MONTANA
AA
CONFERENCE



Western Division	Eastern Division
Butte High School	Belgrade High School
Helena Capital	Billings Senior
Helena High	Billings Skyview
Kalispell, Flathead High	Billings West
Kalispell, Glacier High	Bozeman High School
Missoula Big Sky	Gallatin High School
Missoula Hellgate	Great Falls, C.M. Russell
Missoula Sentinel	Great Falls High

8/13/2026

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AA ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE HISTORY

YEAR	PRESIDENT	SCHOOL	CITY
1971-74	Joseph Roberts	Sentinel High	Missoula
1974-79	Ray Collins	Billings Senior High	Billings
1979-81	William Swarthout	Great Falls High	Great Falls
1981-82	Bob Briney	Butte High	Butte
1982-84	William Vogt	Flathead High	Kalispell
1984-86	Don Harbaugh	Hellgate High	Missoula
1986-89	Dan Peters	Butte High	Butte
1989-91	Darlene Smith	Big Sky High	Missoula
1991-93	R. Lee Kenney	Helena High	Helena
1993-95	Bruce Zinne	Sentinel High	Missoula
1995-97	Gary Davis	Great Falls High	Great Falls
1997-2001	Dave Irion	Billings West High	Billings
2001-2004	Bob Whalen	Skyview High	Billings
2004-2006	Paul Johnson	Big Sky High	Missoula
2006-2008	Dick Kloppel	CM Russell High	Great Falls
2008-2010	Greg Upham	Helena High	Helena
2010-2016	Peter Fusaro	Flathead High	Kalispell
2016-2018	David Cobb	Billings West High	Billings
2018-2020	Kerry Parsons	CM Russell High	Great Falls
2020-2022	Michele Paine	Flathead High	Kalispell
2022-present	Dan Mills	Bozeman High School	Bozeman

YEAR	SECRETARY	SCHOOL	CITY
1974-79	Don Harbaugh	Sentinel High	Missoula
1979-81	Don Peterson	CM Russell High	Great Falls
1981-82	William Vogt	Flathead High	Kalispell
1982-84	Darlene Smith	Big Sky High	Missoula
1984-86	Darlene Smith	Big Sky High	Missoula
1986-89	Darlene Smith	Big Sky High	Missoula
1989-91	Ron Nistler	Billings West High	Billings
1991-93	H. Ed Plass	CM Russell High	Great Falls
1993-95	H. Ed Plass	CM Russell High	Great Falls
1995-97	David Irion	Billings West High	Billings
1997-2001	Bob Whalen	Skyview High	Billings
2001-2004	Dennis Sulser	Billings West High	Billings
2004-2006	Jane Bennett	Hellgate High	Missoula
2006-2008	Fred Anderson	Great Falls High	Great Falls
2008-2010	Randy Carlson	Capital High	Helena
2010-2016	Callie Langohr	Glacier High	Kalispell
2016-2018	Deb Black	Skyview High	Billings
2018-2020	Geff Habel	Great Falls High	Great Falls
2020-2022	Ryan Rettig	Sentinel High	Missoula
2022-present	Erica Schnee	Gallatin High	Bozeman

MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE HISTORY

YEAR	MHSA REP	SCHOOL	CITY
1969-73	James Bergene	CM Russell High	Great Falls
1973-77	Willard Wallace	Billings West High	Billings
1977-81	Donald Driscoll	Have High	Havre
1981-85	Richard Correll	Sentinel High	Missoula
1985-89	William Vogt	Flathead High	Kalispell
1989-93	Dwight Moose	Helena High	Helena
1993-97	Leo Wohler	Skyview High	Billings
1997-99	Gary Davis	Great Falls High	Great Falls
1999-2001	Ken Stuker	Helena High	Helena
2001-2003	Paul Johnson	Big Sky High	Missoula
2004-2005	Glen Johnson	Butte High	Butte
2005-2009	Fred Anderson	Great Falls High	Great Falls
2009-2013	Dennis Holmes	Billings Senior High	Billings
2013-2017	Peter Fusaro	Flathead High	Kalispell
2017-2020	Dave Cobb	Billings West High	Billings
2020-2024	Steve Thennis	Helena High	Helena
2024-Present	Dan Mills	Bozeman High	Bozeman

PHILOSOPHY 1000 - STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The function of a school is to encourage in students a love of learning and a desire for high scholastic standards in all areas. To accomplish this, the school provides educational experience in many ways, one being through the school activities program.

We believe the purpose served by school activities programs are not separate and apart from the general purpose of secondary education, but an important avenue the school uses in fulfilling objectives not met by regular classroom instruction.

We realize activities programs will differ from school to school in terms of: a) the extensiveness of the program; b) the degree to which students are in a position to give direction to the program; and c) the proportion of the student body who participate in whatever activities are provided. We also must recognize that each student is different in terms of abilities, interest, and goals. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the school to provide as many and varied activities as possible for its students.

We believe that voluntary participation of students in the activities should be encouraged in order that a large percentage of students may benefit from the experiences, and that these experiences should contribute to such broad purposes as self-realization, human relationship, and civic responsibility.

We believe the activities program should be designed to provide experiences that will help meet the leisure, recreational, social, and emotional interests of all students and planned in such a way as to provide the opportunity for individual, small groups, and entire school participation.

We must always be cognizant of the fact that activities programs exist to serve the student, and to protect the students at all times from being exploited for the benefit of the school or community.

ADOPTED: December 28, 1998
By AA Conference
Supts., Prin., & A.D.

1006 - ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF ETHICS FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

THE PRINCIPAL BELIEVES –

In the dignity of his/her profession, in the value of his/her position as an educational leader. In the school activity program as an integral part of the total education program. In the honesty and integrity in supervising the school activity program. In moral and spiritual values as fundamental to all phases of education.

THE PRINCIPAL MAINTAINS -

A moral and intellectual integrity inherent in his/her profession. A standard of conduct that is exemplary. A firm belief in youth as the hope of the future. A courteous and cooperative attitude in his/her relations with others. A public trust between the school and community.

THE PRINCIPAL'S CREED –

I believe in children and youth as the hope for the future, that my job is to help them in the pursuit of knowledge and skills that will help to prepare them to become happy, useful, self-supporting citizens.

I believe in democracy as the most desirable way of life and will strive to help youth practice democracy at school, in the home and in all social contracts by my example in dealing with students, teachers, and parents on a day to day basis.

I believe a principal should be loyal to the school system, the state, and the nation but must exercise his/her right to criticize constructively when the need arises.

I believe a principal should show that education makes people not only better citizens but better neighbors.

I believe a principal's personal conduct should not offend the accepted pattern of behavior of the community in which he/she serves.

1020 - AA CONFERENCE OFFICERS

President	2022 – Present	Dan Mills	Bozeman High
Secretary/Treasurer	2022 – Present	Erica Schnee	Gallatin High

Western Division		Eastern Division	
Big Sky High School		**Belgrade High School**	
3100 South Ave West, Missoula, MT 59801		303 N Hoffman, Belgrade, MT 59714	
Phone: 728-2401	Fax: 549-4616	Phone: 388-6862	Fax: 388-4633
Prin: Scott Gragg	Ext: 8026	Prin: Shanna Smith	924-2545
AD: Jack Young	Ext: 8025	AD: Scott Palmer	924-2554
Butte High School		**Billings Senior High School**	
401 S Wyoming, Butte, MT 59701		425 Grand Ave, Billings, MT 59101	
Phone: 533-2200	Fax: 533-2227	Phone: 281-5400	Fax: 281-6174
Prin: Melissa Johnson	533-2220	Prin: Shelli Strouf	281-5417
AD: Travis Johnson	533-2215	AD: Mark Sulser	281-5072
Capital High School		**Skyview High School**	
100 Valley Dr, Helena, MT 59601		1775 High Sierra Blvd, Billings, MT 59105	
Phone: 324-2501	Fax: 447-8563	Phone: 728-2401	Fax: 549-4616
Prin: Cal Boyle	324-2500	Prin: Jay Wahl	281-5294
AD: Eric Peterson	465-2290	AD: Mark Sulser	281-5072
Flathead High School		**Billings West High School**	
644 4th Ave West, Kalispell, MT 59901		2201 St John's Ave, Billings, MT 59102	
Phone: 751-3500	Fax: 751-3605	Phone: 281-5600	Fax: 655-3100
Prin: Michele Paine	751-3550	Prin: Jeremy Carlson	281-5602
AD: Matt Allison	751-3477	AD: Mark Sulser	281-5072
Glacier High School		**Bozeman High School**	
375 Wolfpack Way, Kalispell, MT 59901		205 North 11th, Bozeman, MT 59715	
Phone: 758-8600	Fax: 758-8602	Phone: 522-6200	Fax: 522-6222
Prin: Brad Holloway	758-8613	Prin: Dan Mills	522-6200
AD: Abby Snipes	758-8620	AD: James Maxwell	522-6237
Helena High School		**CM Russell High School**	
1300 Billings Ave, Helena, MT 59601		228 17th Ave NW, Great Falls, MT 59404	
Phone: 324-2200	Fax: 324-2201	Phone: 268-6100	Fax: 268-6109
Prin: Brian Kessler	324-2200	Prin: Jamie McGraw	268-6241
AD: Eric Peterson	465-2290	AD: Mike Henneberg	268-6082
Hellgate High School		**Gallatin High School**	
925 Gerald Ave, Missoula, MT 59801		4455 Annie St, Bozeman, MT 59718	
Phone: 728-2402	Fax: 728-2496	Phone: 522-4603	Fax:
Prin: Judson Miller	Ext: 6042	Prin: Erica Schnee	522-4600
AD: Nick Laatsch	Ext: 6080	AD: Mark Ator	522-6237
Sentinel High School		**Great Falls High School**	
901 South Ave W, Missoula, MT 59801		1900 2nd Ave S, Great Falls, MT 59405	
Phone: 728-2403	Fax: 329-5959	Phone: 268-6001	Fax: 268-6256
Prin: Stephanie Thennis	Ext: 7032	Prin: Geff Habel	268-6313
AD: Josh Jannusch	Ext: 7057	AD: Mike Henneberg	268-6082

MONTANA CLASS AA ADVISORY COMMITTEES

		PRINCIPAL	SCHOOL	AD	SCHOOL	COACH	SCHOOL
1000	ACADEMICS	Jay Wahl	Skyview	Geff Habel (Principal)	GF High	Scott Gragg (Principal)	Msla Big Sky
1100	BOYS & GIRLS BASKETBALL	Jamie McGraw	CMR	Eric Peterson	Helena Schools	Mark Harkins	Flathead
1300	BOYS & GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY	Cal Boyle	Capital	Jack Young	Big Sky High School	Jesse Rumsey	Flathead
1500	FOOTBALL	Jeremy Carlson	Blgs West	Mike Henneberg	Great Falls Schools	Kyle Mihelish	Capital
1600	BOYS & GIRLS GOLF	Jay Wahl	Skyview	Nick Laatsch	Hellgate	Jonathan Kelly	Blgs Senior
1800	BOYS & GIRLS SOCCER	Brian Kessler	Helena	Josh Jannusch	Sentinel	Carl Straub	Helena High
2000	BOYS & GIRLS SWIMMING	Geff Habel	GF High	Mike Henneberg	GF High	Ed McNamee	GF High
2200	BOYS & GIRLS TENNIS	Judson Miller	Hellgate	Scott Palmer	Belgrade	Josh Munro	Glacier
2400	BOYS & GIRLS TRACK	Scott Gragg	Big Sky	Travis Johnson	Butte	Brandon Quesenberry	Blgs Senior
2600	WRESTLING	Shelli Strouf	Blgs Senior	Mark Sulser	Billings	Nate Laslovich	Gallatin High
2800	GIRLS VOLLEYBALL	Brad Holloway	Glacier	Mark Ator	Bozeman	Lindsey Day	Helena High
2900	GIRLS SOFTBALL	Michele Paine	Flathead	Abby Snipes	Glacier High	Mike Falcon	Skyview
3000	MUSIC	Josh Jannusch	Sentinel	Dusty Mollino	Great Falls	Amy Schendel	Billings
4000	FORENSICS	Dan Mills	Bozeman	James Maxwell	Bozeman	Shannon O'Donnell	Flathead
	Baseball	Jeremy Carlson	Blgs West	Matt Allison	Flathead High		

For each Advisory Committee, the principal is to serve as chairman. In the case of absence of the chairman, that principal shall designate another principal to fulfill the responsibility. The activities director will organize coaches' meetings, develop seeding placements, and game times for playoffs for the various activities they are listed. If a coach, AD, or principal has concerns or questions seeding; the appeals committee will be used to determine the outcome.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES - AA ADs

- AA Cup Standings – Belgrade AD – Scott Palmer
- AA Conference Handbook Updates – Helena AD – Nick Laatsch
- AA Conference Meeting Arrangements
  - September Meeting in Helena – Helena AD – Eric Peterson
  - November – December Meeting in Helena – Helena AD – Eric Peterson
  - January Meeting at MHSA Annual Meeting – AA Conference President – Mike Henneberg
  - March Meeting at State Basketball – Host AD
  - June Meeting – Host AD/AA Conference President
- Head Coaches Meeting Schedules/Agendas – AD in charge of that Activity

ATTENDANCE AT AA CONFERENCE AD MEETINGS

All schools are required to have representation at all 5 of the State AA AD meetings scheduled throughout each year. If the AD can't be present, a representative must be in attendance.

AA CONFERENCE HANDBOOK UPDATING & LANGUAAGE GUIDELINES

The AD in charge of an activity is responsible to check the Conference Guidelines of that activity to make sure all proposed changes are added and that all language is correct. The AD in charge of each activity will submit all updates to the AD in charge of updating the Handbook as soon as possible following each meeting. An updated AA Conference Handbook will be ready by the start of the first day of Fall practices each year.

