



2022-2023 MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

Football Rules, Policies and Bylaws

General Information

See the [MSHSL Handbook Page](#) for information regarding the following:

- Multiple level teams at Sub-Varsity levels
- Official Squad Size
- Substitution in MSHSL Tournaments
- Weather (heat, cold, lightning)

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 501](#) for information regarding:

- Maximum Number of Contests

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 502](#) for information regarding:

- Daily and Season Player Participation Limitations

CONTEST RULES

Refer to [Bylaw 402](#): Except as modified by the League, the National Federation of High School Association rules for the current year shall be the official game rules for all interscholastic contests in which League members participate.

END OF SEASON

Refer to [Bylaw 411](#): No school may engage in any meet or meets, practice, training or other activities between the end of the season and the opening of the next season in that sport.

1. Student Participation on a Non-School Team While the Season is Still in Progress:
 - A. The season shall end when the student or the student's team has been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series.
 - B. Students who have been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series may participate as an individual or as a member of a non-school team in that sport.
2. School Team Practice and Competition: The "end of the season" shall be defined to the last date of the state tournament in that sport.
 - A. Schools may continue to conduct practice and training for all squad members, including the students who have been eliminated from further individual competition in a League-sponsored series, until completion of the state tournament conducted by the League in that activity.
 - B. Dual contests may be scheduled after the start of the official League tournament series providing the school the school does not exceed the maximum number of games/matches/meets permitted in that activity.

3. No school may engage in any meet or meets, practice, training or other activities between the end of the season and the opening of the next season.
4. During the Summer Vacation Period [Bylaw 208.3](#) Non-School Competition and Training—Team and Individual Sports) members of a high school team may participate on a non-school team, and they may receive coaching or training from a salaried or non-salaried member of the student’s sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff in that sport provided the school has approved a summer coaching waiver for the coach or coaches of that sport.

VIDEO TAPING ANOTHER SCHOOL'S GAME

It shall be an ethical violation to tape another school's game, meet or contest without their permission. Further, it may be a violation of the laws governing copyrights. Each school owns the copyrights to their games, meets and contests. Taping another school’s game without permission could constitute a violation of the copyright law.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPECTATOR CONDUCT

In order to elevate standards of sportsmanship and encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the students, member schools, fans and school personnel, the MSHSL held a Sportsmanship Summit and asked student participants to identify behavior expectations they felt should be in place at every school event.

These minimum behavior expectations provide a foundation upon which member schools, conferences, administrative regions and the League’s Board of Directors can build specific guidelines for activities under their control.

MSHSL [Bylaw 409](#), **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATING TEAMS, STUDENTS AND SPECTATORS**, speaks to this issue, directly, and [Bylaw 409-2](#) specifically states that, **“School officials shall be held responsible for the proper conduct of teams, team members, students and home spectators regardless of where the contest is being held.”**

In all MSHSL activities, each participating school shall designate a person or persons from that school to serve as crowd control supervisors or chaperones. MSHSL tournament staff may require school administrators to contact the tournament manager prior to the start of the tournament game so that they can be immediately contacted to respond to behavioral issues regarding their team members, students and/or spectators at the tournament site. Each supervisor or chaperone should be immediately identifiable to the students and to the tournament site ushers and other security personnel. This will help to coordinate crowd control between school supervisors and tournament site personnel. 8/9/2005

MSHSL MINIMAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR REGULAR AND POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT COMPETITIONS:

- Respect the American flag and the National Anthem.
- Spectators must wear clothing that covers the entire torso. Those who do not comply or who wear clothing that is vulgar, obscene or that in some other way inappropriate, as determined by school/tournament personnel, will be removed from the arena/stadium if they do not cooperate with this behavior expectation.
- The use of appropriate language is expected at all times. Profanity, negative chants, booing, trash talk, name calling, personal attacks or other acts of disrespect are unacceptable and must be immediately addressed by school and/or tournament administrators.

