

**Board Policy – Approved at the June 1, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Needs Rep Assembly Action – Bylaw Changes**

**Proposed Amendment to Bylaw 403.00 – Cooperative Sponsorship**

**Purpose of Cooperative Sponsorships**

*Cooperative Sponsorships of MSHSL programs are established for the purpose of creating, growing, and maintaining education-based opportunities through programs that provide access for all students to a broad range of activities. These agreements support student participation in programs that are sustainable (financial, participation numbers, other etc.), have access to suitable facilities, provide appropriate levels of competition, and create communities for students. Through these agreements, member schools are expected to promote cooperation, partnership, sportsmanship and the beliefs of the MSHSL.*

1. Cooperative sponsorship of an activity by two or more member schools will be considered under the following conditions. Class A and Class AA refers to the school size for placement into Administrative Regions and does not refer to the tournament classification to which a school may be assigned for a particular sport. For purposes of administering this bylaw, the largest 128 schools by enrollment shall be Class AA, and the rest of the schools shall be Class A.
  - A. When any member school cooperatively sponsors an activity with any other member school(s), 100% of the total enrollment of the largest member school in the co-op and 50% of the enrollment of the other member school(s) in the co-op school be combined to determine the appropriate competitive classification.

*For the purposes of the competitive section placement process, the geographic location of the cooperative sponsorship will be the geographic location of the school with the largest MSHSL enrollment.*

**Cooperative sponsorship between two or more member schools.**

**MSHSL Sponsored Activities:**

Badminton, Girls'	Football	Softball, Adapted
Baseball	Hockey, B/G	Softball, Girls' Fast-Pitch
Basketball, B/G	Lacrosse, B/G	Track and Field, B/G
Bowling, Adapted	Music	Swimming and Diving, B/G
Cross Country Running, B/G	One Act Play	Synchronized Swimming, Girls'
Debate	Skiing, Alpine, B/G	Tennis, B/G
Dance Team, Girls'	Skiing, Nordic Ski Racing, B/G	Visual Arts
Golf, B/G	Speech	Volleyball, Girls'
Gymnastics, Girls'	Soccer, B/G	Wrestling
Floor Hockey, Adapted	Soccer, Adapted	

**2. Newly formed Cooperative Sponsorships:**

- A. Each school that wishes to cooperatively sponsor an MSHSL activity must provide:
  1. the documented need for the co-op including participation numbers for each school at all grade levels 7-12, facilities available, financial impacts or benefits and appropriate student data that indicates interest in the program.
  2. a summary of the steps each school has taken to promote participation in the activity for which a cooperative sponsorship is proposed and what is the future intent of the program.
  3. a written review and comment regarding the proposed cooperative sponsorship from:
    - a. the AD of each member school of the conference/conferences in which the proposed cooperative sponsorship school(s) participates.
    - b. the AD of each school in the most current competitive section or sub-section in which the proposed cooperative sponsorship will participate.
    - c. the Secretary of the Region Committee in which the largest school in the proposed cooperative sponsorship competes as reviewed at a Region Committee meeting OR by contacting the Region Committee members, individually, for their response.

In each instance in letters a-c above, a simple majority of the schools in the conference, section(s) and the Region Committee must approve the proposed cooperatively sponsored activity before any of the required information can be submitted to the MSHSL office.

4. a completed copy of the most current Student Interest Survey of the Interscholastic Athletic Activities as found on the MSHSL website from each school in the proposed cooperative sponsorship.

5. any other information as may be deemed informative for the MSHSL Board of Directors in making a final determination regarding the proposed cooperative sponsorship.

**B. Appeal to Add a Cooperative Sponsorship:**

The League Board of Directors will provide a hearing process for any member school requesting an exception to any cooperative sponsorship not approved per MSHSL Bylaw 403.2.A or 403.4.B. The request for a hearing shall be submitted in writing and sent to the Executive Director of the Minnesota State High School League prior to the first day of

that sport season.

C. **Appeal to Review an Existing Cooperative Sponsorship:**

Prior to every By October 15<sup>th</sup> of the school year in which the League completes the two-year competitive placement cycle, any conference or school(s) within the section in which members of the cooperative sponsorship competes can request a review in writing of any existing cooperative sponsorship to the Executive Director of the MSHSL provided that the reason for the request fully details why the Board of Directors should consider such review of the cooperative sponsorship. The process for a review of an existing cooperative sponsorship is available through the League Office.

