



MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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

TO: MHSAA MEMBER SCHOOLS

FROM: BRIAN MICHELOTTI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Enclosed you will find a copy of the MHSAA Executive Board philosophy concerning cooperative programs and a set of application documents.

The MHSAA Board and Staff would like to outline some of the possible problem areas that should be considered before entering into a cooperative program:

1. Participation by your students. If you already have a program, are students from another school going to replace students from your community and thus deny sons and daughters of your local taxpayers an opportunity to take part in that activity?
2. Who will pay for the cost of equipment and the travel for the activity trips?
3. How will the gate receipts be handled?
4. Who is responsible for the cost of travel to and from practice sessions?
5. Are your local eligibility rules the same for all students in all schools in the agreement?
6. Can schedules for practice sessions and games be coordinated to eliminate class schedule conflicts in the different schools?
7. How is selection of cheerleaders made?
8. Are activity tickets honored from all cooperative schools at cooperative events?
9. Are your training rules the same?
10. Are academic standards the same?
11. How will insurance coverage be financed, etc.?
12. How will physical exams be handled?
13. How is coaching staff hired and how is staff paid?
14. How will activity tickets and other passes be determined?
15. Who selects and pays for officials?
16. Do the affected schools have booster clubs? How will booster funds be applied to co-operatively sponsored programs?

Important Item: The activity dues for a cooperative sport will not be waived. If no students participate in that activity in a particular year, a request for refund may be made by contacting the MHSAA office in writing. Refund requests must be made no later than the first allowable date for competition in that sport/activity. Continued requests for refunds will be reviewed by the Executive Director.



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Cooperative sponsorship of any activity by member schools will be considered under the following conditions:

1. Schools are to be located in the same geographical area.
2. All member schools of the MHSA will be eligible to participate in the cooperative sponsorship program.
3. The participating member schools must jointly make the application to the MHSA Executive Director.
4. A resolution from each school board stating the purpose for sponsoring a joint team or activity must be submitted to the MHSA office.
5. Any cooperative request that is denied can be appealed to the MHSA Executive Board.

PHILOSOPHY

1. The philosophy that will guide the MHSA Executive Director in reviewing and approving applications for Cooperative Sponsorship of Activities is as follows:
 - a. The Executive Director will attempt to increase the number of students that are participating in activities by making activities available for students that would not be available in their school if joint sponsorship did not occur.
 - b. The Executive Director would prefer to see projects that combine smaller schools for sponsorship of an activity rather than a small school combining with a larger school when the smaller school cannot support the activity alone.
 - c. Improving the quality of a team (i.e. better win-loss record) will not be a valid criterion for deciding whether approval should be granted.
2. Cooperative sponsorship agreements shall be continuous unless an application for dissolution is submitted to the MHSA and is approved by the Executive Board. However, the MHSA may terminate said agreement based upon valid reason as determined by the MHSA to become effective at the conclusion of a school year. The following conditions could lead to termination:
 - a. Closing of one of the schools.
 - b. A valid complaint from surrounding schools concerning recruiting.
 - c. Complaints from parents, boards of education, students in cooperating schools, etc.
 - d. Changes in enrollments and/or participation numbers.
 - e. Other valid reasons as determined by the Executive Director.
3. Football cooperative sponsorships will be reviewed on the same cycle as football reclassification (2-year cycle). Enrollment and participation data may be requested by the MHSA office to determine if a cooperative sponsorship will be dissolved or reclassified.
4. Schools in the cooperative sponsorship will be allowed to have an official name recognized by the MHSA that is different than the combination of school names.
5. Applications for approval and dissolution must be submitted to the MHSA Executive Director by February 1st for the following year.



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APPLICATION FOR COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIP

This single form is to be used by all schools involved in this cooperative sponsorship application. This application will be accepted and reviewed by the Executive Director only upon all schools entering the required information. Each school must provide official signatures. **Separate applications must be used for gender specific sports (i.e. boys' track and field, girls' golf, etc.). Fine arts activities are not gender specific.**

1. Date of Application: _____
2. Activity covered by this application: _____
3. List official co-op name: _____ Mascot or Nickname: _____
4. If approved, this co-op would begin in school year: _____
5. Classification in which the cooperative sponsorship would compete: _____
6. Name of schools involved in this application. **Host school must be listed first.**

Enrollment per grade for the current year:

1. _____	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
2. _____	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
3. _____	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
4. _____	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____

6. Fill in the **current** participation numbers per grade for each school involved. Indicate if you did not sponsor (DNS) this activity in the current year. Boys' and girls' data may be combined for the fine arts only.

School #1:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____	DNS _____
School #2:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____	DNS _____
School #3:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____	DNS _____
School #4:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____	DNS _____

7. Fill in **next year's** projected participation numbers per grade for each school involved. Boys' and girls' data may be combined for the fine arts only.

School #1:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
School #2:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
School #3:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
School #4:	7 _____	8 _____	9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____

8. In the space provided, please list the reasons for requesting this co-op application.
9. Is this the nearest opportunity for schools to co-op? Circle one: YES NO
If NO, please indicate why closer school(s) are not included in this application.
10. Where will practices be held?__
11. Where will competitions be held?
12. Other information that may assist the Executive Director in making a decision on this application:

Required Signatures of Approval:

School #1:	_____	Superintendent	Date: _____
	_____	Board Chair	Date: _____
School #2:	_____	Superintendent	Date: _____
	_____	Board Chair	Date: _____
School #3:	_____	Superintendent	Date: _____
	_____	Board Chair	Date: _____
School #4:	_____	Superintendent	Date: _____
	_____	Board Chair	Date: _____

For MHSA Office Use Only:

Official Action of the Montana High School Association

The above request for Cooperative Sponsorship is approved / denied.
The co-op is placed in the _____ classification.

By: _____ Date: _____
MHSA Executive Director