- Respect the game/contest. Under no condition shall anyone other than the members of the official squad enter the playing surface. No one may interfere with the contest in any way.
- Hand held signs, which do not obstruct the view of others, will be permitted provided they are in good taste. Signs, message boards, “white” boards or other similar items contest/tournament officials deem to be in poor taste will be removed.
- Signs on sticks, balloons, or any other type of artificial, celebratory items are not permitted.
- Artificial noise makers (i.e., megaphones, cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks, and other similar items) are not allowed.
- Laser lights are strictly prohibited.
- No Pets Allowed

THANK YOU for supporting your student athletes and fine arts participants and for providing a positive environment in which educational activities are conducted.

Football Information – Regular Season

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 508](#) for information regarding:

- Contests
- Equipment Issued
- Last Date to Join a Team
- Maximum Number of Contests Chart
- Player Participation Limitations
- Practice Sessions Before First Game
- Season Begins

RULE MODIFICATIONS

PLAY CLOCK

A visible 25/40 second play clock may be used when available at the discretion of the home team. There must be a clock operator and the clock must be available to both teams.

TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES

If, at the end of the fourth quarter, the teams have identical scores the tie will be resolved by the "10-yard" Overtime Procedure as outlined in the National Federation Football Rulebook.

MERCY RULE

When the point differential reaches 35 points or more in the fourth quarter, the clock will go to running time. The clock will be stopped for any **(T)**eam timeout, **(I)**njuries, **(P)**enalties or **(S)**coring plays until the ensuing free kick. **TIPS** will be the only reasons the clock is stopped during running time. Regular timing rules will be used if the point differential drops back to less than 30 points. **Note:** Rule 3-1-3 remains in effect which allows the game to be shortened or terminated at any time, by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches and the referee.

9-MAN MODIFICATIONS

Modification of the football distance penalty in 9-Man football. All penalties that require a loss of 15 yards in 11-man football, will be penalized a loss of 10 yards on an 80-yard field. If a 100-yard field is used for 9-man all 15-yard penalties would be assessed as 15 yards.

- on the 9-Man field the "9-yard marks" in rule (1-2-3f & 1-2-3l) are placed 7 yards from the sideline.
- There are no uniform numbering requirements for 9-Man.
- The 45-point rule for 9-Man football will not be enforced in Minnesota.
- The free blocking zone is a square area extending laterally 3 yards on either side of the spot of the snap and 3 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

FIELD DIMENSIONS

When facilities permit, 9-Man football should be played on a 100-yard field. If space does not allow for 100 yards, games can be played on an 80-yard field. In either case the width of the field is 40 yards. Distance from to hash marks is 48 feet, 4 inches.

POLICY FOR THE CONDUCT OF FOOTBALL DISTRICT FOOTBALL

Definition

District Football is the official name given to the method of scheduling all regular season football games in Minnesota. In this system, each school is assigned to a district based on geography, enrollment and "like schools" with natural rivalries preserved whenever possible. This system for scheduling covers the regular season only. The post-season Section Football system remains in place.

District Football vs. Section Football

Section classifications are determined by enrollment and geography (as determined by MSHSL Board policy), with a balanced number of schools in each section. These classifications are strictly followed. District scheduling also uses school enrollment as a key factor in placing schools in districts, but Districts are not confined to enrollment classifications, as in section football, and are also not restricted to a specific number of schools, thus allowing each district to be formed in a way the best works for the schools of a similar size in a particular geographical area.

District Assignment and Realignment

Schools will be assigned to Districts every two years, with the assignments finalized no later than the June MSHSL Board Meeting. This will be done in alignment of when sections are realigned. A District Placement Committee is made up of ten AD's, coaches and/or other administrators, who represent different geographical regions of the state and a variety of school sizes. The committee will be selected by League staff in consultation with the Minnesota Football Coaches Association and the AD's Association. The final committee will be approved by the MSHSL Board of Directors. After the initial District Assignments in April of 2014, the placement committee will be kept intact for the redistricting process that takes place in 2016. After that process has been completed three - four members of the committee will rotate off each cycle, with each member staying on the committee for at least four years – two rounds of realignment.