APPEALS COMMITTEE

The five-person committee will be the appeals committee if a school does not agree how the tie breaking criteria was used/interpreted in determining seeds or other major issues within activities that cannot be agreed upon. If a school wishes to appeal, they must notify the Conference President or President of the ADs by no later than 24 hours after seeds have been determined. Other issues that cannot be solved by AD s will go to the Appeals Committee as well.

Committee Membership (as of July 2021)		
Name	**Position**	**School**
Mark Ator – Chair of Committee	AD	Bozeman Schools
Geff Habel	Principal	Great Falls High
Judson Miller	Principal	Missoula Hellgate
Mark Sulser	AD	Billings Schools
Travis Johnson	AD	Butte High School

If a member leaves the committee, the next city and position (AD or principal) would be replaced by a city not represented on the committee and in alphabetical order of the city being replaced. For instance, Toby Robinson replaced Dane Oliver because he is the AD from the next city in alphabetical order listed below for ADs and because no other principal or AD representative already on the committee is from Belgrade. Another example: If Chuck Merrifield, AD at Butte, were to leave the committee, the AD from Great Falls would be next in line. However, because a principal from Great Falls is already on the committee, it would go to the next AD in line from a city not already represented on the committee. A principal example: If the principal from Helena High left the committee, the principal from Kalispell Flathead would fill the committee as per the alphabetical order listed below for principals and because no other principal or AD from Kalispell is already on the committee. If a member of the committee is from Kalispell, we would move to the first Missoula School looking for a

replacement again where no community has more than one member on the appeals committee. We will always rotate through the Conference so that there is only one principal or AD representative from a city.

Athletic Director	Principal
Belgrade	Belgrade
Billings	Billings Senior
Bozeman	Billings Skyview
Butte	Billings West
Great Falls	Bozeman, Gallatin
Helena	Bozeman High
Kalispell, Flathead	Butte
Kalispell, Glacier	Great Falls, CMR
Missoula Big Sky	Great Falls High
Missoula Hellgate	Helena Capital
Missoula Sentinel	Helena High
	Kalispell, Flathead
	Kalispell, Glacier
	Missoula Big Sky
	Missoula Hellgate
	Missoula Sentinel

AA ADs SERVING AS PRESIDENT - ROTATION

ADs will serve as president of the AA ADs committee on a rotational basis under the terms as listed below:

- Each AD will serve a four-year term.
- Duties for President will include setting the dates for AA AD meetings, writing the agenda for each meeting, chairing all meetings, updating the AA Conference Handbook, keeping track of the AA Cup standings, communicating State AA information with the media, and coordinating with the President of the AA Principals.
- If an AD's turn in the rotation comes up prior to that person having more than 3 years' experience, the rotation will move to the next city in the rotation.
- Cities that have more than 1 AD can determine which school will serve when it's their time.
- Rotation will be set as listed:
    - Butte
    - Great Falls
    - Helena
    - Kalispell
    - Missoula
    - Belgrade
    - Billings
    - Bozeman
- AD 2023 – Present - Mike Henneberg - Great Falls Public Schools

OBJECTIVES FOR PRINCIPALS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ACTIVITIES

1. To encourage participation in extra-curricular activities.
2. To help students recognize their relationships and responsibilities to community, school and activities.
3. To provide a physically safe and healthy setting for students participating in all activities.

4. To promote an appreciation for the total school program, including both academics and activities.
5. To promote high self-esteem and respect for the dignity and worth of all participants.
6. To promote respect for all competitors and an appreciation of different ethnic, social and economic backgrounds.
7. To recognize varying abilities and to provide opportunities challenging those abilities.
8. To promote positive relationships among individual competitors, teams, coaches, administrators, and MOA officials.
9. To provide equality of opportunity regardless of sex, race or creed.
10. To seek the support of the total community for the activity/education program.
11. To help develop reasoned, responsible judgments by student athletes.
12. To teach life skills.
13. To encourage a positive attitude toward learning and growing.
14. To develop appropriate communication skills.

CONSTITUTION CLASS AA CONFERENCE

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the **MONTANA AA HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE**

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to coordinate and improve the inter-school programs of its member schools by establishing a cohesive organization to direct interscholastic activities; and solve mutual problems.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Membership shall consist of the schools assigned by the Montana High School Association to the AA Classification.
SECTION 2. The schools so authorized are:

Belgrade	Gallatin
Billings Senior	Glacier
Billings Skyview	Great Falls High
Billings West	Helena Capital
Bozeman	Helena High
Butte	Missoula Big Sky
CM Russell	Missoula Hellgate
Flathead	Missoula Sentinel

SECTION 3. A school shall be accepted as an active member of the AA Conference provided it has paid its current conference dues (and assessments), and is a member in good standing of the Montana High School Association, and agrees to abide by the provisions of this Constitution and By-Laws.
SECTION 4. Any member school shall be suspended from this conference if:

A. It is in violation of Section 3 (above); or
B. It is suspended by the Montana High School Association.

SECTION 5. A suspended member school may be reinstated on the basis of its original entry.

ARTICLE 4 - ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1. The officers of this organization shall consist of a president and a secretary/treasurer.
SECTION 2. All officers shall be elected for a term of two years. Election shall be by majority vote at the Fall Meeting.

ARTICLE 5 - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. President. (1) The president will preside over all conference meetings; establish agenda for conference meetings and distribute to membership; and appoint members of all committees. The president will be the official representative of the AA Conference.
SECTION 2. Secretary-Treasurer. The secretary-treasurer will keep and distribute to membership official minutes of all meetings; is responsible for accounting for income and expenditure of the conference; submit an annual financial report of the conference to the membership; shall issue passes to member school administrative and coaching personnel for all conference spectator activities. This is not to include tournaments and championships covered under Montana High School Association policies.

ARTICLE 6 - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. The officers of the organization shall constitute the executive committee of this organization.
SECTION 2. The executive committee shall conduct such conference business as may be necessary between regular or special conference meetings; or such business as may be delegated to it by a conference meeting.

ARTICLE 7 - MEETINGS

SECTION 1. The meetings shall be held in September and June. All principals are expected to attend the annual MHSA Meeting held in January. September meetings will be held in Helena, the MHSA will determine the Annual meeting location and the June meeting will be on a rotational basis.

Great Falls	2025
Kalispell	2026
Missoula	2027
Billings	2028
Bozeman	2029
Belgrade	2030
Butte	2031

SECTION 2. Each member school shall be entitled to one vote (if present). The principal of the school, or such person as he/she may designate in writing, shall cast the school's vote. No person will represent more than one school.
SECTION 3. Quorum. 50% + 1 (8), or more of the number of member schools shall constitute a quorum, and conduct official business of the conference.
SECTION 4. Agendas. Meeting agendas will be developed by the president. These will include sections of: items for action; items for discussion, and reports.
SECTION 5. Action. Items for the agenda must be submitted to the president in writing for distribution to membership at least thirty days (30) prior to the meeting where actions will be taken.

ARTICLE 8 - CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

SECTION 1. The conference shall prepare and develop guidelines for the uniform administration of each conference activity. Guidelines may be amended by a majority (9) vote of the membership.
SECTION 2. Guidelines shall be developed to facilitate the conduct and operation of the conference activities:

Academic	Golf	Swimming
Baseball	Music	Tennis
Basketball	Soccer	Track
Cross Country	Softball/Baseball	Volleyball
Football	Speech & Debate	Wrestling

ARTICLE 9 - DUES AND ASSESSMENT

SECTION 1. Principal Dues: Annual dues shall be $100.00 payable on or before November 1st of each school year. Athletic Director Dues: Annual dues shall be $200.00 payable on or before September 1st of each school year.
SECTION 2. Assessments: Principal and Athletic Director Assessments may be voted by the conference at a regular meeting to carry out the work of this association. Such assessments, when voted, must be made equally on all member schools.

ARTICLE 10 - AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1. This constitution shall be amended only upon at least a two-thirds (2/3) (11) favorable vote of the membership at a regular conference meeting; providing however, that each member school received at least 30 days prior notice in writing.

ARTICLE 11 - PROCEDURE FOR CHANGING CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

SECTION 1. The following is the procedure for changes in the AA Conference Guidelines:

1. A written proposal presented to ADs at one of their regularly scheduled meetings with a copy sent to each AA principal.
2. Written proposal/proposals will be given to principals and coaches to be discussed at each AA school.
3. It is the responsibility of the athletic directors and principals to ascertain if any amendments to said proposal/proposals are going to be proposed before the next scheduled AD meeting. Copies of proposed amendments will be sent to each AD and AA principal.
4. ADs will vote on proposal/proposals at the next scheduled meeting.
5. Copies of voted proposal/proposals will be sent to each AA principal.
6. If passed by AD's, the proposal/proposals will be presented at the next scheduled AA principals meeting and voted on. If passed, appropriate action will follow, i.e., sent to MHSA or placed in AA handbook.

ARTICLE 12 - ANNUAL HEAD COACHES MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Each year the AA Boys and Girls head coaches will meet with their respective sport coaches in Helena on the 2nd Monday following their state competition. Unless otherwise approved by the AD's this meeting will be a **one-day** meeting. Listed below are the requirements for this meeting:

1. AA Coaches will select one of their fellow coaches to be the sport president.
2. Sport president will work with the AA AD sport representative to set the date, time and agenda for this meeting.
3. All proposals will be well thought out and vetted. Only written proposals as approved by the majority of the coaches, will be considered. For a proposal to be considered by the AD's two thirds of all head coaches for that sport must be in attendance and vote on the proposal prior for it to pass from the coaches meeting to the AD's
4. All written proposals must be submitted to the AD's immediately following this meeting. AD's will consider these proposals at their next meeting and will respond with a pass, fail, or "more to be considered".
5. Coaches will be given appropriate leave from school. Travel expenses to and from the meeting will be paid by your school.
6. During this meeting, All-State and All-Conference selections will take place. The AA Coaches will be responsible for submitting to the AD's a written document that explains the process and the

criteria they will use to make their selections. This should be a well thought out process in which coaches carefully follow the process and selection criteria. Each sport is allowed to have their own individual process but that process must be approved by the AD's. Selections will be submitted to the AD's immediately following the meeting.

7. Coaches will be expected to attend any pre-tournament meetings as set by the MHSA.
8. Listed below are the preliminary dates set for 2026-2027 State AA Head Coaches Meetings. The coaches can change meeting dates and locations upon agreement between the AD representative of that sport and the other head coaches of that sport. Online meetings are allowed.

Sport	Date	Location
Golf	Thursday, October 1, 2026	State Tournament
Cross Country	Friday, October 23, 2026	State Meet
Soccer	November 3, 2026	Helena
Volleyball	Tuesday, November 17, 2026	Helena
Football	Monday, November 30, 2026	Helena
Swimming	Thursday, February 11, 2026	State Meet
Wrestling	Tuesday, February 23, 2026	Helena
Basketball	Tuesday, March 16, 2026	Helena
Softball	Tuesday, June 1, 2026	Helena
Tennis	Tuesday, June 1, 2026	Helena
Track & Field	Tuesday, June 1, 2026	Helena

ARTICLE 13 - INDIVIDUAL SPORT DIVISIONAL MEET & TEAM SPORTS ADVANCEMENT TO STATE LEVEL CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY

Divisional Track Meet Rotation		
Year	**East Host**	**West Host**
2024-2025	Great Falls	Butte
2025-2026	Billings	Missoula
2026-2027	Undecided	Helena
2027-2028	Billings	Kalispell
Divisional Wrestling Seeding Meet Rotation		
Year	**East Host**	**West Host**
2024-2025	Great Falls	Kalispell
2025-2026	Belgrade/Bozeman	Missoula
2026-2027	Belgrade/Bozeman	Butte
2027-2028	Great Falls	Helena
Divisional Golf Meet Rotation		
Year	**East Host**	**West Host**
2024-2025	Belgrade/Bozeman	Missoula
2025-2026	Great Falls	Butte
2026-2027	Belgrade/Bozeman	Kalispell
2027-2028	Billings	Helena

NOTE: If hosting a state event, the next host city will trade for divisional competitions.

SECTION 1. Team Sport – Advancement to State level competition format. All team sports (football, volleyball, soccer, basketball and softball) will advance to state level play in a similar manner.

1. For each team sport, each conference champion and runner up will automatically qualify for the state level championship competitions (state tournament or state playoffs).
2. Teams finishing seventh or eighth in the conference will end their season at the end of the regular season. They will not advance to post season play.
3. Play-in games will be held for all remaining teams with the following structure to be used based on eastern and western conference final regular season standings: Play-in games will take place the week prior to the start of the state events with soccer play-in on Tuesday and all other sports play-in on Thursday, Friday or Saturday the week prior to state level play. Date and start time of the play-in game rests with the host school. All play-in contests will be a single game EXCEPT softball where a best two of three game format will be used with all games played on the same date for softball.
   A. For Volleyball, Basketball and Softball, the number 3 team from each conference will host the number 6 team from the same conference. The number 4 team from each conference will host the number 5 team from the same conference. Winners of these play-in games will advance to state level play with the highest remaining seed entering as the conferences #3 seed and the lowest remaining seed entering as the conferences #4 seed.
   B. B. For Soccer the number 3 team from each conference will host the number 6 team from the same conference. The number 4 team from each conference will host the number 5 team from the same conference. Winners of these play-in games will advance to state level play with the winner of each play-in game assuming the higher seed's number for their conference and playing as that conference seed for the remainder of the post season.
   C. C. For football a similar format is to be used with the exception being the # 3 seed from each conference will host the #6 seed from the other conference. The #4 seed from each conference will host the #5 seed from the other conference. In football the winner of each play-in game will assume the higher seed number and conference for future play. For example, if the #5 team from the west beats the #4 team from the east, they will assume the #4 east seed for the remainder of the playoffs. We will not reseed the for AA football playoffs following play-in games.
   D. For Basketball, Volleyball, and Softball play-in games, any profit from ticket sales after all officials, allowed travel and site expenses are paid will be divided in the following manner:
      1. If the remaining profit is less then $800 then remaining will be divided by the two participating schools
      2. if the remaining profits is more then $800 the total will be divided evenly between all schools from the conference that the two participating teams are members. (Eastern / Western)

E. **OFFICIALS FOR PLAYOFF GAMES** - Officials for all playoff contests for Volleyball, Basketball and Softball will be chosen using the following criteria. **THIS SECTION MUST BE APPROVED BY THE MHSA EXECUTIVE BOARD TO TAKE EFFECT. IT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THEIR 6/25/25 BOARD MEETING.**

1. Host location pool officials selected to work the state tournament for that season.

2. Host location pool officials who received votes for the state tournament but were not assigned to the tournament.

3. Officials chosen from a neutral pool of officials (from a pool without a team competing in the contest)

SECTION 2 Individual Sport - Individual awards will only be given for individual sports that have divisional competitions – golf, wrestling, track, and tennis.

