these meetings shall be held at the time and place of the annual meeting of the Association; other meetings of the Executive Board shall be called and held at such time and place as designated by the President of the Association. Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President or by a vote of the majority of the members of the Executive Board. Four (4) members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum at any meeting. All Montana High School Association Executive Board meetings shall be open to the public. They will be closed only when allowable by Montana open Meeting Laws. Rules and regulations changes, appeals or any other requests for action at a board meeting must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

A written notice shall be given to all members of the Executive Board at least five (5) days before the date of the meeting.

5.5 Video conferences necessary for the operation of the Montana High School Association shall be conducted in the same manner and with the same restrictions as regular or special meetings. Video conferences will be held only when necessary for immediate action for an interpretation of a rule, for a violation or protest which needs immediate action, or for an appeal on student eligibility. When an expedited hearing is requested prior to the next scheduled meeting, the Executive Board will assess the appellant a ***non-refundable $300*** fee to cover expenses. The Board may hold video conferences for any of the above items as well as litigation, legislative, and other emergency matters which could affect the operation of the Association.

The MHSA Board can propose or amend MHSA Rules and Regulations during a conference call to conduct Association business. The Executive Board may not vote to adopt any proposed change(s) in the rules and regulations until all member schools have received at least a two week notice of the proposed change(s).

Executive Board members must be given 48-hour advance written notice of the call.

5.6 The Executive Board shall interpret the By-Laws, rules and regulations of this Association.

5.7 The Executive Board shall have the following powers and responsibilities for expenditures of monies for the operation of the MHSA consistent with budgeting and expenditure practices mandated for Montana public school finance and principles.

5.8 The Executive Board shall prepare an itemized preliminary budget for the ensuing fiscal year and mail the same to each member school at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the annual meeting.

The unrestricted net assets held in cash and investments as of July 1 for the general operation of the Montana High School Association for the ensuing year are limited to 50% of the approved budget. General operations do not include designated funds the Executive Board believes should not be part of the unrestricted net assets.

The Montana High School Association shall hold as a matter of policy that invested reserve of the Montana High School Association shall be the same types as approved for school districts. The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall administer the reserve fund.

As of July 1 each year any monies over and above the maximum reserve limit shall be pro-rated back to the member high schools, as per football classification when the excess monies reach or exceed the minimum formula that follows:

1. Each Class C school — $10.00
2. Each Class B school — $20.00
3. Each Class A school — $30.00
4. Each Class AA school — $40.00

INTERPRETATION

Without the approval of the membership, the MHSA Executive Board shall not have the authority to rebate monies to the schools until maximum reserve limits have been reached.

5.9 The total maximum amount of the operating budget shall be specified by a majority of the members of the MHSA at each annual meeting. The total operating expenditures for the fiscal year shall not exceed this amount unless the Executive Board has adopted an emergency operating budget under the provisions of Section 5.9a.

a. Emergency budget procedure: The Executive Board may adopt an emergency budget not exceeding twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000) to be drawn from existing reserve funds at any time during the fiscal year by notifying the membership in writing of the details of the emergency budget twenty (20) calendar days prior to its adoption.

In the event that sufficient reserve funds are not available to fund the requested emergency budget or the amount requested for the emergency budget exceeds $25,000, the Executive Board shall submit the proposed emergency budget to a mail ballot sent to the chairperson of the member schools for approval. The proposed budget shall detail the requirements of the budget including the assessment mechanism to fund the budget. A simple majority of ballots from those schools returning the ballot shall be necessary for approval of the emergency budget.

The Executive Board may adopt an emergency budget without a vote of the membership to satisfy a final judgment by a court or a settlement agreed to by the Executive Board in litigation against the MHSA.
The Executive Board shall satisfy a final judgment out of funds that may be available from the following sources:

1. the operating fund;
2. the legal reserve fund; or
3. a levy to the member schools assessed on the basis of the number of activities in which a school participates in an amount necessary to pay any unpaid portion of the judgment.

b. In all matters not herein specified, the Executive Board shall have the complete authority until the next regular meeting of the Association, and shall have authority to adopt such rules and regulations as may appear necessary for carrying out the objectives of the Association.

Section (6) OFFICERS AND DUTIES

6.1 President: The President shall preside over all meetings of the Executive Board and the Association.

6.2 Vice President: The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence and such other duties as shall from time to time be delegated to him/her by the Executive Board.

6.3 Executive Director: The Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer and shall take the initiative in interpreting and enforcing the regulations and policies of the Association, and in promoting its aims and objectives. The Executive Director shall attend to the official duties pertaining to the Association as are delegated to him/her by the Executive Board. He shall be paid an annual salary to be determined by the Executive Board.

6.4 It shall be the duty of the Executive Director to furnish an annual financial report of the Association to all member schools. This report shall cover the fiscal year from July 1 to June 30. It shall also be his duty to collect and send out to member schools the financial reports of all interscholastic affairs held under the jurisdiction of the Executive Board, but for which responsibility has been delegated to administrative heads of member schools.

6.5 The Executive Director shall furnish a bond to the Association, the penal sum of which shall be determined by the Executive Board.

6.6 The Executive Director shall have the accounts of the Association audited annually by a certified public accountant, approved by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE II
Requirements for Eligibility for Participation in an Association Contest

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: The Executive Director is responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of the eligibility rules. This interpretation and enforcement must be uniform and consistent. The Executive Director does not have the power to modify eligibility rules or to make new eligibility rules. At times the enforcement of these rules may appear to result in injustice to a student or a school in a situation arising from lack of familiarity with the rules, misunderstanding of the rules, or negligence on the part of some individual. In such a case, it must be recognized that the Executive Director cannot, through sympathy, permit exceptions to the rules. He/she has no such power. The Executive Board shall hear all appeals of decisions by the Executive Director and shall have the authority to grant relief if the Executive Board determines that the purpose or intent of the by-law/rule is not being served.

Section (1) **ASSOCIATION CONTEST**

1.1 The definition of an “Association Contest” is an athletic contest between teams representing two high schools, which are members of the Association involving any group of students playing under the supervision of the school. All rules and regulations that apply to an Association Contest shall apply to any athletic contest engaged in by a member school.

1.2 Any game or part of a game (scrimmage, practice, warm-up, tune-up or similar activity), in which the students participate as a representative team of their school with any other sanctioned or non-sanctioned team, shall be considered an Association contest and shall be counted as a part of the season game limit for the school’s athletic classification.

1.3 No Association Contest may be played before the starting date of the first allowable competition in each particular sport.

1.4 Any member school will not be permitted to participate in any interschool athletic contest with a school, club team or other groups (teams) that are not accredited by the State Board of Public Education in the state of Montana and, hence, not eligible for membership in the MHSA, if more than two schools would be participating in the event. If a member school does participate in an interschool contest with a non-accredited school, club team or other groups (teams) and more than two schools are involved, the member school or schools will be subject to penalties under Article VIII.

1.5 If a member school wishes to invite a non-accredited school or accept an invitation from the school to participate in a two-school contest, this would not be a violation of this section.

Section (2) ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to participate in an Association Contest, a student shall meet all of the following criteria:

2.1 A student must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance in ten hours per week at the school where the student participates. Regular attendance is defined as actual physical presence in the building (bricks and mortar).

Exception 1: Students are exempt from the ten hours per week bricks and mortar requirement of Section 2.1 if enrolled and completing personalized learning in accordance with provisions and intent of Section 20-7-1601, MCA, and consistent with policy adopted by the school district Board of Trustees. Students enrolled and competing personalized learning must participate for the district for which they are enrolled. All other eligibility requirements in this handbook apply.

Exception 2: Students enrolled and completing personalized learning in accordance with the provisions and intent of Section 20-7-1601, MCA in districts with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district as established by school board policy. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with personalized learning students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school and the student changes to another school in the district, the MHSA Transfer Rule applies.

Exception 3: Non-public or home school students who meet the requirements of 20-5-109 can participate in MHSA member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

1. The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (besides enrollment).
2. The same rules of the MHSA apply including age, semesters and academics (see #3).
3. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for students attending a home school must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA school principal. Academic eligibility includes provisions 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.
4. The student may only participate in the school in the student's attendance area and cannot transfer.

INTERPRETATION
Homeschool or nonpublic students must reside with their parents or guardians for this rule to apply.

5. For a homeschool student to be able to participate in MHSA sports or activities, the student must be a United States citizen, and he/she must be a Montana resident, as determined under the provisions of MCA 1-1-215.

Exception 4: Home school or nonpublic school students who resides in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school and the homeschool or nonpublic student changes to another school in the district, the MHSA Transfer Rule applies.

2.2 A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format utilized (i.e. block, traditional, trimester etc.).

2.3 A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared class work or its equivalent in the last previous semester, at the school where the student participates; except that any ninth-grade student enrolled and attending any junior high, in the same school system as the senior high school, may be eligible to participate on that senior high school's athletic teams. If the school prohibits participation by ninth grade students, this action by the local school will not be subject to review by the MHSA or its Executive Board.

2.4 A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared work per week or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which he/she was enrolled.

2.5 If a student is assigned an "incomplete" or a "condition" in a subject, he/she has not received a passing grade in this subject. The record at the end of the semester is final.

2.6 In the case of two or more schools entering into a cooperative sponsorship of activities, a student enrolled as a student and otherwise satisfying eligibility requirements would be eligible to participate in any activity sponsored by the school, regardless of whether the activity is sponsored only by the school or in conjunction and cooperation with another school, without being in violation of Article II, Section 2.

2.7 No student may establish eligibility concurrently at two member schools. Dual enrollment is not recognized for the purpose of eligibility in MHSA activities. A home school or nonpublic school student who participates at a MHSA member school is not eligible to concurrently participate in the same sport/activity that he/she participates in at the member school in any other league (nonpublic or home school). This provision protects member schools and nonpublic and home school leagues regarding dual participation.

2.8 This rule is not applicable to IDEA '04 and Section 504 students when their individual education plans (IEP) under IDEA or their educational accommodation plans under Section 504 certify that the students are not required to meet this minimum academic to have passed 20 hours of prepared work per week. However, all students must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance in ten hours per week. Special education or Section 504 certification that the student is not required to meet the minimum academic requirements may not be enacted retroactively (after grades have been assigned at the end of the previous semester).

2.9 The second semester begins on Monday morning following the week in which the first semester ends. A student who becomes eligible the second semester would then become eligible on Monday morning. A student who becomes ineligible the second semester would become ineligible on Monday morning.

2.10 A student attending a state approved Charter school approved by the Montana Board of Public Education is considered eligible for competition if the student a) is academically eligible from the previous semester, b) is enrolled and in regular attendance for twenty hours per week of approved high school classes, c) is eligible to receive a diploma from the high school for which he/she is competing, and d) the principal of the high school verifies that the student meets all other eligibility requirements such as age, semesters etc. and is in good standing. The Charter School student must participate for the district in which student's family resides.

If charter school students reside in a school district with more than one high school, they can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with charter students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school, and the student changes to another school in the district, the MHSA Transfer Rule applies.

2.11 If a State of Montana statute establishes law regarding transgender participation in sports and activities, the MHSA shall adhere to and comply with such state statute.

2.12 **Academic *Hardship Rule*: *A high school student who, because of circumstances beyond his/her control (such as broken home conditions, death of parents or guardian, abandonment or other exceptional circumstances), does not pass the required number of credits the previous semester may be declared eligible by the Executive Director provided a member school administrator petitions the Executive Director for a waiver of the academic eligibility rule. If the waiver of the academic eligibility rule is approved by the Executive Director under the foregoing circumstances, he/she shall be eligible provided he/she meets all other eligibility requirements. Appeals on Petitions for Waiver of the Academic Rule under the Academic Hardship Rule shall be acted upon by the MHSA Executive Board at any regular or special meeting, including conference phone calls, provided the school or individual requesting, agrees to pay the cost of the call.***

The official MHSA Waiver of the Academic Eligibility Rule Form must be used.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **A student may not compete "unattached" or "independently." He/she must compete for and be eligible to represent his/her member high school.**
2. **Schools may be more stringent in their policies.**
3. **Twenty hours of prepared class work is defined as four subjects that grant one unit of credit each for the full school year, or their equivalent (e.g., three classes carrying one unit of credit for the school year and two classes carrying one-half unit of credit for the school year) or the equivalency in a block/trimester schedule would meet this requirement.**
4. **Only school district-approved course work can be used to compute the 20 periods of prepared work.**
5. **The scholastic record at the end of the semester shall be final and deficiencies may not be made up in any manner. Deficiencies, including incompletes, conditions and failures for the previous semester may not be made up during a subsequent semester, summer session, night school, correspondence, or tutoring for the purpose of establishing or maintaining MHSA eligibility.**
6. **The intent of the rule prohibiting incomplete grades from being made up is not to prohibit incomplete grades which were given in cases of illness, injury or attending school authorized functions.**
7. **A student attending an alternative school not housed within the high school is considered eligible for competition if the student a) is academically eligible from the previous semester, b) is enrolled and in regular attendance for twenty hours per week of approved high school classes, c) is eligible to receive a diploma from the high school for which he/she is competing, and d) the principal of the high school verifies that the student meets all other eligibility requirements such as age, semesters etc. and is in good standing.**
8. **If a homeschool or non-public school student changes residences from one parent to another, those parents must be divorced or legally separated.**

Section (3) PHYSICAL EXAM

3.1 A physical examination is required for each student in order to be considered eligible and to be approved for participation in an Association Contest. Physical examinations must be completed prior to the first day of practice. This examination must be certified by a licensed medical professional acting within the scope and limitations of his/her practice. Physical examinations conducted after May 1 and thereafter are valid for the following two school years; Physical examinations conducted prior to May 1 are valid only for the remainder of that school year and the following school year. The physical examination form developed by the MHSA Medical Advisory Committee and approved by the MHSA Executive Board must be used. A current form may be obtained from the Montana High School Association. An interim history form is required during the off years when no physical examination is conducted and must be submitted to the school prior to the first practice.

NOTE: Whenever the Association's Rules and Regulations specify that physical examinations shall be required or that doctors shall be present at certain events or that reports or physical examinations or certificates of physical fitness shall be furnished to an official of the Association, the rules and regulations shall be deemed complied with if the services are performed within the scope and limitations of his/her practice. This complies with Section 33-22-111 of the Laws of Montana which provide for freedom of choice of practitioners.

Section (4) GRADUATE STUDENTS

4.1 Any student who meets any of the following criteria shall be ineligible to participate in any Association Activity:

a. The student is a graduate of a regular four-year high school.
b. The student is a graduate of a secondary school which has the same requirements for graduation as a regular four-year high school.
c. The student has earned enough credits to entitle him/her to be graduated from the high school and has completed eight semesters of high school.
d. The student has received a high school equivalency diploma (e.g., GED/HiSET).

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **A student who graduates the first semester is ineligible the second semester.**
2. **A student who has earned enough credits to graduate the first semester but remains enrolled and graduates on the regular date remains eligible to participate.**
3. **Senior students who are currently eligible in their eighth semester (4th spring) will continue to be eligible for all interscholastic activities even though graduation exercises precede the completion of interscholastic activities for that specific year.**

Section (5) STUDENTS BELOW NINTH GRADE

5.1 A student who is enrolled in the eighth grade shall be eligible to participate in an Association contest, but must meet the following requirements and parameters:

a. The eighth-grade student is participating in a contest other than football.
b. There is no restriction in place for participation of this 8th grade student at his/her middle school and/or high school of which he/she will be participating.
c. Any eighth-grade student allowed to participate will have eight semesters of high school eligibility remaining.
d. All eighth-grade students participating must meet the academic requirements.
e. All eighth-grade students participating must meet the transfer requirements. The official MHSA transfer form must be used.
f. All eighth-grade students participating in a high school contest must adhere to all other MHSA rules and guidelines. Committed to a contest at the high school level, the eighth-grade student ***may also*** participate in that same sport at a level under high school concurrently.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Each individual MHSA School District must adopt by school board action policies on whether or not they allow 8th grade participation.**
2. ***Eighth graders who participate in high school must be academically eligible to participate during the school year and they also must pass the previous semester to be eligible as a ninth-grade student.***
3. ***Students must attend the designated feeder middle school for the high school in which they will participate as 8th graders.***

5.2 A ninth grade student may not play on a 7th and/or an 8th grade team.

5.3 Any student who is at least fifteen (15) years old on or before midnight August 31 may be declared eligible for participation in Montana High School Association contests by the Executive Director. The Montana high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the Executive Director for consideration. Any student who is declared eligible under this section must participate in athletics at the high school level (grades 9-12) only.

Section (6) PARTICIPATION ABOVE SECONDARY SYSTEM

6.1 No student who has ever participated in athletics in an institution of learning higher than secondary rank shall be eligible to play under the rules of this Association.

Section (7) AGE RULE

7.1 No student is eligible to participate in an Association contest who has become nineteen (19) years old on or before midnight, August 31, of a given year. Therefore, a student who becomes nineteen (19) years old after midnight, August 31, of a given year, will be permitted to compete in all Association contests throughout that school year, under the provisions of this section.

7.2 A student who is ineligible by reason of this age rule may seek a waiver from the MHSA under the following conditions and procedures.

The student, his/her school, parent/guardian or other representative shall submit a written application for a waiver. For fall sports, the application shall be submitted by March 15th of the preceding school year so that, if necessary, the request can

be considered by the Executive Board prior to summer recess. For all other sports seasons, the application shall be submitted at least 60 days prior to the first activity for which he/she seeks the waiver.

7.3 It will be the burden of the student to prove:
a. the student does not create a safety risk to other players, and
b. the student does not skew the overall competitiveness of the particular activity(ies) for which the student will participate, and
c. the student's participation will not result in the exclusion of other eligible players, and
d. the student meets all other criteria necessary for participation in MHSA activities.

7.4 The Executive Director is vested with the authority and responsibility to make the initial waiver determination. In making the initial determination, the Executive Director shall consider such evidence as is provided by the applicant; and the Executive Director may request the applicant to provide specific information or additional information; and the Executive Director or staff may make an independent investigation of the facts. The Executive Director shall then make a determination as to each activity for which a waiver is sought and notify the applicant.

7.5 Upon initial receipt of the waiver application, the request shall be scheduled for hearing before the Executive Board at the next scheduled meeting. It shall be scheduled neither sooner than 30 days nor more than 60 days from the day the application is received. If the Executive Director thereafter grants a waiver, the scheduled hearing will be vacated. If the Executive Director refuses to grant the requested waiver, then the student will be so notified and can proceed to present his waiver request to the Board. At the hearing, the Board will consider all documentary evidence previously considered by the Executive Director together with any additional evidence submitted.

Section (8) SEMESTER RULE

8.1 A student will be eligible to participate in Association Contests for four (4) consecutive years [eight (8) consecutive semesters] after entering the ninth grade. Enrollment of twenty (20) pupil instruction days during a ninth grader's first semester in high school constitutes his/her first semester of attendance. A ninth grader who is enrolled fewer than twenty (20) pupil instruction days in his/her first semester of high school does not begin his/her eight (8) consecutive semesters unless he/she has participated during this time in an Association contest. Such a period of fewer than twenty (20) pupil instruction days is not considered to be "the last previous semester attended" under Section (2).

INTERPRETATION

1. This rule also applies to a student who has been declared eligible under Section (5)C (Students below ninth grade).

2. A student will be eligible to participate in Association Contests for five (5) years [ten (10) consecutive semesters] after entering the eighth grade.

Section (9) DEADLINE FOR ENROLLMENT

9.1 A student shall have been regularly enrolled in at least twenty hours of prepared class work per week and in attendance for ten hours per week no later than fifteen (15) school days after the beginning of the semester to be eligible during that semester. This rule shall not apply to transfer students who have met the attendance requirements in the school last attended. Regular attendance is defined as actual physical presence in the building (bricks and mortar).

Section (10) TRANSFER RULE

10.1 ***Any student – including eighth graders who are permitted to participate in high school activities – who transfers from one member school, homeschool, or non-member school to another member, homeschool, or non-public school becomes ineligible for varsity competition. The period of ineligibility is equal to half the number of P.I. days in the current school year. This period begins on the student's first day of enrollment and attendance at the new school.*** A student and his/her parents or legal guardians must reside in the attendance area of the school in which he/she is enrolled except for a student enrolling in ninth grade for the first time (see Section (12) Record of Transfer.) This rule applies to a student who transfers after twenty (20) days of enrollment or after he/she participates in an athletic contest while enrolled in grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, EXCEPT the following students may be declared eligible:

a. A student who moves into a new district or school attendance area upon a corresponding change of residence by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) with whom the student was living during his/her previous school enrollment. The legal guardianship must have been established at least one calendar year before the transfer. If the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) move to a new location a student must follow within a calendar year of the move to be eligible for varsity competition after proper certification by his/her principal.

b. Students transferring from one high school to another under any bona fide foreign exchange program will be eligible for two (2) consecutive semesters of eligibility for participation in activities under the administration of any NFHS member association, after the principal properly certifies that they meet all eligibility requirements. The exchange student will not be eligible beyond these two semesters even if he/she chooses to stay at that school, transfer to a different high school or remain under a bona fide program. The student would be ineligible for half the number of P.I. days in the current school year at the school he/she attends following the two consecutive semesters of eligibility. A student who returns to the school at which he/she was enrolled directly before attending a bona fide foreign exchange program will be eligible immediately upon re-enrollment. (A student who has graduated from a high school in his/her own country and is now in the United States under a foreign exchange program would not be eligible.) Refer to Article II, Section (4).

1. A foreign exchange student is an international student who attends high school in the U.S. To be eligible for interscholastic athletics in the U.S., such student must be under the auspices of and be placed with a U.S. host family by an international student exchange program that has been accepted for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) and be recognized by the U.S. Department of State. The foreign exchange program must assign students to host families by a method that ensures that no student, or his/her parents, school or other interested party may influence the assignment for athletic purposes. The foreign exchange student may not be selected or placed on any basis related to his/her athletic interests or abilities.
2. A foreign exchange student is considered to be placed with a host family when written notice of placement is provided by the exchange organization to the student and his/her parents, and to the host family. Neither the school the student attends nor any person associated with the school shall have input into the selection of the student.
3. The foreign exchange student must possess a current J-1 or F-1 visa, issued by the U.S. State Department.
4. The foreign exchange student must comply with all eligibility requirements set forth by the state high school association of which the school he/she attends is a member.
When a foreign exchange student changes his/her attendance from one high school to another, eligibility for MHSA activities will be determined by the Executive Director after receiving a petition for Waiver of the Transfer Rule (Hardship).

c. A student who marries and establishes a new residence in a new district or school attendance area.

d. A student in attendance at a school designated by the governing body of that school as a result of reorganization, consolidation or annexation or a student ordered transferred within a school system, for other than interscholastic competition purposes, by a board of education or the governing body of a private or parochial school system.

e. A student who moves from parent to parent or legal guardian to legal guardian the first time in his/her high school career will be eligible upon verification to the MHSA office that this is the first move and certified by the administrators involved that the move was neither athletically motivated nor was the move because of recruitment. The legal guardianship must have been established at least one calendar year before the transfer.

f. A student who transfers to another school for the primary purpose of participating in a sport(s)/activity(ies) not sanctioned by the Montana High School Association (and does not participate in an MHSA sanctioned sport at that school) and returns to the school from which he/she transferred.

g. A student who transfers from a home school to an MHSA member school in the same school district for the first time in his/her high school career and has never attended high school.

h. A student who has attended high school and resides in a district other than where the student's parent(s) resides, and who subsequently returns to live with the student's parents becomes immediately transfer eligible for varsity competition in the parent's district. This can be applied only one time during the student's career.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Date of enrollment means the first day he/she attends classes.**

2. **A transfer student who changes high schools without the corresponding change of residence by parents or legal guardian (legal guardianship must be established at least one calendar year before the transfer) is eligible to compete as a member of a non-varsity team, only, if his/her school is in a contest against non-varsity teams, only, of other member schools, providing he/she meets all other eligibility requirements. No student may compete unattached or independently.**

   NOTE a: Athletes participating in cross-country, track and swimming will be allowed to compete in the contests where varsity and sub-varsity team members compete at the same time to conserve time and expense, but are scored separately. Example: cross-country meet where varsity and sub-varsity runners run at the same time but are identified and scored separately.

   NOTE b: The following interpretations apply only to transfer students and their eligibility for varsity Association contests:

3. **A change of residence is the actual physical relocation by the parents or legal guardians of a student at a new residence and termination of all occupancy of a previous residence. The change in residence must be bona fide, include other minor siblings and involve transfer from one school district attendance area to another school district attendance area. For the purpose of eligibility, there can be only one residence.**

4. **If a transfer student enters after the beginning of a semester he/she will become eligible after the expiration of half the number of P.I. days in the current school year in the school he/she is now attending.**

5. **Guardianship is not recognized for the purpose of these rules, when either parent is living and legally competent unless such guardianship has been legally established at least one calendar year before the transfer.**

6. **If a family moves to a new location, a student should attend the school within the attendance area. If, however, the new home is geographically more convenient to an out of district school, attendance may be allowed, with MHSA approval, without reference to school district or county boundaries. Under these conditions a student would become eligible as soon as his/her principal properly certifies in writing to the MHSA office that he/she is eligible. Should he/she later decide to return to his/her home school after an attendance of 20 days or more in the school away from home, he/she would be considered the same as any other transfer student and would lose one semester of eligibility.**

7. **For the purpose of these rules a student cannot establish a residence apart from his/her parents. If he/she habitually makes his/her home with a relative and the student changes schools because the relative changes residence, the student will lose eligibility time in accordance with the transfer rule. A student, both of whose parents are deceased and who has no legal guardian, may change high schools without loss of eligibility time. However, a student may not change school systems within a city or school district.**

8. **A student may enroll in a new high school in anticipation of a change of residence on the part of his/her parents. After his/her parents establish residence at the new location, he/she will become varsity eligible as soon as the principal of the school to which the student transfers properly certifies in writing to the MHSA office that he/she is eligible.**

9. **When two or more high schools have been established within one school system and under the administration of one board of trustees, the district shall be divided into a corresponding number of high school attendance areas. Students shall attend the high school of the designated attendance area.**

10. **Each year the board of trustees shall designate a school attendance area for each high school under its jurisdiction not later than the opening date set for fall sports, such boundaries must not be changed during any current school year.**

11. **Students transferring from one high school to another in the same school system but in a different attendance area are ineligible for half the number of P.I. days in the current school year after enrollment, unless there is a bona fide corresponding change of residence on the part of the parents(s) or legal guardian (legal guardianship must be established one calendar year before the transfer) from the previous attendance area to the present attendance area.**

12. **A student who enrolls at MSDB for the first time may become eligible after the principal certifies that the student meets all eligibility requirements.**

13. **A student attending an alternative school not housed within the high school is considered eligible for competition if the student resides in the attendance area of the high school for which he/she competes and if all other eligibility requirements are met.**

14. **A student who has transferred from a MHSA member school to home school and then back to the member school is ineligible for varsity competition for half the number of P.I. days in the current school year after enrollment.**

15. **In order for a parent-to-parent move or a return to parent exception to be granted, parents must be divorced or legally separated.**

10.2 Transfers from one school system to another within the same city or town: In the cities or towns which have more than one high school system (e.g. both a public high school and a private high school), a student must complete half the number of P.I. days in the current school year of attendance before being eligible when transferring from one high school system to another within such city or town, even though the parents or legal guardian with whom the student has been living during the period of his/her last high school enrollment moved into the immediate vicinity of the new school.

INTERPRETATION

MHSA Private Schools Defined Attendance Areas

Butte Central	***Butte City Limits***
Billings Central	***Billings City Limits***
St. Labre	***Ashland City Limits***
Loyola Sacred Heart	***Missoula City Limits***
Lustre Christian	***Frazer City Limits***
Northern Cheyenne	***Busby City Limits***
Great Falls Central	***Great Falls City Limits***
Manhattan Christian	***Manhattan HS Attendance Area***
Valley Christian	***Missoula City Limits***
Two Eagle River	***Pablo City Limits***

10.3 **Hardship Rule:** A high school student who, because of circumstances beyond his/her control such as broken home conditions, death of parents or guardian, abandonment or other exceptional circumstances, finds it necessary to change high schools may be declared eligible by the Executive Director provided the principal of each high school involved files a statement with the Executive Director that the change was necessary, was not athletically motivated, and there was no known undue influence. If the transfer of any student from one school to another is approved by the Executive Director under the foregoing circumstances, he/she shall be eligible provided he/she meets all other eligibility requirements. Appeals on Petitions for Waiver of the Transfer Rule under the Hardship Rule shall be acted upon by the MHSA Executive Board at any regular or special meeting, including conference phone calls, provided the school or individual requesting, agrees to pay the cost of the call.

The official MHSA waiver form must be used.

Section (11) ELIGIBLE TRANSFERS

11.1 A student who transfers enrollment, but retains eligibility pursuant to Section (10), shall be considered eligible as soon as the principal of the school to which the student transfers properly certifies in writing to the Montana High School Association office that the student is eligible to represent the school in an Association Contest.
(The principal's certification verifies that the student has met all eligibility requirements in Article II of these By-Laws.)

11.2 A transfer student shall not be eligible to participate as a member of his/her new school's athletic team if he/she transfers after the last scheduled regular-season Association contest for a given sport during a specific sport season.

11.3 This rule does not apply to non-public or home school participants. There is no transfer for non-public or home school participants.

Section (12) RECORD OF TRANSFER

A student received by transfer shall not be eligible to participate in an Association Contest until the principal of the school shall have filed with the Executive Director of the Association a record of the transfer on the official MHSA transfer form. This section does not relieve the student from eligibility requirements arising from his/her change of high schools.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Any student enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time in high school is not considered a transfer student except under the following conditions:**
   a. **The student competed as an eighth grader at the high school level.**
   b. **A ninth-grade student or as an eighth grader competed in a high school contest, has been enrolled in another school for 20 school days or more.**
   c. **A ninth-grade student or as an eighth grader, has been enrolled in another school for fewer than 20 days but has participated in a high school interschool athletic contest.**
2. **Any student enrolling in the tenth grade directly from the ninth grade from a junior high school in the same school system is not to be considered a transfer student under this Section.**

Section (13) PROFESSIONAL PARTICIPATION

No student shall be eligible to participate in an Association Contest who has been out of school one or more semesters, if during said non-enrollment he/she has been a member of a professional team. If during such non-enrollment he/she takes part in semi-professional athletics, he/she shall not become eligible again until he/she has been in attendance two full semesters.

Section (14) PENALTY FOR A PLAYER ASSAULTING AN OFFICIAL

14.1 Any athlete who makes physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the sports official or causes reasonable apprehension of bodily injury to the sports official in connection with an Association Contest shall immediately become ineligible for further interscholastic competition. It shall be the responsibility of the tournament manager or principal of the school hosting the event to notify as soon as possible the Executive Director or a member of the Executive Board of the incident. The official involved must report the incident in writing to the MHSA office within three days of its occurrence.

14.2 The coach of the student involved is responsible for keeping that student from further interscholastic participation, pending a ruling by the Executive Board of the MHSA. The Executive Board shall have the power to suspend the violating participant from further interscholastic competition for a period not to exceed two semesters from the date of the infraction.

Section (15) AWARD RULE

15.1 A student participant may not accept monetary compensation (cash) in recognition of activities performance, participation and/or achievement. A student may accept non-monetary compensation or items of value solely in recognition of activities ability, participation and/or achievement if the total value of such non-monetary compensation or items of value, including the actual value of any gift certificates (so long as they are not convertible to cash), discounts, coupons, etc., does not exceed $500 retail value annually (July 1 – June 30).

NOTE: For the purposes of this rule, "non-monetary compensation or items of value" does not include customary awards of a symbolic nature without resale value such as:

a. Training apparel for practice and/or workouts provided by the school. These items include but are not limited to the following : practice shirt, practice shorts, spandex, tights and a pair of socks.
b. The school's athletic letter, medals, ribbons, certificates, plaques, trophies, and other emblems.
c. The award is purchased and presented by the student's parents or when the award is purchased by the student with money earned or secured through his/her own individual efforts.
d. MHSA Sportsmanship Awards

NOTE: For the purposes of this rule, these items which have been a part of the previous awards rule would be included in the "non-monetary compensation or items of value":

a. Schools may provide warm-up shirts (e.g. shooting shirts) to be worn on the court/field before a contest.
b. Fundraising activities such as pop hoop shoots, passing accuracy contests etc.
c. Individual miniature trophies for first and second place MHSA state championship events purchased from the Association's awards provider.

15.2 This rule does not regulate or prohibit compensation received by a student for ability, participation and/or achievement in a non-MHSA sport or activity, nor does this rule prohibit the acceptance of college scholarships by students.

15.3 A coach or director is responsible for reporting to the school's athletic/activities director all compensation or items of value received by the students on that coach/director's team within one month of the receipt of the compensation or items of value. Principals are responsible for verifying to the association, if requested, that the total sum of compensation or items of value received by each student participant at that school does not exceed $500 retail value for each participant.

15.4 A student participating without compensation as a contestant, coach, or similar participant in athletic or other activities may accept the use of necessary equipment and incidental services customarily furnished amateur participants in such activities, may accept reimbursement for direct and necessary expenses for participation (including mileage where the student must drive), and where participation requires absence from home, may accept necessary meals and lodging.

15.5 When a student is selected by chance or random drawing, to participate in a halftime or pregame contest involving a sport skill (e.g. throwing, kicking, or shooting a basketball), he or she may receive cash or merchandise prize from the contest, without affecting eligibility under MHSA Awards and Amateur rules.

Random drawing of names or lucky numbers in a program determining the participant would not be a violation. Examples include, but are not limited to, booster club fund-raisers, drawings to shoot a half-court or three point shot, or passing a football to win a prize. During the season of activity, a player from a school team is permitted to participate in such contests, provided the selection occurs randomly.

15.6 A student becomes ineligible from the date of the report of the violation to the MHSA office. Penalties for the awards rule apply when:

a. Any type of cash is accepted.
b. A student is awarded non-monetary compensation or items of value over $500 annually (July 1 – June 30).
c. The MHSA Ridgeway Settlement Agreement is not followed by schools.

The Executive Board will follow the same procedure for restoring the eligibility status as provided in the last paragraph of the Amateur Rule, Article II, Section (19) of the By-Laws.

Section (16) AMATEUR RULE

16.1 All contestants in the Montana High School Association must be amateurs. An amateur is one who engages in athletics for the educational, physical, mental and social benefits he/she derives therefrom, and to whom athletics are nothing more than an avocation. An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by:

a. Competing for or accepting money or other monetary compensation (it is permissible for a student to accept necessary meals, lodging, and transportation in connection with playing a contest).
b. Play or manage under an assumed name.
c. Receiving any award or prize of monetary value which exceeds the amount that has been approved by the MHSA.
d. Except as provided under By-Law 16.2, permitting the use of name, image, and/or likeness (NIL) as an athlete, in the promotion of a commercial or profit-making event, item, plan, or service
e. A student who becomes a professional in an MHSA-sponsored sport is considered a professional in that sport only and is ineligible for further high school athletic competition in that sport only until such time as returned to amateur status in that sport.
f. Sell a prize won in a competition.
g. Bet on a contest in which he/she is to participate.

16.2 Under By-law 16.1d, the term "commercial or profit-making event, item, plan, or service" means any situation in which the person or entity will receive or hopes to receive anything of value, monetary or non-monetary, but does not include student participation in fundraising activities for non-profit organizations. This also does not prohibit a student from participating in any such event, item, plan, or services sponsored by or benefiting the student's MHSA member school or its activities.

Under By-law 16.1d, the term "as an athlete" shall not include use of the name, image, or likeness of a student of a MHSA member school participating in MHSA-sponsored activities, unless otherwise explicitly permitted or prohibited by state or federal law or the MHSA member school's policies or rules, within the following limitations:

a. Students may engage in name, image and/or likeness (NIL) activities subject to the following:
   1. The student's NIL activities may NOT include an image or likeness of the student in uniform or other clothing or gear provided by the MHSA or the member school the student is attending or has attended.
   2. The student shall not use any MHSA or the member school's facilities, proprietary patents, products, copyrights, and/or equipment for the purpose of any NIL activities
   3. The student shall not use any MHSA or the member school's practice and/or game film for the purpose of any NIL activities
   4. The student shall not promote any person or entity, or their services and/or products, during the MHSA member school's scheduled school day or during any team activities.
   5. When required to follow the MHSA or MHSA member school's uniform or dress requirements, the student may not wear any person's or entity's logo, mark, or insignia, or in any other way represent the person or entity with which the student has agreed to an NIL activity.
   6. No compensation (or prospective compensation) for the NIL activity may be provided by the MHSA member school, an agent of the member school (e.g., school booster club, foundation, employee, etc.), a collective or anyone affiliated with the member school in any way attempting to induce the student to attend or participate in any activity of a MHSA member school.

INTERPRETATION

A collective is defined as Individuals and/or companies cooperatively associate together to form an entity whose goal to provide NIL opportunities to student-athletes of one or more specific schools.

   7. The student shall not promote activities, services, or products, directly or in any way associated with, but not limited to:
      i. Alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, or vaping.
      ii. Controlled substances, including illegal drugs (such as cannabis) or any paraphernalia
      iii. Any item, activity, or conduct which is prohibited or unlawful for any school-aged student under state or federal law or the policies of the MHSA or the MHSA member school.
      iv. Gambling of any kind, including sports betting, lottery, or other, even if the entity for whom the student has agreed to engage in NIL activities has the appropriate permits or licenses as required by law.

b. Violation of by-law 16.2 may result in a determination by the member school and the MHSA of the student's ineligibility for activity participation. Compliance with these rules does not guarantee the student's NIL activity or activities comply with other laws or rules which may affect the student, such as rules established by the NCAA, NAIA, or NJCAA. Students and their parents or guardians are strongly encouraged to contact any such organization which may have separate rules and to consult with their own legal counsel regarding any compliance questions or concerns, including review of any contracts or agreements related to NIL activities of any kind. The MHSA and its staff will consult with MHSA member schools, parents/guardians, and/or students who have questions about the MHSA-specific NIL rules but will not offer advisory opinions that are binding on the MHSA, its staff, or its Board of Directors, and will not review contracts or agreements relating to NIL activities.

16.3 Accepting a nominal standards fee or salary for instructing, supervising or officiating in an organized youth sports program or recreation or playground activities shall not jeopardize amateur standards.

16.4 A student may be reinstated as an amateur by the Executive Board after not less than one calendar year has elapsed since the date he/she was declared a professional, provided his/her high school principal requests in writing the reinstatement as an amateur and certifies that the student has not, during that one year period, violated the rules of amateurism, and that the student is not now under contract to, or owned by, any professional athletic organization.

INTERPRETATIONS

A student athlete may:
:

1. Work in camps where he/she is not participating as a "camper", fulfilling duties that include some officiating, coaching and instructing.

2. Be employed in the intramural sports program of his/her school in which duties include officiating intramural contests for the going rate for such employment.

3. ***Participate as an individual or as a member of a team against professional athletes, but the student athlete may not participate on a professional team.***

4. ***Participate and/or work in summer athletic camps, but any awards accepted must not be in conflict with the awards rule.***

5. ***Participate in sports during the summer or during a season when the player is not a member of a regular high school team, providing monetary compensation is not received for services.***

Section (17) RECRUITING PROHIBITED

17.1 Schools, or any employee, representative, club, or other person or entity associated with that school, are prohibited from engaging in any activity intended to induce a student (either directly or through the parents or guardians of the student) to remain at his/her current school or transfer to another school for reasons relating to athletic participation.

17.2 Neither may a school condone, acquiesce to, or otherwise knowingly allow persons not directly associated with the school to engage in the same type of conduct.

17.3 Violations of this rule may subject the student involved to be declared ineligible from the date of the infraction and if the school is found guilty, the head coach of the sport/activity that the violation occurred shall be suspended for a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled varsity competitions following the Executive Board hearing along with other penalties the Board deems appropriate as set forth in Article VIII, section (2).

17.4 The Executive Director may, in lieu of immediate hearing, request affidavits or other documentation relative to charges of undue influence. Following a decision by the Executive Director, the issue may be appealed to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE III
Principal's Duties and Powers

Section (1) The principal of the school or that member of the faculty approved by him/her shall be the manager of the teams representing the school.

Section (2) No contest shall be arranged with any team without the sanction of the principal.

Section (3) The principal of a member school has the power to exclude from any team representing his/her school, contestants for violation of local rules as though they were part of the Association's rules. No action by the principal under this section is subject to review by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE IV
Establishment of Seasons and Calendar

Section (1) Any change of season shall require an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the proposed change of season. Due written notice of the proposed change of season shall have been given to all member schools by publishing same in the monthly Association BULLETIN for December, which shall be mailed to all member schools at least thirty (30) days before the date set for the Annual Meeting.

Section (2) The Executive Board may set up rules determining the length of season for each MHSA activity. The Executive Board shall have the authority to set the beginning and ending dates of each established season determined by the membership as set forth in Section 1 of this article.

Section (3) The Executive Board shall have the authority to govern pre-season games and contests, post-season games and contests, and the total number of games or contests to be played during the activities seasons.

ARTICLE V
Association Rules

The rules of this Association shall apply to all interscholastic activities among the member schools of this Association.

ARTICLE VI
Crowd Control

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: One of the prime functions of interscholastic competition is to foster the traits of good sportsmanship. The MHSA strongly urges local officials to stress to their athletes, student bodies and fans the importance of sportsmanship during all Association Contests, and to make them aware of MHSA rules, policies and by-laws concerning crowd control.

Section (1) Administrative Duties

1.1 The Montana High School Association recognizes the primary obligation incumbent upon the administrators of member schools to control their students, staff members and fans at all Association Contests.

Section (2) Crowd Control Violations

2.1 When a violation of the principles of good sportsmanship occurs so as to endanger the personal safety of any individuals involved, hinder the normal progress of an Association Contest or create situations that may lead to restriction or discontinuance of interscholastic competition, the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association shall contact the administration of the school(s) involved to discuss the situation and attempt to cooperatively formulate a solution to the problem.

2.2 If the violation is flagrant or the situation persists, the Executive Board shall have the power to invoke penalties upon the member school(s). The penalties that may be imposed against the school may consist of those listed in Article VIII of these By-Laws. (See Rules and Regulations, Sportsmanship Guidelines and Crowd Control sections.)

ARTICLE VII
Protests and Appeals

Subsection A: Disputes Between Member Schools

Section (1) An administrative head of a member school; or the officers of a district or division, when authorized by a majority of the member schools of that district or division, may protest another member school for violating the By-Laws or rules of the Association.

NOTE: The administrative head of any member school may submit facts concerning any student whose eligibility may be in doubt, to the Executive Director. Such questions of eligibility shall then be decided by the Executive Board and a report of the Board's decision will be sent to the administrator of the member school. Such action by an administrator shall not be regarded as a formal protest. Specific cases in which the names of students are submitted — not hypothetical cases — will be considered.

Section (2) A protest for violation of the By-Laws or rules of the Association may be made by filing such protest in writing with the Executive Director of the Executive Board and paying a filing fee in the sum of five dollars, ($5.00).

Section (3) Receipt of Protest

3.1 Upon receiving a protest, the Executive Director shall set said protest for hearing before the Executive Board. Written notices of the day and the time set for hearing, together with a copy of said protest, shall be sent to the protested school, and the protesting school. Except as provided hereafter, the notice shall be sent at least fifteen (15) days prior to the time set for hearing. Notice shall be deemed sent on the day it is deposited in the U.S. mail with first-class postage.

3.2 Post-regular season play will not be delayed because of a protest. Where a protest is filed at such time that fifteen (15) days' notice cannot be given without delaying or otherwise interfering with post-season play, then the fifteen (15) day written notice requirement will be suspended. In that situation, the Board will shorten the time of notice and adopt alternative means

of giving notice (either oral or written) as required by the circumstances. Where a protest is received during post-season play, or so close to post-season play that any meeting of the Executive Board is impractical, then a formal hearing may be dispensed with entirely. Instead, the Executive Director will immediately notify all schools concerned and the Montana High School Association Executive Board. Immediate action will be taken after investigation and review of the facts concerning the protest. The school or person filing a protest shall be named to the membership.

NOTE: The following is the procedure adopted by the Board to handle Section (3), 3.2:

1. **Protest is to be filed with the Executive Director in writing accompanied by a $5.00 protest fee.**
2. **The Executive Director is to call the schools involved and other persons known to him to be knowledgeable concerning the circumstances to obtain details concerning the protest.**
3. **If the matter in question is not covered completely in the handbook, at least two people selected from the Executive Board, or an Executive Director, or an Assistant Executive Director shall meet with the parties concerned.**
4. **After this meeting, the Executive Board shall make a decision by conference telephone call.**
5. **No tournament shall be stopped until a protest is settled, but all decisions will be made before the beginning of the next tournament to which the team involved would normally advance.**

Section (4) The Executive Board is hereby vested with the power to decide all protests.

Section (5) The Executive Board shall also have power to investigate any protests filed and may, of its own volition, investigate and file protest against any member school, said protest to be filed in accordance with section (3) of this article.

Section (6) At the hearing, statements of school administrators and statements by interested parties will be accepted as evidence, and the Executive Board will accept all evidence presented on behalf of the protested school and the protesting school and any facts determined by its own investigative power.

Section (7) Board Members Hearing Protests

7.1 In the event a member of the Executive Board shall be directly interested in a protested case, as defined below, such member of the Executive Board shall be disqualified from hearing such protest upon the Board's own motion or upon motion of any school involved in the protest.
The following circumstances are considered to constitute a direct interest by a member of the Executive Board:

a. Where his/her school is involved either as the protesting school or the school protested against.
b. Where a student from his/her school is involved.
c. Where the outcome of the protest could result in a penalty of forfeiture and that forfeiture would cause a change in the final result of a game, contest or activity already completed by his/her school.
d. Where the outcome of the protest could result in a penalty of forfeiture and that forfeiture would determine whether his/her school advanced to a game, contest or activity.
e. Where the outcome of the protest could result in a penalty of forfeiture and that forfeiture would determine whether his/her school would acquire a "home-field advantage" in an upcoming game, contest or activity.
f. In any other circumstance which the Executive Board shall determine constitutes a direct interest in the protested case, the Board, on its own motion or the motion of a school involved in the protest, may disqualify such member from hearing such protest.

7.2 A school involved in a protest may, upon request prior to the hearing, disqualify one director for any reason.

7.3 Any director may disqualify him/herself in the event he/she determines he/she directly interested in the protested case.

7.4 If a motion of disqualification is received at least two days prior to the date of hearing, the president of the Association shall appoint a representative of a disinterested member school of the same classification as that of the disqualified member(s) school to sit at such hearing in the determination of the protest. In the event the president of the Association is disqualified, the vice president of the Association shall make the appointment. If the motion of disqualification is received less than two days prior to the date of hearing, the Board may elect to resolve the protest with the remaining members of the Executive Board.

Section (8) As soon as possible after the hearing, the Executive Board, by a majority vote of its members, must determine the protest.

Section (9) In the event the Executive Board determines that a violation of the By-Laws or rules of the Association has occurred, it shall have power to discipline the member school. The penalties which may be imposed by the Executive Board are outlined in Article VIII.

Section (10) A member school found to have violated the By-Laws, or rules of the Association by the Executive Board, may appeal the decision of the Executive Board of the Association by notifying in writing the Executive Director of its desire to appeal such determination and depositing with the Executive Director the sum of one hundred fifty dollars ($150.00). The Executive Director shall then proceed to call a special meeting of the Association as set forth under these By-Laws at which meeting the Association will proceed to review the action of the Executive Board. If the decision of the Executive Board is upheld, the deposit of the appealing member school shall be forfeited. If the decision of the Executive Board is overruled by the Association, the deposit herein provided for shall be returned to the appealing member school. The determination of the Association shall be final as to the violation protested.

Subsection B: Individuals' Rules Interpretation and Procedure

Section (1) INDIVIDUAL DUE PROCESS

1.1 If a student is ruled ineligible under Montana High School Association rules the student affected, or his/her parents or guardian, may appeal the decision to the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association by filing with the Montana High School Association, at its office in Helena, Montana, a written notice of appeal. Appeals shall be acted upon by the MHSA Executive Board at any regular or special meeting, including video conferences. When an expedited hearing is requested prior to the next scheduled meeting, the Executive Board will assess the appellant ***a non-refundable $300*** fee to cover expenses. The hearing will be conducted by the Executive Board pursuant to the procedure set forth in section three (3) below.

Executive Board members must be given 48-hour advance written notice of the video conference.

Section (2) INTERPRETATION OF RULES

2.1 A participant or parents, or school which is a member of the Montana High School Association, may certify a question in writing to the Executive Board of the Association, seeking an interpretation of the Articles of the Association, By-Laws or the Rules and Regulations of the Association. The written certified question shall be presented to the Executive Board of the Association at its next regularly scheduled meeting or if the party submitting the request agrees to pay for all costs incidental to a special meeting of the Executive Board or for a conference call among members of the Executive Board, then said certified question shall be submitted to and decided by the Executive Board at a special meeting or conference call.

2.2 Prior to any ruling on a question certified, the Executive Director or representative of the Association designated by the Executive Board may be directed to investigate on behalf of the Board all of

the factors relating to the interpretation requested of the Executive Board. After such an investigation is completed, the Executive Board shall notify all parties seeking the decision on certified question, of the time and place of the hearing at least seven (7) days in advance of such hearing. The hearing will be conducted by the Executive Board pursuant to the procedure set forth in section three below.

Section (3) HEARING PROCEDURE

3.1 In any hearing conducted concerning an appeal involving student ineligibility or rule interpretation, the Executive Board, through its Executive Director, shall notify the following persons of the time, date of the hearing, and the place where the hearing will be held: (a) the student; (b) the parents or guardian of the student; (c) the building administrator who made an ineligibility ruling or whose school certified a rule for interpretation; and (d) the appropriate director of the sport or activity.

3.2 All hearings will be held at the Montana High School Association office in Helena, unless another place for a hearing is stipulated to by all parties and the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association. The school representatives, students, parents, contest officials, and coaches are entitled to be personally represented at the hearings or to represent themselves. If a student is submitting an issue for certification, that student may be represented by the member school the student attends.

3.3 The president of the Association will begin the hearing by asking for statements clarifying the issues involved. If an investigation has been performed, at the beginning of the hearing the Executive Director shall make available written copies of his/her investigation.

3.4 The party appealing an ineligibility ruling to the Board or certifying the issue for determination by the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association shall thereafter present its case including written evidence, testimony and argument supporting the ruling or interpretation that it urges. All parties urging affirmance of an ineligibility ruling or disagreeing with the certifying parties' interpretation of the rules thereafter may present written evidence, testimony and argument supporting the ruling or interpretation of the rules they urge. The appealing party of the certifying party shall have an opportunity to rebut such presentation. All parties may offer evidence, including the calling of witnesses, if they desire.

3.5 After all of the parties have submitted their evidence and upon advice from the parties that they have presented all of their evidence, the hearing shall be declared closed. Thereafter, the Executive Board shall make their decision which decision may be in open session or following the hearing, after taking the matter under advisement, in order to consider the evidence and application of the rules. A decision must be rendered in three (3) days. The student and the school will be notified of the decision in writing.

3.6 The determination of the Executive Board shall be final as to the question of ineligibility involved or the interpretation of the rules.

ARTICLE VIII
Penalties

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: The Montana High School Association Executive Board has authorized the Executive Director to invoke the sanctions/penalties as outlined in this section. Appeals to any sanction/penalty imposed shall be acted upon by the MHSA Executive Board at any regular meeting including conference telephone calls, provided the school or individual requesting, agrees to pay for the cost of the call.

Unless otherwise specifically provided for, this provision shall determine the penalties which may be applied by the Association.

Section (1) PARTICIPATION OF INELIGIBLE STUDENT

For participation of an ineligible student or students in any interscholastic contest or contests:

1.1 The Board shall impose the following:

a. In all team sports (e.g. baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, volleyball) forfeiture of the contest in which the ineligible student or students participated and disqualification of ineligible student or students for a period not to exceed one semester (half the number of PI days in the current school year) from the date he/she last participated while ineligible; or

b. In all individual sports (e.g. cross country, track, wrestling, golf, tennis, gymnastics, swimming) forfeiture of all matches won or points earned by the ineligible student and a corresponding adjustment in the team's ranking of the contest in which the ineligible student or students participated and disqualification of ineligible student or students for a period not to exceed one semester (half the number of PI days in the current school year) from the date he/she last participated while ineligible.

1.2 The Board may fine the school an amount not exceeding $100.00.

1.3 If the Board determines the students involved intentionally misled the school as to the facts pertinent to their eligibility, it may declare the students ineligible for a period of time not exceeding one year from the date of the contest in which they last participated.

1.4 If the ineligible student participated after he/she had been officially declared ineligible and the school administrator had been so notified; or if the Board finds the school knew the student or students were ineligible or knew of facts which clearly indicated the student was ineligible; or if the Board determines the school involved has evidenced a continuing indifference to its obligations to determine the eligibility of its students then it may further impose penalties as set forth in Section (2).

1.5 If a student or member school participates in interscholastic competition when ineligible or contrary to the rules and regulations of the MHSA, but pursuant to a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction against the MHSA and member schools, and the temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction is subsequently vacated, reversed, set aside, negated or found to have been improperly granted, or if the case in which the temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction was entered is voluntarily or involuntarily dismissed, the Executive Board may take any one or more of the following actions in the interest of fairness and restitution to other member schools:

a. Require the student(s), team or school so participating to forfeit all contests, events, or competitions participated in and/or forfeit and return to the MHSA all trophies and awards won or received. Team records, scores and individual performances shall also be vacated and tournament places or contributions adjusted.

b. Declare the student(s), team or school so participating to be ineligible for future competition or participation for a period of time or number of contests found by the Executive Board to be reasonable.

c. Such action as the Executive Board feels best serves the interest of fairness and restitution under existing circumstances.

Prior to taking such action, the Executive Board shall conduct a hearing and give notice to the student(s), team and/or school who so participated and provide an opportunity to appear and be heard.

Section (2) GENERAL PENALTIES

For violation of any rule or regulation (other than participation of an ineligible student or other rule where a penalty is specifically provided for) by any member school, the Board may impose a private reprimand,

a public reprimand, probation, suspension, and payment of a fine as set forth hereafter.

2.1 Private Reprimand. A private reprimand is written notification that a violation, or an inexcusable or unethical action, has occurred, is a matter of record, and that such an action must not be repeated. A fine not exceeding $100.00 may be imposed in conjunction therewith.

2.2 Public Reprimand. A public reprimand is written notification similar to private reprimand except that it shall be disseminated to such other schools as the Board may direct. A fine not exceeding $200.00 may be imposed in conjunction therewith. The offending school shall be given a copy of the proposed reprimand 15 days prior to its dissemination so that it may have an opportunity to appeal the sanction prior to its dissemination.

2.3 The MHSA and the NFHS Network are owners of the rights and the copyright holders of all audiovisual recording, filming, videotaping, telecasting webcasting, and photography of MHSA postseason events involving MHSA member schools. Use other than the live webcast of events including, but not limited to, reproduction and/or sale is prohibited without express written consent of the MHSA and the NFHS Network. Member schools that stream postseason events on any platform other the NFHS Network will be subject to a fine, imposed by the MHSA Executive Board, in the amount not exceeding $500 per event.

2.4 Probation. Probation is a more severe penalty and may be imposed in either of the following two ways:

a. A school on probation is on conditional Association membership, but may engage in its regular schedule, sanctioned events, and post season play provided the school files with the Association a program indicating the measures it will take to alleviate the problem which caused it to be placed on probation. A fine of not more than $400.00 may be imposed in conjunction therewith.

b. A school on strong probation may be required to forfeit all regular season contests during the time of probation and/or it may be prohibited from participating in post season play. No fine shall be imposed in conjunction therewith.

The probation shall be for a term not exceeding one year. The Board may terminate the probation prior to the expiration of the term.

2.5 Suspension. A school suspended from Association membership cannot meet in interscholastic competition of any kind with a member of the Association. Suspensions may be imposed for a term not exceeding one year. No fine shall be imposed in conjunction therewith.

2.6 Forfeiture. In addition to the other penalties imposed, the Board may direct that any awards, honors, or contests (past or future) be forfeited if it determines the violation of any By-Law, regulation or rule of the Association gave (or will give) a competitive advantage to the individual or team.

2.7 If a school is found guilty, the head coach of the sport/activity that the violation occurred shall be suspended for a minimum of two (2) regularly scheduled varsity competitions following the Executive Board hearing along with other penalties the Board deems appropriate as set forth in Article VIII, section (2).

2.8 Ejections.

a. Any student or coach who represents a school holding membership in the MHSA who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic competition for unsportsmanlike conduct involving schools which are members of the MHSA will not participate for the remainder of the event and will be suspended for the next regularly scheduled or rescheduled event at that level of competition and all other games/meets in the interim at any level of competition. A student cannot be in uniform while suspended.

In a postseason wrestling tournament, the next event is defined as the next session or round depending on tournament format for coaches; and for students the appropriate post season NFHS rules will be applied.

A second violation will result in a four-competition suspension in that sport for the offending student/coach.

If penalties are imposed at the end of the sport season and no contests remain, the penalty is imposed the first contests in that particular sport in the next school year. In the case of a senior student, the penalty will continue to the next MHSA sponsored sport or activity.

A third violation will result in the student being suspended for the remainder of that sport season and for an additional ninety (90) P.I. days from the date of the championship event of that classification.

b. If a coach is ejected from the last scheduled season game, the coach must miss the next highest contest where there are regular duties to perform.

If a head coach is ejected, an assistant coach or any other school district personnel authorized to supervise students may assume the head coaching responsibilities for the remainder of the contest. If no other authorized school district personnel is on site, the contest will be terminated and a forfeiture declared.

c. Any attendee ejected by mutual agreement of the Official and Administration from a regular season or MHSA tournament contest will incur a minimum ***two-week*** suspension from that team's games/events and all other MHSA games/events in the interim at any level of competition.

If the ejection occurs with fewer than two weeks remaining in the team's season, the suspension will carry over to the start of the next sports season and will begin/continue with that season's first scheduled activity.

An attendee ejected for a second time during a school year shall be suspended for a minimum of one (1) calendar year from all MHSA regular and postseason events. MHSA member schools may increase these minimum penalties at their discretion.

d. Appeal: The president of the conference may appoint a hearing officer/ board to hear any appeals, within 48 hours of the receipt of a complete report of the incident. **T**he only appeal that can be heard is if the wrong student is ejected. Appeals may not deal with decisions made by contest officials.

INTERPRETATION

1. **A coach/student who is ejected from a regular season contested event in wrestling is suspended from the next regularly scheduled contested event.**

2. **A coach/student who is ejected from the last contested event of the regular wrestling season is suspended from the first round of the post season tournament (divisional or seeding). If a wrestler would have had a bye in the first round, it must be scored as a forfeit and the wrestler must move to the consolation bracket.**

3. **An ejection of a coach at a wrestling divisional or seeding tournament results in a suspension from the first session at the state wrestling tournament. An ejection of a student at a wrestling divisional or seeding tournament results in suspension from the state tournament (by NFHS rule).**

4. ***The MHSA Executive Director may utilize video to determine if players have left the bench area during an altercation in an MHSA contest.***

5. ***The MHSA Executive Director has authority to implement further sanctions for students, coaches or fans if an ejection occurs after a game or if deemed egregious.***

6. ***A coach or spectator who is ejected must leave the site immediately and shall not be present onsite or within sight, sound, or communication for the remainder of that day of competition.***

7. ***A student who is ejected may be allowed to remain on the team bench as long as they do not create further disturbance. However, officials may***

require the student to leave, in which case they must be accompanied by an adult.

ARTICLE IX
Amendments

Section (1)

The By-Laws of this Association may be amended at any annual meeting of the Association by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting on the proposed amendment. Due written notice of any proposed amendment shall have been given to all member schools by publishing same in the monthly Association BULLETIN for December, which shall be mailed to all member schools at least thirty (30) days before the date set for the annual meeting. Amendments may be proposed at any annual meeting to be considered at the next annual meeting.

Section (2)

Proposed amendments to the By-Laws must be presented in writing to the Executive Director of the Association by December 1. Amendments may be proposed by the superintendent or principal of any member school or the Executive Board.

NOTE: If the time of the annual meeting is changed to any great degree, the Executive Board may authorize a date other than December 1.

Section (3)

3.1 The rules and regulations of the MHSA may be amended by majority vote of the members present and voting on the proposed amendment provided the proposed change has been formally requested of the Executive Board and denied. The amendments must be proposed by the superintendent or principal of any member school or the Executive Board as follows:

3.2 Written notice sent to the Executive Director of the Association by December 1 and published in the December BULLETIN and mailed to all member school at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the annual meeting. Rules and regulations amended by the general membership at an annual or special MHSA meeting shall not be set aside or altered by the Executive Board before the change has been in effect for one year, except as the change may be clearly in conflict with amended By-Laws or any legal agreements.

Section (4)

All amendments to the MHSA By-Laws and /or the rules and regulations that are adopted at an annual meeting of the Association will become effective July 1 following their adoption.

ARTICLE X
Athletic Classification and Districting

The Executive Board is responsible for reclassification and redistricting of member schools as provided in Article I, Section 4.2, of the By-Laws. A new athletic classification and districting plan was set up by the Executive Board, effective July 1, 2017.

Factors to Be Considered in Athletic Classification

Section (1) Criteria

The MHSA Executive Board shall use the following criteria in the classification of schools:

1.1 enrollment (grades 9-12) including grades 5-8 enrollment for informational purposes only;
1.2 geography; and
1.3 district/divisional alignment.

Section (2) Classifications

2.1 The following enrollment figures shall be used as a basic guideline and adhered to unless geographic locations or district or divisional alignment make the same impractical: Class AA = 801+; Class A = 301-800; Class B = 101-300; Class C = 1-100. Moving schools to a higher classification or to a lower classification will be based on two consecutive years of count; and, schools will be allowed to appeal to the Executive Director/Executive Board on any decision made (refer to 2.4).

2.2 Football classification will be organized on a two-year basis to align with reclassification of schools. Enrollment ranges are as follows: Six-player = 1-65; Eight-player = 65-130; Eleven-player = 130+.
A rubric using four criteria will be used for schools that petition to play at the level below the current placement:

a. Grades 8 – 11 boys' enrollment and future boys' enrollment projections.
b. Roster size from the past four years.
c. Success factor (including win/loss record and postseason success) in the current placement for the past five years.
d. Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage from OPI.

Each of these factors will be weighted using the following percentages: Free and reduced-10%, enrollment-30%, roster size-35%, success factor 25%.

If a school does not meet the rubric calculation, they may participate in the lower classification, but will not be eligible for playoff consideration. A school that opts down in classification may become eligible in the second season if their rubric calculation in the fall of the first season falls within the criteria.

If each school in an existing co-op has participation numbers to support a team at a lower classification, they must dissolve the co-op and participate on their own at the lower classification. Note: The MHSA will determine the roster number for Six-player and Eight-player football regarding "numbers to support a team." Football co-op agreements are reviewed every two years.

2.3 When the MHSA Executive Board adopts classification for member schools, the classifications shall remain in effect for the next two (2) school years.

2.4 Any school that exceeds the enrollment range for that classification may petition to play at the level below their current placement. The Executive Board will apply the following criteria when evaluating the request:

a. Current enrollment and future enrollment projections – including using percentage changes and those trends
b. Roster sizes for each sponsored sport
c. Success factor in the current placement for each sponsored sport,
d. Success factor (including win/loss record and other relevant information) in the current placement for each sponsored sport over the last five years.

2.5 Schools can petition to remain in a higher classification for a minimum of two years if they can demonstrate competitiveness at the varsity level in the higher classification.

2.6 A member school whose enrollment significantly changes during the two-year period shall be placed in the proper classification by the Executive Board. "Significantly changes" is defined as a decrease or an increase in enrollment of more than twenty-five percent (25%).

Section (3) Petition for Change

3.1 Any school that wishes to transfer to a different conference, division or district may petition the Executive Board in writing on or before July 1 of any school year, stating the reasons for submitting the petition. The Executive Board will decide at their November meeting whether the conference, division or district change will be granted, and the affected member schools will be notified of the proposed change at least two weeks prior to the

November Board Meeting. If the Executive Board approves the petition the school will be moved into the district and/or division for the following year.

Any school that feels it has sufficient cause for reclassification may petition the Executive Board in writing on or before April 1 of any school year, stating the reasons for submitting the petition. The Executive Board will decide at their April meeting whether the classification change will be granted, and the affected member schools will be notified of the proposed change at least two weeks prior to the April Board Meeting. If the Executive Board approves the petition the school will be moved into the new classification in the next year reclassification occurs.

Section (4) Enrollment Data

4.1 The enrollment figures considered by the Executive Board for any member school will be taken from an average of the previous two years' fall and spring high school reports submitted by that school to the Office of the State Superintendent.

Section (5) Notification

5.1 No change in districts, divisions, or classification shall take place or shall any hearing considering the change take place until all schools in both the leaving and entering district, division, or class have been given two weeks' notice.

Association and Executive Board Rules and Regulations

Section (1) SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The MHSA believes that all individuals should be treated with respect and dignity. Students should be able to participate in MHSA sponsored activities in an environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence. Each member school is responsible for taking such action and enacting such policies as may be necessary to address incidents of sexual harassment and sexual violence and to ensure that an environment free of such prohibited conduct is maintained. Any member school which sponsors or tolerates such activity is subject to expulsion from the MHSA.

Section (2) DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY

The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

Section (3) WEAPONS IN EVENTS POLICY

No actual weapon may be used for any performance in any event sponsored by the Montana High School Association. Only official "blank" firing starter pistols shall be used for any MHSA sponsored event.

Section (4) CONCUSSIONS/*SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST (SCA)*/SERIOUS INJURY REQUIREMENTS AND RETURN TO PLAY

A. Return to Play:
In accordance with the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act, an athletic trainer, coach, or official shall remove a youth athlete from participation in any organized youth athletic activity at the time the youth exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion. The youth cannot return to play until he/she is evaluated by a licensed health care professional and receives written clearance to return to play from the licensed health care professional.

In accordance with HB 869 an athletic trainer, coach, or official shall remove a youth athlete from participation in any organized youth athletic activity at the time the youth exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with SCA. The youth cannot return to play until he/she is evaluated by a licensed health care professional and receives written clearance to return to play from the licensed health care professional.

In addition, the MHSA also requires that an athletic trainer, coach, or official shall remove a student-athlete from participation in any MHSA activity at the time the student exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a serious injury. The student cannot return to play until he/she is evaluated by a licensed health care professional and is cleared by a licensed health care professional, although written clearance is not required for serious injury other than concussion unless mandated by the local school district.

B. MHSA Policy in Accordance with State Legislation:
Each (high) school district in Montana offering organized youth athletic activities shall adopt policies and procedures to inform coaches, officials, youth athletes and parents or guardians of the nature and risk of brain injuries, including the effects of continuing to play after a concussion.

Each (high) school district in Montana offering organized youth athletic activities shall adopt policies and procedures to inform coaches, officials, youth athletes and parents or guardians of the signs and symptoms of SCA.

C. Coach Education and Awareness:

Each MHSA coach (head, assistant and school-approved volunteer and including cheer coaches) must complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports course each year. The course is available at www.nfhslearn.com. The course must be viewed before the coach has contact with student-athletes in his/her respective sport and viewed after May 1st for the subsequent year. The school should restrict any coach from coaching until the course is completed or the school district is in violation of Montana State Law.

Each MHSA coach (head, assistant and school-approved volunteer and including cheer coaches) must complete the CPR/AED training course each year. The course is available at www.nfhslearn.com. The course must be viewed before the coach has contact with student-athletes in his/her respective sport and viewed after May 1st for the subsequent year. The school should restrict any coach from coaching until the course is completed or the school district is in violation of Montana State Law.

The following certifications can be substituted for the CPR & AED course (for two years):

1. American Heart Association
   a. Basic Life Support (BLS) CPR & AED Training
   b. Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)
   c. Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) for Experienced Providers
   d. Heartsaver CPR/AED
2. American Red Cross
   a. In-person class and skills check OR online class and in-person skills check
   b. Advanced Life Support (ALS)
   c. Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
3. Others with approval from the MHSA.

D. Student-Athletes' and Parents' Awareness and Notification:
Schools shall distribute to each student-athlete and his/her parents or legal guardians the information provided to the schools by the MHSA (acknowledgement form with required signatures, parent information, athlete information and available resources) before the student participates in an MHSA sport. The student-athlete and parents/legal guardians must sign the acknowledgement form on the front page after verifying they have read and understand the information regarding concussions ***and SCA.*** The acknowledgement form must be retained on file by each school. The information with signature sheet cannot be distributed and completed until after May 1st for the next school year. The student and parents/guardians only have to complete the information once per year and it must be completed before the student practices or participates for the first time in a given school year.

E. Officials' Education and Awareness:
Each MOA or non-MOA official who works MHSA contests must take the NFHS Concussion in Sports course each year. That course must be taken after June 1st for the subsequent school year and must be completed before officiating scrimmages or contests. Schools using non-MOA officials for sub varsity games must verify those officials have completed training.