Enrollment Data

Enrollment data from October 1 of the school year in which the placement process is completed will be used as criteria for District placement. Enrollments will be calculated using the enrollment for grades 9-12 (grades 8-11 to determine 9-man classification) as provided by the Minnesota Department of Education, less 40% of the free and reduced lunch number.

9-Man

Prior to the initial alignment process and for all future realignment processes, schools that qualify for 9-man Football must declare whether or not they will compete in 9-man football for the two years for which the new realignment will be in effect. Class A schools who do not qualify for 9-man, may appeal to play 9-man during the regular season. This appeal will go to the District Placement Committee. That committee will make recommendations to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, who will make the final decision. Schools allowed to play 9-man during the regular season must play 11-man in the Section playoffs. Schools may appeal to play 9-man football as per current MSHSL Board Policy for appeals.

School Information and Input

During each realignment process all schools will be given the opportunity to file an information form that will allow them to share specific information about their program; indicate schools that they feel they must play; and provide any other information that will be helpful to the committee during the placement process. These forms must be filed by the established deadline.

Placement Process

The District Placement Committee will meet at least two times to assign schools to Districts. Their final recommendation will go to the Athletic/Activities Directors Advisory Committee for review at their May meeting. The AD's Advisory Committee will review all placements and pass these placements on to the full Board of Directors with any recommended adjustments. The Board will review and give final approval at the June meeting in even numbered years.

The committee will work to place schools according to geography, and "school size." While the membership of districts may include schools that are more than twice as big as another school, the Placement Committee recommends that when developing sub-districts, Districts should not place schools with enrollments more than twice as large as another school, in the same sub-district; unless smaller school approves of that placement, or such a placement will work based on competitive balance.

The goal will be to have Districts with at least sixteen schools (although that may not always be possible), and all will have an even number unless there is an odd number of 9-man teams or an odd number of 11-man teams. When there is an odd number, that district may use the Zero Week concept to make sure that all schools have a full schedule. Another option may be to find a school from an adjacent state to fill in the bye weeks; or schools may choose to have a bye and only play seven games. All schools within a District must have an eight game regular season schedule, unless there is an odd number of schools and the District members decide to only play seven games. Districts will have flexibility in how those schedules are developed.

District Structure

Schools within each District will determine the "structure" of their District and how they will schedule regular season games. Once Districts have been assigned, a District Committee, made of Athletic/Activities Directors from the schools of that District shall meet and determine, with the input from all District schools, the best way to form sub-districts. Each District shall have a minimum of two sub-districts, with Sub-Districts named Red, White, Blue, Maroon; or Sub-districts may be named by "direction," for example 9-man South District may name their sub-districts East and West. Final sub-district alignment shall be voted on by all member schools, with a two-thirds majority (of those voting) needed to pass.

Schedules

Regular season schedules will be developed with all of the schools in a sub-district playing each other. Games schedule to fill out the schedule will be cross-over games with schools in another sub-district of the District to which they are assigned (Intra-District games); or with permission from the MSHSL Placement Committee, these games may be played against schools in another District (Cross-District games). Once the District Committee has determined the schedule for all District Schools, all members of the district will have the opportunity to vote on this schedule, with a two-thirds majority (of those voting) necessary in order to approve the schedule. Once the original two-year schedule has been approved, if there is a need to adjust schedules based on changes with co-ops, or schools adding or dropping programs, those adjustments may be made by the District Committee.

Sub-Varsity Schedules

District football governs varsity schedules only. Schools within each District will decide how to schedule sub-varsity levels. These schedules may be aligned with the varsity schedule, or schools may schedule sub-varsity on their own. Sub-varsity schedules are not restricted to District opponents. The procedures for scheduling sub-varsity, and rules and policies to govern sub-varsity shall be included in District Bylaws.