ARTICLE 14 - STATE TOURNAMENT BRACKETS INFORMATION

SECTION 1. All AA State Tournament Brackets and other tournament information as set forth by the MHSA can be found on their website.

SECTION 2. At their June 2024 MHSA Executive Board Meeting, members voted approval of a new policy for assigning offsite game locations for Saturday morning games at the state basketball tournaments. The gym assignments for Saturday morning contests will not be determined until after the Friday semifinal games are completed. The following factors would be used to determine which games are played at the main tournament site and which games are played at the secondary site:

1. A team will not play in their home gym.
2. Different gender teams from the same school should not play at separate locations.
3. Gym capacity could be considered for crowd size Brackets would be updated with gym assignments Friday night and affected teams would be notified as soon as possible.

1100 - GENERAL RULES - BASKETBALL (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws, rules and regulation of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity; and the specific rules for the AA Boys' and Girls' Basketball program as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by these guidelines.

1110 - CONFERENCE RULES

Conferences	
West	**East**
Butte High School	Belgrade High School
Big Sky High School	Billings Senior High School
Glacier High School	Billings Skyview High School
Capital High School	Billings West High School
Flathead High School	Bozeman High School
Helena High School	Gallatin High School
Hellgate High School	C. M. Russell High School
Sentinel High School	Great Falls High School

1112 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar. EXCEPTION: All AA schools will begin the Winter season on the Monday before Thanksgiving. All AA schools will have a dead period from Thanksgiving Day until the Monday following Thanksgiving. No open gyms or practices of any type may take place during the conference Thanksgiving Dead Period.

1114 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Starting Times – determined by the host team.
B. Varsity must have a minimum of 15 minutes warm-up prior to the game. State tournament warm-up time will be no less than 15 minutes.
C. On days when school is not in session, the visiting team's locker room should be open at least one hour prior to the start of the first preliminary game.
D. Visiting teams will be treated with courtesy and adequate protection will be given to these teams before, during and after games. This includes boarding and departure of the bus.
E. No towels will be provided to visiting teams.
F. Visiting teams will be responsible for care of their own valuables.
G. Home team shall provide the basketballs for the team to warm-up.
H. There will be an official statistician for AA Basketball. All member schools will be charged a fee for this service.
I. The MHSA Quarter Eligibility Rule will apply for AA Basketball. Students who participate exclusively in subvarsity contests (freshman, sophomore, or junior varsity) may enter up to six (6) quarters of basketball in any one day. Any student who participates in a varsity contest is limited to a maximum of five (5) total quarters of basketball for that day, regardless of the level at which those quarters are played. No student may play at more than two (2) consecutive levels. Any student who participates in a junior varsity contest may not start the varsity contest. AA teams will follow this rule even when competing against out-of-conference or out-of-state opponents.

J. Beginning in the 2022-2023 season, a 35 second shot clock will be used for both boys and girls at all levels.

1120 - PLAY-OFF PROVISIONS

A. AA play-off structure. Refer to AA "BB" program, MHSA handbook.
B. Basketball teams will advance to the state tournament in the following manner:
   1. Conference Seeding - All teams will be seeded into the playoff structure as a result of conference standings and/or AA Playoff tie breaking provisions.
   2. For each conference champion (East and West) and runner up will automatically qualify for the state tournament.
   3. Teams finishing seventh or eighth in the conference will end their season at the end of the regular season. They will not advance to post season play.
   4. Play-in games will be held for all remaining teams with the following structure to be used based on eastern and western conference final regular season standings: Play-in will be on Thursday, Friday or Saturday the week prior to state tournament play. Date and start time of the play-in game rests with the host school.
   5. In Basketball the number 3 team from each conference will host the number 6 team from the same conference. The number 4 team from each conference will host the number 5 team from the same conference. Winners of these play-in games will advance to state level play with the highest remaining seed entering as the conferences #3 seed and the lowest remaining seed entering as the conferences #4 seed.
   6. Playoff Structure:

Play-In Games	
State Tournament Play-In round, to be played on Thursday, Friday or Saturday following the last week of the Regular Season	
1E, 2E, 1W, 2W advance to the state tournament bracket in their respective seed	
7E, 8E, 7W, 8W season ends	
Game 1	5W at 4W winner advance to state tournament
Game 2	6E at 3E winner advance to state tournament
Game 3	5E at 4E winner advance to state tournament
Game 4	6W at 3W winner advance to state tournament

C. Resolution of ties for post season seeds
   1. When attempting to break a tie where more than two teams are involved, the highest seeded team shall be determined first using the steps outlined below (in order to seed top to bottom, if ties exist when comparing top to bottom, ties will be skipped). All other teams involved in the tie will be seeded beginning over at step one of the procedures.
   2. All ties (whether two team, three team, or four team) would be settled on the basis of head-to-head competition between the teams involved in conference play. If a multiple team tie (three or more teams) exists in the loss column for conference play, the team that has defeated all others involved in the tie will be seeded the highest. If two of the three teams tied have beaten the third, that team will be eliminated/thus taking one team out the bottom. The procedure with the remaining teams will start over. Once a team is seeded, the team that was kicked out the bottom will be considered again and the proceeding will start over from the top of the criteria.
   3. All ties (whether two team, three team, four team or more) would be settled on the basis of head-to-head competition between the teams involved in conference play. This means their record between the teams tied as illustrated by the example below. If there are multiple ties within the

conference, attempts will be made to break those ties from top to bottom. If those ties can't be broken from top to bottom, we will try to break the next tie in order possible and to help break the other tie(s). The tie breaker should be broken between the 3 teams involved head-to-head. For example:

Team A	3-1	Team A is 1st, then we take teams B and Team C and start the tie breaker procedure over between these two teams.
Team B	2-2	
Team C	1-3	

If there is a four-way tie and there is a difference, it may look like this:

Team A	4-2	Team A would be seeded #1 or highest among tied teams, then the tie break process would start over with the tied teams of B, C, and D. We would then break that tie starting with the original criteria for breaking ties. The remaining two teams would again work through the original criteria to determine the next best seed.
Team B	3-3	
Team C	3-3	
Team D	2-4	

4. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then play against the rest of the division from the top to the bottom shall be utilized skipping other ties until higher seeds have been determined.
5. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then play against a common non-conference AA opponent at a common host site will be used. (both home/away) (i.e Hellgate plays Gallatin at home, Helena plays Gallatin at home, **or** Hellgate and Helena play Gallatin in Gallatin.)
6. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used the point differential in all conference games will be used up to a maximum of 10 points per contest. The team with the highest point differential will be the higher seed.
7. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then point differential in head-to-head contests involving ONLY the tied teams will be used up to a maximum of 10 points per contest. The team with the highest point differential will be the higher seed.
8. If a tie still exists, the team with the highest win/loss percentage against all AA opponents will receive the higher seed.
9. If a tie still exists a coin flip will be used.

D. Play-In Game Ticket Prices
   1. Single Session: Adult $10.00
   2. Students: $8.00

1300 - GENERAL RULES - CROSS COUNTRY (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity; and the specific rules for the AA Track and Field program, Sec. VII, as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by these guidelines below.

1310 - CONFERENCE RULES

1312 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

1314 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Because of the increasing size of meets and the increasing number of spectators present at meets, the approach to the finish line and the chute area shall be roped for crowd control. This is to avoid collision between incoming runners and spectators as well as to aid judges' visibility of the whole finish line area.
B. Specified warm-up areas will be designated to cut traffic and confusion in the race area. This along with item letter E would not only be a measure to aid meet administration but also would be an aid in controlling traffic around green and tee areas of the golf course on which many of our races are run.
C. The standard order for running races will be an alternating, boy's and girl's rotation: JV girls, JV boys, Varsity girls, Varsity boys or JV boys, JV girls, Varsity boys, Varsity girls.
D. The length of all races will be 5 Kilometers.
E. Provision for walking the course: A team desiring to walk the course should appear on the course one hour before the start of the meet. No meet should be held up because a team does not appear on the course in time to walk it.
F. The rule book should be followed concerning chute construction and number of officials assigned for good meet management.

1500 - GENERAL GUIDELINES - FOOTBALL

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general guidelines for this activity shall also apply.

1510 - CONFERENCE GUIDELINES

1512 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

1514 - ADMINISTRATION

A. All schools will send game information to their opponents 4 days in advance.
B. A uniform pre-game information sheet will be used by every school providing visiting teams with information about pre-game times, change areas, flip-of-coin, playing of National Anthem, and similar information pertinent to the logistics of the contest.
C. There will be an official statistician.
D. Each team is responsible for the working condition of their own phones.
E. Schools are encouraged to have a physician.
F. The home team will wear colored jerseys and the visiting team will wear light jerseys.
G. Every school will receive 14 passes.

1516 - SCOUTING

A. Use of Hudl to share film is the common procedure for all AA football teams.
B. The home team should upload film from the weeks game before the end of the evening when the game is played.
C. If coaches wish to attend games to observe opponents, they may do so at their own expense and without the use of any scouting devices (paper, tape players, scouting forms, etc.).
D. Use of Sideline Hudl and end zone cameras is okay as long as it complies with all rules and regulations of the venue and of the MHSA.
E. If teams want to do their own film on the road, this is possible but only as space allows. Priority will be given to the home team and then to the visiting team. There is no guarantee space will be available in the press box.

1518 - ROSTER

A. A roster, typed and on white paper, will be sent to each conference opponent at least 4 days prior to a scheduled game and will be standardized as follows:
    1. Players listed by number in numerical order
    2. Name, last name first
    3. Position
    4. Weight
    5. Year in School

1519 - MERCY RULE

A. 35-point Mercy Rule. If the score difference reaches 35 points, at any point after halftime, a running clock will be put into effect. Once the clock moves to a continuous running clock, it will continue to be a running clock even if the score deficit goes below the 35-point margin.

1520 - PLAY-OFFS

A. 2022 AA Football Playoff Structure: Our goal is to protect the number 1 & 2 seeds of each conference by ensuring that they host quarterfinal games.

B. 1st and 2nd place in each conference will receive a first-round bye during the play-in games and will host the quarterfinal games. They will also host successive rounds and cannot be jumped by seeds 3 or below. The seasons of the teams that place 7th and 8th in each conference will end after the end of the 9-week regular season.

C. Conference standings will be determined using Conference Record followed by AA football tiebreaking procedures using all 9 games.

D. The play-in games will be cross conference and standings will be determined at the end of week 9 and will use:
   1. Conference Record followed by AA football tiebreaker using all 9 regular season games.
   2. Matchups for the play-in games are as follows:

Play-In Games	
Game 1	5E at 4W
Game 2	6W at 3E
Game 3	5W at 4E
Game 4	6E at 3W

Quarterfinal Games	
Game 5	Winner of Game 1 (5E at 4W) at 1E
Game 6	Winner of Game 2 (6W at 3E) at 2W
Game 7	Winner of Game 3 (5W at 4E) at 1W
Game 8	Winner of Game 4 (6E at 3W) at 2E

Semi-Final Games	
Game 9	Winner of Game 5 vs Winner of Game 6 at home of best remaining seed
Game 10	Winner of Game 7 vs Winner of Game 8 at home of best remaining seed

Championship Game
Winner of Game 9 vs Winner of Game 10 at home of best remaining seed.

E. Championship Game Host - The championship game host will be the best remaining seed as the teams were seeding into the playoffs. For example, if the championship game is 1W vs 3E, the West team will host. If the two teams in the championship game have the same seed, for example 1E vs 1W or 2E vs 2W, the host team will be determined using the strength of schedule formula using all 9 regular season games. Playoff games will not be included in the strength of schedule formula.

F. Tie-Breaking Procedures
   1. Tie Breaker Procedures between Two Teams
      a. Head-to-head record.
      b. Best won-loss percentage within common opponents.

c. Best ranking within common opponents, point formula- see index B.
d. Best ranking within conference games, point formula- see index B.
e. The average per game point differential up to 14 points in conference games, point formula - see index B.
f. Strength of schedule (Strength of Schedule Formula- This is based on the original values so there will be equal point values when there is a tie (see index A).
g. Coin Flip. The President of the AA Conference will flip the coin for the purpose of resolving the tie. The coin flip will take place according to MHSA guidelines.

2. Tie Breaker Procedure between multiple teams (three or more teams): Note: These procedures apply to both Conference and State AA tie breakers.

G. Overall Procedures
1. Only one team is seeded into the playoffs in any tie-breaking step.
2. If two or more teams remain tied after a third or other teams are eliminated, tie breaker reverts to step one with only those teams until a higher seed is found.
3. Once a team is seeded, all the remaining teams from the original tie start the procedure again at step one.
a. Head-to-head sweep (Applicable only if one team has defeated each of the others or if two of the three teams tied have beaten the third or all other teams have beaten one team, that team will be eliminated).
b. Strength of schedule (Strength of Schedule Formula- see index A).
c. Best won-loss percentage within common opponents.
d. Best ranking within common opponents, point formula- see index B).
e. Best ranking within Class AA games, point formula- see index B).
f. The average per game point differential up to 14 points in conference games, point formula- see index B.
g. Coin Flip. The President of the 'AA' Conference will flip the coin for the purpose of resolving the tie. The coin flip will take place according to MHSA guidelines.