**3. Cooperative Sponsorship with Charter Schools (Non-Exclusive Cooperative Sponsorship)**

Charter schools who are members of the Minnesota State High School League and who are organized as prescribed by M.S. 124E.03 may have multiple non-exclusive cooperative sponsorships in the same League-sponsored activity with public schools provided that:

- A. The Charter School does not have its own team in that activity;
- B. The Charter School student(s) return(s) to the public school in the attendance area of the public school where the student(s) officially resides with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s);
- C. The Charter Schools, on behalf of the student(s) officially enrolled in the Charter School, comply with all of the eligibility and financial requirements prescribed by the public school in the attendance area where the student(s) officially resides with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).
- D. The boards of education of the public school(s) and the Charter School agree to cooperatively sponsor the activity and complete the required League cooperative sponsorship form(s).

**4. Application Procedure**

- A. Each member school participating in a cooperative sponsorship must register and pay as an individual school to participate in each cooperatively sponsored activity.
- B. The governing boards of participating member schools must jointly make the application to the League Board of Directors.
  - 1) The request must include a resolution adopted by each board of education stating the purpose for sponsoring a joint team or activity.
  - 2) Each application for a cooperative sponsorship must include a review and comments the requirements as identified in 403.2.A.
  - 3) Deadline for Application: Requests for a cooperative sponsorship must be submitted to the League not later than 30 days prior to the first day of practice for that sport season to be considered for that sport season. Decisions for applications for cooperative sponsorship activities will be determined by the League at the next Board of Directors meeting.
- C. Cooperative sponsorship agreements must be for a minimum of two years. Cooperative sponsorship agreements will be continuous following the first two-year agreement unless an application for dissolution is submitted as outlined in MSHSL Bylaw 403.8.
- D. Any member school(s) who add a co-op later than 30 days prior to the first day of practice in that sport may request the Board of Directors to review the request as identified in 403.2.B.

**5. Transfers Between Schools with Cooperative Programs**

When a student transfers from one school to another school that cooperatively sponsor a program or programs the student shall remain fully eligible in all programs that are cooperatively sponsored. MSHSL Bylaw 111—Transfer and Residence, shall be used to determine the student's eligibility for the programs that are not cooperatively sponsored.

**6. Home Schools and Charter Schools**

Home schools and Charter schools joining the League and entering into cooperative sponsorship agreements after September 1 will be allowed a late registration provided they can show evidence from their local school administration that they had no knowledge of the League deadline dates, process, etc.

**7. Identification of Cooperatively Sponsored Teams**

The official school identification in tournament programs and press releases for cooperatively sponsored teams will be listed as indicated on the cooperative sponsorship resolutions submitted by the schools.

**8. Reviewing, Amending, Dissolving a Cooperative Sponsorship**

- A. Cooperative Sponsorship agreements must be reviewed by representatives from all schools involved every two years. Amendments to the cooperative sponsorship may not be unreasonably denied by the participating schools.
- B. If either or any of the schools involved in the cooperative sponsorship wish to dissolve the agreement, they may do so provided a minimum of one year's notice is given in writing to the other school(s) unless the schools involved mutually agree to discontinue the cooperative sponsorship agreement.
- C. Requests to dissolve the cooperative sponsorship must be submitted to the League not later than the first day of practice for that sport season. Decisions on all applications will be determined by the League at the next Board of Directors meeting.
- D. The dissolution request must include a resolution stating the purpose for dissolving the cooperative sponsorship.
- E. Any conference or competitive section school(s) in which the members of the cooperative sponsorship activity competes may ask the MSHSL Board of Directors to review the co-op approval as identified in 403.2C.

F. The Board of Directors may establish a committee to review all requests.

**BYLAW 403.00 INTERPRETATION**

Q. What procedure should be followed when an additional school is to be added to an existing cooperative sponsorship agreement?

A. Cooperative sponsorship is an agreement between two or more member schools. When a ~~third or fourth~~ an additional school is to be added to an existing cooperative sponsorship agreement, a new application must be submitted on behalf of all of the schools that are going to be involved in the new agreement. At the same time application for dissolution should be submitted for the existing agreement. The new agreement creates a Cooperative Sponsorship that must be in place for two year.

DRAFT