Sub-District Champions

A champion will be determined for each sub-district. Trophies for Sub-District Champions shall be purchased directly from the MSHSL Trophy vendor by the championship teams. Each District may also name an all-district team based on their sub-districts. The criteria for these awards and any other awards (Coach of the Year, MVP, etc.); and how these award winners are selected, is to be determined by the District Committee and included in the District Bylaws. Each District shall determine what the awards will be (trophies, plaques, certificates, etc.) and shall arrange for the purchase of the awards, with each school paying for the individual awards they receive.

District Committee

Membership on the District Committee shall be determined by each District, with equal representation (as close as possible) from each sub-district. Members of the District Committee shall elect a chairperson from those that are on the committee. The recommendation is to have seven or nine members of the District Committee. Each committee shall finalize the Bylaws for their District, as per the model provided by the MSHSL. Bylaws shall be approved by a vote of all members of the District, with a two-thirds majority (of those voting) needed to pass. The Bylaws shall be on file in the MSHSL office. Districts are to operate without having a separate financial structure. If there is a need to collect and disburse funds, a procedure for doing so must be included in the Bylaws. Those funds must be accounted for through the financial operation of a school that is a member of that district.

Resolution of Issues

The District Committee is expected to resolve issues that may occur within their district. They may contact MSHSL staff for guidance. If necessary, the District Placement Committee will mediate and assist in resolving any internal conflicts. Conflicts that cannot be resolved at the District level or with assistance from staff and/or the District Placement Committee will go to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The decision of the Executive Committee is final.

MSHSL member schools who choose to not participate or do not fully cooperate with District Football Policy will not be allowed to participate in the Section Playoffs.

EQUIPMENT

Footballs and football shoes may be issued at any time provided the school doesn't engage in any football game or games, practice or other football activities between the end of one season and the opening of the next season.

GAMES

Number allowed: Member schools shall not schedule or play more than eight (8) games per season, unless the section conducts a 4-team play-off, in which case a school may play a ninth (9) regular season game. The champion of any conference, section or division of a conference will, however, be allowed to play one extra game to determine an inter-conference or an intra-conference championship. The game must be on the school schedule.

No team may play more than 11 games total (12 with Conference Championship Game), during the regular season and Section playoff.

First Game: Interscholastic games may be scheduled and played on or after the second Thursday of organized practice, provided transfer students do not participate until they are enrolled. Two weeks of organized practice, plus five-days of organized conditioning practice must precede the first scheduled game. Transfer students must be enrolled before participating.

PRACTICE SITE

Practice sessions shall be conducted within the local school environs. Special training camps are not permitted. Controlled interschool scrimmages may be held within the environs of one of the participating schools or at some point between the two schools. Exception: Schools may practice at sites outside of the school environs when it is necessary to secure indoor practice facilities due to inclement weather)

TEACHER STRIKE

A football game will be forfeited if a school is not able to play as contracted because of a teacher strike.

ZERO WEEK

1. The Zero Week application form that must be filed by both schools involved in the Zero Week game.
 - Requests will be accepted on or after September 1 of each year.
 - Schools may apply to schedule the same opponent on zero week for two years (home & home)
2. A committee five members (2 coaches, 2 AD's and 1 MSHSL staff member) will review all applications and deny or approve the application within 3 weeks of receipt.
3. Teams who are approved to play a zero week game must start practice (conditioning week) one week earlier than that official starting date for football conditioning and complete 3 full weeks of practice prior to the first game.
4. Teams playing a zero week game must have a bye week during the season. During the bye week the team may practice any 3 of the five weekdays. (Saturdays may be used for team meetings, lower-level games or strength training)
5. Each application will be reviewed and approved based on its own merit. Care will be taken to prevent schools or coaches from manipulating their schedule to gain an advantage.