H. Tie Breaking Definitions
a. Index A - Strength of Schedule - Points are awarded based on wins for each team. A team will receive 14 points for defeating a first-place team, if they beat a 14^{th}- place team they receive 1 point and so on. The team with the most points earns the higher seed. An example:

Example: 2012 AA Football Final Ranking Points		
Glacier	8-2	14 points
Butte	8-2	14 points
Helena	8-2	14 points
CMR	8-2	14 points
Bozeman	7-3	10 points
West	7-3	10 points
Skyview	6-4	8 points
Capital	5-5	7 points
Big Sky	4-6	6 points
Senior	3-7	5 points
Great Falls	2-8	4 points
Sentinel	2-8	4 points
Flathead	1-9	2 points
Hellgate	1-9	2 points

Under this system the final results would look like this:

Teams		
CMR	60 points - CMR defeated the following teams:	Flathead +2, Glacier +14, GFHS +4, Senior +5, Skyview +8, Big Sky +6, Capital +7, Helena High +14
Butte	58 points - Butte defeated the following teams:	CMR +14, Senior +5, West +10, Sentinel +4, Bozeman +10, Big Sky +6, Capital +7, Hellgate +2
Helena	55 points - Helena defeated the following teams:	Flathead +2, Glacier +14, GFHS +4, Sentinel +4, Butte +14, Skyview +8, Capital +7, Hellgate +2
Glacier	43 points - Glacier defeated the following teams:	Flathead +2, GFHS +4, Sentinel +4, Bozeman +10, Skyview +8, Big Sky +6, Capital +7, Hellgate +2
*CMR would receive the higher seed. Remaining teams would start at step one of tie breaker procedure.		
**If in the example above CMR and Butte had tied at 60 points, those two teams would revert to step one of the two team tie-breaker. Butte beat CMR head-to-head and would have received the higher seed.		

b. Index B- Point Formula - The following point formula will be used only with games played against common opponents of the teams that are tied including each other. A maximum of 14 points will apply in the formula. If a team has a point differential greater than 14 points in a game, only 14 points will be computed. The maximum of 14 points will be awarded to any team that receives a forfeit. The maximum of -14 points will be awarded to the team that forfeits.

EXAMPLE: Comparisons of tied teams using 5 common opponents season record conference.

	Game 1 point differential	**Game 2 point differential**	**Game 3 point differential**	**Game 4 point differential**	**Game 5 point differential**	
Team A	**Team C**	**Team D**	**Team E**	**Team F**	**Team G**	**TOTAL**
9-1	14	12	6	3	-4	31
Team B	**Team G**	**Team F**	**Team E**	**Team D**	**Team C**	**TOTAL**
8-1	6	7	1	3	-6	11
TEAM A SEEDED HIGHER						

I. For the purpose of the football tie-breaking procedure the team winning a Montana play-off will be recognized as having one less point scored against them. In a Montana play-off, the winning team will receive (+1) in the point differential and the loser will have (-1) in the point differential.

J. MHSA playoff rules
   1. Play-off game officials will be chosen from a neutral site. MHSA will assign officials.
   2. Ticket prices at play-off games will be in accordance with the MHSA guidelines in the MHSA Handbook.
   3. Other administrative considerations will apply.
   4. The coin flip will take place according to MHSA guidelines.

1600 - GENERAL RULES - GOLF (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity; and the specific rules for the AA Golf program as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by these guidelines below.

1610 - CONFERENCE RULES

1612 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

1614 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Refer to general rules Golf Division, MHSA Handbook.

1620 - TOURNAMENT PROVISIONS

A. Divisional Tournament Provision Beginning in the 2020-2021 Season.
    1. Each AA School will be represented at their respective Eastern or Western Divisional Golf Tournament. It will be a two-day, 36-hole tournament. After competition, the top 4 TEAMS, consisting of 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 8 INDIVIDUAL finishers plus ties, outside of those that have already qualified on a top 4 team. A total of 28 boys plus ties and 28 girls plus ties from each Division will qualify for the State AA Golf Tournament.
    2. 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.
    3. Individual Tie Breaker for selecting the top ten individual finishers not aligned with a State Team Qualifier: If there is a tie with the 8th place finisher to qualify for the State Tournament, each of those individuals will qualify for the State Tournament.
    4. There will be a total of 112+ golfers represented at the State AA Golf Tournament
        a. AA East Boys – Top 4 Teams (20 golfers), Next 8 Individuals + ties.
        b. AA West Boys – Top 4 Teams (20 golfers), Next 8 Individuals + ties.
        c. AA East Girls – Top 4 Teams (20 golfers), Next 8 Individuals + ties.
        d. AA West Girls – Top 4 Teams (20 golfers), Next 8 Individuals + ties.
    5. Alternative Start: An alternative start to the divisional and state meets in the case that bad weather is anticipated will be conducted as follows: A shotgun start with all boys starting on the back holes and completing those holes before moving to the front and all girls starting on the front holes and completing those holes before moving to the back. If the event does have to be shortened after the day has started, the tournament would fall back on the completed holes and not wipe out the entire day. Each gender would have played the same holes and scores will be counted.

6. Coaching will be allowed on the course from Tee to Green per MHSA guidelines. Coaches are not allowed on the green at any time. Supervision and coaching of athletes are expected during practice and competition.
7. Spectators are allowed on the course for all regular and post-season events as per MHSA and individual course regulations.
8. Any player disqualified under USGA Rules of Golf from Day 1 play will not be allowed to compete Day 2 as per MHSA regulations.
9. Any player disqualified for inappropriate behavior, but not via the Rules of Golf, shall be totally disqualified from tournament play as per MHSA regulations.
10. All participants will conform to MHSA dress and jewelry rule requirements.
11. A traveling team trophy will be awarded to both the boys and girls team champions following the conclusion of the divisional tournament. Those teams will be required to bring the trophy to the tournament the following year.
12. Divisional host schools are to be responsible for securing enough markers for the event. All participating schools will be responsible for securing one back-up marker for the event to be used, if needed.

B. State Tournament Provisions
1. The State AA Boys/Girls Tournament shall be held at season's end on a Thursday and Friday, or a Friday and Saturday. If the host city can't find a course to host the state tournament on a Thursday, Friday or Friday, Saturday, the tournament site will rotate to the next city in the state tournament rotation order. The scheduled host city needs to bid the tournament dates and course(s) through the MHSA as per the normal bidding procedures.
2. Coaching will be allowed on the course from Tee to Green per MHSA guidelines. Coaches are not allowed on the green at any time. Supervision and coaching of athletes is expected during practice and competition.
3. Spectators are allowed on the course for all regular and post-season events as per MHSA and individual course regulations. Spectators will not be allowed on the course for the practice round at state.
4. Any player disqualified under USGA Rules of Golf from Day 1 play will not be allowed to compete Day 2 as per MHSA regulations.
5. Any player disqualified for inappropriate behavior, but not via the Rules of Golf, shall be totally disqualified from tournament play as per MHSA regulations.
6. All participants will conform to MHSA dress and jewelry rule requirements.
7. The following rotation will be used for State Tournament sites to ensure that all AA schools will have the opportunity to host. If a school could not host or wants to pass, they could do so to the next school in the rotation.

State Tournament Rotation			
City	**Year**	**City**	**Year**
Kalispell	2024	Kalispell	2031
Butte	2025	Butte	2032
Great Falls	2026	Great Falls	2033
Missoula	2027	Missoula	2034
Bozeman	2028	Bozeman	2035
Helena	2029	Helena	2036
Billings	2030	Billings	2037

8. A practice round on the state tournament course will be allowed on the day prior to the state tournament if approved by the state tournament host course. All practice round fees will be paid separately from other state tournament fees.
9. For the State Tournament, the MHSA Executive Board approved in Class AA allowing host schools for postseason events to be responsible for securing enough markers for the event. All participating schools will be responsible for securing one back-up marker for the event to be used, if needed.

1800 - GENERAL GUIDELINES - SOCCER (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general guidelines for this activity shall also apply.

1810 - CONFERENCE RULES

1811 - MERCY RULE

A. When a team is winning by
   1. 8 goals, they will reduce their number of players playing from 11 to 10.
   2. 9 goals, they will reduce their number of players playing from 10 to 9.
   3. 10 goals, the contest is over
   4. If at any time the goal deficit decreases then the winning team may put the player that they have taken out back in.

1812 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

1814 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Refer to general rules, Soccer Division, MHSA Handbook.

1820 - PLAY-OFF PROVISIONS

A. Conference Seeding: All teams will be seeded into the playoff structure as a result of conference standings and/or AA Playoff tie breaking provisions.
B. A total of 22 players can dress and participate in all postseason games.
C. Playoff Timeline: The play-in round of the State AA Playoffs will take place on the first Tuesday following the end of the regular season. Round 2 will be scheduled for that following Saturday. The semi-finals round will take place the next Tuesday followed by the championship round on that next Saturday. Saturday games may be moved to Friday to accommodate weather, stadium scheduling or other issues as determined by the host school.
D. Playoff Venue: Playoff games and championships will be played in stadiums if at all possible. If possible, tickets will be taken.
E. Playoff Structure:

Round 1	
1E, 2E, 1W, 2W receive first round byes	
7E, 8E, 7W, 8W season ends	
Game 1	5W at 4W
Game 2	6E at 3E
Game 3	5E at 4E
Game 4	6W at 3W

Round 2	
First Saturday following the Tuesday Conference Playoff	
Game 5	Winner of Game 1 at 1E
Game 6	Winner of Game 2 at 2W
Game 7	Winner of Game 3 at 1W

Game 8	Winner of Game 4 at 2E

Round 3 – State Semi-Finals	
Game 9	Winner of Game 5 vs Winner of Game 6 at home of best remaining seed.
Game 10	Winner of Game 7 vs Winner of Game 8 at home of best remaining seed.

Round 4 – State Championship
Hosted by the Best remaining seed left in the tournament.

F. Host Rotation: The following rotation will be used to determine the home team if the teams playing in the championship game are the same seed from their respective conference:

2023 - 2024	East Conference will host
2024 - 2025	West Conference will host
2025 - 2026	East Conference will host
2026 - 2027	West Conference will host
2027 - 2028	East Conference will host
2028 - 2029	West Conference will host

G. Selection of officials for play-off games
   1. The officials for all playoff games will be selected by the MHSA office.

H. Ticket prices for play-off games will be in accordance with MHSA guidelines in the MHSA Handbook. If at all possible, schools will take tickets.

1824 - TIE BREAKER PROCEDURE

Tie breaking within a division (for the purpose of play-off seeding) will be as follows:

A. When attempting to break a tie where more than two teams are involved, the highest seeded team shall be determined first using the steps outlined below. All other teams involved in the tie will be seeded beginning over at step one of the procedures.

B. All ties (whether two team, three team, or four team) would be settled on the basis of head-to-head competition between the teams involved in conference play.

C. Goal differential between tied teams. Points are assigned for goals scored minus goals scored against. Subtract the losing team's score from the winning team's score. The winning team is awarded one point for each goal of the difference to a maximum of five (5) points per game.

D. Top to bottom: Within the division, each team's record is compared to the first-place team, then the second-place team, etc., until the tie is broken.

E. Goal differential within the division. The same process of determining a goal differential value is used as described above. This uses all games against divisional opponents through the year.

F. If a tie cannot be resolved by the application of the above criteria, then a coin flip will determine the highest seed of the teams tied. The conference president (or designee) will flip the coin for this purpose.

2000 - GENERAL RULES - SWIMMING (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. The official National Federation of State High School Association Swimming and Diving Guide shall govern all situations unless modified by MHSA rules.

2010 - CONFERENCE RULES

A. Post Season Meeting
   1. A post-season AA Coaches Meeting will be held at a centralized, neutral site on the second Tuesday after the MHSA State Championship Meet.
   2. This meeting will replace a coaches meeting at the State Meet to discuss rules changes and other business concerning the sport.

2012 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar. EXCEPTION: All AA schools will begin the Winter season on the Monday before Thanksgiving. All AA schools will have a dead period from Thanksgiving Day until the Monday following Thanksgiving. No open gyms or practices of any type may take place during the conference Thanksgiving Dead Period.
B. All high school dual and invitational meets may be held any time during the season.

2014 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Pools should be at least a regulation short course 25 yards with 6 lanes.
B. Entries - Shall be determined by the meet manager with the consideration of the number of teams participating.
C. Standard Order of Events for all meets:

1	200-yard medley relay	Boys-Girls
2	200-yard freestyle	Boys-Girls
3	200-yard individual medley	Boys-Girls
4	50-yard freestyle	Boys-Girls
5	100-yard butterfly	Boys-Girls
6	100-yard freestyle	Boys-Girls
7	500-yard freestyle	Boys-Girls
8	200-yard freestyle relay	Boys-Girls
9	100-yard backstroke	Boys-Girls
10	100-yard breaststroke	Boys-Girls
11	400-yard freestyle relay	Boys-Girls

D. Timers - Every effort should be made to have at least two timers on each lane plus one person to use the automatic timing backup button (pickle) per lane.

E. State Championship
   1. Officials for the championship shall be selected by the meet manager.
   2. State tournament will be a 2.5 day event. Preliminary heats for the 500 freestyle will be held on Thursday evening with finals for that event occurring as part of the Saturday meet program. Friday will feature preliminary heats with top 12 qualifiers advancing to Saturday's finals.
   3. All entries, number of contestants, and number of events per contestant will be governed by the rules of Team Personnel of Section 3 in the National Federation edition of Swimming and Diving Rules.
   4. Scoring

   a. Individual Events: 16-13-12-11-10-9-7-5-4-3-2-1
   b. Relays: 32-26-34-22-20-18-14-10-8-6-4-2
5. Pool - At least a regulation short course 25 yards with 6 lanes.
6. In order to be eligible for state, a swimmer must compete in a minimum of 2 regular season meets. All entries shall be certified to the meet manager no later than the Monday preceding the championship.
7. Recommended Meet Workers.
   a. Timers - 3 stop watches to each lane or one electrical timer and one back-up stop watch.
   b. Automatic Timing Backup Button (Pickle).
8. All other situations will be outlined in the National Federation Swimming and Diving Guide.
9. Qualifications for Participation in the State Meet
   a. Floating Qualification: A maximum of 32 swimmers will be entered in each event for the State Meet.
   b. Coaches are encouraged to enter up to four swimmers in each event.
   c. Entries are due no later than 5:00pm the Wednesday of the week prior to the State Meet (2022 – Feb. 2nd).
   d. Psych sheet will be published by the Friday prior to the State Meet and no changes or replacements may be made following publication (2022 – Feb. 4th).
   e. The MHSA board approved a change to assure 48 swimmers will participate in each event at state. For instance, when Class A/B does not have enough swimmers to fill the heat for an event, additional AA swimmers will be used to fill lanes.
1.