Each MOA or non-MOA official who works MHSA contests must watch the SCA information video provided in the MOA section of the MHSA sports rules clinics. Schools using non-MOA officials for sub varsity games must verify those officials have completed training.

Section (5) SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

A. The ignition or the discharge of fireworks, firearms, explosives, incendiary devices, or flammable materials of any kind is strictly prohibited at all MHSA events in both the regular season and

postseason. Event managers are authorized to restrict the use of any material or device(s) deemed a safety risk to students, fans, officials, or personnel.

B. The use of drones (UAS), ***or any unmanned aircraft***, for any purpose, is strictly prohibited at all ***MHSA events in both the regular season and postseason***. This prohibition applies to all fields of play, courts, arenas, mats, gym floors, pools, and includes a ban on the entire facility being used as part of the MHSA event, including stands, spectator access and parking areas.

C. ***Flyovers by any manned aircraft and parachuting onto the field are strictly prohibited at all MHSA events, both regular season and postseason. This prohibition applies to all fields of play and extends to the entire event facility, including spectator areas and parking lots.***

D. The MHSA prohibits the burning of any incense (sweet grass, herbs, candles or other flammable substance) inside any school or venue that hosts MHSA events because of the risk of fire or violation of fire codes. Any pregame rituals/ceremonies may be performed offsite.

E. Facilities may utilize safety measures such as metal detectors and/or bag check procedures when available at the site during MHSA postseason events.

Section (6) MHSA JEWELRY POLICY

A. Jewelry can be worn if allowed by NFHS rules or the governing body for the sport (USGA or USTA***).***

B. To request a waiver for a Daith Piercing the following criteria must be met:

1. The piercing must be medically indicated. A note from a neurologist or primary care provider I required.
2. Executive Director will consult with Chief Medical Advisor
3. ED and CMA will take the individual's sport(s) under consideration in regard to risk of injury to self and to others.
4. One of the following recommendations will be made:
   a. Piercing will be allowed
   b. Piercing allowed with a "soft" material in place of a metal device (if individual states he/she cannot replace the metal with a soft material, ED and CMA will re-evaluate as in # 3 and issue a decision.
   c. No piercing allowed.

C. Wearable technology is allowed, as long as the device does not allow a team, a participant, and/or a coach to gain a competitive advantage during the MHSA contest. The device must not create a safety risk to the participant or their competitor(s). Schools must have approval from the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association before any use of the technology in an association contest.

Section (7) COACHING/PRACTICE REGULATIONS

Introductory Note: The intent of having rules and regulations which govern coaching and practice sessions are:

1. To afford all students the same and equal opportunity for development of skills.
2. To provide an equity basis for all team competition.
3. To provide the opportunity for students to experience diversified activities exposure of their choice.
4. To allow students to choose their own out of season activities.

A. Only students who meet all MHSA eligibility requirements (enrollment, age, semesters, academics, physical examinations etc.) are eligible to practice with and participate on member school teams. Exception: students who are eligible in every way except academics may participate in practice if the school allows.

B. Regular season practice is defined as a potential player(s) reporting to the practice field or court, with or without uniforms, under the supervision of a sport-specific school-approved coach, and receiving coaching in game skills and techniques.
The following are recommended pre-season and regular season practice guidelines:

1. If a practice lasts two hours or less the athlete must have two hours of rest between practices.
2. If a practice is more than two hours the athlete must have three hours of rest between practices.
3. Practices should last a maximum of 2 1/2 hours in length, but if a team chooses to have one practice per day that practice shall be no longer than three hours in length.
4. There should be no more than five hours of practice per day.

C. All participants in MHSA individual sports (cross-country, golf, swimming, tennis and track and field) will be allowed to practice with either gender during MHSA practices.

For wrestling, if a school district adopts a policy addressing circumstances under which a female wrestler may practice with or prepare for meets with participants on the boys' team, the girls will be allowed to wrestle boys from the same school in practice and warm-ups. The policy must be aligned with an objective of providing equitable opportunities for participation that assure safety of and meet the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex in any extracurricular activity. Schools must use the following criteria in allowing this option:

1. A parent of any participant must be allowed to opt their child out of any practice or preparation for an extracurricular activity with participants of the opposite sex.

D. Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

E. Open Gym/Field for MHSA sanctioned sports is an arrangement whereby the school's facilities are scheduled for volunteer play for all the currently enrolled student body or non-secondary students within the school's attendance area who are not enrolled in another district. Open Gym/Field are not covered by any MHSA insurance (liability, catastrophic, concussion etc).

INTERPRETATIONS

Open gyms do not violate MHSA rules if they are conducted according to the following guidelines:

1. **The open gym is open to any *currently enrolled student body or non-secondary students within the school's attendance area who are not enrolled in another district who are interested in attending.***
2. ***One on one instruction will be allowed at open gyms as long as it is separate from the group activity. There is NO other instruction allowed during the open gym, whether by a coach or anyone else.***
3. **Coaches may supervise open gyms, but they cannot instruct more than one individual at a time, organize drills, etc. or participate with the students.**
4. **There is no organized competition, such as established teams participating in round-robin competition, etc.**

There is no such thing as an open gym during a sport-specific season (i.e. no volleyball open gym during volleyball). During the summer coaching period, only the current student body or non-secondary students within the school's attendance area (who are not enrolled in another district) are allowed to participate in open gyms or practices. Coaches who coach AAU clubs or teams with mixed high school students must follow district policy to rent the gym to practice.

F. Individual Instruction (coaching) is acceptable out of season on a one-to-one basis, i.e. one athlete per coach(es). This means that one or more coaches could instruct one athlete but two or more coaches could not coach two or more athletes. This rule does not provide the coach, or any coach on that school's high school coaching staff, the opportunity to coach his/her athlete in any out-of-season competition.

G. Required Instruction on a one-to-one basis out of season cannot be required of any student. The intent of allowing one on one instruction is to provide the opportunity for a student to improve his/her skills if he/she requests assistance.

H. Coaching Rules:

Summer Coaching Period: The MHSA defines the timeframe for the summer coaching period as the Tuesday after Memorial Day until July 31st.

1. The team coaching rule is suspended from the Tuesday after Memorial Day through July 31st. The team coaching rule for MHSA Baseball coaches is suspended from the ` after the State Baseball Tournament through July 31st. This means a coach of a team sport can coach his/her players anytime, anywhere, during this period. During this period a team can scrimmage against another team without violating the out-of-season contest requirements (renting facility etc.). Practice, competition and facility use during the coaching rule suspension are not covered by MHSA insurance (liability, catastrophic, concussion etc.).
   a. All currently enrolled student body or non-secondary students within the school's attendance area who are not enrolled in another district and attends the high school's feeder school can practice/compete with that high school's team during the summer coaching period.
   b. For out of district transfers, participation for a MHSA high school will occur after the following:
      1. The student must finish the current school year.
      2. The parent(s) complete registration at the student's selected school.
      3. The parent(s) paid the applicable tuition charge.
      4. The parent(s) complete a request that cumulative school records be sent to the high school.

      Upon completion of these four criteria, students are eligible to participate in the open team coaching period for that high school during the summer coaching period.
2. The team coaching rule is in effect from August 1 - Memorial Day. The team coaching rule for MHSA Baseball coaches is in effect from August 1 - the Saturday of the MHSA State Baseball Tournament. This means that there is to be no coaching of one's team sport (team sports being baseball, football, basketball, volleyball, softball and soccer) out of season other than the one-on-one provision allowed presently. Coaches of individual sports (individual sports being cross country, wrestling, track and field, swimming, golf and tennis) are not affected by this rule.
3. Students cannot be required to attend out-of-season practices, camps or contests.
4. A coach coaching a team during the summer that advances to a ***state***, regional or national event can continue to coach after July 31st until the competition is ended. The MHSA office must be notified ***and approve any competition after July 31st.***

I. Approved co-op students are allowed to participate in each school's open gyms, practices or summer coaching period activities.

INTERPRETATIONS

In order to prevent member schools from observing the "letter" of the law but not the "spirit" or, on the other hand, to prevent a situation where coaches hesitate to even talk about wrestling, football, volleyball, basketball or softball outside the season, the following interpretations are given:

1. **The coaching and team participation rules do not apply to the coaches of individual sports (individual sports being cross country, wrestling, track/field, swimming, golf and tennis). However schools should remember that they may not sponsor interschool contests or competitions out of season in team or individual sports.**
2. **Setting up special classes and teaching students the fundamentals, skills or plays outside the season. VIOLATION.**
3. **Playing touch football or flash ball in classes outside of football season. NO VIOLATION.**
4. **A small group of potential players shooting baskets or passing a football around outside regular season on the school grounds or at home, during noon hour or recess periods. NO VIOLATION.**
5. **Class basketball tournaments conducted just before or just after regular basketball season in which no coaching by any member of the staff is involved. NO VIOLATION.**
6. **Issuing copies of a sports playbook. NO VIOLATION.**
7. **Issuing football equipment to prospective squad members before seasons opens. NO VIOLATION. (Possibly equipment should not be allowed to be issued until the opening day set for football practice.)**

J. Olympic Development Programs: The team coaching rule can be suspended for involvement with U.S. Olympic Development Programs. Approval must be requested from the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association.

K. If a student returns from documented military basic training over the summer, the MHSA Executive Director can reduce the total number of initial practices (no more than half the number of required practices for that sport or activity) at their school. In football, the student athlete will still be required to have at least 3 days of practice with no pads and only helmets.

Section (8) COACHES' EDUCATION PROGRAM

All member school athletic coaches are required to complete the NFHS online coaching program. The purpose of the requirement is to improve the quality of coaching in the state, to foster positive youth development, as well as to enhance the health, safety and welfare of all students.

Every coach (head, assistant and school-approved volunteer coaches) must meet the following requirements:

A. Completion of the Fundamentals of Coaching core course prior to contact with student-athletes. This clinic must be completed once in each coach's career.

B. Completion of the Concussion in Sports course prior to contact with student athletes. Certification is good for a one-year period.

C. Completion of the CPR & AED training course prior to contact with student-athletes. Certification is good for a one-year period.

The following certifications can be substituted for the CPR & AED course (for two years):

1. American Heart Association
   a. Basic Life Support (BLS) CPR & AED Training
   b. Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)
   c. Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) for Experienced Providers
   d. Heartsaver CPR/AED
2. American Red Cross
   a. In-person class and skills check OR online class and in-person skills check
   b. Advanced Life Support (ALS)
   c. Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
3. Others with approval from the MHSA.

D. Completion of the annual continuing education requirement – NFHS Learn course "Coaching Mental Wellness" for the 2026-27 school year.

In addition, coaches are encouraged to utilize the other available elective or sport-specific NFHS courses.

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate school administrator(s) receive verification that the courses are completed. The school administrator is responsible for reporting to the MHSA annually that all their coaches have completed the requirements successfully.

Section (9) SPECIALIZED CAMP RULE, INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS & OTHER EVENTS

Any student enrolled in a school holding membership in the MHSA shall be allowed to participate in specialized camps, invitational tournaments and other events in all sports so long as the program and the student's participation meet the following requirements: (This includes all 9th grade students who are currently enrolled in a junior high school in the same school district as an MHSA member high school.)

A. No student shall participate in a specialized sports camp, invitational tournament or other sporting events in which any of his/her coaches are involved except ***during the summer coaching period*** of each calendar year. (This rule does not apply to individual sports.)

B. If a coach employed by the school or a coach who volunteers in the school's athletic program conducts a specialized camp, invitational tournament or other event independent of the school district and uses school district facility(ies), the coach must follow the district policy on facility use including paying the normal rental fee.

C. An MHSA member school, its booster club or other school-related group may not sponsor or have any part in any way in financing a specialized camp, invitational tournament or any other event. A school, booster club or other school-related group paying a coach for conducting a specialized camp, invitational tournament or other event would be in violation.

D. The MHSA Award Rule and the MHSA Amateur Rule must be followed.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Provided a student's coach(es) are not involved and the school/booster club is not, in any way, sponsoring a specialized camp, invitational tournament or other event and provided the general rules are met, a student may a attend a specialized camp, invitational tournament or other event at any time during the year.**
2. **Schools and booster clubs cannot sponsor, supplement or underwrite a specialized camp, invitational tournament or other event.**
3. **Coaching staffs (head, assistant or volunteer coaches) of member schools cannot be involved unless the event is taking place during the summer coaching period.**
4. **The amateur rule must be followed. Athletes can only receive actual expenses (hotel, travel, meals etc.) from an outside source (i.e. parent fundraiser, local business, private donor), and the school and booster club cannot cover expenses in any way. Expense records, receipts and other documentation should be kept by the sponsoring groups or individuals.**
5. **Schools cannot manage or house accounts and/or funds that are used in any way for specialized camps, invitational tournaments or other events.**
6. **A student involved in a specialized camp, invitational tournament or other defined event cannot receive anything over $100 in value for participating in the event, and no cash can be awarded.**
7. **School uniforms/equipment may be used, if the school allows.**
8. **MHSA insurance does not cover any specialized camp, invitational tournament or other event.**

Section (10) VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS/AWARENESS EVENTS/RAFFLES

The soliciting of voluntary contributions is prohibited at any Association contest. Special awareness events (i.e. pink week) are restricted to one week of the regular season, approval for which must be obtained from the appropriate MHSA staff liaison prior to the event. This includes promotions, announcements, introductions, uniform deviations, and other variation of expected local game protocol.

Unless approved by the MHSA Executive Board, raffles or similar fund-raising events, including any type of awareness event, are prohibited at playoffs, championship games, post-season tournaments, post-season meets, and/or post-season festivals which are under the direct supervision of the Montana High School Association Executive Board. The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events in accordance with the district and/or divisional policies.

Section (11) OFFICIALS' DRESSING ROOM

Officials should be provided with a private dressing room.

Section (12) CONTESTS PROHIBITED

A. The Association prohibits all interscholastic contests by member schools between December 24 and January 1 of any school year, both dates inclusive.

B. The Association prohibits Cultural Exchange Programs' athletes participating against member school teams during their specific season. Cultural exchange competition is allowed out of season for each sport, provided MHSA coaching/practice regulations are met. This restriction does not affect individuals approved to participate on member high school teams from a CSIET-approved Foreign Exchange Program.

Section (13) FORFEITURES

A. A team receiving a forfeiture shall be allowed to count the game(s) as a game(s) won and will be allowed to schedule and play make-up games(s). Any team forfeiting a game(s) shall not be allowed to schedule another game in place of the forfeited game(s) and shall count the same as a loss.

B. Where a maximum number of games has been established, the team that forfeits must count the game(s) forfeited as part of the season's game limits.

This rule will not apply when conditions arise that would warrant the Executive Board or Executive Director granting an honorable release from the fulfillment of obligations.

C. Any school's varsity team which forfeits one-fourth or more of its schedule in a season would be ineligible for varsity competition in that sport the following season. The school would have to complete a non-varsity schedule the following year. The school's administrator(s) must meet with the Executive Board during the school year in which the forfeits took place.

D. It is understood that unforeseen circumstances will and do occur, but if at all possible, schools will not cancel scheduled varsity competitions. In the event that a varsity contest must be cancelled, the school cancelling must personally contact a high school principal or activities director of the opponent at least five (5) days in advance of the contest. Any school failing to give five (5) days notice must: 1) reimburse their scheduled opponent the lost gate and concessions income because of the cancellation, if another game cannot be scheduled by the teams receiving the forfeit. Reimbursement will be determined by the scheduled opponent by averaging their gate and concessions income from gate and concessions income over the previous year for that sport; and 2) referees are to be paid according to the MOA Handbook.

Section (14) NO ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION ON SUNDAY

The Association prohibits member schools or students of a member school from participating in any interschool contest or activity, or practice including chalk talks or meetings for such contests or activities, including cheerleading, on Sunday, EXCEPT that member Catholic high schools may hold religious speech meets on Sunday when such religious speech meets are under the auspices of that religious group, or are held with the approval of that religious group, and when all participating schools are members of that religious group. Also, an exception will be made for All - Northwest music groups - PROVIDING local school districts realize that students are not required to audition and also have the opportunity to not accept the invitation if they are selected. Other exceptions to the Sunday rule may be made by the Executive Director when tournaments or meets at the state, divisional or district level must be extended because extraordinary circumstances cause delays or postponements of scheduled competitions.

Section (15) ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES

The Executive Board has adopted the following rule: Any Montana college or university planning to sponsor activities that will involve high school students in clinics, festivals, parades, fairs, meets, tournaments and the like in speech, drama, and music must meet all of the following standards in order that these activities will be approved for high school students' participation:

A. The round-trip must be made in one day unless the school is over 200 miles from the college or university involved, and in the latter instance, not more than two hours of the regular school day may be used for travel time. No schools or students are to be invited who cannot make the round-trip on a Saturday.

B. Dates for these activities must be approved and cleared with the Executive Board. Application for sanction is to be initiated by the host school or other sponsoring organization and received in the MHSA office as soon as possible and preferably thirty days prior to the date for most events in order to obtain proper consideration from the Executive Board for sanctioning such events. And, further, if there is a cost to the MHSA such as phone calls, in order to sanction them, the cost will have to be absorbed by the school or organization sponsoring the function.

This rule does not apply to High School Week.

Section (16) SANCTIONING OF INTERSTATE CONTESTS

A. The Executive Board has adopted that competition by a member school in any of the following contests shall be sanctioned through the NFHS:

Co-sponsoring Sanction Requirement: Any interstate competition involving two (2) or more schools which is co-sponsored by an organization outside the high school community (e.g., a university, a theme park, a shoe company), in addition to being sponsored by a member school, an approved school or a state association, shall require sanction of the NFHS office.

Non-bordering State Sanction Requirement: Subject to the requirement above, no sanction is required from the NFHS office if all competing schools, regardless of the number of competing schools, are from states which border the host state. Each state association shall sanction through the NFHS office interstate competition by a member school involving either:
1. More than eight (8) schools, at least one (1) of which is from a state that does not border the host state, or
2. Five (5) or more states, at least one (1) of which does not border the host state.

Contests/events with contiguous state and/or contests/events with states in National Federation Section 8 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming) do not need sanction from the MHSA or the National Federation whether they be athletic contests or speech/music events.

B. Contests/events outside these above parameters sponsored by schools need the sanction of the MHSA and of the National Federation, and any contest/event sponsored by an organization other than a high school needs sanction by the MHSA and by the National Federation.

C. Each state association shall approve and receive NFHS approval of competition by a member school in an athletic activity under that state association's jurisdiction against a school from a foreign country, except for two-school and/or three-school competition with a school or schools from Canada and Mexico, which necessitates a round trip of less than 600 miles.

D. The NFHS Board of Directors shall establish and publish policies, procedures, criteria and application forms for sanctioning domestic and international competition. Sanction shall not be granted for any tournament, meet or other contest to qualify for and/or determine a national high school individual champion or championship team.

E. In all interstate contests each state association shall require each participating school to follow the contest rules of the state association of which it is a member, or rules which have been approved by that state association for interstate competition.

F. No NFHS state association shall permit a member school to compete in any contest in any other state if the contest involves conditions which would violate the regulations or established policies of that state association.

G. The Executive Director is further authorized to sanction participation for any member schools in a sanctioned out-of-state meet.

H. Applications for sanction are to be initiated by the host school or other sponsoring organization and received in the MHSA office well in advance (thirty days for most events) in order to obtain proper consideration from the Executive Director for sanctioning such events. And, further, if there is a cost to the MHSA such as phone calls, in order to sanction them, the cost will have to be absorbed by the school or organization sponsoring the function.

Section (17) LIABILITY CATASTROPHE PLAN AND CONCUSSION INSURANCE

A. CATASTROPHIC INSURANCE: The MHSA member schools, at the 1973 Annual Meeting, adopted a catastrophic insurance plan. This plan was revised and adopted by the MHSA Executive Board in 1993. It is a claims-made excess liability policy which has a $50,000 deductible. Also included is excess medical coverage subject to a lifetime benefit of two million dollars. All member schools are automatically enrolled for the insurance and the premium will be collected from each school by the MHSA Executive Director by July 15 of each year according to the schedule approved and listed as follows: Any school failing to pay the premium on or before August 1 will become ineligible from that date until such premium is paid and shall be required to pay a penalty of fifty dollars ($50.00) in addition to the regular premium before reinstatement. This plan covers all MHSA sanctioned activities during the defined season.

High School Enrollment	**Catastrophic Premium**
0-40	@ $ 206.00
41-110	@ $ 302.00
111-200	@ $ 381.00
201-300	@ $ 503.00
301-400	@ $ 625.00
401-800	@ $ 836.00
801-up	@ $1339.00

B. CONCUSSION INSURANCE: Effective in 2015, the MHSA Executive Board adopted concussion insurance based on a 97% favorable response from member schools. The plan includes $25,000 coverage with no deductible for all MHSA-sponsored sports and cheerleading. All member schools are automatically enrolled for the insurance and the premium will be collected from each school by the MHSA Executive Director by July 15 of each year according to the schedule approved and listed as follows: Any school failing to pay the premium on or before August 1 will become ineligible from that date until such premium is paid and shall be required to pay a penalty of fifty dollars ($50.00) in addition to the regular premium before reinstatement.

High School Enrollment	Concussion Premium
0-40	@ $ 41.00
41-110	@ $ 66.00
111-200	@ $ 121.00
201-300	@ $ 141.00
301-400	@ $ 171.00
401-800	@ $ 191.00
801-up	@ $ 226.00

Section (18) REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN MHSA ACTIVITY

Any school not participating in a specific MHSA activity the previous year must request permission for placement in a district or division to participate competitively on an interschool basis by indicating their desire to do so by written notice to the Executive Director's office by May 1 of the current school year for all activities except for Speech and Drama which is Sept. 1 of the following school year.

INTERPRETATION
This rule will apply only to those activities where schools are assigned to a definite district or division.

Section (19) STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

Unless there are five (5) or more teams registered in an activity and taking part in the particular program, there will be no state championship play. This would also include an individual classification where there are fewer than five (5) teams.

Section (20) MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION

Membership in the Montana High School Association will entitle all member schools to participate in all interschool activities, approved by and under the active supervision and control of the Association. Individual participant fees for district activities to be approved by the Executive Board.

The school administrator is responsible for reporting the school participation numbers for all sports and activities annually. Participation numbers will be reported on the OPI website per MCA 20-7-104.

Section (21) POLICY ON INTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES ADMINISTRATION

The Executive Board of the MHSA shall provide in their annual budget for the administration of all interschool activities under their supervision and control.

Section (22) APPROVED DATES

The dates for all interschool activities and contests must be approved by the Executive Board. The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting dates for all practices and for all contests.

Section (23) ADVISORY ORGANIZATIONS

The Montana Music Educators Association, and the Montana Forensic Educators Association shall be recognized as advisory organizations of the Montana High School Association, and shall be represented in official advisory committees as designated by the Executive Board, provided that the Constitution and By-Laws of their several organizations are in harmony and agreement with the Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and Rules and Regulations of the Montana High School Association.

Section (24) PROCESS FOR ADDING A NEW SPORT OR ACTIVITY

The purpose of this rule is to grow meaningful interscholastic participation opportunities for students in athletics and activities for interested students that have the potential to meet the required number of schools participating to be considered for official sanctioning by the MHSA.
Listed below are the steps required to request designation as an Emerging Sport/Activity and the timeline involved. Any sport/activity that meets these requirements must successfully complete a two-year provisional period before consideration for adoption as an officially sanctioned sport/activity.

A. Have at least 10 member schools or 25% of the schools in a classification participating in the sport/activity and/or written indication from schools willing to offer the sport/activity on a provisional basis.

B. Submit a request to the MHSA Executive Board for approval.

C. Contest limitations, individual player limitations and the applicable season of participation will be determined and specified in the approval by the MHSA Executive Board.

D. If approved, the sport/activity will be listed as an emerging sport/activity in the MHSA Handbook and registration in the sport/activity will be offered.

E. If approved, a committee shall be formed to help determine specific rules and any other necessary information for the sport/activity.

F. Emerging sports/activities approved on a provisional basis will be limited in the services they receive until they become officially sanctioned by the MHSA. The following MHSA administrative services will not be offered to emerging sports/activities:

1. Assigned rules interpreters, but the MHSA will assign a sports/activity liaison to assist with questions and implementation.
2. Sport/activity section on the MHSA website.
3. State championships administered by the MHSA – although the MHSA will work with the committee to investigate and implement a state championship.

G. MHSA membership dues will be charged as student athletes are covered under the MHSA catastrophic and concussion insurance.

H. Emerging sports/activities approved on a provisional basis, along with member school student and coach participants, must abide by all MHSA regulations.

At the end of the two-year provisional period, the sport/activity committee shall report back to the membership at the next MHSA Annual Meeting to summarize the progress that has been achieved.

The membership will vote to officially sanction the sport/activity, keep the sport/activity in provisional status, or remove it from the list of emerging sports/activities.

Section (25) MHSA STANDING COMMITTEES

Each MHSA advisory committee will have representation from an American Indian member or an American Indian school representative, and a female representative.

A. **Sports Advisory Rules Review Committee:** The Executive Board is authorized to appoint a standing Sports Advisory Rules Review Committee. This committee is to consist of a minimum of seven members. The membership shall consist of five coaches representing all four athletic classifications, one athletic director and one school administrator. The Montana Coaches Association shall be invited to recommend coaches for consideration as committee members. A member of the MHSA Executive Staff shall serve on this committee.

B. **Music Committee:** A Music Committee consisting of representatives of the Montana High School Association, the Montana Music Educators Association president and a representative of the State Superintendent shall be established by the Executive Board.

C. **Forensic and Drama Committee:** A Forensic and Drama Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association as a standing committee of at least six members, consisting of a representative of the Executive Board, one other school administrator, a representative of the Montana Forensic Educators Association — at least one of whom shall represent drama. The Executive Director of the MHSA or his/her appointee shall serve as secretary of this committee.

D. **Master Basketball Scheduling Committee:** A Master Basketball Scheduling Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association as a standing committee of at least sixteen members, consisting of administrators, athletic directors and/or coaches from each of

four regions—southern, northern, eastern and western. The Executive Director of the MHSA or his/her appointee shall serve as secretary of this committee. The membership of the committee shall be reviewed annually and appropriate appointments made.

E. **Spirit Advisory Committee:** A Spirit Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association as a standing committee of at least five members, consisting of at least one spirit coach from each of the four classifications. The Executive Director of the MHSA or his/her appointee shall serve as secretary and advisor of this committee.

F. **Gender Equity Committee:** The Executive Board is authorized to appoint a Gender Equity Committee on a permanent basis to review the Ridgeway Settlement Agreement, Title IX and current gender equity trends. The committee will be responsible to make recommendations to the Executive Board.

G. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee:** The Executive Board is authorized to appoint a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee on a permanent basis to study problems in activities and address concerns unique to some cultural societies. The committee will be responsible to recommend solutions to the MHSA Executive Board.

H. **Sports Medicine Advisory Committee:** The Executive Board is authorized to appoint a Sports Medicine Advisory Committee on a permanent basis to study and address concerns relative to control of communicable diseases as it relates to athletics, legal questions involving athletics and the medical profession, updates in sports medicine and nutrition, and providing input for the welfare of athletes. The committee will be responsible to make recommendations to the Executive Board.

I. **Individual Sports Committees:** The Executive Board shall appoint a committee for each sport sanctioned by the MHSA. These committees shall serve as advisory committees to the Athletic Committee and be responsible for making recommendations***. MHSA rule interpreters will be members of the sport specific committee.***

J. **Sportsmanship Committee:** The Executive Board shall appoint a Sportsmanship Committee on a permanent basis to promote sportsmanship among student-athletes, coaches, parents and fans and to develop tools for addressing poor sporting behavior. The committee will be responsible to make recommendations to the Executive Board.

Section (26) NATIONAL CONTESTS OR ACTIVITIES

The approval of any national contest or activity by the Association automatically approves local, district, regional and state contests or activities leading to participation in the national contest or activity.

Section (27) RULES CLINICS

The MHSA Executive Board requires that the administrator of each member school ensures that the head coach, all assistant coaches and all school-approved volunteer coaches of his/her high school coaching staff in that sport completes the annual rules/safety clinic in the format provided by the MHSA for cheerleading and for each sport in which a clinic is offered and sponsored by the MHSA. Clinics are developed for boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' cross country, football, boys' and girls' golf, boys' and girls' soccer, boys' and girls' swimming, softball, boys' and girls' tennis, boys' and girls' track & field, wrestling and volleyball.

Section (28) TOURNAMENT MANAGER WORKSHOP

Tournament managers for MHSA post-season events must complete the online tournament managers' workshop for that sport once every five years. This requirement is sport-specific.

Section (29) IN-SERVICE CLINIC REQUIREMENT

A. Member schools are required to have an onsite administrator and/or athletic/activities director who have viewed the online in-service on the eligibility rules as well as equity and the Ridgeway Settlement Agreement. Such on site personnel are required to complete the renewal online in-services every five years.

B. Member schools are required to have an onsite administrator and/or athletic/activities director who have viewed the Sportsmanship clinic available at nfhslearn.com. Onsite personnel are required to complete a renewal every five years.

C. ***First year activities directors or activities directors that have not been working in the capacity of an AD for more two (2) years are required to attend the in-person New AD Workshop. New Principal and Superintendents are strongly encouraged to attend the workshop***.

D. Member schools are required to ensure that all music teachers, festival managers and administrators who oversee their school's music program must complete the Understanding Copyright and Compliance online course available at nfhslearn.com. Each individual will be required to complete the course once during their high school tenure. For current teachers, festival managers and administrators, the course must be completed before the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

E. The MHSA is an Office of Public Instruction (OPI) Renewal Unit provider for NFHS Clinics. This includes Fundamentals of Coaching, sport specific rules clinics and Concussion in Sports.

Section (30) VIDEO CONFERENCES

Video conferences necessary for the operation of the Montana High School Association shall be conducted in the same manner and with the same restrictions as regular or special meetings. Video conferences will be held only when necessary for immediate action for an interpretation of a rule, for a violation or protest which needs immediate action, or for an appeal on student eligibility. When an expedited hearing is requested prior to the next scheduled board meeting, the Executive Board will assess the appellant a ***non-refundable $300*** fee to cover expenses. The Board may hold video conferences for any of the above items as well as litigation, legislative, and other emergency matters which could affect the operation of the Association.

Executive Board members must be given 48-hour advance written notice of the video conference.

Section (31) RADIO BROADCASTING POLICY

The Montana High School Association and the Montana Broadcaster's Association agree to the following joint policies on the radio broadcasting of MHSA Athletic Activities (revised policy effective July 1, 1994):

A. The host member school shall be responsible for the local policies concerning radio broadcasting of all MHSA athletic events other than district, divisional, and state tournaments and playoffs and exhibitions. Member schools and local stations shall work cooperatively to promote the broadcasting of both male and female activities.

B. The radio broadcasting of district, divisional, and state tournaments and playoffs and exhibitions shall be controlled by the MHSA Executive Board with the following guidelines:

1. Any radio stations that declare their broadcasting interests to the tournament/playoff manager no less than three days in advance of the scheduled event shall, without charge, be granted permission to broadcast such contests.
2. Radio stations with permission to broadcast any contests have an obligation to provide a reasonable amount of free air-time prior to the event to promote attendance and ticket availability of the tournament/playoff game.
3. The local radio station serving the market that normally has carried and promoted tournament/playoff representatives'

contests throughout the season shall be given first right of broadcasting facilities in the site location. This local station will broadcast the contests of any local teams participation, as well as, the consolation and championship contests.

4. The tournament/playoff manager shall determine and assign broadcasting space to all other stations requesting permission. Assigned location shall be desirable for broadcasting and limited to no more than three (3) people. The tournament manager will provide a limit of three media passes if they are needed. These passes must be used by the broadcast team members only and are not transferable.
5. Radio stations may request feeds from any radio station broadcasting the tournament/playoff contests. All stations are responsible for making their own broadcast arrangements. If feeds are not available, the stations may request permission to broadcast those contests of interest.

C. The privilege to broadcast is granted on the following conditions:

1. There shall be no announcements or advertisements contrary to the principles of high school athletics.
2. Stations shall be responsible for any and all expenses incidental to setting up and broadcasting the activity.
3. Reports of accidents, injuries, or other incidents should be minimized and factual to prevent or minimize undue anxiety on the part of the listener.
4. Radio stations providing "feeds" will adhere to the format approved by the Montana Broadcaster's Association.
5. No commercials or advertisements on behalf of or at the request of the MHSA will be broadcast without a signed Timed Brokerage Agreement between the Montana Broadcasters Association and the Montana High School Association.
6. At all times, the sportscasters should be unbiased and shall use good judgment in providing an objective, fair and professional presentation of the contests. Sports casters will report on the contests and actions associated with them. Announcers will make no comments regarding the judgment of contest officials or coaches during any broadcast originating at the contest site. Broadcasts should reflect sensitivity and a caring attitude towards the contests' participants.
7. Stations have demonstrated efforts to broadcast postseason events for both genders when applicable.
8. Violation of any of the conditions will result in the station not being permitted to continue its broadcast.

D. Stations that are not in compliance with MHSA policies on broadcasting will be notified in writing by the MHSA of details of their non-compliance and be allowed to respond and remedy the problem before ***future*** requests to broadcast are declined.

Section (32) POLICIES FOR VIDEO, CYBERCASTING, STREAMING, TELECASTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY OF MHSA EVENTS

The MHSA reserves the exclusive authority to regulate photographic and video recordings and their distribution, including but not limited to photos, tapes, CD's, DVD's, broadcasts, telecasts, cybercasts, video-streaming, audio-streaming and other mediums. The Montana High School Association is the owner of the rights to and the copyright holder of all audiovisual recording, filming, videotaping, telecasting, webcasting and photography of MHSA events involving MHSA member schools.
The MHSA and its member schools will consider equitable coverage of both male and female activities when granting permission for any photography, filming, audio and/or video recording, and the subsequent use of those mediums.

All regular season and post-season audiovisual rights may be granted to other parties as stipulated below:

A. Videotaping/Filming:

1. All videotaping shall be conducted from an area designated by the event manager or tournament manager.
2. No videotaping shall be conducted for commercial purposes unless previously approved by the MHSA Executive Director.
3. Videotaping by spectators is allowed only from designated areas and only for private home use (not for distribution, broadcast or cybercast).
4. Videotaping by school/team representatives is allowed only from designated areas and only for use by the individual school program (not for distribution, broadcast or cybercast). Schools or their representatives may videotape only those specific competitions in which their students participate.
5. Videotaping by media and commercial outlets is allowed only from designated areas and is regulated as outlined below.

B. News Media Broadcast, Telecast, Cybercast and Video Display:

1. News media may air, broadcast, telecast, cybercast, audio-stream, video-stream or display highlights only in a bona fide newscast or through an approved MHSA media outlet or website. "Bona fide newscast" is defined as a half hour or one hour program that is regularly scheduled and includes news, weather and sports, e.g., the 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. newscasts on broadcast television stations. Entertainment and commercial uses of highlights are not considered "bona fide newscasts" and shall not be permitted without the written consent of MHSA.
2. News media may display highlights of an event in progress as part of a bona fide newscast so long as such highlights are not live excerpts.
3. News media highlights may not exceed five (5) minutes per event (or per day of multiple day events such as post-season tournaments) of running time total in any one newscast or via an approved MHSA media outlet website.
4. News media highlights may not be sold or transferred in any way except for transfers from newspaper to newspaper within the same publishing corporation or from a newspaper to a bona fide news agency. Media highlights may not be used commercially or in any other manner not specifically set forth above without the written consent of MHSA, except for provisions granted in Section E, #3 of this policy.
5. At all times, the sportscasters should be unbiased and shall use good judgment in providing an objective, fair and professional presentation of the contests. ***Sports casters will report on the contests and actions associated with them. Announcers will make no comments regarding the judgment of contest officials or coaches during any broadcast originating at the contest site.*** Broadcasts should reflect sensitivity and a caring attitude towards the contests' participants.
6. The MHSA may revoke or refuse to issue credentials to any person or entity failing to comply with these guidelines.

C. Commercial Broadcast, Telecast, Video-Streaming, Cybercast and Video Display:

1. All commercial broadcast, telecast, cybercast, ***video-stream*** or video display of any regular or post-season event must be approved by the MHSA Executive Director. Rights and conditions (including fees) of live commercial broadcasts, telecasts, and/or cybercasts of regular and post season events will be specified through written consent of the MHSA.
2. When granted authority for commercial broadcast, telecast, cybercast ***video-stream*** or video display of MHSA events, the commercial entity must comply with the conditions set forth by MHSA, including any safety, contractual, fiscal, or other concerns that apply. The MHSA will consider the promotion of both male and female activities when granting authority.
3. All Post Season live video-streaming of MHSA events will be exclusively broadcast on the NFHS Network.
4. All video streaming of regular season 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. Exception for soccer, softball, tennis, and baseball: If the host site does not have a Pixellot camera available, school(s) can request streaming

with a different commercial company without the NFHS Network parallel streaming requirement.

D. Non-Media/Non-Commercial Tape Delay Policy:

Any filming by private or non-media outlets that is intended for tape-delayed broadcast, telecast, or cybercast must meet the following criteria:

1. All non-media, non-profit filming for any postseason event must be approved by the MHSA Executive Director. Rights and conditions (including fees) of tape-delayed broadcasts, telecasts, and/or cybercasts of post-season events will be specified through written consent of the MHSA. The MHSA will consider the promotion of both male and female activities when granting authority. Schools may request permission to live-stream their post-season events from the Executive Director only if they are a member of the NFHS Network.
2. All non-media, non-profit filming for regular season events must be approved by the local school districts involved in the event. Member schools are granted the authority to regulate tape-delayed telecasts and/or cybercasts of regular season events, provided that member schools and local entities work cooperatively to promote both male and female activities. (If it's a commercial broadcast, telecast, cybercast or video display, it must be approved by the Executive Director, also.)
3. All entities and outlets must comply with the conditions set forth by MHSA, including any safety, contractual, fiscal, or other concerns that apply.

E. Still Photography:

1. Personal photography by individuals (including students, coaches, parents, and/or fans) is permissible provided that the resulting images are for private home use only and not for any manner of distribution. The act of photographing any part of an MHSA event must not interfere in any way with the conduct of the event or with the view of other patrons. Personal photography is allowed only from designated spectator areas.
2. Photography by school/team representatives is allowed only for use by the individual school program (specifically yearbooks, school newspapers, other school-produced publications and/or school websites). Resale of images is prohibited, unless authority is granted under item 4 (below). Press credentials will not be issued to school/team photographers, and these individuals are allowed to photograph only from designated spectator areas. School/team representatives are not allowed in areas designated for members of the media.
3. Bona fide members of the news media may photograph and print photo images as part of their established print media or websites. Newspapers will have unrestricted use and sale of photo images that appear in print or on newspaper websites as part of news articles or in photo galleries. News media photography must not interfere in any way with the conduct of the event and is allowed only from designated news media areas.
4. Rights and conditions (including fees) of commercial photography and subsequent distribution will be specified through written consent. When granted authority for commercial photography, the commercial entity must comply with the conditions set forth, including any safety, contractual, fiscal, or other concerns that apply. The promotion of both male and female activities will be considered when granting authority. Commercial photography rights are authorized as follows:

   a. For regular season events, the event manager has the authority to grant photography rights with the permission of participating schools.
   b. For district/divisional tournaments and playoffs (excluding post season football and Class A soccer), the tournament/event manager has the authority to grant photography rights with the permission of conference schools.
   c. For all state level competition, all post season football and all post season soccer, the MHSA Executive Director has the authority to grant rights.

5. The MHSA may revoke or refuse to issue credentials to any person or entity failing to comply with these guidelines.

F. Media Passes ***and Credentials***

All requests for passes and credentials must be made via online registration on the MHSA website no later than Monday at 12:00 p.m. (noon) the week of the event. The MHSA will stop accepting requests at this time.

1. During MHSA postseason events, no media passes, credentials or courtesies will be provided to:
   a. College or professional coaches or scouts;
   b. Social media platforms or sites in which the content is personal in nature (such as a diary, blog, fan-based, etc.);
   c. Organizations or sites developed solely to list/profile/rank for the purposes of scouting or recruiting students.
   d. Commercial/individual photographers, videographers and their companies;
   e. Student of school publications or yearbooks;
   f. Parents/fans;
   g. Spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.
2. All media outlets or individuals requesting passes/credentials for MHSA events must:
   a. Be a limited Liability corporation or bona-fide business registered to do business in the state of Montana;
   b. Carry its own liability insurance and agree to hold the MHSA, venue and all associated parties harmless for any damages, injuries or death occurring while covering an MHSA event;
   c. Use the official name of the championship/event when referring to the event via print, radio, television, web or social media.
3. All media outlets or individuals who are granted credentials/passes for MHSA events must agree to the following:
   a. They are an active reporter, journalist or photographer representing a professional media outlet;
   b. To remain neutral in all of their actions on site at the event, including and especially in the press box or on press row;
   c. To not cheer or be visibly in favor of any specific team or student;
   d. To respect the quiet demeanor of the press box or press row;
   e. To address any disagreement with the MHSA Event Coordinator or Manager in a private setting in a professional manner;
   f. To make no comments regarding the judgment of contest officials or coaches during any broadcast originating at the contest site;
   g. ***To not live video stream any portion of the competition.***

G. Policy on Venue Video Boards/Replay Boards

It is recognized that as technology advances, more facilities are adding video capability to the assets utilized at contests. To ensure the proper conduct of contests, and to ensure that such video is not used to the detriment of any school, coach, participant or contest official, the following specific restrictions shall be in place:

1. Any live action being shown during the contest may only be the simulcasting of the event, and no audio from the simulcast can be projected via the venue sound system.
2. In the event of officials holding any type of conference to properly interpret or apply a game situation, video replays may NOT be shown during that conference and may not be shown later. There cannot be any replay of any controversial call or controversial play.

3. Any replay of game action that is shown on the video board, shall be shown only once immediately following the play, only at full game speed, and without announcing commentary from any source.
4. Replays of specific scoring plays and contest highlights may be shown during time-outs or during breaks between periods, but must reflect a balance between participating teams and may not include announcer commentary.
5. Game administration is continually expected to exercise prudent judgment and ensure that nothing shown on the video boards can serve to incite the crowd against either team or the contest officials. Failure to perform this expected discretion may result in penalties against the school for a violation of MHSA Rules and Regulations.

Section (33) SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES

A. Statement of philosophy: The Montana High School Association has established policies, expectations and responsibilities which will cultivate the ideals of good sportsmanship. It shall be the responsibility of each member school to ensure that all individuals employed or directly associated with the inter-scholastic program conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner.

The coach represents the school at interscholastic athletic activities. It is the responsibility of the head and assistant coaches to serve as role models for students and the public.

B. Code of Conduct: A coach will be in violation of the standards for good sportsmanship established by the Montana High School Association by:

1. Making degrading/critical remarks about officials during or after a contest either at the competition site, from the bench, in the locker area or through any public news media;
2. Arguing with officials or going through motions indicating dislike/disdain for a decision;
3. Detaining the officials following a contest to request or argue a ruling or explanation of actions by the official;
4. Being ejected from a contest;
5. Physically assaulting an official.

Section (34) CROWD CONTROL AT MHSA CONTESTS

Because of incidents during past seasons, the MHSA member schools have been made aware of the need for crowd control measures at interscholastic contests. Believing that working toward prevention is better than seeking a cure, the MHSA offers the following guidelines to aid in planning crowd control strategy which will help insure the safety of contestants and fans. Good sportsmanship must become a common goal.

A. Schools should understand the true purposes of athletic contests and educate their patrons to that purpose. Athletic contests are not to become rivalries to the point of losing the primary objectives of the game.

1. Provide worthwhile educational experiences for all students, players and spectators.
2. Provide enjoyable recreation regardless of whether the game is won or lost.

B. A full knowledge of each game's rules applying to sportsmanship which have their purpose to enhance the educational values of interscholastic athletics should be taught. How these are taught will depend upon the innovation of the school personnel. Schools might be wise to insert in their eligibility rules some concern over the misconduct of players.

C. Copies of game rules pertaining to sportsmanship should be made available to fans. These rules could be printed in the game programs, along with the sport's recent rule changes. In the buildings where contests are being held, bulletin boards and other means of conveying the information can be used to inform the public.

D. Leadership must be provided by the school faculty with the superintendent, principal, and athletic director leading the way and delegating authority. The superintendent, principal and athletic director are completely responsible for the entire program, including all levels of competition.

1. This includes providing an event supervisor who will be responsible for duties including but not limited to game preparation, greeting of officials, and supervision of the game/event area for the duration of the event. Special attention must be given to the supervision of student cheering sections, including having an administrator present near the vicinity of the student cheering section for all home and post-season contests to assist with crowd control.
2. Schools are required to have an administrative representative at all MHSA baseball, basketball, softball and volleyball state events. The representative must be available to assist with crowd control for their team.

E. Ample help, even involving law enforcement officers, stationed at strategic points and alerted to potential problems will help prevent the initial onset of any conflict.

F. All schools should inform their people involved in any contest that there is a specific role for the visiting participants to play as well as the host school.
Amenities and courtesies should be displayed and extended to the visiting organizations without flaunting of rivalries.

G. Spectators should not be allowed to enter an area where a contest is being held if they are observed in the possession of alcohol or other mood altering substances or are believed to be under the influence of these substances.

H. Schools should eliminate possible confrontations by close observations of people who might contribute to any confrontation such as people under the influence of these mood altering substances or persons with a past history of unsporting behavior. If your team is traveling and you are aware of a likelihood of fan misbehavior, it is your responsibility to communicate those concerns with the game management of the host school.

I. In the event a spectator assaults a referee or other official in connection with an Association Contest, he/she should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. To save the status of interscholastic competition, schools will have to work together and be alert of potential dangers in their own communities and when they are visiting other communities.

J. The use of bells, air horns, whistles, wooden blocks and other noise makers during indoor Association contests is prohibited. Handheld megaphones larger than 8" are prohibited. At indoor contests bands ***or music*** may only play before the start of a contest, during intermissions between periods (quarters) and during a time out. They may not play during "live ball." At outdoor contests the use of electronic and air-amplified devices, including vuvuzelas, by spectators is prohibited. At all outdoor contests bands ***or music*** will not be allowed to play during "live ball."

K. The formation of "rally lines" or "player run-throughs" by spectators, fans and/or students on or near the playing field/floor during the introduction of players or at any other time before, during or after a game is prohibited. Exceptions may be cheerleaders, introduction of parents as part of a "Parents' Night" ceremony, homecoming participants or special guests who have been approved by the home school administration.

L. Schools are required to erect sideline barriers for all football, soccer and softball fields during all contests.

M. Allowable procedures for varied and/or dimmed lighting during contest introductions are defined as follows:

1. Regular Season - for any indoor MHSA athletic contest, facility lights may be dimmed or partially extinguished only during introductions and only within the following guidelines:

a. If lights are dimmed or modified during introductions, enough light must remain to ensure the safety of all occupants in the facility, specifically for the purposes of maintaining crowd control and guaranteeing that aisles, stairways and exits are visible.
b. If partial lighting sections above the area of competition are fully extinguished, the lighting sections above the fan areas must remain on, and aisles, stairways and exits must remain visible.
c. The use of spotlights is allowed provided they are used appropriately and do not delay the start of the game.
d. Home and visiting teams must be introduced in the same manner, and gender equity standards must be met in showcasing introductions in this manner.
e. All local fire and public safety codes must be followed.

2. Postseason - for all indoor postseason events (playoffs and tournaments), full facility lighting will remain on throughout introductions, during competition, and between contests (if applicable).

N. During player introductions, players may not leave the playing floor or enter the spectator section; players may not throw objects into the spectator section.

O. Anyone associated with an Association contest (regular season or postseason) is prohibited from throwing any type of object into or from any spectator section.

Coaching Staff

The coach bears the greatest burden of responsibility for sportsmanship. His/her influence upon the attitudes and behavior of the players, the student body and the community is unequalled. In order for good sportsmanship to become a reality, it is essential that the coach subscribe to the values of sportsmanship and teach its principles through word and deed. Specifically, it is recommended that the coach:

1. Always set a good example for others to follow.
2. Instruct the players about their sportsmanship responsibilities.
3. Discipline those players who display unsportsmanlike behavior. If necessary, forfeit their privileges of representing the school.
4. Be a good host to opponents; treat them as guests.
5. Provide opportunities for social interaction among coaches and players of both teams before and after the contest.
6. Select only officials who have demonstrated the highest ethical standards.
7. Respect the official's judgment and interpretation of the rules. Question them with respect and dignity only when the game rules permit. After a contest, questions concerning an official's call, mechanics or procedural duties should be addressed through the respective official's pool leader, the MOA Regional Director or the MOA office. A report form for unusual situations is located on the MHSA website.
8. Publicly shake hands with the officials and opposing coach before and after the contest.

Players

The responsibility of the players for sportsmanship is second in importance only to the coach. Because players are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of the spectators. Desirable behavior for players would be to:

1. Treat opponents with respect that is due them as guests and fellow human beings.
2. Shake hands with opponents and wish them good luck before the contest.
3. Exercise self-control at all times, accepting decisions and abiding by them.
4. Respect the official's judgment and interpretations of the rules. Never argue or make gestures indicating dislike for a decision.
5. Do not communicate with the officials regarding the clarification of a ruling. This is the captains' responsibility.
6. Do not engage in celebrations/chants that will antagonize or embarrass an opponent.

Cheerleaders

1. Stimulate and control crowd response.
2. Choose the right cheers at the right time.
3. Be certain that words used in a cheer do not inflame an audience.
4. Avoid using bells, horns and noisemakers.
5. Use gestures that are synchronized, pleasing to watch, and easy to follow.
6. Divert the crowd's attention by starting a positive yell if booing or improper cheers develop.
7. School flags cannot be paraded in front of the opposing fans' sections.
8. School mascots cannot engage in antagonistic behavior and must remain in their own cheering section.
9. Do not lead fans in any cheer that poses a safety risk, including fans jumping or bouncing on the bleachers at any time.

Students

Students' habits and reaction as spectators determine the quality of sportsmanship which reflects upon the reputation of the school. Profane and abusive language and obnoxious behavior have no place at an athletic contest.

1. Know and demonstrate good sportsmanship. Good sportsmanship means always being positive with your response to the contest.
2. Respect and cooperate with the cheerleaders.
3. Respect the property of the school and the authority of the school officials.
4. Show respect for an injured player and do not heckle or jeer the opposing team.
5. Remember athletic contests and mood altering substances do not mix.
6. Do not use profanity in cheers or direct profane statements at officials, players, coaches or opposing cheering sections.
7. Do not single out opposing players personally and heckle them by directing derogatory or profane statements/chants at them. This includes signs, posters, and clothing that would be deemed inappropriate. Racist remarks are never acceptable.
8. Do not advance on the court or field to protest or communicate with officials, coaches or players.
9. Do not direct offensive cheers/chants at opposing cheering sections.
10. Shirts must be worn at all contests.
11. The student sections are prohibited from any activity that poses a safety risk or interferes with competition, including jumping or bouncing on the bleachers at any time.

Spectators

Fan behavior whether at home or away at athletic contests reflect on the entire community. Hometown fans should treat out-of-town guests with respect. Similarly, visiting fans should treat their hosts—both individuals and property — with proper appreciation.

1. Know and demonstrate good sportsmanship.
2. Be positive. Cheer for your team rather than against the opposition.
3. Refrain from booing and name calling.
4. Respect the officials' point of view. He/she is in charge and is doing his/her best.
5. Remember, athletic contests are, in one respect, just like driving, they do not mix with mood altering substances.
6. Do not use profanity in cheers or direct profane statements at officials, players, coaches or opposing cheering sections.
7. Do not single out opposing players personally and heckle them by directing derogatory or profane statements/chants

at them. This includes signs, posters, and clothing that would be deemed inappropriate. Racist remarks are never acceptable.

8. Do not advance on the court or field to protest or communicate with officials, coaches or players.
9. The student sections are prohibited from any activity that poses a safety risk or interferes with competition, including jumping or bouncing on the bleachers at any time.

Officials

1. Know the rules and accepted officiating procedures.
2. Make decisions promptly and fairly.
3. Be consistent.
4. Be neat and friendly, but businesslike.
5. Be on time and start the game on time.
6. Refrain from placing hands on players during an athletic contest.
7. During the pre-game conference make reference to the fact that you expect captains to exhibit sportsmanlike behavior and demand it from all team members.
8. Keep emotions in check. Being emotional can affect your judgment.

Public Address Announcers

1. Announcers shall not attempt to be bigger than the game or event by doing play-by-play or by providing commentary in an effort to draw attention to themselves.
2. Announcers shall understand that because they have a tremendous influence on the crowd and that cheerleading or antics designed to incite the crowd for the purpose of gaining an advantage for their team is inappropriate.
3. Announcers shall promote good sportsmanship by what they say and how they say it.
4. Announcers shall treat the opponents and their fans as guests, not the enemy.
5. Announcers shall respect the individuals who are responsible for the conduct and administration of athletic games and events, such as coaches, officials and administrators, and avoid making any comments that reflect positively or negatively on them.
6. Announcers shall respect the participants of all teams and remain neutral in regard to the outcome of plays or performances of the participants.
7. Announcers shall be competent. This means following approved announcing guidelines, expectations and policies, such as emergency procedures, provided by the administration or the host facility.
8. Announcers shall be prepared, such as being familiar with the correct pronunciations of the participants' names, knowing the rules of the sport, the officials' signals and how the game is played.
9. Announcers shall exhibit professional behavior and represent their school, organization or association with respect and dignity at all times by what they say, how they act and how they appear.
10. Announcers shall not use alcohol and tobacco products at the venue.

Police and Staff Supervisors

1. Check with the athletic director prior to the contest time for assignments.
2. Arrive on time.
3. Discourage small groups from gathering near entrances and exits.
4. Keep playing area clear of spectators before, during, and after the contest.
5. Move with the crowd.
6. Have adult violators escorted to the police station. Call parents of youth offenders to escort them home.
7. Survey the area after the contest.

Administrative Staff

1. Arrange for a supervision and crowd control committee meeting before the fall season. The committee should be comprised of:
   a. Superintendent of Schools
   b. High School and/or Junior High School Principal
   c. Athletic Director
   d. Cheerleader Coach
   e. Student Council Representative
   f. Community Civic Club Representative or Booster Club Representative.
   g. Police Representative
   h. Regular staff supervisors.
2. Publicize the recommendation of the supervision and crowd control committee.
   a. Meet with the Chief of Police and Highway Patrol prior to the opening of school.
   b. Hire off-duty police as game and conditions warrants. Assign duties, times etc.
   c. Establish traffic patterns in and around the contest site. Use community volunteers or student groups.
   d. Erect restraining fences and/or rope off areas appropriately.
   e. Supervise gates at all times and prohibit free entry to anyone during the entire contest.
   f. Check the physical facility to see that it is in the best possible condition to accommodate crowds.
   g. Provide first aid capability and/or medical doctor availability.

Athletic Director

1. Review game management responsibilities.
2. Explore crowd control ideas with other schools in your conference.
3. Discuss crowd control with civic and/or booster organizations.
4. Schedule pre-season school assemblies to review contest rules, good sportsmanship and spectator behavior.
5. Review with security personnel their assignments prior to each contest.
6. Review assignments with staff prior to each contest.
7. Make sure that officials and their dressing area are taken care of in the proper manner. Questions concerning an official's call, mechanics or procedural duties should be addressed through the respective official's pool leader, the MOA Regional Director or the MOA office. A report form for unusual situations is located on the MHSA website.
8. Announce that no spectator is allowed on the field or court prior to, during, or after a contest.
9. Check with police and staff at half-time.
10. Provide a check of the facilities after the contest.

Section (35) COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIP OF ACTIVITIES

A. Class AA, A, B, and C member schools wishing to establish a cooperative contract for sanctioned activities may apply by submitting the required paperwork to the MHSA Executive Board by February 1st, for the following school year. All cooperative sponsorships will be continuous unless an application for dissolution is submitted to the MHSA and is approved by the Executive Board. The effective date is the date on which the application was approved. Football co-ops will be reviewed on the same cycle as football reclassification. Enrollment and participation data may be requested by the MHSA office to determine if a cooperative sponsorship will be dissolved or reclassified.

B. Cooperative contract applications will be initiated by a host district, confirmed by all districts that are parties to the contract, and approved by the MHSA Executive Director prior to the implementation of any cooperative activity. The school districts named on the cooperative contract application will be responsible for the implementation and supervision of the contract.

C. If the schools that cooperatively sponsor a program are in different classifications, participation in that activity shall be in the highest classification of the schools involved.

D. To be eligible to participate in MHSA sanctioned activities schools must have an enrollment at or below the maximum classification enrollment. If the combined enrollments of the schools involved in a combined cooperative program exceeds the minimum number of the next higher classification the combined cooperative team will compete at that higher classification in that activity.

E. To be eligible to participate in six-player football, schools must be Class C and have a high school enrollment at or below 65 students. No football cooperative contracts may exceed an enrollment of 65 students when two or more participating member schools are combined (Exception – See Article X Section (2) 2.2). New applications must be filed with MHSA by October 1st of each year. The enrollment count will meet or exceed this number for two consecutive years in order to be mandated to switch to eight-player football.

F. Application forms and a list of details that describe district to district issues affecting cooperative sponsorship will be made available by the MHSA to school districts upon request. The activity fees payment as outlined in Article I Section (2) 2.1 must be paid upon approval of the co-op.

G. Refunds will be made, upon request, up to the date of the first allowable contest of the activity.

H. February 1st is the application deadline for new cooperative sponsorships and for the dissolution of existing cooperative sponsorships.

I. Cooperative implementation of an activity by two or more member schools will be considered under the following conditions:

1. Schools are to be located in the same geographic area and combined enrollments will be used as a guideline.
2. Making activities available for students that would not be available in their home school if cooperative contracting did not occur.
3. The school board of the participating member schools must jointly make the application to the MHSA Executive Board.
4. A resolution from each school board stating the purpose for sponsoring a joint activity must be submitted to the MHSA office in a timely manner.
5. Decisions on all applications will be determined by the Executive Director subject to appeal to the MHSA Executive Board.
6. A school may not enter into any cooperative sponsorship whereby students are sent to two or more schools in the same activity.
7. When schools from two different classifications co-op, they will compete in the higher classification of that activity.
8. When the intent is not to improve a particular school's win-loss record.
9. All other related procedures not specifically controlled or directed by the MHSA will be the responsibility of the schools named on the cooperative contract.
10. Both schools must be in compliance with the Ridgeway Settlement Agreement, specifically in terms of the number of sports offerings for each gender.
11. ***The MHSA may terminate cooperative agreements based upon valid reason as determined by the MHSA, to become effective at the conclusion of a school year.***

J. Cooperative sponsorships are allowed to have an official name recognized by the MHSA that is different from the combination of school names.

INTERPRETATION

1. Students transferring from one school to another in a cooperative agreement are not eligible unless all transfer obligations in Article II, Section (10) are met

Section (36) HEALTH AND SAFETY

A. Emergency Action Plans: Member schools are required to have an updated Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for each of their sites that are used for athletic contests or practices. An EAP Verification Form must be submitted to the MHSA by July 15th of each year to verify the completion of this requirement.

B. Medical Care at Postseason Tournaments:
1. An operational AED must be present and accessible at each location being used as a tournament site.
2. Each tournament site must have a current and comprehensive Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
3. It is recommended that medical and first-aid assistance be available at all MHSA tournaments.

C. Medical Timeouts: A pre-event medical meeting is required to be held before every sanctioned interscholastic athletic contest (at every level of play) to review the emergency action plan (EAP), confirm AED location, and clarify each participant's role.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

To Resolve the Issue of
Ridgeway et al. vs. Montana High School Association et al.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

This Settlement Agreement disposes of the pending disputes in that civil suit presently pending before the United States District Court for the District of Montana denominated as *Karyn Ridgeway et al., Plaintiffs, v. Montana High School Association et al., Defendants*, Civil No. 82-59-M, and filed pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq., the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, 42 U.S.C.1983, Article, X, 4 and Article X, 1 of the Montana Constitution and 49-2-307 and 49-2-403, MCA.

Hereafter, the following individuals will be denominated as Plaintiffs and unless the text of this Settlement Agreement otherwise indicates that only some or that only an individual Plaintiff is intended to be mentioned, the term Plaintiff shall refer to all such parties in their individual and class capacity. Plaintiffs are: Karyn Ridgeway, Donna Ridgeway, Bernadette Lopez, Jeanine Hunt, Deanna Paulus, Dan M. Merritt, and that class of all other persons similarly situated, consisting of those female students who have been, are now, or hereafter may be enrolled as students of Missoula County High School District, Whitehall High School District No. 2, and Columbia Falls High School District No. 6, as such class has been designated by the United States District Court herein.

Hereafter, the named Defendants, Montana High School Association, and Dan Freund, Executive Director, shall be referred to as MHSA; the named Defendants, Montana Office of Public Instruction and Ed Argenbright, Superintendent, shall be referred to as OPI; the named Defendants, Missoula County High School District and Harold Sharkey, Chairperson, shall be referred to as Missoula High School District; the named Defendants, Whitehall High School District No. 2 and Charles Wiedman, Chairperson, shall be referred to as Whitehall School District; the named Defendants, Columbia Falls High School District No. 6 and Larry Wilson, Chairperson, shall be referred to as Columbia Falls School District; and unless the text of this Settlement Agreement otherwise indicates that only some or that only an individual Defendant is intended to be mentioned, then the term of Defendant otherwise set forth above shall refer to all such parties named as Defendants, and all of those parties' agents and employees.

II. INTENT OF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The thrust and overall intent of this Settlement Agreement is to advance the opportunities which female high school students have to participate in extracurricular athletic events relative to their male counterparts; to create, implement and enforce minimum requirements for obtaining sex equity in athletics in Montana; and to make available established grievance procedures and forums, to permit students experiencing sex inequities to obtain non-judicial relief, while retaining the availability of alternative redress through remedies extended by state and federal law.

III. RECITALS

This lawsuit was commenced on May 10, 1982. Plaintiffs alleged they were students who were denied an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular high school athletics and were subjected to invidious discrimination in athletics and consequently were deprived of an opportunity to develop to their full educational potential in violation of state and federal law. Such discrimination was alleged to exist in the number of sanctioned sports available, the seasons in which sports were available, the length of sport season, the scheduling of practices and games, facilities, equipment, coaching, transportation, school band and pep rallies, uniforms, access to trainers, publicity, and other aspects of extracurricular athletics. The suit was certified as a class action to include Plaintiffs and other similarly situated females in some or all aspects of extracurricular high school athletics.

Defendants denied liability for the claims. Defendants challenged the court jurisdiction over the subject matter of the litigation and over their persons. Furthermore, Defendants denied that federal law covered the subject of extracurricular high school athletics and denied that the state agency defendant had any responsibility over the subject of the litigation.

In an effort to resolve the respective claims of Plaintiffs in this litigation, the terms of this agreement have been negotiated and accepted.

IV. TERMS

A. GENERAL TERMS

1. **Future Conduct of Parties.** This agreement recognizes that certain events, which allegedly occurred prior to the date of this agreement, will not occur again, if such events did occur; and further recognizes that certain events which may have occurred by lack of clear identification may have had a sexually discriminatory impact upon Plaintiffs and should not again occur.

2. **Minimum Requirements for Sex Equity in Athletics and Implementation of a Grievance Procedure and Sanctions.** In order to advance sex equity in extracurricular athletic activities in the Defendant school districts and to recognize the availability of non-judicial procedures for future disputes in all Montana high school districts, the parties agree to the adoption, implementation and enforcement of the following Minimum Requirements which shall be enforceable through the non-judicial procedures outlined below. To the extent the minimum requirements are not already in force, the parties agree that Missoula, Columbia Falls, and Whitehall High School Districts shall implement these Minimum Requirements.

3. **Plan of Implementation.** To effectuate the settlement the parties agree that each Defendant shall prepare a Plan for Implementation of this settlement and submit the same within the two months of the execution of this Settlement Agreement to the Facilitator. The Facilitator may assist each Defendant in preparing its plan. Upon receipt of the plans, the Facilitator shall review and comment on them. The Defendants may respond to the comments and make appropriate amendments. The Facilitator, within one month of receipt of all final plans, shall submit the final plans to the Court for approval. The Facilitator may also provide the Court and all parties with his comments.

4. **Reporting Requirements.** Within three months of the Court approval of the final plans, each Defendant shall make a written report to the Court of its progress in implementing this Settlement Agreement and its Plan for Implementation. The Court may refer any report to the Facilitator for review, recommendations, or such other action as directed by the Court.

The Compliance Report shall include details of changes made in the respective programs to show compliance by the Defendants with this Settlement Agreement.

The Defendants shall submit copies of their plans and reports to Plaintiffs at the time the same is submitted to the Facilitator and Court, and the Plaintiffs may make comment to the Facilitator or the Court regarding the same within Fifteen (15) days of the receipt thereof. Plaintiffs shall submit copies of their comments to the Defendants. Defendants may have ten (10) days within the receipt thereof to respond to such comments. The Defendants shall also retain copies of their plans and reports for use by any person.

5. **Facilitator.** To effectuate this Settlement Agreement and to resolve issues pending between the parties, the parties hereby designate as "Facilitator" a neutral representative, Barry Gomberg of the Mountain West Sex Desegregation Assistance Center, Weber State College, Ogden, Utah. In addition to assisting in compliance with this Settlement Agreement, the Facilitator shall collect facts and make recommendations as set forth herein. Should Gomberg cease affiliation with the Center, Gomberg shall continue to be designated as "facilitator" for purposes of this agreement. In addition to assisting in compliance with this Settlement Agreement, the Facilitator shall collect facts and make recommendations as set forth hereafter. Should the Facilitator cease to be able to perform his functions under this Settlement Agreement, the Court, after considering recommendations

of the parties, shall appoint a Facilitator to carry out the duties. To the extent that unallocated or uncommitted federal funds are available to the Facilitator, such shall be used to pay the expenses of the Facilitator; if such federal funding is unavailable, then the expense of the Facilitator, if any, shall be borne by the Defendants.

6. **Notice to Class.** To comply with Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(e), and to assure that all students and parents who are affected by this Settlement Agreement receive notice of the same, distribution of the Settlement Agreement upon its execution shall be as follows: the Defendant school districts shall give notice to students and parents in their school district of the existence of this Settlement Agreement. Such notice may be given by publishing a notice of the same in the student handbook distributed to students in their respective schools or through any other effective means designed to give notice to students and parents in their school district of the existence of this Settlement Agreement. The Notice shall contain a summary of the Settlement Agreement and information regarding where copies of the Settlement Agreement may be obtained. The Defendant school districts shall retain copies of the Settlement Agreement for the use of students and parents within their school district. MHSA shall distribute copies of the Settlement Agreement to its member high schools. OPI shall also distribute copies to any high school over which it has authority under Montana law. Defendants may coordinate their distribution efforts in order not to duplicate them.

B. **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

The following Statewide Minimum Requirements and Minimum Requirements for School Districts shall be used by OPI, MHSA, and the three school districts in evaluating grievances and eligibility challenges as set forth in Section VI, Grievance Procedures and Sanctions. In the event the facts establish a particular school or school district in engaging in extracurricular athletic activities which do not achieve such Minimum Requirements, then OPI, MHSA, or the three Defendant school districts applying applicable minimum procedural standards shall conclude the activity engaged in does not achieve sex equity in such extracurricular athletic activity. The parties agree, however, that the OPI Grievance Procedure shall not apply to determine MHSA's compliance with the Statewide Minimum Requirements set forth below, although it shall be available to determine a local school district's compliance with the Statewide Minimum Requirements and to adjudicate grievances arising out of local school district decisions or actions.

Although this Settlement Agreement does not set forth the Minimum Requirements for other non-athletic extracurricular activities which are related to extracurricular athletic events, the Minimum Requirements set forth hereafter may be considered by individuals, school districts, OPI, MHSA, or other interested parties in evaluating whether under the particular circumstances sex equity has been achieved in other non-athletic extracurricular activities which are related to athletic events.

Unless otherwise stated, compliance by the Defendants with the Minimum Requirements shall be for the 1984-85 school year. To the extent possible the Defendants shall implement the Minimum Requirements during the 1983-84 school year.

1. **Statewide Minimum Requirements.**

a. **Number of Sanctioned Sports.** MHSA shall sanction at least the same number of sports for females as for males. In deciding which sport should be sanctioned to at least equalize the number of sports for both males and females for the 1984-85 school year, MHSA shall supply any documentation requested by the Facilitator. The Facilitator shall determine which sport should be sanctioned, and MHSA shall implement the Facilitator's determination. The Facilitator shall also determine the appropriate playing season for the sanctioned sport using the national norm for such sport as determined by information derived from the National Federation of State High School Associations (hereafter, "national norm"), or other sources he deems useful.

After implementation of this provision regarding the sanctioning of a new sport for girls for the 1984-85 school year, MHSA shall select all further sports to be sanctioned through the use of a survey taken by MHSA of the interests and abilities of males and females. The playing season for all further sanctioned sports shall be determined by considering the national norm for such sport, but any decision as to season must be based on gender-neutral factors.