Football Information – Post Season

ELIGIBILITY DURING LEAGUE-SPONSORED TOURNAMENT – SUBSECTION, SECTION AND STATE

Refer to [Bylaw 206.4.B.1.d](#): A student must be fully eligible under all local school district policies and MSHSL Bylaws and Rules & Policies to be in uniform, occupy the bench or playing area, participate and receive individual/team awards, including all-tournament honors, in the awards ceremony.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN LEAGUE-SPONSORED TOURNAMENTS

Refer to [Bylaw 405](#): A member school must schedule a minimum of three interscholastic varsity games, meets or matches to qualify for League-sponsored tournament participation in that sport.

FOOTBALL PLAYOFF ORGANIZATION - SECTION PLAYOFF MANAGEMENT

The Board of Directors has delegated the management and administration of Sectional football playoffs to Region Committees organized by the member schools of each Section as follows:

ARTICLE 1. Football Playoff Committee.

- A. Furnish a full report of all proceedings of Playoff Meetings to members of the Region Committee.
- B. Keep accurate records of receipts and disbursements of Section funds and report annually the status of such funds to members of the Region Committee.
- C. Pay the necessary expenses of the representative of the official meetings of the Football Advisory Committee.
- D. The Region may employ a tournament manager to administer the sectional football playoffs.

ARTICLE 2. Policies for Administering Section Playoffs.

- A. These policies are intended to lend uniformity to Section Playoffs as conducted on a statewide basis.
 1. The tournament manager and representatives from section schools must adopt a seeding procedure based on MSHSL Seeding Policies.
 3. The tournament manager must set a final date for the official seeding meeting.
 4. The Region Committees must establish a seeding format.
 5. The tournament manager must adopt a policy for determining site and home team designation.
 6. The Class AAAAAA, AAAAA, AAAA, AAA, AA, A, and 9-Man Committees must choose one of the following options:
 - a. If the schools in the Section play a nine-game schedule, only four teams may be seeded to the playoff and no team may play more than two games in the Section playoff.
 - b. If the Committee chooses an eight-game schedule, eight teams may be seeded to the playoffs and no team may play more than three games in the section playoffs.
 - c. Schools not qualifying for the playoffs may schedule a ninth (9th) game.
 - d. No team may play more than a combined total of eleven (11) games during the season and Section playoffs.

ARTICLE 3. Recommended Section Policies: General, Seeding and Pairing.

One of the most sensitive areas in the development of the football playoff system is the establishment of confidence in Section management procedures. It is difficult for any school to feel comfortable when they are assigned to a Section with other schools that represent other football conferences and some that are independent. There will be a feeling of apprehension that the Section organization and management will be dominated by one conference. However, enrollment and geography are the principle components for the establishment of the Sections and the members will find it necessary to develop guidelines that will respect and

protect the interests of all of the members. The following recommendations are intended to assist region committees in developing procedures that will ensure equitable treatment for all of the member schools of each Section.

A. General Policies:

1. That each Section make the necessary long-range schedule adjustments within their jurisdiction which will enable the members to qualify and be ready to play on the selected Section playoff date i.e., eight or more game schedules.
2. That all participating team allowances be in accordance with the League's policies for State quarter-final and semifinal games.

B. Seeding Policies: When seeding for section tournaments at the discretion of the Region Committee the Section must adopt one of the following seeding systems. With either Face to Face or Electronic, there should be criteria established by which coaches are to rank the teams.

Face to face: Coaches meet at one location, share information and vote on the placement. This may be used when schools are located in close proximity to each other. When voting one high score and one low score for each team is not counted, unless there are seven or less voting. If there is a tie, the first tie breaker is head-to-head competition. If that does not break the tie, the ranking that the tied schools gave each other is dropped. If the tie is not broken a coin flip is used to break the tie. All rankings are shared so that all coaches can see how each school seeded each of the other schools. Note: if there is a tie, head-to-head competition cannot be used as a tie breaker if the winner of that game was determined by a forfeit.