2200 - GENERAL RULES - TENNIS (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. Medals will be presented to the 1st through 6th place finishers in both singles and doubles at both the divisional and state tournaments.
C. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity and the specific rules for the AA Tennis program as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by the guidelines below:

2210 - CONFERENCE RULES

2212 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

2214 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Refer to general rules Tennis Division, MHSA Handbook.
B. During Regular Season play, coaches are required to fill in from the top down making sure that the number 1 spot, then number 2 spot, etc. is always filled. Coaches should go to the jv's or pull a player from doubles to fill in if necessary.
C. Regular Season Tiebreak Procedure for Dual Matches tied 4-4 after completion of play.
    1. Tiebreaker #1 will be used first. If teams are still tied, then tiebreaker #2 will be used and so on until a winner is determined.
    2. Add up the total games won by both schools. Whichever team won more games wins the dual.
    3. All tiebreaks count as 1 game each.
    4. A forfeited match shall count as 6-0, 6-0.
    5. Add up the total sets won by both schools. Whichever team won more sets wins the dual.
    6. All tiebreaks count as 1 game each.
    7. A forfeited match shall be counted as 6-0, 6-0
    8. If teams are still tied after the first three tiebreakers, the #1 singles result is the final tiebreak.
D. Beginning with the 2019-2020 Season, Divisional and State Tournaments will coincide with Class A Tennis as well as other Class AA Spring Sports.
E. Beginning with the 2019-2020 Season, a 5th and 6th place match will be added to the current championship and consolation matches of the State AA Tournament. The point values that will be used: 1st Place – 9 points, 2nd Place – 7 points, 3rd Place – 5 points, 4th Place – 3 points, 5th Place – 1 point.
F. Seeding for the Divisional Tournament must take place at the conclusion of the regular season for each team entered in a division and must follow the criteria below:
    1. Divisional Tournament Seeding and Process - addition to Rule II, (6) and AA Handbook (6) Divisional Seeding and Draws.
    2. Seeding Criteria: Each division shall determine the top 4 seeds in each bracket based on the following criteria. The criteria is listed in order of weight. A coach can request a 2/3 vote to overrule seeding criteria if an unusual situation exists.
        a. Head-to-Head competition (most recent has most weight).
        b. Overall season record in the event entered - more weight given to matches played at #1, followed by #2, then #3, with matches at #4 carrying less weight. It is the coach's responsibility to bring stats/evidence. A win at #1 equals 4 points. #2 equals 3 points, #3 equals 2 points, and #4 equals 1 point.
        c. Record against common opponents.

   d. Past record in previous state high school meets and divisional meets *match play in USTA tournaments can be used in seeding provided the match occurred after Jan 1 of the current year.

G. Creating the Draw
   1. Placing: Placing is prohibited. Placing occurs, for example, when the Tournament Committee in a 16-draw tournament seeds four and "places" four. The practice of placing is an attempt to hide the fact that in reality eight players have been seeded instead of the permissible maximum of four.
   2. Placing the Seeds: Draw of 12-16 with 4 seeds - Seed #1 is placed on Line 1. Seed #2 is placed on Line 16. A coin flip shall determine the placement of Seeds #3 & #4 for lines 5 or 12. Flip a coin, with HEADS putting #3 on Line 5, TAILS puts #3 on Line 12. Seed #4 fills whichever line was not given to #3. A separate coin flip shall occur for each bracket (girls singles, girls doubles, boys singles, and boys doubles) meaning you must flip the coin four times, once for each bracket played.
   3. Remaining byes. If for some reason a division has an odd number of competitors. The remaining byes shall be distributed so that the total number of byes is evenly distributed by quarters and halves. If the number of byes remaining to be distributed is not divisible by four, then the quarter or quarters that receive one more bye than the other quarter or quarters shall be determined by a random drawing. Place four slips of paper with 1, 2, 3, and 4 written on them. Draw a slip and place the extra bye on lines 4, 8, 9, or 13 based on the quarter drawn.
   4. Filling in unseeded players by random drawing. Once the seeded players and the byes have been written in, the rest of the draw shall be filled in by drawing the names of the remaining players and putting them on the unoccupied lines in the order in which they are drawn, starting at the top and moving downward in sequence.
   5. Separating opponents of same school. Players will be chosen randomly. When players/teams are selected, they cannot play a person/team from the same school in the first or the second round of the winner's bracket. They will be placed at the next available position moving from the top of the bracket to the bottom of the bracket to the next available line in the bracket.

H. A student can be entered as an alternate in both singles and doubles events. This allows for greater flexibility of a coach to determine the lineup.

I. Guidelines and Code of Ethics
   1. Players will appear neat and well groomed. Participants are required to wear proper tennis attire per MHSA guidelines in tennis section.
   2. Coaching may occur only during court exchange.
   3. It is considered unsportsmanlike conduct if you engage in (a) abusive display or temper, (b) loud or abusive language, (c) swearing, (d) obscene language or gestures, (e) racket throwing, (f) hitting the ball in anger, (g) "gamesmanship" or stalling, (h) cheating. Any of the above may be considered as grounds for disqualification by the Tournament Director or his designee. 1st warning - loss of point. 2nd warning - loss of game, 3rd warning - disqualification.
   4. When you are your own linesman, your obligation is to call all balls fairly and honestly on your side of the net, also to help your opponent when requested.
   5. Do not question your opponent's call. Ask your opponent's opinion when he is in a better position to see the ball than you. Do not enlist the aid of a spectator.
   6. Calls of "out" and "let" should be made instantly.
   7. In doubles, the receiver's partner may call the service line. If one partner calls the ball good and the other calls it out, the point goes to the opponents, as doubt has been raised.
   8. The foot fault is a violation. The person who foot faults unknowingly is taking advantage of his opponent. The person who foot faults knowingly is cheating.
   9. Warm-up time shall not be in excess of ten minutes.

10. Play will be continuous.
11. Time between games limited to one minute.
12. Rest period between second and third sets, when allowed, not to exceed ten minutes.
13. Parents, friends or coaches are not permitted on the court.
14. Divisional entries are due on the Monday prior to the divisional meet. Entries will be submitted to the MHSA Office via email.
15. At the Divisional Tournament, players and doubles teams from the same school shall not compete prior to semifinals.

J. Inclement Weather/Indoor/Alternative Scoring
1. Divisional and State Tournament inclement weather plan - The MHSA Board approved language for all postseason events in Class AA. This states no match will begin later than 10:00 PM. Additionally, if conditions will not allow for the completion of a minimum of 40 matches on the opening day, the event will become a 3-day event.
2. If Indoors, scoring will be best of 3 sets, with sets 1 and 2 regular except both sets will be shortened by starting 2 games each. Set 3 will be a 10-point tie breaker but must win by 2. A 120 second set break if split sets.
3. 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 especially if forced indoors with few matches left to complete.

2216 - DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENT CYCLE BEGINNING IN 2020

Even Years
Glacier – Flathead at CMR – GFH
Big Sky – Hellgate – Sentinel at Butte
Bozeman High – Gallatin at Capital – Helena High
Odd Years
CMR – GFH at Glacier – Flathead
Butte at Big Sky – Hellgate – Sentinel
Capital – Helena High at Bozeman High – Gallatin
Billings – Belgrade rotation will always be held in Billings

2400 - GENERAL RULES - TRACK (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity; and the specific rules for the AA Boys and Girls Track program as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by these guidelines below.

2410 - CONFERENCE RULES

A. Five (5) athletes from each school will be allowed to participate in an event at Divisional track Meets.
B. Contestants may participate in no more than five events including relays at the Divisional Meet. (See page 151-152 of the 1998-99 MHSA Handbook.)
C. Only 1/8" spikes will be used for all meets. No needle spikes.
D. The Eastern and Western Conferences will run the same events on the same day at Divisional track meets. Both conferences will strive to host the Pole Vault Event for both girls and boys on Friday.
E. The Divisional meet program will be based from entries submitted by the entry deadline of the Wednesday night at 7:00pm prior to the Divisional meet. There will be no reseeding after the entry deadline. There will be no additions or substitutions to entries made after the Wednesday night 7:00pm prior to the meet deadline.
F. Entries for divisional meet must be made using the best time or distance obtained by the athlete in that event during the course of the season. To protect the integrity of heat/flight assignment entry of an athlete with an incorrect time or distance is prohibited.
G. The Divisional meets will have a standard set of minimal distances that must be acquired before a throw or jump will be measured. Those distances are set as listed below:

Event	Boys	Girls
Javelin	130 feet	80 feet
Discus	120 feet	90 feet
Shot Put	38 feet	29 feet
Long Jump	18 feet	15 feet
Triple Jump	38 feet	30 feet
High Jump	Current method is approved	
Pole Vault	Current method is approved	

H. The State meet will continue on a 3-year rotation as listed below:

State Meet Rotation	
2023-2024	AA – C and A – B
2024-2025	AA – A and B – C
2025-2026	AA – B and A – C
2026-2027	AA – C and A – B
2027-2028	AA – A and B – C
2028-2029	AA – B and A – C

I. Following are the guidelines that must be used to determine the time or distance that can be used for a state meet entry:
   1. The individual's best qualifying time or distance obtained during a qualifying meet.
   2. If a qualifying standard was not met during any of the regular season FAQ meets, the divisional time or distance that qualifies the individual for state must be used. This time or distance must come from a divisional final heat. Divisional preliminary times or distances cannot be used. NOTE: The divisional

time or distance that qualifies an individual for state must be used as the state entry even if it is not as good as that individual's non-qualifying personal record that was obtained during the regular season.

3. It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that all entries are correct. Incorrect entries have a huge impact on seeding. It takes a lot of time and effort for state meet personnel to review and adjust incorrect entries. Please caution all assistant coaches who have been given the responsibility of completing their own event entries that they must know these guidelines and do their absolute best to ensure that all entries are submitted correctly.

2412 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

2414 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Refer to general rules of Track Boys and Girls in the MHSA Handbook and event schedule is as follows.

2416 - AA EASTERN AND WESTERN DIVISIONAL SCHEDULES

A. At the 2025 June Meeting, the AD's and Principals approved a plan to move to a one-day divisional track meet. A schedule for a one-day divisional meet will be developed by a committee of two AD representatives and two track coaches. When developed, the same schedule will be followed in both conferences with the event manager having been given the discretion to alter this schedule due to weather or facility limitations. That schedule will be included in this handbook and shared with all coaches when completed.

B. In the event it is needed, the following is a two-day divisional track schedule that will remain in the AA handbook until such time that it is replaced by the single day schedule.

Running Events - Friday			**Running Events - Saturday**		
2:00 pm	400 M Relay Finals	Boys/Girls	11:00 am	110 M Hurdles Finals	Boys
2:20 pm	110 M Hurdles Trials	Boys		100 M Hurdles Finals	Girls
	100 M Hurdles Trials	Girls	11:30 am	100 M Dash Finals	Boys/Girls
3:00 pm	800 M Run Finals	Boys/Girls	11:50 am	400 M Dash Finals	Boys/Girls
3:25 pm	100 M Dash Trials	Boys/Girls	12:35 pm	1600 M Run Finals	Boys/Girls
4:10 pm	300 M Hurdles Finals	Boys/Girls	1:15 pm	200 M Dash Finals	Boys/Girls
4:55 pm	3200 M Run Finals	Boys/GIrls	2:00 pm	1600 M Relay Finals	Boys/Girls
5:30 pm	200 M Dash Trials	Boys/Girls			
Field Events - Friday			**Field Events - Saturday**		
1:00 pm	Pole Vault Warm Ups	Boys/Girls	10:00 am	Alt Pole Vault Warm Up	Boys/Girls
1:30 pm	Pole Vault	Boys/Girls		Triple Jump	Boys/Girls
	High Jump	Boys		Discus	Girls
	Javelin	Boys		High Jump	Girls
	Shot Put	Girls	10:30 am	Alt Pole Vault	Boys/Girls
	Long Jump	Boys/Girls	12:00 pm	Discus	Boys
4:15 pm	Shot Put	Boys			
	Javelin	Girls			

C. AA Qualifying Standards

1. In June of 2007, the AA principals moved to accept qualifying standards as a method to qualify for a state AA track meet. This shall begin in the spring of 2009. This measure was taken to ensure that the best athletes are able to participate in the state meet on a yearly basis. The following will serve as procedures for implementation. Completed June 18, 2008 after input from coaches, MHSA, and administration input. After review by the AA Activity Directors and Coaches in the summer of 2010, greater clarity and issues have been resolved. It is our hope that the MHSA Executive Board accepts qualifying standards on a permanent basis.