In considering whether equity has been achieved in equalizing the number of sports, the sports football and wrestling shall be considered to be male sports, although these sports shall remain open for participation by females. Sanctioned sports shall be considered to be available for females if the sport is sanctioned only for participation by females or if the sport is sanctioned for both males and females but a separate and identical team is sanctioned only for participation by females in that sport. For example, volleyball, sanctioned only for females, shall be considered a female sport. If volleyball were in the future sanctioned for participation by both sexes, a separate volleyball team would have to be sanctioned for females only for the sport to be considered a female sport.

b. **Length of Athletic Season.** MHSA shall authorize, and individual school districts shall extend to both males and females, athletic seasons of approximately the same length for the same sport played by both sexes. This shall be accomplished commencing with the 1985-86 athletic season; however, to the extent possible, MHSA shall implement this requirement during the 1984-85 athletic season and shall provide to the parties and the facilitator an identification of areas where compliance is not possible until 1985-86 and the reasons therefore and the remainder of the items shall be instituted by 1984-85. As used herein, the term "athletic season" means the practice, regular season and, as well, tournament play. As used herein, the term "approximately equal" means that the length of a sport for one sex may have a variation of seven days or less than the athletic season for the same sport played by the opposite sex, if this variation is necessitated by gender-neutral factors, such as holidays, school breaks, and coaching discretion. However, the difference in the seasons for the same sport participated in by both females and males cannot vary in length more than seven days and the season variation cannot always be less for one sex and still achieve sex equity.

Further, to achieve equal length of seasons in the same sport, if a school district offers the same sport for both female and male participation, such as basketball, soccer or baseball/softball, MHSA shall authorize the school district to, and the school district shall schedule the same number of games for both male and female students and provide an opportunity for the same number of days of practice for both male and female students subject to the variation permitted above.

Where sports are played by only females or males, hereafter single-sex sports such as girls volleyball, football or wrestling, MHSA shall authorize, and the school district shall extend to males and females, athletic seasons equal to the national norm for such sport. MHSA shall authorize the school districts to, and the school districts shall, schedule at least the same number of games as is equal to the national norm for the single-sex sport. The Facilitator shall determine what the national norm is for the length of season and number of games for the single-sex sports.

c. **Continuity of Athletic Seasons and Elimination of Overlapping Seasons.** Commencing with the 1985-86 athletic season, and to the extent possible during the 1984-85 athletic season, MHSA and the school districts shall provide athletic seasons in a manner to assure that the continuity of seasons for females and males shall be approximately equal and shall provide to the parties and the Facilitator an identification of areas where compliance is not possible until 1985-86 and the reasons therefore and the remainder of the items shall be instituted by 1984-85. This requirement will require that the breaks between male and female sport seasons do not vary in length by more than seven days and that the sport seasons do not overlap so as to prevent interested students from participating in consecutive athletic seasons offered by a particular high school. If more than one sport is offered to either or both sexes during one athletic season, such offering does not constitute a prohibited overlap of athletic opportunities.

d. **Tournament Locations.** MHSA shall select tournament and statewide meet sites for both female and male sporting tournaments and events at locations which are comparable considering the actual and reasonable needs of the tournament or statewide meet. If the same sport is participated in by both females and males and is played or participated in during the same season, MHSA shall consider and make reasonable efforts to schedule tournaments or statewide meets at the same location during the same week or appropriate time period. Further MHSA shall schedule the dates for the tournaments or statewide meets and determine their locations based upon gender-neutral factors.

e. **Press Releases.** MHSA shall issue press releases giving equal emphasis to male and female athletic contests and tournaments and shall equalize any other publicity in which it may engage.

f. **MHSA Coaching Requirements.** MHSA shall seek to assure that equal opportunity in the selection of and in the extension of coaching for both female and male students is provided and shall review and revise its rules in accordance with this requirement.

g. **Summer Camp Rules.** MHSA shall review and revise its summer camp rules, to assure that both females and males participating in the same sport have equal opportunities to participate in summer camps offered for that sport. Specialized summer camp rule 2(8) shall be eliminated. This requirement shall not require MHSA to sanction the identical number or types of summer camps for females as males.

h. **Recruiting Efforts by MHSA.** Where the same sport is sanctioned during different seasons for females and males, or where a female or male sport is played during a season different than the season played in majority of other states playing such sport, MHSA shall participate with school districts in improving recruitment opportunities for those athletes playing the sport in the off season.

i. **Officials.** MHSA shall hire equally qualified officials for female and male sports during the final tournaments and use Montana Officials Association (M.O.A.) ratings to comply with this requirement. For both regular seasons and tournament play MHSA shall set rates for officials officiating female volleyball at not less than the same rate paid to officials of volleyball consistent with the national norm.

2. **Minimum Requirements for School Districts.** The Minimum Requirements for School Districts shall apply to all schools within that school district and the term "school district" as used herein shall refer to both the school district and school within that district.

j. **Number of Offered Sports.** The school districts shall offer the same number of sports for both males and females during the individual school year except as provided below. School districts shall make the choice of which individual sports shall be offered for males and females based upon their students' interests and abilities.

If during a school year a school district does not offer the same number of sports for both male and female students, the school district is not in violation of this provision if it makes an explicit and deliberate effort to increase interest in an additional sport for the sex of the students having fewer sports, conducts a survey, and establishes that there is insufficient interest in an additional sport or that the interest would be insufficient to field a team in any sport in which an interest has been expressed. If a school district or school does not offer an equal number of sports for females and males because it has established there is insufficient interest during the school year, the school district shall make an explicit and deliberate effort to equalize sports for females and males during the subsequent school year and shall continue to make such efforts until the sports are equalized.

If the explicit and deliberate efforts of a school district to equalize sports for females and males result in a survey of interest demonstrating that a particular sport would receive sufficient support to field a team, the school district shall offer that sport to the extent of the financial ability of the school district. The school district must consider all alternatives to equitably distribute finances among the extracurricular athletic program including elimination or substitution of one sport for another participated in by the other sex. However, a limitation of funds shall not be a justification for offering an unequal number of sports for males and females.

k. **Coaches.**

i. A school district shall seek, endeavor to hire, and where there are qualified persons available, hire comparable qualified persons as coaches for male and female extracurricular athletic teams and shall also hire comparable numbers of coaches based upon the number of participants for both female and male extracurricular athletic teams. A school district shall develop written, objective and gender-neutral criteria to evaluate applicants for coaching positions, and consider, as one of these criteria, the applicants' experience in interscholastic, intercollegiate or other sporting activities.

ii. A school district, if it has not already done so, shall develop written gender-neutral, objective criteria to evaluate the performance of all coaches hired by the district, including the following criteria: ability to communicate skills; ability to motivate and inspire team members; efforts made to improve the coach's own coaching abilities and techniques; the interest and motivation demonstrated by the coach; and the coach's relative knowledge of the sport as compared with coaches of other sports.

iii. Each year the district shall evaluate each head coach by (a) utilizing the foregoing criteria, (b) considering the head coaches' regular and tournament success record, and (c) considering whether participants or parents of participants have lodged written complaints concerning coaching abilities, the number of complaints lodged, and the contents of such complaints. A head coach's evaluation shows the coach is inadequate if it demonstrates the performance of the coach or staff is overall unsatisfactory. The term "head coach" shall mean the coach in charge of a team regardless of how such coach is designated in the organizational structure of the particular school district.

iv. Once an evaluation has been made, then in the event the head coach or staff of any female sport is considered inadequate but the head coach or staff of an identical or comparable male sport is not, the school district may replace the inadequate head coach or staff. If the inadequate head coach or staff is not replaced, the school district shall require the head coach or staff of the female sport to attend a coaching clinic. If such remediation does not correct the inadequacy such that in the following year a similar comparative overall inadequacy is demonstrated, the school district shall adopt one or more of the following remedies:

(a) Hire another coach to assist the inadequate head coach or staff in performing coaching functions.

(b) Pay the inadequate coach but hire a substitute coach to perform the coaching functions.

(c) Exchange the head coach or staff of the female and male sport activities.

(d) Terminate the employment of the head coach or staff; or,

(e) Take any other remedy which must resolve any inequity experienced by female athletes due to inadequate coaching of the female sport.

If, in the following year, a similar comparative overall inadequacy is demonstrated, the school district shall either terminate the employment of the head coach or pay the head coach and hire a substitute head coach to perform the coaching functions.

l. **Coaching Salaries.** A school district shall pay equal salaries for equal work by coaches of female and male teams, except that differences in pay for coaches of female and male teams may result from a seniority system, a merit system, or a system that measures earnings by quantity and quality of performance. A school district shall develop and utilize written objective criteria in recommending the amount of compensation to be assigned to a particular coaching position.

m. **Publicity.** A school district shall issue press releases and arrange for advertising giving equal emphasis to male and female sport activities. The school district shall make a good faith effort to encourage comparable coverage of female and male extracurricular sports in school-sponsored publications such as yearbooks and school newspapers. In determining whether a good faith effort has been made the following factors, among others, shall be considered:

i. The amount of coverage devoted to female and male extracurricular athletic activities.

ii. The number and content of communications between school administrators and publication advisors or students associated with publications.

iii. The number of students assigned to provide coverage of male and female extracurricular athletic activities.

iv. The number and content of communications between publication advisors and students associated with publications.

v. The guidelines and policy in effect regarding school publications.

n. **Team Support.** Within a school year and during the regular and tournament athletic season, a school district shall provide on an equal basis to male and female athletes any of the following types of support which it offers to either male or female extracurricular athletes during the school year: pep assemblies, school announcements, rosters, programs, pep band, cheerleaders and drill team. The school district or the band director may determine at which athletic events for males and females the band shall appear in satisfying the equal appearance requirement, providing that, at the end of the school year, the band has played at the same number of regular season extracurricular athletic events of females as males. In satisfying this requirement and determining which performances are appropriate for band appearances, consideration shall be given to functions and goals of the music program as an independent co-curricular activity.

o. **Scheduling and Facilities.** A school district shall schedule the times and places for practices and athletic events or games for male and female teams of the same and comparable sports on an equal basis, but not necessarily together at the same time. This requirement means that male and female teams shall have equal access to prime time practice and play during the times of the day and days of the week in facilities or on fields which are equally desirable and advantageous to female and male teams. The term "prime time" as used herein means the hours immediately after school and before

the evening meal for practice purposes and the weekend evenings for regular games. The term "same sport" as used herein means a sport which is sanctioned for both males and females, such as basketball. The term "comparable sport" as used herein means a sport similar in terms of indoor/outdoor status and numbers of participants to another sport, such as volleyball and wrestling.

A school district shall also consider and make reasonable efforts to schedule male and female games together for sports in which both males and females participate in during the same season.

A school district shall also provide the same or comparable support facilities and the same or comparable access to support facilities to females and males participating in the same or comparable sports. Support facilities shall include training rooms, weight rooms, locker rooms and storage facilities.

p. **Laundry facilities.** If a school district provides laundry service to student athletes, it shall provide the service to females and males on an equal basis.

q. **Recognition Boards, Halls of Fame, and Trophy Cases.** If a school district provides recognition to students in the form of a recognition board, hall of fame or other display, it shall afford comparable recognition to female and male sports.

r. **Meals.** If a school district provides a per diem monetary allowance for student athletes, the allowance will be the same for females and males, and it shall be spent within the season only for meals.

s. **Overnight Accommodations and Out-of-State Trips.** If a school district provides overnight accommodations for student athletes, the accommodations and their utilization shall be comparable for females and males, and the same opportunity for overnight trips shall be available to male and female teams.

To the extent comparable out-of-state athletic activities are practically available each school district shall provide them equally to both males and females. Where comparable out-of-state athletic activities are practically available for athletes of one sex but not the other, a school district shall make reasonable efforts to make them practically available for the other sex.

t. **Uniforms, Accessories, Equipment and Supplies.** If a school district provides uniforms, accessories, equipment and supplies to athletes participating in extracurricular sports, it shall provide uniforms, accessories, equipment and supplies of comparable quality and at comparable replacement rates to females and males on an equal basis. The character of sporting activity may be taken into consideration in determining replacement rates.

u. **Booster Clubs.** A school district shall affirmatively encourage booster clubs and similar groups of fans to devote comparable attention to the promotion and encouragement of female and male sports. The district shall not give significant assistance to any private organization which aids, benefits, or services athletes in the district on a sex discriminatory manner, unless for each organization which supports the athletes of only one sex, and to which the school district gives assistance, there is a comparable organization which supports the athletes of the other sex to which the school district gives comparable assistance.

v. **Transportation.** If a school district provides transportation to athletic events, transportation shall be provided for female and male teams on an equal basis, with allowances made for gender-neutral factors including mileage to be traveled, the duration of the trip, the time of year and condition of the roads, and the number of athletes and amount of equipment to be transported.

w. **Trainer.** If a school district provides an athletic trainer, the services of the trainer shall be available to members of female and male teams on an equal basis with allowances made for the character of the athletic activity and the health needs of the athletes.

x. **Officials.** A school district shall hire the best available, qualified officials for male and female extracurricular sports during regular season games and shall utilize M.O.A. ratings to comply with this requirement.

y. **Recruiting Efforts by School Districts.** Where the same sport is sanctioned during different seasons for females and males or where female sports are played during seasons different than the season played in a majority of other states playing such sport, a school district shall participate with MHSA in improving recruitment opportunities for those athletes playing the sport in the off-season.

z. **Sex Equity Policy, Grievance Procedure and Coordinator.** A school district shall prepare, if it has not already done so, a sex equity in athletics policy, establish a grievance procedure and designate a coordinator for such policy and grievance procedure pursuant to the requirements of applicable federal law. The policy and information regarding the coordinator and grievance procedure shall be disseminated to its student body, faculty and parents.

Each school district shall keep on file for use by students and parents within their school district at least one copy of documents reflecting the MHSA and OPI grievance procedure as set forth hereafter, and as supplemented by other documents prepared by MHSA and OPI, as well as copies of ARM 10.6.101 et seq. and the Montana Administrative Procedures Act, 2-4-101 et seq., MCA.

V. CHANGE OF SEASONS - FACILITATOR

Plaintiffs and MHSA agree that they will utilize the Facilitator to determine whether a seasonal change of any sporting activity sanctioned by MHSA, and in particular, girls' volleyball and basketball, is appropriate. To determine this issue, both Plaintiffs and MHSA shall submit to the facilitator a list of reasons for adopting new sport seasons for athletic activities, and reasons which justify continuance of the current athletic seasons for these athletic activities. Additionally, both Plaintiffs and MHSA shall submit to the facilitator a list of documents, in the form of a bibliography, which documents the Facilitator can examine and consider in evaluating and making recommendations. Finally, the Plaintiffs and MHSA shall submit to the Facilitator a list of witnesses who the Facilitator can contact in evaluating this issue and preparing recommendations. All submissions of the parties shall be made within 30 days of the date of the execution of this Settlement Agreement. Comments and documents responsive to the other parties' submissions shall be submitted within 10 days thereafter.

Having accomplished the foregoing, the athletic season issue shall be submitted to the Facilitator, who shall, in a timely fashion make detailed recommendations concerning seasonal change and implementation. The Facilitator shall present to the United States District Court for approval the recommendations regarding seasonal change and implementation, without further submission of evidence or argument by the parties unless directed by the Court. In the event the United States District Court does not approve and order such recommendations, then the matter shall be resolved as further directed by the United States District Court but such further action shall not affect in any way any other provisions of this Settlement Agreement.

In addition to the foregoing recommendations the Facilitator may advance nonbinding suggestions as to how extracurricular sporting activities should be scheduled, assuming both females and males participate in the same sport during the same season.

VI. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND SANCTIONS.

A. OPI GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

In addition to the foregoing Minimum Requirements, in the event that an interested person believes that an individual is not receiving an equal opportunity to participate in sporting activities because of that individual's sex, that interested person may submit the controversy to a local school district for evaluation and consideration consistent with established grievance procedures. Upon exhaustion of remedies available within the school district, the party aggrieved by a final decision of the governing authority may commence an action before the county superintendent pursuant to the grievance procedure established in ARM 10.6.101 et seq. The grievance procedure, commenced at the local level and pursued through the county superintendent, may be further appealed to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction as established by ARM 10.6.101 et seq. The matter may be further appealed pursuant to the Montana Administrative Procedure Act, 2-4-101 et seq., MCA. This grievance procedure shall not apply to those Minimum Requirements which MHSA has exclusive responsibility to implement, as set forth in this agreement.

A final order at the county superintendent level or beyond shall establish a Minimum Requirement on sex equity issues. OPI shall have all final decisions of the county superintendent reduced to writing and transmitted to OPI, and OPI shall promptly distribute a copy of such final written decision to MHSA and retain a copy within OPI. The Minimum Requirements set forth within this Settlement Agreement shall be recognized by all parties as the equivalent of a final decision established by the county superintendent, or other successive appellate steps within the grievance procedure set forth above, and applied by the parties in a manner equivalent to those final decisions established through the grievance procedure.

In the event the grievance procedure established in ARM 10.6.101 et seq. results in a final decision, not modified or reversed through administrative or judicial review, that an action or omission of a particular school district is in violation of the Minimum Requirements, and that a particular school district is engaging in sex discrimination

against students, OPI shall report such conclusion to MHSA, which thereafter shall take all steps reasonably necessary to insure compliance.

B. **MHSA GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND SANCTIONS**

In addition to any interested person having access to grievance procedure as otherwise described above, any person may bring a complaint to the attention of MHSA, which complaint can also be brought by any member of MHSA or by the board of MHSA upon its own initiative. Once a complaint is brought to the attention of MHSA, MHSA shall thereafter commence to investigate and determine, applying the Minimum Requirements established from the grievance procedure or by this Settlement Agreement, whether the Minimum Requirements to achieve sex equity have been satisfied. If following its investigation, MHSA concludes that the Minimum Requirements have not been satisfied, then MHSA, following hearing and utilizing its due process procedure, shall take all steps reasonably necessary to assure compliance with said Minimum Requirements. MHSA may, among other things, declare the school ineligible for participation in any or all MHSA-sanctioned activities. In the event the person bringing the complaint remains dissatisfied with the result, that person shall retain the option of seeking relief in any available forum.

MHSA shall utilize as Minimum Requirements the final unappealed decisions developed through the OPI grievance procedure set forth above. In the event there are conflicting decisions on the same issue, MHSA shall apply that Minimum Requirement established at the highest level of the OPI grievance procedure. In the event there are conflicting decisions at the same level of the OPI grievance procedure, then MHSA shall request an opinion from OPI as to which of the two conflicting opinions MHSA should follow and enforce, and MHSA shall apply the recommendation and decision of OPI as though there were but a single decision on the subject matter. If there is no established Minimum Requirement on a particular issue, then MHSA shall have no authority to proceed with respect to the complaint. However, MHSA shall promptly in writing advise the complaining person of the local school board and OPI grievance procedure set forth above as a means to address the issue of sex inequity.

C. **EXHAUSTION OF MHSA AND OPI GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE IS NOT REQUIRED**

This Settlement Agreement and the procedures adopted herein neither preclude nor impede any person from pursuing all legal and equitable remedies, whether state or federal, in any forum available by law nor do they require the exhaustion of the OPI or MHSA grievance procedures prior to pursuing said remedies.

VII. OPI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. **INTRODUCTION**

OPI shall provide to the school districts in Montana technical assistance in self-evaluation and self-improvement in providing sex equity in athletics. The technical assistance to be provided by OPI is subject to the limitations of state and federal funding resources. Technical assistance is of a variety nature and will not concentrate exclusively on a particular activity.

B. **LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES**

1. OPI shall continue to respond to questions on issues of equity and shall continue to provide interpretations of state and federal law pertinent to school districts, school personnel offices and trustees throughout the state of Montana. Individuals will be assigned to provide this service from the Special Services Department and the Legal Service Unit in the Office of Public Instruction.

2. OPI shall continue to distribute sex equity materials such as handbooks, policies, news articles, and other vital information which is important for a school district in maintaining compliance.

3. OPI shall continue to distribute materials such as sex equity handbooks, examples of school board policies, grievance procedures, etc. to any requesting school district and/or will inform school districts of developments regarding equity laws.

4. OPI shall continue to provide the following workshops to school districts, county superintendents and administrators on an "as needed" basis, pending federal funding.

(1) The Cost of Sex Bias in the Classroom
(2) Teacher-Student Interaction
(3) Evaluating Textbooks for Bias
(4) Women in History
(5) Career Awareness
(6) Myth and Reality of Women Workers
(7) Math Anxiety

These workshops are intended primarily to develop awareness of sex equity issues.

5. OPI shall continue to provide the following statewide workshops, pending federal funding:

(1) Women Interested in School Administration
(2) Sex Equity in Athletics
(3) Technology's Implications for Education

C. **STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES**

1. OPI has applied for and received a Title IV Sex Desegregation grant, which has been partially subgranted to the Striving for Educational Equity (SEE) Institute, Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Montana, in order to provide more assistance directly to school districts.

2. OPI shall continue its in-house committee on equity to assure that all publications are free from sex bias and are in compliance with the law.

3. OPI shall provide districts with handbooks on equity and self-evaluation. The self-evaluation handbook is the alternative to the statewide survey which would have been funded through the federal WEEA grant.

4. OPI shall continue to provide in-house workshops and inservice for all Office of Public Instruction specialists on sex equity and how to provide technical assistance to schools.

5. OPI shall continue to maintain a Human Potential Specialist (sex equity) in the Department of Vocational Education, pending availability of federal funding.

6. OPI's legal counsel shall continue to train county superintendents as hearing officers pursuant to the Rules of Controversy, concentrating immediate attention on sex equity issues.

D. **NATIONAL LEVEL ACTIVITIES**

1. OPI will host the third annual National Conference on Equity (June 1984). During the conference Office of Public Instruction staff will offer to conduct a presentation on sex equity and its implication for school districts.

2. OPI's Assistant Superintendent for Special Services is the chairperson of the National Conference on Equity.

3. OPI is working with Mountain West Desegregation Center to provide technical assistance to all school districts on equity issues. These requests are filtered back to the Office of Public Instruction.

4. OPI is a part of a coalition of states joining with the Department of Education in its attempts to free Title IV monies from a federal lawsuit in Chicago for utilization within the state education agency.

5. OPI is in contact on a regular basis with other state education agencies for information and materials with regard to sex equity and will relay the same to school districts.

6. OPI shall continue to work with the Council of Chief State School Officers' Office on Equity, on a regular basis, for technical assistance and materials on all equity issues.

7. OPI is coordinating with the Office for Civil Rights, Denver, Colorado in an attempt to resolve disputes and complaints which have been filed with the Office for Civil Rights and is assisting school districts to maintain compliance in all equity issues.

VIII. RELEASE

This agreement is a settlement and release of all claims and damages asserted by Plaintiffs in their individual and class representative capacities against the Missoula County High School District, the Whitehall High School District, and the Columbia Falls School District, OPI, and MHSA. Although Plaintiffs have asserted a claim for monetary damages, this settlement agreement offers in exchange for a dismissal as set forth hereafter, no payment of compensation, or any promise to make any payment for any damages, claimed or allegedly suffered by any of the Plaintiffs. The consideration for the release hereafter set forth in this agreement is the actions and decisions of the parties set forth herein, which all parties recognize must be carried forward in good faith; that the present agreement will become a part of a judgment or dismissal of this action and enforceable through the exercise of appropriate legal and equity powers of the United States District Court in the event of its breach; and that future sex equity issues may be referred to either or both the grievance procedure of OPI and the eligibility determination of MHSA, and, thereafter, court review as appropriate, or may be resolved through exercise of other available legal or equitable remedies.

Plaintiffs, in their individual and class representative capacities, do hereby release, acquit, and discharge, and by these presents do

release, acquit, and forever discharge, Missoula County High School District, Whitehall High School District, Columbia Falls High School District, MHSA, and OPI, of and from any and all liability, causes of action, costs, charges, claims or demands, of whatever name or nature, in any manner arising out of or growing out of the above-described litigation, except as otherwise more fully set forth in the terms and context of this release. Plaintiffs have executed this agreement for themselves, in their individual and representative capacities, upon advice of counsel, releasing any and all claims they have or may have; and the execution of this instrument is made in reliance upon the advice of their counsel and not upon the advice of any representative, attorney, or other agent acting for or on behalf of any of the other parties hereby released.

In making this release and agreement, it is understood that Plaintiffs, in their individual and representative capacities, do rely upon their own judgement, belief, and knowledge of the nature, extent, and duration of the injuries and damages claimed to have been suffered. Plaintiffs further acknowledge that this is a complete release of all claims, either in tort, in contract, or at all, which may have existed in the past and which do not continue after the date of this agreement except as hereinafter provided; and that no promise, representation, or other assurance has been made by any person with respect to any further or future payment for costs or damages except as hereinafter referred to; and that the agreements hereinafter made by the parties hereby released shall not be construed as an admission of liability on the part of any such parties because said persons and corporations expressly deny such liability. Finally, Plaintiffs acknowledge, on advice of counsel, that this agreement is the entire, sole, and only agreement pertaining to the subject and things referred to herein and there are no other independent, collateral, or additional agreements or obligations to be performed or things to be done except as set forth and described by the terms of this agreement.

This agreement is not to be construed as any confession by any of the litigation Defendants or admission by OPI that OPI has direct and specific jurisdiction over extracurricular athletic activities except as otherwise provided herein; that the acceptance of federal monies by a school district subjects the school district to federal or state regulation or control over any aspects of the educational program offered by the school district which does not receive direct federal funds; that the State of Montana or OPI has any control, directly or indirectly, over MHSA; that MHSA is a state agency or subject to any portion of the Montana Administrative Procedure Act, 2-4-1-1 et seq., MCA; or that any Plaintiff has ever experienced an act or omission which constituted sex discrimination of any form or nature while such Plaintiffs were enrolled students of the individual school districts names as parties herein, regardless of whether the discrimination is alleged to have resulted as a consequence of acts or omissions of the school district, OPI, MHSA, jointly, individually, or at all.

The parties agree that the litigation filed shall contemporaneously be dismissed without prejudice pursuant to a stipulation between the parties and an order of the United States District Court incorporating this agreement as an exhibit to the underlying stipulation for dismissal, which agreement the parties stipulate may be enforced, in the event of breach, as though the agreement were a final judgment of the United States District Court, so that in the event one or more of the parties hereafter concludes that other parties to this agreement are not performing acts required by this agreement or are performing acts prohibited by this agreement, that the equity powers of the United States District Court can be utilized, in conjunction with or in addition to any and all other remedies created or existing either pursuant to this agreement or pursuant to applicable state or federal law. The parties further agree that the court shall retain continuing jurisdiction to enforce this settlement agreement even though the Complaint is being dismissed.

IX. ATTORNEY'S FEES

Nothing in this Settlement Agreement shall affect the right of any party to seek costs and attorneys' fees as permitted by law.

ACTIVITIES IN MONTANA

The Program

Personnel from the Montana High School Association staff are trained, along with other school personnel, to conduct educational workshops on leadership, mentoring, mental health, hazing/bullying tobacco, alcohol and other drug use, as well as the promotion of good citizenship/sporting. Workshops are conducted to reach Montana coaches, students, school administrators and activity supervisors so that they are prepared to go back to their schools and work directly with students and parents. A major component of the workshops is the implementation of mentoring programs whereby high school students will interact with middle and elementary school students regarding substance use issues as well as citizenship/sporting behavior issues. A library of publications and video materials, a speakers' bureau, and other citizenship information has been developed and is maintained by the Montana High School Association, for use across the state.

AIM HIGHER is not planned as simply a one-time project. The program will be an ongoing one in Montana.

Students involved in extracurricular activities

Students involved in school activities, like athletics, speech and drama, music and others, are often the leaders in the schools. Peer pressure is important and when students have problems, they turn to other students. By reaching high school students involved in extracurricular activities there is a better chance to reach more students.

By involving coaches and other activity supervisors as well as parents in AIM HIGHER, the people who often have a unique positive relationship with students will be involved. Coaches, students and parents will form a strong triangle of support to attack the problems of poor sporting behavior.

The Role of the School

AIM Higher is designed to supplement any other school programs in Montana schools. The Montana High School Association believes in Montana youth and is concerned with youth developing healthy lifestyles which is obtained by making good choices, being a leader in their school and community, displaying positive sportsmanship and having quality mental health.

Promotion of Citizenship, Leadership and Positive Sporting Behavior

The major objectives of this component of AIM Higher are to promote citizenship, leadership and positive sporting behavior and to bring an awareness of the problems caused by lack of good behavior in this area. The other major objective is to encourage students to consider taking leadership positions on sporting issues and to be active in their schools in this arena. The two units the workshop will focus on are: respect and positive values, and positive sporting behavior and the importance of perspective.

AIM HIGHER AWARD

This award was initiated in 1995 by the MHSA Executive Board and is presented annually to one school in recognition of their support for the AIM Higher program and its ideals.

1995 Sidney High School
1996 Butte High School
1997 Broadwater High School (Townsend)
1998 Helena High School/Capital High School
1999 Glasgow High School
2000 Sweet Grass County High School (Big Timber)
2001 Dawson County High School (Glendive)
2002 Scobey High School
2003 C.M. Russell High School (Great Falls)
2004 Cut Bank High School
2005 Custer County High School (Miles City)
2006 Shelby High School
2007 Power High School
2008 Missoula Sentinel High School
2009 Wibaux County High School
2010 Choteau High School
2011 Sidney High School
2012 Butte High School
2013 Loyola Sacred Heart High School (Missoula)
2014 Darby High School
2015 Powell County High School (Deer Lodge)
2016 Laurel High School
2017 Broadwater High School (Townsend)
2018 Butte Central High School
2019 Joliet High School
2020 Great Falls High School
2021 [no award presented]
2022 [no award presented]
2023 Glacier High School (Kalispell)
2024 Columbia Falls High School
Jefferson High School (Boulder)
2025 Whitehall High School
2026 Billings Skyview High School

AIM HIGHER CONTRIBUTOR AWARD

In the 2009-10 school year the MHSA Executive Board instituted a recognition of individuals who have made extraordinary efforts in expanding the AIM Higher Program. The AIM Higher Contributor Award is presented to individuals for notable support and promotion of this student-based leadership program.

2010 Bruce Clausen, Administrator – Dawson County High School (Glendive)
Jill Flynn, Facilitator – Broadwater High School (Townsend)
Richy Powell, Facilitator – Dawson County High School (Glendive)
2011 Kip Ryan, Facilitator – Sweet Grass County High School (Big Timber)
2012 Connie Wittak, Facilitator – Scobey High School
2013 Randy Gramm, Facilitator – Choteau High School
2014 [no award presented]
2015 Randy Shipman – Beaverhead County High School (Dillon)
2016 [no award presented]
2017 [no award presented]
2018 [no award presented]
2019 Sergeant First Class Todd Carver – Montana Army National Guard
2020 Brian Michelotti, Associate Director – MHSA
2021 [no award presented]
2022 [no award presented]
2023 [no award presented]
2024 [no award presented]
2025 Joe Studiner and Cathy Cullen-Kuhr – Erck Hotels and Hampton Inn
2026 Butte High School

ATHLETES' HALL OF FAME

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS many Montana student-athletes have made, and continue to make, outstanding contributions to the high schools of Montana through their extraordinary efforts in interscholastic athletics; and

WHEREAS their efforts, dedication and desire have enabled them to excel in achievement or performance; and

WHEREAS student excellence should be recognized:

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Montana High School Association shall set forth rules to organize and govern an Athletes' Hall of Fame.

Section (1) NAME

This feature of the Montana High School Association shall be titled the Montana High School Association Athletes' Hall of Fame.

Section (2) GOVERNANCE

The governance of the Montana High School Athletes' Hall of Fame shall be embodied in the Montana High School Association Executive Board.

Section (3) SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

A. The Athletes' Hall of Fame Selection Committee shall have twenty-five (25) anonymous members as follows:

1. One (1) member from the Montana High School Association Executive Staff.
2. Six (6) members from the Montana Coaches Association selected from a list of members submitted by the Montana Coaches Association.
3. Three (3) members from the Montana Athletic Directors Association selected from a list of members submitted by the Montana Athletic Directors Association.
4. Four (4) members of the Montana print media selected from the names of active or retired sports writers for Montana newspapers.
5. Six (6) individuals selected from a list of people who would be familiar with athletes or athletic feats of those to be considered for recognition in the legacy category.
6. Five (5) contest officials selected from a list of candidates submitted by the Montana Officials Association as well as from others who have officiated Montana High School Association contests.

B. Names of the Selection Committee individuals will be anonymous to the public.

C. Members of the Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Montana High School Association Executive ***Director***.

D. Vacancies on the Selection Committee shall be filled by the Montana High School Association Executive ***Director***.

E. All appointed members shall serve a four (4) year term.

F. Committee membership shall begin July 1st.

Section (4) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The duties and responsibilities of the Montana High School Association office staff shall be:

A. To receive nominations of persons who shall be considered for election to the Athletes' Hall of Fame.

B. To keep a current, accurate and complete accounting of the candidates for the Athletes' Hall of Fame.

C. Prepare and send out all correspondence as required.

D. Tally committee ballots.

E. Prepare press releases of inductees.

F. Validate candidate information upon request for the selection committee.

Section (5) NOMINATIONS

A. Nominations for the Athletes' Hall of Fame may be made by:

1. Representatives of Montana High School Association member schools.
2. Members of the Athletes' Hall of Fame Committee.
3. The general public.

B. Nomination for the Athletes' Hall of Fame requirements and limitations:

1. Cover Letter
2. MHSA Athletes' Hall of Fame Nomination form
3. Photocopies (8 ½" x 11") of not more than six (6) of the following: newspaper clippings, magazine articles, event programs, or other such materials that detail information about the nominee's accomplishments (DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS). Please do not use notebooks with plastic sheet protectors or highlighters to point out specific facts; either underline or draw arrows to mark copy.
4. Letters - a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of four (4) letters of recommendation explaining why you think this individual is worthy of this honor. Please limit each letter to ONE typewritten page. Letters of recommendation for other awards or honors should not be used as a substitute for this requirement.
5. A current portrait-type photograph of the nominee. Please include names on all photos. NOTE: All information submitted shall be retained by the MHSA and all actions necessary to the selection process shall remain confidential.

C. The selection of candidates will occur every other year, which will occur in each even numbered year. Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association. Any nomination received after the candidates' materials have been sent to the Selection Committee will be held until the next election. The time line is as follows:

June 1st:	Nomination forms are sent to schools and others as requested.
Aug 31st:	Nominations are due at the MHSA office.
Sept 15th:	Nominations are forwarded to the Selection Committee.
Oct 15th:	Selection Committee ballots are due to the MHSA office.
Nov 1-15th:	Inductees are notified.
Dec 5th:	Winners are announced to the media.

D. The two categories of the MHSA Athletes' Hall of Fame are:

1. Modern era - a person who has experienced outstanding achievement as a competitor in interscholastic athletics as sanctioned by the MHSA while enrolled in a Montana high school. A modern competitor is eligible for nomination a minimum of seven years after graduation.
2. Legacy era - a person who has experienced outstanding achievement as a competitor in interscholastic athletics as sanctioned by the MHSA while enrolled in a Montana high school. A Legacy candidate has graduated fifty years before the induction date for that year's Athletes' Hall of Fame (i.e. to qualify for the 2028 Athletes' Hall of Fame the candidate must have graduated in 1978 or earlier). At least one Legacy Era competitor will be inducted annually.

E. The number of candidates to be elected every two years shall be:

1. The number of inductees shall be a maximum of eight (8) per ceremony.

F. The Selection Committee shall consider all candidates sent to the individual committee members. Each committee member shall vote for a maximum of nine (9) modern era candidates and three (3) legacy era candidates each year. At least one inductee must be from the "legacy" category.

G. The Selection Committee will receive an updated packet of information for each candidate for each election. Files of inducted candidates can be discarded. Files of unsuccessful candidates will be retained by the MHSA office to which new files will be added and distributed for each election. A candidate who has not been elected within five (5) ballots will be dropped from the list of eligible candidates and shall not have his/her name reconsidered again unless re-nominated.

Section (6) RESEARCH

Should any Selection Committee person desire clarification or validation of information contained on a nomination or résumé he/she should contact the MHSA. If the information requested would be beneficial to the rest of the committee, it will be forwarded to them.

MEMBERS OF THE ATHLETES' HALL OF FAME

1993 Inaugural Inductees
Gene Lee Davis
Wayne Vernon Estes
Bob Hawke
Vicki Heebner
Ed Kalafat
Ray Eugene Kuka
Michael James Lewis
Jeanne Marie McNulty
Lawrence Pretty Weasel
Roy Robinson
Craig Allen Stiles

1994 Inductees
George "Doug" Brown
Julie Brown
Pat Donovan
Joseph "Greg" Rice

1995 Inductees
Peter Lazetich
Mary Osborne
Earle Parsons
Larry Questad
Pamela Spencer
Duane Walker

1996 Inductees
Paula Good
Marti Kinzler Vining
Milt Popovich
Robin Selvig
Bill Sprinkle
Scott Steckel

1997 Inductees
Mike Guon
Danny Hanley
Bob O'Malley
Loren Perry
Denise Pidcock

1998 Inductees
Kelly Pilcher Beattie
Katheryn Jarvis Coggon
William Crtalic
Allan Nielsen
Todd Riech

1999 Inductees
Branch Brady
Robert "Lefty" Byrne
Shane Collins
Glenn Havskjold
Shannon Cate Schweyen

2000 – No Inductions

2001 Inductees
Dave Dickinson
Dick Gregory
Skip Grodahl
Gordon Ruttenbur
Skyla Sisco
Karen Deden-Westwater

2002 – No Inductions

2003 Inductees
Cass Bauer-Bilodeau
Carla Beattie-Cunneen
Shannon Butler
Julie Calahan-Bauer
Bob Graves
Mike Welton
Don Wetzel
Bill Zadick

2004 – No Inductions

2005 Inductees
Daren Engellant
Mark Gilman
Bill Halverson
Les Leininger
James Soft
Dean Studer

2006 – No Inductions

2007 Inductees
Rick Goodman
Mark Kato
Sam McDonald Jr.
Terry Schlabs
Kristin Schmitt-Salonen
Willie Weeks

2008 – No Inductions

2009 Inductees
Ed Hauser
Mike Huggins
Kathleen Monaghan
Fernandel Omeasoo
Loree Payne
Stacey Smiedala
Mike Zadick

2010 – No Inductions

2011 Inductees
Mandi Carver
Ken Christison
Wayne Edwards
Brian Morris
Natalie Streeter-Chamberlain
Kermit Young

2012 – No Inductions

2013 Inductees
Harry Clark
Scott Hanser
Joe Kelly
Angie Thill-McDaniel
Ristine Olson

2014 – No Inductions

2015 – No Inductions

2016 – No inductions

2017 – No inductions

2018 Inductees
Travis Dorsch
Lindsey Graham-Gustafson
Tim Hauck
Terry Idler
Gary Monahan
Zoe Nelson
Joslyn Tinkle
Travis Walker

2019 – No inductions

2020 Inductees
Jeff Ellis
Tyler Emmert
Josh Huestis
Jeff Larson
Marjie (Connors) Markle
Duane Olson
Gary Peck

2021 – No inductions

2022 Inductees
Spencer Frederick
Christy Otte
Fred Paoli
Mat Seidensticker
Gary Wagner

2023 – No inductions

2024 Inductees
Arie Grey
Lindsay Hall
Tuff Harris
Richard Kronebusch
Marc Mariani
Makena Morley
Luke Zieger

2025 – No Inductions

2026 Inductees
Lance Fred
Gary Fox
Reece Gliko
Kandice (Kelly) Gregorak
Mike Houlihan
Kamber Kelly

AWARDS

The basic philosophy of the awards system is to standardize the number and size of awards that will be presented at the various MHSA-approved activities and to prohibit any additional awards being purchased or presented by a member school, other organizations or individuals.

GENERAL RULES FOR AWARDS

(1) The Executive Board shall select and approve exclusive trophy and individual award designs for use in the MHSA Award program.

(2) Only trophies, medals, and awards authorized and provided through the MHSA may be presented at MHSA meets or tournaments. Schools, districts, or divisions may not purchase, accept, or present additional team trophies unless specifically permitted by MHSA rules. Districts and divisions may recognize sportsmanship at the conclusion of tournaments. Schools may purchase additional authorized individual awards through the MHSA office.

(3) Divisions may purchase additional divisional medals in speech and drama, golf, tennis, track and field, and wrestling beyond those provided by the MHSA. All additional medals must be ordered through the MHSA office.

(4) All trophies or awards authorized by the MHSA, except basketball, wrestling, volleyball, and Class AA soccer conference championship trophies, will be ordered and paid for by the MHSA.

(5) MHSA will provide one trophy for each co-op team. Additional trophies for participating co-op schools may be purchased through the MHSA office.

(6) If a conference championship trophy in basketball, wrestling, volleyball, or Class AA soccer is desired by the conference, the trophy awarded shall be identical to a district or a divisional championship trophy, whichever is the first tournament participated in by the team that will receive the trophy. Such a trophy must be ordered through the MHSA office and shall be paid for by the conference.

(7) The number of team trophies awarded at MHSA events shall be determined as follows:
   a. One trophy when five (5) or fewer teams participate.
   b. Two trophies when six (6) teams participate and no qualifying procedure is used.
   c. Three trophies only when specifically authorized by MHSA rules for that activity.

   Conferences may purchase a second or third place trophy through the MHSA office if desired. In the event of a tie, duplicate trophies may be awarded, but the total number of places awarded shall not exceed the number authorized under MHSA rules. Any unused trophies shall be returned to the MHSA office.

(8) Individual miniature trophies for first, second and third place finishers at MHSA state championship events may be purchased directly from the MHSA awards provider.

(9) Invitational athletic meets and tournaments may present trophies and individual awards subject to the following limitations:
   a. Three trophies (first, second, and third place) may be awarded when seven (7) or more teams participate.
   b. One trophy (first place only) may be awarded when six (6) or fewer teams participate.
   c. The number of individual awards may not exceed the number allowed at an MHSA district or divisional tournament for that sport.
   d. Trophy size and cost may not exceed the specifications of the MHSA Class C district championship trophy.

   The specifications of the first-place Class C district trophy are as follows:

   - The overall height is approximately 10 inches.
   - The width of the base is approximately 13 inches.
   - The bid price is $57.00 including all engraving.

(10) In the event of team ties, trophies and place standings shall be determined by the following method: When two or more teams have the same number of points, the tie(s) will be broken by using the National Federation Rule Book. If the National Federation Rule Book does not provide a method to break the tie(s) then duplicate trophies will be awarded. See General Awards Rule (6).

   In the event of ties for individual awards the presentation will be determined by a flip of a coin. Duplicate medals for individual ties will be ordered and purchased by the MHSA.

AUTHORIZED AWARDS FOR MHSA ACTIVITIES

Non-Athletic Awards:

I. Music

   A. **District** - Certificates will be issued for every event in the district festival.

   B. **State** – Certificates will be issues for every event in the state festival.

   C. **All-State Groups** - Certificates of recognition will be issued for each All-State participant.

II. Speech and Drama

   A. Division

      1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to each of the top three schools in Classes A, B and C in both speech and drama at each of the two Class A divisional meets and at each of the three Class B-C divisional meets as per General Rules for Awards, (6). (No divisional meets are held in Class AA.)
      2. **Individual** – In Class A, a medal will be awarded to each of the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded to each of the third through eighth place winners for each speech event. In Class B-C, a medal will be awarded to each of the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded to each of the third through ***eighth*** place winners for each speech event. A medal will be awarded to each of the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded to each of the third through ***eighth*** place winners for each drama event. Exceptions:
         Class A – Western and Eastern division purchases medals for 3rd – 8th place.

   B. State

      1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to each of the top three schools in each of the four basketball classifications (AA, A, B and C) in speech that earn the most sweepstakes points at the state meets. A trophy will be awarded to each of the top three schools in each of the three basketball classifications (A, B and C) in drama that earn the most sweepstakes points at the state meets.

      Note: No sweepstakes trophy will be awarded without sweepstakes points.

      2. **Individual** - A medal will be awarded to each of the first eight place winners in each speech event in Class AA,

Class A and Class B-C. A medal will be awarded to each of the first eight place winners in each drama event in Class A and Class B-C.

C. Invitational Meets - The MHSA has approved a standardized trophy which may be presented to first place winners only in individual events at any invitational speech and drama meet where the host school(s) wishes to present awards. The cost of this trophy must not exceed $7.50. The only other awards that are authorized are certificates which may be awarded in lieu of or in addition to the standardized trophy. This would permit certificates only to be awarded to other place winners. The designing, securing and awarding of a sweepstakes trophy is left to the discretion of the host school(s). Only one sweepstakes trophy may be awarded in each school classification. The size of such sweepstakes trophy shall not exceed that of the first-place trophy presented by the MHSA at athletic or non-athletic district meets. See General Awards Rule (8).

Athletic Awards:

I. Baseball

A. Division

1. **Team** - ***A team trophy will be awarded to the East, Central, South and North divisional champions in the class A-B division.***

B. State
1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each classification.
2. **Individual** - 22 gold medals will be awarded to the state champions and 22 silver medals will be awarded to the state runners-up (18 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches).

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

II. Basketball (Boys and Girls)

A. District

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (6).
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

B. Division

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in Classes A, B and C.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

C. State

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each classification.
2. **Individual** - 16 gold medals will be awarded to the state champions and 16 silver medals will be awarded to the state runners-up (12 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches) in each classification.

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

D. Conference

1. **Team** - A team trophy can be purchased by the conference for the conference champion. It must be identical to a district or divisional championship trophy, whichever is the first MHSA tournament participated in by the school. The trophy, if awarded, must be ordered through the MHSA office.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

E. Tournament Basketball

At MHSA district, divisional and state tournaments the tournament basketball (one only) is to be presented to the first place team in addition to the first place trophy.

III. Cross Country (Boys and Girls) - State

A. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each of four classifications, AA, A, B and C. If five or fewer compete in any classification, only one trophy will be awarded.

B. **Individual** - A medal will be awarded to the first fifteen place winners in each of the four classifications for boys and girls. In addition, the winning team in each classification will receive seven (7) medals, both boys and girls.

IV. Football

A. District

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (6).
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

B. Division

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (6). If the division has split into subdivisions each subdivision will receive a first and a second place trophy as per General Rules for Awards, (6). Exceptions: in Class A only a first place trophy will be awarded in each conference and in Class AA no trophies will be awarded.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

C. State Semi-Finalist (Mailed to the school)

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to each semifinalist that fails to qualify for the state championship game.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

D. State

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the state champion and to the runners-up in Classes AA, A, B, C and 6-Player.
2. **Individual**

a. Class AA - 53 gold medals will be presented to the state champions and 53 silver medals to the runners up, (44 players, 4 managers and 5 coaches).
b. Class A - 45 gold medals will be presented to the state champions and 45 silver medals to the runners up, (39 players, 2 managers and 4 coaches).
c. Class B - 37 gold medals will be presented to the state champions and 37 silver medals to the runners up, (33 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches).
d. Class C - 28 gold medals will be presented to the state champions and 28 silver medals to the runners up, (24 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches).
e. 6-Player - 24 gold medals will be presented to the state champions and 24 silver medals to the runners up, (20 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches).

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

E. At MHSA quarter final and semi-final playoff games and at state championship games the game football (one only) is to be presented to the game winner.

V. Golf (Boys and Girls)

A. Divisional
1. Team

a. Class AA will provide and present one traveling trophy that will be presented to the winning boys' and girls' team.
b. Class A, Class B, and Class C – A trophy will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (6).

2. Individual

a. All Classes – A medal will be awarded to the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded to each third – fifteenth place winners for the boys and girls in each division. Exceptions:
   1. Class AA – MHSA will purchase 3rd – 15th place medals since no team trophies are awarded in Class AA.
   2. Class A – Western and Eastern division purchase medals for 3rd – 15th.
   3. Class B – ***Western, Northern and Southern divisions purchase 3rd – 20th medals.***
   4. ***Class C – MHSA purchases 3rd – 15th ribbon per policy.***

B. State

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams for both boys and girls in each classification, as per General Rules for Awards (6).
2. **Individual** - A medal will be awarded to the top fifteen place winners for both boys and girls in each classification.

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

VI. Soccer (Boys and Girls)

A. Division

1. **Team** - In Class A, a team trophy will be awarded for divisional champions
2. **Team** - In Class AA, a team trophy can be purchased by the division for the division champion. It must be identical to a district or divisional championship trophy, whichever is the first MHSA tournament participated in by the school. The trophy, if awarded, must be ordered through the MHSA office.
3. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

B. State Semi-finalist - Class AA and A (Mailed to the school)

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to each semifinalist that fails to qualify for the state championship game.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

C. State

1. **Team** - A team trophy will be awarded to the state champion and to the runners-up in Class AA and A.
2. **Individual** - 22 gold medals will be awarded to the state champions and 22 silver medals will be awarded to the state runners-up (18 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches) in both classes.

VII. Softball

A. Division

1. Team – A team trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards (6) in the divisional softball tournaments for Eastern and Western B-C.

B. State

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each classification.
2. **Individual** - 22 gold medals will be awarded to the state champions and 22 silver medals will be awarded to the state runners-up (18 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches).

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

VIII. Swimming (Boys and Girls) - State

A. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in Class AA and a trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in Class A as per General Rule for Awards, (6).

B. **Individual** - A medal will be awarded to the top six places in each event for both Class AA and Class A except for Class A relays where only three places will be awarded.

IX. Tennis (Boys and Girls)

A. Division

1. **Team** – In Classes A and B/C, a maximum of three (3) trophies will be awarded in each division as per General Rules for Awards, (6). Exception: In Class AA no trophies will be awarded.
2. **Individual** - A medal will be awarded to the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded to the third through fourth place winners in both singles and doubles as mandated by the tennis section. In Class AA, a medal will be awarded to the top three placers and a ribbon will be awarded to fourth place. Exceptions:
   1. Class AA – MHSA will purchase 4th place medals because no team trophies are awarded in Class AA.
   2. Class A – Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest divisions purchase medals for 3rd - 4th place.
   3. Class B/C – Boys' Central, Northwest, and Southwest divisions purchase medals for 3rd - 4th place. Girls' Central, East, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest purchase medals for 3rd - 4th place.

B. State

1. **Team** – A team trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams.
2. **Individual** – In Classes AA, A, and B/C a medal will be awarded to each of the top six place winners in both singles and doubles.

X. Track (Boys and Girls)

A. District

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each district as per General Rules for Awards, (6).
2. **Individual** - A ribbon will be awarded to the top six place winners in each event in each district. In case of ties which exist following the application of all tie breaking criteria, duplicate ribbons will be awarded. (Provided there are a minimum of six teams competing.)

B. Division

1. Team

a. Class AA will provide and present one traveling trophy that will be presented to the winning boys' and girls' team.
b. Class A, Class B, and Class C – A trophy will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (6).

2. Individual

a. All Classes – A medal will be awarded to the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded

to each third – ***sixth*** place winners for the boys and girls in each division. Exceptions:

1. Class AA – MHSA will purchase 3rd – ***8th*** place medals since no team trophies are awarded in Class AA.
2. Class A – Western and Eastern division purchases medals for 3rd – 6th place.
3. Class B – Western division purchases medals for 3rd – 6th place.
4. Class C – Eastern, Northern, Southern, and Western division purchases medals for 3rd – 6th place.

C. State

1. Team - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each of the four classifications, AA, A, B and C.
2. Individual - A medal will be awarded to the top six place winners in each event in each of the four classifications. In case of ties which exist following the application of all tie breaking criteria, duplicate medals will be awarded.

No additional awards may be ordered or presented.

XI. Volleyball

A. District

1. Team - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (7).
2. Individual - No individual awards are to be presented.

B. Division

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in classes A, B, and C.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

C. State

1. **Team** - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each classification.
2. **Individual** - 16 gold medals will be awarded to the state champions and 16 silver medals will be awarded to the state runners-up (12 players, 2 managers and 2 coaches) in each classification.

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

D. Conference

1. **Team** - A team trophy can be purchased by the conference for the conference champion. It must be identical to a district or divisional championship trophy, whichever is the first MHSA tournament participated in by the school. The trophy, if awarded, must be ordered through the MHSA office.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

E. Tournament Volleyball

At MHSA district, divisional and state tournaments the tournament volleyball (one only) is to be presented to the first place team in addition to the first place trophy.

XII. Wrestling (Boys and Girls)

A. Division

1. Team

a. Class AA will provide and present one traveling trophy that will be presented to the winning boys' and girls' team.

b. Boys' Class A, Class B, and Class C – A trophy will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards, (6). Girls Class A, Class B and Class C – A Trophy will be awarded to the first, second, and third place teams as per General Rules for Awards (6).

2. Individual

a. All Classes – A medal will be awarded to the top two place winners and a ribbon will be awarded to each third – place winners for the boys and girls in each division. Exceptions:

4. Class AA – MHSA will purchase 3rd – 6th place medals since no team trophies are awarded in Class AA.
5. Class A – Western and Eastern division purchases medals for 3rd – 6th.
6. Class B/C – Western and Eastern division purchases medals for 3rd - 8th places.

In addition, one accumulative "quick fall" award will be presented to the wrestler with the most pins in the shortest total time at each divisional tournament. The "quick fall" award shall be presented only to the wrestler who reaches the championship round.

B. State

1. **Team** – Boys - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each of the four classifications, AA, A, B and C. Girls - A trophy will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each of the four classifications AA, A, B and C.

2. **Individual** - A medal will be awarded to each of the top six place winners in each weight class at the three boys' state tournaments, AA, A and B-C. ***A medal will be awarded to each of the top six place winners in each weight class at the two girls' state tournaments, AA and A-B-C***. In addition, one accumulative "quick fall" award will be presented to the wrestler with the most pins in the shortest total time. The "quick fall" award shall be presented only to the wrestler who reaches the championship round.

No additional individual awards may be ordered or presented.

C. Conference – ***Boys Only***

1. **Team** - A team trophy can be purchased by the conference for the conference champion. It must be identical to a divisional championship trophy. The trophy, if awarded, must be ordered through the MHSA office.
2. **Individual** - No individual awards are to be presented.

JAMES C. HAUGEN MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

The Montana High School Association's James C. Haugen Meritorious Service Award will be presented by the MHSA Executive Board for "Outstanding Contributions to MHSA Activities." This is the highest award given by the MHSA. The Meritorious Service Award was established in 1979 and was renamed the James C. Haugen Meritorious Service Award in 2004 in honor of the retiring MHSA Executive Director.

1979-80 - James L. Dutcher, Athletic Director, Billings Public Schools
1980-81 - Mildred B. Adams, MHSA Secretary, Helena
1981-82 - Frank McElwain, Director of Special Services, Missoula County Schools
1982-83 - Bob "Pappy" Nees, Activities Director, Custer County High School, Miles City
1983-84 - [no award presented]
1984-85 - R. Rex Dalley, MHSA Executive Secretary
Nick Mariana, Prognosticator of "Nick's Picks" Radio Show, Great Falls
1985-86 - [no award presented]
1986-87 - Paul "Casey" Stengel, Superintendent, Custer County Schools, Miles City
C.W. "Pops" Grandy, Superintendent, Terry
R.W. Wallin, Superintendent, Flathead County, Kalispell
Professor Walter T. Scott, State Football Director, Butte
1987-88 - [no award presented]
1988-89 - [no award presented]
1989-90 - [no award presented]
1990-91 - [no award presented]
1991-92 - Ralph Halverson, Coach, Great Falls High School, and MCA Executive Secretary
1992-93 - Dan L. Freund, MHSA Executive Director
James C. Haugen, MHSA Assistant Executive Director
1993-94 - [no award presented]
1994-95 - [no award presented]
1995-96 - [no award presented]
1996-97 - [no award presented]
1997-98 - Dean Conklin, Manager-Corporate Communications, Montana Power Co., Butte
Montana Power Company, Bob Gannon-Chair, President and CEO, Butte
1998-99 - Jim Grant, Former Activities Director, Great Falls Public Schools
Dave Shreeve, Activities Director, Colstrip Public Schools
Anne Sullivan, Speech and Debate Coach, Bozeman High School
Universal Athletic Service, Larry Aasheim-President, Bozeman
1999-00 - [no award presented]
2000-01 - [no award presented]
2001-02 - Bob Farrell, Former Principal, Glasgow High School
2002-03 - [no award presented]
2003-04 - Jim Haugen, Retiring MHSA Executive Director, Helena
Scott McDonald, Athletic Director, Bozeman High School
2004-05 - Joanne Austin, MHSA Assistant Director, Helena
2005-06 - Terry Peterson, Activities Director, Froid High School
2006-07 - [no award presented]
2007-08 - [no award presented]
2008-09 - James Baldwin, Superintendent, Alberton Public Schools
Rollie Rieger, Activities Director, Belgrade High School
2009-10 - [no award presented]
2010-11 - Bob Rowe, CEO, NorthWestern Energy, Butte
Bill Wright, Production Manager, Farmers Union Insurance, Great Falls
2011-12 - Duane Walker, Activities Director, Hardin High School
2012-13 - Mark Beckman, MHSA Executive Director
2013-14 - Gary DeGooyer, Activities Director, Great Falls Public Schools
Herb Townsend, Activities Director, Laurel High School
2014-15 - Liz Flikkema, Activities Director, Manhattan Christ High School
2015-16 - Mark Brajcich, Red Lodge
US Bank
2016-17 [no award presented]
2017-18 - Dan Rust, former MOA/civic leader, Bozeman
Jerry Thompson, Superintendent, Rapelje
2018-19 - Jock Anderson, Retired MHSA Legal Counsel
Janie Holmes, Retired MHSA Business Manager
Theresa Stanisich, Retired MHSA MOA Coordinator
2019-20 - Scott King, Activities Director, Malta High School
Bob Hogemark, Activities Director, Park City High School
2020-21 [no award presented]
2021-22 Dinny Bennett, Superintendent Forsyth Public Schools
Pat Lynch, Activities Director Manhattan High School
2022-23 Dave Edington, Retired MHSA Wrestling Rules Interpreter
Doug Reisig, Retired Superintendent Hellgate Elementary
2023-24 Mark Ator, Activities Director, Bozeman Public Schools
Merle Gunderson, Great Falls Public Schools
Dennis Murphy, Retired Activities Director, Havre
2024-25 Mark Wahl, Retired Activities Director, Billings
2025-26 Mark Dennehy, Retired Activities Director, Kalispell

SERVICE CITATION AWARD

This award was initiated by the MHSA Executive Board to commence with the 1983-84 school year and will be presented by the MHSA Executive Board in recognition of a Significant Contribution" to the MHSA.

1984 Recipients

1. Eleanor Buzalsky, Gymnastics Official – Bozeman
2. Jay Shaw, Gymnastics Official – Billings
3. Jug Beck, Wrestling Coach – Missoula
4. City Center Motel, George Hubbard – Bozeman
5. Larry Williams, Music Supervisor – Great Falls
6. Don Simmons, Music Supervisor – Missoula
7. John Johnson, Administrator – Glendive
8. Montana Power Company – Butte
9. Universal Athletics, Dick Hart and Larry Aasheim, owners – Bozeman
10. Roy Pace, Sportswriter – Helena
11. Bernie Lustig, Sports Announcer – Billings
12. Dan Marinkovich, Administrator – Anaconda
13. Chamber of Commerce – Helena
14. Paul Stengel, Administrator – Miles City
15. University of Montana – Missoula
16. Bud Purdy, MSU Field House Manager – Bozeman
17. Les Irish, MHSA Staff and Insuror – Helena
18. John Good, District Delegate – Butte
19. Bob Chilton, Official – Helena
20. Bill Racicot, Carroll College – Helena
21. Billings Gazette Sports Staff, Warren Rogers, Editor
22. Great Falls Tribune Sports Staff, George Geise, Editor
23. Al Manuel, Track Volunteer – Alberton

1985 Recipients

1. Cato "The Cat" Butler, Sports Announcer – Helena
2. Ralph Halverson, MCA Director – Great Falls
3. Helena High School
4. Al Bedoo Shrine Temple – Billings
5. Harley Lewis, UM Athletics Director – Missoula
6. Tom Kelly, Carroll College – Helena
7. Tom Reynolds, Northern Montana College – Havre
8. Jim Barsotti, Administrator/Speech Director – Big Sandy

1986 Recipients

1. Gary Spaeth, Legislator – Silesia
2. Lander Fred, Administrator – Missoula
3. Willard Wallace, Administrator – Billings
4. Ray Collins, Administrator – Billings
5. Don Lawston, Administrator – Missoula
6. Mike Thompson, Administrator – Glendive
7. Bob Zupan, Administrator – Billings
8. Bill Swarthout, Administrator – Great Falls
9. Fred Anderson, Administrator – Glendive
10. Bob Dantic, Administrator – Laurel

1987 Recipients

1. Norm Clark, Sportswriter – Denver
2. Bob Beach, Transportation Owner – Missoula
3. William O'Grady, Gymnastics Official – Great Falls
4. Robert Bares, Music Supervisor – Laurel

1988 Recipients
1. KSEN Radio – Shelby
2. Jan Lowney, Cheerleader Coach – Anaconda
3. Dr. Robert Whitesett, Medical Advisor – Helena
4. Dr. John McMahon, Medical Advisor – Helena

1989 Recipients
1. Jim Grant, Administrator – Great Falls
2. Phil Robinson, Administrator – Richey
3. Bob Farrell, Administrator – Glasgow
4. Montana Standard, Hudson Wilse, Sports Editor – Butte

1990 Recipients
1. Nels Christiansen, Eastern Montana College – Billings
2. Tom McGonigal, Administrator – Baker

1991 Recipients
1. College of Great Falls, Fr. Jim Sikora – Great Falls
2. Frazer Community, Star Quilt Ceremonies – Frazer
3. Poplar Community, Star Quilt Ceremonies – Poplar
4. Brockton Community, Star Quilt Ceremonies – Brockton

1992 Recipients
1. Cecil Warren, Administrator – Helena
2. Jack McGowan. Administrator – Ennis

1993 Recipients
1. Harvey Hawbaker, Administrator – Shelby
2. Gary Hughes, UM Field House Manager – Missoula
3. Ted Kato, Administrator – Thompson Falls
4. Howard Ross, MSU Field House Manager – Bozeman

1994 Recipients
1. Jim Wood, Administrator – Sidney
2. Ron Ewing, Administrator – Sidney

1995 Recipients
1. Dr. Ernest Jean, Administrator – Florence-Carlton
2. Cal Moore, Administrator – Medicine Lake
3. Cal Johnson, Administrator – Billings
4. Bill Larson, Music Supervisor – Great Falls

1996 Recipients
1. Charlie Klimas, Administrator – Havre
2. Anne Sullivan, Speech Advisor – Bozeman

1997 Recipients
1. Liz Flikkema, Administrator – Manhattan Christian
2. Dave Marsh, Administrator – Sheridan
3. Scott McDonald, Administrator – Bozeman
4. Dr. Rick Stuber, Administrator – Culbertson

1998 Recipients
1. Ron Adams, Administrator – Hardin
2. Gene Boyle, Administrator – Kalispell
3. Shirley Chesterfield, Coach – Helena
4. Chuck Harvey, Administrator – Townsend
5. Terry Peterson, Administrator – Froid

1999 Recipients
1. Richard Correll, Administrator/Corporate Sponsor – Missoula
2. Dave Edington, Wrestling Interpreter-Clinician/Coach – Ronan
3. Dave Edwards, Music Supervisor – Billings
4. Wayne Loeffler, Administrator – Bigfork
5. Dr. Michael Schutte, Medical Advisor – Missoula

2000 Recipients
1. Scott Lockwood, Soccer Interpreter-Clinician/Official – Helena
2. Joe McKay, Coach – Kalispell
3. Doug Dierenfield, Awards Advisor – Billings
4. Brady Selle, Administrator – Florence-Carlton
5. Nancy Walters, Administrator/Coach – Great Falls

2001 Recipients
1. Frank Kibbee, Administrator – Alberton
2. Karen Underwood, Administrator – Cut Bank
3. Bob Holden, Administrator – Missoula
4. Herb Townsend, Administrator – Laurel
5. Fred Anderson, Administrator – Miles City
6. Ted Schreiber, Administrator – Miles City

2002 Recipients
1. Verne Beffert, Administrator – Livingston
2. Scott Dubbs, Administrator – Lewistown
3. Rollie Rieger, Administrator – Belgrade

2003 Recipients
1. John Cheek, Administrator – Drummond
2. Gary DeGooyer, Administrator – Great Falls
3. Rocky Erickson, Sports Announcer – Billings
4. Dennis Granlie, Music Supervisor – Great Falls

2004 Recipients
1. Howard Neckels, Radio Announcer – Deer Lodge
2. Bill Schlepp, Administrator – Roundup
3. Colleen Sullivan, Teacher/Coach – Whitefish
4. Dave Williams, Administrator – Billings

2005 Recipients
1. Glenn Flatt, Administrator – Malta
2. Merle Gunderson, Rules Interpreter – Great Falls
3. Cal Spangler, Administrator – Shepherd

2006 Recipients
1. Ward Fifield, Administrator – Power
2. Steve Gaub, Former Administrator – Florence-Carlton
3. Don Paulson, Administrator – Cut Bank

2007 Recipients
1. Dan Rust – Bozeman

2008 Recipients
1. Tom Blakely, Administrator – Three Forks
2. Clay Dunlap, Administrator – Winnett
3. Mike Venner – Butte
4. Scott Whaley, Administrator – Missoula

2009 Recipients
1. John Jones, Former Administrator – Nashua
2. Mike Reynolds, Coach – Cut Bank
3. Jerry Thompson, Administrator – Rapelje
4. Melanie Stocks and Brad Murphy, MSU Field House Personnel – Bozeman

2010 Recipients
1. Janie Holmes, MHSA – Helena
2. Allan Labbe, Administrator – Superior
3. Mark Meredith, Trainer – Bozeman
4. Jim Opitz, Administrator – Helena Public Schools
5. Mary Svenvold, Music Director – Glendive

2011 Recipients
1. Glenn Hageman, Administrator – Glasgow
2. Darrell Holland, Administrator – Hamilton
3. Randy Russell, Administrator – Bozeman

2012 Recipients
1. Trudi Downer, Former Coach – Laurel
2. Karen Sanford-Gall, Former Executive Board Member – Billings
3. Scott Wilson, Administrator – Polson
4. Bruce Sayler, Sports Editor – Butte

2013 Recipients
1. Mark Brajcich, Administrator – Red Lodge
2. Mark Dennehy, Administrator – Glacier (Kalispell)
3. John Overstreet, Administrator – Ennis

2014 Recipients
1. Greg Kielb, Owner-Broadcaster, KMMR Radio, Malta
2. Richie Melby, Sports Director, KRTV-Great Falls
3. Mike Towne, Prep Sports Writer, Great Falls Tribune

2015 Recipients
1. Jim Carroll, Administrator – Conrad

2. Jackie Fuller, Administrator – Whitefish
3. Doug McConnaha, Forensics – Corvallis
4. Tim Tharp, Administrator – Sunburst

2016 Recipients
1. Bob Hogemark, Administrator – Park City
2. Scott King, Administrator – Malta
3. Dennis Murphy, Administrator – Havre
4. Chad Peterson, Administrator – Butte Central

2017 Recipients
1. Erik Engebretson, Music Director – Malta
2. Pat Lynch, Administrator – Manhattan
3. Chuck Merrifield, Administrator – Butte
4. Meadow Lark Country Club – Great Falls

2018 Recipients
1. Shawn Holmes, Administrator – Seeley-Swan
2. Matt Molyneaux, Administrator – Chinook
3. Paula Molyneaux, Administrator – Chinook
4. Mark Wahl, Administrator – Billings

2019 Recipients
1. Advantage Butte
2. Rick Phillips, Administrator – Belgrade
3. Richy Powell, Administrator – Billings Central

2020 Recipients
1. Bob Rittierodt, NFHS Network
2. Bill Dutcher and First Interstate Arena (MetraPark)

2021 Recipients
[no award presented]

2022 Recipients
1. Larry Cady, Administrator – St. Labre Catholic
2. Larry Crowder, Administrator – Culbertson
3. Dan Sturdevant, Administrator – Jefferson

2023 Recipients
1. Kara Bartlett, Destination Missoula
2. Travis Blome, Administrator – Hamilton
3. Bryce Wilson, Administrator - Kalispell

2024 Recipients
1. Chris Hayden, MSU-Bozeman
2. Hank Eekhoff, Manhattan Christian
3. Kathy Eekhoff, Manhattan Christian

2025 Recipients
1. Mike Ryan, Billings Central
2. Luke Kloker, Fairview
3. Shawn Holmes, Seeley-Swan
4. John Polich, Miles City
5. Ron Osborne, Columbus
6. Jim Hawbaker, Billings Central

2026 Recipients
1. ***Brandon Gondeiro, Highwood***
2. ***Steve Yokim, Sidney***
3. ***Bill Melvin, Butte***
4. ***John O'Dell, Townsend***
5. ***Tim McMahon, Helena***

NORTHWESTERN ENERGY'S ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

This award was initiated by the MHSA Executive Board to commence with the 1988-89 school year and will be presented to a school in each classification whose students in activities have the highest overall G.P.A. during the school year.