Electronic: Coaches contact a meeting via conference call where they share information about their teams -- or that information is shared electronically. Coaches then vote electronically by using the same system as used by the MSHSL for State Tournaments. Each coach ranks all the schools in the section or sub-section, except their own. One high score and one low score for each team is not counted, unless there are seven or less voting. Points are totaled and the lowest point total is the high seed, etc. If there is a tie, the first tie breaker is head-to-head competition. If that does not break the tie, the ranking that the tied schools gave each other is dropped. If the tie is not broken a coin flip is used to break the tie. All rankings are shared so that all coaches can see how each school seeded each of the other schools. Note: if there is a tie, head-to-head competition cannot be used as a tie breaker if the winner of that game was determined by a forfeit.

Point System: All seeding shall be conducted by the MSHSL point system. This point system will give a school points for victories based on the size of school of the opponent and the season record of the opponent using the QRF System.

If there is a tie:

1. The first tie breaker is head-to-head competition followed by:
2. Ranking based on either Conference/Sub-District (C/SD) winning percentage or C/SD point total based on the rules of that C/SD.
3. Overall Winning Percentage
4. Section winning percentage (if at least 25% of the teams' competitions are against section opponents);
5. QRF points.

6. If still tied, a coin flip is used to break the tie.

To be seeded when using QRF, a team must play a minimum of 70% of the allowable number of games for that sport. If not, they are seeded last. If more than one team falls into this category, they will be placed at the bottom, in the order of the QRF scores. The number of contests that must be played, by sport: Football 6; Basketball, Hockey and Volleyball 18; Baseball and Softball 14; Soccer 11; Lacrosse 9.

MANAGEMENT

The Board of Directors has delegated the management of sectional football playoff games to Section Committees. Each Section Committee is responsible for the general supervision of planning, controlling and managing the section football playoffs.

OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT BALL

The official MSHSL ball for football is the Spalding Alpha. This ball will be provided for Quarterfinal, Semifinal, and Championship games.

Schools/teams are encouraged to use this football during the regular season but that is not required.

Beginning with the Quarterfinal round, schools/teams must either use the ball provided (Spalding Alpha) or they can provide their own as long as the ball that is used is a Spalding.

END OF GAME AND HALFTIME RULE ADOPTION FOR SECTION AND STATE FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS GAMES

The National Federation of High Schools Football Rule Book provides the opportunity for the MSHSL Board of Directors to approve the following rule adoption, effective for the section and state playoffs: (NFHS Rule Book)

In the unlikelihood that a section or state playoff game cannot be completed due to darkness, weather or other issues outside the control of game management, the Game Manager in consultation with the Tournament Director, has the authority to decide whether or not the game will continue from the point of interruption or be terminated. The Game Manager also has the authority to shorten halftime to 10 minutes in the case of bad weather or other issues that would make it necessary to conclude a game as soon as possible. (Note the current rule allows halftime to be shortened at the consent of the head coaches, this change gives this authority to the game manager, without approval from the coaches).

INSTANT REPLAY

It will be utilized in a limited capacity during the post season only during the semifinals and finals of the Prep Bowl Championships at US Bank Stadium.

NUMBER OF SECTION PLAYOFF GAMES

Classes AAAAAA, AAAAA, AAAA, AAA, AA, A, 9-Man: The committee must choose one of the following options:

- A. If the schools in your Section play a nine-game schedule, four teams may be seeded to the playoff and no team may play more than two games in the Section playoff.
- B. If the Committee chooses an eight-game schedule, eight teams may be seeded to the playoffs and no team may play more than three games in the Section playoffs.

Schools not qualifying for the playoff may schedule a ninth (9th) game, if they played less than 9 games during the regular season.

PLAYOFF SITES - SECTION GAMES

The Region Committee will determine the Section playoff sites.

Region Committees are advised that the selection of the home field provides many advantages which lead toward success of the tournament game. These advantages include: All out community support; special care in field and facility preparation; extra help in crowd control; convenient accessibility to support personnel (ticket sellers, ticket takers, game hosts, bands, chain gang, parking assistance, press, box help, medical stand-by, etc.); minimum cost in game expenses to participating schools; and convenient accessibility to dressing room facilities.