D. Track Procedures
   1. All meets in which teams compete against another school will be used as a qualifying meet when FAT is used. These qualifying marks will be accepted for the state meet. This is to include the Divisional meet.
   2. The Divisional meet manager will provide results to the State meet manager immediately following the meet.
   3. 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.
   4. The top 8 placers at the Divisional meet will advance to State. Ties for 8th place at Divisionals will not be broken. All ties for 8th place will advance to State.
   5. Scoring will occur for the top 8 finishers in each divisional meet event using the following:
      a. 10-8-6-5-4-3-2-1
      b. A request will be made to MHSA to allow this scoring format for the state meet. The final decision regarding scoring of the top 8 finishers at state rests with the MHSA.
      c. The top eight (8) finishers in each event will be awarded medals. The MHSA currently provides medals for the top six finishers. If the MHSA is unable to provide medals for seventh and eighth place, the divisional meet host will assume the additional cost.
   6. All Divisional meet entries for running races must be FAT times. No conversions up or down will be accepted.
   7. Seeding for State will be determined by best time/distance from the Divisional meets and qualifying meets, in which a qualifying standard is met. The coach must submit the time or distance via Athletic.net for state by 3 pm on the Sunday following the divisional meet. Only a qualifying mark or the finals time and placing distance/height can be used.
   8. Coaches will sign up for State via Athletic.net immediately following the Divisional meet. Signup will close at 3 pm on Sunday following the Divisional meet. Coaches will review heats on Monday morning and have until 3 pm on Monday to correct any errors. No changes will be accepted after this time.
   9. Wind gauges will not be required at qualifying meets including the divisional meet.
   10. Implements that will be used for competition are required to be weighed and certified by both the coach and activities director at the beginning of the season. Implements will be marked with the two school colors.
   11. A qualifying meet must have all 17 events unless it is shortened due to weather.
   12. Qualifying marks are to be reported to hundredths. No rounding will be accepted.
   13. It is the responsibility of meet management to upload all Qualifying Meet Results to athletic.net as soon as possible following a meet. Only qualifying times can be used to advance to the State meet, so meet managers must designate if time are not FAT, (all qualifying standard times must be electronic times. No conversion from hand times to FAT or vice/versa will be allowed). Coaches are responsible to let meet managers know if there was a mistake with results within two (2) full business days.

14. The Athletic.net stats program will post qualifying standards immediately following the correct submission by coaches. Only the top time or best distance for one competitor will be listed.
15. An athlete who meets or exceeds the qualifying standard in a particular event at a regular season qualifying meet or at a divisional meet may enter that event at state. For the purposes of this rule, a regular season qualifying meet is defined as a meet in which a school participates with its track and field team as part of its regular season schedule. Invitational meets hosted by MHSA member schools, including invitation-only meets, shall be considered qualifying meets. Meets attended by only a portion of a school's team for the purpose of providing competition opportunities to selected athletes shall not be considered qualifying meets. An athlete using a qualifying standard to advance to state in a particular event must be entered in the divisional meet for that event but is not required to participate. The entry counts toward the event limitation of five per athlete as well as toward the school's limitation of five contestants per event.
16. Relay teams must participate at the Divisional meet in order to advance to the State Meet. Teams that achieved a Qualifying Standard during the year will advance to state as long as they participate at Divisionals. Relay teams that have not met the Qualifying Standard prior to the divisional meet, will advance to the State meet provided they enter the divisional meet, compete and they finish the event.
17. Distances in field events from longest/highest to shortest will be seeded from an athlete's best marks. This is to include a Divisional mark or qualifying mark. The top 8 places in the Divisional meet will advance to state. At the divisional meet following completion of the final flight, for field events, the top 10 and all ties will advance to finals.
18. Coaches are responsible for and will be required to enter athletes via an on-line service for all athletes and all events by Wednesday at 7:00pm of divisional week. Divisional meet managers will provide instructions for entering athletes on line. Coaches are required to provide the athlete's best marks. It is imperative that a coach double-checks their entries.
19. Preliminaries will only be run for the 100-meter dash, 200-meter dash, 100-meter hurdles and 110-meter hurdles. The preliminary will only be run if the total number of qualifiers exceeds 10 runners in an event for a 10-lane track or 8 for an 8-lane track. Although unlikely, if there is no need for multiple preliminary races, the first scheduled preliminary race is the final.
20. Races with preliminaries will be seeded by time and will be divided evenly with competitors between the number of heats. Beginning with the regular season and divisional meet in the spring of 2026 the following advancement process will be used for events that include preliminary races including the divisional meet. The top 10 fastest times will advance to finals regardless of the number of preliminary heats. MHSA must approve such a change for the state meet.
21. Unless item 20 (above) is approved by MHSA. the following advancement formula will be used for the state meet: The number taken from preliminary races to finals at the State meet are as follows and will be seeded in the finals by time.

10-Lane Track	
2 heats	Top four places in each heat and next best two times
3 heats	Top two places in each heat and next best four times
4 heats	Top two places in each heat and next best two times
5 heats	First place and next best five times
8-Lane Track	
2 heats	Top three places in each heat and next best two times
3 heats	Top two places in each heat and next best two times
4 heats	First place in each heat and next best four times

5 heats	First place and next best three times

22. At the State and Divisional meets, entries and seeding for finals will be determined by times from preliminary races.
23. At state, athletes are limited to 5 events plus 2 relays.
24. Out of state meets that meet the criteria for a qualifying meet will be considered qualifying meets and it is the responsibility of the team's coach to have the qualifying standard verification form signed by meet management. If there are less than 17 events because the specific state does not sanction the same number or types of events, it is still considered a qualifying meet if FAT is used.
25. In the 800 and 1600-meter runs, the field will be allowed a maximum of 30 racers and minimum of 8 racers per heat. For example, if there were 34 athletes in the 1600m race, there will be two heats with 8 athletes in the first heat and 26 in the second heat. The 3200meter will have one race at the Divisional meet.
26. At state and divisional meets, field events finals will be reseeded for flights following preliminaries.
27. If an athlete and/or relay team is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct at the divisional meet, the athlete and/or relay team cannot use a qualifying mark in the specific event to compete at state.
28. In an event where there are timed finals, If the number of athletes is greater than the number of lanes, the last heat will be filled if we have at least 4 runners in the heat preceding. Lane guidelines are as follows:

10-Lane Track (for timed finals)		
Total Athletes	First Heat	Last Heat
14	4	10
13	4	9
11	4	7

8-Lane Track (for timed finals & prelims)		
Total Athletes	First Heat	Last Heat
14	6	8
13	5	8
10	2	8

29. Seeding of preliminary and final races

10 Lane Track		**8 Lane Track**	
1st Best Time	Lane 5	1st Best Time	Lane 4
2nd Best Time	Lane 6	2nd Best Time	Lane 5
3rd Best Time	Lane 4	3rd Best Time	Lane 3
4th Best Time	Lane 7	4th Best Time	Lane 6
5th Best Time	Lane 3	5th Best Time	Lane 2
6th Best Time	Lane 8	6th Best Time	Lane 7
7th Best Time	Lane 2	7th Best Time	Lane 1
8th Best Time	Lane 9	8th Best Time	Lane 8
9th Best Time	Lane 10		
10th Best Time	Lane 11		

30. International Start – all long-distance races including the 800m, 1600m and 3200m races will begin using a double waterfall start with a 1-turn stagger. The fastest 1/3 will start out and will be seeded using the same criteria as if they were in alleys, 1st seed - 3A, etc.
31. 5 Alley Track

Alley	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Seed Rank 1st Row	5, 10, 15	3, 8, 13	1, 6, 11	2, 7, 12	4, 9, 14
Seed Rank 2nd Row	20, 25, 30	18, 23, 28	16, 21, 26	17, 22, 27	19, 24, 29

32. Preliminary flights in field events for the shot put, discus, long jump, triple jump, and javelin will range from 6-9 athletes per flight depending on the number of entries. The top 10 preliminary finishers will advance to finals and will participate in the reverse order of their finish. The 10th best preliminary competitor competes first in the finals.
33. Reviewing data from the last 7 years at state, 5-year average from Divisional meets, common sense and coaches' input, the AA Activity Directors created standards in June of 2008. In the summer of 2010, marks were reviewed and established by receiving input from coaches and reviewing the number of qualifiers in each event. This past year, the Activity Directors adjusted standards if the number of qualifiers exceeded 10 or were 4 or less. Relays were the only exception, as the times remained the same as established 2 years ago.
34. Once established, the qualifying standards will be reviewed via the AA Activity Directors every 2 years. The next schedule review is following the 2026 season.

AA Qualifying Standards				
Previous	**Girls**	**Updated 6/27/2024**	**Boys**	**Previous**
	2024-2025	Events	2024-2025	
	13	100 Meters	11.25	11.3
	26.7	200 Meters	22.8	
1:00	1:01	400 Meters	51.8	
	2.24.0	800 Meters	2:00	2:01
	5:23	1600 Meters	4:30	4:34
	11:50	3200 Meters	10:00	
	16.3	110/110 M Hurdles	15.7	
	48.5	300 M Hurdles	41.5	
	35'3"	Shot Put	48"	
	113'	Discus	146"	
	113'	Javelin	165'	170'
	5'2"	High Jump	6'2"	
	16'6"	Long Jump	21'	
	34'	Triple Jump	42'	
	10'	Pole Vault	13'0"	13'6"
	50.60	400 Meter Relay	43.8	
	4.12.0	1600 Meter Relay	3.30.0	
All relay teams will advance to State if they meet the following provisional prior to the divisional meet. Those who did not meet this time must compete in and complete the event at divisionals.				
	52.8	400 Meter Relay	45.8	
	4:25	1600 Meter Relay	3:42	

2600 - GENERAL RULES - WRESTLING (BOYS & GIRLS)

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity: and the specific rules for the AA Wrestling program, Section XX, as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by these guidelines below.
C. Night Before Weigh-ins: All weigh-ins for regular season 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. The format and time for Friday night weigh-ins will be determined by the host school.
D. MHSA has issued the following guidance for wrestling regarding genders in competitions and practices effective 5/6/2024.
    1. COMPETITIONS - Girls will only wrestle girls during regular and post season competitions
    2. PRACTICES - Girls will be allowed to wrestle boys from the same school in practices and warm-ups under the following criteria:
        a. There are no girls on the wrestling team of similar weight and/or competitive level.
        b. There is a boy of a similar weight class.
        c. There is a boy of a similar competitive level.

2610 - CONFERENCE RULES

2612 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar. EXCEPTION: All AA schools will begin the Winter season on the Monday before Thanksgiving. All AA schools will have a dead period from Thanksgiving Day until the Monday following Thanksgiving. No open gyms or practices of any type may take place during the conference Thanksgiving Dead Period.

2614 - ADMINISTRATION - DUAL MEETS

A. Dual meets shall be conducted in accordance with MHSA and National Federation rules unless modified by these guidelines.
B. Dual meets shall be wrestled by random draw.
C. There will be no breaks during the wrestling match for ceremonies and/or performances.
D. Dual meet weigh-ins shall be conducted according to National Federation Rules.
E. Weigh-ins for 2-day invitational tournaments may take place at a team's home site on the night before competition and certified by and administrator. Lineups must be sent to the tournament by 6 pm that evening.

2616 - AWARDS

A. All awards presented must be in accordance with MHSA awards policies.
B. A traveling team trophy will be awarded to the Divisional Champion each year.
C. Individual medals will be awarded to places 1 through 6. No ribbons.
D. AA State Tournament awards will be given according to MHSA awards policies. The champion in each weight class will also be presented with the wall bracket for that weight class.

2620 - DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENT

A. At the 2025 June Meeting, the AD's and Principals approved a plan to move to a one-day seeding meet for Wrestling with a scheduled 10:00 AM start on Saturday.
B. Two Divisional tournaments, Eastern and Western, will be conducted to determine the qualifiers and their seeding into the State Tournament. These tournaments will take place the weekend prior to the State Tournament.
C. Schools assigned to the Eastern Divisional Tournament are: Belgrade, Billings Senior, Billings Skyview, Billings West, Bozeman High, Gallatin High, Great Falls High, and Great Falls Russell.
D. Schools assigned to the Western Divisional Tournament are: Butte, Helena High, Helena Capital, Glacier, Flathead, Missoula Big Sky, Missoula Hellgate, and Missoula Sentinel.
E. Each school is allowed to enter two (2) wrestlers per weight class. All entries must be completed by Thursday evening at 7 PM – no exceptions. The only change that can take place must be approved by the MHSA in case of injury or sickness. The top eight wrestlers in each weight class will advance to the State Tournament. A sixteen-wrestler bracket will be used.
F. This will be a true Divisional Tournament. Team scores will be kept and a traveling team trophy will be awarded to the champion. Individual awards will be presented at the end of the Tournament.
G. The Divisional Tournament will begin at 10:00 AM on Saturday morning. A coaches' seeding meeting will be held at 8 AM and will be concluded by the start of the first matches. All rounds will run consecutively with no breaks, but we will adhere to the minimum time required between matches.
H. The Suggested time schedule is as follows:

Thursday	7:00 pm	Entries deadline
		Home Weigh-Ins
Saturday	8:00 AM	Coaches Meeting
	10:00 am	Rounds 1 & 2 (Quarterfinals)
		Rounds 3 & 4 (1st and 2nd Consolation)
		Rounds 5 & 6 (Semifinals, Consolation, Quarters)
		Round 7 (Consolation Semifinals)
		Round 8 (5th and 6th, Losers R5, 7th, 8th, Losers R4)
		Round 9 (Consolation & Championship)

I. In the event it is needed in the future, the following suggested time schedule will be followed for a two day wrestling seeding meet.

Thursday	7:00 pm	Entries deadline
		Home Weigh-Ins
Friday	12:00 pm	Coaches Meeting
	2:00 pm	Rounds 1 & 2 (Quarterfinals)
	4:30 pm	Rounds 3 & 4 (1st and 2nd Consolation)
	TBA	Weigh-Ins – time and format to be announced
Saturday	9:00 am	Rounds 5 & 6 (Semifinals, Consolation, Quarters)
		Round 7 (Consolation Semifinals)
		Round 8 (5th and 6th, Losers R5, 7th, 8th, Losers R4)
		Round 9 (Consolation & Championship)

J. Referees will be assigned to the Divisional Tournament by the MHSA using the same process as for A & BC Divisional Tournaments. A minimum of four referees shall be used for each tournament.
K. Weigh-ins for the Divisional tournaments shall be conducted according to National Federation.