1988-89 Recipients
AA – Helena
A – Custer County (Miles City)
B – Whitehall
C – Lavina

1990 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Colstrip
B – Bigfork
C – Peerless

1991 Recipients
AA – Butte
A - Fergus (Lewistown)
B – Loyola Sacred Heart (Missoula)
C – Peerless

1992 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Colstrip
B – Troy
C - Kremlin-Gildford

1993 Recipients
AA - Helena Capital
A – Colstrip
B – Troy
C – Peerless

1994 Recipients
AA – Billings West
A – Colstrip
B - Fort Benton
C – Peerless

1995 Recipients
AA – Missoula Sentinel
A – Colstrip
B – Fort Benton
C – Peerless

1996 Recipients
AA – Missoula Sentinel
A – Colstrip
B – Fort Benton
C – Peerless

1997 Recipients
AA – Missoula Sentinel
A – Colstrip
B – Fort Benton
C – Peerless

1998 Recipients
AA – Billings Skyview
A – Colstrip
B – Fort Benton
C – Roberts

1999 Recipients
AA – Billings Senior
A – Colstrip
B – Fort Benton
C – Roberts

2000 Recipients
AA – Missoula Sentinel
A – Fergus (Lewistown)
B – Cut Bank
C – Turner

2001 Recipients
AA – Billings Senior
A – Fergus (Lewistown)
B – Baker
C – Turner

2002 Recipients
AA – Billings Skyview
A – Colstrip
B – Choteau
C – Turner

2003 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Bigfork
B – Cut Bank
C – Chester

2004 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Bigfork
B – Cut Bank
C – Chester

2005 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Butte Central
B – Cut Bank
C – Lustre Christian

2006 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Butte Central
B – Cut Bank
C – Moore

2007 Recipients
AA – Butte
A – Billings Central
B – Cut Bank
C – Moore

2008 Recipients
AA – Billings Skyview
A – Billings Central
B – Valley Christian (Missoula)
C – Chester-Joplin-Inverness

2009 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Butte Central
B – Colstrip
C – Chester-Joplin-Inverness

2010 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Butte Central
B – Three Forks
C – Lavina

2011 Recipients
AA – Missoula Sentinel
A – Billings Central
B – Manhattan Christian
C – Chester-Joplin-Inverness

2012 Recipients
AA – Missoula Hellgate
A – Billings Central
B – Florence-Carlton
C – Chester-Joplin-Inverness

2013 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Butte Central
B – Joliet
C – Judith Gap

2014 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Butte Central
B – Jefferson (Boulder)
C – Stanford

2015 Recipients
AA – Billings Senior
A – Butte Central
B – Joliet
C – Grass Range

2016 Recipients
AA – Billings Skyview
A – Butte Central
B – Florence-Carlton
C – Simms

2017 Recipients
AA – Bozeman
A – Butte Central
B – Joliet
C – Grass Range

2018 Recipients
AA – Bozeman
A – Butte Central
B – Jefferson (Boulder)
C – Fairview

2019 Recipients
AA – Billings Skyview
A – Libby
B – Bigfork
C – Winnett

2020 Recipients
AA – Bozeman
A – Whitefish
B – Bigfork
C – Plevna

2021 Recipients
AA – Billings Skyview
A – Billings Central
B – Huntley Project
C – Whitewater

2022 Recipients
AA – Billings Senior
A – Billings Central
B – Jefferson (Boulder)
C – Grass Range

2023 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Beaverhead County (Dillon)
B – Florence-Carlton
C – Drummond

2024 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Billings Central
B – Florence-Carlton
C – Whitewater

2025 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Billings Central
B – Florence-Carlton
C – Winnett

2026 Recipients
AA – Glacier (Kalispell)
A – Billings Central
B – Shepherd
C – Turner

MIAAA AWARD OF MERIT

The MHSA/MIAAA Gold Pass is a gesture of appreciation by the MHSA and the Montana Interscholastic Athletic Administrator Association (MIAAA) to Montana Athletics Directors who have made significant contributions to the MHSA and the MIAAA organizations. The award includes a gold lifetime pass to all MHSA activities.

2001 Inaugural Recipients
1. Joe Russell – Laurel
2. Terry Peterson – Froid

3. Gene Boyle – Kalispell
4. Jim Grant – Great Falls
5. Cecil Warren – Helena
6. Phil Robinson – Richey
7. Lander J. Fred – Billings
8. Ronald E. Ewing – Sidney

2002 Recipients
1. Jim Dutcher – Billings
2. Bill Kambich – Butte
3. Frank Kibbee – Alberton
4. Charlie Klimas – Havre

2003 Recipients
[no awards presented]

2004 Recipients
1. Jim Baldwin – Alberton
2. Lew Morris – Billings

2005 Recipients
1. Bob Farrell – Glasgow
2. Ron Adams – Hardin
3. Scott McDonald – Helena

2006 Recipients
1. Glenn Flatt – Malta

2007 Recipients
1. Dan Martin – Billings
2. Bill Osborne – Butte
3. Dave Williams – Billings

2008 Recipients
1. Liz Flikkema – Manhattan Christian
2. Jim Opitz – Helena

2009 Recipients
1. Denny Davis – Fairfield

2010 Recipients
1. Rollie Rieger – Belgrade

2011 Recipients
1. Dave Marsh – Sheridan

2012 Recipients
1. Steve Crosby – Roundup

2013 Recipients
1. Mike Gear – Sidney
2. Ted Schreiber – Custer Co. (Miles City)
3. Scott Whaley – Missoula Sentinel

2014 Recipients
1. Gary DeGooyer – Great Falls Public Schools
2. Stan Juneau – Browning High School

2015 Recipients
[no award presented]

2016 Recipients
[no award presented]

2017 Recipients
1. Gary Haverfield – Beaverhead Co. (Dillon)
2. Don Paulson – Cut Bank
3. Tim Tharp – Hobson

2018 Recipients
1. Jim Opitz – Helena
2. Gary DeGooyer – Great Falls

2019 Recipients
[no awards presented]

2020 Recipients
1. Dennis Murphy – Havre High School
2. Mark Ator – Bozeman High School
3. Jim Carrol – Conrad High School

2021 Recipients
1. Bob Hogemark – Park City High School

2022 Recipients
[no awards presented]

2023 Recipients
[no awards presented]

2024 Recipients
[No awards presented]

2025 Recipient
1. Nate Achenbach – Great Falls CMR

2026 Recipient
1. ***Jim Daniels – Fergus***
2. ***Scott King – Malta***
3. ***Tim McMahon – Helena***
4. ***Chuck Merrifield – Butte***
5. ***Mike Ryan – Billings Central***
6. ***Mark Wahl – Billings***

MILDRED ADAMS AWARD

This award was initiated by the MHSA Executive Board to commence with the 2000-2001 year and will be presented by the MHSA Executive Board to schools' support staff personnel in recognition of their assistance with student activities.

2001 Inaugural Recipients
1. Mildred Adams – Glasgow
2. LaVerne Combo – Butte
3. Martha Sorensen - Great Falls

2002 Recipients
1. Kelli Kesler – Helena
2. Joan Moodry – Anaconda
3. Shirley Rehling - Laurel

2003 Recipients
1. JoAnn Barnette - Hardin
2. Diane Blevins - Billings
3. Rae Deschamps – Alberton
4. Julie Glasson - Billings

2004 Recipients
1. Fran Effertz – Helena
2. Patty Sayler – Alberton

2005 Recipients
1. Zella Farrell – Glasgow
2. Nancy Mason - Park (Livingston)

2006 Recipients
[no awards presented]

2007 Recipients
1. Sharon Clelland - Custer Co. (Miles City)
2. Cindy Hardy – Billings

2008 Recipients
1. Rich Helterbran – Laurel
2. Mel McKitrick – Ennis
3. Ken Watson – North Star

2009 Recipients
1. Bill Herbolich - Whitehall

2010 Recipients
[no award presented]

2011 Recipients
[no award presented]

2012 Recipients
1. Blanche Craig - Colstrip

2013 Recipients
1. Doug Dyk – Manhattan Christian

2014 Recipients
1. Lisa Henry – Great Falls Public Schools

2015 Recipients
[no award presented]

2016 Recipients
1. Karen Rommick – Roundup
2. Jim Nielsen - Plentywood

2017 Recipients
1. Brenda Huston – Great Falls

2018 Recipients
1. Brenda Asher – Manhattan Christian

2019 Recipients
1. Pat Powers – Butte High

2020 Recipients
1. Joyce Harvey – Froid

2021 Recipients
[no award presented]

2022 Recipients
1. Janet Swanson – Belfry & Forsyth

2023 Recipients
1. Margi Corey – Choteau
2. Sally Haas – Choteau

2024 Recipients
1. Julie Caster – Huntley Project
2. Sandie Hodgkiss – Choteau
3. Marlene Krum – Huntley Project

2025 Recipients
1. Scott Smart – Great Falls
2. Todd Bailey – Lavina
3. Darrel Neese – Miles City

2026 Recipients
1. ***Butch & Pixie Zieske – Richey***
2. ***Ennis Geraghty – Columbus***
3. ***Terri Bowen – Colstrip***
4. ***Deb Gibson – Richey***

LES IRISH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Northwestern Scholastic Insurers sponsored this scholarship from 2007-2014 in memory of Robert "Les" Irish, longtime executive officer of the MHSA and steadfast enthusiast of high school activities. The Montana High School Association administers the scholarship program on behalf of Northwestern Scholastic Insurers. One male and one female are awarded the scholarship on an annual basis. (discontinued after 2014)

2007 Inaugural Recipients
1. Chase Berg - Custer Co. (Miles City)
2. Jillian Hoblitt - Belgrade

2008 Recipients
1. Shane Donaldson – Thompson Falls
2. Jenny Snipstead – Flathead (Kalispell)

2009 Recipients
1. Chisholm Christensen – Hinsdale
2. Kayla Neumiller - Colstrip

2010 Recipients
1. Connor Fuller – Glacier (Kalispell)
2. Whitney Peterson - Circle

2011 Recipients
1. Trevor Conrad – Dawson Co. (Glendive)
2. Emily Paffhausen – Beaverhead Co. (Dillon)

2012 Recipients
1. Haley Marie Swank – Chinook
2. Amanda Tharp - Sunburst

2013 Recipients
1. Joy Noel Quackenbush – Missoula Sentinel
2. Daniel Romero - Ronan

2014 Recipients [Final Year]
1. Zach Dennehy – Glacier (Kalispell)
2. Kara Lee Gerke – Belt

BASEBALL

TOURNAMENT DATES

State Tournaments

Classes AA and A-B ..... May 27 -29

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool BASEBALL activities among the member schools.

(2) The playing rules as authorized and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all games. By National Federation Rule, Montana has adopted the following:

a. Any regular season game will end when, after two and a half or three innings, a team is fifteen (15) or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.
b. Any game will end when, after four and a half or five innings, a team is ten or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.
c. Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of weather – resume from the point of interruption.
d. Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings that are tied – resume from the point of interruption.
e. Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of darkness – resume from the point of interruption.
f. Junior varsity games played prior to varsity games, the following time limit shall apply: No new inning shall begin more than 1 hour and 45 minutes after the conclusion of the pre-game plate meeting.
g. Using a maximum time limit of 1 1/2 hours for games played at invitational tournaments. The game can be called if there is five minutes or less before the maximum time limit or officials should not start a new inning after one hour and twenty minutes of play.
h. Postseason play-in games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of weather, darkness or a game that is tied – resume from the point of interruption if the game can be continued at a later time, unless the opposing coaches wish to terminate the game and determine a winner. If the game is suspended and the game cannot be played at a later time, the higher seeded team (#2 seed) is declared the winner. In case of a tie, the higher seeded team is declared the winner.

(3) Pitcher limitation from JV to Varsity: the starting pitcher in a varsity game cannot pitch in a JV contest unless there is an injury or for other out of the ordinary circumstances, which must be approved by the Executive Director.

(4) Pitch Counts for MHSA Baseball: Refer to the chart on the baseball section of the MHSA website at mhsa.org.

(5) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association BASEBALL contest until he has a minimum of eight (8) days of BASEBALL practice of at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (5), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a game does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a game that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a game that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a game does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins their initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(6) Twenty-two (22) games with no more than three (3) games on one date will be the maximum for schools excluding Association sponsored tournaments.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Any BASEBALL team that receives a forfeit may be allowed to schedule and play a make-up game but the team that gives the forfeit must count the forfeited game as one of the season's game limits for its school and that team will not be allowed to schedule another game in place of the forfeited game(s).**

2. **Definition of "squad" — An athletic squad is determined by union of "act and intent" by grouping together a number of students to play as a unit to represent the school, under the direction of a designated coach or coaches. A school must have at least fourteen (14) players participating to be able to schedule sub varsity games or play a sub varsity schedule. At least five (5) players must be designated as varsity only and cannot play in the sub varsity contest whether on the same or different day of the varsity contest.**

3. **Club team participation – During the MHSA baseball season, no more than four (4) rostered participants in a school's program can compete in an outside baseball event on the same team.**

(7) **Baden Perfection Pro 3B-PPRO Baseballs** shall be utilized at all MHSA sponsored BASEBALL tournaments and/or baseball play-in games.

(8) Walk-up music may be played in the regular season by the home team only if approved by the school's administration. Each team can choose their own approved music. Administrators should review the music to determine its appropriateness. Walk-up music should stop the moment the batter steps into the batter's box. Officials may order the music turned down or off if the music is inappropriate or is interfering with the orderly administration of the game.

(9) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school

officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any game or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered in to the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(10) American Legion teams and MHSA High School teams are not allowed to play each other.

(11) The BASEBALL season officially closes with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(12) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

II - STATE CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION AND PLAYOFF

(1) Schools in each classification will be charged with the responsibility of drawing the conference schedules each season and for determining the number of conference games the schools must play to be eligible for tournament seeding. Tournament seeding will be determined by each classification.

(2) The site(s) and manager(s) for the state tournament(s) will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(3) No all-state teams or players shall be picked or announced at the state tournament site by either the Executive Board or tournament officials. This applies to playoffs, divisional and state competition.

(4) The game balls for the State Tournament shall be provided by the Montana High School Association.

(5) First round games at state tournaments will have the team with the higher seed being designated as home team. A coin flip determines home team in all future rounds.

(6) The state baseball tournament shall be single elimination with a consolation bracket format. Game times shall be established by the tournament manager.

(7) State tournament games suspended because of weather and/or darkness will be resumed from the point of interruption.

(8) State tournament games suspended because of weather and/or darkness after 4 1/2 - 5 innings of play will be resumed from the point of interruption and 7 innings completed unless the 10-run rule is reached.

III - ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

Teams and players recognized as eligible to participate in interscholastic BASEBALL in Montana under the rules of the Montana High School Association will be eligible to participate in the tournaments arranged. All schools are cautioned to carefully check over their list of potential players and make certain that each student whose name is submitted is fully qualified under the rules.

IV - TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

No more than seventeen (17) players can be in uniform for any tournament game.

V - TOURNAMENT POLICING

(1) The local tournament manager and/or committee must make arrangements for adequate policing at the field during the course of the tournament.

(2) Special attention must be given to ensure that the game officials are afforded proper protection when leaving the field.

(3) These rules apply for divisional and state tournaments.

VI - VIDEO TAPE AT BASEBALL TOURNAMENTS

The MHSA Executive Board has given the tournament manager the authority to grant or refuse permission for schools to use video tape at BASEBALL tournaments provided it is within the guidelines of the MHSA Handbook and National Federation rules.

VII - DETERMINATION OF TOURNAMENT SITES

(1) The determination of sites, tournament managers and arrangements for state MHSA tournaments will be made by the Executive Board. This determination will be made at a meeting of the Board after interested member schools or communities have been given an opportunity to submit written invitations to host an Association tournament.

Tournament managers cannot be a coach or an official if that coach or official is participating in the tournament.

(2) Following are some of the criteria which will be considered by the Board in making the determination of tournament sites: (1) Adequate field facilities; (2) Adequate community facilities for team and spectator housing and eating; (3) Reasonable assurance of financial success; (4) Definite invitation showing local community support; (5) Geographical rotation when feasible.

(3) If the Board locates a tournament by a member school's request, an administrator of that school will normally be named tournament manager. If the tournament is located by a request from other than a member school, the Executive Director, a member of the MHSA staff or a member of the Executive Board will normally be named manager.

(4) The concession rights for any tournament held in a non-member school facility shall be awarded by the MHSA Executive Board.

VIII - TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS, CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The tournament program rights for all state tournaments will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

(2) The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

(3) At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events.

(4) Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas; i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

IX - TOURNAMENT FINANCE PLAN

(1) After each divisional or state tournament the tournament manager shall submit a financial report of the tournament to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the event.

(2) The Executive Board wished to point out that the local community definitely profits from the tournaments in three ways: (a) All concessions of the tournaments are normally given to local organizations. (b) Local communities profit considerably through income at hotels, motels, restaurants and stores. (c) The local school is under no expense to send its team to the tournament.

(3) The host school does not underwrite the expense of the tournament but is obligated to do its best to see to it that the gross receipts are such that allowable expenses are paid in full.

Allowable Tournament Expenses

Charges against the tournament will stand for payment in the following order:

(1) Referees' fees and expenses.

(2) The BASEBALLs for all state tournaments will be furnished by the MHSA office at no charge.

(3) Normal administrative expenses. (Printing tickets, scorebook, advertising, signs, postage, telephone, clerical, scorer and timer.)

(4) Use of facility charges (rental), shall include all charges, if any, for the following: extra field preparation/maintenance, utilities, ticket sales, ticket takers, police/security, entrance guards, ushers, parking attendants, first aid room and towel service.

Non-allowable Tournament Expenses

(1) Proper policing of hotels.

(2) Proper timing and scoring equipment.

(3) Adequate dressing room and shower facilities.

Established Ticket Prices for the State Tournaments

The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all state tournaments.

	Adult	***Student***
General Admission (one day)	***$12.00***	***$10.00***
All-Session (three day)	***$28.00***	***$21.00***

X - SELECTION OF OFFICIALS

Refer to the MOA section for procedure for selection of officials to work the BASEBALL tournaments.

XI - POLICY FOR TOURNAMENT PASSES

The Association has established the following policy for tournament passes which shall be adhered to by all tournament managers.

(1) For school administrators - Up to fourteen all-session tickets. If schools co-op the host school will receive the fourteen administrative tickets and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets. These complimentary tickets are for administrators, coaches, spouses, chaperones, bus drivers etc. who actually attend tournament.

(2) For players — seventeen passes for players and two for managers — total of nineteen.

(3) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(4) For radio — three passes to each station given permission to broadcast the tournament or game. The game (games) must be broadcast in its (or their) entirety.

(5) For media other than radio

a. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.

b. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.

c. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.

d. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

(6) For umpires — one pass to each umpire working the tournament.

These are the only complimentary passes that shall be allowed and others from non-participating schools must purchase tickets.

XII – CLASS AA BASEBALL PROGRAM

(1) ***See <u>www.mhsa.org</u> for the detailed alignments for Class AA.***

(2) Standings for AA playoffs will be determined by the AA Conference Policy. Seeding to state will be as follows:

<u>Western Conference</u>
#1 and #2 receive byes (1st & 2nd seed at state)
#3 West v. 6 West (at #3's site)
#4 West v. 5 West (at #4's site)

<u>Eastern Conference</u>
#1 and #2 receive byes (1st & 2nd seed at state)
#3 East v. 6 East (at #3's site)
#4 East v. 5 East (at #4's site)

Each division's seeding will be as follows for advancement to the state tournaments:

<u>Seeding for Eastern and Western Divisions</u>
#1 – 1st place in the division
#2 – 2nd place in the division
#3 – Next highest remaining seed in the division
#4 – Last remaining seed in the division

(3) Class AA 2-game playoff. If the higher seed wins one game, they will advance to state. The lower seed must win both games to advance to state. The host team is the home team for game one and if a second game is needed, the visiting team will be the home team.

Pairings for the state tournament will be as follows:

Bracket I 2nd place Eastern vs. 3rd place Western
1st place Western vs. 4th place Eastern

Bracket II 2nd place Western vs.3rd place Eastern
1st place Eastern vs. 4th place Western

***Brackets I and II shall alternate each year. Brackets shall be switched when the host city has an entry in the state tournament so the host city's team will play in the evening session. When the host city has two teams in the tournament and they are in opposite brackets, the brackets shall remain the same. If more than two host city teams are in the tournament, then the bracket with the most host city teams shall be played in the evening. The order of games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

(4) The state tournament will be an eight-team single elimination with consolation bracket, three-day tournament.

XIII – CLASS A-B BASEBALL PROGRAM

(1) ***See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A-B.***

(2) The BASEBALL Conferences will be charged with drawing up the conference schedules each season and determining the number of conference games each school must play to be eligible for state tournament seeding including the breaking of any ties in conference standings.

(3) The #1 seed in each conference will receive an automatic bid to the state tournament. Play-in games will be played to determine the remaining teams using the following matchups:

#3 Central @ #2 East
#3 East @ #2 Central
#3 South @ #2 North
#3 North @ #2 South

Seeding for the Class A-B state tournament will be as follows:

2026-2027 (Subject to Change)

Bracket I	1st East vs. Winner 2nd South vs. 3rd North 1st Central vs. Winner 2nd North vs. 3rd South
Bracket II	1st North vs. Winner 2rd Central vs. 3rd East 1st South vs. Winner 2nd East vs. 3rd Central

***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 day on the first day of the tournament. All matchups and future matchups will remain the same.

(4) The state tournament will be an eight-team single elimination with consolation bracket, three-day tournament.

BASKETBALL

TOURNAMENT DATES

District/Conference Tournaments

Girls' & Boys' Class C.....February 15-20
Girls' & Boys' Class B.....February 22-27

Divisional Tournaments

Divisional held in Week 1 .....February 22-27
Class C – Boys' & Girls' (N, W)
Class A – Boys' & Girls' (E)
Divisional held in Week 2 ..... March 1-6
Class C – Boys' & Girls' (E, S)
Class B – Boys' & Girls' (N, W, S)
Class A – Boys' & Girls' (W)

State Tournaments

Classes B & C – Girls & Boys..... March 10-13
Classes AA & A – Girls & Boys..... March 11-13

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool basketball activities among the member schools for both boys and girls.

(2) Schools will be divided into four classes for boys' and girls' basketball - Class AA, Class A, Class B and Class C.

(3) The playing rules as authorized and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all games. By National Federation Rule, Montana has adopted the following:

1. For all levels of play (varsity and subvarsity), once a team has a forty (40) point lead or better in the second half, a running clock will ensue until the end of the game even if the difference in score drops below the forty point margin. The only time the clock will stop is between quarters, time outs and when replacing an injured or disqualified player.
2. A thirty-five (35) second shot clock will be used for all varsity and sub-varsity games. The shot clock will be used even if a running clock is in effect.
3. The five-second closely guarded provision while a player dribbles the ball is eliminated. The closely guarded rules remain in effect while a player holds the ball.
4. For MHSA regular and postseason play, a twenty-eight-foot coaching box will be used. The top of the coaching box will be marked twenty-eight feet from the baseline and shall be outlined outside the side of the court on which the scorer's and timer's table and team benches are located. The line shall be located off the court and be two (2) inches wide. The end of the coaching box will be the interior of the baseline of the court.
5. Use of artificial limbs is allowed if the prosthesis is approved on an individual basis by the MHSA office.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of basketball practice of at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a game does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a game that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a game that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a game does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA postseason play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the number of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(5) Eighteen (18) basketball games will be the maximum limit for schools in classes A, B and C. Class AA will have a maximum limit of nineteen (19) basketball games. These limits include invitational tournaments but are exclusive of Association-sponsored tournaments. These game limits apply for each squad - varsity, junior varsity, sophomore, frosh, etc. Should a non-varsity contest be played using a variation in the length of quarters or the number of quarters played, one of the approved variations shown on the basketball page of the MHSA website must be used. The applicable game limit interpretations are also included on the website (www.mhsa.org).

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Any basketball team that receives a forfeit(s) may be allowed to schedule and play a makeup game(s), but the team that gives the forfeit must count the forfeited game(s) as part of the season's game limit for its school, and that team will not be allowed to schedule another game in place of the forfeited game(s).**
2. **Definition of "squad" - An athletic squad is determined by union of "act and intent" by grouping together a number of students to play as a unit to represent the school, under the direction of a designated coach or coaches, i.e. a participant who plays in a preliminary contest cannot start in the varsity game in the same day.**
3. **Club team participation – During the MHSA basketball season, no more than two (2) rostered participants in a school's program can compete in an outside basketball event on the same team.**

(6) The basketball season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(7) Quarter Eligibility

Class AA:

1. ***Students who participate exclusively in subvarsity contests (freshman, sophomore, or junior varsity) may play up to six (6) quarters in any one day.***
2. ***Any student who participates in a varsity contest is limited to a maximum of five (5) total quarters that day, regardless of the level at which those quarters are played.***

3. ***No student may play at more than two (2) consecutive levels.***
4. ***A student who plays in a junior varsity contest may not start the varsity contest.***
5. ***These rules apply even against out-of-conference or out-of-state opponents.***

Class A:

1. No student may play more than five (5) quarters in one day, except subvarsity players who may play six (6) quarters if not suited for the varsity game.

Classes B and C:

1. Students may play up to six (6) quarters in any one day.

If a non-varsity contest uses a variation in quarter length or number of quarters, one of the approved variations posted on the basketball page of the MHSA website (www.mhsa.org) must be used. Applicable game limit interpretations are also available on the website.

These limitations do not apply to postseason contests.

(8) The Association prohibits students of member schools from playing in a preliminary contest and then starting in the varsity game on the same day.

(9) Schools must participate in the basketball schedule and play the majority of their scheduled games to be eligible to participate in the MHSA tournaments.

(10) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any regular season game or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in regular season play is automatically entered in the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(11) ***Each classification will be responsible for developing its basketball schedule by forming a committee or designating individuals to create the Master Basketball schedule. These committees or individuals will determine the number of conference games and organize the season's schedule for their respective classification.***

(12) Regular Season Breakage

a. Rim Breakage: If a sub-varsity or varsity team breaks a rim while attempting to dunk a ball in pregame, that school will be responsible for payment of the rim. If the rim is broken during the sub-varsity game or varsity game, the responsibility for payment will be that of the home team. If the home team does not have a replacement at that time, the varsity game will be rescheduled for a later date.
b. Backboard Breakage: If a sub-varsity or varsity team breaks a backboard during the pregame while attempting to dunk the ball, that school will be responsible for payment of the backboard. The team will also forfeit games scheduled for that time period. If the backboard is broken during a game, the home team will be responsible for payment and the varsity game may be suspended or rescheduled for a later date if there is no replacement backboard available.

Tournament Breakage

a. Rim Breakage: If a team breaks a rim while attempting to dunk a basketball during the pregame, that team will be responsible to pay for the replacement of the rim. If the rim is broken during the game, the cost of the replacement of the rim will be drawn from the tournament receipts unless prior arrangements have been made. If the tournament site does not have a replacement rim, the game or games will be rescheduled as soon as possible.
b. Backboard Breakage: If a team breaks a backboard while attempting to dunk a basketball during the pregame, that team will forfeit the game and be held responsible for the cost of the replacement of the backboard. If the backboard is broken during a game, the cost for the replacement of the backboard will be drawn from the tournament receipts unless prior arrangements have been made. If the tournament site does not have a replacement backboard, that game and any other scheduled to follow will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

(13) Teams are to conduct pre-game and half-time warm-up on their half of the floor only. If jogging or running is part of their warm-up drills, then it is to be confined to their half of the court to warm-up. Teams are not to run under the basket of the opposing team when entering the floor or any time during warm-ups.

(14) Regular season basketball contests (at any level of competition) will have at least a 15-minute pre-game warm-up period and when one regular season game (at any level of competition) immediately follows another on the same night and the same officials or any of the same officials work consecutive games there will be at least a 20-minute intermission between games.

(15) Controlling the Playing Court

The MHSA Executive Board urges all school administrators, athletic directors and coaches to establish a policy in their school to prohibit students from rushing onto the floor at the conclusion of athletic contests. The request for this policy comes as a result of the dangers to players, officials and fans with the rushing of uncontrolled fans onto the confined area of the gymnasium floor.

(16) For MHSA postseason play, boys shall use the Baden Perfection Elite BX7E basketball and girls shall use the Baden Perfection Elite BX6E basketball. For regular season and post season play the ball used for all levels of play shall include the NFHS authenticating mark.

(17) For MHSA regular and postseason play, it is mandatory that the official scorer wear a black and white striped shirt and that his/her location be clearly marked by an “X” twelve (12) inches long and two (2) inches wide that shall be placed on the floor out-of-bounds directly in front of the official scorer to help substitutes and officials with the proper location of the scorer.

(18) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(19) ***Schools from any classification may participate in a jamboree, which involves three or more subvarsity teams.***

The following rules apply for jamborees:

a. Varsity teams are not allowed to participate.
b. The event must be on a single day.
c. Each team can play up to three halves (2 quarters) against three different teams. Players play a maximum of six quarters.

d. Participation in a jamboree counts as one game toward the team's regular season limit of 18 games (19 for Class AA).

e. Officials are paid half the subvarsity game fee for 2- or 3-person crews for each half officiated.

II - DISTRICT, DIVISION, PLAYOFF AND STATE PARTICIPATION

(1) The playing rules as authorized and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all games.

(2) No all-state teams or players shall be picked or announced at the tournament site by either the Executive Board or tournament officials. This applies to district, divisional and state tournaments.

(3) It shall be mandatory for the winners of all classes' divisional tournaments to take part in the final playoff series. In the event that any such winners should refuse to take part as provided above, then such team shall forfeit its right to its respective tournament championship, trophies etc., and the next team in line shall take its place and receive all respective trophies and replace the defaulting team in the final playoff. Furthermore, the defaulting team shall be barred from all tournament participation the following year, unless excused by the Executive Board for such default.

(4) It is recommended that officials not be seen in the company of coaches, socially or otherwise, at any time during the course of the tournament.

(5) Classes AA, A, B, and C boys' and girls' state basketball tournaments will be held concurrently. Each classification bracket can be found on the MHSA website.

III - ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

The teams and players recognized as eligible to participate in interscholastic basketball in Montana under the rules of the Montana High School Association will be eligible to participate in the tournaments arranged. All schools of the state are cautioned to carefully check their lists of potential players and make certain that each student whose name is submitted is fully qualified under the rules.

IV - TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

No more than twelve (12) players can be in uniform for any tournament/playoff game.

V - PRETOURNAMENT PRACTICE SESSIONS

(1) The tournament floor shall not be made available for practice purposes for any tournament team during the days when the tournament is in progress (other than the regular warm-up period) or at any time during the ten-day period immediately preceding the opening of the tournament, except when a team plays the majority of its home season games on the floor selected as the tournament site. Then that team only would be permitted to practice on the tournament floor during the ten-day period prior to the opening of any Association tournament.

(2) Teams which have a bye for the first game will be allowed one open practice period during the days when the tournament is in progress prior to their first game of the tournament if scheduling at the tournament site permits.

(3) Teams which receive byes after their first game and/or have a day without a game can practice on the tournament floor with the tournament manager's approval.

VI – TOURNAMENT PRE-GAME WARM UP PERIOD

District and divisional tournament pre-game warm up periods will be twenty (20) minutes in length except Districts 4B, 5B, 2C, 3C, 9C, 11C, 12C, 13C, 14C, and Class A, Southern B, Eastern C and Western C Divisional which will have a pre-game warm-up period of fifteen (15) minutes. State tournaments will have a pre-game warm-up period of fifteen (15) minutes for all games each day.

VII - NET CUTTING

No team, coach or individual shall cut down the nets following the championship game at any tournament level or at any MHSA sanctioned basketball game.

VIII - NUMBER OF GAMES DURING ANY TOURNAMENT DAY

No team shall be permitted to play more than two games on any one day of any playoff or tournament.

IX - TOURNAMENT POLICING

(1) The local tournament manager and/or committee must make arrangements for adequate policing at the gymnasium during the course of the tournament which includes general policing of the building and grounds as well as policing of team dressing room facilities.

(2) These rules apply for district, divisional and state tournaments.

(3) Special attention must be given to insure that the game officials are afforded proper protection when leaving the floor, during the movement to the dressing room area and while in the dressing room.

X - VIDEO TAPE AT TOURNAMENTS

The MHSA Executive Board has established the following policy for videotaping at MHSA sponsored tournaments in basketball, volleyball and wrestling:

(1) All videotaping must be approved by the tournament manager.

(2) All team videotaping shall be conducted from an area designated by the tournament manager. [Refer to Rules and Regulations, Section (32) Policies for Videotaping, Cybercasting, Telecasting and Photograph of MHSA Events.]

(3) No videotaping shall be conducted for commercial purposes unless previously approved by the MHSA Executive Director.

(4) Schools or their representatives may video only those specific competitions in which their students participate.

XI - DETERMINATION OF TOURNAMENT SITES

(1) Each district and division will determine their own tournament sites and managers and are authorized to make all arrangements for the proper staging of said tournaments in accordance with the General Rules and under the MHSA finance plan. Tournament managers cannot be a coach or an official if that coach or official is participating in the tournament.

(2) The determination of sites, tournament managers and arrangements for all MHSA state tournaments will be made by the Executive Board. This determination will be made at a meeting of the Board after interested member schools or communities have been given an opportunity to submit written invitations to host an Association tournament.

(3) Following are some of the criteria which will be considered by the Board in making the determination of tournament sites: (a) adequate gym facilities; (b) adequate community facilities for team and spectator housing and eating; (c) reasonable assurance of financial success; (d) definite invitation showing local community support; (e) geographical rotation when feasible.

(4) If the Board locates a tournament in a member school's facility, an administrator of that school will usually be named tournament manager. If the state tournament is located in a facility other than a member school, the Executive Director, a

member of the MHSA staff or a member of the Executive Board will be named manager.

(5) For all state tournaments, the gym assignments for Saturday morning contests will not be determined until after the Friday semifinal games are completed. The following factors will be used to determine which games are played at the main tournament site and which games are played at the secondary site:
a. A team will not play in their home gym.
b. Different gender teams from the same school should not play at separate locations.
c. Gym capacity can be considered for crowd size.

XII - TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS, CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The tournament program rights for all district and divisional programs will be determined by the respective district or division. The tournament program rights for all state tournaments will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

(2) The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons, etc.

(3) At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events.

(4) Corporate sponsorship of any postseason event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas, i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.
Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

XIII - DISTRICT/DIVISIONAL CHALLENGE GAMES

In the event of a district or divisional challenge game being necessary, the MHSA Executive Director can select a neutral site for the game that is geographically located so as to require the least amount of travel necessary for both teams involved in the challenge contest.

XIV - TOURNAMENT FINANCE PLAN

(1) After each district, divisional or state tournament the tournament manager shall remit to the MHSA Executive Director a complete financial report of the tournament within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the event.

(2) The Executive Board points out that the local community definitely profits from the tournaments in three ways: (a) all concessions of the tournaments are normally given to local organizations; (b) local communities profit considerably through income at hotels, motels, restaurants and stores; (c) the local school is under no expense to send its teams to the tournament.

(3) The host school does not underwrite the expense of the tournament but is obligated to do its best to see to it that the gross receipts are such that allowable expenses are paid in full.

(4) Pretournament or post-tournament playoff games are considered part of the tournament, and therefore, all receipts and expenses of these games are part of the tournament financial report.

Allowable Tournament Expenses

Charges against the tournament will stand for payment in the following order:

(1) Referees' fees and expenses.

(2) Basketball - only one may be charged against the district tournament. (The basketballs for all divisional and for all state tournaments will be furnished by the MHSA office at no charge.)

(3) Normal administrative expenses. (Printing tickets, scorebook, one set of nets, advertising, signs, postage, telephone, clerical, scorer and timer.)

(4) Use of facility charges (rental), shall include all charges, if any, for the following: extra custodial service, utilities, ticket sales, ticket takers, police/security, door guards, ushers, parking attendants, first aid room and towel service.

(5) Team expenses are to be computed as follows:

a. In addition to the certified players on the tournament roster (a maximum of twelve) per diem will be allowed for four additional persons at $45.00 per day for a maximum of 16 persons (12 players, 2 managers, 2 coaches) plus travel expense allowance of $2.50 per mile for one round trip for each school participating.
b. The decision to stay at the tournament site or to commute rests with each school. If a school elects to commute to the tournament site, any or all days the tournament is in session, they will be paid expenses as follows:
1. $2.50 per mile for each round trip, maximum of one round trip per day, plus $20.00 a day per person, to a maximum of 16, for meal allowance for each day they commute while the tournament is in session if the team is competing those days or has a bye and has a scheduled practice session approved by the tournament manager on the tournament floor. If a team commutes to the tournament site and does not have a game, they do not receive mileage or per diem for that day. If both genders commute on one bus the team competing receives mileage and per diem accordingly.
2. For the days when the team stays overnight at the tournament site, the regular schedule of $45.00 applies. If both genders traveled on one bus and are staying overnight at the tournament site they will receive $45.00 per day for the days they stay overnight even if they don't play on a particular day when the tournament is in session.
3. No expenses are paid for the day following the tournament.
c. For all classes, one additional day per diem will be allowed if the team stays overnight an extra night preceding the state tournament dates.

For all tournaments in Classes A & C and for district and divisional tournaments in Class B, one additional day per diem will be allowed if travel distance is more than 200 miles one way, if the team stays overnight an extra night preceding the tournament dates. Also, one additional day per diem will be allowed if the team plays before noon and stays overnight an extra night preceding the tournament dates.
d. Teams required to report to the tournament site a day early for a playoff game will be entitled to an extra day per diem at $20.00 or $45.00 whichever applies.
e. If, after a team is eliminated from tournament play, they leave before completion of the tournament play, they will receive one day less per diem than they otherwise are entitled to receive under this schedule.
f. Teams located at the tournament site will not receive any mileage or per diem.
g. Participating teams required to remain at the tournament site for a playoff game will be entitled to two additional days per diem. If participating teams do not remain at the

tournament site, but return home and then travel to the playoff game, they will be entitled to an additional round trip mileage and $20.00 for 16 persons for other expenses.

h. In computing miles traveled, the shortest paved route open to travel as listed on the current official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways will be the mileage used.
Note: No guarantee is made that teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

Non-allowable Tournament Expenses

(1) Proper policing of hotels.

(2) Proper timing and scoring equipment.

(3) Adequate dressing room and shower facilities.

Established Ticket Prices for District, Division and State Tournaments

(1) Each district and division in each classification shall determine its own ticket prices for each tournament for both boys and girls.

(2) The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all boys' and girls' state tournaments.

All Classes Combined Boys' & Girls' Tournament

All-Session Tickets		Thursday or Friday All-Day Tickets	
Adult	$42.00	Adult	$18.00
Student	$26.00	Student	$11.00
		Thursday or Friday After 6 PM	
		Adult	$10.00
		Student	$8.00
Saturday Morning Tickets		Saturday Evening Tickets	
Adult	$10.00	Adult	$10.00
Student	$8.00	Student	$8.00

XV - SELECTION OF OFFICIALS

Refer to the MOA section for procedure for selection of officials to work basketball tournaments.

XVI - SWITCHING OF BRACKETS

Teams involved in MHSA tournaments shall be notified no later than Tuesday of tournament week if there is a change in brackets.

XVII - POLICY FOR TOURNAMENT PASSES

The Association has established the following policy for tournament passes which shall be adhered to by all tournament managers.

(1) For school administrators – twenty-four (24) all-session (reserved seat if used) tickets when one team qualifies per school. When two teams qualify, an additional six (6) passes shall be given for a total of thirty (30). If school's co-op the host school will receive the twenty-four (24) or thirty (30) administrative tickets and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets. These complimentary tickets are to be distributed by the superintendent to the principal, coaches, band directors, school board chairpersons, bus drivers, cheerleading coaches, sponsors of half-time entertainment etc., and maybe spouses of some.

(2) For players - twelve passes for players and four for managers (total of sixteen).

(3) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(4) For radio - three passes to each station given permission to broadcast the tournament or game. The game (or games) must be broadcast in its (or their) entirety.

(5) For media other than radio

a. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
b. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
c. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
d. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

(6) For referees - two passes to each referee working the tournament.

XVIII - DISTRICT AND DIVISION ORGANIZATION

(1) Each district in Classes B and C and each division in Classes AA and A should organize to transact such business as may come under its jurisdiction. Such organization may transact any business at their meetings which does not conflict with the Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and rules and regulations adopted by the MHSA Executive Board. District and division dues may be voted if such dues are used in the carrying out of district and division organization and plans. If dues are voted, it must be understood that they are voted in addition to the annual dues of the Association. Each should elect a full complement of officers to carry out such work as may come under its jurisdiction.

(2) While the management and general arrangements of Class B and Class C districts and all divisional tournaments are left to each district and division, all officers are cautioned to adopt such rules and regulations as are consistent and fair to all schools within the district or division. No attempts to boycott or discriminate against individual schools will be allowed. Tournament committees and officials are cautioned not to select a tournament site unless the community or school sponsoring such a tournament has adequate facilities and housing conditions to warrant staging the event. This should particularly include an adequate gymnasium with all locker and shower facilities and sufficient hotel/motel accommodations to properly house all teams as well as patrons who are in attendance.

(3) In order that district and divisional officers may be furnished with tournament and other Association information, it is necessary that a list of officers elected for the current year be sent immediately to the MHSA Executive Director. The president or secretary of each district will be responsible for furnishing this information at the earliest possible date along with tournament sites.

(4) At the conclusion of respective tournaments, the secretary or tournament manager is responsible for furnishing a complete financial report of the tournament to the MHSA Executive Director.

XIX - CLASS AA BASKETBALL PROGRAM - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

(2) The Class AA schools will be charged with the responsibility of playoff structure and seeding.

(3) Playoff structure is for both boys and girls and will be held each year. Each division will have charge of the operation and management of its respective playoffs as to times and sites, and with other arrangements in accordance with the standard

tournament plan as set for all tournaments and outlined in this handbook.

(4) Seeding for Class AA playoffs will be determined by AA conference policy.

Playoffs for Eastern and Western Divisions
#1 – Bye (1st seed at state)
#2 – Bye (2nd seed at state)
#3 – Plays #6 (at #3's site)
#4 – Plays #5 (at #4's site)
#5 – Plays #4 (at #4's site)
#6 – Plays #3 (at #3's site)

(5) The dates for playoff games will be determined by the AA conference.

(6) Each division's seeding will be as follows for advancement to the state tournaments:

Seeding for Eastern and Western Divisions
#1 – 1st place in the division
#2 – 2nd place in the division
#3 – Next highest remaining seed in the division
#4 – Last remaining seed in the division

(7) Seeding for the Class AA state tournaments will be as follows:

Bracket I 2nd place Western vs. 3rd place Eastern
1st place Eastern vs. 4th place Western

Bracket II 2nd place Eastern vs. 3rd place Western
1st place Western vs. 4th place Eastern

Brackets I and II shall alternate each year. Brackets shall be switched when the host city has an entry in the state tournament so the host city's team will play in the evening session. When the host city has two teams in the tournament and they are in opposite brackets, the brackets shall remain the same. If more than two host city teams are in the tournament, then the bracket with the most host city teams shall be played in the evening. The order of games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

XX - CLASS A BASKETBALL PROGRAM - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

(2) The Class A schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility for divisional tournament seeding. Possible options include but are not limited to:

a) All teams advance to divisional tournaments.
b) Playoff games in which the number of teams advancing from each conference are determined by the division.
c) A conference tournament may be conducted to determine divisional seeding or conferences may choose to seed teams directly to the divisional tournament.

Divisions must inform the MHSA office of their divisional seeding plans.

(3) Each of the two divisions will be responsible for the operation and management of its divisional tournaments. Each will be responsible for the selection of the tournament sites and tournament managers, and the financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Standard Tournament Finance Plan as set up for all tournaments. In the event of any ties in conference standings, the division will be responsible to determine the seeding in its divisional tournaments.

Western Division

Bracket I 2nd place NW vs. highest remaining SW seed
1st place SW vs. lowest remaining NW seed

Bracket II 1st place NW vs. lowest remaining SW seed
2nd place SW vs. highest remaining NW seed

Brackets I and II shall alternate each year.

Eastern Division

Bracket I 1st place NE vs. 4th place SE
2nd place SE vs. 3rd place NE
Bracket II 3rd place SE vs. 2nd place NE
1st place SE vs. 4th place NE

Brackets I and II shall alternate each year.

(4) The dates for the divisional and state tournaments will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(5) Seeding for Class A state tournaments will be as follows:

Bracket I 2nd place Eastern vs. 3rd place Western
1st place Western vs. 4th place Eastern

Bracket II 2nd place Western vs. 3rd place Eastern
1st place Eastern vs. 4th place Western

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of the games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

XXI - CLASS B BASKETBALL PROGRAM - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class B.

(2) The Class B schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility for divisional tournament seeding. Possible options include but are not limited to:

a) All teams advance to divisional tournaments.
b) Playoff games in which the number of teams advancing from each district are determined by the division.
c) District tournament.

Divisions must inform the MHSA office of their divisional seeding plans.

(3) In the event of any ties in conference standings, the division will be responsible to determine seeding in its district tournaments or playoff games. Each district will advance teams to the divisional tournament and be seeded according to the following plan:

Northern Division

Bracket I 1st place District 1B vs. 5th place District 1B
3rd place District 1B vs. 2nd place District 2B

Bracket II 2nd place District 1B vs. 3rd place District 2B
4th place District 1B vs. 1st place District 2B

Southern Division

2026-27

Bracket I Game 1: 3rd place Dist. 4B vs. 3rd place Dist. 3B
Game 2: 1st place Dist. 4B vs. 3rd place Dist. 5B
Game 3: 1st place Dist. 3B vs. 2nd place Dist. 5B

Bracket II Game 4: 2nd place Dist. 3B vs. 2nd place Dist. 4B
Game 5: 1st place Dist. 5B vs. Winner of Game 1

2027-28

Bracket I Game 1: 3rd place Dist. 3B vs. 3rd place Dist. 5B
Game 2: 1st place Dist. 3B vs. 3rd place Dist. 4B
Game 3: 1st place Dist. 5B vs. 2nd place Dist. 4B

Bracket II Game 4: 2nd place Dist. 5B vs. 2nd place Dist. 3B
Game 5: 1st place Dist. 4B vs. Winner of Game 1

2028-29

Bracket I Game 1: 3rd place Dist. 5B vs. 3rd place Dist. 4B
Game 2: 1st place Dist. 5B vs. 3rd place Dist. 3B
Game 3: 1st place Dist. 4B vs. 2nd place Dist. 3B

Bracket II Game 4: 2nd place Dist. 4B vs. 2nd place Dist. 5B

Game 5: 1st place Dist. 3B vs. Winner of Game 1

Western Division

Bracket I 1st place District 6B vs. 4th place District 7B
3rd place District 6B vs. 2nd place District 7B

Bracket II 1st place District 7B vs. 4th place District 6B
3rd place District 7B vs. 2nd place District 6B

For the Northern and Western Divisions Brackets I and II shall alternate each year.

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

(4) District Challenge Games – A challenge game will be allowed in district tournaments where only two teams advance to the divisional tournament. No challenge game is permitted in the districts where three or more teams will advance to the divisional tournaments.

If a challenge game is held, three of the regular district tournament officials must be used to officiate this challenge game. If the tournament ends on Saturday night, this challenge game must be played on Monday following the completion of the regular tournament and must be played on the tournament floor.

Exception: A change in site may be made by the MHSA Executive Director or his/her assistants to a site that is relatively centrally located between the two schools involved. This would permit the district tournament challenge game to be played on a floor other than the tournament site.

Receipts and expenses from this challenge game are part of the regular tournament receipts and expenses. Second and third place trophies must be presented on the basis of this game.

(5) Each of the three divisions will be responsible for the operation and management of its divisional tournaments. Each will be responsible for the selection of the tournament sites and tournament managers, and the financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Standard Tournament Finance Plan as set up for all tournaments.

(6) Divisional Challenge Games - A challenge game will be allowed in divisional tournaments where only two teams advance to the state tournament.
Three of the regular divisional tournament officials must be used to officiate this challenge game. If the tournament ends on Saturday night, this challenge game must be played on Monday following the completion of the regular tournament and must be played on the tournament floor.

A change in the site may be made by the MHSA Executive Director or one of his/her assistants to a site that is relatively centrally located between the two schools. This would permit the thirteenth or challenge game to be played on a floor other than the tournament site.
Receipts and expenses of this challenge game are part of the regular tournament receipts and expenses. Second and third place trophies must be presented on the basis of this game.

(7) The dates of district, divisional and state tournaments will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(8) Seeding for the Class B state tournaments will be as follows:

2026-27

Bracket I 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 3rd place Southern

Bracket II 1st place Southern vs. 3rd place Northern
2nd place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

2027-28

Bracket I 1st place Southern vs. 3rd place Northern
2nd place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 3rd place Southern

2028-29

Bracket I 1st place Western vs. 4th place Southern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II 1st place Northern vs. 3rd place Southern
2nd place Southern vs. 2nd place Western

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of the games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

XXII - CLASS C BASKETBALL PROGRAM - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class C.

(2) The Class C schools in each district will be charged with the responsibility for district tournament seeding.

(3) Each district will hold a district tournament or have playoff games each year to determine the teams that will advance to an eight- or nine-team divisional tournament. Each district will be responsible for selecting the tournament sites and managers. In the event of any ties in conference standings, the district will be responsible to determine seeding in its district tournaments. Also, each will be responsible for financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Tournament Finance Plan.

(4) Each of the four divisions will be responsible for the operation and management of its divisional tournament. Each will be responsible for the selection of the tournament sites and tournament managers and the financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Standard Tournament Finance Plan as set for all tournaments. Each division will send two teams to the state tournament.

(5) Challenge Games - A challenge game will be allowed in district tournaments where only two teams advance to the divisional tournament, unless the Class C districts vote before the opening of the tournament not to permit the playoff game. No challenge game is permitted in the districts where three teams will advance to the divisional tournaments.

If a challenge game is held, three of the regular district tournament officials must be used to officiate this challenge game. If the tournament ends on Saturday night, this challenge game must be played on Monday following the completion of the regular tournament and must be played on the tournament floor.

Receipts and expenses of this challenge game are part of the regular tournament receipts and expenses. Second and third place trophies must be presented on the basis of this game.

(6) In the four Class C divisional tournaments, if the third place team has not met the second place team in divisional tournament play, then a challenge game must be held to determine second place and also the two teams that advance to the state tournament. The regulations and conditions in the two paragraphs immediately above concerning challenge games in district tournaments will apply in divisional tournaments.

Exception: A change in the site may be made by the MHSA Executive Director or his/her assistants to a site that is relatively centrally located between the two schools involved. This would permit the challenge game to be played on a floor other than the tournament site.

(7) Teams must be seeded in the divisional tournaments according to the brackets listed on the MHSA website.

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

(8) Seeding for the Class C state tournaments will be as follows:

2026-27

Bracket I 1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern

2027-28

Bracket I 1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II 1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

2028-29

Bracket I 1st place Western vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Eastern

Bracket II 1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Northern

2029-30

Bracket I 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II 1st place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern

2030-31

Bracket I 1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II 1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Eastern

2031-32

Bracket I 1st place Western vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Eastern

2032-33

Bracket I 1st place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern

Bracket II 1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western

2033-34

Bracket I 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Southern
Bracket II 1st place Western vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Eastern

2034-35

Bracket I 1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Southern

2035-36

Bracket I 1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern

Bracket II 1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern

2036-37

Bracket I 1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II 1st place Western vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Southern

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of the games within the brackets may not be switched for any reason.

CROSS COUNTRY

DATE FOR STATE CROSS COUNTRY MEET

All Classes ..... October 24

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool cross country activities among member schools for both boys and girls.

(2) All cross country meets shall be conducted under the Cross Country Rules of the National Federation except when modified by the Association Rules.

(3) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any meets may be held.

(4) No individual shall compete in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of cross country practice and at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable contest. The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a meet does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a meet that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a meet that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a meet does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(5) No student shall participate in more than ten (10) meets excluding Association sponsored meets.

No individual may participate in an out-of-state invitation-only meet unless approved by the MHSA Executive Director. Any out-of-state participation approved under these criteria will count toward the ten-meet limit for the particular student.

For an athlete to be eligible to compete in the State Cross Country Meet he/she must compete in at least two (2) Association-sanctioned meets during the regular cross country season. Only a medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempt from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHSA Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.

Also, athletes must meet a minimum time in at least one regular season cross country meet prior to participation in the State Cross Country Meet. The minimum times for Classes AA, A, **B** and C are: ***25:00 minutes for boys and 30:00 minutes for girls***. Athletes who do not meet the required performance time at least once during regular season competition are not eligible for participation at the state meet and cannot be entered as a team member or alternate.

The cross country season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the state meet.

(6) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to participate.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

(7) Interstate Meets: Any interstate meet must be sanctioned as set forth in Rule 16 in the Association General Rules and Regulations before any member school may participate.

(8) All participants are prohibited from wearing any garments with alcohol or tobacco advertisements, profanity or other inappropriate messages at cross country meets. It is the responsibility of coaches and meet directors to ensure that inappropriate apparel be removed. Participants who fail to remove inappropriate apparel on request to do so shall be disqualified from participation in the meet.

(9) Event Programs, Concessions and Corporate Sponsors

A. The program rights for all state meets will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

B. The concession rights for any state meet must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

C. Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including foodor beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas; i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

(10) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(11) A state cross country meet participant may only wear one watch during competition. The watch must be unadorned and may be worn only on the wrist.

II – CLASSIFICATION OF CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAMS - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) Schools are classified into the following classes: AA, A, B and C. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments.

III - STATE MEETS

(1) The Executive Board shall be responsible for staging the state cross country meet for all four classes. They shall determine the sites, set the dates and appoint the state cross country meet managers. The managers shall be responsible to the Executive Board to conduct the state cross country meets in accordance with the rules of the Montana High School Association.

(2) Judges and other meet officials shall be selected by the meet managers subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

(3) Each member school may send a boys and/or girls team to the state meet. Each member school's boys' and/or girls' team(s) may enter seven (7) athletes and two (2) alternates in the state meet.

A. Classification:
The State Cross Country Meet for boys and girls will be run in four classifications, namely, AA, A, B and C, the same as basketball classifications.

B. Distance: boys' and girls' races will be five (5) kilometers.

C. Scoring:
Team — Total points scored by the first five (5) contestants of a team will count as the team score for Classes AA, A and B. Total points scored by the first three (3) contestants of a team will count as the team score for Class C.

Individual — If fewer than five (5) contestants per school participate in Classes AA, A and B, and fewer than three (3) contestants per school participate in Class C, contestants may compete for individual honors.

In Classes AA, A and B, if a school enters the state meet and does not have the minimum number of runners for team's honors consideration, then the individual(s) from the incomplete team that placed holds his/her spot and no one moves up. This means that the place a runner finishes in a race remains frozen and another team's individual cannot move into that position.

In Class C, if fewer than three competitors of a team finish, the places of all members of that team shall be disregarded and team scores reranked.

D. Order of Competition:
Each classification's boys' and girls' races will alternate in the order of competition with the boys' and girls' races of another classification.

2026-27	**2027-28**	**2028-29**	**2029-30**
C-Girls	B-Boys	A-Girls	AA-Boys
AA-Girls	C-Boys	B-Girls	A-Boys
C-Boys	B-Girls	A-Boys	AA-Girls
AA-Boys	C-Girls	B-Boys	A-Girls
A-Girls	AA-Boys	C-Girls	B-Boys
B-Girls	A-Boys	AA-Girls	C-Boys
A-Boys	AA-Girls	C-Boys	B-Girls
B-Boys	A-Girls	AA-Boys	C-Girls

2030-31	**2031-32**	**2032-33**	**2033-34**
AA-Girls	C-Boys	B-Girls	A-Boys
A-Girls	AA-Boys	C-Girls	B-Boys
AA-Boys	C-Girls	B-Boys	A-Girls
A-Boys	AA-Girls	C-Boys	B-Girls
B-Girls	A-Boys	AA-Girls	C-Boys
C-Girls	B-Boys	A-Girls	AA-Boys
B-Boys	A-Girls	AA-Boys	C-Girls
C-Boys	B-Girls	A-Boys	AA-Girls

E. Rule 8 of the current edition of the National Federation Track and Field/Cross Country Rules will be followed for boys' and girls' cross country state meets except when modified by the Association Rules.

(4) Each MHSA cross country school is required to share proportionally in the cost of the state cross country meet by paying a fee per qualifying participant. The MHSA Executive Board has set a $7.00 fee per participant in the State Cross Country Meet. [Alternates are not considered participants.]

(5) A school will be fined $100 for late or incorrect entries at the State Cross Country Meet.

FOOTBALL

First Round Playoffs
Classes AA, A, B, Eight-Player and Six-Player ..... October 30 - 31

Quarter Final Playoffs
Classes AA, A, B, Eight-Player and Six-Player .....November 6-7

Semi-final Playoffs
Classes AA, A, B, Eight-Player and Six-Player .....November 13-14

State Championship Games
Classes AA, A, B, Eight-Player and Six-Player .....November 20-21

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) There shall be no spring football for classes of schools.

(2) It is mandatory that a stretcher or backboard be a part of the regular football field equipment for every football game.

(3) It is recommended that the home team be responsible for seeing that a doctor is available on the football field for all season football games.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of ten (10) days of football practice of at least one practice session per day on ten different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial ten (10) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a game does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a game that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a game that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a game does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial ten (10) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional five (5) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(5) Ten (10) football games will be the maximum limit for all football classifications exclusive of Association-sponsored playoffs.

(6) The first three days of football practice will be a period of acclimation with no contact and no pads. The only football equipment to be used is shoes and helmets. Non-contact is defined as no student-to-student contact. However, participants may contact dummies/shields held by others. [Also see Specialized Camp Rule, Rules & Regulations].

(7) No football player shall be allowed to participate in more than eight (8) quarters per week (Sunday to Sunday) nor in more than two (2) games within a 48-hour period.

INTERPRETATION
Participation in one play in a game would constitute one (1) quarter.

1. **Club team participation – During the MHSA football season, no more than five (5) rostered participants in a school's program in 11-player, no more than four (4) in 8-player or no more than three (3) in 6-player can compete in an outside football event on the same team.**

(8) Contact limitations: during the regular season and postseason, football practice per team shall not exceed more than ninety (90) minutes of contact practice per week. During the initial ten practices (first two weeks of practice only) one intra-squad scrimmage is exempt from the ninety (90) minutes of contact.

Levels of Contact Defined:

The following levels do not count toward the 90-minute limit:

A. Air – players run a drill unopposed without contact.

B. Bags – drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface.

C. Control – drill is run at assigned speed until the moment of contact; one player is predetermined the "winner" by the coach. Contact remains above the waist and players stay on their feet.

The following levels count toward the 90-minute limit:

D. Thud – drill is run at assigned speed through the moment of contact; no predetermined "winner." Contact remains above the waist, players stay on their feet and a quick whistle end the drill.

E. Live Action – drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground.

INTERPRETATION
A team may continue to dress in full pads for practice, but may only participate in "thud" drills, "live action" drills and game-like simulations no more than ninety minutes per team per week. It is assumed that when players are in shells (shorts, shoulder pads and helmets) no contact or simulations will occur. A team may participate in "air', "bags" and "control drills and simulations at any point.

(9) The football season officially ends with the last regularly scheduled game or the state championship game of each respective classification.

(10) Contests interrupted because of events beyond the control of the responsible school administrative authority shall be continued from the point of interruption, unless the teams agree to terminate the contest with the existing score. Regular season contests continued from the point of interruption must be rescheduled before playoff competition begins. Playoff contests continued from the point of interruption must be rescheduled before the next playoff contest. Schools unable to mutually agree on contest dates must contact the MHSA office for a determination.

(11) The playing rules as adopted and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all games. By state association adoption the coin toss shall occur three (3) minutes prior to the game.

(12) Halftime will be twelve (12) minutes with a mandatory additional three (3) minute warm-up period. The only exceptions to this rule are homecoming games, parents' nights etc.

(13) Schools shall purchase sideline clips for chain crews and officials to use during games.

(14) When the teams of two schools have met during the football season in the past five years, the school whose team last played on the field of the other shall have prior claim to this particular season's game on its own field. By mutual agreement other arrangements may be made, but the terms of this mutual agreement should be set down in written contract and/or master schedule. Where no such written contract or master schedule can be shown, the Executive Board will award the game in question to the school which last played the other away from home. Where equally fair alternatives present themselves, the Executive Director shall flip a coin to determine the site of the game. The two schools abide by this determination and the penalty for failing to accept this result shall be forfeiture of the game under consideration by the school failing to comply.

The provision stated in the previous paragraph will not apply if the schools concerned reach a satisfactory agreement, or if the conference to which these schools belong has definite rules or a master schedule for season's play. For the purpose of this rule, forfeited games shall be considered as games played. A school that forfeits a football game shall lose the home field advantage of the following year to the school who received the forfeit.

(15) Games between teams from different districts and divisions are permissible at any time, provided they do not interfere with necessary elimination games, but these games will not be considered in determining district or divisional champions. Should teams which have already met during the season become the champions of their respective district or division, it will be necessary for them, if paired, to play again to determine which one will advance toward the finals for the championship in their class.

(16) If two teams end the second half of the regular playing time of any football game played in Montana with a tie score, the tie must be broken, and a winner declared. The method used to break ties is published in the National Federation football rules.

(17) Classes A, B and C: In A, B, Eight-Player or Six-Player football games, if at any time the score differential reaches 35 points or more, the clock will not be stopped when:
A. The ball goes out-of-bounds.
B. A forward pass is incomplete.
C. A fair catch is made or awarded.
D. A touchback occurs.
E. A first down is declared.
F. A score occurs, until the completion of the try. The clock will be stopped during the official's timeout between a score and the ensuing kickoff.

If the score differential falls below 35 points, normal timing procedures will be utilized.

In Class AA, this rule applies at the beginning of the ***third*** quarter in all games (varsity and sub varsity). If the score falls below 35 points, the running clock timing rules will continue to be utilized.

The clock will continue to be stopped on all other situations as specified by National Federation Rule 3.4.4 (penalty, time out, end of period).

(18) If the point differential reaches 70 points or more at any time during the second half, the game will be terminated. If the differential reaches 70 points or more in the first half, the second half will start with a free kick. The game will be terminated once the free kick is over unless the differential falls below 70 points. This rule will be followed by all classification at all levels.

(19) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any game or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered in to the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(20) Some schools schedule two games each season with another school. If both games are played within the time set for the completion of the conference season and if no signed agreement has been made regarding the bearing of these games on the championship, the first of these games shall count and the second game shall have no bearing on the conference standing. If schools want the second game to count, they should have a written agreement to that effect. If only one game is played within the time limit, it shall be decisive in determining the championship.

(21) Games arranged to break a tie in the standings in any season will in no way affect the location of games in future rotating schedules.

(22) Awards will follow the MHSA standardized awards program.

(23) All football playoff and state championship games will be conducted under the following financial arrangements and charges against the game receipts are to be paid in the order listed:

Class AA and B

A. Game officials' (referees') fees and expenses.

B. The visiting team's expenses to be paid the following schedules:
1. Mileage — $2.50 per mile, for one round trip. (In computing the number of miles traveled, the shortest paved route open to travel, as listed on the current Official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways will be the mileage used.)

2. Per diem — One day per diem allowed @ $45.00 for the persons specified when team stays overnight or one day per diem allowed @ $20.00 for the persons specified when they do not stay overnight. No per diem is ever allowed for the day after the game.

3. If the visiting team must travel more than 200 miles one way to the game site and stays overnight two nights (including game day night), they will be allowed two days @ $45.00 for the persons specified. If they do not stay over a second night they will be allowed one additional day @ $20.00 for the persons specified. In Classes AA and A, if the visiting team must travel more than 400 miles one way and they stay overnight three nights (including game day night), they will be allowed three days @ $45.00. If they stay over two nights before game day and don't stay over game day night, they will be allowed two days @ $45.00 and one day @ $20.00.

4. No expenses are paid for the day following the contest.

5. Number of persons to be paid expenses:

a. Class AA — 53 persons including players, coaches, managers and administrators.
b. Class B — 37 persons including players, coaches, managers and administrators.

C. Reasonable local expenses may be charged against the game. The host school is expected to furnish the football field already properly marked and equipped and in the best possible playing condition for the game without charge. However, because of snow removal conditions that require extra time and expense for field preparation, the host school may claim expenses up to

a maximum of $500.00 for field preparation. Schools will be required to itemize all charges. These itemizations and amounts charged are subject to review and approval.

D. If the game receipts are insufficient to pay the expenses listed in items a through c above, charges for local expenses in item c shall not be allowed and then the remaining loss shall be shared 60 percent by the host school and 40 percent by the visiting school.

E. No guarantee is made that all teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

F. For distribution of profits from all playoffs and state championships refer to By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3.

(23) The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all post season games, including state championships.

General Admission: Adults $10.00. Students $8.00. Reserved: $10.00.

(24) A financial report showing a complete itemization of income and expenses for all playoff and state championship games must be submitted to the MHSA office, using the financial report form furnished, within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the event.

(25) Refer to the MOA section for number of officials required.

(26) Emergency matters not specifically covered by the football general rules will be decided by the Executive Board of the Montana High School Association.

(27) The Wilson WTF1003B GST will be the Official Football of the MHSA. Wilson footballs are required in the state playoffs and state championship games. Schools can use the Wilson WTF1003B GST Football or any other Wilson leather, composite leather or rubber football in all state playoffs and championships. Schools do not have to use the brand-new Wilson Football that is mailed to each site week.

(28) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(29) A school may participate in a jamboree, which shall involve three or more junior varsity, sophomore and/or freshman teams in the competition (varsity teams are not allowed to compete in any jamborees).

The following rules apply for jamborees:

A. No varsity teams are allowed – even if a varsity team from a smaller classification wants to participate with sub varsity teams from a larger classification.
B. Ten practices (on ten separate days after the first allowable practice date) are required for each individual player before they can compete in a jamboree.
C. Season limits – The jamboree will count as one game towards each team's limit of ten games.
D. Quarter Rules – For any player who participates in a jamboree, it will count as four quarters towards their weekly limit of eight quarters.
E. The maximum number of plays per team is sixty offensive and sixty defensive plays per team per day.
F. Up to four teams are allowed on the same field at the same time. Teams playing on each end of the football field are allowed.
G. Coaches are not allowed to be in the huddle or on the field instructing. Coaches must be a member of the high school football coaching staff meeting all requirements set by the MHSA and school administration.
H. The hiring of MOA officials is recommended. Jamborees must have the required number of officials per classification. Coaches are allowed to officiate but cannot on-field coach even when they are officiating.
I. NFHS Football Rules apply (Examples of penalties that must be called: holding, illegal blocks; illegal formations; facemasks; horse collar tackles; pass interference; etc.)
J. The 40-second play clock between plays must be followed.
K. All players must be properly equipped.
L. No kicking game is required, but it is allowed.
M. The score and time are not required to be kept.

(30) An Eleven-Player, Eight-Player or Six-Player school may participate in a triangular, which shall involve three junior varsity, sophomore and/or freshman teams in the competition (varsity teams are not allowed to compete in any triangular). A triangular is defined as three teams coming together at a common site with each team participating against the both of the other two teams for one half (two twelve-minute quarters in Eight-Player and two ten-minute quarters in Six-Player).

The following rules apply for a triangular:

A. No varsity teams are allowed – even if a varsity team from a smaller classification wants to participate with sub varsity teams from a larger classification.
B. Ten practices (on ten separate days after the first allowable practice date) are required for each individual player before they can compete in a triangular).
C. Season Limits – The triangular will count as one game towards each team's season limit of ten games.
D. Quarter Rules – For any player who participates in a triangular, it will count as four quarters towards their weekly limit of eight quarters.
E. The maximum number of quarters per team per day is four quarters.
F. Format – Using twelve-minute quarters for Eight-Player and ten-minute quarters for Six-Player, Team A plays Team B for two quarters; Team B plays Team C for two quarters; and finally, Team A plays Team C for two quarters.
G. The hiring of MOA officials is recommended. Officials will be paid a game and a half sub varsity fee. A triangular must have the required number of officials per classification.
H. All NFHS Football Rules apply.

(31) Schools may use a visible 40-second play clock.

II - CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The concession rights for any state championship must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

(2) Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas; i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

III - COMPLIMENTARY PASS POLICY FOR POSTSEASON GAMES

The Association has established the following pass policy for football playoffs and state championship games which shall be adhered to by the host administrators. This applies to participating schools only.

(1) For school administrators - fourteen reserved seat (if available) tickets. If school's co-op, the host school will receive the fourteen administrative tickets and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets. These complimentary tickets are to be distributed by the superintendent

to the principal, band directors, school board chairpersons, bus drivers, cheerleading coaches, sponsors of half-time entertainment etc., and maybe spouses of some.