Seating for the visiting team should be comparable to the home team. If adequate seating is not available additional bleachers should be moved in or another site should be considered.

PLAYOFF SITES - STATE QUARTERFINALS

All State Quarterfinal playoff games will be played at neutral sites on artificial turf fields. Quarterfinal games may be scheduled on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday of the week following the section play-offs. All site assignments will be made by the League Office.

OFFICIAL SQUAD FOR SECTION AND STATE PLAYOFFS

Schools participating in MSHSL Section and State Tournaments may dress, have on sidelines, and play all players who were on the regular season varsity team roster.

| Classes | Players | Coaches | Student Managers | Total |
|---------|---------|---------|------------------|-------|
| AAAAAA | 62 | 5 | 3 | 70 |
| AAAAA | 62 | 5 | 3 | 70 |
| AAAA | 53 | 4 | 3 | 60 |
| AAA | 45 | 3 | 3 | 51 |
| AA | 39 | 3 | 2 | 44 |
| A | 36 | 3 | 2 | 41 |
| 9-Man | 27 | 2 | 2 | 31 |

Sideline numbers may exceed official roster at Section and State Tournament Games for FOOTBALL ONLY.

STATE TOURNAMENT QUALIFYING SCHOOL INFORMATION

Specific information for qualifying schools is available on the MSHSL Administrative Dashboard under Tournament Resources.

PLAYOFF SITES - STATE TOURNAMENT

The Board of Directors will determine the sites for all state tournament games.

FUTURE PAIRINGS

Quarterfinals

- 2022:** Section 1 vs. 2, 3 vs. 4, 5 vs. 6, 7 vs. 8
- 2023:** Section 3 vs. 1, 4 vs. 2, 7 vs. 5, 8 vs. 6
- 2024:** Section 1 vs. 4, 2 vs. 3, 5 vs. 8, 6 vs. 7
- 2025:** Section 2 vs. 1, 4 vs. 3, 6 vs. 5, 8 vs. 7
- 2026:** Section 1 vs. 3, 2 vs. 4, 5 vs. 7, 6 vs. 8

Semifinals

- 2022:** Section 3 vs. 4 Winner vs. Section 7 vs. 8 Winner
Section 1 vs. 2 Winner vs. Section 5 vs. 6 Winner
- 2023:** Section 3 vs. 1 Winner vs. Section 8 vs. 6 Winner
Section 4 vs. 2 Winner vs. Section 7 vs. 5 Winner
- 2024:** Section 6 vs. 7 Winner vs. Section 2 vs. 3 Winner
Section 5 vs. 8 Winner vs. Section 1 vs. 4 Winner
- 2025:** Section 6 vs. 5 Winner vs. Section 2 vs. 1 Winner
Section 8 vs. 7 Winner vs. Section 4 vs. 3 Winner
- 2026:** Section 5 vs. 7 Winner vs. Section 2 vs. 4 Winner
Section 6 vs. 8 Winner vs. Section 1 vs. 3 Winner

PLAYOFF PLAN FOR CLASS 6A FOOTBALL

- Top 32 schools – 4 sections of 8 schools
- Each section seeds #1 – 8 – choice of seeding procedures based on current policy.
- No game on Tuesday after MEA

The morning after the last regular season games, each of the four 6A sections will seed their section as per MSHSL seeding policy and will be placed into 1 of 6 random brackets will be selected (at random) at a time to be determined by the tournament committee.

Class 6A will then play out their tournament. First two rounds will be played on the succeeding Friday evenings at the higher seed. The winners of round 2 would be awarded “State Qualifier” trophies for having qualified for the state tournament. The third round would consist of 8 remaining teams and would be the State Tournament under the direction of the State High School League.

The Creation (Design) of the 6 Random Brackets

These brackets are each a 32-team single elimination tournament brackets that will consist of eight 4-team subgroups.