L. Seeding criteria for the Divisional tournaments shall be as follows:
   1. Each head coach must make available to the seeding tournament director, and each of the other head coaches, a complete record of all AA varsity matches for each wrestler entered in the tournament. This record must include the date, opponent's name, opponent's school, weight class, outcome of the bout (win, loss, draw) and score or time of fall.
   2. Seeding information must be received by the seeding tournament manager no later than the end of the day on Monday of the seeding tournament week.
   3. Up to 8 wrestlers shall be seeded in each weight class. If one student from a school is seeded on one side of the bracket, the other wrestler from that school must be seeded on the other side of the bracket unless the 2 wrestlers from the same school are ranked in the top 4. The top four (4) wrestlers shall be seeded regardless of school designation.
   4. A wrestler must have weighed in at least 50% of his/her matches at the weight at which he or she will compete in at the seeding tournament.
   5. All matches against AA opponents in varsity duals and tournaments shall count for seeding. Matches between a varsity wrestler from one school and a "JV" wrestler from another school shall count for seeding, for both wrestlers, if wrestled during a varsity dual meet, varsity dual meet tournament, or varsity invitational tournament. A minimum of TEN (10) varsity AA matches shall be required to qualify a wrestler for seeding.
   6. As the first order of business prior to the seeding meeting on Thursday evening, coaches must verify their entries in each weight class in the order determined by a computer-generated draw.
   7. Seeding criteria, and their priority order, shall be as follows:
      a. Win/loss percentage against all AA opponents in AA varsity competition. Draws count as ½ win and ½ loss.
      b. Head-to-head results between the wrestlers.
      c. If no head-to-head, the greatest number of AA varsity wins.
      d. Win/loss percentage against common opponents.
      e. Highest returning state placer.
      f. Majority vote of the head coaches.
      g. To insure the fairest possible seeding, the coach of a wrestler may make a motion that his wrestler be seeded above another wrestler ahead of him in the criteria. A two-thirds vote of the head coaches (4 of 6 and 5 of 7) is required to make the change.
      h. The following factors should be considered for discussion, which is limited to two minutes by each coach.
         i. Most of the wrestler's losses were to higher seeds.
         ii. The wrestler, due to scheduling, did not have the opportunity to wrestle seven AA matches.
      i. There may be occasional cases in which, for some bona-fide reason such as illness or injury, an outstanding wrestler does not have the opportunity to compete in the required number of AA matches. If a majority of the head coaches agree that a wrestler should be seeded, his seed position will be determined by a majority vote of the head coaches.
   8. Team divisional places will be determined in the same manner as the State Tournament is scored. The top 14 scorers count for teams scores.
   9. A traveling team trophy will be presented to the Divisional team champion each year.
   10. Ticket Prices for the Divisional Tournament will be set as follows:
      a. Adults – Day Pass - $12.00
      b. Adult – Tournament Pass - $20.00
      c. Student – Day Pass - $8.00

d. Student – Tournament Pass - $14.00

2622 - STATE TOURNAMENT

A. Qualifiers for the State AA Tournament will be placed on the tournament bracket as indicated in the MHSA Handbook wrestling section under OFFICIAL PAIRINGS FOR Class AA and Class A Wrestling Tournaments.
B. Wrestlers will automatically score full bonus points against teammates in the state tournament when wrestling against each other.
C. The top 14 scorers for each team will be counted toward the State Tournament Team Championship.

2800 - GENERAL RULES - VOLLEYBALL

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws, rules and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.
B. In addition to the above, the general rules for this activity; and the specific rules for the AA Volleyball program as printed in the handbook shall also apply unless modified by these guidelines.
C. Each individual participant is limited to two (2) matches, at most two (2) consecutive levels with an eight (8) game limit for consecutive levels.
D. Varsity Warm-ups will be conducted in a 8-4-4-2-2 format, total = 20 minutes.
E. Sub-varsity Warm-ups will be conducted in a 3-4-4-2-2 format, total = 15 minutes.
F. Serving: A coin flip prior to the first game will be held to establish serving in game #1. Serving will then alternate through the first four games of the match. If a game five is needed, a coin flip prior to the game will determine who serves the final game.
G. Bench Rotation: Teams will switch benches after each game of a match.
H. Student crowds are to be located on the same side as their school's starting team bench.
I. All sub-varsity contests that take place during the cross conference double headers that take place on the first weekend of competition will be Best of 3. Varsity matches will remain at Best of 5.
J. Beginning during the 2022-2023 season, all sub-varsity warmups will be 15 minutes in duration. Varsity warm-ups will remain at 20 minutes.

2810 - CONFERENCE RULES

Conferences	
West	**East**
Butte High School	Belgrade High School
Big Sky High School	Billings Senior High School
Glacier High School	Billings Skyview High School
Capital High School	Billings West High School
Flathead High School	Bozeman High School
Helena High School	Gallatin High School
Hellgate High School	C. M. Russell High School
Sentinel High School	Great Falls High School

2812 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

2814 - ADMINISTRATION

A. The starting times will be established by the home school.
B. Warm-up times: Varsity Warm-ups will be 20 minutes and sub varsity 15 minutes.
C. Locker room must be available to visiting teams at least one hour prior to match time.
D. Visiting teams will be treated with courtesy and receive adequate protection before, during and after the match. No towels will be provided.
E. Visiting team will be responsible for care of their own valuables.
F. Home team will provide six volleyballs for visitor's warm-up.
G. A statistician will compile the weekly stats.

2820 - SEEDING AND TIE BREAKING PROVISIONS

A. All ties (whether two team, three team, four team or more) would be settled on the basis of head-to-head competition between the teams involved in conference play. This means their record between the teams tied as illustrated by the example below.

B. If a multiple team tie (three or more teams) exists in the loss column for conference play, the team that has defeated all others involved in the tie will be seeded the highest. If two of the three teams tied have beaten the third, that team will be eliminated/thus taking one team out the bottom. The procedure with the remaining teams will start over. Once a team is seeded, the team that was kicked out the bottom will be considered again and the proceeding will start over from the top of the criteria. The tie-breaker should be broken between the 3 teams involved head to head.

For Example:

Team A	3-1	Team A is 1st, then we take teams B and Team C and start the tie breaker procedure over between these two teams.
Team B	2-2	
Team C	1-3	

If there is a four-way tie and there is a difference it may look like this:

Team A	4-2	Team A would be seeded #1 or highest among tied teams, then the tie break process would start over with the tied teams of B, C, and D. We would then break that tie starting with the original criteria for breaking ties. The remaining two teams would again work through the original criteria to determine the next best seed.
Team B	3-3	
Team C	3-3	
Team D	2-4	

C. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then play against the rest of the division from the top to bottom shall be utilized skipping other ties until higher seeds have been determined.

D. If a tie still exists, the team with the highest win/loss percentage against all AA opponents will receive the higher seed.

E. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then play against a common non-conference AA opponent at a common site (common city) will be used.

F. If a tie still exists a coin flip will be used.

G. Post Season Format

1. Conference final standings will be determined by regular season conference play and tie-breaking procedures.
2. Volleyball teams will advance to the state tournament in the following manner:
    a. Conference Seeding: All teams will be seeded into the playoff structure as a result of conference standings and/or AA Playoff tie breaking provisions.
    b. For each conference champion (East and West) and runner up will automatically qualify for the state tournament.
    c. Teams finishing seventh or eighth in the conference will end their season at the end of the regular season. They will not advance to post season play.
3. Play-in games will be held for all remaining teams using the established structure based on the final regular-season standings of the eastern and western conferences. Play-in games may be scheduled on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or Saturday of the week prior to the state tournament. The host school will determine the date and start time.
4. In Volleyball the number 3 team from each conference will host the number 6 team from the same conference. The number 4 team from each conference will host the number 5 team from the same

conference. Winners of these play-in games will advance to state level play with the highest remaining seed entering as the conferences #3 seed and the lowest remaining seed entering as the conferences #4 seed.

5. Playoff Structure

Play-In Games	
State Tournament Play-In round, to be played on Thursday, Friday or Saturday following the last week of the Regular Season	
1E, 2E, 1W, 2W advance to the state tournament bracket in their respective seed	
7E, 8E, 7W, 8W season ends	
Game 1	5W at 4W winner advance to state tournament
Game 2	6E at 3E winner advance to state tournament
Game 3	5E at 4E winner advance to state tournament
Game 4	6W at 3W winner advance to state tournament

2900 - GENERAL RULES - SOFTBALL

A. This activity shall be conducted in accordance with the by-laws and regulations of the MHSA as printed in the Official Handbook.

2910 - CONFERENCE RULES

2912 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. The season shall run in accordance with the MHSA 3-season calendar.

2914 - ADMINISTRATION

A. It is recommended that a certified trainer or a physician be on the field for all conference games and this trainer or physician, at some time prior to the opening inning, make his presence known to the visiting coaches.
B. The home team will wear dark colored jerseys and the visiting team light colored jerseys (If you have two sets).
C. For conference games in which both games will be played at one location, the real home team will be home on the scoreboard for the first game and the traveling team will be the home team on the scoreboard for the second game.
D. Given the 8-team state tournament format and play in game postseason format, the regular season will be capped at 20 games.
E. Beginning with the 2024 season MHSA has removed the coach's option for following mercy run rules. A score differential of 15 runs or more following the end of the 3rd or 4th inning **OR** a differential of 10 runs or more following the end of the 5th or 6th inning will end the game. The home half of the impacted inning will not be played if the home team is leading by the prescribed margin.
F. Bat Testing Program: The AA Conference will be a using the following bat testing protocol beginning in the 2020-2021 season:
    1. All bats desired to be used by one or more players on the team, junior varsity and varsity, must be tested and certified prior to the start of the season.
    2. Testing and Certification will be done by the District or School AD using the GS SSL bat compression tester. www.barrelcompression.com.
    3. A bat that is not included on the most updated, non-linear bat list, must read more than 1550 psi to be a legal bat. If the psi falls in the red zone of the tester, between 500 psi and 1550 psi, it is not a legal bat. A bat that is included on the non-linear bat list, must meet or exceed the bat compression cut-off as listed on the most updated, non-linear bat list.
    4. A bat that reads more than 1550 psi or that is listed on the non-linear bat list and meets or exceeds the bat compression cut-off, will be certified with a nonremovable sticker placed on the bat.
    5. Any bat used during the game must have the appropriate certified sticker. If the bat has not been properly certified, it will not be allowed to be used and will be confiscated and turned over to game administration.
    6. A coach cannot, at any time, request that a bat being used by the opposing team, be re-certified. Once the approved sticker is placed on the bat, the bat is legal and may be used.
    7. Bats will be re-certified prior to the State Tournaments by tournament officials. Bat testing at the state tournament may occur the evening prior to the tournament begins if the tournament manager chooses.
    8. The AA conference will provide the stickers to be used for certification.

G. Post Season Format

1. Softball teams will advance to the state tournament in the following manner:

a. Conference Seeding: All teams will be seeded into the playoff structure as a result of conference standings and/or AA Playoff tie breaking provisions.
b. For each conference champion (East and West) and runner up will automatically qualify for the state tournament.
c. Teams finishing seventh or eighth in the conference will end their season at the end of the regular season. They will not advance to post season play.
d. Play-in games will be held for all remaining teams based on eastern and western conference final regular season standings: Play-in games will be on Thursday, Friday or Saturday the week prior to state tournament play. Date and start time of the play-in game rests with the host school but mutual agreement between participating schools is encouraged.
e. In Softball the number 3 team from each conference will host the number 6 team from the same conference. The number 4 team from each conference will host the number 5 team from the same conference. Winners of these play-in games will advance to state level play with the highest remaining seed entering as the conferences #3 seed and the lowest remaining seed entering as the conferences #4 seed.

H. Playoff Structure

Play-In Games	
State Tournament Play-In round, to be played on Thursday, Friday or Saturday following the last week of the Regular Season. For softball, PLAY-IN games will be a two-game series. The higher seed needing to win one of the games to advance to state and the lower seeding needing to win both games to advance to state. Host school will be home team for first game of series, traveling team will be designated the home team for second game if it is needed. Teams will stay in their respective dugouts for both games.	
1E, 2E, 1W, 2W advance to the state tournament bracket in their respective seed	
7E, 8E, 7W, 8W season ends	
Game 1	5W at 4W winner advance to state tournament
Game 2	6E at 3E winner advance to state tournament
Game 3	5E at 4E winner advance to state tournament
Game 4	6W at 3W winner advance to state tournament

I. Tie Breaking Provisions
1. All ties (whether two team, three team, or four team) would be settled on the basis of head-to-head competition between the teams involved in conference play.
2. All ties (whether two team, three team, four team or more) would be settled on the basis of head-to-head competition between the teams involved in conference play. If a multiple team tie (three or more teams) exists in the loss column for conference play, the team that has defeated all others involved in the tie will be seeded the highest. If two of the three teams tied have beaten the third, that team will be eliminated/thus taking one team out the bottom. The procedure with the remaining teams will start over. Once a team is seeded, the team that was kicked out the bottom will be considered again and the proceeding will start over from the top of the criteria.
3. This means their record between the teams tied as illustrated by the example below. The tie breaker should be broken between the 3 teams involved head to head.
   For example:

Team A	3-1	Team A is 1st, then we take teams B and Team C and start the tie breaker procedure over between these two teams.
Team B	2-2	
Team C	1-3	

If there is a four-way tie and there is a difference it may look like this:

Team A	4-2	Team A would be seeded #1 or highest among tied teams, then the tie break process would start over with the tied teams of B, C, and D. We would then break that tie starting with the original criteria for breaking ties. The remaining two teams would again work through the original criteria to determine the next best seed.
Team B	3-3	
Team C	3-3	
Team D	2-4	

4. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then play against the rest of the division from the top to bottom shall be utilized skipping other ties until higher seeds have been determined.
5. If a tie still exists after that criterion is used, the total run differential in contests between the tied teams will be used. A maximum of 10 runs per contest will be allowed. The team with the highest run differential between the tied teams will be awarded the higher seed. A forfeit on any tied teams schedule will be counted for the maximum 10 run differential.
6. If a tie still exists after that criterion is used, the run differential for the tied teams in all contests versus all other teams within their conference (East/West) will be used. A maximum of 10 runs per contest will be allowed. The team with the highest run differential across the entire conference between the tied teams will be awarded the higher seed. A forfeit on any tied teams schedule will be counted for the maximum 10 run differential**.**
7. If a tie still exists, the team with the highest win/loss percentage against all AA opponents will receive the higher seed.
8. If the tie still exists after that criterion is used, then play against a common non-conference 'AA' opponent at a common site (common city) will be used.
9. If a tie still exists a coin flip will be used.