(2) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(3) For radio — three passes to each station given permission to broadcast the game.

(4) For media other than radio
A. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
B. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
C. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
D. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

These are the only complimentary passes that shall be allowed and others from non-participating schools must purchase tickets.

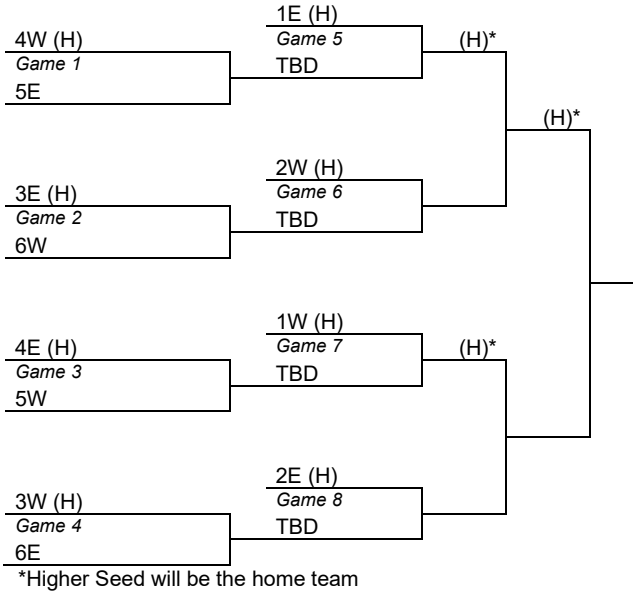
IV - CLASS AA FOOTBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

(2) The Class AA school will be charged with the responsibility of determining the number of conference games each school shall play and for organizing the season's schedule. Football games must be played as scheduled — that is, in the specific week.

(3) The breaking of ties in final standings shall be the responsibility of the Class AA conference.

(4) The sites for the Class AA football playoffs and state championship games will be determined by the Class AA conference:
2026



*Higher Seed will be the home team

A. Twelve (12) teams will qualify for the playoffs.
B. Single elimination.
C. Pairings will be available on the football postseason page at www.mhsa.org
D. Date and time of each game will be determined by mutual consent of teams involved (games to be scheduled on Fridays or Saturdays of respective weeks).
E. Ticket prices for playoff games will be in accordance with MHSA guidelines.

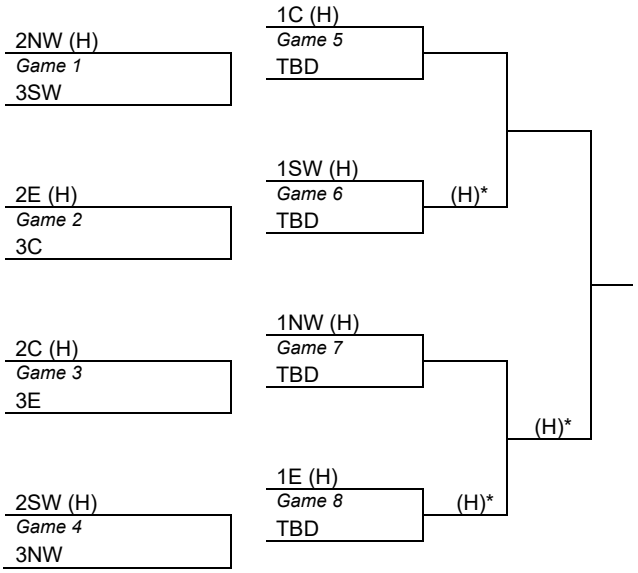
(5) The host school will stage the game under the finance plan as found in the By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3.

V - CLASS A FOOTBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

(2) The Class A schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility for determining the number of conference games each school shall play and for organizing the season's schedule for the division, to be presented to the Executive Board for approval each year. Football games must be played as scheduled, i.e. in the specific week.

(3) The playoff series leading to the state championship games will be as follows:
2026



*Higher Seed will be the home team in the first two rounds. All playoff games will be played on Friday night unless mutually agreed upon for a different day and time. Class A will determine home team in semi-finals and championship games.

Future brackets are available on the football page at www.mhsa.org.
The sites for the Class A football playoffs and state championship will be determined in the bracket and as follows – the highest remaining seeded team will host the lowest remaining seeded team in the semi-finals and championship game. Like seeds will follow the bracket.

(4) Financial arrangements for playoff games and the state tournament game are found in the By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3.

(5) All Class A football playoffs and championship games will be conducted under the following financial arrangements and charges against the game receipts are to be paid in the order listed. Financial reports on all playoffs and championship games must be filed with the MHSA.

A. Game Officials' (referees') fees and expenses.

B. Normal administrative expenses. (Printing tickets, scorebook, advertising, signs, postage, telephone, clerical, scorers and timers.)
Use of facility charges (rental), shall include all charges, if any, for the following: extra field

preparation/maintenance, utilities, ticket sales, ticket takers, police/security, entrance guards, ushers, parking attendants, first aid room and towel service.

C. The visiting team's expenses to be paid the following schedules:

1. Mileage — $2.50 per mile, for one round trip. (In computing the number of miles traveled, the shortest paved route open to travel, as listed on the current Official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways will be the mileage used.)

2. Per diem — One day per diem allowed @ $45.00 for the persons specified when team stays overnight or one day per diem allowed @ $20.00 for the persons specified when they do not stay overnight. No per diem is ever allowed for the day after the game.

3. If the visiting team must travel more than 200 miles one way to the game site and stays overnight two nights (including game day night), they will be allowed two days @ $45.00 for the persons specified. If they do not stay over a second night they will be allowed one additional day @ $20.00 for the persons specified. In Classes AA and A, if the visiting team must travel more than 400 miles one way and they stay overnight three nights (including game day night), they will be allowed three days @ $45.00. If they stay over two nights before game day and don't stay over game day night, they will be allowed two days @ $45.00 and one day @ $20.00

4. No expenses are paid for the day following the contest.

5. Number of persons to be paid expenses: 45 persons including players, coaches, managers and administrators.

E. Reasonable local expenses may be charged against the game. The host school is expected to furnish the football field already properly marked and equipped and in the best possible playing condition for the game without charge. However, because of snow removal conditions that require extra time and expense for field preparation, the host school may claim expenses up to a maximum of $500.00 for field preparation. Schools will be required to itemize all charges. These itemizations and amounts charged are subject to review and approval.

F. No guarantee is made that all teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

G. For distribution of profits from all playoffs and state championships refer to By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3.

(6) It shall be the responsibility of the host school to furnish the field properly equipped, game football, yardage chain, sideline clip, and down marker crew and electric field clock operator and staff to handle crowd, etc.

VI - CLASS B FOOTBALL PROGRAM

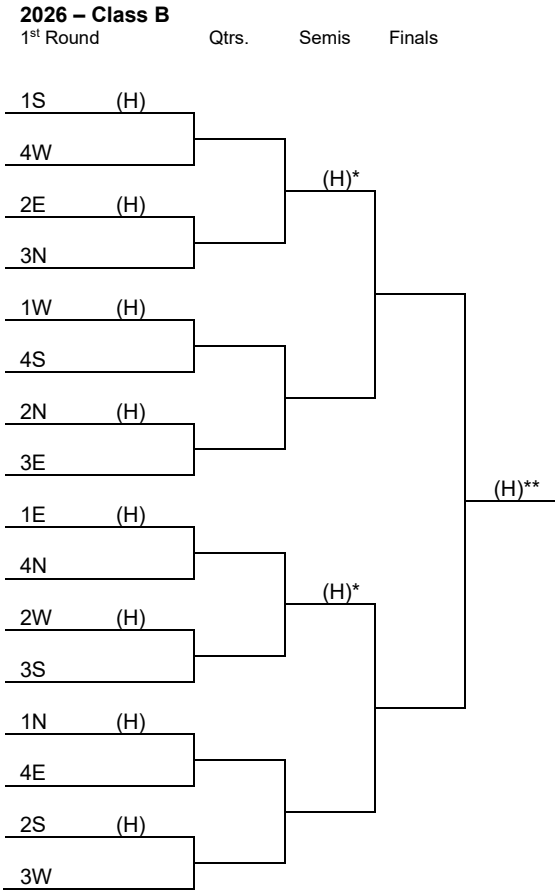
(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class B.

(2) No football cooperative contracts may exceed the maximum Class B enrollment ranges and criteria when two or more schools are combined. New applications must be filed with MHSA by February 1st of each year. The enrollment count will meet or exceed this number for two consecutive years in order to be mandated that the cooperative contract will no longer be allowed.

(3) The Class B schools in each district will be charged with the responsibility for determining the number of conference games each school shall play and for organizing the season's schedule for the district, to be presented to the Executive Board for approval each year. Each district will be responsible for determining its district champion and runner-up.

(4) There shall be a State Class B Championship Football Game each year. The state champion shall be determined by the following plan:

2026 – Class B



All playoff games will be played on Friday night at 7:00 pm unless mutually agreed upon for a different day and/or time.

The higher seed will host in rounds 1 and 2.

*Semi-final round is noted in the bracket when like-seeds play; otherwise higher seed will host.

**Championship criteria for hosting:
A. Highest seed hosts.
B. Like-seed tiebreakers:
1. Head-to-Head in current season (excluding #1 seeds)
2. Did not host previous year's championship
3. Did not host semi-final in current playoffs
4. Bracket (H)

Future brackets are available on the football page at www.mhsa.org.

(5) Financial arrangements for divisional playoff, interdivisional playoffs and state championship games are found in the By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3.

(6) Divisions are expected to abide by the General Football Rules stated in this handbook.

VII – EIGHT-PLAYER FOOTBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Eight-Player Football.

(2) To be eligible to participate in Eight-Player football, schools must have an enrollment range between 65 and 130. For schools over the 130 enrollment, a rubric will be used for consideration for 8-

player football. The Executive Board will apply the following four criteria when considering the petition:

A. Grades 8 – 11 boys' enrollment and future boys' enrollment projections.
B. Roster size from the past four years.
C. Success factor (including win/loss record and postseason success) in the current placement for the past five years.
D. Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage from OPI.

(see bylaw Article X, section 2.2 for detailed information)

(3) No football cooperative contracts may exceed the Eight-Player enrollment ranges and criteria when two or more participating member schools are combined. New applications must be filed with MHSA by October 1st of each year. The enrollment count will meet or exceed this number for two consecutive years in order to be mandated that the cooperative contract will no longer be allowed. (See Football Timeline on the MHSA website).

(4) There shall be a State Eight-Player Championship Football Game each year. The playoff series leading to the State Championship Game will be as follows:

2026 – Eight-Player

The higher seed would host each playoff game. If like seeds play each other, the following teams will host: East, South, West, North – South hosts W, N, E. West hosts N, E. North hosts East. Determining Home Site for State Championship for Like Seeds: 1. Did not host the year prior. 2. Follow the rotation above.

Future brackets are available on the football page at www.mhsa.org.

(5) The Eight-Player schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility for determining the number of season games each school shall play and for drawing up the season schedule for the division. Each division will be responsible for determining its division champion and the four teams that advance to the post season playoffs.

(6) All teams playing in a Eight-Player division must comply with one or the other of these two conditions: (a) The schools within any division have the right to establish their own plan for districting the division to determine a division or champion to represent them in the inter-division playoff game. This plan must include the scheduling of games in all districts and must come within the time limits established for division play. (b) If no such plan is arranged by the schools concerned and no statements are filed with the Executive Director, then the teams in an Eight-Player division must play every other team within their division on the master schedule. Refusal to play another team or to iron out conflicts in dates shall constitute a forfeit of all claims to consideration for a championship. Games with teams outside the division must be canceled, if necessary, to make way for a necessary game within the division involved.

(7) All Eight-Player football playoff and state championship games will be played on Saturday afternoon unless another time is mutually agreed upon by the two schools involved.

(8) Divisions are expected to abide by the General Football Rules stated in the Handbook.

(9) **Eight-Player Football Rule Differences**: Eleven-player rules are used for eight-player football with modifications found in the National Federation Football Rule Book.

(10) All Eight-Player football playoff and championship games will be conducted under the following financial arrangements and charges against the game receipts are to be paid in the order listed. Financial reports on all playoffs and championship games must be filed with the MHSA.

A. Game officials (referees) fees and expenses.
B. The visiting team's expenses to be paid the following schedules:
   1. Mileage — $2.50 per mile, for one round trip. (In computing the number of miles traveled, the shortest paved route open to travel, as listed on the current Official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways will be the mileage used.)
   2. Per diem
      a) One day per diem allowed @$10.00 if round trip mileage does not exceed 500 miles.
      b) One day per diem allowed @ $15.00 for the persons specified when they do not stay overnight, and the round-trip mileage exceeds 500 miles.
      c) One day per diem allowed @ $30.00 for the persons specified when team stays overnight, and round-trip mileage exceeds 500 miles.
      d) If the visiting team travel exceeds round trip mileage of 1000 miles, expenses allowed include:
         1) One day per diem allowed up to two days @ $30.00
         2) If they do not wish to stay over a second night, they will be allowed one additional day @ $15.00 per diem.
   3. No expenses are paid for the day following the contest.
   4. Number of persons to be paid in eight-player football – expenses — 28 persons including players, coaches, managers and administrators.
C. It will be the home team's responsibility to pay the officials. The expenses paid to schools will be paid as gate receipts allow. No school will be required to pay expenses beyond the income from the gate receipts.
D. Host team may retain a maximum of $1500.00 from game income to cover costs for paying clock keeper, gate/ticket personnel, chain crew, snow removal or any other costs incurred by the host team. All costs must be itemized on the financial report.

Any game income received beyond sections A, B, C and including monies not used from section D will be sent to the MHSA and distributed to eight-player football schools as per By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3. No guarantee is made that all teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

VIII - SIX-PLAYER FOOTBALL

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Six-Player Football.

(2) To be eligible to participate in Six-Player football, schools must be Class C and have a high school enrollment at or below 65 students. For schools over the 65 enrollment, a rubric will be used for consideration for 6-player football. The Executive Board will apply the following four criteria when considering the petition:

A. Grades 8 – 11 boys' enrollment and future boys' enrollment projections.
B. Roster size from the past four years.
C. Success factor (including win/loss record and postseason success) in the current placement for the past five years.
D. Free and Reduced Lunch Percentage from OPI

(see bylaw Article X, section 2.2 for detailed information)

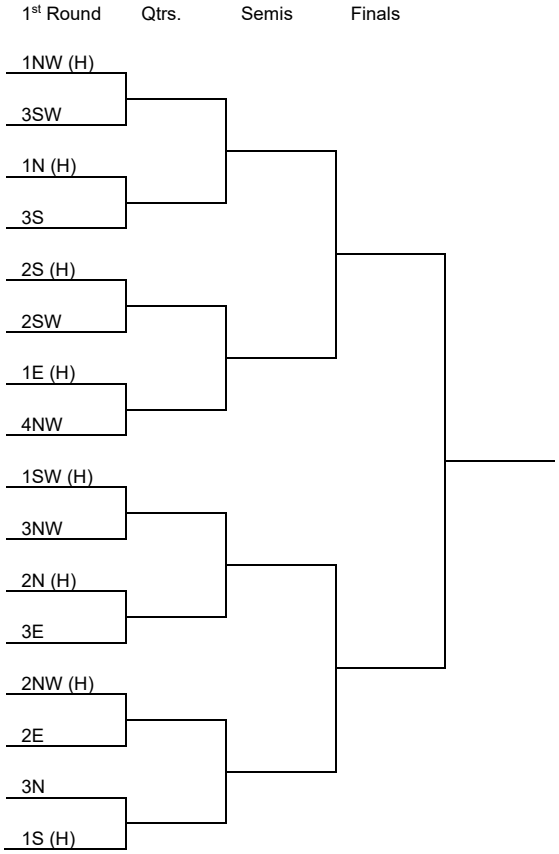
(3) No football cooperative contracts may exceed the Class C Six-Player enrollment ranges and criteria when two or more participating member schools are combined. New applications must be filed with MHSA by October 1st of each year. The enrollment count will meet or exceed this number for two consecutive years in order to be mandated to switch to Eight-Player football. (See Football Timeline on the MHSA website).

(4) Six-Player football rules as outlined in the National Federation Football Rule Book will be used. Six-Player football rules difference:

A. Four officials are required for six-player varsity football.

(5) There will be a state Class C Six-Player championship football game each year. The playoff series leading to the state championship will be as follows:

2026 – Six-Player



The higher seed will host each playoff game. If like seeds play each other, the plan for which teams hosts is as follows: Northwest hosts S, N, SW, E. South hosts N, SW, E. North hosts SW, E. Southwest hosts East.

Future brackets are available on the football page at www.mhsa.org.

(6) All Class C six-player football playoff and state championship games will be played on Saturday afternoon unless another time is mutually agreed upon by the two schools involved.

(7) All six-player football playoff and championship games will be conducted under the following financial arrangements and charges against the game receipts are to be paid in the order listed. Financial reports on all playoffs and championship games must be filed with the MHSA.

A. Game officials (referees) fees and expenses.
B. Mileage - $2.50 per mile, for one round trip.
C. It will be the home team's responsibility to pay the officials. The mileage to schools will be paid as gate receipts allow. No school will be required to pay mileage beyond the income from the gate receipts.
D. Host team may retain a maximum of $500.00 from game income to cover costs for paying clock keeper, gate/ticket personnel, chain crew or any other costs incurred by the host team. All costs must be itemized in the financial report.

Any game income received beyond sections A, B, C and including monies not used from section D will be sent to the MHSA and distributed to six-player football schools as per By-Laws, Article I, Section 2.3.

GOLF

STATE TOURNAMENT DATES

Class AA ..... October 1-2
Class A..... October 2-3
Classes B..... May 21-22
Classes C..... May 18-19

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The MHSA recognizes golf as an interscholastic high school sport for both boys and girls.

(2) Any high school student participating in any meets or tournaments in golf must meet all MHSA eligibility requirements, including the award and amateur rules. USGA playing rules will be used for all competitions.

(3) Participants will wear the following school-approved appropriate golf attire (uniform to include top and bottom garments): shirts will be full-length with finished edges with collars, traditional crewneck, v-neck or mock-turtle neck design. Sleeveless shirts must extend from the base of the neck to the top of the shoulder on each side. Halter tops, spaghetti straps and tank tops will not be permitted. Long pants, shorts and skirts must be worn at the waist and be appropriately sized for the individual. Shorts and skirts must have a minimum five-inch inseam. All skorts (a pair of compression shorts having a flap or panel across the front and back to resemble a skirt) are legal bottom garments. The skort must be appropriately sized for the individual, worn as the manufacturer intended, and the flap or panel must be long enough to cover the compression shorts.

Adornments on clothing or headwear will not advertise drugs or alcohol or contain offensive material as deemed inappropriate by the meet director or tournament manager. Participants must be appropriately attired during play or they will be disqualified.

The meet director has the right to waive the uniform rule due to inclement weather; however, each participant must be dressed appropriately during all competition.

(4) Golf shall be divided into four classifications: Class AA, Class A, Class B and Class C. Golf for Classes AA and A is in the fall; golf for Classes B and C is in the spring.

(5) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any match can be played. No individual shall play in any association golf contest until he/she has a minimum of two (2) days of practice of at least one practice session per day on two (2) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday) prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial two (2) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (5), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a competition does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a competition that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a competition that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a golf date does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her two days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury or academic ineligibility for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional one (1) day and to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA postseason play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(6) The golf season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(7) Twelve (12) dates of competition shall be the maximum number per individual golfer excluding association sponsored tournaments. A two-day tournament counts as two days of competition towards the season limitations.

(8) For an athlete to be eligible to compete in postseason competition, he/she must compete in at least two (2) Association-sanctioned meets during the regular MHSA golf season. Only a medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempted from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHSA Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.

(9) There is no stroke limit per hole in all MHSA tournaments.

(10) The use of any communication devices by participants (i.e. cell phones, walkie-talkies, or headphones) during any golf tournament is prohibited. The timeframe is from being called to teeing off on the first designated hole until that player's signed card is turned into the scoring table. The penalty for the first infraction is the player(s) using such device(s) will incur a two stroke penalty. Any further infraction by the same player(s) will incur immediate disqualification from the tournament, to include the second day if a second infraction occurs on day one of a two-day tournament.

(11) Players are allowed to use USGA-approved measuring devices during MHSA events. In using these devices, players can share distance information with fellow competitors without violating any USGA or MHSA tournament rules. Sharing distance information is NOT considered giving advice. Legal measuring devices must be USGA-approved and only measure distance. The penalty for the first infraction is the player(s) using such device(s) will incur a two stroke penalty. Any further infraction by the same player(s) will incur immediate disqualification from the tournament, to include the second day if a second infraction occurs on day one of a two-day tournament.

(12) MHSA Golf Cart Policy for Participants - Except as required by applicable law, participants may not use golf carts in MHSA golf events. The MHSA will evaluate, on a case-by-case basis, any request to use a golf cart in MHSA golf events due to a claimed disability. In order for the MHSA to evaluate such requests, the student must submit medical

documentation regarding the exact nature of the disability and how that disability prevents the student from walking during a round. In addition, the student must complete the MHSA Golf Cart Application. An exemption is valid for one calendar year; the medical information and MHSA Golf Cart Application must be submitted each year an exemption is sought.
Please note that requests due to "temporary" injuries or impairments that do not qualify as a "disability" under the ADA will not be granted. A disability protected by the ADA is "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual."

(13) The MHSA allows parents and spectators to attend regular season and postseason golf events. Spectators must be 6-years old and above to attend MHSA golf events. It is appropriate for parents and spectators to respectfully applaud good shots by all players and not just the player they are following. Additionally, we require that parents and spectators adhere to the code of conduct listed on the MHSA website. If any of the guidelines are perceived to be broken by a designated tournament official, the spectator will be removed from the event.

1. Attendance fees (if any) for regular season events will be determined by the host school. All spectators must register and receive the proper credentials which must be worn at all times on the course.
2. Spectators will receive a badge that will be required to be worn at all times on the course. After the fee is paid and the spectator receives a copy of the MHSA Spectator Code of Conduct, they will receive a badge. The host school is responsible for making arrangements to collect fees and distribute badges. The spectator fees will be retained by the host school. The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all state championship tournaments:
   1 day pass - Adults $12.00. Students $10.00.
   ***2 day pass* - Adults $20.00. Students $18.00**
3. MHSA Golf Coaches and host course personnel will be responsible for ensuring all rules are being followed.
4. When players have completed their round, they are allowed to go back onto the course, but must follow all spectator rules.
5. *No spectators are allowed on the course during postseason practice rounds.*

For detailed spectator rules see the spectator code of conduct at www.mhsa.org

(14) ***Coaching – Each school may have the following number of coaches on the course at the same time to give advice to participants representing that school each day of the competition from green to tee:***

- ***Class AA – Up to three certified coaches***
- ***Class A – Up to two certified coaches per gender***
- ***Class B – Up to two certified coaches per gender***
- ***Class C – Up to two certified coaches***

The following rules and requirements apply:

a. The coaches must have been approved by their local school district administration, have passed the MHSA Coaches Education Requirements, have completed the MHSA Golf Rules Clinic for the current season and have been a bona fide member of the coaching staff during the entire season.
b. The coaches are identified by tournament management before the start of the competition each day with credentials / access passes displayed on a lanyard which must be worn and visible at all times.
c. The coaches shall not give advice to, or ask for advice from, another school's participants.
d. Authorized coaches are allowed to coach a player up until the player and the player's ball are on the green. If any part of the player's ball is on the actual green, the ball is considered on the green. Once the player arrives at the green (no delay by the player), the coach can have no more communication with the competing player(s) until all players in the group have holed out. When providing advice, a coach must not enter a bunker. Coaches are not to assist or instruct a player regarding any putting on the green. There is to be no delaying of play when providing instruction during the prescribed coaching time.
e. The advice shall be given in a private manner and does not unduly delay play.
f. Motorized carts will be allowed for coaches if the golf course allows.
g. Coaches shall not weigh in on scoring and rules decisions unless interacting with their own players and in a manner such as to minimize interruption or disruption of play for other players in the group. All scoring and rules related matters should be handled amongst the players in the group and any scoring or rules related questions should be raised by the player and/or the coach directly with the tournament official. If the players in the group are unsure of a scoring or rule decision, the players should play multiple balls, note the discrepancy on the scorecard with an asterisk (*), and raise the questions with the tournament official prior to signing and turning in their scorecards. Coaches should not question or challenge a scoring or rule decision directly with a player not playing for their school, but rather shall raise any questions or challenges directly to a tournament official and in such a manner such as not to disrupt play.

Penalties
First Offense - Two strokes will be added to the player's score for that day. The penalty would be added to the team score if that players score was not counted for the day.

Second Offense – Two additional strokes will be added to that players score for the day and the penalty would be added to the team score if that players score was not counted for the day. The second offense also results in coaching privileges being suspended for the remainder of the event for all coaches from that school. Tournament managers will report these violations to the MHSA office.

(15) No caddies may be used. Automotive transportation can only be used if the golfer is approved by the MHSA Executive Director by meeting the criteria of the MHSA Cart Policy. Pull carts are legal.

(16) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any match or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered into the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament with the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(17) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood altering drugs during competition.

Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(18) Hair devices made of soft material or unadorned hair devices, such as bobby pins, barrettes, or hair clips, no longer than two inches, may be worn to control a player's hair. Hair adornments made of soft material and no more than two inches wide may be worn.

(19) Match Play – Schools will be allowed to participate in a match play format similar to the "Ryder Cup" format for a dual meet.

The following types of match play will be allowed:

- Four-Ball - In four-ball, each member of a two-man team plays his own ball, so four balls are in play on every hole. Each team counts the lowest of its two scores on each hole, and the team whose player has the lowest score wins the hole. If the low scores are tied, the hole is halved.
- Singles - In singles, each match features one player from each team. The player with the lower score on each hole wins that hole. If their scores are tied, the hole is halved.

Scoring

- Mixing the 3 formats within the same dual would be allowed.
- Concession Exception - Unlike stroke play, players don't have to complete each hole in match play. If a player concedes a stroke – almost always a putt – to his opponent, the opponent picks up his ball, takes the score he would have made on the next stroke and moves on to the next hole.
- Each match is worth one point, with matches ending in a draw worth ½ point to each side.

MHSA Rules and Regulations that must be followed:

- Boys and Girls must always compete separately
- Results will not be used for seeding purposes in the postseason.

II – GENERAL RULES FOR POSTSEASON GOLF MEETS

(1) Four state golf meets will be held — one for Class AA, one for Class A, one for Class B and one for Class C. The Class B & C meets will be held one week prior to the state track and field meets and the Class AA & A meets will be held in the fall.

(2) For Classes AA, A and B, schools may enter up to five individuals to constitute their team. The four individual boys with the low score each day will determine the boys' team score and the four individual girls with the low score each day will determine the girls' team score. A school may choose to enter only four boys or four girls.

(3) For Class C, schools may enter up to four individuals to constitute their team. The three individual boys with the low score each day will determine the boys' team score and the three individual girls with the low score each day will determine the girls' team score. A school may choose to enter only three boys or three girls.

(4) Tie breaking procedure:

A. The hole or holes to be used for the individual and team competitions will be selected by the tournament manager or committee.

B. If a competitor is involved in both playoffs, the competitor will play in each playoff separately. The playoff for the individual competition is not to be played concurrently with the team competition. The playoff for the individual competition will occur first, if a competitor is involved in both playoffs.

C. A tie for the individual competition (for first place only) shall be decided immediately by a hole-by-hole playoff. Procedure for breaking individual ties:

1. All competitors tied for first place, individual competition, will play together. The order of play will be determined by lot.
2. All players tying for low score for the hole will complete a second hole or subsequent holes until a competitor wins. A player will not continue in the playoff unless the low score of the hole is obtained.
3. A first place individual competitor will be determined. All other competitors involved in the playoff will be tied for second, regardless of what hole they were eliminated from the playoff.

D. A tie for team competition (for first place only at divisional and state tournaments) shall be decided immediately with a hole-by-hole playoff. At divisional tournaments, a team tie must be broken if the tie determines which teams will advance to state. Trophies will be awarded per General Rules for Awards (6). Procedure for breaking team ties:

1. In Classes AA, A and B, each team in the playoff will be represented by five players on the team. The four best scores of the players in the playoff will be used for the team score.
2. In Class C, each team in the playoff will be represented by four players on the team. The three best scores of the players in the playoff will be used for the team score.
3. All teams tied for first place, team competition, will play together (See Divisional exceptions in Sections IV and IV). The order of play will be determined by lot.
4. On the first hole, the team will determine their own order of play. The order of play thereafter will be individual stroke play.
5. When balls are in play, the ball farthest from the hole shall be played first. If two or more balls are equidistant from the hole, the ball to be played first should be decided by lot. Balls belonging to the same team may not be played in the order the team considers best.
6. The competitor with the lowest score at a hole shall have the honor at the next teeing ground. The competitor with the second lowest score shall play next and so on. If two or more competitors have the same score at a hole, they shall play from the next teeing ground in the order as at the previous teeing ground. The order at the next teeing ground may not be played in the order the team considers best.
7. All teams tying for low score for the hole will complete a second hole or subsequent holes until a team wins. A team will not continue in the playoff unless the low score for the hole is obtained and a first place team will be determined. The remaining teams involved in the playoff will be tied for second, regardless of what hole they were eliminated from the playoff.

(5) Golfers for the same team may be allowed to play in the same group on the second day of the state tournament. In a foursome or a five-some, only two golfers from the same team may be in that group.

(6) The host club pro or their designee will be the sole judge on rule interpretations. Situations brought to the judge will not include team or individual names so the ruling can be as objective as possible.

(7) The meet manager shall appoint a person(s), as designated per classification, to walk with each group (scorers) to verify scores of every individual in the group. It is recommended that scorers not be students or student-athletes. Each school must designate 2 markers for post-season tournaments. The marker can be a relative, administrator or spectator as designated by the school. In Class AA, all participating

schools will be responsible for securing one back-up marker for the event, to be used if needed.

(8) After completion of the round, the competitor should check his/her score for each hole and settle any doubtful points with the tournament committee. He/she shall ensure that the marker has signed the card, countersign the card, and return it to the committee as soon as possible. The scorecard shall be considered returned when it is placed in the card box.

(9) Each state meet shall consist of 36 holes of medal play per player.

(10) ***For any reason*** one boy or one girl, who was named as an alternate before the start of competition, may be used as a substitute before the round begins either day of competition. The substitute will not be eligible for an individual award. The player for whom the substitute played will not be eligible for an individual award. Their scores shall count toward team scores. Once a player has been replaced, he/she is no longer eligible to return to competition.

(11) Disqualification:

A. The committee may impose a penalty for unsporting behavior (i.e. use of inappropriate language, club throwing, or other disruptive behavior). Penalty for unsporting conduct, two strokes, for repeated or a serious breach of player conduct, disqualification.

B. A player disqualified under the Rules of Golf of the United States Golf Association will be permitted to play in subsequent rounds of the tournament. The player's score shall be eligible for the team score in subsequent rounds. The player will not be eligible for the individual competition.

C. A player will not be permitted to play in subsequent rounds of the tournament or have a score eligible for the team score if the player is disqualified for player misconduct.

(12) ***The Divisional tournament golf course shall not be made available for practice purposes for any tournament team member during the days when the tournament is in progress (other than the practice round and the use of practice facilities) or at any time during the two-day period immediately preceding the opening of the tournament, except when the site is a team's home course. Regular season and/or postseason tournaments scheduled during the two-day period preceding the divisional tournament on the site are allowed.***

(13) The state tournament golf course shall not be made available for practice purposes for any tournament team member during the days when the tournament is in progress (other than the practice round and the use of practice facilities) or at any time during the seven-day period immediately preceding the opening of the tournament, except when the site is a team's home course. Regular season and/or post-season tournaments scheduled during the seven-day period preceding the state tournament on the site are allowed.

(14) ***Penalty for violation of practice round rules – If a school violates either the golf practice rule at a divisional or state tournament site or the Sunday practice rule, all individuals involved in the violation will be disqualified from the school's next scheduled golf competition.***

(15) Each postseason golf tournament must designate a rules committee. This committee will consist of the tournament manager, a coach, the head professional at the course and the golf course superintendent.

III - CLASS AA GOLF PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

(2) Each AA school choosing to participate in their state golf meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament at the rate of $100.00 per school.

(3) At the Class AA State Golf Tournament, a practice round will be allowed on the tournament course the day before the state tournament begins (See Section II-General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets, item (13) for all other rules and exceptions in regard to the state tournament practice round.)

(4) A shotgun start must be used, on both days, at the Class AA State Golf Tournament.

(5) Rules for Class AA Divisional golf meets:

A. Each AA School will be represented at their respective Eastern or Western Divisional Golf Tournament. It will be a two-day, 36-hole tournament. ***The two-day practice round restriction applies (See #12 under II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets).*** After competition, the top four (4) teams, consisting of five (5) golfers on each team, will qualify for the State AA Golf Tournament. In addition to the qualifying teams, each Division will qualify the top ***eight (8)*** individual finishers plus ties, outside of those that have already qualified on a top four (4) teams. A total of ***twenty-eight (28)*** boys plus ties and ***twenty-eight (28)*** girls plus ties from each Division will qualify for the State AA Golf Tournament.

B. Team Tie Breaker: To break any team ties, compare the best individual score on each team. The lowest score between those two individual scores wins the tie. If those two individuals are tied, use the same process with the next best individual score to break the tie. Continue this process until the tie is broken. If all four places are tied, use the process with the fifth individual on each team. If the process using the 5th individual on each team does not break the tie a one hole playoff on a hole as determined by course management, will be used to break the tie. The playoff will be a head-to-head competition starting with each team's #1 players. If they play the hole to a tie, the #2's will play and so on until the tie is broken. If the playoffs should go through all five players without the tie being broken, head-to-head competition will start again with the #1's. Play will continue in this manner until the tie is broken.

C. Individual Tie Breaker for selecting the top ten (10) individual finishers not aligned with a State Team Qualifier: If there is a tie with the 10th place finisher to qualify for the State Tournament, each of those individuals will qualify for the State Tournament.

IV - CLASS A GOLF PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

(2) Each Class A school choosing to participate in their state golf meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament at a maximum rate of $40/participant which includes the practice round and club fees. This rate would guarantee the tournament be played on a Friday/Saturday with a practice round on Thursday. A maximum rate of $30/participant which includes the practice round and club fees will be used if the state tournament is played on a Monday-Friday.

(3) State Tournament Exceptions for Class A: If two 18-hole courses are being used for the State Tournament competition, one course will be designated as the boys' course and one will be designated as the girls' course.

(4) A shotgun start must be used, on both days, at the Class A State Golf Tournament.

(5) Rules for Class A Divisional golf meets:

A. Each division will hold a one day 18-hole qualifying tournament. ***The two-day practice round restriction applies (See #12 under II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets).*** The top four (4) teams from each Division meet will qualify for the state meet. In addition to the qualifying teams, each Division will qualify the top eight (8) individual finishers plus ties, outside of those that have already qualified on a top four (4) teams. A total of twenty-eight (28) boys plus ties and twenty-eight (28) girls plus ties from each Division will qualify for the State A Golf Tournament. Four individuals who qualify as individual participants can be considered a team. See section D in this section for the tie breaking process.

B. Each of the Class A divisions will determine the host site for their respective tournament.

C. Tie breaking process for first place ties at divisional tournaments:

1. Individual Tie – first place only – hole by hole playoff starting with hole #1 or a hole determined by course management.
2. Team Ties – first and if the tie determines which teams advance to state – hole by hole playoff starting with hole #10 or a hole determined by course management. At divisionals, if teams are tied and it determines state qualifiers, they will play together.
3. If a competitor is involved in both playoffs, the individual playoff will be played first.
4. All other tie breaking rules/criteria will be followed in accordance with MHSA rules found in Section II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets.

D. Tie breaker for places second through fifteenth. All individual ties that occur in places second through fifteenth will be broken by comparing scorecards using the following format:

1. The cards will be reviewed and compared by the golf pro. The golfers' accumulative score for holes 10 through 18 will be the first criteria used. The golfer with the lowest score on these holes will be given the higher place. If there is still a tie, we will use the scorecard starting at the eighteenth hole and working back. The lower score on a given hole will determine the higher place.
2. Individual ties will be broken in an order on the highest to lowest place. For example, if there are two ties, one for third place and a tie for sixth place, the tie for third will be broken first.

E. The meet manager must receive entries two business days prior to the beginning of the tournament. Entries received after that date will not be accepted for participation in the meet.

F. ***For any reason***, each boys' and each girls' team may be entitled to one substitute to be named before the start of competition.

V - CLASS B GOLF PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class B.

(2) Each B school choosing to participate in their State Golf Meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament at a maximum rate of $40 per participant, which includes the practice round and club fees, and this rate would guarantee the tournament be played on Friday/Saturday with a practice round on Thursday. A maximum rate of $30 per participant, which includes the practice round and club fees, would be used if the state tournament would be played on a Monday-Friday.

(3) A shotgun start will be used for the practice round and the first day of competition, but tee times will be used for the final day at the Class B State Golf Tournament.

(4) Rules for Class B Divisional golf meets:

A. Each division will hold ***either*** a one day eighteen-hole ***or a two-day thirty-six-hole*** qualifying tournament. A practice round may be held. ***The two-day practice round restriction applies (See #12 under II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets).***

B. In addition to the top ***three (3)*** teams that qualify, the top ***twenty (20)*** participants with the lowest score will also qualify. Included in the top ***twenty*** participants with the lowest score may be members of the qualifying teams. Four individuals who qualify as individual participants cannot be considered a team. All ties will be broken at the divisional tournaments and only the top ***twenty*** individuals will go to the state tournament. In the event of a tie for ***twentieth*** place, all individuals tied for ***twentieth*** will advance to the state tournament. See section D in this section for the tie breaking process.

C. Each of the Class B Divisions will determine the host site for their divisional tournament.

D. Tie breaking process for first place ties at divisional tournaments:

1. Individual Tie – first place only – hole by hole playoff starting with hole #1 or a hole determined by course management.
2. ***Team Ties – first and if the tie determines which teams advance to state – hole by hole playoff starting with hole #10 or a hole determined by course management. At divisionals, if teams are tied and it determines state qualifiers, they will play together.***
3. If a competitor is involved in both playoffs, the individual playoff will be played first.
4. All other tie breaking rules/criteria will be followed in accordance with MHSA rules found in Section II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets.

E. Tie breaker for places second through fifteenth:

1. The cards will be reviewed and compared by the golf pro. The golfers' accumulative score for holes 10 through 18 will be the first criteria used. The golfer with the lowest score on these holes will be given the higher place. If there is still a tie, we will use the scorecard starting at the eighteenth hole and working back. The lower score on a given hole will determine the higher place.

2. Individual ties will be broken in an order on the highest to lowest place. For example, if there are two ties, one for third place and a tie for sixth place, the tie for third will be broken first.

F. The meet manager must receive entries two business days prior to the beginning of the tournament. Entries received after that date will not be accepted for participation in the meet.

G. ***For any reason***, each boys' and each girls' team may be entitled to one substitute to be named before the start of competition.

VI - CLASS C GOLF PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class C.

(2) Each C school choosing to participate in their State Golf Meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament at a maximum rate of $40 per participant, which

includes the practice round and club fees, and this rate would guarantee the tournament be played on Friday/Saturday with a practice round on Thursday. A maximum rate of $30 per participant, which includes the practice round and club fees, would be used if the state tournament would be played on a Monday-Friday.

(3) A shotgun start will be used for the practice round and the first day of competition, but tee times will be used for the final day at the Class C State Golf Tournament.

(4) During regular season events, a postseason qualifying scores can be shot during a meet with markers present. Markers should walk or ride with each group from tee to green. Automatic Regular Season Qualifying scores for the State C meets must occur on a regulation golf course [on a 9-hole course (minimum of a par 35) or on an 18-hole course (minimum of a par 70)] and will be 85 for Boys and 100 for Girls.

(5) Rules for Class C Divisional Golf Meets

A. Each division will hold a one day eighteen-hole qualifying tournament. ***The two-day practice round restriction applies (See #12 under II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets).*** Each team can enter up to 4 boys and 4 girls at the divisional tournament. Golfers must shoot a minimum score of 115 for boys and 130 for girls during the regular season to compete in the postseason. Pre-qualified athletes must be entered into the Divisional Tournament and will count towards the number of participants allowed (4). If a school has athletes with regular season qualifying scores, they must be entered into the divisional tournament. If a team or individuals choose not to compete at the divisional tournament, they can still compete as individuals and a team (if 3 or 4 are qualified) at the state tournament. The maximum participants at the State Tournament for each team is four (4). The top four (4) teams from each division will qualify for the state tournament. A practice round may be held. To have a team participate in the Divisional meet, a minimum of two (2) individual members must shoot the minimum score during the regular season and then an additional (1) team member may be added to compete as a team at the divisional meet.

B. In addition to the top four (4) teams that qualify, the top eighteen (18) participants with the lowest score will also qualify. Included in the top eighteen participants with the lowest score may be members of the qualifying teams. All ties will be broken at the divisional tournaments and only the top eighteen individuals will go to the state tournament. In the event of a tie for eighteenth place, all individuals tied for eighteenth will advance to the state tournament. See section D in this section for the tie breaking process.

C. Each of the Class C Divisions will determine the host site for their divisional tournament.

D. Tie breaking process for first place ties at divisional tournaments:
   1. Individual Tie – first place only – hole by hole playoff starting with hole #1 or a hole determined by course management.
   2. Team Ties – first and if the tie determines which teams advance to state – hole by hole playoff starting with hole #10 or a hole determined by course management. At divisionals, if teams are tied and it determines state qualifiers, they will play together.
   3. If a competitor is involved in both playoffs, the individual playoff will be played first.
   4. All other tie breaking rules/criteria will be followed in accordance with MHSA rules found in Section II – General Rules for Postseason Golf Meets.

E. Tie breaker for places second through twentieth:
   1. The cards will be reviewed and compared by the golf pro. The golfers' accumulative score for holes 10 through 18 will be the first criteria used. The golfer with the lowest score on these holes will be given the higher place. If there is still a tie, we will use the scorecard starting at the eighteenth hole and working back. The lower score on a given hole will determine the higher place.
   2. Individual ties will be broken in an order on the highest to lowest place. For example, if there are two ties, one for third place and a tie for sixth place, the tie for third will be broken first.

F. The meet manager must receive entries two business days prior to the beginning of the tournament. Entries received after that date will not be accepted for participation in the meet.

G. ***For any reason***, each boys' and each girls' team may be entitled to one substitute to be named before the start of competition.

SOCCER

CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

Class A (First Round Playoffs)..... .October 12-17
Class AA (First Round Playoffs) .....October 20
Class AA (Quarterfinals).....October 24
Class A (Semi-Finals)..... October 23-24
Class AA (Semi-Finals) .....October 27
Class A (Championship Games)..... October 30-31
Class AA (Championship Games) .....October 31

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interscholastic soccer activities among the member schools for both boys and girls.

(2) Schools will be divided into two classes for boys' and girls' soccer: Class AA and Class A.

(3) The playing rules as authorized and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all games. No overtime games will be played during the regular season.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of soccer practice of at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a game does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a game that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a game that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a game does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(5) In Classes AA and ***A***, fourteen (14) soccer games will be the maximum limit for schools including invitational tournaments but are exclusive of Association-sponsored tournaments.

These game limits apply to each squad - varsity, junior varsity, B squad, freshman etc. No team may play more than two games in one day during the regular season.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Any soccer team that receives a forfeiture may be allowed to schedule and play a make-up game(s), but the team that gives the forfeit must count forfeited game(s) as one of the season's game limit for its school and that team will not be allowed to schedule another game in place of the forfeited game(s).**

2. **Definition of "squad" - An athletic squad is determined by union of "act and intent" by grouping together a number of students to play as a unit to represent the school, under the direction of a designated coach or coaches; i.e. a participant who plays in a preliminary contest cannot start in the varsity or next game in the same day/evening.**

3. **Club team participation - During the MHSA soccer season, no more than five (5) rostered participants in a school's program can compete in an outside soccer event on the same team.**

(6) 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 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 scheduled sub-varsity competition, each varsity-eligible player will be allowed participation in four separate halves of the scheduled varsity games.

(7) In accordance with NFHS rules, the home team will wear dark jerseys/socks, and the visiting team will wear solid white jerseys/socks. In the event that either team cannot wear the designated jersey, they must notify the other team at least 24 hours prior to the contest.

(8) The soccer season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the last regular scheduled game or the state championship game for the classification of the school concerned.

(9) Schools must participate in the soccer schedule and play the majority of their scheduled games to be eligible to participate in the MHSA tournaments.

(10) Host schools are required to provide the scorer(s) for regular season games.

(11) No all-state teams or players shall be picked or announced at the tournament/play-off sites by either the Executive Board or tournament officials. This applies to playoffs and state championships.

(12) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any game or tournament, but once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other school represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered into the first tournament/playoff round held in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament/playoff round without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(13) In the event that any team should refuse to take part as provided above, then such team shall forfeit its right to respective tournament championship, and the next team in line shall replace the defaulting team in the final playoff. Furthermore, the defaulting team shall be barred from all tournament participation the following year, unless excused by the Executive Board for such default.

(14) It is recommended that officials shall not be seen in the company of coaches, socially or otherwise, at any time during the course of the post season.

(15) By state association adoption, if a game is suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, and less than one-half of the game has been played, the game will be rescheduled from the start.

(16) By state association adoption, the official time is kept by the head referee. The use of stadium clocks is encouraged. When stadium clocks are used, it is recommended that the time run to the two-minute mark; then the clock be turned off.

(17) By state association adoption, the diagonal officiating system is used. However, a dual officiating mechanic may be used for sub varsity games in emergency situations only.

(18) For MHSA postseason play teams shall use the Baden ST350 soccer ball when provided. MHSA recommends the use of the Baden ST350 soccer ball for playoffs where no ball is provided. For regular season and post season play the ball used for all levels of play shall include the NFHS authenticating mark.

(19) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

II - ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

(1) Teams and players recognized as eligible to participate in interscholastic soccer in Montana under the rules of the Montana High School Association will be eligible to participate in the tournaments arranged. All schools of the state are cautioned to carefully check over their lists of potential players and make certain that each student whose name is submitted is fully qualified under the rules.

(2) A disqualified player or coach (one who receives a red card) will not participate for the remainder of the event and will be suspended for the next regularly scheduled or rescheduled event at that level of competition and all other games in the interim at any level of competition. A second disqualification could result in a four competition suspension. (Refer to By-Laws, Article VIII, Section (2), 2.6.)

(3) All players and coaches must comply with the soccer behavior improvement plan as established by the MHSA Executive Board. In 2023, the soccer behavior plan was modified to focus on major infractions. Players and/or coaches who are in violation of the expected standards are subject to game suspensions as well as other penalties as defined in the plan or as determined by the Executive Director.

III - TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

No more than twenty-two (22) players in Classes AA and A can be in uniform for any tournament/playoff game.

IV - NUMBER OF GAMES DURING ANY TOURNAMENT DAY

No team shall be permitted to play more than two games in any one day or any playoff or tournament.

V - TOURNAMENT POLICING

(1) The local tournament manager and/or committee must make arrangements for adequate policing at the field during the course of the tournament, which includes general policing of the building and grounds as well as policing of team dressing room facilities.

(2) These rules apply for divisional and state tournaments.

(3) Special attention must be given to insure that the game officials are afforded proper protection when leaving the field, during their movement to the dressing area and while in the dressing room.

VI - CROWD CONTROL AT SEASON ATHLETIC CONTESTS

The Executive Board of the MHSA urges all school administrators, athletic administrators and coaches to establish a policy in their school to prohibit students from rushing on the field at the conclusion of the athletic contests. The request for this policy comes as a result of the dangers to players, officials and fans with the rushing of uncontrolled fans onto the confined area of the field.

VII - DETERMINATION OF TOURNAMENT SITES

(1) The determination of sites, tournament managers and arrangements for all MHSA state tournaments will be made by the Executive Board. This determination will be made at a meeting of the Board after interested member schools or communities have been given an opportunity to submit written invitations to host an Association tournament. Tournament managers cannot be a coach or an official if that coach or official is participating in the tournament.

(2) Following are some of the criteria which will be considered by the Board in making the determination of tournament sites: (a) adequate field facilities; (b) adequate community facilities for team and spectator housing and eating; (c) definite invitation showing local community support; (d) geographical rotation when feasible.

(3) If the Board locates a tournament at a member school's facility, an administrator of that school will usually be named tournament manager. If the state tournament is located in a facility other than a member school, the Executive Director, a member of the MHSA staff, or a member of the Executive Board will be named as manager.

VIII - TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS, CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The tournament program rights for all district and divisional programs will be determined by the respective district or division. The tournament program rights for all state tournaments/championships will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Director.

(2) The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

(3) At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events.

(4) Corporate sponsorship of any postseason event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires

Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas; i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

IX - TOURNAMENT FINANCE PLAN

(1) Immediately after the conclusion of each state tournament/playoff the tournament manager will remit to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association a complete financial report of the tournament.

(2) The Executive Board wishes to point out that the local community definitely profits from the tournaments in three ways: (a) concessions of the tournaments are normally given to local organizations; (b) local communities profit considerably through income at hotels, motels, restaurants and stores; (c) the local school is under no expense to send its team to the tournament.

(3) The host school does not underwrite the expense of the tournament, but is obligated to do its best to see to it that the gross receipts are such that allowable expenses are paid in full.

Allowable Tournament Expenses

Charges against the tournament will stand for payment in the following order:

(1) Referees' fees and expenses.

(2) Normal administrative expenses. (Printing tickets, scorebook, advertising, signs, postage, telephone, clerical, scorers and timers.)

(3) Use of facility charges (rental), shall include all charges, if any, for the following: extra field preparation/maintenance, utilities, ticket sales, ticket takers, police/security, entrance guards, ushers, parking attendants, first aid room and towel service.

(4) Team expenses are to be computed as follows:

a. In addition to the certified players on the tournament/playoff roster (a maximum of eighteen) per diem will be allowed for four additional persons at $45.00 per day for a maximum of 24 persons (22 players, 2 coaches) plus travel expense allowance of $2.50 per mile for one round trip for each school participating.
b. The decision to stay at the tournament/playoff site or to commute rests with each school. If a school elects to commute to the tournament/playoff site, any or all days the tournament/playoff is in session, they will be paid expenses as follows:

1. Mileage — $2.50 per mile, for one round trip. (In computing the number of miles traveled, the shortest paved route open to travel, as listed on the current Official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways will be the mileage used.)
2. Per diem — One day per diem allowed @ $45.00 for the persons specified when team stays overnight or one day per diem allowed @ $20.00 for the persons specified when they do not stay overnight. One additional day per diem will be allowed if travel distance is more than 200 miles one way, if the team stays overnight an extra night preceding the tournament dates.
3. No expenses are paid for the day following the tournament.

c. Teams located at the tournament/playoff site will not receive any mileage or per diem.

Note: No guarantee is made that teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

(5) The soccer balls for all state tournaments/championship games will be furnished by the MHSA office at no charge.

Non-allowable Tournament Expenses

(1) Proper policing of hotels.
(2) Proper timing and scoring equipment.
(3) Adequate dressing room and shower facilities.

Playoff Finances for Class AA and A

Travel expenses will be calculated using the team expense formula as printed under Allowable Tournament Expenses Item (4). Profits for any postseason Class AA and A soccer contest will be divided between teams on a "site-to-site" basis in the event that profits do not cover travel expenses of visiting teams. Profits, minus reasonable itemized facilities and administrative expenses, will be distributed to traveling schools.

In the event that a single school hosts playoff games for both girls and boys and two differing schools are traveling to the game site, any profits after expenses will be divided proportionately between the two traveling schools based on miles traveled to the game site. For example:

Host site is School A. Profit after host school expenses are met equals $1,000.00.

	Visitors' Mileage	Mileage %	Profit %
School B:	Girls = 200 miles	33% of mileage	$333.00 (33%/profit)
School C:	Boys = 400 miles	66% of mileage	$677.00 (66%/profit)
	Total = 600 miles		

In the event that profits are great enough that all travel expenses are covered during a playoff contest(s), any remaining profits will be forwarded to the MHSA to be equally divided among Class AA or A schools that sponsor soccer and had teams qualify for post season play.

Established Ticket Prices for State Tournaments/Playoffs

The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all boys' and girls' state tournaments:

	Adult	Student
General Admission:	$ 10.00	$ 8.00

X - SELECTION OF OFFICIALS FOR STATE TOURNAMENT

Refer to the MOA section for procedure for selection of officials to work soccer tournaments/playoffs.

XI - CLASS AA SOCCER PROGRAM - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

(2) Class AA goal differential language:

When a team is winning by:

8 goals, they will reduce their number of players playing from 11 to 10.
9 goals, they will reduce their number of players playing from 10 to 9.
10 goals, the contest ends.

If at any time the goal deficit decreases, then the winning team may put a player back into the game.

(3) The Class AA schools will be charged with the responsibility of playoff structure and seeding.

(4) Playoff structure is for both boys and girls and will be held each year. Each division will have charge of the operation and management of its respective playoffs as to times and sites, and with other arrangements in accordance with the standard tournament plan as set for all tournaments and outlined in this handbook.

(5) Standings for AA playoffs will be determined by AA conference policy.

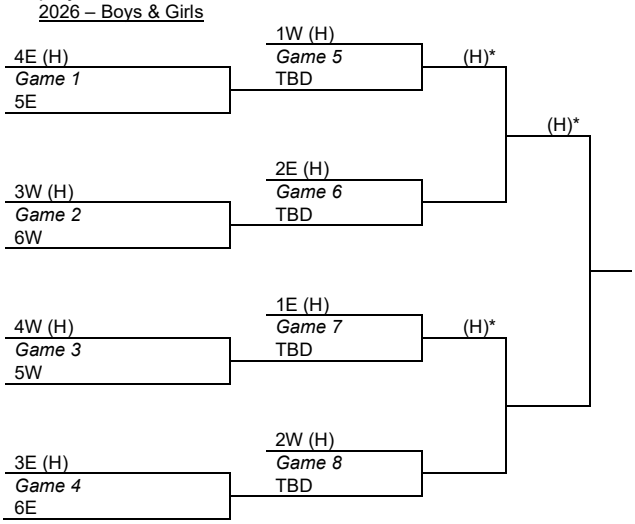
(6) The dates for playoff games will be determined by the AA Conference.

(7) Only conference games will be used to determine conference standings. Three (3) points will be assigned to a win, one (1) point to a tie, and zero (0) points for a loss.

(8) Tie breaking procedures will be determined by the Class AA Conference.

(9) Each division's seeding will be as follows for to the state playoffs:

2026 – Boys & Girls



Semi-Final and State Championship
*Hosted by the higher seed.

(9) By state association adoption, a winner shall be determined in all playoff/tournament games with overtime play as follows:
a. There shall be two full ten-minute overtime periods (not sudden victory). A coin toss shall be held, and the winner shall choose a goal to defend or to kick off first. The loser of the toss shall be given the remaining choice. At the end of the first ten-minute period the teams shall change ends.
b. If the score remains tied after both ten-minute overtime periods, proceed to kicks from the mark. Kicks from the mark should be administered as outlined on pages 102-103 of the National Federation Soccer Rules Book.

(10) The dates and sites for post season play will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

XII – CLASS A SOCCER PROGRAM – BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

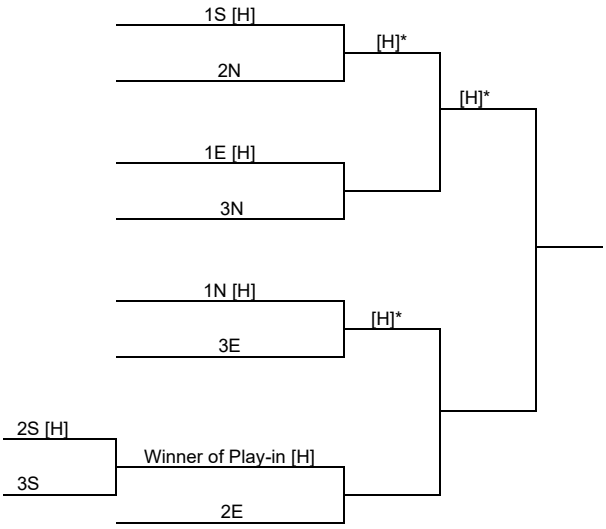
(2) Class A goal differential language:

When a team is winning by 10 goals, the contest ends.

(3) Each team will play each conference opponent twice. All three conferences will combine to fill in the remaining games or pick up AA opponents as scheduling allows.

(4) The championship series will consist of nine (9) teams, three (3) teams from the Southern division, Northern division, and Eastern division, using the following bracket:

2026 – Boys & Girls



Note for H*: the higher seed will host each playoff game. If like seeds play each other, the bracket determines the host site. If the two teams in the playoff/championship are from the same division, the team that finished higher in the conference standings will host the game.

For the play-in game [H], if the two (2) seed has beaten the three (3) seed twice during regular season conference play, then there is no game.

(5) Conference Scoring and Tie Breaker:

Each conference contest will be scored as follows: win = 3 points, tie = 1 point, and loss = no points.

In the event that two conference opponents are tied in the conference standings, the following criteria will be used to satisfy the tie and establish seeding:

a. Head-to-head competition between tied opponents based upon win/loss ratio.
b. Goal differential between tied opponents in both conference contests using both goals scored, and goals scored against with a maximum goal differential of 5 goals.
c. Head-to-head competition with the next highest common conference opponent based upon win/loss ratio. If the next highest common conference opponent is also tied with another team(s) use the opponent that has the better conference record as the "next highest". If the next highest common conference opponent is still tied with another team(s), use the opponent that has the better overall record as the next highest.
d. Goal differential between tied opponents and the next highest common conference opponent using both goals scored, and goals scored against. If the next highest common conference opponent is also tied with another team(s) use the opponent that has the better conference record as the "next highest". If the next highest common conference opponent is still tied with another team(s), use the opponent that has the better overall record as the next highest.
e. Coin toss by class 'A' soccer chair or his/her designee with the winner taking the higher seed.

(6) By state association adoption, a winner shall be determined in all playoff/tournament games with overtime play as follows:

a. There shall be two full ten-minute overtime periods (not sudden victory). A coin toss shall be held, and the winner shall choose a goal to defend or to kick off first. The loser of the toss shall be given the remaining choice. At the end of the first ten-minute period the teams shall change ends.

b. If the score remains tied after both ten-minute overtime periods, proceed to kicks from the mark. Kicks from the mark should be administered as outlined ***on pages 89-90*** in the National Federation Soccer Rules Book.

XIII - POLICY FOR TOURNAMENT PASSES

The Association has established the following policy for tournament passes which shall be adhered to by all tournament managers.

(1) For school administrators - fourteen all-session tickets when one team qualifies per school. When two teams qualify, an additional six (6) passes shall be given for a total of twenty (20). If schools co-op the host school will receive the fourteen or twenty administrative tickets and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets. These complimentary tickets are to be distributed by the superintendent to the principal, coaches, band directors, school board chairpersons, bus drivers, cheerleading coaches, sponsors of half-time entertainment etc., and maybe spouses of some.

(2) For players – twenty-two (22) passes for players. No manager passes are provided.

(3) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(4) For radio – three passes to each station given permission to broadcast the tournament or games. The game (or games) must be broadcast in its (or their) entirety.

(5) For media other than radio

a. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
b. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
c. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
d. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

SOFTBALL

TOURNAMENT DATES

Divisional Tournaments

Class B-C..... May 17-22

State Tournaments

Classes AA, A and B-C ..... May 27-29

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool softball activities among the member schools.

(2) The playing rules as authorized and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all games. By National Federation Rule, Montana has adopted the following:

a. Any game will end when, after four and a half or five innings, when a team is ten (10) or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.
b. Any game will end when, after two and a half or three innings, when a team is fifteen (15) or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.
c. Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of weather – resume from the point of interruption.
d. Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings that are tied – resume from the point of interruption.
e. Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of darkness – resume from the point of interruption.
f. Junior varsity games played prior to varsity games, the following time limit shall apply: No new inning shall begin more than 1 hour and 45 minutes after the conclusion of the pre-game plate meeting.
g. Double first bases are mandatory.
h. Using a maximum time limit of 1 1/2 hours can end games played at invitational tournaments. The game can be called if there is five minutes or less before the maximum time limit or officials should not start a new inning after one hour and twenty minutes of play, except if a tie exists where NFHS Softball Rules for tiebreaking would be followed.
i. Invitational tournaments which use tie-breaking procedure shall use the National Federation procedure: beginning in the top of the eighth inning or upon reaching the predetermined time limit, the last batter from the previous inning will be placed on second base at the beginning of each half inning with the game then proceeding in a normal manner until a winner is decided.

(3) Pitcher limitation from JV to Varsity: the starting pitcher in a varsity game cannot pitch in a JV contest unless there is an injury or for other out of the ordinary circumstances, which must be approved by the Executive Director.

(4) On defense, the positions of pitcher third (3rd) base and first (1st) base must wear a protective mask. The mask must be single solid color (excluding padding) and unadorned.

(5) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association softball contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of softball practice of at least one practice session per day on ten different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (5), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a game does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a game that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a game that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a game does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility, or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(6) Twenty-two (22) games with no more than three (3) games on one date will be the maximum for schools excluding Association sponsored tournaments.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Any softball team that receives a forfeit may be allowed to schedule and play a make-up game but the team that gives the forfeit must count the forfeited game as one of the season's game limit for its school and that team will not be allowed to schedule another game in place of the forfeited game(s).**

2. **Definition of "squad" — An athletic squad is determined by union of "act and intent" by grouping together a number of students to play as a unit to represent the school, under the direction of a designated coach or coaches. A school must have at least fourteen (14) players participating to be able to schedule sub varsity games or play a sub varsity schedule. At least five (5) players must be designated as varsity only and cannot play in the sub varsity contest whether on the same or different day of the varsity contest.**

3. **Club team participation – During the MHSA softball season, no more than four (4) rostered participants in a school's program can compete in an outside softball event on the same team.**

(7) Each classification can hold a softball jamboree. Requirements for a jamboree are:

a. A jamboree consists of four five-inning games.
b. Each game has a one hour maximum time limit, and a game can be called if there is five minutes or less before the maximum limit.
c. Games may end in a tie in a jamboree.
d. The five-inning, one hour time limit must be followed during the entire jamboree.
e. The inning total would be less than three full games.
f. The jamboree counts as two games towards the season total of twenty-two. At the AA and A level, the jamboree counts as one game towards the season total of twenty-two.

g. The jamboree must be played within the first twenty-one days of eligible competition competitive dates of each season.
h. The current pitching rule remains in effect.

(8) Dudley (WT-12-Y-FP) softballs shall be utilized at all MHSA sponsored softball tournaments.

(9) The ball shall be optic yellow and the COR specification shall be identical for each ball used in each game.

(10) Walk-up music may be played in the regular season by the home team only if approved by the school's administration. Each team can choose their own approved music. Administrators should review the music to determine its appropriateness. Walk-up music should stop the moment the batter steps into the batter's box. Officials may order the music turned down or off if the music is inappropriate or is interfering with the orderly administration of the game.

(11) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any game or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered into the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such a tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties Article VIII, Section (2).

(12) The softball season officially closes with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(13) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

II - STATE CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION AND PLAYOFF

(1) Schools in each classification will be charged with the responsibility of drawing the conference schedules each season and determining the number of conference games the schools must play to be eligible for tournament seeding. Tournament seeding will be determined by each classification.

(2) The site(s) and manager(s) for the state tournament(s) will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(3) No all-state teams or players shall be picked or announced at the state tournament site by either the Executive Board or tournament officials. This applies to playoffs, divisional and state competition.

(4) The game balls for the State Tournament shall be provided by the Montana High School Association.

(5) First round games at state tournaments will have the team with the higher seed being designated as home team. A coin flip determines home team in all future rounds.

(6) The state softball tournaments shall be double elimination formats. Game times shall be established by the tournament manager.

(7) State tournament games suspended because of weather and/or darkness will be resumed from the point of interruption.

(8) State tournament games suspended because of weather and/or darkness after 4 1/2 - 5 innings of play will be resumed from the point of interruption and 7 innings completed unless the 10 run rule is reached.

(9) Any game will end when, after two and a half or three innings, when a team is fifteen (15) or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.

10) **Any game will end when, after four and a half or five innings, the team is ten (10) or more runs behind and completed its turn at bat.**

(11) Bat Testing – Class AA, Class A and Class B/C will compression test all softball bats prior to competition at the state tournament. The testing will be completed by the state tournament managers.

(12) Championship Game Home and Away Determination- The undefeated team will be the home team for game one of the state championships. If a second game is needed, the winning team from game number one will be the home team for the second game. Approved for Class AA. Class A and Class B/C will conduct a coin toss to determine the championship and if game is as needed.

III - ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

Teams and players recognized as eligible to participate in interscholastic softball in Montana under the rules of the Montana High School Association will be eligible to participate in the tournaments arranged. All schools are cautioned to carefully check over their list of potential players and make certain that each student whose name is submitted is fully qualified under the rules.

IV - TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

No more than seventeen players can be in uniform for any tournament game.

V - TOURNAMENT POLICING

(1) The local tournament manager and/or committee must make arrangements for adequate policing at the field during the course of the tournament.

(2) Special attention must be given to insure that the game officials are afforded proper protection when leaving the field.

(3) These rules apply for divisional and state tournaments.

VI - VIDEO AT SOFTBALL TOURNAMENTS

The MHSA Executive Board has given the tournament manager the authority to grant or refuse permission for schools to use video at softball tournaments provided it is within the guidelines of the MHSA Handbook and National Federation rules.

VII - DETERMINATION OF TOURNAMENT SITES

(1) The determination of sites, tournament managers and arrangements for state MHSA tournaments will be made by the Executive Board. This determination will be made at a meeting of the Board after interested schools or communities have been given an opportunity to submit written invitations to host an Association tournament.

Tournament managers cannot be a coach or an official if that coach or an official is participating in the tournament.

(2) Following is some of the criteria which will be considered by the Board in making the determination of tournament sites: (1) Adequate field facilities; (2) Adequate community facilities for team and spectator housing and eating; (3) Reasonable assurance of financial success; (4) Definite invitation showing local community support; (5) Geographical rotation when feasible.

(3) If the Board locates a tournament by a member school's request, an administrator of that school will normally be named tournament manager. If the tournament is located by a request from other than a member school, the Executive Director, a member of the MHSA staff or a member of the Executive Board will normally be named manager.

(4) The concession rights for any tournament held in a non-member school facility shall be awarded by the MHSA Executive Board.

VIII - TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS, CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The tournament program rights for all state tournaments will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

(2) The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

(3) At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events.

(4) Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas, i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

IX - TOURNAMENT FINANCE PLAN

(1) After each divisional or state tournament the tournament manager shall submit a financial report of the tournament to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the event.

(2) The Executive Board wished to point out that the local community definitely profits from the tournaments in three ways: (a) All concessions of the tournaments are normally given to local organizations. (b) Local communities profit considerably through income at hotels, motels, restaurants and stores. (c) The local school is under no expense to send its team to the tournament.

(3) The host school does not underwrite the expense of the tournament but is obligated to do its best to see to it that the gross receipts are such that allowable expenses are paid in full.

Allowable Tournament Expenses

Charges against the tournament will stand for payment in the following order:

(1) Referees' fees and expenses.

(2) The softballs for all state tournaments will be furnished by the MHSA office at no charge.

(3) Normal administrative expenses. (Printing tickets, scorebook, advertising, signs, postage, telephone, clerical, scorer and timer.)

(4) Use of facility charges (rental) shall include all charges, if any, for the following: extra field preparation/maintenance, utilities, ticket sales, ticket takers, police/security, entrance guards, ushers, parking attendants, first aid room and towel service.

(5) Team expenses are to be computed as follows:

a. In addition to the players on the tournament roster (a maximum of 17) per diem will be allowed for four additional persons at $45.00 per day for a maximum of 21 persons (17 players, 2 managers, 2 coaches), plus travel expense allowance of $2.50 per mile for one round trip for each school participating.
b. The decision to stay at the tournament site or to commute rests with each school. If a school elects to commute to the tournament site, any or all days the tournament is in session, they will be paid expenses as follows:
   1. $2.50 per mile for each round trip, maximum of one round trip per day, plus $20.00 a day per person, to a maximum of 21, for meal allowance for each day they commute while the tournament is in session.
   2. For the days when the team stays overnight at the tournament site, the regular schedule of $45.00 applies.
   3. No expenses are paid for the day following the tournament.
c. One additional day per diem will be allowed if travel distance is more than 200 miles one way, if the team stays overnight an extra night preceding the tournament dates.
d. If, after a team is eliminated from tournament play, they leave before the completion of the tournament play, they will receive one day less per diem than they otherwise are entitled to receive under this schedule.
e. Teams located at the tournament site will not receive any mileage or per diem.
f. In computing miles traveled the shortest paved route open to travel, as listed on the current official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways, will be the mileage used.