Four of these subgroups will consist of the following seeds (#1, #4, #5, and #8). These teams will all come from different sections. The remaining four subgroups will consist of the following seeds (#2, #3, #6, and #7). These teams will also come from different sections.

A subgroup with a #1 seed and a subgroup with a #2 seed is paired in each quarter of the bracket. Thus each side of the bracket will consist of two of these pairings.

The #1 and #2 seeds from each of the original 4 sections are always on the opposite sides of the bracket and, therefore, could only meet in the state championship. The #1 seed can only meet another #1 seed in the state semi-finals. The first two rounds of the tournament would always involve teams from different sections. Teams could not play a team from their section until the first round of the state tournament. This matchup could never be a #1 vs a #2 from the original 4 sections. Once again this can only happen in the state championship. The selected “random bracket” will be taken out of circulation for two seasons.

A completely pre-determined tournament is now ready to be played.

STATE TOURNAMENT POLICIES

NOTE: The MSHSL will be sponsoring the entire State Tournament which will include the quarter-finals, semifinals and the championships in each class. Supplemental management policies and regulations will be forwarded to member schools and tournament managers.

Policies and regulations will include: (1) pairings and site locations of the quarterfinal and semifinal games; (2) the championship games at U.S. Bank Stadium; (3) ticket information for schools; (4) complimentary ticket policies; (5) expense allowance provisions; (6) band allowances; and (7) cheerleader allowances.

EXCHANGE OF GAME FILMS/VIDEOTAPES

The exchange of game films/videotapes is required. Teams shall make all regular season and post-season games available to their opponents. Game films/videotapes must be made available to the opposing team by noon on Monday of the week in which the next playoff game is scheduled.

FILMING/VIDEOTAPING GAMES

Each participating school may choose to film/videotape its game. The filming/videotaping will be done at the expense of each participating school. The schools wishing to film/videotape their game will be instructed to make arrangements with the Site Manager for a spot to locate their cameras.

HOME TEAM DESIGNATION

The Region Committee will designate the home team in the Section playoff games.

The Board of Directors will designate the home team in the State Tournament. When a school has been designated as the home team for a football playoff game, it shall: (1) act in that capacity unless excused by the Section Committee or the Board of Directors, (2) be considered the home team regardless of where the game is played, and (3) wear a dark-colored jersey. The visiting team shall wear a white jersey.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS, CONSOLIDATIONS, COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIPS, and PAIRINGS

School closings, consolidations, cooperative sponsorships or pairings may cause an individual school to be reassigned to a different classification or to a different Section. However, such movement of school(s) will not change the overall classification alignment during the term of the playoff format.

SCOUTING

Audio taping may be used as a scouting tool, as well as written observations of the team that is being scouted. THE USE OF VIDEO EQUIPMENT OR ANY TYPE OF CAMERA IS PROHIBITED BY A COACH, TEAM

MEMBER, OR ANY AGENT THEREOF.

AWARDS

Section

- Trophies: First – second place teams
 - 6A only: two–first place tr.; two-second place tr.
- Medals: First – second place teams: 6A (65) 5A (65), 4A (56), 3A (48), 2A (41), A (38), 9M (29)
 - 6A only: two sets of first place; two sets of second place

State

- Trophies: First through fourth place teams
- Medals:
 - First – second place teams: 6A (65), 5A (65), 4A (56), 3A (48), 2A (41), A (38), 9M (29)
 - First – second place coaches: 6A (5), 5A (5), 4A (4), 3A (3), 2A (3), 1A (3), 9M (2)
- Certificates:
 - Official Squad: 6A (65), 5A (65), 4A (56), 3A (48), 2A (41), A (38), 9M (29)
 - Coaches: 6A (5), 5A (5), 4A (4), 3A (3), 2A (3), A (3), 9M (2)
 - Cheerleaders + Cheer. Coach (1)

It is a violation of MSHSL policy for a member school or a representative of a member school to establish, distribute or accept any awards not provided by the MSHSL for section or state tournament.