J. **State Tournament Format** – Beginning in 2025, the AA State Tournament will be a two and a half day, 8-Team True Double-Elimination bracket using two fields with the following suggested timelines:

Round 1 - Thursday	
Suggested game times – 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm	
ODD years the East #1 seed and West #2 will play the 2:00 games and in **EVEN** years the West #1 seed and East #2 will play at 2:00	
Game 1	1E vs 4W
Game 2	2W vs 3E
Game 3	1W vs 4E
Game 4	2E vs 3W
Round 2 - Friday	
Suggested game times - 10:00 am and 12:00 pm	
Game 5	Winner Game 1 vs Winner Game 2 10:00 am
Game 6	Winner Game 3 vs Winner Game 4 10:00 am
Game 7	Loser Game 1 vs Loser Game 2 12:00 pm
Game 8	Loser Game 3 vs Loser Game 1 12:00 pm
Round 3 - Friday	

Suggested game time - 2:00 pm	
Game 9	Loser Game 5 vs Winner Game 8
Game 10	Loser game 6 vs Winner Game 7
Round 4 - Friday	
Suggested game time - 5:00 pm	
Game 11 – Semifinal	Winner Game 5 vs Winner Game 6
Game 12 – 3rd & 4th	Winner Game 9 vs Winner Game 10
Round 5 - Saturday	
Suggested game time - 10:00 AM	
Game 13 – 2nd & 3rd	Loser game 11 vs Winner Game 12
Round 6 - Saturday	
State Championship game time - 12:00 PM	
Game 14	Winner Game 11 vs Winner Game 13
Round 7 - Saturday	
State Championship If Needed Game	
Game 15	To be played immediately after game 15 if first loss for the loser of game 14

K. State Championship Game Home Team Designation
1. A request for consideration will be made to MHSA to designate the winner of Game 11 at the state tournament (the undefeated team) as the home team for game 14 (Championship Game). Additionally, for game 15 (the If Needed Game), the winning team of game 14 will be designated the home team.

L. Officials
1. For State Tournament play, officials will be selected by the MHSA.
2. For Play-In Games, officials will be selected by MHSA.

M. Rosters
1. Rosters will be sent to each Athletic Director and opposing coach, after the varsity rosters have been finalized.
2. Rosters include
    a. Players listed in numerical order
    b. Name (last name first)
    c. Position
    d. Year in school

N. Decisions for the type of balls to be used for the State Tournament (Dudley, DeBeer, etc.) will be made by the MHSA in accordance with ball contracts.

3000 - MUSIC ACTIVITIES

A. Applicability of MHSA Rules and Regulations.
   1. All MHSA Rules and Regulations are to apply.
   2. Certain guidelines below illustrate areas in which modification of existing MHSA Rules and Regulations should be proposed by the AA Conference Principals.

B. NASSP and National Federation of High School Activities
   1. Care should be taken that out-of-state travel provides appropriate educational experiences.
   2. Relevant Out-Of-State Music Trips
      a. The Biennial All-Northwest Division Conference (MENC and NWACDA).
      b. Occasional trips individually approved by local schools.
   3. Out-Of-Town Music Trips
      a. All such trips are to be made at the request of the local director, discretion of the building principal, approval of the local Board of Trustees.
   4. Relevant In-State Music Trips
      a. All-State Music Festival (late October).
      b. District and State Music Festivals (April and May).
      c. In-State Invitational Music Festivals:
         i. In-state invitational AA band, choir, & orchestra festivals are encouraged as a means of allowing the students in the state's largest music programs to hear one another and work under accomplished guest conductors. Host cities and schools should be given latitude in setting dates, hiring guest conductors and setting schedules.
         ii. Invitations are encouraged on a more local basis for training choirs, bands and orchestras that would involve smaller schools as well.
      d. Trips in support of athletic events.
      e. Exchange Concerts.

C. Organizational Responsibility for Invitational Festivals
   1. A host organizational chairman shall be designated with consent of the host principal, and will engage guest directors upon soliciting advice from affected directors.
   2. Music selected should be assessed by the organizing chairman as to availability, educational and musical worth, and appropriateness to the capabilities, instrumentation or voicing, and size of the groups involved. The organizing chairman bears the responsibility for adequately conveying these perimeters to guest directors making selections of music.
   3. Directors should be notified by the host organizational chairman of repertoire selections. Affected directors who wish to register objections to repertoire should do so constructively and within 3 weeks of notification.
   4. Invitational Festivals shall be self-financing in the sense that all relevant costs shall be equally divided among participating schools except where the number of students makes a direct difference, i.e., lunches, etc. The host AA school and its principal shall be accountable to other participating schools for all financial transactions.
   5. Program lengths shall be manageable and special acknowledgments shall be as brief and unpretentious as possible. Public presentation of gifts is not recommended.
   6. Guest directors for invitational festivals shall generally not be paid more than $500.00 per day of work plus expenses.
   7. Hosts should be cognizant of budgetary limitations. However, in selecting performance venues, acoustics, aesthetics and audience comfort should be given top consideration. Rehearsal sites need not meet the same standards as performance venues, and cost containment should take precedence over acoustics/aesthetic considerations.

D. Recommended guidelines for establishing priorities among conflicting activities:
   1. It is recommended that activities of statewide nature in the AA Conference be given priority to other activities where conflicts arise.
   2. It is recommended that all activities' personnel be acquainted annually with this guideline.

E. Recommended policy for encroachment on dates
   1. It is recommended that no activities of a statewide nature be scheduled by the AA Conference against the proposed dates for All-State and AA Invitational Festivals or District Music Festivals.
   2. It is recommended that no music exchange concerts nor any invitational music festivals be scheduled against other regular statewide AA activities.
   3. It is recommended that no football game be scheduled in the AA Conference opposite All-State Music Festival (Friday evening of Teachers' Convention) in the same city.
   4. It is recommended that marching bands and pep bands with students participating in All-State Festival will not be required to perform the weekend of All-State.
   5. It is recommended that no AA activity be scheduled opposite any NW-MENC Divisional Meet.

F. Rotation of All-State Festival
   1. It is recommended that the All-State Festival rotate in sponsorship among high school in the following four cities: Billings, Missoula, Bozeman, and Great Falls on a 4-year cycle.

G. Uniform Policy Regarding District Music Festivals
   1. All AA Conference schools will actively participate in District Music Festivals.

H. Uniform Policy Regarding State Solo and Ensemble Festivals
   1. It is recommended that participation in the State Solo and Ensemble Festivals be a local option.

I. Student Expectations
   1. Drinking of alcoholic beverages, use of tobacco and the use of non- prescription drugs will not be tolerated under any other circumstances or premises. If the school has a code-of-conduct, this will be in effect during the entire festival.
   2. Curfews while on trips will be imposed at the discretion of directors.

J. Dress at Rehearsals and Performances
   1. Boys: Slacks, neat shirt, dress shoes and socks.
   2. Girls: Dresses, skirts, or dress slacks; blouses, shirts or sweaters; shoes.
   3. Concert Dress: Complete uniform or formal attire.

4000 - GENERAL RULES - FORENSICS

A. The MHSA handbook is the basis for all guidelines. Changes in guidelines shall be initiated by the AA advisory committee after a survey of the coaches.

4010 - CONFERENCE RULES

A. For all AA issues, there will be one vote per member school.

4012 - SEASON RUN TIME

A. First semester beginning in mid-October and culminating in mid-February.

4014 - ADMINISTRATION

A. Debate
   1. The number of preliminary rounds will be no less than four (4) in a two day tournament; octa-finals will be optional. Invitational tournament debate competition may move from the last preliminary round to quarter finals. Competition will be single elimination from the quarter finals on.
   2. Invitational tournament directors recommend use of the debate team ranking list published by the Debate Committee to determine first round pairings at the AA State meet.

B. Judges
   1. Every effort should be made to acquire qualified judges at all tournaments, especially the state tournament.
   2. The tournament director at the state tournament should, in selecting judges, avoid conflicts of interest by not using teachers who know home town competitors or by using parents or close friends of any of the competitors. Judges should be made aware that they are obligated to disqualify themselves if such a conflict of interest occurs.
   3. Unless a person has been out of a Montana high school for at least one academic year, he/she may not be used to judge at the state tournament unless approved by a vote of the coaches attending.
   4. Every effort should be made to keep judges from knowing the identity of the school from which the contestant comes.
   5. As soon as a round is tabulated, results should be available for coaches.

C. Tournament
   1. Tournament directors must include all sanctioned speech events but have the option of including selected experimental events at invitational speech tournaments.
   2. Tournament directors must use the Sweepstakes scoring system for events as outlined in the Forensic and Drama handbook. Experimental events shall not exceed regular event contest points.
   3. Tournament directors have the option of restricting the size of their own tournaments by inviting the school of their choice.
   4. If tabulation assignments or judging assignments made to specific AA coaches or their assistants are not carried out to the satisfaction of the tournament director, the school may lose all sweepstakes points. Extenuating circumstances will be judged by the tournament director.
   5. Individual contestants or teams which are dropped at registration will result in no more than a twenty dollar ($20.00) fine for each person dropped.
   6. If a student places in the top 4, they are considered all state.
   7. AA schools shall be allowed to attend an out-of-state meet on a date scheduled for a major AA Tournament.

D. Meetings

1. There shall be a Spring meeting which shall either precede or be in conjunction with the week-end of the Spring AA principals' meeting.
2. The AA Forensic Committee shall meet with the AA Principals' forensic committee concerning action and recommendations of AA business.
3. Competitive Drama - Not under AA Guidelines - See MHSA Handbook.

4030 - TOURNAMENT ROTATION

Year	**Regional**	**NSDA-East**
2020	Belgrade	Billings
2021	Belgrade	Billings
2022	Belgrade	Billings
2023	Belgrade	Likely Bozeman
2024	Belgrade	Billings
2025	Likely Great Falls	Billings

Western half of the state is much more up for grabs because they do bids for NSDA-West year by year.

State Tournament Rotation			
Year	City	Year	City
2021	Butte	2031	Billings
2022	Helena	2032	Missoula
2023	Billings	2033	Belgrade
2024	Missoula	2034	Kalispell
2025	Belgrade	2035	Great Falls
2026	Kalispell	2036	Butte
2027	Great Falls	2037	Bozeman
2028	Butte	2038	Helena
2029	Bozeman	2039	Billings
2030	Helena	2040	Missoula

SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES

The 16 Montana AA High Schools have adopted the following guidelines regarding sportsmanship and expected behaviors at school events.

A. Only positive spirit signs and cheers are allowed.
B. Appropriate handheld signs will be allowed if approved by administration.
C. It is expected that all will stand, remove hats, and remain respectfully silent for the national anthem.
D. Students must be fully clothed. Body painting is not a substitute for clothing.
E. Clothing is to be appropriate for a school event; wearing school colors is encouraged.
F. Derogatory cheers, heckling or negative signs or comments to referees, players, coaches, half-time performers or opposing fans are not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
G. No singling out of players or profiling of athletes or referees.
H. Disrespectful behavior of any kind will not be tolerated.
I. Oversized school flags are allowed at outdoor events only and must be waved in front of the home fans, never in front of the opponent's fans.
J. Failure to comply with these AA Conference Sportsmanship Guidelines may result in disciplinary action to include being asked to leave the premises, loss of privileges to attend activities, legal consequences, school discipline to include detention or suspension, forfeiture of activity ticket, or any combination thereof.

AA CONFERENCE NETWORK

The Montana AA Conference has established the Montana AA Conference Network. This network will use the following procedures to guide media coverage of all AA Sports beginning with the 2018-2019 Season:

A. All AA Conference schools will be a part of the NFHS Network, live-streaming all football, volleyball and basketball games, all levels, that take place at their main outdoor football venues and within their main or auxiliary gyms.
B. Live streaming will be done using the PLAY ON SPORTS Pixellot system.
C. All radio coverage of AA Conference varsity games will be allowed per current contracts or per newly written contracts as have been negotiated by individual schools in the past.
D. Radio coverage can sync into the live streaming of varsity games as approved by the radio sponsor.
E. All television coverage of AA Conference varsity games will be allowed per current contracts or per newly written contracts as have been negotiated by individual schools in the past.
F. All media coverage contracts including radio, television and live-streaming, must be approved by the MSHA.
G. All financial returns from the AA Conference Network in conjunction with the NFHS Network will be distributed by the NFHS Network to individual schools.
H. All AA Conference schools commit to being a part of the AA Conference for a period of 3 years. After the 3rd year, the AA Conference will revisit the Network guidelines.

MONTANA AA CUP AWARD

Montana's AA Conference will award what will be called the "AA CUP". This award will go to the AA school that earns the most points based on the final standings of both boys and girls of each sport. The AA CUP standings will be determined based on the following guidelines:

A. Points
    1. First Place = 16 points
    2. Second Place = 15 points
    3. Third Place 14 points

4. Sixteenth place = 1 point

B. Teams that tie will equally share the points that are allocated to their places of finish.
C. A school that does not offer a sport will receive last place points for that sport.
D. At the AA Principal and AD meetings each June, the AA CUP traveling trophy will be awarded to the school that earns the most point.
E. The school that wins the trophy will be responsible for getting the trophy engraved and for bringing the trophy to the next year's meeting.