Note: No guarantee is made that teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

Non-Allowable Tournament Expenses

(1) Proper policing of hotels.

(2) Proper timing and scoring equipment.

(3) Adequate dressing room and shower facilities.

Established Ticket Prices for the State Tournaments

The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all state tournaments.

	Adult	Student
General Admission (one day)	***$12.00***	***$10.00***
All-Session (three day)	***$28.00***	***$21.00***

X - SELECTION OF OFFICIALS

Refer to the MOA section for procedure for selection of officials to work the softball tournaments.

XI - POLICY FOR TOURNAMENT PASSES

The Association has established the following policy for tournament passes which shall be adhered to by all tournament managers.

(1) For school administrators - Up to fourteen all-session tickets. If the school co-op the host school will receive the fourteen administrative tickets and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets.

These complimentary tickets are for administrators, coaches, spouses, chaperones, bus drivers etc. who actually attend the tournament.

(2) For players — seventeen passes for players and two for managers — total of nineteen.

(3) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(4) For radio — three passes to each station given permission to broadcast the tournament or game. The game (games) must be broadcast in its (or their) entirety.

(5) For media other than radio

a. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
b. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
c. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
d. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

(6) For umpires — one pass to each umpire working the tournament.

XII - CLASS AA SOFTBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

(2) Class AA Scheduling

a. Class AA programs are allowed to schedule varsity and JV contests at the same time a maximum of four times during the regular season.
b. Class AA players are allowed to participate in a maximum of 9 innings when JV and varsity contests are played at different times for a one-game series. Programs with low roster numbers may appeal to the MHSA to allow players to participate in more than 9 innings to provide JV opportunities.

(3) Standings for AA playoffs will be determined by the AA Conference Policy. Seeding to state will be as follows:

Western Conference
#1 and #2 receive byes (1st & 2nd seed at state)
#3 West v. #6 West (at #3's site)
#4 West v. #5 West (at #4's site)

Eastern Conference
#1 and #2 receive byes (1st & 2nd seed at state)
#3 East v. #6 East (at #3's site)
#4 East v. #5 East (at #4's site)
Each division's seeding will be as follows for advancement to the state tournaments:

Seeding for Eastern and Western Divisions
#1 – 1st place in the division
#2 – 2nd place in the division
#3 – Next highest remaining seed in the division
#4 – Last remaining seed in the division

(4) Class AA 2-game playoff. If the higher seed wins one game, they will advance to state. The lower seed must win both games to advance to state. The host team is the home team for game one and if a second game is needed, the visiting team will be the home team.

Pairings for the state tournament will be as follows:

Bracket I 1st place Eastern vs. 4th place Western
2nd place Western vs.3rd place Eastern

Bracket II 1st place Western vs. 4th place Eastern
2nd place Eastern vs. 3rd place Western

Bracket I will begin the State Tournament in odd years and Bracket II will begin State Tournament in even years.

XIII - CLASS A SOFTBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

(2) The Class A Softball Conference will be charged with drawing up the conference schedules each season and determining the number of conference games each school must play to be eligible for divisional and/or state tournament seeding including the breaking of any ties in conference standings. A divisional tournament may be conducted to determine state seeding or divisions may choose to seed teams directly to state.

(3) Each division has the option of conducting a divisional tournament. The top six (6) placing teams at the divisional tournament will advance to the state tournament.

Each division will be responsible for determining the number of conference games each school must play for divisional tournament seeding including the breaking of any ties in conference standings.

If the divisional tournament cannot be played, seeding will be determined by the class A conference. If the tournament cannot be completed, then the six (6) highest seeded teams remaining will advance to the state tournament and be seeded accordingly.

(4) Six (6) teams will qualify from each division for the state tournament. Seeing for the Class A State Tournament will be as follows:

2026-27
Game #1 2nd place Northeastern vs. 3rd place Southwestern
Game #2 2nd place Southeastern vs. 3rd place Northeastern
Game #3 2nd place Northwestern vs. 3rd place Southeastern
Game #4 2nd place Southwestern vs. 3rd place Northwestern
Game #5 1st place Southeastern vs. Winner of Game #1
Game #6 1st place Northwestern vs. Winner of Game #2
Game #7 1st place Southwestern vs. Winner of Game #3
Game #8 1st place Northeastern vs. Winner of Game #4

2027-28
Game #1 2nd place Southwestern vs. 3rd place Northeastern
Game #2 2nd place Northwestern vs. 3rd place Southwestern
Game #3 2nd place Southeastern vs. 3rd place Northwestern
Game #4 2nd place Northeastern vs. 3rd place Southeastern
Game #5 1st place Northwestern vs. Winner of Game #1
Game #6 1st place Southeastern vs. Winner of Game #2
Game #7 1st place Northeastern vs. Winner of Game #3
Game #8 1st place Southwestern vs. Winner of Game #4

XIV - CLASS B-C SOFTBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class B-C.

(2) Each Class B-C Softball Division will be charged with drawing up the conference schedules each season.

(3) Each division will conduct a divisional tournament. The top four placing teams at the divisional tournament will advance to the state tournament. Seeding at the divisional will be based on conference records. Each division will be responsible for determining the number of conference games each school must play for divisional tournament seeding including the breaking of any ties in conference standings. If the divisional tournament cannot be played, the four highest-

seeded teams will advance to the state tournament based on their seeding entering the divisional. If the tournament cannot be completed, the four highest-seeded teams remaining will advance to the state tournament and be seeded accordingly.

(4) Four teams will qualify from each division for the state tournament. Seeding for the Class B-C State Tournament will be as follows:

2026-27

Bracket I	1st Place Eastern vs. 4th Place Western
	2nd Place Western vs. 3rd Place Eastern
Bracket II	1st Place Western vs. 4th Place Eastern
	2nd Place Eastern vs. 3rd Place Western

2027-28

Bracket I	1st Place Western vs. 4th Place Eastern
	2nd Place Eastern vs. 3rd Place Western
Bracket II	1st Place Eastern vs. 4th Place Western
	2nd Place Western vs. 3rd Place Eastern

Brackets I and II shall alternate each year.

SWIMMING

STATE MEET DATES

All Schools ..... February 11-13

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association recognizes swimming as an interscholastic sport for both boys and girls.

(2) Schools are classified as Class AA and Class A. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments.

(3) All high school students participating in swimming meets or tournaments must meet all MHSA eligibility requirements, including the award and amateur rules.

(4) The determination of sites, meet managers and arrangements for all MHSA state meets will be made by the Executive Board. This determination will be made at a meeting of the Board after interested member schools or communities have been given an opportunity to submit written invitations to host an Association meet.

(5) The date for the State Swim Meet shall be set by the MHSA Executive Board.

(6) The MHSA Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall compete in any Association swimming contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of swimming practice of at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday) prior to the date of the first allowable meet. The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (6), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a meet does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a meet that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a meet that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a game does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(7) The swimming season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(8) Ten (10) meets shall be the maximum number for schools excluding Association sponsored tournaments.

(9) No individual may participate in an out-of-state invitation only meet unless approved by the MHSA Executive Director. Any out-of-state participation approved under these criteria will count towards the ten-meet limit for the particular student. Students will only be allowed to compete in out-of-state meets if the meet was sanctioned by NFHS and received permission from the MHSA Executive Director. The meet may be used as one of two (2) meets as described in the mandatory minimum participation. Swim meets that occur outside the official MHSA swim season are not subject to this rule.

(10) For an athlete to be eligible to compete in the State Swim Meet he/she must compete in at least two (2) Association-sanctioned meets during the regular swimming season. Only a medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempted from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHSA Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.

(11) Swimmers who compete in the State Swim Meet must have a reportable time in that event from an MHSA sanctioned meet that takes place during the current competitive season. Athletes may not use a time or event from a previous year's competition or from non-MHSA events.

(12) The National Federation Swimming Rules shall be the official rules for all interscholastic swimming, unless modified by the MHSA rules.

(13) Diving will not be a swimming event in any MHSA swimming meet.

(14) AA and A-B Schools shall compete together during the preliminary races with the top 12 swimmers in AA competing for 12 556789000000000000699 in the finals and the top six swimmers in Class A-B competing for six places in the finals. Class A-B swimmers will compete separately in the finals for ***all*** events. Class A-B Relay teams will only score the top ***six*** teams for team points.

AA and A-B schools will be scored separately. A maximum of six (6) trophies shall be awarded, three in each class. General Rules for Awards (6) shall be followed for the number of trophies presented.

(15) State Meet Entries – A maximum of sixteen (16) swimmers will be entered in each event for the class A State Swim Meet. A maximum of thirty-two (32) swimmers will be entered in each event for the class AA State Swim Meet. When Class A or Class AA does not have enough swimmers to fill the heat for an event, additional A or AA swimmers will be used to fill lanes to ensure 48 swimmers will participate in each event at state.

(16) All swimmers representing the same school during a competition must wear matching school-issued swim caps in the same, color clearly identifying their team. These caps may display the swimmer's name, school name, or school nickname. Swimmers may wear a second cap underneath (a "double cap"), but it must be neutral in color and not distract from the team-issued cap.

All swimwear must comply with NFHS rule 3-3, Article 2, which states:
1. Suits must be one-piece;

2. Male swimmers must wear suits that cover the buttocks and do not extend above the waist or below the top of the kneecap;
3. Female swimmers must wear suits that cover the buttocks and breasts, and do not extend beyond the shoulders, below the top of the kneecap, or cover the neck.

Suits that are school-issued or school-approved, and worn as intended by the manufacturer, are considered legal regardless of color or print. "Modesty panels" and undergarments are not considered part of the official swimsuit but may be worn during competition.

(17) If an athlete fails to report to his/her respective heat, whether trial or final, the starter shall call the swimmer's name and school. He/she shall be called a maximum of two (2) times before the referee can impose the penalty for failure to report.

(18) Voice commands will be used for starts in swimming meets.

(19) A jury of appeals consisting of two coaches and the meet manager will be selected by the participating teams prior to the preliminaries and will be impaneled for the duration of the state meet. All protests, disputes and appeals having to do with the state meet will be resolved by the committee of three. Should the protest, dispute or appeal involve one of the coaches on the jury of appeals, the meet manager shall have the authority to appoint another coach to replace him/her for a decision on that particular case.

(20) The state meet manager shall provide a written report of the State Swim Meet results and a financial statement of the meet to the MHSA office immediately following the state meet. Any income in excess of the bid amount will be sent to the MHSA.

(21) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any meet or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered into the first tournament held in that district or in that division. Teams shall not be allowed to withdraw from participating in such a tournament without the specific approval of the MHSA Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(22) No all-state teams or players shall be picked or announced at the tournament site by either the Executive Board or tournament officials.

(23) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(24) By MHSA adoption, backstroke ledges may be used for regular and postseason meets. If ledges are used, they must be used as intended by the manufacturer and no modifications should be made. All requirements for backstroke ledges as set forth in the NFHS rules shall be followed.

II – SWIM MEET FINANCES

(1) **Established Ticket Prices for State Meet**

The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all state meets.

	Adult	**Student**
Single Session	$ 10.00	$ 8.00
All-Session	$15.00	$ 12.00

(2) Payment of Team Expenses and Division of Profits: After all allowable meet expenses are paid, the balance remaining shall be designated as team expenses and shall be paid as follows: Each participant from any one school shall be paid a per diem based on the amount of remaining profits, divided by the total number of participants minus participants in the host city schools. State meet managers may submit the funds to MHSA for distribution.

(3) After each state meet the meet manager shall remit to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association a complete financial report of the meet within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the event.

The meet manager for each state meet shall furnish the complete financial report to each of the competing schools and to the Executive Director of the MHSA.

(4) Related items:

A. The concession rights for any state meet held in nonmember school facilities shall be awarded by the MHSA Executive Board.

B. The meet program rights for the state tournament will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

III – STATE SWIM MEET GUIDELINES

The following 5 items will used as guidelines for the state swim meet:

(1) Have a spectator rotation to ensure that seating unlimited to individual event spectators to watch a single event is provided. The spectators will rotate in and out before and after the event. The other seats will be available for spectators that want to watch all events during the meet.

(2) All event awards will be presented at the end of the finals competition on Saturday in a separate area outside the competitive pool.

(3) The host for the MHSA State Swim Championship Meet will make available a pre-meet warm-up in the pool available on the Thursday prior to the start of the meet.

(4) All events will be marshalled to the pool through a ready room for both preliminaries and finals of the state meet.

(5) Entries for the MHSA State Swim Championship Meet are required to arrive to the host team register by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday (nine days prior to the meet start date) and a final psych sheet will be sent and posted the following Friday by 5:00 p.m. after which no changes to the meet entries will be allowed. Meet scratches can be made but no changes to events or added swimmers will be allowed.

TENNIS

TOURNAMENT DATES

Divisional Tournaments

Class AA, A & B-C..... May 17-22

State Tournaments

Classes A, B-C..... May 27-29
Class AA ..... May 27-28

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The MHSA will promote, provide for and control all interschool tennis activities among the member schools. USTA rules will govern play.

(2) Participants will wear the following school-approved traditional tennis attire which is appropriately sized (uniform to include top and bottom garments): shirts will be full-length with finished edges with collars, traditional crewneck, v-neck or mock-turtle neck design. Well-fitting racer back tops, tank tops, and other appropriately fitted tops will be allowed. Halter tops and spaghetti straps will not be permitted. Shorts and skirts will be worn at the waist. All skorts (a pair of compression shorts having a flap or panel across the front and back to resemble a skirt), as well as leggings, are legal bottom garments. The skort must be appropriately sized for the individual and worn as the manufacturer intended.

The upper portion of the tennis dress will be full-length with finished edges with collars, traditional crewneck, v-neck or mock-turtleneck design. The lower portion of the tennis dress must be appropriately sized for the individual and worn as the manufacturer intended.

Adornments on clothing or headwear will not advertise drugs or alcohol or contain offensive material as deemed inappropriate by the meet director or tournament manager. After the first violation of this rule, there will be a warning administered for the individual and the team with the uniform violation being corrected within five minutes before continuation of play is to resume. After the second violation, the individual forfeits the match and the team is deducted one (1) team point.

The meet director has the right to waive the uniform rule due to inclement weather; however, each participant must be dressed appropriately during all competition.

(3) Montana shall be divided into three classifications for tennis.

A. Schools are classified into Class AA, A, or B-C. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association tennis contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of tennis practice of at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.
The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.
When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of an association sanctioned contest does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a contest that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a contest that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a contest does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the number of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(5) The tennis seasons for both boys and girls officially close with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(6) Twelve (12) dates of competition will be the maximum number per individual tennis player excluding Association sponsored tournaments. A two-day tournament counts as two days of competition towards the season limitations.

(7) For an athlete to be eligible to compete in the postseason meet he/she must compete in at least two (2) Association-sanctioned days of competition during the regular tennis season. A medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempt from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHSA Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.

(8) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.
No school is required to take part in any match or tournament, but once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered into the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(9) Wilson is the official ball and tennis supplier of the Montana High School Association. The Wilson US Open ball is the ball used for all MHSA state tennis meets. The MHSA recommends the use of this ball for all regular season events.

(10) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

II - RULES FOR DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENTS

(1) All entries to the divisional meet shall be forwarded to the divisional meet manager one week in advance of the divisional tournament.

(2) Schools within these divisions from each of three classifications wishing to qualify participants into state competition may enter up to eight singles participants (four boys and four girls) and four doubles (two boys teams and two girls teams) in a divisional playoff at their respective sites. Class A may enter three boys' and three girls' teams in doubles competition. Class AA may enter four boys' and four girls' teams in doubles competition.

(3) Events will be boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles. Both boys and girls shall be allowed to enter one event only, either singles or doubles, but not both.

(4) Both the divisional and state tournaments in all classes shall be organized so that they are double elimination from the first round through semi-finals, in both singles and doubles. The only exception to this would be in the divisional play where the divisional manager may set up pro-sets on the first round as single elimination. This would be in a situation where there is an unusually large number of entries in the divisional tournament.

(5) Care should be given to scheduling each player or team on a variety of courts in order to equalize playing conditions. Care should be taken to avoid, when possible, early round matchups of contestants from the same school.

(6) Each division will be charged with the responsibility of determining the divisional tournament seeding criteria. Suggested criteria for seeding entries could include the following: past record in previous state high school meets, divisional meets, head to head competition with most recent matches carrying the most weight, and record against common opponents.

(7) Because of injury, illness or other emergency situations, one boy or one girl, who was named as an alternate before the start of competition, may be used as a substitute before or during the divisional meet for doubles play only. This substitute can only be placed at the beginning of a match. This substitute shall not be a qualifier from any other tennis event.

INTERPRETATION

1. ***If an alternate is used during the tournament, that alternate must continue to play for the rest of the tournament and the original player may not return. If the doubles team with the alternate qualifies for the state tournament, that same team will compete at state.***

(8) Each division is responsible for selecting a site and manager for its divisional tournament. In case of foul weather, the tournament will be held on the Monday following the regular, scheduled time of the divisional meet.

(9) The top four singles players and the top four doubles teams from each divisional tournament in Classes AA and A will advance to the state tournament.
For the state B-C girls' meet: each division will qualify 4 or 5 singles players (equal to the number of schools in each division). The additional 4 qualifiers will be determined based on the number of competitors in each divisional tournament. Each division will qualify 4 doubles teams.

For the state B-C boys' meet - Each division will qualify 4 singles players and 3 doubles teams.

(10) Scoring in Class A divisional tournaments will be: 1st-10 points; 2nd-7 points; 3rd-4 points; and 4th-2 points.

Scoring in Class AA divisional tournaments will be: 1st-7 points; 2nd-5 points; 3rd-3 points; 4th-1 point.

The four events are boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles. To determine team champions in the divisional tournaments, two (2) advancement points will be given to those players advancing on the winner's bracket and one (1) advancement point for those advancing on the consolation brackets. Defaults, forfeits and disqualifications will be given two (2) advancement points on the winner's side of the bracket and one (1) advancement point on the consolation side of the bracket. Byes receive two (2) points on the winners' side of the bracket if the individuals win their next match and one (1) point if the player who receives the bye wins the next round on the consolation side of the bracket.

To determine team champions in B-C divisional tournaments, two (2) advancement points will be given to those players advancing on the winner's bracket and one (1) advancement point for those advancing on the consolation brackets. Defaults, forfeits and disqualifications will be given two (2) advancement points on the winner's side of the bracket and one (1) advancement point on the consolation side of the bracket. Byes receive two (2) points on the winners' side of the bracket if the player who receives the bye wins the next round and one (1) point if the player who receives the bye wins the next round on the consolation side of the bracket.

Scoring in the divisional B-C tournaments will be 1st-10 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points, 4th - 4 points, 5th – 3 points, and 6th – 1 point.

(11) The MHSA method of breaking ties at divisional tournaments shall be the USTA set (7-point) tie breaker.

SINGLES: A, having served the first game of the set, serves the first point from the right court; B serves point 2 and 3 (left and right), A serves points 4 and 5 (left and right), B serves point 6 (left and after they change ends, point 7 (right); A serves points 8 and 9 (left and right); B serves point 10 and 11 (left and right), and A serves point 12 (left). A player who reaches 7 points during these first 12 points wins the game and set. If the score has reached 6 points all, the players change ends and continue in the same pattern until one player established a margin of two points, which gives that player the game and set. Note that the players change ends every six points, and that player who serves the 1st point of one of these 6-point segments also serves the first point of the next one (from right court). For a following set the players change ends, and B serves the first game.

DOUBLES follows the same partners preserving their serving sequence. Assume A-B versus C-D, with A having served the first game of the set. A serves the first point (right); C serves points 2 and 3 (left and right); B serves points 4 and 5 (left and right); D serves point 6 (left) and the teams change ends. D serves point 7 (right); A serves points 8 and 9 (left and right); C serves points 10 and 11 (left and right); B serves point 12 (left). A team that wins 7 points during these first 12 points wins the game and set. If the score has reached 6 points all, the teams change ends. B then serves point 13, (right) and they continue until one team establishes a two-point margin and thus wins the game and set. As in singles, they change ends for one game to start a following set, with team C-D to serve first.

(12) Competitors' conduct:

A. All tennis players in MHSA sanctioned tournaments shall be penalized one team point (on the first infraction) and

removed from further play (on second infraction) for any unsportsmanlike conduct on site after a match or before the next match or at the end of the tournament. Any contestant disqualified in an individual tournament competition is not entitled to any points earned in the tournament. All advancement points and placement points are negated. All vacancies created in the tournament pairing shall be scored as forfeits. During the match, players are under the point penalty system of the USTA. Warnings of this rule shall be written in pretournament letters and given to all players at the pretournament meeting.

B. Each tennis court should have a site director and that director should be in charge of administering the penalty system above for violation/abuse of any equipment or facilities, abusive language, abusive gestures, and other obnoxious, offensive behavior.

C. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the tournament site includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: throwing rackets or any equipment, swearing, intentionally hitting game balls out of the court, being abusive to tournament officials, and fighting.

(13) School coaches should be identified by coaches' badges issued by tournament management.

(14) Competition at all AA divisional tournaments is to be conducted on the basis that all matches will be the best of three sets except during inclement weather.

(15) During competition at all AA divisional tournaments players shall be limited to three full matches or five abbreviated matches per day.

(16) During competition at all Class A divisional tournaments players shall be limited to four full matches per day. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

(17) During competition at Class B-C Divisional Tennis Meets, players will be limited to 3 full matches per day unless players have played less than 6 hours, then 4 matches would be allowed. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

(18) Inclement Weather Format:

Best of 3 sets. Sets 1 & 2 regular but each set will be shortened by starting at 2 games each. Set 3 - 10 point match tiebreaker - first to 10 points but win by 2. A 120 second set break, if split sets. Once a round has started, the scoring format will be the same whether the round is finished inside or outside. If indoor courts are being used as part of the regular scheduled play (not because of weather issues), scoring will be the same as the outdoor format; Tournament Director can modify to no add scoring if needed.

The decision of which format to use for shortened matches will be decided by the tournament manager in consultation with the MHSA.

(19) Rest Time Between Matches: When players are involved in back to back matches, the MHSA will allow a minimum of 30 minute rest period and a maximum of 60 minute rest period for both singles and doubles competition. After the 30-minute rest period, the match will be allowed to begin if both the players and coaches involved are ready to start the match. For consistency, the MHSA recommends a minimum of 30 minutes for all matches.

(20) In class B-C, at least one coach is required to be at each site when genders are playing at split locations.

(21) In class B-C, the 10-point tiebreaker will be used in lieu of a full third set for all postseason matches.

III - RULES FOR STATE TENNIS MEETS

(1) Three state tennis meets will be held — one for Class AA, one for Class A, and one for Class B-C.

(2) The state AA meet will utilize a 16-player bracket with contestants consisting of four qualifiers from each of the four divisions. The state A meet will utilize a 16-player bracket with contestants consisting of four qualifiers from each of four divisions advancing to the state tournament. For the state B-C meet, 32 individuals will qualify for girls' singles, 24 teams will qualify for girls' doubles, 16 teams will qualify for boys' singles and 12 teams will qualify for boys' doubles. State tournament managers will use 32-player and 24-player brackets in the girls' competition and 16-player and 12-player brackets in the boys' competition.

(3) Scoring in the state tournaments will be as follows:
Class AA: 1st - 9 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points and 4th - 3 points and 5th – 1 point
Class A: 1st - 10 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points, 4th - 3 points and 5th - 1 point.
Class B-C: 1st - 10 points, 2nd - 7 points, 3rd - 5 points, 4th - 4 points, 5th - 3 points, and 6th - 1 point.

The four events are boys' singles, boys' doubles, girls' singles and girls' doubles. To determine team champions in the state tournaments, two (2) advancement points will be given to those players advancing on the winner's bracket and one (1) advancement point for those advancing on the consolation brackets. Defaults, forfeits and disqualifications will be given two (2) advancement points on the winner's side of the bracket and one (1) advancement point on the consolation side of the bracket. Byes receive two (2) points if the player who receives the bye wins the next round and one (1) point if the player who receives the bye wins the next round on the consolation side of the bracket.

(4) The method of breaking ties at state tournaments shall be the USTA Set (7-point) tie breaker as outlined under II - Rules for Divisional Tournaments, (11).

(5) Competition shall be conducted on the basis that all matches will be the best of three sets.

(6) Because of injury, illness or other emergency situations, one boy or one girl, who was named as an alternate before the start of competition, may be used as a substitute before or during the state meet for doubles play only. This substitute can only be placed at the beginning of a match. This substitute can be the alternate that was listed for doubles at the divisional tournament or a team member that participated in the divisional tournament, as a singles ***or*** doubles team that did not qualify for state.

(7) Entries to the State Tennis Meets will be certified by the division tournament manager. These entries must be reported no later than the Monday before the opening of the state tennis meet.

(8) Competitors' conduct:

A. All tennis players in MHSA sanctioned tournaments shall be penalized one team point (on the first infraction) and removed from further play (on second infraction) for any unsportsmanlike conduct on site after a match or before the next match or at the end the tournament. Any contestant disqualified in an individual tournament competition is not entitled to any points earned in the tournament. All advancement points and placement points are negated. All vacancies created in the tournament pairing shall be scored as forfeits. During the match, players are under the point penalty system of warning, point, game, match. Warnings of this rule shall be written in pretournament letters and given to all players at the pretournament meeting.

B. Each tennis court should have a site director and that director should be in charge of administering the penalty system above for violation/abuse of any equipment or facilities, abusive language, abusive gestures, and other obnoxious, offensive behavior.

C. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the tournament site includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: throwing rackets or any equipment, swearing, intentionally hitting game balls out of the court, being abusive to tournament officials, fighting, and using alcohol and/or tobacco.

(9) School coaches should be identified by coaches' badges issued by tournament management.

(10) Competition at the state AA tournament is to be conducted on the basis that all matches will be the best of three sets except during inclement weather.

(11) During competition at the state AA tournament players shall be limited to three full matches or five abbreviated matches per day.

(12) During competition at all Class A state tournaments players shall be limited to four full matches per day. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

(13) During competition at Class B-C State Tennis Meets, players will be limited to 3 full matches per day unless players have played less than 6 hours, then 4 matches would be allowed. There is no match limit per day for shortened matches.

(14) Inclement Weather Format:

Best of 3 sets. Sets 1 & 2 regular but each set will be shortened by starting at 2 games each. Set 3 - 10 point match tiebreaker - first to 10 points but win by 2. A 120-second set break, if split sets. Once a round has started, the scoring format will be the same whether the round is finished inside or outside. If indoor courts are being used as part of the regular scheduled play (not because of weather issues), scoring will be the same as the outdoor format; Tournament Director can modify to no add scoring if needed.

The decision of which format to use for shortened matches will be decided by the tournament manager in consultation with the MHSA.

(15) State AA Tennis Prices

The Executive Board has established the following minimum ticket prices for all State Tennis Meets.

	Adult	Student
Single-Session (Friday or Saturday)	$11.00	$ 9.00
All-Session (two days)	$18.00	$13.00

(16) Each Class A school choosing to participate in their state tennis meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament by paying a maximum $20 fee per participant.

(17) Each Class B-C school choosing to participate in their state tennis meet will be required to share proportionately the cost of the tournament by paying a fee per participant. This fee will be set by the MHSA Executive Board when the state site is determined.

(18) Rest Time Between Matches: When players are involved in back to back matches, the MHSA will allow a minimum of 30 minute rest period and a maximum of 60 minute rest period for both singles and doubles competition. After the 30 minute rest period, the match will be allowed to begin if both the players and coaches involved are ready to start the match. For consistency, the MHSA recommends a minimum of 30 minutes for all matches.

(19) In class B-C, at least one coach is required to be at each site when genders are playing at split locations.

(20) In class B-C, the 10-point tiebreaker will be used in lieu of a full third set for all postseason matches.

IV - OFFICIAL PAIRINGS AND BRACKETS FOR STATE TENNIS MEETS

(1) The official pairings for the State AA Tennis Meet consist of three parts which will be released by the MHSA office after the divisional tournaments are completed.

Bracket I	Bracket II	Bracket III
1st East	1st East	1st East
4th South	4th West	4th North
2nd North	2nd North	2nd West
3rd West	3rd South	3rd South
2nd West	2nd South	2nd South
3rd North	3rd North	3rd West
1st South	1st West	4th East
4th East	4th East	1st North
1st West	1st North	1st West
4th North	4th South	4th South
2nd East	2nd East	2nd East
3rd South	3rd West	3rd North
2nd South	2nd West	2nd North
3rd East	3rd East	3rd East
1st North	1st South	1st South
4th West	4th North	4th West

(2) The official pairings for the State A Tennis Meet (boys and girls) consist of three parts which will be released by the MHSA office after the divisional tournaments are completed.

Bracket I	Bracket II	Bracket III
1E	1E	1E
4SW	4NW	4C
2NW	2C	2SW
3C	3SW	3NW
2C	2SW	2NW
3NW	3C	3SW
4E	4E	4E
1SW	1NW	1C
1NW	1C	1SW
4C	4SW	4NW
2SW	2NW	2E
3E	3E	3C
2E	3NW	3E
3SW	2E	2C
4NW	4C	4SW
1C	1SW	1NW

(3) The official pairings for State B-C Tennis will be distributed by the MHSA office after the completion of the divisional tournaments.

If needed, MHSA will adjust the state qualifying criteria to account for changes in the number of teams.

The following guidelines shall be used for qualifying into State B-C Tennis:

Girls State Meet Qualification Information:

- A 32-player bracket will be used for girls' singles and a 24-player bracket will be used for girls' doubles.
- Each division will qualify 4 or 5 singles players (equal to the number of schools in each division). The additional 4 qualifiers will be determined based on the number of competitors in each divisional tournament.
- Each division will qualify 4 doubles teams.

Boys State Meet Qualification Information:

- A 16-player bracket will be used for boys' singles and a 12-player bracket will be used for boys' doubles.
- Each division will qualify 4 singles players.
- Each division will qualify 3 doubles teams.

TRACK AND FIELD

DATES FOR TRACK & FIELD MEETS

District Meets

Classes B and C.....May 10-15

Divisional Meets

All Classes .....May 17-22

State Meets

All Classes .....May 27-29

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool track and field activities among member schools for both boys and girls.

(2) All track and field meets shall be conducted under the Track and Field Rules of the National Federation except when modified by the Association Rules.

(3) MHSA rules modify Rule 4, Section 2, Article 4 of the National Federation Track Rules to provide that each school can enter up to five (5) contestants per individual event in meets involving four or more schools.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any meets may be held.

(5) No individual shall compete in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of track and field practice and at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable contest. The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (6), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a meet does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a meet that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a meet that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a meet does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(6) No team shall participate in more than ten (10) meets excluding Association sponsored meets and excluding top ten or top eight meets. An athlete will only be allowed to compete in one top 10/8 track and field meet. The track season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the state meet.

(7) No individual may participate in an out-of-state invitation-only meet unless approved by the MHSA Executive Director. Any out-of-state participation approved under these criteria will count toward the ten-meet limit for the particular student.

(8) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to participate.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any regular season meet, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered in to the first meet held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from participating in such meet without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(9) MHSA rules modify National Federation Track & Field rule 4, section 2, articles 1 and 2, Limitation of events: In one-day meets a contestant shall not be allowed to participate in more than five events (track and/or field), including relays.

Note: It is possible for a competitor to qualify in 5 individual events at the divisional meet and then also compete on a relay team or teams at the state meet, thus participating in more than 5 events. The state meet is considered to be more than a one day meet.

(10) Scoring for all MHSA meets shall be according to National Federation Rule 2 - 1 - 2. Each relay race shall be included in the scoring. District, division and state meets shall score six (6) places in individual and relay events (using 10-8-6-4-2-1 scoring).

(11) Qualifying relay teams are not limited to the same personnel at the state meet who participated in the divisional meet. No substitutions are allowed in individual event(s).

(12) Interstate Track and Field Meets: Any interstate meet must be sanctioned as set forth in Rule 16 in the Association General Rules and Regulations before any member school may participate.

(13) All participants are prohibited from wearing any garments with alcohol or tobacco advertisements, profanity or other inappropriate messages at track and field meets. It is the responsibility of coaches and meet directors to ensure that inappropriate apparel be removed. Participants who fail to remove inappropriate apparel on request to do so shall be disqualified from participation in the meet.

(14) In all meets an athlete must have a legally recorded mark in the preliminaries to advance to the finals.

(15) For an athlete to be eligible to compete in post-season competition he/she must compete in at least two (2) Association sanctioned meets during the regular track and field season. Only a medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempt from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHSA Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.

(16) All schools will be required to process the pole vaulters' weight verification form listing each student participating in the pole vault event. The form is to be on file in the Activities Director's office prior to a pole vaulter's first interscholastic competition.

(17) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(18) During the regular season, the MHSA will allow the addition of a relay (200, 200, 400, 800) to be run if requested by meet management to the MHSA Executive Director.

(19) At all postseason meets, warm-ups for throwing events must be conducted in the following manner:

a. When athletes participate in a general warm-up the day prior to competition, each athlete will be allowed only one implement/attempt at a time.
b. During the general warm-up immediately prior to the event, each athlete will be allowed only one implement/attempt at a time.

II – CLASSIFICATIONS OF TRACK PROGRAMS - BOYS AND GIRLS

(1) Schools are classified into the following classes: AA, A, B and C. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments.

III - DISTRICT AND DIVISIONAL MEETS

(1) The responsibility for staging district and divisional meets rests with the schools in the respective districts and divisions. Times and distances used for seeding at the district (Classes B and C) and divisional (Classes AA and A) levels must be from performances established during the current season.

(2) Class B and Class C schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility of divisional seeding. Possible options include: a) conducting district meets; or b) entering athletes directly to the divisional meets. Divisions that choose not to conduct district meets must request permission from the MHSA office.

In Class C, advancement from the district meets to divisional meets will be as follows:

Western C – ***The top five (5) finishers from each of Districts 12C, 13C and 14C shall qualify for the divisional meet. The next five (5) best performances (times, heights, or distances), regardless of district, among the remaining competitors from Districts 12C, 13C and 14C shall also qualify.***
Southern C –***The top six (6) finishers from each of Districts 6C and 7C shall qualify for the divisional meet and any athletes who have achieved the approved Divisional qualifying marks during the regular season.***
Eastern C – ***The top four (4) finishers from each of Districts 2C, 3C, and 4C shall qualify for the divisional meet. The next four (4) best performances (times, heights, or distances), regardless of district, among the remaining competitors from Districts 2C, 3C, and 4C shall also qualify. A maximum of sixteen (16) competitors shall advance in each event.***
Northern C – ***The top six (6) finishers from each district shall qualify for the divisional meet. The next four (4) competitors, based on the Northern C divisional depth charts, shall also qualify to complete a field of sixteen (16) competitors in each event.***

In Class B district meets, the first six place winners in each event and the first six relay teams will qualify for advancement to the divisional meet.

Relay teams are not limited to the same personnel at the divisional meets as participated in the relay at the district meets. Advancement to divisional meets is restricted to only those who qualify at the district meets. No substitutions are allowed, except in relay personnel. District meet managers are responsible to certify entries from their districts to the divisional meet managers.

(3) Divisional meets must be held in all classes to qualify contestants to the State Track and Field Meet. Divisions will advance competitors to the state meet as follows:

Class AA – both divisions: the first eight (8) place winners, including ties for eighth place in all running and field events. All Class AA relay teams will advance to the state meet if they compete in race at divisional.

Class A – both divisions: the first ten place winners in all events, including ties for tenth place in running/relays and field events.

Class B – the first six place winners, including ties for sixth place in all running and field events, in the Northern and Western divisions and the first eight place winners, including ties for eighth place in all running and field events, in the Southern Division.

Class C – all divisions: the first six place winners including ties for sixth place in all running/relays and field events.

Qualifying relay teams are not limited to the same personnel at the State Track and Field Meet who participated in the divisional meet. Advancement to the State Meet is restricted to only those who qualify at the divisional meets. No substitutions are allowed, except in relay personnel.

(4) Districts and divisions shall not permit more than one relay team per school to be entered for each relay event.

(5) Divisional track and field meets, that are approved by the division to be conducted on two days, must meet the requirements for limitations on the number of events for a one day meet.

(6) Financing of district and divisional track and field meets is the responsibility of the respective district or division.

(7) Immediately following each district or divisional track and field meet the meet manager should submit a financial report to the MHSA Executive Director on the official MHSA financial report form.

(8) All entries must be certified by each divisional meet manager and reported to the manager of the State Track and Field Meets immediately following the conclusion of the meet. Entries received later than the Sunday following the divisional meets will not be accepted for participation in the State Track and Field Meets.

(9) Schools are allowed to conduct non-high school track and field meets at the same time as high school district track and field meets. The high school and non-high school events must be conducted separately.

IV – QUALIFYING STANDARDS

(1) In addition to conducting a divisional meet, all classes will use Qualifying Standards as an approved method to qualify athletes for the state track and field meets. ***Qualifying meets must have all 17 events, FAT system, and events must be supervised by adults.***

(2) The approved Qualifying Standards by class are:

	Class AA	
EVENTS	GIRLS	BOYS
100 Meters	13.00	***11.15***
200 Meters	26.70	22.80
400 Meters	1:01.00	51.80
800 Meters	2:24.00	2:00.00
1600 Meters	5:23.00	4:30.00
3200 Meters	11:50.00	***9:50.00***
100/110 Meter Hurdles	16.30	15.70
300 M Meter Hurdles	48.50	***42.0***
Shot Put	35'3"	48'
Discus	113'	146'
Javelin	113'	165'
High Jump	5'2"	6'2"
Long Jump	16'6"	21'
Triple Jump	34'	42'
Pole Vault	10'	13'0"
400 Meter Relay	50.60	43.80
1600 Meter Relay	4:12.00	3:30.00
400M Relay Provisional Time	52.80	45.80
1600M Relay Provisional Time	4:25.00	3:42.00

	Class A	
EVENTS	GIRLS	BOYS
100 Meters	***13.00***	11.30
200 Meters	***26.70***	***22.90***
400 Meters	1:01.50	51.70
800 Meters	2:26.00	2:01.00
1600 Meters	5:28.00	***4:34.00***
3200 Meters	12:13.00	10:12.00
100/110 Meter Hurdles	16.70	16.10
300 M Meter Hurdles	48.50	41.80
Shot Put	35'2"	47'0"
Discus	110'0"	142'
Javelin	113'0"	167'
High Jump	5'0"	6'0"
Long Jump	***16'6"***	***20'10"***
Triple Jump	***34'0"***	41'9"
Pole Vault	9'6"	12'6"
400 Meter Relay	51.80	44.80
1600 Meter Relay	4:14.00	3:34.00

	Class B	
EVENTS	GIRLS	BOYS
100 Meters	13.20	11.50
200 Meters	***26.90***	***23.00***
400 Meters	***1:01.20***	***51.50***
800 Meters	***2:24.50***	**2:02.00**
1600 Meters	***5:30.30***	***4:36.00***
3200 Meters	***12:10.30***	***10:11.70***
100/110 Meter Hurdles	16.50	***16.10***
300 M Meter Hurdles	***47.90***	***42.10***
Shot Put	***35'1"***	***46'0"***
Discus	***107'6"***	***137'10"***
Javelin	***115'7"***	***159'8"***
High Jump	4'11"	6'
Long Jump	***16'4"***	***20'5"***
Triple Jump	***33'10"***	***41'5"***
Pole Vault	***9'2"***	***12'5"***
400 Meter Relay	***51.20***	***44.70***
1600 Meter Relay	***4:16.10***	***3:33.90***

	Class C	
EVENTS	GIRLS	BOYS
100 Meters	***12.99***	***11.54***
200 Meters	***26.85***	***23.13***
400 Meters	***1:01.20***	***51.39***
800 Meters	***2:26.92***	***2:01.71***
1600 Meters	***5:35.74***	***4:40.47***
3200 Meters	***12:30.82***	***10:25.18***
100/110 Meter Hurdles	***16.23***	***16.01***
300 M Meter Hurdles	***47.25***	***41.85***
Shot Put	***34'11.25"***	***44'11.75"***
Discus	***109'0"***	***140'6"***
Javelin	***115'10"***	***157'3"***
High Jump	5'0"	***6'2"***
Long Jump	***16'5.5"***	***20'11.5"***
Triple Jump	***34'3"***	***41'4"***
Pole Vault	8'10"	***12'3"***
400 Meter Relay	***52.12***	***44.67***
1600 Meter Relay	***4:16.84***	***3:33.89***

(3) An athlete who meets or exceeds the qualifying standard in a particular individual event at a regular season qualifying meet or at a district meet (Class B or C) and/or divisional meet (all classes) may enter that event at the state meet. An athlete using a qualifying standard to advance to state in a particular individual event must be entered in the district meet in Class B or C and divisional meet in all classes for that event but is not required to participate. That entry counts toward the MHSA event limitation which states that a contestant shall not be allowed to participate in more than five events (track and/or field), including relays, as well as toward the school's limitation of five contestants per event. For all other purposes, the NFHS Track and Field Rules 4-1-2 and 4-7-1 defining when an athlete becomes a competitor /participant will be followed.

(4) ***Any regular season track and field meet in which an MHSA member school competes against one or more other schools using Fully Automatic Timing (FAT) shall be considered a qualifying meet. Qualifying performances achieved at these meets may be used to meet MHSA Track and Field qualifying standards.***

For the purposes of this rule, a regular season qualifying meet is defined as a meet in which a school enters its track and field team as part of its regularly scheduled season.

a. The following meets shall be considered qualifying meets:
- ***1. Regular season dual, triangular, quadrangular, and invitational meets conducted by MHSA member schools using FAT.***
- ***2. Invitational meets hosted by MHSA member schools, including invitation-only meets.***
- ***3. District and Divisional meets.***

b. The following shall not be considered qualifying meets:
- ***1. Meets in which only a portion of a school's team participates for the primary purpose of providing competition opportunities to selected athletes rather than representing the school's full team as part of its regular season schedule.***

Only performances achieved at qualifying meets, as defined above, are eligible to be used for MHSA Track and Field qualifying standards.

(5) If FAT fails in the middle of the meet all times that are certifiable with FAT can be used to determine if a qualifying standard is met. All field events will be considered certifiable.

(6) A master list of qualifying times/marks will be updated regularly throughout the season and posted on the online stats program designated by the MHSA. The meet's host school or the school's head track and field coach must submit/enter qualifying performances within two full business days of the mark being set. Submissions must be completed using the MHSA-designated online stats program. Late submissions are

not allowed and will not be used for qualifying/seeding purposes.

(7) Qualifying standards will be evaluated and, if necessary, modified following the state meets every other year (in ***even*** numbered years).

(8) Evaluation of qualifying standards and any recommendations for modification will be the responsibility of ***all*** classifications respectively. All recommended changes must be presented to the MHSA staff before July 1st (of even numbered years) in order to be implemented for the following season.

V - TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS, CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The tournament program rights for all district and divisional programs will be determined by the respective district or division. The tournament program rights for all state tournaments will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

(2) The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

(3) At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events.

(4) Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas, i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

VI - STATE TRACK AND FIELD MEETS

(1) The Executive Board shall be responsible for staging the state track and field meets for Class C. The Executive Board shall determine all sites, set dates and appoint state track and field meet managers. The managers shall be responsible to the Executive Board to conduct the state track and field meets in accordance with the rules of the Montana High School Association. Classes AA, A and B state meets will be conducted by advancing competitors from the divisional track and field meets in addition to utilizing qualifying standards.

(2) Judges and other meet officials shall be selected by the meet managers subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

(3) The use of two-way radio communications systems at the state track and field meets by other than authorized track officials is prohibited. Other than devices used by meet officials, all radios, recorders, iPods, cell/camera/smart phones, video cameras and other electronic devices are prohibited on the field of competition (except in the pole vault coaching box).

(4) All relay races will be started at the juncture of the straight away and the curve at the state meets.

(5) Participation in the State Meets: State Meet qualifiers are outlined in II-District and Divisional Meets, (3) and (4) and in III-Qualifying Standards (1) through (4).

(6) All divisional entries must be certified by each divisional meet manager and reported to the manager of the state meets on or before the Sunday preceding the state meet. Entries or changes after the date are subject to a $100 fine Any necessary corrections after Sunday will be made in accordance with NFHS Track and Field Rules and the MHSA Handbook.

In all classes, each head coach must enter his/her qualifying athletes using the electronic method designated by the MHSA no later than Sunday preceding the state meet. Entries received after the date will not be accepted for participation in the state track and field meets. Entries for qualifying performances that were not submitted in accordance with III-Qualifying Standards will not be allowed.

(7) The MHSA will follow the basic record recognition for changing from the English to the metric System as that of the National Federation. The current English system of the MHSA records will stand and be listed as the Metric record for that distance until someone betters that time of the equivalent Metric distance. Until someone betters that record, the English distance record will continue to be shown. The exception to this would be the 100 meter dash. Handheld records and automatic timing records will both be recognized if the handheld time is faster.

(8) Timed finals will be utilized in the 300 meter hurdles, 400 meter dash, and the 1600 meter relay for both boys and girls. In Class AA, the 400 meter relay will be a timed final also.

(9) The number of participants in field event finals will be ten. The number of participants in track event finals from preliminaries will be ten when run on ten-lane tracks and eight when run on eight-lane tracks.

(10) State Track and Field Championships Pass Policy
The following Pass Policy will be followed for State Track and Field Championships:

A. Administrators, athletic directors of participating schools, and coaches of participating schools only: Boys' AA and A - 7; Girls' AA and A - 7; Boys' B and C - 3; Girls' B and C - 3.
B. Contestants - Bona-fide contestants (1).
[Each school shall receive two (2) packets - one (1) for Boys Teams and one (1) for Girls Teams.]
C. Managers - One (1) per team per school.
D. Montana High School Coaches without contestants - None.
E. Media
   1. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
   2. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
   3. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
   4. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

Note: When more administrators and/or coaches attend than passes permitted by the above policy, extra tickets must be purchased.

(11) State Track and Field Meet Ticket Prices

The Executive Board has established the following minimum ticket prices for all State Track and Field Meets.

	Adult	Student
Single-Session (Friday or Saturday)	$ 16.00	$ 11.00
All-Session (two days)	$24.00	$19.00

(12) Financial Report of the State Meet

A financial report will be submitted to the MHSA Executive Director immediately following the completion of the State Track and Field Meets by each respective meet manager on the official MHSA report form.

VII - LIST OF EVENTS

For all state, divisional and district meets the following is a list of approved events for boys and girls:

Track Events

1. 100 Meter Dash
2. 200 Meter Dash
3. 400 Meter Dash
4. 110 Meter High Hurdles-boys
   (10 hurdles: 39” high)
   100 Meter High Hurdles-girls
   (10 hurdles: 33” high)
5. 300 Meter Intermediate Hurdles
   (8 hurdles: 36” for boys, 30” for girls)
6. 800 Meter Run
7. 1600 Meter Run
8. 3200 Meter Run
9. 400 Meter Relay
   (4 competitors, 100 meters each)
10. 1600 Meter Relay
    (4 competitors, 400 meters each)

Field Events

1. Pole Vault
2. High Jump
3. Long Jump
4. Triple Jump
5. Discus
6. Javelin
7. Shot Put

VIII - ORDER OF EVENTS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

The order of events for track and field meets for a one session meet when no preliminary flights or heats are required — Rule 1, Section 2, Article 1A and Rule 1, Section 3, of the National Federation Track and Field Rules: For one session meets that require preliminaries the recommended order of events should follow Rule 1, Section 2, Article 1B and Rule 1, Section 3, of the National Federation Track and Field Rules (except when modified by the MHSA).

VOLLEYBALL

TOURNAMENT DATES

District Tournaments

Classes B and C..... Oct 26-31

Divisional Tournaments

Classes AA, A, B and C.....November 2-7

State Tournaments

All Classes .....November 12-14

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool volleyball activities among the member schools.

(2) Schools will be divided into four classes – AA, A, B and C.

(3) The playing rules as authorized and published by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all matches.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any contests may be played. No individual shall play in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of volleyball practice of at least one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable game.

The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team/C squad) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a match does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a match that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a match that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a match does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(5) Eighteen (18) volleyball matches will be the maximum limit for schools in classes A, B and C and nineteen (19) matches in class AA, with no more than three (3) 3-out-of-5 matches [or five (5) 2-out-of-three matches in dual tournament format only] on any one date excluding Association sponsored tournaments. These match limits apply for each squad: varsity, junior varsity, sophomore, freshman, etc.

(6) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any regular season match or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered in to the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(7) Each school's squad can take part in a maximum of three (3) regular season tournaments excluding Association-sponsored tournaments (regular season tournaments are defined as either invitational or dual tournament formats). An invitational or dual tournament shall count as one match and one day toward the match and date limitations established in section (5). Invitational or dual tournaments conducted over two (2) days constitute two matches and two days toward the match and date limitations. Dual tournament matches shall not be considered conference matches.

(8) Match formats:

<u>Regular Season Matches</u>
Varsity matches – All classifications will play a three (3) out of five (5) match format and will play a rally scoring system. In the first four sets, the score will go to twenty-five (25) points with no cap and a team must win by two (2) points. If a fifth set is needed, the score will go to fifteen (15) points with no cap and a team must win by two (2) points. The let serve will be utilized and two (2) time-outs per set will be allowed***. Two libero players can be utilized.***

Sub-varsity matches – All classifications will play a three (3) out of five (5) match format and will play a rally scoring system. Sets 1 and 2 score to twenty-five (25) points with a cap of thirty (30) points, and sets 3, 4 and 5 score to fifteen (15) points with a cap of twenty (20) points. The let serve shall be utilized with two (2) time-outs allowed for sets 1 and 2 and one (1) time-out allowed for sets 3, 4 and 5. ***Two libero players can be utilized.***

<u>Dual Tournament Format</u>
Varsity matches – All matches will be a three (3) out of five (5) or two (2) out of three (3) match formats and will use a rally scoring system. In a three (3) out of five (5) match format, the first four sets score will go to twenty-five (25) points with no cap and a team must win by two (2) points. If a fifth set is needed, the score will go to fifteen (15) points with no cap and a team must win by two (2) points. In a two (2) out of three (3) match format, the score will go to twenty-five

(25) points in all three sets, with no cap and a team must win by two (2) points. In all match formats, the let serve will be utilized and two (2) timeouts per set will be allowed. ***Two libero players can be utilized.***

Sub-varsity matches – All matches will be a three (3) out of five (5) or two (2) out of three (3) match formats and will use a rally scoring system. In a three (3) out of five (5) match format, sets 1 and 2, the score will go to twenty-five (25) points with a cap of thirty (30) points, and sets 3, 4 and 5, the score will go to fifteen (15) points with a cap of twenty (20) points. In sets 1 and 2 two (2) time-outs will be allowed and one (1) time-out allowed for sets 3, 4 and 5. In a two (2) out of three (3) match format, the score will go to twenty-five (25) points in sets 1 and 2, with a cap of thirty (30) points and set three (3) the score will go to fifteen (15) points with a cap of twenty (20) points. In sets 1 and 2 two (2) time-outs will be allowed and one (1) time-out allowed for set 3. The let serve and the libero player will be utilized in all sub-varsity match formats.

Dual tournaments may be organized by utilizing the pool play concept, round robin play or bracket play, and a minimum of four teams must be involved to be considered a dual tournament.

Invitational Tournament Format
Invitational tournaments may be organized by utilizing the "pool" play concept in which teams play only two (2) sets of a match. The teams which win their "pool" play then may advance to true match play which can be the best two out of three games or three out of five sets. Invitational tournaments will have a cap of 25.

(9) The Association prohibits students of member schools from entering a preliminary contest and then starting in the varsity contest the same day, except for Classes ***B and C*** when there are insufficient non-varsity players to play a junior varsity contest, schools may, by mutual consent of the ***administrators*** involved, play no more than two (2) varsity starters in the jv contest.

Individual volleyball players shall be allowed to play in no more than two matches/levels (freshman, sophomore, junior varsity, varsity) in any school's dual match. Entering a contest for one live ball counts as participation in one match. MHSA By-Laws, Section 2, General Penalties will be followed for any contest in which a participant exceeds the limitation. The player limitation rule doesn't apply during invitational or dual tournaments. Montana volleyball teams will always follow the MHSA match limitation rule when playing in neighboring states.

INTERPRETATIONS

1. **Any volleyball team that receives a forfeiture may be allowed to schedule and play a make-up match but the team that gives the forfeit must count the forfeited match as one of the season's match limit for its school and that team will not be allowed to schedule another match in place of the forfeited match(es).**

2. **Definition of "squad" – An athletic squad is determined by union of "act and intent" by grouping together a number of students to play as a unit to represent the school, under the direction of a designated coach or coaches.**

3. **Club team participation – during the MHSA volleyball season, no more than three (3) rostered participants in a school's program can compete in an outside volleyball event on the same team.**

4. **Definition of "invitational tournament" – An invitational tournament is defined as a tournament that does not have a predetermined number of matches a team will play. The number of matches per team is determined solely by wins and losses.**

(10) All varsity regular and post season matches will be a best three (3) out of five (5) competition with rally scoring all sets. A continuous twenty-minute warm-up clock will be standard for all varsity play. The buzzer will be sounded at twelve (12) minutes (signaling the end of joint court warm-up), at eight (8) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time), at four (4) minutes (signaling the end of the receiving team court time), at two (2) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) and at 0.00 (signaling the end of the receiving team court time). The officials will conduct the pre-match conference before the twenty (20) minute warm-up period begins. Coaches must be on the floor at this time. This applies to regular season and post season play. A continuous fifteen-minute warmup will be standard for all sub varsity levels of play. The buzzer will be sounded at (12) minutes (signaling the end of joint court warm-up), at eight (8) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) at four (4) minutes (signaling the end of the receiving team court time), at two (2) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) and 0.00 (signaling the end of the receiving court time). The officials will conduct pre-match conference before the fifteen (15) minute warm-up period begins. Coaches must be on the floor at this time.

(11) It is mandatory that line judges be adults for all varsity matches (excluding invitational and dual tournament matches) which utilize a three (3) out of five (5) match format and play a rally scoring format. It is recommended that adult line judges be used for sub-varsity matches and invitational/dual tournaments, but high school students are acceptable.

(12) The volleyball season officially closes with the end of the state tournament for the classification of the school concerned.

(13) No warm-up activities are allowed in the vicinity of the main playing floor at any time while any volleyball match is in progress. Invitational and dual tournaments are excluded from this rule.

(14) For MHSA volleyball post season play, the Baden Lexum Comp VX450c-210 red/white/navy blue microfiber composite volleyball will be used. For regular season play, a solid white volleyball may be used. If a colored volleyball is used for regular season play, it can only be a red/white/navy blue colored volleyball. For both regular season and post season play, any volleyball used for all levels of play shall include the NFHS authenticating mark.

(15) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(16) For post season play, volleyball teams will not be allowed on the playing floor until thirty (30) minutes before the start time of the match.

(17) All district and divisional volleyball tournaments that use a three-day format must be played on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. If the tournament uses a two-day format, the tournament can be held on Thursday/Friday or Friday/Saturday. Any variation must be approved by the MHSA office.

II – DISTRICT, DIVISIONAL AND STATE CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPATION AND PLAYOFF

(1) The playing rules as authorized by the National Federation of State High School Associations for the current year shall be followed for all sets.

(2) No all-star teams or players shall be picked or announced at the tournament site by either the Executive Board or tournament officials. This applies to district, divisional and state tournaments.

(3) It shall be mandatory for the winners of Classes AA, A, B and C in the divisional tournaments to take part in the final playoff series. In the event that any such winners should refuse to take part as provided above, then such team shall forfeit its right to its respective tournament championship, trophies etc., and the next team in line shall take its place and receive all respective trophies and replace the defaulting team in the final playoff. Furthermore, the defaulting team shall be barred

from all tournament participation the following year, unless excused by the Executive Board for such default.

(4) All divisional volleyball tournaments in Classes A, B and C shall utilize a true double-elimination bracket. Class AA will have playoff games to qualify for state. All classes will play three (3) out of five (5) basis with rally scoring for all sets. The let serve will be utilized and two time-outs per set will be allowed. The libero player can be utilized.

(5) There will be an eight (8) team, three (3) day state tournament on a three out of five rally scoring basis for all classes.

(6) Montana High School Association will provide volleyballs for the state tournaments.

III – ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

Teams and players recognized as eligible to participate in interscholastic volleyball in Montana under the rules of the Montana High School Association will be eligible to participate in the tournaments arranged. All schools of the state are cautioned to carefully check their lists of potential players and make certain that each student whose name is submitted is fully qualified under the rules.

IV – TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

In Classes B and C no more than twelve (12) players may be in uniform for any tournament match. Classes AA and A may suit fourteen (14) players.

V – TOURNAMENT POLICING

(1) The local tournament manager and/or committee must make arrangements for adequate policing at the gymnasium during the course of the tournament, which includes general policing of the building and grounds as well as policing of team dressing room facilities.

(2) Special attention must be given to insure that the game officials are afforded proper protection when leaving the floor, during their movement to the dressing area and while in the dressing room.

(3) These rules apply for district, divisional and state tournaments.

VI – CROWD CONTROL AT SEASON ATHLETIC CONTESTS

The Executive Board of the MHSA urges all school administrators, athletic directors and coaches to establish a policy in their school to prohibit students from rushing the floor at the conclusion of athletic contests. The request for this policy comes as a result of the dangers to players, officials and fans with the rushing of uncontrolled fans on the confined area of the gymnasium floor.

VII – DETERMINATION OF TOURNAMENT SITES

(1) Each district and division will determine its own tournament site and manager and is authorized to make all arrangements for the proper staging of said tournament in accordance with the general rules and under the MHSA finance plan. Tournament managers cannot be a coach or official if that coach or official is participating in the tournament.

(2) The determination of tournament sites, tournament managers and arrangements for all other MHSA tournaments will be made by the Executive Board. This determination will be made at a meeting of the Board after interested member schools or communities have been given an opportunity to submit written invitations to host an Association tournament.

(3) Following are some of the criteria which will be considered by the Board in making the determination of tournament sites: (1) Adequate gym facilities; (2) Adequate community facilities for team and spectator housing and eating; (3) Reasonable assurance of financial success; (4) Definite invitation showing local community support; (5) Geographical rotation when feasible.

(4) If the Board places a state tournament in a member school's facility, an administrator of that school will normally be named tournament manager. If the tournament is located in a facility other than a member school, the Executive Director, a member of the MHSA staff or a member of the Executive Board will normally be named manager.

(5) The concession rights for any tournament held in a nonmember school facility shall be awarded by the MHSA Executive Board.

VIII - TOURNAMENT PROGRAMS, CONCESSIONS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS

(1) The tournament program rights for all district and divisional programs will be determined by the respective district or division. The tournament program rights for all state tournaments will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

(2) The concession rights for any state tournament must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

(3) At district and divisional events, concessions where goods and/or services are received would be at the approval of managers of events.

(4) Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas; i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

IX - TOURNAMENT FINANCE PLAN

(1) After each district, divisional or state tournament the tournament manager shall submit a financial report of the tournament to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of that event. Schools will be required to itemize all charges. These itemizations and amounts charged are subject to review and approval.

(2) The Executive Board wishes to point out that the local community definitely profits from the tournaments in three ways: (a) All concessions of the tournaments are normally given to local organizations. (b) Local communities profit considerably through income at hotels, motels, restaurants and stores. (c) The local school is under no expense to send its team to the tournament.

(3) The host school does not underwrite the expense of the tournament, but is obligated to do its best to see to it that the gross receipts are such that allowable expenses are paid in full.

(4) Pretournament or post tournament playoff matches are considered part of the tournament; therefore, all receipts and expenses of these matches are part of the tournament financial report.

Allowable Tournament Expenses

Charges against the tournament will stand for payment in the following order:

(1) Referees' fees and expenses.

(2) Only one volleyball may be charged against the district tournament. The volleyballs for all divisional and for all state tournaments will be furnished by the MHSA office at no charge.

(3) Normal administrative expenses. (Printing tickets, scorebook, advertising, signs, postage, telephone, clerical, scorer and timer.)

(4) Use of facility charges (rental), shall include all charges, if any, for the following: extra custodial service, utilities, ticket sales, ticket takers, police/security, door guards, ushers, parking attendants, first aid room and towel service.

(5) Team expenses for district and divisional tournaments are to be computed as follows:

A. In addition to the players on the tournament roster (a maximum of twelve) per diem will be allowed for four additional persons at $45.00 per day for a maximum of 16 persons (12 players, 2 managers, 2 coaches), plus travel expense allowance of $2.50 per mile for one round trip for each school participating.

B. The decision to stay at the tournament site or to commute rests with each school. If a school elects to commute to the tournament site, any or all days the tournament is in session, they will be paid expenses as follows:

1. $2.50 per mile for each round trip, maximum of one round trip per day, plus $20.00 a day per person, to a maximum of 16, for meal allowance for each day they commute while the tournament is in session.
2. For the days when the team stays overnight at the tournament site, the regular schedule of $45.00 applies.
3. No expenses are paid for the day following the tournament.

C. One additional day per diem will be allowed if travel distance is more than 200 miles one way, if the team stays overnight an extra night preceding the tournament dates.

D. Teams required to report to the tournament site a day early for playoff match will be entitled to an extra day per diem at $20.00 or $45.00 whichever applies.

E. If a team(s) draws a bye and does not have to play on any day of the tournament, they will be paid expenses, either commuting or overnight schedule, whichever is applicable, if they are in attendance at the tournament on that day(s).

F. If, after a team is eliminated from tournament play, they leave before completion of the tournament play, they will receive one day less per diem than they otherwise are entitled to receive under this schedule.

G. Teams located at the tournament site will not receive any mileage or per diem.

H. In computing miles traveled the shortest paved route open to travel, as listed on the current official Montana Highway Map published by the Montana Department of Highways, will be the mileage used.

Note: No guarantee is made that teams will receive maximum expense allowance.

(6) For state tournaments only: team expenses will be calculated and distributed with consideration of the total travel distance of the qualifying teams based on a multi-tiered mileage chart established by the Executive Board.

Non-allowable Tournament Expenses

(1) Proper policing of hotels.

(2) Proper timing and scoring equipment.

(3) Adequate dressing room and shower facilities.

Established Ticket Prices for Division and State Tournaments

(1) Each district and division in each classification shall determine their own ticket prices for each tournament.

(2) The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all state tournaments:

State Tournaments

General Admission	Adult	Student
All-Session	$36.00	$25.00
Thursday or Friday – All Day Pass	$ 16.00	$ 11.00
Thursday or Friday – After 5:00 pm	$ 10.00	$ 8.00
Saturday – All Day Pass	$ 10.00	$ 8.00

X - SELECTION OF OFFICIALS

Refer to the MOA section for procedure for selection of officials to work the volleyball tournaments.

XI - PRETOURNAMENT PRACTICE SESSIONS PROHIBITED

(1) The tournament floor shall not be made available for practice purposes for any tournament team during the days when the tournament is in progress (other than the regular warm-up period) or at any time during the ten-day period immediately preceding the opening of the tournament, except when a team plays the majority of its home season matches on the floor selected as the tournament site. Then that team only would be permitted to practice on the tournament floor during the ten day period prior to the opening of any Association tournament.

(2) Teams which have a bye for the first match will be allowed one open practice period during the days when the tournament is in progress prior to their first match of the tournament if scheduling at the tournament site permits.

(3) Teams which receive byes after their first match and/or have a day without a match can practice on the tournament floor with the tournament manager's approval.

XII - VIDEO TAPE AT VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENTS

The Montana High School Association Executive Board has established the following policy for videotaping at MHSA sponsored tournaments in basketball, volleyball, and wrestling:

(1) All videotaping must be approved by the tournament manager.

(2) All videotaping (other than that approved for news media) shall be conducted from an area designated by the tournament manager. [Refer to Rules and Regulations, Section (32) Policies for Videotaping, Cybercasting, Telecasting and Photograph of MHSA Events.]

(3) No videotaping shall be conducted for commercial purposes unless previously approved by the Executive Director of the MHSA.

(4) Schools or their representatives may video only those specific competitions in which their students participate.

XIII - POLICY FOR TOURNAMENT PASSES

The Association has established the following policy for tournament passes which shall be adhered to by all tournament managers.

(1) Personnel passes — fourteen (14) all-session tickets per school. If school's co-op the host school will receive the fourteen administrative tickets and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets. These are to be used for administrators, coaches, spouses, chaperones, bus drivers, etc., who actually attend the tournament.

(2) For players — twelve passes for players and four for managers — total of sixteen.

(3) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(4) For radio — three passes to each station given permission to broadcast the tournament or match. The match (or matches) must be broadcast in its (or their) entirety.

(5) For media other than radio

a. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
b. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
c. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
d. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

(6) For referees — one pass to each referee working the tournament.

XIV - DISTRICT AND DIVISION ORGANIZATION

(1) Each Class B and C district and each division in AA and A should organize to transact such business as may come under their jurisdiction. Such organization may transact any business at their meetings which does not conflict with the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws and the rules and regulations adopted by the MHSA Executive Board. Division dues may be voted if such dues are used in the carrying out of division organization and plans. If dues are voted, it must be understood that they are voted in addition to the annual dues of the Association. Each should elect a full complement of officers to carry out such work as may come under its jurisdiction.

(2) While the management and general arrangements of divisional tournaments are left to each division, all officers are cautioned to adopt such rules and regulations as are consistent and fair to all schools within the division. No attempts to boycott or discriminate against individual schools will be allowed. Tournament committees and officials are cautioned not to select a tournament site unless the community school sponsoring such a tournament has adequate facilities and housing conditions to warrant staging the event. This should particularly include an adequate gymnasium with all locker and shower facilities and sufficient hotel accommodations to properly house all teams as well as patrons who are in attendance.

(3) Any officers, when authorized by a vote of their respective division, who have various proposals to submit to the Executive Board or the entire membership of the Association may submit these proposals to the Executive Board and request that these proposals be published in the regular Association Bulletin. If, after reviewing these proposals, the Board finds that they are not in conflict with Association policy, the Board will authorize publishing these various proposals in the regular Association Bulletin.

(4) In order that divisional officers may be furnished with tournament and other Association information, it is necessary that a list of officers elected for the current year be sent immediately to the Executive Director, Helena. The president or secretary of each division will be responsible for furnishing this information at the earliest possible date along with the tournament site.

(5) At the conclusion of each respective tournament, the secretary or tournament manager should be responsible for furnishing a complete financial report of the tournament to the Executive Director.

CLASS AA VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

(2) The Class AA schools will be charged with the responsibility of playoff structure and seeding.

(3) Playoff structure is for both boys and girls and will be held each year. Each division will have charge of the operation and management of its respective playoffs as to times and sites, and with other arrangements in accordance with the standard tournament plan as set for all tournaments and outlined in this handbook.

(4) Seeding for Class AA playoffs will be determined by AA conference policy.

Playoffs for Eastern and Western Divisions
#1 – Bye (1st seed at state)
#2 – Bye (2nd seed at state)
#3 – Plays #6 (at #3's site)
#4 – Plays #5 (at #4's site)
#5 – Plays #4 (at #4's site)
#6 – Plays #3 (at #3's site)

(5) The dates for playoff games will be determined by the AA conference.

(6) Each division's seeding will be as follows for advancement to the state tournaments:

Seeding for Eastern and Western Divisions
#1 – 1st place in the division
#2 – 2nd place in the division
#3 – Next highest remaining seed in the division
#4 – Last remaining seed in the division

(7) Seeding for the Class AA state tournaments will be as follows:

Bracket I	1st place Eastern vs. 4th place Western
	3rd place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western
Bracket II	1st place Western vs. 4th place Eastern
	3rd place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern

Brackets I and II shall alternate each year. The order of matches within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

(8) The state tournament will be an eight (8) team, three (3) day, true double-elimination tournament played on a three (3) out of five (5) basis with rally scoring all sets. The let serve will be utilized and two time-outs per set will be allowed. The libero player can be utilized.

CLASS A VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

(2) The Class A schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility of drawing up the conference schedules each season and for determining the number of conference matches the schools must play to be eligible for tournament seeding.

(3) The Class A schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility for divisional tournament seeding. Possible options include but are not limited to:

a. All teams advance to divisional tournaments.
b. Playoff games in which the number of teams advancing from each conference are determined by the division.
c. A conference tournament may be conducted to determine divisional seeding or conferences may choose to seed teams directly to the divisional tournament.

Divisions must inform the MHSA office of their divisional seeding plans.

(4) Each of the two divisions will hold a divisional volleyball tournament each year to determine the teams that will advance to an eight-team State Class A Tournament. The divisional tournaments will be seeded as follows:

Western Division

Bracket I 1st place SW vs. lowest remaining NW seed
2nd place NW vs. highest remaining SW seed

Bracket II 2nd place SW vs. highest remaining NW seed
1st place NW vs. lowest remaining SW seed

Brackets I and II shall alternate each year.

Eastern Division

Bracket I 1st place NE vs. 4th place SE
2nd place SE vs. 3rd place NE

Bracket II 3rd place SE vs. 2nd place NE
1st place SE vs. 4th place NE

(5) Each of the two divisions will be responsible for the operation and management of its divisional tournament. They will be responsible for the selection of the tournament sites and tournament managers, and the financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Tournament Finance Plan, as set up for all volleyball tournaments. In the event of ties in conference standing, the division will be responsible to determine seeding in its divisional tournaments.

(6) The date for divisional and state tournaments will be determined by the Executive Board.

(7) Each divisional tournament manager will be responsible for seeding the teams in the divisional tournament according to each division's policy.

(8) The sites, managers and standard seeding plan for the State Class A Tournament will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(9) Seeding for Class A State Tournaments will be as follows:

Bracket I 2nd place Eastern vs. 3rd place Western
1st place Western vs. 4th place Eastern

Bracket II 2nd place Western vs. 3rd place Eastern
1st place Eastern vs. 4th place Western

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of the matches within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

The state tournament will be an eight (8) team, three (3) day, true double elimination tournament played on a three (3) out of five (5) basis with rally scoring all sets. The let serve will be utilized and two time-outs per set will be allowed. The libero player can be utilized.

CLASS B VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class B.

(2) The Class B schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility of drawing up the conference schedules each season and for determining the number of conference matches the schools must play to be eligible for tournament seeding.

(3) The Class B schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility for divisional tournament seeding. Possible options include but are not limited to:

a. All teams advance to divisional tournaments.
b. Playoff matches to determine which teams advance to the divisional tournaments.
c. District tournament.

Divisions must inform the MHSA office of their divisional seeding plans.

(4) Each district will advance teams to the divisional volleyball tournament and be seeded according to the following plan. In the event of any ties in conference standing, the division will be responsible to determine seeding in its district tournaments or playoff games. Each division will advance teams to an eight-team State Class B Tournament according to the Class B state tournament seeding plan.

Northern Division

Bracket I 1st place District 1B vs. 4th place District 2B
3rd place District 1B vs. 2nd place District 2B

Bracket II 2nd place District 1B vs. 3rd place District 2B
4th place District 1B vs. 1st place District 2B

Western Division

Bracket I 1st place District 6B vs. 4th place District 7B
3rd place District 6B vs. 2nd place District 7B

Bracket II 1st place District 7B vs. 4th place District 6B
3rd place District 7B vs. 2nd place District 6B

For Northern and Western Divisions, Brackets I and II will alternate each year.

Southern Division

2026-27

Bracket I Game 1: 3rd place Dist. 4B vs. 3rd place Dist. 3B
Game 2: 1st place Dist. 4B vs. 3rd place Dist. 5B
Game 3: 1st place Dist. 3B vs. 2nd place Dist. 5B

Bracket II Game 4: 2nd place Dist. 3B vs. 2nd place Dist. 4B
Game 5: 1st place Dist. 5B vs. Winner of Game 1

2027-28

Bracket I Game 1: 3rd place Dist. 3B vs. 3rd place Dist. 5B
Game 2: 1st place Dist. 3B vs. 3rd place Dist. 4B
Game 3: 1st place Dist. 5B vs. 2nd place Dist. 4B

Bracket II Game 4: 2nd place Dist. 5B vs. 2nd place Dist. 3B
Game 5: 1st place Dist. 4B vs. Winner of Game 1

2028-29

Bracket I Game 1: 3rd place Dist. 5B vs. 3rd place Dist. 4B
Game 2: 1st place Dist. 5B vs. 3rd place Dist. 3B
Game 3: 1st place Dist. 4B vs. 2nd place Dist. 3B

Bracket II Game 4: 2nd place Dist. 4B vs. 2nd place Dist. 5B
Game 5: 1st place Dist. 3B vs. Winner of Game 1

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of the matches within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

(5) Each of the three divisions will be responsible for the operation and management of its divisional tournament. They will be responsible for the selection of the tournament sites and tournament managers, and the financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Tournament Finance Plan, as set up for volleyball tournaments.

(6) The date for the district, divisional and state tournaments will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(7) The sites, managers and standard seeding plan for the State Class B Tournaments will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(8) Seeding for the Class B State Tournament will be as follows:

2026-27

Bracket I
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 3rd place Southern

Bracket II
1st place Southern vs. 3rd place Northern
2nd place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

2027-28

Bracket I
1st place Southern vs. 3rd place Northern
2nd place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 3rd place Southern

2028-29

Bracket I
1st place Western vs. 4th place Southern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II
1st place Northern vs. 3rd place Southern
2nd place Southern vs. 2nd place Western

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manger. The order of the matches within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

The state tournament will be an eight (8) team three (3) day true double elimination tournament played on a three (3) of five (5) basis with rally scoring all sets. The let serve will be utilized and two time-outs per set will be allowed. The libero player can be utilized.

CLASS C VOLLEYBALL PROGRAM

(1) See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class C.

(2) The Class C schools in each division will be charged with the responsibility of drawing up the conference schedules each season and for determining the number of conference matches the schools must play to be eligible for district tournament seeding.

(3) Each district will hold a district tournament or have playoff matches and will determine seeding into the divisional. If a district wishes not to hold a district tournament or playoff matches, they must contact the MHSA office for approval. In event of any ties in conference standing, the division will be responsible to determine seeding in its district tournaments.

(4) Each of the four divisions will hold a divisional volleyball tournament each year to determine the two teams that will advance to an eight-team State C Tournament.

(5) Each of the four divisions will be responsible for the operation and management of its divisional tournament. They will be responsible for the selection of the tournament sites and tournament managers, and the financial arrangements in accordance with the MHSA Tournament Finance Plan, as set up for volleyball tournaments.

(6) The date for the divisional and state tournaments will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(7) Teams will be seeded in the divisional tournaments according to the brackets listed on the MHSA website.

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of games within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

(8) The sites, managers and standard seeding plan for the State Class C Tournament will be determined by the MHSA Executive Board.

(9) Seeding for the Class C State Tournament will be as follows:

2026-27

Bracket I
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern

Bracket II
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western

2027-28

Bracket I
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Eastern

2028-29

Bracket I
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Western

Bracket II
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Eastern

2029-30

Bracket I
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Western
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Eastern

2030-31

Bracket I
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Northern

Bracket II
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Southern
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Western

2031-32

Bracket I
1st place Eastern vs. 2nd place Northern
1st place Western vs. 2nd place Southern

Bracket II
1st place Southern vs. 2nd place Eastern
1st place Northern vs. 2nd place Western

Brackets may be switched at the discretion of the tournament manager. The order of the matches within each bracket may not be switched for any reason.

The State Class C Volleyball Tournament will be an eight (8) team, three (3) day, true double elimination tournament played on a three (3) out of five (5) basis with rally scoring all sets. The let serve will be utilized and two time-outs per set will be allowed. The libero player can be utilized.

WRESTLING

IMPORTANT DATES

Weight Certification

Final day for weight certification..... December 16

Seeding/Divisional Tournaments

All Classes ..... February 12-13

State Tournaments

All Classes ..... February 18-20

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

(1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool wrestling activities among the member schools.

(2) The National Federation Wrestling Rules, unless modified by MHSA rules, shall govern all situations. Montana follows the NFHS fourteen (14) weight classes for boys' and girls':

Boys

106 lbs.	***138 lbs.***	***175 lbs.***
113 lbs.	***144 lbs.***	***190 lbs.***
120 lbs.	***150 lbs.***	***215 lbs***
126 lbs.	***157 lbs.***	***HWT (max. 285)***
132 lbs.	***165 lbs.***	

Girls

100 lbs.	125 lbs.	155 lbs.
105 lbs.	130 lbs.	170 lbs.
110 lbs.	135 lbs.	190 lbs.
115 lbs.	140 lbs.	HWT (max. 235)
120 lbs.	145 lbs.	

Note: NFHS Rules do not have a minimum weight for the lowest weight class.

(3) The MHSA will follow NFHS rule 4-5 on weigh-in procedures for all regular season matches/tournaments and postseason competition.

Exception: All weigh-ins for regular season and divisional tournaments will take place the night prior to competition. For example, a tournament that takes place on a Friday and Saturday will have weigh-ins at the home school on Thursday night and at the tournament site on Friday night. Weigh-ins for the state tournament will take place Thursday *afternoon* & Friday nights on-site.

(4) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any matches may be held.

(5) Prior to the date of the first interscholastic wrestling match or meet, the wrestler must participate in eight (8) days of wrestling practice of at least one practice session on eight (8) different days for each contestant (no practice permitted on Sunday). The initial eight (8) practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (5), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a contested event does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a contested event that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a contested event that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a contested event does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial eight (8) days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional four (4) days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

(6) Each individual wrestler may have no more than eighteen (18) contested events (where he/she weighs in and wrestles at the same physical location) ***with a maximum of fifty-five (55) total matches prior to the postseason.*** Two of the contested events must be in the city where the wrestler's high school that he/she participates for is located. An individual wrestler may have no more than six (6) matches in one day and no more than ten (10) matches in a two-consecutive day period.

(7) A one-day invitational tournament (where there is not a predetermined number of matches for each contestant) shall count as one contested event toward season limitations. Invitational tournaments conducted over two (2) days constitute two contested events toward season limitations.

(8) Schools may utilize the "mixer" format for regular season meets. Mixers are defined as inviting a set number of schools to one location, with meet administration matching up the wrestlers from different schools to provide each participating wrestler the opportunity to compete in several matches that day (pre-determined matches in specific weight classes; not bracketed competition). A mixer is an excellent option for teams that cannot fill all of their weight classes. A one-day mixer will count as one contested event towards the season match limitations.

(9) When three or more schools take part in a double dual meet wrestling competition held in two separate schools/towns that are located less than thirty (30) miles apart and held on the same day, the following provisions apply:

a. One weigh-in will be used for multiple competitions that day.
b. Each dual meet wrestled will be counted as one contested event toward the season limitations.
c. A school not participating in the first dual will be required to follow NFHS rules and weigh-in one hour prior to their dual.

(10) A wrestling match won by forfeiture will be counted as part of the season match limitation only when the match is used for seeding purposes into the divisional or state tournament.

(11) Divisional and state wrestling tournaments shall be single elimination in the winner's bracket and double elimination in the loser's bracket.

(12) It is recommended that the officials not be seen in the company of coaches, socially or otherwise, at any time during the course of a tournament.

(13) The MHSA office will send ballots to all member schools for selection of divisional, seeding and state wrestling tournaments. It is strongly suggested that each school vote independently for officials for each tournament.

Divisional, seeding and state tournament ballots will be tabulated by the MHSA office staff. The MHSA office staff will contact those officials selected.

(14) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to play.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

No school is required to take part in any game or tournament, but when once entered under the plan outlined, schools shall carry out their part of the program in fairness to all other schools represented. Any team taking part in season play is automatically entered in to the first tournament held in that district or in that division. That team shall not be allowed to withdraw from playing in such tournament without the specific approval of the Executive Director. The penalty for violation shall be as outlined under Penalties, Article VIII, Section (2).

(15) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

(16) Walk-up music may be played in the regular season, dual or championship final round of an invitational tournament, by the home team only if approved by the school's administration. If the host school chooses to play walk-up music for the championship final round, walk-up music must be played for each wrestler participating in that round. Administrators should review the music to determine its appropriateness. Walk-up music should stop the moment the wrestler steps on the mat after checking in with the head table. Officials may order the music turned down or off if the music is inappropriate or is interfering with the orderly administration of the event.

II - WEIGHT CONTROL PROGRAM

(1) In order to be eligible for any interscholastic wrestling competition a student must satisfy the requirements set forth in this plan.

(2) ***Each wrestler must certify his/her weight on or before the third Wednesday of December (December 16, 2026).*** To be certified, a wrestler must have on file a completed WR#1 form with the school principal or his/her designee. This form will bear the wrestler's name, his/her school, and the dated signatures of the examining physician, the wrestler, his/her parent or guardian, and the coach. On this card, the examining physician will record the lowest weight he/she feels the wrestler may safely attain during that wrestling season. The other parties must sign the form after the examining physician has recorded his/her lowest weight, and by so doing, they indicate agreement with the physician's assessment.

(3) It is recommended that wrestling coaches and schools monitor weight control of their student athletes through skin-fold measurement techniques.

(4) It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to see that the above provisions are met as specified.

(5) A student who joins the team after the deadline for certification must have his WR#1 Form completed immediately.

(6) There can be no recertification at a lower weight class once the WR#1 form is complete. A wrestler who wrestles in a weight class lower than that dictated by the WR#1 form at any time or at any level during that season is in violation of these rules.

(7) The lowest weight class shown on the original WR#1 form for that season shall apply for the entire season. However, a wrestler may compete at any higher weight at any time during the season. If a wrestler weighs in more than one weight class above the lowest weight class shown on the original certification, the wrestler will no longer be eligible to wrestle at the lowest weight class shown on the WR#1. The wrestler must move to at least one weight class higher than shown on the WR#1.

NOTE: A wrestler certified at the 132 pound weight class, who weighs in at the 144 pound weight class after certification, would no longer be eligible to participate in the 132 pound weight class. The lowest weight class in which the wrestler may now participate would be the 138 pound weight class. The purpose of this rule is to allow growth and to discourage unhealthy or unsafe weight loss.

(8) 50% rule: For health and safety reasons, Montana's weight control program shall require each wrestler to have at least one-half of weigh-ins during the season at the minimum weight the wrestler will compete in during the divisional and state tournament series. The divisional/seeding tournament manager will verify that the wrestler has complied with the 50% rule.

The MHSA requires that each school use either the weight management portal through the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA) to track the 50% rule or the MHSA Record of Qualifying Weigh-ins Form.

For the purpose of the 50% rule, a valid weigh-in must comply with the following:

a. The wrestler must weigh-in and compete, i.e. a decision is reached (win, loss or receive a forfeit).
b. Weigh-ins for the purpose of the 50% rule can only occur at meets that have been scheduled before the season or rescheduled during the season because of extenuating circumstances with approval of the MHSA office. Each school must enter their regular season schedule (varsity and junior varsity) into the NWCA portal prior to the first scheduled competition of the season.
c. A wrestler eliminated on the first day of a tournament cannot weigh-in the second day for the same tournament. Varsity and junior-varsity tournaments are considered separate events and if there is a corresponding junior-varsity tournament, then wrestlers would be allowed to weigh-in and wrestle the second day for the junior-varsity tournament.
d. If a wrestler does not have anyone to wrestle during that event, this weigh-in will count.
e. If boys/girls wrestle out of state, they must weigh-in at the Montana approved weight class but are allowed to wrestle in the state approved weight class in which the contest is held.

(9) A wrestler must have weighed in and wrestled at least one time during the regular season in order to be eligible for the post season.

(10) A two-pound weight allowance is allowed for regular season matches held on Monday or Tuesday in December. ***The weight allowance cannot exceed +3 pounds over the original weight.***

(11) Weigh-ins for the 2nd day of a regular season and/or postseason tournament cannot officially begin until the weight class is finished for the day. The weigh-in will close 1 hour after the last match of the day. It is recommended that tournament management have 2 or more scales available and enough volunteers to avoid long waiting times. Weigh-ins are not allowed after the 1-hour time limit has elapsed.

(12) A two-pound growth allowance will be added to each weight class on January 1st. The growth allowance also applies to the maximum weight for the 285 lb weight class in boys' wrestling and the 235 lb weight class in girls' wrestling.

(13) In invitational dual meet tournaments involving consecutive days of team competition, wrestlers are not allowed to weigh-in at a lower weight class after the first day of competition. They are allowed to weigh-in or wrestle at a higher weight class.

(14) Violations of the above eligibility rules shall be dealt with by the MHSA Executive Director just as he/she deals with other eligibility violations.

III - DIVISIONAL/SEEDING TOURNAMENTS

(1) Member schools shall be divided into three classes, the same as classified for wrestling as follows:

A. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class AA.

1. Two seeding tournaments will be conducted to determine the qualifiers and their seedings into the state tournament. The seeding tournament will be conducted over one (1) day. Each school is allowed to enter two (2) wrestlers per weight class. The top eight wrestlers in each weight class will advance to the state tournament. Team points, at both the seeding tournament and state level, shall be awarded to the top fourteen (14) scores from each team. A sixteen-wrestler bracket will be used. Any applicable place points will also be awarded. When two wrestlers from the same school meet in a match in the postseason, the maximum points possible will be awarded to the winner. Maximum points are defined as advancement points (two points for the championship bracket or one point for the consolation bracket) and two match points.
2. Each division will be responsible for selecting the site and manager and for conducting its divisional tournament. The dates for divisional tournaments will be set by the MHSA Executive Board.

B. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class A.

1. Each division will hold a divisional wrestling tournament each year to determine the entries for the State Class A Wrestling Tournament. Class A schools will be allowed to enter a maximum of eighteen (18) wrestlers in the divisional tournament and shall have no more than two (2) wrestlers in a weight class. Team points, at both the divisional and state level, shall be awarded to each wrestler. When two wrestlers from the same school meet in a match in the postseason, the maximum points possible will be awarded to the winner. Maximum points are defined as advancement points (two points for the championship bracket or one point for the consolation bracket) and two match points. Any applicable place points will also be awarded. All eighteen wrestlers from each team have the opportunity to advance to state.
2. Each division will be responsible for selecting the site and manager and for conducting its divisional tournament. The dates for divisional tournaments will be set by the MHSA Executive Board.

C. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments for Class B-C.

1. Each division will hold a divisional wrestling tournament each year to determine the entries for the State Class B-C Wrestling Tournament. Class B-C schools will be allowed to enter a maximum of seventeen (17) wrestlers in the divisional tournament but no more than two (2) wrestlers in a given weight class. For Class B team points at both the divisional and state level shall be awarded to each wrestler; When two wrestlers from the same school meet in a match in the postseason, the maximum points possible will be awarded to the winner. Maximum points are defined as advancement points (two points for the championship bracket or one point for the consolation bracket) and two match points. Any applicable place points will also be awarded. All seventeen wrestlers from each team have the opportunity to advance to state. For Class C, Team points shall be scored by any fourteen wrestlers as designated by the school prior to the convening of the divisional seeding meeting and only those wrestlers designated prior to the seeding meeting shall gather team points at the divisional and state tournaments.
2. The MHSA Executive Board will set the dates for each of the two (2) Class B-C divisional tournaments.
3. For a team to be eligible for Class C wrestling trophies during the Class B-C state wrestling tournament, cooperative sponsorships must be Class C and have a combined enrollment at or below the maximum Class C enrollment range (100).
4. Each division will be responsible for selecting the divisional tournament site and manager. Tournament managers cannot be a coach or an official if that coach or official is participating in the tournament.

(2) Seeding of contestants for divisional/seeding tournaments shall be the responsibility of each tournament manager. Each school shall furnish to the tournament manager, for seeding purposes, the win-loss record for each contestant it enters in the tournament. Each school is entitled to enter a contestant for each weight class (refer to individual classifications for exceptions). Any wrestler that fails to make the weight that he/she was seeded will not be allowed to compete in the tournament at any weight class.

(3) All contestants must qualify in the divisional/seeding tournaments in order to participate in the state meet and there shall be no substitution or exception to this rule regardless of reason. If a contestant has qualified in the divisional/seeding tournament and because of illness, injury or some other reason he/she cannot participate, there will be a forfeit arranged in the state tournament bracket.

(4) The first eight place winners in the AA seeding tournaments and Class A divisional tournaments, and B/C equitable distribution of qualifiers will qualify for the state tournament. The tournament manager must certify these qualifiers for his/her divisional to the state tournament manager not later than the Monday morning prior to the state tournament. Class B/C will base the number of state qualifiers on the equitable distribution of qualifiers (EDQ) formula for each weight class. The EDQ formula will be a total of divisional participants divided by total potential qualifiers in both divisions multiplied by sixteen (the number of state qualifiers) with no less than 6 qualifiers from each division. The MHSA will notify Class B/C divisional tournament managers of the number qualifiers for each division.

In Class A, if it is determined there will be a lack of qualifiers in the other division in a specific weight class, the opposite division will wrestle for 9th – 12th place only in those specific

weight classes. The ninth through twelfth place wrestler will be placed into the state tournament where byes would be present. Alternates will be drawn by the MHSA after the completion of the divisional tournaments. The MHSA will notify divisional tournament managers and the schools involved of the selected alternates.

(5) NFHS rule 4-5 on weigh-in procedures will be followed for divisional/seeding tournaments.

(6) The fee and expense allowance paid to each official who works a divisional tournament must conform to the established fee schedule and expense allowance published in this MHSA Handbook.

(7) The MHSA Record of Wrestlers' Qualifying Weigh-Ins form must be completed and presented to the divisional/seeding tournament manager verifying that the wrestler has complied with the 50% rule (refer to II-Weight Control Program).

IV - GIRLS WRESTLING

(1) Member schools shall be divided into ***two (2) classifications*** for girls' Wrestling.

A. See www.mhsa.org for the detailed alignments.

(2) The following specific recommendations and/or exceptions to the boys' wrestling will be implemented in this sport:

a. Girls can only compete in regular season matches against girl competitors. It is recommended that MHSA regular season events have both boys' and girls' tournaments at the same site, when possible, but they wrestle separately.
b. Girls can only participate in girls matches only during the post-season.
c. Schools will determine if boys and girls will practice together, have the same coaches etc. By MHSA rules, a head coach will have to be designated for both programs (which can be the same individual).
d. Postseason
   1. State Tournament Qualifiers:
      a. Classification - Girls will wrestle in two (2) Classifications in the post season – AA and A-B-C.
   2. Girls' Divisional / Qualifying tournaments
      a. Six (6) Divisional Tournaments will be held at the same time and site as the boys divisional wrestling tournament.
      b. There will be a separate boy and girl divisional tournament at each site.
      c. Girls' teams will wrestle in the same divisions as their boys' team
      d. Seeding for Divisional Tournaments will use the same criteria as the boys.
      e. Class AA - Two seeding tournaments will be conducted to determine the qualifiers and their seedings into the state tournament. The seeding tournament will be conducted over one (1) day. Each school is allowed to enter two (2) wrestlers per weight class. The top eight wrestlers in each weight class will advance to the state tournament. Team points, will be determined by the AA conference. When two wrestlers from the same school meet in a match in the postseason, the maximum points possible will be awarded to the winner. Maximum points are defined as advancement points (two points for the championship bracket or one point for the consolation bracket) and two match points.
      f. ***Class A/B/C - Four (4) divisional tournaments will be conducted to determine the qualifiers and their seedings into the state tournament. The divisional tournament will be conducted over two (2) days. Each school is allowed to enter two (2) wrestlers per weight class. Girl's A-B-C state qualifiers are based on the EDQ formula. The EDQ formula uses total participants for each weight class in each division divided by total participants for each weight class in all 4 divisions multiplied by sixteen (16). Each Division qualifies a minimum of 3 wrestlers in each weight class. The MHSA will notify all divisional tournament managers of the number of qualifiers for each weight class after all divisional brackets have been built. Team points, at both the divisional and state level, shall be awarded to each wrestler. When two wrestlers from the same school meet in a match in the postseason, the maximum points possible will be awarded to the winner. Maximum points are defined as advancement points (two points for the championship bracket or one point for the consolation bracket) and two match points. Any applicable place points will also be awarded.***
      g. Team Scoring – 4 Classes:
         1. Class AA - Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams.
         2. Class A - Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams.
         3. Class B - Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams.
         4. Class C - Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams.
e. Awards
   1. Per General Rules for Awards (6)

V - STATE TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

(1) The Executive Board shall be responsible for staging the four state tournaments. They shall determine the site(s), set the dates and appoint a state wrestling tournament manager for each tournament. Tournament managers cannot be a coach or official if that coach or official is participating in the tournament.

(2) The fee and expense allowance to be paid to each official who works a state wrestling tournament must conform to the established fee schedule and expense allowance as published in this MHSA Handbook.

(3) ***In the boys' and girls' state tournaments, fifth and sixth places will be wrestled off.***

(4) NFHS rule 4-5 on weigh-in procedures will be followed for the state tournament.

(5) The divisional/seeding tournament manager must certify qualifiers for his/her division to the state tournament manager not later than the Sunday 10:00 am prior to the state tournament.

(6) The seeding for the state tournaments will follow the plan as printed in the MHSA Handbook.

(7) The results of the state tournaments shall be prepared by the managers for the MHSA Executive Director and the competing schools immediately following the tournaments.

VI - TICKET PRICES FOR STATE TOURNAMENTS

The following ticket prices as established by the MHSA Executive Board will be used for all state tournaments:

	Adult	Student
Single Session (one day)	$16.00	$14.00
Single Session (Thursday pm)	$10.00	$ 8.00
Single Session after 4 pm Fri or 3 pm Sat	$10.00	$ 8.00
All-Session (three day)	$29.00	$24.00

VII - ESTABLISHED POLICY ON TOURNAMENT PASSES FOR POST SEASON WRESTLING TOURNAMENTS

(1) Personnel passes — number needed up to a maximum of fourteen for Class AA, twelve for Class A, and ten for Class B-C. If school's co-op the host school will receive the administrative tickets as stated above and the other school(s) in the co-op will each receive an additional four (4) administrative tickets. These are to be used for administrators, coaches, spouses, chaperones, bus drivers, etc., who actually attend the tournament.

(2) Participants — one for each participant who qualifies for the state tournament.

(3) Manager — a maximum of two per gender for each participating school.

(4) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

(5) Media
   a. Print news media - one pass for Associated Press and passes for working staff of local newspapers of teams in the tournament or newspapers in the marketing area of those teams. Members of the print media are required to show their Montana Newspaper Association press credentials when picking up their passes.
   b. Television news media - passes for working staff of local stations of teams in the tournament or stations in the marketing area of those teams.
   c. Commercial photography or broadcast - passes for working staff as contracted by the event manager or MHSA.
   d. Passes will not be issued for spouses or children who attend the event with working members of the media.

VIII - OFFICIAL PAIRINGS FOR THE STATE CLASS AA, CLASS A, AND CLASS B-C BOYS' WRESTLING TOURNAMENTS

The official pairings for the State Wrestling Tournament for Class AA consist of two parts which will be determined by the MHSA after both seeding tournaments are completed.

Set A:
Part I will be used by weights 106, 120, 132, 144, 157, 175, and 215.
Part II will be used by weights 113, 126, 138, 150, 165, 190, and 285.

Set B:
Part I will be used by weights 113, 126, 138, 150, 165,190, and 285.
Part II will be used by weights 106, 120, 132, 144, 157, 175, and 215.

Part I	Part II
1st Western	1st Western
8th Eastern	8th Eastern
5th Western	5th Eastern
4th Eastern	4th Western
3rd Western	3rd Eastern
6th Eastern	6th Western
7th Western	7th Western
2nd Eastern	2nd Eastern
2nd Western	2nd Western
7th Eastern	7th Eastern
6th Western	6th Eastern
3rd Eastern	3rd Western
4th Western	4th Eastern
5th Eastern	5th Western
8th Western	8th Western
1st Eastern	1st Eastern

The official pairings for the State Wrestling Tournament for Class A, and Class B-C are listed below.

1st Western
8th Eastern

5th Western
4th Eastern

3rd Western
6th Eastern

7th Western
2nd Eastern

2nd Western
7th Eastern

6th Western
3rd Eastern

4th Western
5th Eastern

8th Western
1st Eastern

IX - OFFICIAL PAIRINGS FOR THE STATE GIRLS' WRESTLING TOURNAMENT

The official pairings for the State Wrestling Girls' Tournament will consist of the following:

A. 16-person bracket in all 14 weight classes.
B. All Girls that qualify from divisional are scoring wrestlers.
C. Participants ***in Class A-B-C*** will be seeded at two (2) seeding meetings, east and west, for the state tournament using Track Wrestling.

X - WRESTLING TOURNAMENT FINANCING

(1) Each divisional and state tournament must finance itself.

(2) Charges against the tournament receipts will stand for payment in the following order:

   A. Officials (referees).

   B. Normal administrative expenses, to include the following: (1) Printing of tickets, (2) Advertising, (3) Signs, (4) Postage, (5) Telephone, (6) Clerical, (7) Scorers, (8) Timers, (9) Mat officials, (10) Management.

   C. Use of facility charges (rental) to include the following: (1) Extra custodial services, (2) Utilities, (3) Ticket sales, (4) Ticket takers, (5) Door guards, (6) Ushers, (7) Parking attendants, (8) First aid room and supplies, (9) Towel services.

   D. Renting or borrowing extra mats and timing devices.

(3) Nonallowable Tournament Expenses:

   Filming of championships is not an allowable expense of the tournament.

(4) **Payment of Team Expenses and Division of Profits:** After all allowable meet expenses are paid, the balance remaining shall be designated as team expenses and shall be paid as follows: Each participant from any one school shall be paid a per diem based on the amount of remaining profits, divided by the total number of participants minus participants in the host city schools.

(5) After each divisional or state tournament the tournament manager shall remit to the Executive Director of the Montana High School Association a complete financial report of the

tournament within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the event.

The tournament manager for each division and state tournament shall furnish the complete financial report to each of the competing schools and to the Executive Director of the MHSA. The Executive Director shall see that a summary of all reports of the wrestling tournament is sent to all MHSA member schools.

(6) Related items:

A. Concessions: Proceeds from the divisional tournament go to the host school if the tournament is held in a member school facility. If not, concession rights shall be determined by the division.

B. The concession rights for any state tournament held in nonmember school facilities shall be awarded by the MHSA Executive Board.

C. The tournament program rights for all divisional programs will be determined by the respective division.

D. The tournament program rights for the state tournament will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

FINE ARTS
EVENT DATES AND ELIGIBILITY

The Montana High School Association shall supervise and control interschool forensic and drama activities and interschool music activities, including District Music Festivals, State Solo and Ensemble Festivals, and the All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival. Event dates and eligibility regulations are included in the complete MHSA Handbook. Refer to the complete rules and regulations for these fine arts activities in the supplemental MHSA publications for the respective activities: the MHSA Forensics and Drama Booklet and the MHSA Music Booklet.

FORENSICS AND DRAMA

EVENT DATES
Divisional Tournaments

Classes A and B-C ..... January 22-23

State Tournaments

All Classes ..... January 29-30

Teams and Student Eligibility

1. Only teams from member high schools may participate in MHSA division and state forensic tournaments. Any ninth-grade student enrolled in and attending an accredited junior high school in the same school system as a senior high school may be eligible to participate on that senior high school's forensic team. The eligibility of a ninth-grade student of a junior high school who has been approved for senior high school competition must be certified by the principals of both the junior and senior high schools.

2. In order for a student to be eligible to represent his/her school in any interschool speech and/or drama activity, he/she must comply with the following criteria:

   a. A student must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance ten hours per week at the school where the student participates. Regular attendance is defined as actual physical presence in the building (bricks and mortar).

   b. A student who is enrolled in the eighth grade shall be eligible to participate in all MHSA Speech, Drama and Debate events. All eighth-grade students participating must meet the academic requirements. All eighth-grade students participating in a high school contest must adhere to all other MHSA rules and guidelines. Each individual MHSA School District must adopt by school board action policies on whether or not they allow 8th grade participation.

      Exception: students who are enrolled and participating in a transformational learning program in their school that meets a district's proficiency-based learning requirements pursuant to the adopted policies of the local school board is exempt from the ten hours per week bricks and mortar requirement.

      Exception: Non-public or home school students who meet the requirements of 20-5-109 can participate in MHSA member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

      1) The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (besides enrollment).

      2) The same rules of the MHSA apply including age, semesters and academics (see #3).

      3) The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for students attending a home school must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA school principal. Academic eligibility includes provisions 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.

      4) The student may only participate in the school in the student's attendance area and cannot transfer.

      5) For a homeschool student to be able to participate in MHSA sports or activities, the student must be a United States citizen, and he/she must be a Montana resident, as determined under the provisions of MCA 1-1-215.

      Exception: Home school or nonpublic school students who resides in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school, that is the only school that student may participate at during the student's high school activities career. There is no transfer in district after the initial approval.

   c. A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format utilized (i.e., block, traditional, trimester etc.).

   d. A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared class work or its equivalent in the last previous semester, at the school where the student participates.

   e. A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared work per week or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which he/she was enrolled.

   f. If a student is assigned an "incomplete" or a "condition" in a subject, he/she has not received a passing grade in this subject. The record at the end of the semester is final.

   g. No student may establish eligibility concurrently at two member schools. Dual enrollment is not recognized for the purpose of eligibility in MHSA activities.

   h. This rule is not applicable to IDEA '04 and Section 504 students when their individual education plans (IEP) under IDEA or their educational accommodation plans under Section 504 certify that the students are not required to meet this minimum academic to have passed twenty hours of prepared work per week. However, all students must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance ten hours per week. Special education or Section 504 certification that the student is not required to meet the minimum academic requirements may not be enacted retroactively (after grades have been assigned at the end of the previous semester).

   i. A student: 1) must not be a graduate of a four-year high school or of a secondary school with similar graduation requirements, 2) must not have earned enough credits to

have graduated and completed eight semesters of high school, and 3) must not have a GED.

j. The team that shall represent any member high school shall be selected by that school in any manner agreed upon by the principals, teachers, and students at that school.

k. The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol, or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

Student Special Considerations

1. Special considerations implemented for a student identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or 504 shall not infringe upon the rights of other competitors. Accommodations should be made as not to create an unfair advantage but rather level the playing field.

2. When accommodations need to be made, the individual team or coach should attempt to do so within the rules and regulations mandated by MHSA and MFEA.

3. Requested accommodations to rules must be an inherent part of a current IDEA Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 plans.

4. It is the coaches' responsibility to inform event organizers of needed accommodations so that the information can be disseminated to those impacted.

Season and Tournaments

1. Practice and competition for interschool speech and drama shall begin the first week in October and conclude with the MHSA State Speech and Drama Meets on the last weekend in January EXCEPT, member schools holding a valid NSDA (National Speech and Debate Association) charter will be permitted to participate in the Montana District and the NSDA tournaments after the speech and drama meets.

2. Individual instruction (coaching) is acceptable after the season on a one-on-one basis - i.e., one entry per coach(es).

   Instruction on a one-on-one basis out of season cannot be required of any student. The intent of allowing one on one instruction is to provide the opportunity for a student to improve his/her skills if he/she requests assistance.

3. The team coaching rule is suspended from June 1 - July 31. This means a coach of a team can coach his/her speech/drama students anytime, anywhere, during this period.

4. Students cannot be required to attend out-of-season practices, camps or contests.

5. Schools cannot in any way sponsor, finance, promote or be affiliated with any out-of-season events or tournaments.

6. During the regular season, a student may travel to only six two-day meets. If his/her school is hosting a two-day meet, this will not count in the limitation of the six two day meets. The MHSA divisional, state or NSDA Montana district meets will not count toward the limit of two-day meets.

7. During the regular season, a student may participate in a maximum of eleven (11) interschool meets. The limit on the number of meets that a student may participate in does not include MHSA divisional, state or NSDA Montana district meets. Online NSDA Springboard Scrimmage events taking place during the regular season are exempt from the interstate meet restrictions and will not count toward a student's 11 interschool meet maximum. Any costs incurred due to participation in these events will be the responsibility of the competitors.

8. Approval will not be granted for any member school to participate in any speech and/or drama meet lasting longer than two days.

9. Invitational meets: Any interstate meets in which four or more schools participate or which involves three or more state high school associations, any interstate meets where travel is more than 300 miles one way, or any interdivision meet involving three or more schools must have prior approval of the Montana High School Association Forensic and Drama committee and Executive Board. See Rule (l4), Association and Executive Board Rules and Regulations. The MHSA Executive Board has authorized the Executive Director to approve the invitational schedule.

   In circumstances where a school brings a JV squad to an invitational in addition to its varsity squad, and under a separate code number, that JV squad shall not compete for sweepstakes rankings.

10. Opportunity for extra entries must be stated in the invitation.

11. Tournament hosts must clearly indicate in the original invitation all entry deadlines and fees, including drop fees.

12. Tournament directors are strongly encouraged to distribute approved judging instructions with each ballot.

13. The tabulation room will be open to paid member coaches of the Montana Forensic Educators Association to observe the tabulation procedure. Those coaches who are not paid members will not be allowed entrance to the tab room but will still be allowed to view feedback and results.

MUSIC

EVENT DATES

District Music Festival Dates and Information: www.mhsa.org.

When participating in any activity where school musical groups or students are involved, (pep bands, tours, invitational festivals, contests etc.) local school administrators are to be held responsible for assuring the MHSA office that participation in the district music festival by all curricular/credit-bearing performing groups of that school for the year has been or will be a fact.

II. ELIGIBILITY

1. Only high school students from member schools of the Montana High School Association may take part in the district music festival. There is an exception for grade school pupils through grade eight of the same school system that are regular members of the high school curricular performing groups.

   Grade school students through grade eight of the same school system may be permitted to participate in high school band, orchestra, chorus, or other instrumental or vocal ensembles without affecting their eligibility after they become high school students. However, students below the ninth grade may not participate at the state level. These students may be permitted to participate in high school band, orchestra, chorus, or instrumental/vocal ensembles at the district level. A county high school and a public elementary school in the same city shall be considered parts of the same school system.

   Exception: Eighth grade students who participate regularly in a curricular ensemble, perform at the district festival and earn a Superior rating would be eligible to participate at State if they meet general eligibility requirements, no parts are doubled in the ensemble, and they comprise one-quarter (1/4) or less of the ensemble members. Permission for eighth grade participation must be requested by the school and authorization granted by the MHSA Executive Director. Requests must be made and approved prior to the District Music Festival.

2. In order for a student to be eligible to represent his/her member school in any MHSA music activity (such as District festival, State festival, All-State Band/Choir/Orchestra), he/she must meet the following criteria:

   a. A student must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance ten hours per week at the school where the student participates. Regular attendance is defined as actual physical presence in the building (bricks and mortar).

      Exception: students who are enrolled and participating in a transformational learning program in their school that meets a district's proficiency-based learning requirements pursuant to the adopted policies of the local school board is exempt from the ten hours per week bricks and mortar requirement.

      Exception: Non-public or home school students who meet the requirements of 20-5-109 can participate in MHSA member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

      1) The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (besides enrollment).

      2) The same rules of the MHSA apply including age, semesters and academics (see #3).

      3) The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for students attending a home school must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA school principal. Academic eligibility includes provisions 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.

      4) The student may only participate in the school in the student's attendance area and cannot transfer.

         Exception: Home school or nonpublic school students who resides in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school, that is the only school that student may participate at during the student's high school activities career. There is no transfer in district after the initial approval.

      5) For a homeschool student to be able to participate in MHSA sports or activities, the student must be a United States citizen, and he/she must be a Montana resident, as determined under the provisions of MCA 1-1-215.

   b. A student: 1) must not be a graduate of a four-year high school or of a secondary school with similar graduation requirements, 2) must not have earned enough credits to have graduated and completed eight semesters of high school, and 3) must not have a GED.

   c. No student may establish eligibility concurrently at two member schools. Dual enrollment is not recognized for the purpose of eligibility in MHSA activities.

3. In order for a student to be eligible to represent his/her member school in an all-state music group or an interschool music group/entry at the district level which may qualify for a state solo & ensemble festival, he/she must also comply with the following:

   a. A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared class work per week or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which he/she was enrolled at the school where the student participates.

   b. If a student is assigned an "incomplete" or a "conditional" in a subject, he/she has not received a passing grade in this subject. The record at the end of the semester is final.

   c. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format utilized (i.e., block, traditional, trimester etc.).

   d. This rule is not applicable to IDEA '04 and Section 504 students when their individual education plans (IEP) under IDEA or their educational accommodation plans under Section 504 certify that the students are not required to meet the minimum academic requirements to have passed twenty hours of prepared work per week. However, all students must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance ten hours per week. Special education or Section 504 certification that the student is not required to meet the minimum academic requirements may not be enacted retroactively (after grades have been assigned at the end of the previous semester).

4. A student must be an enrolled member (receiving credit) of a curricular/credit-bearing performing group, and that group must participate in the district festival. Curricular/credit-bearing performing group refers to bands, choirs and orchestras. These represent the curricular study of music and promote ensembles outside of the school. Piano soloists must also be a member of a curricular performing group or an accompanist of a curricular performing group. In exceptional cases, where a member school does not have a high school music program, any student studying with a private teacher may enter the district and state music festivals with the approval of the local school administrator provided the appropriate MHSA dues are paid.

5. In schools using full immersion block schedules, students who earned, or will earn, a full credit in a curricular/credit-bearing performing group are granted the same eligibility as students who participate in a curricular performing group for an entire year in schools following traditional schedules.

6. A student must be approved for participation in the music festival by an administrator of the member school where the student is in attendance.

7. The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during participation. Violation will cause the director/coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

Refer to the MHSA Music Booklet at www.mhsa.org/music for specific information regarding participation in District Music Festivals, State Solo and Ensemble Festivals, and the All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival.

SPIRIT

Cheerleading / Dance are extracurricular activities designed to serve as a component of the athletic program. Its primary purpose is to foster school spirit, sportsmanship and a positive atmosphere at competitive events. Cheerleading, as an extracurricular activity, is not a competitive activity as sponsored by the Montana High School Association.

Being the most recognizable representative of a school, spirit groups are in a position of great influence; therefore, high standards of conduct are essential. Positive personal behavior and team cohesiveness demonstrate these standards. Appropriate behavior will help earn the respect of the student body, which is the core of developing effective school spirit and student involvement.

The MHSA will conduct mandatory spirit coach/advisor rules clinics for all MHSA member schools. All spirit coaches (head, assistant, volunteer) and all dance/drill team coaches (head, assistant, volunteer) must complete the clinic requirement. MHSA member schools' cheer/dance squads are allowed to perform stunts ONLY if spirit coach(es) at every level have completed and are current with the Cheer & Dance Safety Certification Course.

All provisions of the National Federation Spirit Rule Book as well as regulations listed in the MHSA Handbook shall be in effect for all spirit team activities including practices, games, performances. Violations of these regulations are subject to penalties as outlined in Article VIII, Section (2) of the MHSA By-Laws. An individual school district may place further restrictions on their spirit squads than what is placed by the National Federation and the MHSA.

A spirit participant and coach must not commit an unsporting act. This includes, but is not limited to, acts or conduct such as: (a) disrespectfully addressing or contacting a game official or gesturing in such a manner as to indicate resentment; (b) Using profane or inappropriate language, music, or gestures; and (c) Baiting or taunting an opponent. The MHSA disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin.

Schools' administrators and cheer / dance / drill team coaches need to make certain that the music being played during half-time entertainment is lyrically appropriate. Spirit teams are required to keep dance movements non-offensive and non-suggestive. High school contests are family events and music should be appropriate for an audience of all ages.

It is important to note that it is the coach's responsibility to follow all rules found in the National Federation Spirit Rule Book as well as the rules found in the MHSA Handbook. – Listed are the areas where MHSA has been more restrictive in the spirit rules than what the National Federation has set forth.

(1) No individual shall participate in a spirit-related activity until he/she has a minimum of eight (8) days of practice with one practice session per day on eight (8) different days (no practice permitted on Sunday) prior to the date of the first allowable game.

(2) The Association prohibits spirit teams from participating in any spirit related activity on a Sunday.

(3) Participation at games/contests is limited to a school's spirit team (no children younger than the sixth grade for those schools that don't have an adequate student population) except for performances prior to the game or during intermission. Participation in spirit team activities during interscholastic contests must be limited to bona-fide students of the school district who are designated as members of the school's spirit team. A bona-fide student is one who has not graduated and is eligible to participate with and/or compete for a designated school according to the rules of the MHSA. All team members must be in a position of close proximity to the playing field (team members may not be brought out of the stands).

(4) Eighth grade students that have been approved to participate on the high school cheer or dance team may participate in stunting with approval from their school administration. No students younger than eighth grade may participate in stunting in any capacity.

(5) Spirit team members are prohibited from throwing any type of object into or from the spectator section.

(6) Whether stunting or not, all members of a team shall wear their hair away from the face and off the shoulders (i.e. wearing a side ponytail would not meet the intent of the rule "off the shoulders". Hair devices (ornamental and functional) shall be safe and secure. No head covering is allowed unless being worn as part of a costume during a non-stunting half-time performance. The team is to remove hats or bandanas before they resume spirit activities.

Head coverings worn for religious reasons so as not to expose one's uncovered head may be worn and must be attached in such a way that it is unlikely to come off during performance. It must be made of non-abrasive, soft materials, must fit securely and not pose a danger to any other participant.

(7) When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff. Skirts, pants or shorts are to remain zipped and/or buttoned and should be worn in the manner intended.

(8) The formation of "rally lines" by spectators, fans and/or students on or near the playing field/floor during the introduction of players or at any other time before, during, or after a game is prohibited. Props which players run through are legal if being held by spirit squad members in an appropriate area of the playing surface, however, no stunting is allowed while holding the player run-through.

(9) Megaphones are permitted when being used appropriately by spirit squads to magnify the words of a cheer or chant.

(10) For spirit, bands and performing groups — they will be allowed free admission at playoff and state championship games when they play or perform.

MONTANA OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the Montana Officials Association (MOA).

II. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the MOA is to advance and to sustain fair, competent and ethical officiating while providing safe competition at all levels of Montana's interscholastic athletic activities.

III. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the MOA are to administer rules of high school athletic contests; to promote good fellowship among its members; to elevate the standards of officiating; to provide means for correct interpretations of the rules; to advance better cooperation and understanding among officials and school personnel, players and fans; to encourage and assist in developing promising young officials; to foster a high standard of ethics and to further the interests of all sports generally by cultivating a proper spirit of sportsmanship and fair play.

IV. MOA BOARD

The MOA Board shall be composed of the eleven Regional Directors (Director) and the Montana High School Association (MHSA) Executive Director or his/her designated staff member. The MHSA/MOA may call meetings when necessary. The Directors shall have responsibility for the general oversight of the MOA.

V. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MOA BOARD

A. Serve as Director of officials within the region and assure the procedures and guidelines as defined by the MOA and the National Federation are followed.

B. Represent their Region at all MOA meetings in the best interest of the officials and the Association. If a director is unable to attend an association meeting, then they must send a qualified representative.

C. Coordinate, at the regional level, testing information including but not limited to opening and closing dates, deadlines for upgrade requests, publicity and recruiting referrals.

D. Assist the MOA office by monitoring study clubs, checking completed work, and recording season attendance.

E. Regional Directors will input pool information into the current data management system. Study club forms will be submitted to the MHSA for record.

F. Oversee the official pools within a region and ensure that procedural and evaluation guidelines are followed.

VI. ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

A. Regional Directors shall serve terms of three years. Directors shall be elected by online balloting administered by the MOA office. Any member in good standing and residing within the prescribed boundaries of his/her region may be elected to the position of Director.

B. Officials shall receive online ballots for regional director for the region in which their pool is located. Officials who are members of multiple sports pools will receive online ballots for the official's region of residence.

C. In the event of a tie vote, the MOA office will appoint a director. In the event of death, the MOA will appoint a director to fill the vacancy. In the event of a resignation, a special election will be administered by the MOA office. The electee shall finish the length of term. Directors will assume office immediately following the election. The appointee shall finish the length of term. Directors shall assume office on June 15 of the year elected.

VII. GAME PASSES FOR DIRECTORS

The MHSA Executive Board issues a pass to the MOA Directors for all athletic activities under the jurisdiction of the Executive Board. The passes are issued to Directors for use in observing officials and attending MHSA sponsored contests. The passes are not transferable. The passes shall be honored at all MHSA affiliated athletic activities. The MHSA Executive Board requests member schools honor passes to athletic contests presented by the MHSA to past MOA Directors who have served at least two terms. Former officials with forty years of officiating membership in Montana also receive passes in recognition of their service. These passes are to be honored at MHSA sponsored regular season contests and postseason tournaments.

VIII. POLICY CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS

MOA policy may be formulated specifically by the MOA Board or jointly with the MHSA Executive Board. All decisions that involve monetary consideration within the MOA shall be presented to the MHSA Executive Board for approval.

IX. AFFILIATION OF THE MHSA and MOA

The Directors of the MOA, in a joint meeting with the MHSA Executive Board on January 28, 1968, in Great Falls established a permanent affiliation between the MOA and the MHSA contingent upon:

A. The MHSA state office will be the official headquarters for the MOA.

B. The MHSA staff will handle the administration of the MOA and interpret MOA policy.

C. The MHSA Executive Director or their designee will serve as the Executive Director of the MOA.

D. The MOA will maintain its regional organization and its method of electing Regional Directors. The Directors will serve in an advisory capacity to the MHSA Executive Board.

E. The MOA Board will meet jointly, at least annually, and will be paid an expense allowance to attend said meetings.

F. The MHSA will furnish office space, office supplies, postage, rule books, study materials; publish MOA newsletters; receive dues; conduct rules clinics for officials; and furnish all other supplies and materials necessary to administer MOA business.

G. In consideration of the above-listed services all annual income from the annual MOA membership dues will be credited to the MHSA beginning with fiscal year 1968-69.

H. In the event that affiliation of the MHSA and the MOA is dissolved, the MHSA will fund the MOA in the amount of $3,000.00 when the separation is complete.

I. The MOA Board will be represented at the annual MHSA Executive Board meeting.

X. MOA MEMBERSHIP

A. Securing Membership –Prospective Officials

Membership in the MOA is initially attained by paying the Association dues and scoring a minimum of 60% on the appropriate rule's examination.

B. Associate Membership

1. ***High school students may become Associate Members of the Montana Officials Association (MOA) by successfully passing the applicable MOA qualifying examination(s). Associate Members may officiate sub-varsity contests and varsity contests with approval from both the local officials' pool and the MOA.***
2. ***Annual dues for all high school-aged Associate Members shall be $40.00 for the first sport and $32.00 for each additional sport.***
3. ***Associate Members may advance to Regular MOA Membership upon graduating from or otherwise leaving high school by paying the appropriate membership dues.***
4. ***Associate Members may receive service-year credit toward MOA advancement once they become Regular Members and pay the applicable dues. Associate Members shall receive service-year credit toward MOA advancement. Associate Members may be eligible for upgrades upon approval of their local officials' pool and successful completion of all applicable MOA requirements.***

C. Qualifying Examinations

1. The qualifying examinations are scheduled simultaneously nationwide. The exam dates will be published on the MOA website.

D. Dues

The annual dues are $80.00 for one sport and $32.00 for each additional sport. The dues include payment for rules manuals, study materials, online resources, premiums for liability and supplemental medical insurance and the **NFHS Network.**

1. Prospective officials must submit dues to the MOA office prior to the exam date for their sport(s). If dues are paid early, the prospective member will receive MOA rules manuals and other study material prior to the test. If the official fails or does not take the examination, no refunds are provided.

2. Membership for renewing officials is continuous with the timely payment of dues. Dues are outstanding after July 1 of each year. For any dues paid July 1 or after, **an additional $10.00 fee will be assessed**. This applies to all classifications.

   Renewing officials who register after the seasonal bulk mailing date will not receive printed MOA materials, including rule books. These officials will be provided with electronic versions of the materials. All new and reinstated officials will receive mailed materials upon registration, regardless of when they register.

   Master officials will not be eligible for postseason unless they meet the testing and requirement deadlines. Failure to pass the exam with the required score, within that classification, will result in a rating reduction of one classification for master and certified officials and loss of membership for apprentice officials. Failure to take the examination will result in the loss of membership and no refund of dues will be provided. In addition, upgrading is denied for one year for failure to pay dues prior to July 1st each year.

3. MOA members in good standing are eligible to join the Montana Coaches Association (MCA) as associate members for $40.00 per official per year.

E. Conviction Status and Background Check: Any individual convicted of: (a) a felony involving the use, possession or sale of a controlled substance within the last ten years; or (b) a crime involving the use or threatened use of violence against a person within the last ten years is prohibited from membership in the MOA; an individual who is convicted of (c) a crime involving a minor child at any time is subject to lifetime suspension from membership in the MOA.

The MOA Background Committee will review all flagged background checks and determine the individual's eligibility status. In addition, the MHSA Executive Director or their designee will review all decisions made by the MOA Background Committee regarding information submitted by the applicant or other parties concerning the official's eligibility status.

REINSTATEMENT: Following ten (10) years from the date of conviction or deferred imposition, an individual permanently prohibited from membership pursuant to subpart (c) above may apply to the MHSA Executive Board for reinstatement upon a showing by clear and convincing evidence that the individual is not a threat to minor children and is otherwise qualified for MOA membership.

Registering officials are subject to a public criminal records background search. If he/she is found to have been convicted or is in a period of deferred imposition for any crime listed in the MOA Conviction Status Policy, subject to the right of appeal, he/she will be considered ineligible for membership.

F. If a MOA member does not notify the MOA office of any discrepancies in their rating prior to the first date of competition, in their respective sport, no changes will be made.

G. Dues are considered paid on time if the registration timestamp meets the appropriate deadline date. There can be no exception.

H. A Director is exempt from paying their dues to the MOA. Past Directors are exempt from paying their MOA dues as long as they are active MOA officials, even though they were not re-elected or choose not to run for the position of Director.

XI. CONCUSSION EDUCATION AND *SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST (SCA)* AWARENESS

Each MOA or non-MOA official who works in MHSA contests must complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports course each year. That course must be taken after June 1st for the subsequent school year and must be completed before officiating scrimmages or contests. If an official is to receive credit for attendance, they must complete the clinic prior to the published deadline in the format provided.

Each MOA or non-MOA official who works MHSA contests must watch the SCA information video provided in the MOA section of the MHSA sports rules clinics. Schools using non-MOA officials for sub varsity games must verify those officials have completed training.

Failure to complete concussion ***or SCA*** training by the published deadline will result in a loss of rating and render an official ineligible for post season assignment. In addition, immediate suspension will apply until proof of completion is supplied to the MOA office.

XII. MEDICAL TIMEOUT

A pre-event medical meeting is required to be held before every sanctioned interscholastic athletic contest (at every level of play) to review the emergency action plan (EAP), confirm AED location, and clarify each participant's role.

XIII. RECIPROCAL MEMBERSHIP IN BORDERING STATES

Members of the MOA can join as members of the official association in the bordering states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and/or Idaho by paying dues per sport to that/those state's organization. Approval and dues for the MOA of $20.00 must be paid to the MOA office before the official works a contest.

This five-state agreement entitles members of each respective organization to officiate in any state(s) in which they maintain membership. Reciprocal arrangements with non-bordering states must be approved by the MOA office.

A. It is required that MOA pools show preference to Montana contests over any reciprocity contests they may contract

XIV. OFFICIAL UNIFORM

A. All MOA Sports

1. Members are required to wear the uniform specified in the Federation rules for their respective sport unless an exception is specified below.

2. The MOA patch must be displayed on the left breast of the official's uniform **or the umpires hat**. Embroidered patches are acceptable as long as they are black with white background and the same size as the current patch (1 3/4" x 3").

3. Only MOA members in good standing are authorized to display the MOA patch on the uniform.

4. Eyewear - Except in cases where a prescription is necessary, officials working MHSA sanctioned outdoor contests shall adhere to the following requirements for wearing sunglasses or another eye wear:

   a. Must be lightweight and functional.
   b. Must not distract from the rest of the uniform.
   c. Must have strong frames which allow for a maximized field of vision.
   d. Must fit properly for minimum movement on the face.
   e. Multi-colored and reflective lenses are not allowed.
   f. Lanyards, if used, shall be solid black in color or shall match the whistle color.

5. ***Officials shall be permitted to wear jewelry that is authorized for athletes under the rules of the applicable sport, including wedding bands and medical-alert bracelets.***

6. An American flag may be worn on the uniform and must be placed on the left shoulder of the uniform top.

7. Pink whistles may be used by officials at contests designated as breast cancer awareness events. Any other uniform modifications for the purpose of supporting a charitable fundraising event must be approved in advance by the MOA Commissioner.

8. All sports: In an effort to make quality footwear available, an official's shoes for INDOOR sports (i.e. basketball, volleyball) must be predominantly black but may have some clear or grey trim to deviate slightly from solid black. In wrestling, shoes must be predominantly black but may have white or gray trim. Whenever possible, any different color must be dyed or colored over with black.
   Officials' shoes for OUTDOOR sports (i.e. football, soccer, baseball and softball), bearing white logo, trademark or manufacturer's name shall be legal. Officials' shoes must still be predominantly black and be unaltered from the manufacturer's original intent.

9. Officials may wear a facemask while officiating. The facemask must be a single solid color and unadorned. Officials may use electronic whistles.

B. Baseball: Officials shall wear the approved black, powder-blue or navy-blue (short sleeved or long-sleeved pullover shirt). The official pants for baseball/softball shall be full length slack, charcoal gray or navy blue. (Pant styles not allowed include, capris, leggings, sweats, yoga, etc.) Variance by state adoption.

Baseball umpires may wear a jacket. The required jacket shall be a standard black or navy pullover with powder blue and white (NFHS) or a navy-blue pullover with powder blue trim (USA) to be worn for varsity contests. Jackets are to be unadorned (except for MOA service pins). Variance by state adoption. For each game the uniform shirt, pants, and jacket must be the same color for each member of the officiating crew. Variance by state adoption.

Hats worn by baseball officials must be black and may represent the MOA Logo.

The ball bag for baseball plate umpires will be black.

Officials that regularly work in both baseball and softball should purchase the standard color uniforms intended for both baseball and softball.

C. Basketball: Basketball officials may wear a black and white striped shirt or a ***black and white shirt with black sleeves***. For each game the uniform shirt must be the same for each member of the officiating crew and must be tucked in.

The official pants used for basketball shall be full-length slacks of a solid black color that shall measure to the top of the official shoe, which shall include black crew length, unadorned socks. Pant styles not allowed include capris, leggings, sweats, yoga, etc. Basketball officials may wear a standard warm-up jacket, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for MOA service pins).

A standard jacket, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for MOA service pins***)*** is allowed. Variance by state adoption.

D. Football: The official pant used for football shall be the approved black pant, which must be black with a 1 inch to 1 ¼ inch white stripe on each leg. The pant must be of a straight leg and are not to be banded or cuffed at the ankle. Pant styles not allowed include capris, leggings, sweats, yoga, etc. Black socks are required.

Football officials may wear a standard jacket for warm-ups only, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for MOA service pins).

Football officials may wear either the 2 inch – 2 ¼ inch striped shirt, as long as the entire crew wears matching shirts, and the shirt must be tucked in.

Authorizes the wearing of a commemorative/memorial patch with written approval from the MHSA Office. Variance by state adoption.

E. Soccer: Official uniform colors are yellow, red, black, and blue, but green or other alternate colors may be used in case of emergency, provided that all members of the officiating crew are properly attired.

Officials uniform colors are yellow, red, black, and blue, but green or other alternate colors may be used in case of emergency, provided that all members of the officiating crew are properly attired**.** Variance by state adoption.

F. Softball: Officials shall wear the approved black, powder-blue or ***navy-blue, navy-bright blue (NCAA)*** short sleeved or long-sleeved pullover shirt.

The official pants for softball shall be full length slack, charcoal gray or navy blue. (Pant styles not allowed include, capri, leggings, sweats, yoga, etc.) Variance by state adoption.

Softball umpires may wear a jacket. The required jacket shall be a standard black or navy pullover with powder blue and white (NFHS), a navy-blue pullover with powder blue trim (USA) or a ***navy with bright blue trim (NCAA)*** to be worn for varsity contests. Jackets are to be unadorned (except for MOA service pins). Variance by state adoption. For each game the uniform shirt, pants, and jacket must be the same color for each member of the officiating crew.

Hats worn by Softball officials must be navy blue and may represent the MOA Logo.

The ball bag for softball plate umpires can be either navy blue or charcoal gray.

Officials that regularly work in both baseball and softball should purchase the standard color uniforms intended for both baseball and softball

G. Volleyball: Volleyball officials are exempt from the specified uniform if they wear black shoes and cyan blue collared polo shirt short or long sleeved, and the shirts must be tucked in. The volleyball uniform must be in compliance with NFHS uniform rules. The officiating crew shall match the color of shirt worn in the contest.

The official pants used for volleyball shall be a full-length slack of a solid black color that shall measure to the top of the official shoe, which shall include black crew length, unadorned socks. Pant styles not allowed include capris, leggings, sweats, yoga, etc.

Volleyball officials acting as line judges have the option to wear a coat and/or a cyan long or short sleeved polo shirt if worn by both officials.

Volleyball officials may wear a standard jacket for warm-ups only, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for service pins).

H. Wrestling: All officials working at the same event must wear the same pants. Wrestling officials may wear a gray shirt with black pinstripes or a black and white striped shirt. For each match/dual/tournament, the uniform shirt must be the same for each member of the officiating crew and must be tucked in.

The official pants used for wrestling shall be a full-length slack of a solid black color that shall measure to the top of the official shoe, which shall include black crew length, unadorned socks. Pant styles not allowed include capris, leggings, sweats, yoga, etc.

Wrestling officials may wear a standard jacket for warm-ups only, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for MOA service pins).

XV. STATEMENT ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Whenever a contest participant suffers a laceration or wound where oozing or bleeding occurs, the contest should be stopped at the earliest possible time and the participant should be escorted from the contest area for the appropriate treatment. The participant will not return to the contest until bleeding has been arrested, open wounds properly covered, or uniforms replaced if necessary. Contest officials will enforce the rules in these situations per the specific guidelines in Federation rulebooks.

XVI. GUIDELINES FOR MOA POOLS

A pool is a group of registered MOA officials formed for the purpose of providing services to MHSA member schools. A pool's purpose is to provide participating schools with the best-qualified officials.

A. Establishing a new pool for a sport will be considered under the following conditions:

1. The new pool is approved by the Regional Director of that region and an application is filed with the MOA office.
2. The new pool submits a list of officers/contacts for the pool.
3. The new pool lists all MOA members of the pool.
4. The new pool submits a list of schools to be serviced.
5. The new pool shall submit a constitution and/or by-laws regarding the operation of the pool.
6. The new pool submits a proposed name for this pool.
7. The new pool lists the pool site (location) of the new pool. Listing to a pool site is mandatory.
8. A new pool must have at least enough members to service two schools at all levels.
9. The new pool agrees to follow all guidelines for MOA pools listed below.

B. An individual official can belong to only one (1) pool per sport. An official cannot individually contract game/contest assignments with schools.

C. Officials are independent contractors.

D. An individual school and/or an individual official have the right to refuse an assignment; however, a particular pool cannot discriminate against a member school(s).

E. Officials may receive mileage from either place of residence or their pool site; whichever is closer to the game site. This applies only to the regular season.

F. By June 1, every pool shall be required to have written by-laws, general assignment, and evaluation procedures on file with both their Regional Director and the MOA office.

G. Any pool that handles money will provide a yearly financial statement to the Regional Director for their region.

H. Individual pools are responsible for training and evaluating all officials.

I. An individual official because of pool membership and MOA membership is not guaranteed game assignments.

J. New pools cannot duplicate the name of established pools.

K. Pools may provide information regarding availability of eligible officials for postseason assignment to a district or division representative for distribution to schools in those districts or divisions when requested in writing. Individual officials shall not provide such information.

L. Pools must choose a secretary or head of the pool and notify the Regional Director before the season starts.

M. Enrolled college students may only work out of one pool while in attendance at school. Exceptions for college

students may be granted with approval of the MOA and the Regional Director from December 1st to February 1st.

XVII. MOA CLINICS

A. The MOA will offer rules clinics in football, basketball, baseball, soccer, volleyball, softball, and wrestling. If an official is to receive credit for attendance, they must complete the clinic prior to the published deadline in the format provided.

Failure to complete rules clinic(s) by the published deadline will result in a loss of rating and render an official ineligible for postseason assignment. The official may choose to pay the MHSA office $25 and complete the requirement within 7 days of notice to become eligible for the postseason.

XVIII. MOA STUDY CLUBS

A. Study clubs are an integral part of the official training program of the MOA and provide a continuous learning opportunity. The MOA office will provide appropriate study club materials for review and training. The Directors are responsible for monitoring study clubs in their region, gathering and inputting study club information into the current data management system. Regional Directors will submit attendance to the MOA office for record.

B. An official must attend at least six (6) study clubs in basketball, football, wrestling and/or volleyball in order to receive credit toward their rating. An official in baseball, soccer and/or softball must attend a minimum of four (4) study clubs in order to receive credit toward their rating and to be eligible to work an MHSA tournament. It is recommended that study clubs begin at least one week prior to the start of each season.

Completion of the MOA Annual Exam will satisfy the requirements for Study Club #1. MOA Pool Leaders may combine the testing requirements with other pool requirements as needed.

Failure to complete study clubs will result in a loss of rating for the entirety of the following year.

C. If an MOA member's employment prevents him/her from attending study clubs, the official may receive credit for attendance if they comply as follows:

1. Make prior arrangements with the Director or head of the pool.
2. Complete and present the study club outlines to the Director or head of the pool in advance of the meeting they will miss.
3. Request an exception from the MOA office for certain military actions or other extenuating circumstances.
4. An official whose employment requires him/her to be away from home during the week may attend study clubs at an alternate pool location if he/she receives permission from the regional director(s).
5. Study clubs can be administered, with the approval of the Regional Director, via real-time interactive video conferencing (which includes, but is not limited to FaceTime and Skype.)

D. All study club attendance information from both pools and individual officials must be received by the Regional Directors for signature and approval by the dates shown below. No credit for study clubs will be given until approved by the Director.

1. Soccer December 1
2. Football December 1
3. Volleyball December 1
4. Wrestling April 1
5. Basketball April 1
6. Baseball June 1
7. Softball June 1

XIX. MOA CODE OF ETHICS

This code of ethics for athletic officials is intended to protect and promote the best interest of interscholastic athletics and the officiating profession.

A. I will study the rules, observe the work of other officials, and will always attempt to improve myself.

B. I will endeavor to keep my body in sound physical condition.

C. I will remember that while my work as an official is important, I must conduct myself in such a way that attention is drawn, not to me, but to the ***student-athletes*** playing the game. I will keep in mind that the game is more important than the wishes of any individual player or the ambitions of any individual official.

D. I will dress and maintain my appearance in a manner befitting the dignity and importance of my profession.

E. I will shape my character and conduct so as to be a worthy example to the ***student athletes*** who play under my jurisdiction.

F. I will be fair and unbiased in my decisions, rendering them without regard to the score.

G. I will give my complete cooperation to the schools which I serve, the officials' association of which I am a member, and to the MHSA.

H. I will cooperate with my fellow officials and will do nothing to cause them public embarrassment.

I. I will, in my actions on the floor or field, be firm but not overbearing; courteous, but not ingratiating; positive, but never rude; dignified, but never "cocky;" friendly, but not companionable; calm, but always alert.

J. I will not officiate a game after having any alcoholic drink/illegal drugs that day as per MOA rules.

K. I will not use any tobacco or ***vaping*** products while officiating any MHSA contest.

L. ***I will not contact coaches, athletic directors, school administrators, or other school personnel, either in person, by mail, or electronically, regarding assignments, ratings, game calls, mechanics, or procedural duties. Questions or concerns regarding these matters shall be directed first to the local pool leader, MOA Regional Director, or the MOA Office.***

M. I will not make a request to officiate a specific game or games for any coach, school or conference.

N. I will not criticize or attempt to explain a fellow official's judgment or decision.

O. I will honor all contracts in spite of possible inconvenience or financial loss.

P. I will not contact any coach or school administrator encouraging them to select any official for post-season work.

Q. ***Social Media Policy***
The integrity of high school athletics depends heavily on the character, professionalism, and impartiality of its officials. This policy defines types of conduct considered unacceptable and establishes that violations may lead to disciplinary action

Prohibited Conduct - "Conduct Unbecoming" The following constitute violations of this policy when committed by an official that is an active participant in the Montana Officials Association.

1. Misuse of Social Media, Public Communication, or Electronic Forums. Posting or sharing content that criticizes, mocks, or undermines the integrity of the MOA, MHSA membership schools, school administration, coach, player, spectator, or a fellow official.

2. Disclosing sensitive or confidential information, including internal or private matters, through public or unauthorized channels.

3. Using social media or electronic communications in any way to solicit or give the appearance of solicitation for post season assignments.

4. Officials will maintain an ethical approach while participating in forums, chat rooms and all forms of social media.

5. Officials shall remain mindful that their conduct influences the respect that student athletes, coaches and the public hold for the profession.

6. Use appropriate and professional communication methods and be mindful that written communication may be publicly accessible.

Penalty - Any MOA official determined to be in violation due to misconduct shall be subject to discipline as determined by the MOA Regional Directors Board and the MOA Commissioner.

XX. SEXUAL HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

A. The MOA believes that all its members should strive to provide a healthy, safe and appropriate environment for athletic competition. This philosophy dictates that each individual involved with interscholastic competition be treated with respect and dignity. An integral part of a contest official's role is awareness of what behaviors or practices are considered unacceptable. The following information identifies what is considered wrongful conduct, both on and off the contest arena and said conduct is hereby prohibited.

B. Definitions:

1. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which violates federal law. Sexual harassment is illegal. Sexual harassment includes requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication (including electronic communication or online postings) of a sexual nature.

2. Sexual intimidation is conduct which subjects members of either gender to humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Sexual intimidation can be verbal or non-verbal and includes electronic communications or online postings.

3. Sexual violence is an act of physical aggression that includes a sexual act or sexual intent. Sexual violence could include, but is not limited to, touching, grabbing, or patting another person's intimate body parts, coercive sexual touching, or coercive sexual intercourse. Using force or the threat of force to engage in sexual touching or sexual intercourse also constitutes sexual violence.

XXI. MISCONDUCT BY OFFICIALS

A. Charges of conduct unbecoming of an official or of conduct contrary to the best interests of the MOA may be brought before the Directors by an MOA member or school administrator. Such charges must be submitted in writing. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. The accused official must have an opportunity for a hearing before the Directors. The MHSA or their designee will serve as a non-voting hearings officer.

B. Proven misconduct on the part of an official will result in one or more of the following penalties:

1. Permanent suspension.

2. Suspension for a stated period of time not to exceed two years.

3. Suspension for an indefinite period of time and reinstatement contingent upon the suspended official meeting such conditions as may be imposed by the Directors.

4. A fine may be imposed not to exceed $300.00.

5. Loss of rating.

6. Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate.

C. Charges.

In the event misconduct charges are filed against a director, they are excused from the Board during the hearing decision process. In the event that action is taken against a Director under this section, the remainder of the Board shall decide whether the members shall retain their position.

An official must apply to the Board for reinstatement following a suspension for good cause. (Refer to Reinstatement Section for criteria that must be complied with for one to be reinstated.)

D. Ruling

The Board and the hearing officer shall render a written decision within fourteen (14) days of the hearing.

E. Right of Appeal

Following the decision of the Board, the official or Director may appeal in writing within fourteen (14) days to the MOA office whose decision shall be final. The MOA office must render a decision on any appeal within fourteen (14) days.

F. Misconduct Can Be Charged for the Following:

1. Using abusive, demeaning, racially or sexually insensitive remarks or language made in the presence of or toward any student-athlete, coach, fan or other person during any MHSA sanctioned contest.

2. Degrading fellow MOA members.

3. Providing derogatory news media releases and/or interviews that cause public embarrassment.

4. Engaging in derogatory, abusive, demeaning, and/or racially or sexually insensitive remarks through electronic communication or online postings toward any student-athlete, coach, fan or other person associated with an MHSA sanctioned contest.

5. Using distasteful gestures.

6. Using mood-altering substances on game day prior to the contest which includes regular and post season

games, playoffs, and tournaments. Mood altering substances include alcohol, narcotics, dangerous drugs and controlled substances as defined by state and federal law, or prescriptions and prescription drugs not taken pursuant to or consistent with a written prescription.

7. Fee violations
   a. Accepting fees above or below those prescribed by the MOA Handbook.
   b. Accepting more or less mileage than prescribed by the MOA Handbook.

8. Working as a member of more than one pool per sport, using more than one residence, or individually contracting contest assignments while being a member of a pool.

9. Failing to notify school authorities when unable to work a contest or unable to reach the game site after previously agreeing to work the game.

10. Knowingly work a varsity contest with a non-MOA member.

11. Deviating from enforcement of National Federation Rules and mechanics other than those variances allowed in the MHSA Handbook.

12. Failure to wear the proper MOA uniform including failure to wear the MOA patch.

13. Being charged with a felony criminal act or a misdemeanor act involving use, possession or distribution of mood or body altering substances, theft, acts involving moral turpitude or any act of violence with or without the use of a weapon. (Emergency temporary suspension is permissible at the discretion of the MOA Commissioner.)

14. An official shall not request to officiate any contest from any coach, league or official thereof. Officials should not obligate themselves to any person affiliated with any game they might be assigned to officiate.

15. Violating the MOA policy on sexual harassment, intimidation, and violence.

16. Any acts or omissions detrimental to the best interests of the MOA, MHSA and interscholastic athletics or violating any section of the MHSA Handbook.

17. Officiating any school district sanctioned contest or practice without having completed the required concussion training for the current school term. Failure to complete concussion training, which violates Montana state law.

18. Officiating contests in another reciprocal state (Idaho, Wyoming, South Dakota or North Dakota without paying reciprocity to that state.)

19. Violating the MOA Social Media Policy.

XXII. REPORTING ATHLETIC CONTEST PROBLEMS

The following procedure should be followed when an official desires to lodge a complaint against a school or coach involving an athletic contest.

A. The appropriate form should identify the problem area and be filed with their Regional Director.

B. The Regional Director will then deal with the problem. If the problem is a recurring or serious situation and they feel inadequate to handle, the Regional Director may report it to the MOA office.

C. The MOA office may contact the proper school administrator to address the problem.

XXIII. PENALTY FOR A PLAYER ASSAULTING AN OFFICIAL

A. Any athlete who makes physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with the sports official or causes reasonable apprehension of bodily injury to the sports official, in connection with an MHSA contest shall immediately become ineligible for further interscholastic competition. It shall be the responsibility of the tournament manager or ***administrator*** of the school hosting the event to notify as soon as possible the MHSA or a member of the Executive Board of the incident. The official involved must report the incident in writing to the MOA office within 48 hours of its occurrence.

B. The coach of the student involved is responsible for keeping that student from further interscholastic participation, pending a ruling by the MHSA. The MHSA shall have the power to suspend the violating participant from further interscholastic competition for a period not to exceed two semesters from the date of the infraction.

XXIV. REPORTING EJECTIONS

Any official who ejects a coach or player from a contest must report the ejection to the MOA Office within twenty-four (24) hours using the designated electronic reporting system.

If a spectator must be ejected from the premises, the official must first contact the contest's administrator, and the administrator must remove the spectator from the premises.

XXV. RATING SYSTEM BY SPORT

A. The minimum yearly standards for rating officials in all classifications include:

1. Pay dues in accordance with MOA rules and regulations.

2. Complete the MOA sponsored annual rules and concussion training for the sport concerned.

3. An official must complete a minimum number of study clubs in their sport(s) to receive study club credit:

a.	Baseball	four
b.	Basketball:	six.
c.	Football:	six.
d.	Softball:	four.
e.	Soccer:	four.
f.	Wrestling:	six.
g.	Volleyball:	six.

B. The rating requirements for each classification include:
   1. Apprentice
      a. The official must score 60% on a properly administered National Federation open book examination. Note: A prospective official who has paid dues is eligible to officiate contests pending the results of the National Federation rules exam.
      b. The official is recommended to work only sub-varsity contests but is qualified to work any regular season contest.
   2. Certified
      a. The official must serve as an Apprentice official for two consecutive years prior to the year the official applies for Certified status.
      b. The official must score 70% on a properly administered National Federation open-book examination.
      c. The official must receive a favorable recommendation from their evaluation committee and Director.

d. A Certified official is qualified to work in any regular season contest in their registered sport. Second year certified officials may work the first round of playoffs/tournaments, if necessary, in specified sports with approval of the MHSA Executive Director.

3. Master
   a. The official must serve as a Certified official for two consecutive years prior to the year the official applies for Master status.
   b. The official must score 80% on a properly administered National Federation open-book examination.
   c. The official must have in previous years officiated in their respective sport 10 varsity baseball, 20 varsity basketball, 10 varsity football, 10 varsity softball, 10 varsity soccer, 10 varsity wrestling, or 10 varsity volleyball contests.
   d. The official must receive a favorable recommendation from their evaluation committee and Director.
   e. To maintain a Master rating, the Master official must officiate in their respective sport a minimum of 3 varsity baseball, 3 varsity football, 3 varsity softball, 3 varsity soccer, 6 varsity basketball, 3 varsity wrestling, or 4 varsity volleyball contests annually (volleyball, wrestling, and softball tournaments shall count as three contests).
   f. A Master official is qualified to work in any regular season contest, tournament, playoff, or championship contest.

C. Officials shall drop one rating classification for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to complete required number of study clubs.

2. Failure to work required number of contests.

3. Receiving an unfavorable recommendation from their evaluation committee and Regional Director.

4. Receiving a loss of rating penalty for misconduct.

NOTE: These rating reductions will be effective for the entirety of the following school year. Officials shall also drop one rating classification for:

5. Failure to complete the rules clinic and/or concussion training prior to the published deadline for their sport.

   NOTE: Missing the deadline for rules clinic and/or concussion training also renders an official ineligible for any post season contest.

   The official's rating is restored when he/she completes the next year's concussion training and/or rules clinic for his/her sport. Officials must notify the MOA office for restoration.

   Failure to complete concussion training by the published deadline will result in immediate suspension until proof of completion is uploaded and approved by the MOA office via Arbiter. Officiating contests without completing concussion training will lead to misconduct charges being filed.

D. Transferring from out-of-state

A member from another state may transfer to the MOA providing:

1. The MOA office receives a letter from their current official organization confirming that their membership was in good standing.

2. Payment of prescribed dues to the MOA.

3. An official transferring to Montana from another state will have their MOA rating based on their current out-of-state rating. However, an official will not receive a rating above the Certified classification for the first year. After one-year of experience, a favorable recommendation, and fulfilling all appropriate requirements, the official must test to upgrade to the next higher classification. Any official who transfers from out-of-state during the current regular season of his/her sport will have the requirement for satisfaction of any rule's clinic training waived for that season if he/she has met these requirements in his/her prior organization.

4. Out-of-state service will count towards the MOA Service Award.

5. ***Transfer MOA Officials: Officials may be authorized to officiate in postseason competition without a waiting period, subject to approval by their pool.***

E. Upgrading

If an official meets the criteria to upgrade a classification, they must register via Arbiter at least seven (7) days prior to the opening of the exam. The official must test prior to the season of the sport in which they are upgrading. It is the official's responsibility to ensure their upgrading requirements have been met. Upgrading will be denied for a one-year period for failure to: 1) complete required number of study clubs; 2) complete the current year's rules clinic and/or concussion training; or 3) pay annual MOA dues by the published date.

F. Reinstatement

An official who has had a break in service in a particular sport may request reinstatement to their previous classification providing the following criteria are met: A Reinstatement Form must be filled out and submitted to the MOA office for approval. After all requirements have been completed the official must contact the MHSA office to be reinstated to their previous rating.

1. The official must pass the qualifying examination contingent upon the requirements for that classification (their previous rating). Note: A reinstating official is eligible to officiate contests upon paying dues and passing the National Federation rules exam.

2. The official must officiate for one year at one classification below their previous rating.

3. Following one year of service at the reduced classification, the official must receive a favorable recommendation from the Regional Director and their evaluation committee in order to have their previous rating restored.

4. The official must notify the MOA office that they have met all of their reinstatement requirements and wish to have their previous rating restored.

5. If an official chooses to reinstate membership, and he/she has violated any MOA rules while not an MOA member, upon reinstatement, the official is subject to a fine not to exceed $300.00 and one-year unrated probation.

6. If an official chooses to reinstate membership, he or she will not be charged a late fee if they have one year's break in service.

7. ***Reinstated MOA Officials: Officials may be authorized to officiate in postseason competition without a waiting period, subject to approval by their pool***.

G. Retention of Rating

If illness, injury or extenuating circumstances prevent an official from officiating, the official may request to retain his/her rating from the previous year. The following procedure must be followed:

1. MOA dues must be paid for the current year.

2. The official must submit a completed retention of rating request form to their Regional Director. If the request is medically related the request for retention must include a written statement from a doctor confirming the injury or illness. For extenuating circumstances, a written explanation is required on the form.

3. The MOA ***Coordinator*** will act upon the request

4. The official is obligated to fulfill study club and rules clinic requirements in order to retain his/her rating.

5. The rating may be retained for one year only, unless the MOA Board extends the retention for one additional year.

H. Leave of Absence

An official may retain their current classification for up to one year if advance arrangements are made in writing with and approved by the MOA Office.

I. Military Leave

An official deployed by the military may request military leave which will retain his/her current classification. All membership requirements are waived, including dues, for the duration of their deployment. Upon termination of deployment, dues are payable for the current season, with no penalties.

J. Soccer Ratings

1. Soccer officials who are active USSF officials can join the MOA as a second year certified if their USSF rating is State/Regional referee or higher, second year apprentice if their USSF rating is a Grassroots Advanced with the same years of service requirements as the MOA ratings.

   The USSF rating system is subject to change. Any successor or comparable rating system will be used in evaluating advancement eligibility.

2. Documentation of the certification and years of service is required when requesting an upgrade. All MOA requirements must be met to be approved and retain the rating upgrade.

3. After one year of MOA experience, a favorable evaluation, pool recommendation and completion of requirements, the official may test up to the next level when all requirements have been met.

4. If an official is not currently a member of the USSF they must test for MOA membership and move through the rating classifications as in all other sports.

XXVI. VARIANCES BY STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTION

Listed below are the rules alterations adopted by the MHSA as allowed by the National Federation of State High School Associations:

A. *Baseball*

1. Game ending procedures:

   Any game will end when, after four and a half or five innings, a team is ten or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.
   Employ a maximum 1 1/2-hour time limit to end games at invitational tournaments. The game can be called if five or less minutes remain before the maximum 1 1/2-hour time limit or officials should not start a new inning after 1 hour and 20 minutes of play except if a tie exists where NFHS Softball Rules for tiebreaking would apply.

   Varsity and sub-varsity regular season games will end after three (3) innings if a team is leading by fifteen (15) runs.

   For junior varsity games played prior to varsity games, the following time limit shall apply: No new inning shall begin more than 1 hour and 45 minutes after the conclusion of the pre-game plate meeting.

   For game suspensions:
   Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of weather, darkness or tied game will resume from the point of interruption.

B. Basketball

1. Authorizes the use of the coaches' box; the head coach may be off the bench in front of their seat within the confines of the box to give instructions to their players and/or substitutes.

2. Authorizes the use of artificial limbs if the prosthesis is approved on an individual basis by the MHSA office.

3. Officials will sign the official scorebook.

4. A thirty-five (35) second shot clock will be used for all varsity and sub-varsity games. The shot clock will be used even if a funning clock is in effect.

5. The five-second closely guarded provision while a player dribbles the ball is eliminated. The closely guarded rules remain in effect while a player holds the ball.

6. For all levels of play, once a team has a forty (40) point lead or better in the second half, a running clock will ensue until the end of the game even if the difference in score drops below the forty-point margin. The only time the clock will stop is between quarters, time outs and when replacing an injured or disqualified player.

C. Flag Football

Flag football will be administered by the Montana Flag Football Association. The MHSA and MOA will follow all applicable emerging sport rules and regulations.

D. Football

1. Determines the number of game officials to be used in the game as per Montana Officials Association (see assignment section),

2. Mandates the use of a specific ball for postseason or playoff competition as per Rules and Regulations for Football, Article I-General Rules and Regulations, Section 26.

3. Authorizes the use of the following supplementary equipment to aid in game administration.
   a. Schools shall provide a sideline clip to assist officials with measurements.
   b. It is recommended that schools equipped with field public address systems provide referee field microphones for all varsity contests.

4. Authorizes the use of artificial limbs with written approval from the MHSA Office.

5. Authorizes the use of a drum for rhythmic cadence for deaf or partially deaf teams with written approval from the MHSA Office.

6. Authorizes the use of a device to enhance a required hearing aid through a licensed medical physician (MD/DO) and with written approval from the MHSA Office.

7. Established the procedure listed in the NFHS football rules book to resolve games tied following the fourth quarter.

8. Established the following differential to terminate games or to use a running clock when the point differential is reached.

   Classes A, B and C: In any Class A, B or C (8 and 6 player) football game, if at any time the score differential reaches 35 points or more, the clock will not be stopped when:
   a. The ball goes out-of-bounds.
   b. A forward pass is incomplete.
   c. A fair catch is made or awarded or
   d. A touchback occurs.
   e. A first down is declared.
   f. A score occurs, until the completion of the try. The clock will be stopped during the official's timeout between a score and the ensuing kickoff.

   If the score differential falls below 35 points, normal timing procedures will be utilized.

   In Class AA, this rule applies at the beginning of the third quarter in all games (varsity and sub-varsity).

   The clock will continue to be stopped on all other situations as specified by the National Federation Rule (penalty, time out, end of period).

9. ***If the point differential reaches 70 points or more at any time during the second half, the game will be terminated. If the differential reaches 70 points or more in the first half, the second half will start with a free kick. The game will be terminated once the free kick is over unless the differential falls below 70 points. This rule will be followed by all classification at all levels.***

10. Established rules regarding continuation of interrupted games as per Rules and Regulations for Football, Article I-General Rules and Regulations, Section 9

11. Determined the length of halftimes, provided it is not less than 10 minutes and not more than 20 minutes. Halftime will be twelve (12) minutes with a mandatory additional three (3) minute warm-up period. The only exceptions to this rule are homecoming games, parents' nights etc.

12. Determined when the coin toss is to be held. The coin toss must occur 3 minutes prior to the game.

13. Football: Football officials shall wear approved black pants, which must be black with a 1 inch to 1 ¼ inch white stripe on each leg. The pants must be similar in style and appearance to the pants worn by officials in the National Football League (straight leg and are not banded or cuffed at the ankle). Black socks are required when wearing black football pants.

14. A standard warm-up jacket, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for MOA service pins) is allowed.

15. At the sub-varsity level only, football officials may wear striped jackets with a MOA patch.

16. Football officials may either the two-inch striped shirt or 2 ¼ inch striped shirt, as long as the entire crew wears matching shirts, and the shirt must be tucked in.

17. The head line judge and line judge are required to switch sides at halftime for all varsity games at all classification levels. It is optional to at the sub varsity level.

E. Soccer

1. Wireless communication devices, (i.e.: two-way radio, with attached earpiece and push to talk microphone), may be worn by game officials in an effort to improve accuracy and timeliness of relaying information between crew members over great distances. If used, all members of the crew shall wear a device.

2. Overtime procedure: Follow the tie game procedure in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book but eliminate the two five-minute, sudden victory overtime periods.

3. If the game was suspended with less than one-half of the game completed, the game will be rescheduled from the start.

4. The head referee records the official time. The use of stadium clocks for unofficial timekeeping is encouraged. When stadium clocks are used, it is recommended that the stadium clock is turned off with two minutes remaining. If timekeepers are not available to start and stop the clock as per the referee signals, then stadium clocks shall not be used.

5. The use of the Dual Officiating Mechanic: It is to be used for sub-varsity matches and only in emergency situations. The following fee adjustment is used when there are only 2 officials available: The total fee paid for the contest for the 2 officials will be the same as if 3 officials were used and this is only approved for sub-varsity competition.

F. Softball

1. Game ending procedures:

   Any game will end when, after four and a half or five innings, a team is ten or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat.

   Games may end after three (3) innings if a team is leading by fifteen (15) runs.

   Employ a maximum 1 1/2-hour time limit to end games at invitational tournaments. The game can be called if five or less minutes remain before the maximum 1 1/2-hour time limit or officials should not start a new inning after 1 hour and 20 minutes of play except if a tie exists where NFHS Softball Rules for tiebreaking would apply.

   For junior varsity games played prior to varsity games, the following time limit shall apply: No new inning shall begin more than 1 hour and 45 minutes after the conclusion of the pre-game plate meeting.

   For game suspensions:
   Games suspended before 4 1/2 or 5 innings because of weather, darkness or tied game - will resume from the point of interruption.

2. Tie Breaker:

   Invitational tournaments which use a tie breaking procedure shall follow the NFHS rules. Beginning in the top of the eighth inning or at the time limit the last batter from the previous inning will be placed on second base at the beginning of each half inning with the game then proceeding in a normal manner until a winner is decided.

G. Volleyball

1. Teams may play a five-game match in which a team is considered the winner of the match when it wins three games. The fourth and/or fifth game shall not be played unless it is necessary to determine the winner of the match. If a fifth game is necessary, a coin toss shall be conducted prior to that game. In sub-varsity games, or invitational tournaments, the length and number of games per match may be modified.

2. A continuous ***twenty***-minute warm-up clock will be standard for all levels of play. The buzzer will be sounded at twelve (12) minutes (signaling the end of joint court warm-up), at eight (8) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time), at four (4) minutes (signaling the end of the receiving team court time), at two (2) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) and at 0.00 (signaling the end of the receiving team court time). The officials will conduct the pre-match conference and coin toss before the ***twenty*** (***20***) minute warm-up period begins. Coaches must be on the floor at this time. This applies to regular season and post season play. A continuous fifteen-minute warmup will be standard for all sub varsity levels of play. The buzzer will be sounded at (12) minutes (signaling the end of joint court warm-up), at eight (8) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) at four (4) minutes (signaling the end of the receiving team court time), at two (2) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) and 0.00 (signaling the end of the receiving court time). The officials will conduct pre-match conference before the fifteen (15) minute warm-up period begins. Coaches must be on the floor at this time.

3. Modification of match format is permitted for invitational tournaments including use of pool play.

4. The volleyball uniform must be in compliance with the NFHS uniform rule as specified in the rule book.

5. A standard warm-up jacket, solid black pullover, full zip or button up, unadorned (except for MOA service pins) is allowed.

6. During regular season contests and during district and divisional tournaments, flags may be used by line judges. The R1 and R2 will provide flags and will train the line judges in the use of the flags. Flags will be required to be used during all MHSA State Tournament Contests. ***MHSA will provide flags at the state tournament***.

XXVII. ASSIGNMENT

A. General Policy

1. ***MHSA*** schools will request and hire officials for all regular season interscholastic athletic contests. MOA pools will assign, through participating in schools, all officials for regular season Interscholastic athletic contests. Schools are to go through the MOA area officials' pool(s) when hiring. This process will be followed for all regular season baseball, basketball, wrestling, softball, and volleyball tournaments.

2. Each pool assignor is responsible to work with MHSA schools to place appropriate officials in each of their regular season contests. There are two approved methods of paying assignors:

   a. Pools determine a method of compensation within their own pool. The pool determines the amount (if any) the assignor is paid. Pool dues are used as the source of funding in this method. The assignor is an independent contractor.

   b. Soccer will have its own method of paying the assignor. An assignor, who is an independent contractor, will bill the schools $5 per official, per game. The assignor will provide one invoice per school at the end of the season. This $5 increase per official, per game will be given to all other MOA sports. This is a one-time fee hiatus and soccer will be given future fee increases consistent with other sports.

   There is a fee adjustment when only 2 officials are available. The total fee paid for the contest for the 2 officials will be the same as if 3 officials were used and this is only approved for sub-varsity competition.

   If other sports in the MOA consider schools paying the assignor, there must be agreement from all pools in that sport, across the state, and a similar process would be implemented.

3. The MOA requires that only MOA members in good standing are assigned to work all varsity regular season contests in all classifications and the MOA recommends that only MOA officials in good standing are assigned to work all sub-varsity regular season contests. The MOA recommends only Master or Certified officials work varsity contests.

4. All MOA officials working any MHSA sanctioned contest shall use NFHS mechanics and signals.

5. A prospective official who has paid dues is eligible to officiate contests pending results of the NFHS rules exam.

6. Officials are prohibited from working in a varsity contest or tournament where they cohabitate with or have an immediate relative who is participating as an athlete or head coach. Officials are also prohibited from working postseason contests in the gender-specific classification where they have an immediate relative ***or*** step relative who is participating as an athlete or head coach. An immediate relative is defined as a parent, spouse, brother, sister, child or grandchild. There is an exception for soccer officials, which allows officials to work tournaments or matches involving immediate relatives, but they must avoid the specific contest where their immediate relative participates. The wrestling exception prescribes that officials must avoid the weight class where an immediate relative participates in the regular season or a divisional tournament.

7. Officials who are members of the coaching staff are prohibited from working a varsity contest or tournament of his/her gender-specific sport in the classification he/she coaches. Officials are prohibited from working in a tournament in which they are employed as a school administrator of any schools involved in the tournaments. School administrators are defined as superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and activities directors.

8. The MOA requires that only Master officials who have completed concussion training, completed their appropriate rules clinic for the current year and who have officiated the required number of varsity contests during the current regular season to maintain their master rating are eligible to work postseason playoffs or tournaments.

   Basketball officials are required to attend an approved basketball officiating camp at least once every three years to be eligible to officiate postseason divisional and state tournaments. This requirement does not affect eligibility for district tournament assignments. This requirement will affect postseason eligibility for officials beginning in the 2028 postseason.

9. Selection of officials for districts (exception: basketball), divisional and state basketball, volleyball and wrestling will be made by the MOA office by using a combination of the following: coaches' input (ballots), individual officials' pool ranking, and MOA office input.

10. The MOA office will send ballots to participating member schools for selection of state baseball tournaments, divisional, and state basketball tournaments, divisional and state wrestling tournaments, district, divisional and state volleyball tournaments, and divisional and state softball tournaments. Ballots must be returned to the MOA office by the published deadline for each sport in order to be included. Failure to submit a ballot for schools participating will result in a $100 fine.

    The MOA office staff will tabulate tournament ballots. The MOA office staff will contact officials selected for tournaments.

11. An official is prohibited from accepting any contest or tournament when the fee, per diem and/or mileage offered is an amount other than the MOA prescribed fee schedules.

12. A basketball official is allowed to work any combination of three postseason basketball tournaments. In addition, an official can only work the identical school classification state basketball tournament by gender for two consecutive years.

13. An official is prohibited from working more than two MHSA volleyball tournaments below the state level each year. An official can work one state volleyball tournament each year. In addition, an official can only work the identical school classification state volleyball tournament for two consecutive years.

14. An official is prohibited from working more than one championship football game each year. An official is prohibited from working more than one semi-final football game each year.

15. An official is prohibited from accepting more than one MHSA playoff contest or tournament in the same day. An official is prohibited from officiating in any other contest prior to completing their MHSA sanctioned playoff or tournament responsibilities within the same day. Note: Soccer officials are exempt from this policy.

16. An official participating in a postseason tournament cannot serve as the tournament manager.

17. Two officials are required for all varsity baseball, softball, and volleyball contests. Two officials are recommended for all sub varsity baseball, softball, and volleyball contests. Three officials are required for all varsity soccer contests.

18. A NFHS Dual Officiating Mechanic is approved for sub varsity soccer on an emergency basis only.

19. Regular season basketball contests (at any level of competition) will have at least a 20-minute intermission between games when one game immediately follows another on the same night if the same officials or any of the same officials work consecutive games.

20. MOA officials are not authorized to officiate an extended sub-varsity contest beyond the limits of a National Federation contest.

21. Schools can schedule basketball officials, during the regular season, to work one full contest and one half of a contest as long as the school is paying the appropriate entire game fee for both contests.

B. Basketball

1. The MOA requires that six (6) officials shall be used for all district, divisional and state tournaments and that three-person crews will be utilized. Districts with seven (7) teams or fewer shall use six (6) officials unless prior approval to use five (5) or fewer is granted by the MOA staff.

2. Selection of officials for divisional and state basketball will be made by the MOA office by using a combination of the following: coaches' input (ballots), individual officials' pool ranking, and MOA office input. The MOA staff may consider reasonable geographic limitations when selecting officials. District tournaments will be assigned by Regional Directors (using coaches votes).

3. State tournament officials will receive notification of their assigned rotation at the state pretournament meeting for officials. All officials must attend the pretournament meeting. State tournament officials are required to remain at the tournament site until excused by the tournament manager.

4. After the rotation schedule is assigned, no deviation from the rotation is permitted, except when an official assigned to work a semi-final or championship game is from the same town as one of the teams playing in the semi-final or championship contest. If all parties agree, then only the tournament manager may exchange that official with another official assigned to work the other game that same evening. For tournaments below the state level, a schedule of alternate officials will be prepared by the tournament officials and coordinated by the tournament manager.

5. Tournaments with seven or nine teams may deviate from the assigned rotation. The MOA office will provide supplemental rotations for tournaments as necessary. The tournament manager may make other rotation schedule changes with approval of the MOA office.

6. The MOA office may use second year certified officials at the district level at their discretion and these officials will be ranked by their pools.

7. For play-in or challenge basketball games, if one tournament official has a work-related conflict and is unable to officiate the play-in or challenge game, the MOA office can assign a replacement utilizing one of the other officials assigned to the tournament.

C. Flag Football

Flag football assignments will be administered by the Montana Flag Football Association.

D. Football

1. The MOA requires that only Master officials who complete the rules clinic requirement are assigned for playoff or state championship contests. Second year certified officials are allowed to work the first round of playoffs if necessary.

2. The minimum number of officials assigned for various contests are:

    a. Class AA
       Varsity, playoffs and state championships — 5 officials (7 if available)
       Non-varsity — 4 officials
    b. Classes A & B
       Regular season varsity — 4 officials; (5 are recommended)
       Playoff and state championships — 5 officials
       Non-varsity — 4 officials
    c. Class C

Regular season varsity — 4 officials (5 are allowed)
Non-varsity — 3 officials (4 are recommended).
Eight-man playoffs and state championships — 5 officials

d. Six Player
Regular season varsity — 4 officials (5 are allowed)
Non-varsity — 3 officials (4 are recommended)
Playoffs — 5 officials
State championships— 5 officials

Note: if an injury or emergency situation occurs during the course of a football game, the other officials may continue to work that game as long as there are enough remaining officials to operate with published NFHS approved mechanics. Class AA varsity can continue with four officials, Classes A, B and C can continue with three officials using the NFHS approved mechanics.

3. Officials for the AA football semifinal and championship contests will be assigned from a neutral site by the MOA staff on a pool rotation basis. First round AA playoff games will be assigned at MOA staff discretion. The MOA staff may use a reasonable variation of the geographic limitations whenever feasible and necessary.

4. An alternate will be selected for state championship games to replace an official who is unable to continue officiating during the state championship contest. The alternate receives one-half of the game fee and no mileage or per diem.

E. Volleyball

1. The MOA requires that six (6) officials be used in all MHSA district, divisional, and state volleyball tournaments. District and divisional tournaments with less than eight teams must request the MOA office to use less than 6 officials. All tournament officials are required to remain at the tournament site until excused by the tournament manager.

2. Selection of officials for district, divisional and state volleyball will be made by the MOA office by using a combination of the following: coaches' input (ballots), individual officials' pool ranking, and MOA office input. The MOA staff may consider reasonable geographic limitations when selecting officials.

3. Second year certified officials may officiate the district tournament if necessary.

4. State tournament officials will receive notification of their assigned rotation at the state pretournament meeting for officials. All officials must attend the pretournament meeting and draw their rotation number at the meeting.

5. After the tournament rotation schedule is assigned, no deviation from the rotation is permitted, except when the tournament manager approves urgent, short-term requests to change the line judging rotation and only if the change is acceptable to the entire officials' crew and the change is scheduled prior to the first match of the tournament.

6. Warm-up time for all classifications - A continuous twenty-minute warm-up clock will be standard for all levels of play. The buzzer will be sounded at twelve (12) minutes (signaling the end of joint court warm-up), at eight (8) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time), at four (4) minutes (signaling the end of the receiving team court time), at two (2) minutes (signaling the end of the serving team court time) and at 0.00 (signaling the end of the receiving team court time). The officials will conduct the pre-match conference and coin toss before the twenty (20) minute warm-up period begins. Coaches must be on the floor at this time. This applies to regular season and postseason play.

F. Wrestling

1. Schools may use two officials per match. Both officials must be paid according to the applicable MOA fee schedules for that classification. If an assistant official is used, they shall be paid a sub-varsity fee.

2. The MOA office will send ballots to all member schools to select master officials for divisional and for state wrestling tournaments as per the Assignment General Policy.

3. Selection of officials for divisional and state wrestling will be made by the MOA office by using a combination of the following: coaches' input (ballots), individual officials' pool ranking, and MOA office input. The MOA staff may consider reasonable geographic limitations when selecting officials.

4. For the state All-Class wrestling tournament, twenty (20) officials will be assigned. The top vote getter from each of the Six (6) divisions (all classes) will work the state All-Class wrestling tournament. In addition, fourteen (14) officials will be selected at large based on the total number of state votes.

5. Six (6) officials are to be used for each divisional tournament. The top vote getter in each division will be assigned to the divisional tournament in which they are the top vote getters. If the official is the top vote getter in more than one division, they will be able to choose which tournament they would like to officiate All 14 at large state officials will be offered a divisional tournament before the remaining sixteen (16) divisional slots are filled. Selection of officials will be based on coach's vote, regional placement, if possible, receiving at least one vote in the division and individual officials' pool ranking.

6. The MOA recommends that the number of officials for invitational wrestling tournaments be:
   a. 2 Mats - (3 less than 6 hrs. -4 officials more than 6 hrs.)
   b. 3 Mats - (4 less than 6 hrs. -5 officials more than 6 hrs.)
   c. 4 Mats - (6 officials)

G. Selection Procedure for Volleyball and Basketball Tournament Officials

1. Selection of officials for district (except basketball), divisional and state basketball and volleyball will be made by the MOA office by using a combination of the following: coaches' input (ballots), individual officials' pool ranking, and MOA office input. The MOA staff may consider reasonable geographic limitations when selecting officials.

2. The MOA office will send ballots to all member schools to select officials for district, divisional, and state basketball and volleyball tournaments per the Assignment General Policy.

3. The officials receiving the most votes from each district will be offered the district tournament if the additional criteria is met per the selection policy.

4. All ballots for the divisional tournament are tabulated individually by district. If a division is comprised of three districts, then each district would select two officials for a tournament of six. If the three-district divisional uses four officials, each district selects one official, and the fourth official is determined by composite votes.

5. The playoff officials for AA basketball and volleyball are selected by the MOA office staff with preference shown to the pool of officials selected for the state tournament, then highly ranked available local officials, and finally the next available officials, allowing for geographic consideration.

6. The MOA office will contact the selected officials in order of preference based on selection criteria to confirm the officials for the tournament.

H. Selection Procedure for Soccer Tournament/Playoff Officials

1. The MOA office, using geographic considerations and recommendations from pool leaders, will assign officials for all soccer playoffs and championship contests.

2. ***Certified officials may be authorized to officiate in postseason competitions on an individual basis, subject to approval by the pool.***

I. Selection Procedure for Baseball/Softball Tournament Officials

1. Selection of officials for divisional and state baseball and softball will be made by the MOA office by using a combination of the following: coaches' input (ballots), individual officials' pool ranking, and MOA office input. The MOA staff may consider reasonable geographic limitations when selecting officials.

2. The playoff officials for Class AA softball and the Class B-C divisional softball tournaments are selected by the MOA office from the list of eligible master officials. The MOA staff may consider reasonable geographic limitations when selecting softball playoff officials.

3. The state tournament umpire rotation will be determined before the start of the tournament by the umpire-in-chief.

4. ***State Tournament games shall be officiated by three officials for each contest. Each classification may determine whether to utilize two or three officials for divisional or playoff games.***

XXVIII. REGULAR SEASON FEE/ EXPENSES

A. Fee schedules for payment of contest officials were adopted by the MHSA and MOA Boards.

B. No school or official may deviate from the fee schedule.

C. The fees and expense allowances paid to each official must conform to the current established schedules as published in the MHSA Handbook.

D. The MHSA recognizes that officials are independent contractors; therefore, methods of paying established fees/expenses will be determined by agreement between the school which has contracted for the official services and the local officials' pool, or an individual official. Officials' pools cannot receive payments from the schools to distribute to individual members as this practice would make the officials' pool the employer, nullifying the independent contract status and subjecting the pool to unemployment and workers' compensation requirements. Any changes in the payment process must be approved by the Regional Director. Note: If there is a change in the payment process one option to another that change must be approved by the Regional Director. However, the MHSA requires that one of the three following methods be utilized:

1. All assigned officials may be paid within seven (7) business days of the contest with a check issued by the member school.

2. All assigned officials may be paid with Arbiter assignment software. A member school has (7) seven business days from the date of the contest to issue payment via Arbiter.

3. All assigned officials may be paid before the contest with a check issued or with Arbiter by the member school. MOA officials are not allowed to accept checks written to other member officials. A member school has seven (7) business days from the date of the contest to reissue appropriate checks to the official(s) who worked the contest, if there has been an assigned official change.
Exception for soccer pools only: because the fee structure for soccer officials differs from all other MHSA sanctioned sports, an alternative payment method for soccer officials may be approved by the MOA Commissioner, provided that the local soccer pool, the local school(s), and the Regional Director are in agreement. The alternative payment method must be submitted in writing for approval by the MOA Commissioner on an annual basis prior to implementation.

E. If an official was not notified but was present to work a contest that was canceled or postponed for reasons related to an act of God including, but not limited to, power failure, adverse weather, or hazardous road conditions, the officials must be paid at least half of the game fee plus all travel and per diem allowances. Contest(s) cancelled due to weather or act of God will be rescheduled using the same officials (if possible) and those officials will receive only travel and per diem allowances for the canceled contest(s).

If different officials are used, officials will be paid all travel/per diem allowance and game fee. Regarding cancellations/postponements after the contest begins, officials that work one quarter (or its equivalent, i.e. two full innings in softball) or more will receive a full game fee and if the officials work less than one quarter, they will receive one half a game fee (lightning cancellations, power outages etc.).

F. If an official was not notified by a school that a contest date was changed or canceled, but the official was present to work the contest as originally scheduled, the official must be paid a full game fee plus all travel and per diem allowances. This also applies when a team does not show up for the contest.

G. A varsity fee shall be paid to all officials working any contest involving a varsity and sub-varsity team.

H. The regular season fee schedules include:
MOA regular season fee sheets are available at www.mhsa.org under the MOA Tab.

Basketball	
Varsity two- or three-person	$ 80.00
Sub-varsity two-person (including shortened contests)	$ 60.00
Sub-varsity three-person	$ 45.00
Jamborees	

Flag Football – Varsity or Sub-varsity	
Four-person crew	***$ 50.00***
Three-person crew	***$ 60.00***
Two-person crew	***$ 65.00***

Football	
Varsity	$ 90.00
Sub-varsity	$ 70.00
Jamborees (*see the MOA page at www.mhsa.org)	*

Soccer	
Varsity Referee	$ 75.00
Varsity Assistant Referee	$ 75.00

Varsity 4th Official	$ 35.00
Sub-varsity Referee	$ 55.00
Sub-varsity Assistant Referee	$ 55.00
Sub-varsity 4th Official	$ 35.00

*Soccer assignors will receive a $5.00 per match fee (not including 4th officials. Pools will send an invoice at the end of each season with game counts.

Baseball/Softball	
Varsity	$ 80.00
Sub-varsity	$ 60.00
Invitational tournament varsity	$ 52.00
Invitational tournament sub-varsity	$ 39.00
Jamboree - varsity	$ 38.00
Jamboree – sub-varsity	$ 29.00

Volleyball	
Varsity (3 out of 5 matches)	$ 80.00
Sub-varsity (3 out of 5 matches)	$ 60.00
Varsity Invitational tournaments (per set) pool play – cap 25 points	$ 15.00
match play 2 out of 3 - cap 25 points	$ 30.00
Subvarsity Invitational tournaments (per set) pool play – cap 25 points	$ 12.00
match play 2 out of 3- cap 25 points	$ 24.00
Dual Varsity 3 out of 5	$ 80.00
Dual Varsity 2 out of 3	$ 60.00
Dual Sub-varsity 3 out of 5	$ 60.00
Dual Sub-varsity 2 out of 3	$ 36.00
MOA Line Judge (per match) All Classifications	$ 25.00
*If a different format is used contact MHSA office for information	

Wrestling	
Varsity Duals (per match)	**$** 80.00
Subvarsity and exhibition	
Up to 14 matches	$ 60.00
Additional (per match)	$ 4.00
Assistant referee	$ 55.00
Invitational tournaments (per day)	
Varsity Invitational (double elimination boys *or* girls' division)	$ 200.00
Varsity Invitational (double elimination boys & girls division)	$ 275.00
Subvarsity varsity Invitational (double elimination boys *or* girls' division)	$ 132.00
Varsity Invitational (double elimination boys & girls division)	$ 172.00
Mixers (*see the MOA page at www.mhsa.org)	*

I. All travel allowances are computed using round trip mileage. The regular season expense allowances include:

1. The travel allowance for each driver official: ***$.725*** per mile.

2. The per diem allowance for each official including the driver: $.16 per mile.

3. The driver official receives the total ***($.88 per mile)*** of the travel allowance plus the per diem allowance. The travel and per diem allowance is partially based on the travel distances between cities as prescribed for State of Montana employees using personal vehicles for business purposes. This travel allowance is established for the entire fiscal year commencing on July 1 and continuing through June 30 of the following year. Distances to determine mileage allowances will be those listed on the official Montana Department of Transportation map. The mileage allowance is based upon the shortest paved distance from the contest site to either the (1) official's home, or (2) pool site. When an official is assigned to a contest in a pool city site, but lives outside the city, they shall get paid mileage from their home zip code to the pool city zip code.

4. The per diem allowance for invitational/regular season tournaments is $.16 per mile or $20 per day, whichever is greater, if the official does not stay overnight, and $30 per day if the official does stay overnight.

5. Officials working in their home city/pool site receive no travel allowance but will receive a $10.00 per diem allowance per day if they work more than two contests during that day at the same facility for a regular season contest.

6. When separate officiating crews are requested or used for different contests which occur on the same date, schools must pay the driver official for each crew the required travel allowance when it isn't feasible for officials to travel together. This applies even when the officials are from the same city or pool site.

7. Soccer Exception: There is a fee adjustment when only 2 officials are available. The total fee paid for the contest for the 2 officials will be the same as if 3 officials were used and this is only approved for sub-varsity competition.

XXIX. POSTSEASON FEE/EXPENSES

A. The postseason fee schedule per official is:
MOA regular season fee sheets are available at www.mhsa.org under the MOA Tab.

Basketball	
District tournament/game	$ 85.00
Divisional tournament/game/playoff	$ 90.00
State tournament	$ 570.00

Flag Football	
Four-person crew	***$ 65.00***

Football	
First & second round	$ 120.00
Semifinal	$ 142.00
Championship	$ 162.00
Championship alternate (1/2 game fee)	$ 81.00

Soccer	
First & Second Round Referee/Assistant Referee (per match)	$ 120.00
Semifinal Referee/Assistant Referee (per match)	$ 142.00
Championship Referee/Assistant Referee (per match)	$ 162.00
State Playoffs Fourth official (per match)	$ 40.00
Recommended championship alternate (1/2 game fee only) Championship 4th	$ 81.00

Baseball/Softball	
Divisional tournament/Play-offs	$ 90.00
State Tournament	$ 95.00

Volleyball	
District tournament per match	$ 85.00
District tournament personnel who line judge only (per match)	$ 25.00
Divisional tournament per match	$ 90.00
Divisional tournament personnel-line judge only	$ 30.00
State tournament	$ 475.00
State tournament official working as line judge	$ 175.00
Play-in match at District tournament	$ 85.00
District Play-in match personnel who line judge only (per match)	$ 25.00
Play-in match at Divisional tournament	$ 90.00
Divisional Play-in match personnel who line judge only (per match)	$ 30.00

Wrestling	
Divisional tournament (per working day)	$ 285.00
State tournament (per working day)	$ 305.00

B. ***The postseason expense allows the following:***

1. All postseason officials will be paid a one-way mileage at ***$.725*** travel allowance from their home sites to the postseason tournament or playoff site.

   Exception for Football & Soccer Postseason Mileage: All postseason driver and rider officials will be paid a round-trip travel allowance from their home sites to the postseason tournament or playoff site except for the official who is a bona fide member of a pool outside his/her local pool. He/she will be paid a rider's allowance from the home site to the postseason tournament or playoff site. **Whenever an official traveling to a playoff or tournament through a community where another official working the same playoff or tournament resides, the officials shall carpool and only the driver official will receive the one travel allowance. Both officials will receive the per diem allowance.**

2. Each tournament official receives a $35.00 per diem allowance for each overnight stay at the tournament site away from home for each day the tournament is in session. Each official who travels more than 200 miles one way will also be paid one additional day per diem and provided a room if they stay away from home for an extra night. Any official who is officiates a Saturday night contest but chooses not to stay overnight, or an official who rides with an official in this situation shall receive the $35.00 per diem for that day. The MOA office has the discretion to apply the appropriate basketball tournament per diem schedule for postseason football contests.

3. If inclement weather forces an extra overnight stay for those officials who are less than 200 miles from their home, the tournament manager must pay an extra day's per diem and accommodations such officials.

4. Officials living less than 200 miles one-way from the tournament site and who are required to report to a tournament site one day early for meetings or weigh-ins, or who must leave their home before 7:00 a.m. on the day of the tournament shall receive an extra day per diem if they commute to the site. If they are staying at the site and must leave their home before 7:00 a.m. to attend those meetings or weigh-ins, the official will be provided with a room the night preceding the opening day of the tournament.

5. The tournament manager is responsible for arranging lodging for tournament officials. Lodging accommodations shall be paid from tournament receipts by the tournament manager. Officials choosing not to utilize lodging accommodation provided by the tournament manager are not entitled to any other lodging reimbursement. When feasible, officials shall be provided with a single room. Lodging expenses may be provided from the receipts of a post-season football playoff game when determined necessary by the MOA office.

6. Officials who commute daily from their home city to the tournament city or who alternate during the duration of the tournament contested on consecutive days between a daily commute and an overnight stay will receive one-way mileage per day at the current prescribed milage rate. Officials making more than one commute per day will only be compensated for a single commute.

7. A tournament official receives ***$***25.00 per day for each day that the officials commute to the tournament while the tournament is in session.

8. Tournament officials working in their home city/pool site receive no travel allowance but will receive a $10.00 per diem allowance for each day the tournament is in session.

9. Playoff Expenses – Baseball, Basketball, Softball, Soccer, and Volleyball. Mileage - ***$.725***. Per diem - $.16 per mile or $25.00 per day, whichever is greater, if the official does not stay overnight. If the official stays overnight, $35.00 per diem. In baseball and softball, host city officials will receive $10.00 per diem (two out of three game playoffs). In soccer the postseason officials will receive a per diem of $10.00 per game or $0.16 per mile (whichever is greater) regardless of if the official is out of in or out of town. Schools are responsible for room reservations and room costs.

10. Pretournament, challenge and play-in or play-off contests utilize selected tournament officials and are considered part of the tournament. Receipts and expenses from the pre-tournament contest(s) are considered part of the tournament's financial report.

MOA REGIONAL DIRECTORS
CURRENT MOA
REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Current Regional Directors are listed by region with reference to the counties they represent.

Region 1
(Lincoln, Flathead, Sanders)
David Reese
Kila
(term expires 2028)

Region 2
(Missoula, Granite, Ravalli, Lake, Mineral)
Joel Fuhrmann
Charlo
(term expires 2028)

Region 3
(Silver Bow, Deer Lodge, Powell,
Beaverhead, Madison-includes Whitehall)
Shane Jorgesen
Butte
(term expires 2028)

Region 4
(Hill, Blaine, Phillips, Toole, Liberty)
Patrick Wirtzberger
Havre
(term expires 2027)

Region 5
(Cascade, Choteau, Teton, Pondera, Glacier-includes
Raynesford and Geyser)
Lea Potoczny
Great Falls
(term expires 2029)

Region 6
(Gallatin, Park, Meagher – includes towns of Harrison and Ennis)
Michael Bell
Belgrade
(term expires 2027)

Region 7
(Yellowstone, Sweet Grass, Golden Valley, Bighorn, Carbon, Stillwater, Musselshell)
Jay Lemelin
Billings
(term expires 2029)

Region 8
(Roosevelt, Richland, McCone, Valley, Sheridan, Daniels, Wibaux, Dawson)
Mike Erickson
Fort Peck
(*term expires 2027)*

Region 9
(Custer, Rosebud, Carter, Powder River, Prairie, Garfield, Treasure, Fallon)
Austin Stradley
Miles City
(term expires 2029)

Region 10
(Fergus, Judith Basin, Wheatland, Petroleum)
George Maruska
Lewistown
(term expires 2029)

Region 11
(Lewis & Clark, Broadwater, Jefferson)
Duane Cunningham
Helena
(term expires 2027)

PAST REGIONAL DIRECTORS
1952-2025

Region 1
C.H. Brewer, Kalispell
Andrew P. Anderson, Kalispell
O. N. “Bing” Caps, Kalispell
Neil Hart, Kalispell
Neil Eliason, Kalispell
Don Crosswhite, Columbia Falls
Bill Redmond, Kalispell
Bob Pike, Columbia Falls
Chuck Grant, Kalispell
Irv Heitz, Whitefish
Randy Saunier, Kalispell
Todd Fiske, Kalispell
Chuck Dotson, Kalispell

Region 2
Henry Zahn, Missoula
Claude Potter, Missoula
Tom O’Neil, Missoula
Jay Johnstone, Missoula
Robert Bedard, Missoula
Richard Huse, Missoula
Glen Welch, Missoula
Dick Scott, Missoula
Dewey Arnold, Superior
Doug McAlear, Polson

Region 3
John Good, Butte
Dick Muffick, Helena
Gene McMahon, Helena
Bob Rowling, Butte
Ned Ellingwood, Butte
Rick Rowling, Butte

Region 4
Metro B. Karaffa, Havre
Wilbur Swenson, Havre
Ole Larson, Havre
Glenn Gregson, Havre
John Callahan, Havre
Leonard “Bud” Seelinger, Havre
John Warner, Havre
Terry Sather, Havre
Cal Wirtzberger, Havre
Dave Peterson, Havre

Region 5
Tony Dalich, Great Falls
Walter Hantsman, Great Falls
Bob Murray, Great Falls
Tony Carlson, Great Falls
Phil Caldwell, Great Falls
Marv Kildahl, Great Falls
Ken Leland, Great Falls
Tom Lorang, Great Falls
Dan Miller, Great Falls

Region 6
Pete Vavich, Bozeman
Robert Ward, Bozeman
Lynn Eilefson, Bozeman
Fred Turner, Bozeman
Dobbie Lambert, Bozeman
Bill Bruner, Belgrade
Jack Bennett, Bozeman
Guy Miller, Belgrade
Dave Sauvageau, Three Forks
Dan Rust, Bozeman
Mark Bissell, Bozeman
KC Barnhardt, Bozeman
Bob Burns, Livingston
KC Barnhardt, Bozeman
Casper Roth, Bozeman

Region 7
Gene Pearson, Billings
Walter Zimmerman, Billings
Ron Nistler, Billings
Jim McKenzie, Billings
Harold Olson, Billings

Region 8
Homer V. Loucks, Nashua
N. L. Schneider, Sidney
Rex Dougherty, Sidney
Gene Eckroth, Sidney
Richard Buehler, Sidney
Jerry Butner, Sidney
Bob Frank, Sidney
Dave Zieske, Plentywood
Frank DiFonzo, Sidney
Lonnie Swigart, Sidney

Region 9
Fred R. Brown, Miles City
Carl Horn, Miles City
Daniel Marinkovich, Miles City
Ken Skillestad, Glendive
Chuck Strand, Miles City
Doug Ellingson, Miles City
John Laney, Miles City
Bruce Shipp, Miles City

Region 10
C. E. (Mike) Henry, Lewistown
Waldo Vangsness, Lewistown
Leon Jacobs, Lewistown
Pete Tuss, Lewistown
Jack Shields, Lewistown
Bill Price, Lewistown
Doreen Heintz, Stanford
Jack Shields, Lewistown
Steve Hertel, Moore

Region 11
Gene McMahon, Helena
Fred McDermott, Helena
John Maloney, Helena
Larry Holman, Helena
Eric Obrigewitch, Clancy

Montana Officials Association

HALL OF FAME

The Regional Directors of the Montana Officials Association established the MOA Hall of Fame in 1984 with the purpose of recognizing those individuals who have shown distinguished and dedicated service.

Section (1) NAME

This feature of the Montana Officials Association shall be titled the Montana Officials Association Hall of Fame.

Section (2) GOVERNANCE

The governance of the Montana Officials' Association Hall of Fame shall be embodied in the Montana Officials Association Regional Directors.

Section (3) SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

A. The MOA Hall of Fame Selection Committee shall have twelve (12) anonymous members as follows:

1. One (1) member from Montana High School Association Executive Staff.
2. One (1) member representing each of the Eleven (11) regions in the Montana Officials Association

B. Names of the Selection Committee individuals will be anonymous to the public.

C. Members of the Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Montana Officials Association Commissioner with approval from the Montana High School Association Executive Director.

D. Vacancies on the Selection Committee shall be filled by the Montana Officials Association Commissioner with approval from the Montana High School Association Executive Director.

E. All appointed members shall serve a four (4) year term. Members can be reappointed.

F. Committee membership shall begin July 1st.

Section (4) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MONTANA OFFICIALS' ASSOCIATION

The duties and responsibilities of the Montana Officials' Association office staff shall be:

A. To receive nominations of persons who shall be considered for election to the Officials' Hall of Fame.

B. To keep a current, accurate and complete accounting of the candidates for the Officials' Hall of Fame.

C. Prepare and send out all correspondence as required.

D. Tally committee ballots.

E. Prepare press releases of inductees.

F. Validate candidate information upon request to the selection committee.

Section (5) NOMINATIONS

A. Nominations for the MOA Hall of Fame may be made by:
1. Representatives of Montana Officials' Association
2. Members of the MOA Hall of Fame Committee.
3. The general public.

B. Nomination for the MOA Hall of Fame requirements and limitations:
1. Cover Letter
2. MOA Hall of Fame Nomination form – The form must be signed by the candidates Regional Director to be considered.
3. Photocopies (8 ½" x 11") of not more than six (6) of the following: newspaper clippings, magazine articles, event programs, or other such materials that detail information about the nominee's accomplishments (DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS). Please do not use notebooks with plastic sheet protectors or highlighters to point out specific facts; either underline or draw arrows to mark copy.
4. Letters - a minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation explaining why you think this individual is worthy of this honor. Please limit each letter to ONE typewritten page. Letters of recommendation for other awards or honors should not be used as a substitute for this requirement.

C. The selection of candidates will occur every year. Nomination forms are routed through the Regional Director and are due in the MOA office by April 1st of each year. Nominees remain in consideration for a period of five years. Any nomination received after the candidates' materials have been sent to the Selection Committee will be held until the next election. The timeline is as follows:

April 1st: Nominations are due at the MOA office.
April 20th: Nominations are forwarded to the Selection Committee.
May 15th: Selection Committee ballots are due to the MOA office.
June: Inductees are notified.
June: Winners are announced to the media.

D. The two categories of the Montana Officials' Association Hall of Fame are:
1. Modern era - a person who has experienced outstanding achievement as an official while registered in the Montana Official Association. A modern competitor is eligible for nomination a minimum of one year after his/her retirement.
2. Old timer - a person who has experienced outstanding achievement as an official while registered in the MOA. An old timer has over twenty-five (25) years of service with the MOA. At least one old timer will be inducted annually if the criteria are met.

The criteria for selection in both of these categories include:
a. LONGEVITY - Consideration is given for length of service as a member of the MOA and officiating service.
b. MULTIPLE SPORTS - Consideration is also given to those officials who have officiated multiple sports throughout their career.
c. PLAYOFF/TOURNAMENT/OFFICIATING - Consideration is given for the different levels of competition officiated, for example district, divisional, and state tournaments, along with football and soccer playoffs. This will include the number of tournaments officiated, with more consideration afforded for working at the higher levels of post season events.
d. HONORS - Consider Distinguished Service Awards, NFOA Awards, or any recognition the official has received as a result of his/her being involved in MOA.
e. PROFESSIONAL SERVICE - This could include serving in a leadership role of his/her local association/pool, a trainer of young officials, MOA Regional Director etc.

E. The Selection Committee shall consider all candidates sent to the individual committee members. Each committee member shall vote for a maximum of ten (10) candidates each year. At least one inductee must be from the "old timer" category if the criteria are met.

F. The Selection Committee will receive an updated packet of information for each candidate for each election. Files of inducted candidates can be discarded. Files of unsuccessful candidates will be retained by the MOA office to which new files will be added and distributed for each election. A candidate who has not been elected within five (5) ballots will be dropped from the list of eligible candidates and shall not have his/her name reconsidered unless re-nominated.

1984 INAUGURAL INDUCTEES

Edward "Barney" Berger ..... Lewistown
Lloyd "Bergy" Bergstrom ..... Billings
Ernest "Al" Blockey ..... Bozeman
Fred Brown ..... Billings
J. Robert "Bob" Chilton ..... Helena
Hubert "Buzz" Christiansen ..... Billings
Robert "Bob" Edwards ..... Billings
Ken Fowell ..... Great Falls
John "Johnnie" Good ..... Butte
C. E. "Mike" Henry ..... Lewistown
Frank "Bud" Holter ..... Miles City
Stan Krivec ..... Billings
George "Nig" McGrath ..... Butte
Toby Nelson ..... Polson
Henry Rae ..... Red Lodge
Paul Schmaltz ..... Billings
Carl Shogren ..... Billings
Paul "Casey" Stengel ..... Miles City
Pete J. Tuss ..... Lewistown
James Wedin ..... Ramsay
Glenn Welch ..... Butte
Walter Zimmerman ..... Billings

1985

Wilbur "Bunny" Augustine .... Great Falls
Ron Balzer ..... Worden
Chuck Bartell ..... Great Falls
Don Bettise ..... Billings
James Dellwo ..... Choteau
Jim Emmons ..... Deer Lodge
Jim Fleming ..... Billings
Dick Hansen ..... Worden
Bill Hodges ..... Great Falls
Clarence Hofmann ..... Worden
Johnny Jones ..... Billings
Joe McElwain ..... Butte
Bob Murray ..... Great Falls
Danny Price ..... Sidney
Nic Schneider ..... Billings
Ken "Skilly" Skillestad ..... Glendive
Pete Vavich ..... Bozeman
Hal Webb ..... Great Falls
Norm Zieske ..... Sidney

1986

Rex Dougherty ..... Sidney
Farrell "Cap" Griffin ..... Billings
Cliff Hagfeldt ..... Scobey
Leon "Jake" Jacobs ..... Lewistown
John Mora ..... Great Falls
Dick Muffick ..... Helena
Gene Pearson ..... Billings
Jim Stevens ..... Butte
Dean Turner ..... Billings
Bill Wallinder ..... Missoula
Roy Wood ..... Havre

1987

Webster "Webb" Briggs ..... Box Elder
Richard "Dick" Buehler ..... Billings
Eleanor Buzalsky ..... Bozeman
Tony Carlson ..... Great Falls
Dale Combs ..... Wise River
Floyd Dawson ..... Belt
Fred Daylis ..... Billings
Neil Eliason ..... Bozeman
Carl "Swede" Fahlgren ..... Malta
Henry Fiske ..... Helena
Walt Hantsman ..... Great Falls
Neil Hart ..... Kalispell
John Kosich ..... Billings
Dave Nebel ..... Great Falls
George "Bruin" O'Donnell ..... Billings
Donald L. Olson ..... Great Falls
John Shoquist ..... Great Falls
John "Jack" Toy ..... Great Falls

1988

Robert "Bob" Bedard ..... Missoula
Mike Cloud ..... Helena
Tony Dalich ..... Great Falls
Eli "Doc" Doyra ..... Great Falls
Leonard "Bud" Seelinger ..... Havre
Don Ward ..... Lewistown

1989

Doug Dierenfield ..... Billings
Don Richman ..... Harlem
Jim Simpson ..... Helena

1990

Bill O'Grady ..... Great Falls
Frank "Frog" Hull ..... Dillon
Joe Morstein ..... Dillon
Bill Redmond ..... Kalispell

1991

Doug Bussell ..... Shelby
Jim Kello ..... Butte
Dan Marinkovich ..... Anaconda

1992

Tom Campbell ..... Helena
Nels Christiansen ..... Billings
Floyd Creekmore ..... Billings
Bernard "Swede" Goodheart ..... Malta
Ron Hathaway ..... Miles City
Guy Miller ..... Belgrade

1993

Dennis Arndt ..... Great Falls
Jim Kuka ..... Havre
Fred McDermott ..... Helena
Gene McMahon ..... Helena
Bob Pike ..... Columbia Falls
Bill Wilkerson ..... Great Falls
Bob Wilson ..... Billings

1994

Jim Benn ..... Missoula
Darryl Dupuis ..... Polson
Marvin Kildahl ..... Great Falls
Frank McElwain ..... Missoula
Ron Nistler ..... Billings
Richard Smith ..... Kalispell
Oscar Wirtala ..... Billings

1995

Erwin Byrnes ..... Missoula
Phil Caldwell ..... Great Falls
Henry Hofeldt ..... Chinook

1996

Bob Sheridan ..... Missoula

1997

Mike Furlong ..... Helena
Jim McKenzie ..... Billings

1998

John Maloney ..... Helena
Dan Rust ..... Bozeman

1999

Jim Combo ..... Butte
Bob Frank ..... Sidney
Bill Hogart ..... Butte

2000

Gene Cook ..... Great Falls
Bob Dickson ..... Miles City
Gary Mihelish ..... Helena
Mark Shafer ..... Whitefish

2001

Gerry Butner ..... Sidney
Dick Schipporeit ..... Missoula

2002

Bob Lemelin ..... Anaconda
Bud Rausch ..... Billings

2003

Wayne Giese ..... Sidney
Jim Lodge ..... Missoula

2004

Kevin Bochy ..... Billings

2005

Don Peoples ..... Butte

2006

Chuck Brooks ..... Libby
Terry Sather ..... Havre

2007

Dick Huse ..... Missoula
Ken Leland ..... Great Falls

2008

Doug Ellingson ..... Miles City
Tom Taylor ..... Missoula

2009

Rob Brattain ..... Great Falls
Norm Girard ..... Glasgow
Jack Shields ..... Lewistown
Pete Waylett ..... Dillon

2010

Irvin Heitz ..... Whitefish
Alan Lear ..... Corvallis
David Zieske ..... Plentywood

2011

Rick Baird ..... Bigfork
Chuck Strand ..... Miles City

2012

Tom Lorang ..... Great Falls
Fred Salmonsen ..... Florence

2013
Gerry Bittner..... Billings

2014
Michael Anderson.....Bozeman
Ron Collins..... Butte
Marty Derrig ..... Billings
John Laney..... Miles City
Tony Laslovich .....Anaconda
Randy Morrison .....Belgrade

2015
Hal Karl .....Missoula
Mike Lynch..... Billings

2016
Dave Bennetts..... Butte
Doug Crum..... Libby
Keith Ori .....Kalispell

2017
Larry Holman..... Helena
Marvin Qualley .....Froid
Steve Weston.....Hamilton

2018
Cody Kuntz..... Pompey's Pillar

2019
Ron Hatcher…….Anaconda

2020
No Inductees

2021
Pat Sherman…..……Billings

2022
No Inductees

2023
Jim Foran……..……Hilger
Suzette Harkin…….……. …..Bozeman
Bryan Larson……... Missoula
Bob "Rollo" Rowling…….……Butte

2024
Mike Anderson……..……..…Butte
Dan Boucher……..……....Havre
Frank Costello …….. Billings
Cal Wirtzberger……...…….……Havre

2025
Ned Ellingwood…….Butte
Steve Johnson……Bozeman
Bryan Porch…….……Missoula
Bruce Shipp……Miles City

2026
Vinson Gundlach……Miles City
Donald MacIntyre……Helena
Tom Nansel……Colstrip

For more information on the MHSA/MOA visit the MHSA website at www.mhsa.org.

Dates and Sites

For 2026-2027 MHSA State Events

State AA Golf	October 1-2	Great Falls-Meadowlark Country Club
State A Golf	October 2-3	Shelby-Marias Valley Golf & Country Club
All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra	October 14-16	Bozeman
State Cross Country	October 24	Billings-Amend Park
State All-Class Volleyball	November 12-14	Bozeman-MSU Brick Breeden Fieldhouse
State AA Speech	January 29-30	Great Falls
State A Speech and Drama	January 29-30	East Helena
State B-C Speech and Drama	January 29-30	Choteau
State Swim Meet	February 11-13	Great Falls
State All-Class Wrestling (boys & girls-same site)	February 18-20	Billings-MetraPark
State AA Basketball (boys & girls-same site)	March 11-13	Bozeman-MSU
State A Basketball (boys & girls-same site)	March 11-13	Missoula-UM
State B Basketball (boys & girls-same site)	March 10-13	Butte-Butte Civic Center
State C Basketball (boys & girls-same site)	March 10-13	Billings-MetraPark
State Solo and Ensemble (East)	April 30-May 1	Billings
State Solo and Ensemble (West)	April 30-May 1	TBD
State B Golf	May 21-22	Hamilton-Hamilton Golf Club
State C Golf	May 18-19	Laurel-Laurel Golf Club
State AA Baseball	May 27-29	Billings-Pirtz Field
State AB Baseball	May 27-29	TBD
State AA Tennis	May 27-28	Kalispell-FVCC
State A Tennis	May 27-29	Hardin
State B-C Tennis	May 27-29	Missoula
State AA Softball	May 27-29	Butte-Stodden Park
State A Softball	May 27-29	Polson
State B-C Softball	May 27-29	Glasgow
State AA-C Track & Field Meet	May 28-29	Kalispell-Legends Stadium
State A-B Track & Field Meet	May 28-29	Laurel-Laurel Sports Complex

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MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
CALENDAR FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES
2026 – 2027

Three Season Calendar

August 13	First Date for Practice in Golf – Classes AA and A
August 14	First Date for Practice in Football, Cross Country, Volleyball, Soccer and Spirit – All Classes
August 15	First Date for Golf Competition – Classes AA and A (if required practices are held)
August 27	First Date for Competition in Football, Cross Country, Volleyball and Soccer - All Classes (if required practices are held)
September 1	Deadline for Registration for Speech and Drama
September 7	Labor Day
September 21-26	Divisional Golf Tournaments – Classes AA and A
Sept 28- Oct. 3	State Golf Tournaments – Classes AA and A
October 1	First Date for Interscholastic Speech and Drama Meets
October 12-17	First Round Soccer Playoffs – Class A
October 14-16	All-State Band, Orchestra and Chorus Festival (subject to confirmation)
October 14-16	MCEL Convention (subject to confirmation)
October 15-16	Teachers Convention (subject to confirmation)
October 20	First Round Soccer Playoffs – Class AA
October 23-24	Semi-final Soccer Playoffs – Class A
October 24	Quarter-final Soccer Playoffs – Class AA
October 24	State Cross Country Meet
October 27	Semi-final Soccer Playoffs – Class AA
October 26-31	District Volleyball Tournaments – Classes B and C
October 30-31	State Championship Soccer Games – Class A
October 30-31	First Round Football Playoffs - Classes AA, A, B, 8-Player and 6-Player
October 31	State Championship Soccer Games – Class AA
November 2-7	Divisional Volleyball Tournaments – All Classes
November 6-7	Quarter Final Football Playoffs – Classes AA, A, B, 8-Player and 6-Player
November 12-14	State Volleyball Tournaments – All Classes
November 13-14	Semi-final Football Playoffs – Class AA
November 14	Semi-final Football Playoffs – Classes A, B, 8-Player and 6-Player
November 19	First Date for Practice in Basketball, Swimming and Wrestling – All Classes
November 20-21	State Championship Football Game – Classes AA, A, B
November 21	State Championship Football Games – Classes 8-Player and 6-Player
November 26	Thanksgiving
December 3	First Date for Competition in Basketball, Swimming and Wrestling – All Classes (if required practices are held)
January 18	MHSA Annual Meeting
January 22-23	Divisional Speech and Drama Meets – Classes A and B-C
January 29-30	State Speech and Drama Meets – All Classes
February 11-13	State Swim Meet
February 12-13	Seeding/Divisional Wrestling Tournaments – All Classes
February 18-20	State Boys' and Girls' Wrestling Tournaments – All Classes

Post Season BB	Class C	Class B	Class A	Class AA
February 15-20 -----	Combined District			
February 22-27 -----	Combined Divisional (NC, WC)	Combined District	Combined Divisional (EA)	
March 1-6 ----------	Combined Divisional (EC, SC)	Combined Divisional	Combined Divisional (WA)	Playoffs
March 10-13 ---------	Girls' & Boys' State (10-13)	Girls' & Boys' State (10-13)	Girls' & Boys' State (11-13)	Girls' & Boys' State (11-13)

March 15	First Date for Practice in Baseball, Softball, Track & Field, and Tennis – All Classes
March 15	First Date for Practice in Golf – Classes B and C
March 17	First Date for Competition in Golf – Classes B and C (if required practices are held)
March 23	District Music Festival – 9 [large groups] (subject to change)
March 25	First Date for Competition in Baseball, Softball, Track & Field, and Tennis - All Classes (if required practices are held)
March 28	Easter
April 6	District Music Festival – 9 [solos and ensembles] (subject to change)
April 8-10	District Music Festival – 5 (subject to change)
April 9-10	District Music Festivals – 6, 7, 10, 12 (subject to change)
April 16-17	District Music Festivals – 1, 2, 4, 8, 11 (subject to change)
April 30-May 1	State Solo and Ensemble Festivals
May 1	Last Date to Request New Activity Assignment
May 10-15	Divisional Golf Tournament – Class B
May 10-15	District Track & Field Meets – Classes B and C
May 17-22	State Golf Tournament – Class B
May 17-22	Divisional Softball Tournaments – Classes A and B-C
May 17-22	Divisional Track & Field Meets – All Classes
May 17-22	Divisional Tennis Tournaments – All Classes
May 17-22	Divisional Golf Tournament – Class C
May 24-29	State Golf Tournament – Class C
May 27-29	State Baseball Tournaments – All Classes
May 27-29	State Tennis Tournaments – All Classes
May 27-29	State Softball Tournaments – All Classes
May 28-29	State Track & Field Meets – All Classes (AA-C) (A-B)

WHEREVER YOU PLAY.
MHSA IS ON YOUR TEAM

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