



MONTANA HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION  
2020 ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, January 20, 2020  
Billings Hotel & Convention Center  
Billings, Montana

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**Addendum: GIRLS' WRESTLING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**Addendum: BOYS' POWERLIFTING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

## 1. PROPOSAL TO AMEND ELIGIBILITY BY-LAW

The MHSA Executive Board proposes the following amendment to By-Law, Article II, Section (2) Eligibility on page 10 of the current MHSA Handbook:

### Section (2) ELIGIBILITY

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

2.1 A student must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance in ten hours per week at the school where the student participates. Regular attendance is defined as actual physical presence in the building (bricks and mortar). ***Exception: A student who is enrolled and participating in a transformational learning program in their school that meets a district's proficiency-based learning requirements pursuant to the adopted policies of the local school board is exempt from the ten hours per week bricks and mortar requirement.*** A home school student is not eligible to participate for an MHSA member school.

#### Rationale:

With the recently passed law regarding transformational learning, MHSA eligibility rules need to be updated to assure member schools are not violating any provisions of the law. This amendment to Section 2 clarifies students under a bona fide transformational learning program do not have to meet the ten hours per week bricks and mortar requirement.

## 2. PROPOSAL TO AMEND ELIGIBILITY BY-LAW

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2.2 ***A home school student is eligible to participate for a member school if:***

- a. Their family lives in the attendance area of the school they participate.***
- b. The home school student has registered with the County Superintendent of Schools***
- c. The home school student's curriculum and grade placement are approved by the local school district.***
- d. The home school student meets the MHSA eligibility requirements of age, semester, physical exam, concussion education and any other relevant eligibility requirement.***

2.3 A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared class work or its equivalent in the last previous semester, at the school where the student participates; except that any ninth grade student enrolled and attending any junior high, in the same school system as the senior high school, may be eligible to participate on that senior high school's athletic teams. If the school prohibits participation by ninth grade students, this action by the local school will not be subject to review by the MHSA or its Executive Board. ***Exception: students under section 2.2 are exempt from this section.***

- 2.4 A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared work per week or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which he/she was enrolled. **Exception: students under section 2.2 are exempt from this section**

**Rationale:**

During the recent legislative session, Senate Bill 8 was passed in both houses by wide majorities. Senate Bill 8 provided ANB funding for schools who had outside students (home school) students participating in their activity programs for three weeks or more. Senate Bill 8 was vetoed by the Governor however the sponsor and other legislators stated that the purpose of this Bill was to make it clear the MHSA needed to examine their rules regarding allowing home school participation at MHSA schools. These amendments would allow home school participation however with very specific requirements including residency in the school attendance area, all curriculum and grade placement to be approved by local school policy and the student must meet all other MHSA eligibility requirements including age, semester etc. The Executive Board wants to be proactive regarding this issue and require criteria for those home school students who would participate instead of having legislation being passed that may not have the same restrictions.

**Fiscal Note:**

There could be ANB provided if a bill similar to Senate Bill 8 is passed and signed into law during a future legislative session.

**3. PROPOSAL TO AMEND EIGHTH GRADE PARTICIPATION/ACADEMIC/TRANSFER BY-LAWS**

Arlee High Schools proposes the following amendments to By-Laws, Article II, Section (5) Students Below Ninth Grade on page 11 and to Section (10) Transfer Rule on page 12 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (5) STUDENTS BELOW NINTH GRADE**

- 5.1 Any student in the Eighth Grade shall be eligible to participate in an Association Contest as noted.
- a. Eighth grade students may participate in high school volleyball, basketball, wrestling, track, cross country, swimming, soccer, tennis, softball and golf.  
**Eighth grade students are not eligible to participate in football.**
  - b. Permission for eighth grade participation is determined by local control of respective boards in the school district. However, record of transfer forms for new eighth grade students enrolled from other districts must be filed, including a proof of residency, in the attendance area of the school where he/she will participate.
  - c. Any eighth student must be passing in twenty periods of prepared classwork or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which he/she was enrolled.
  - d. Any eighth-grade student allowed to participate will have eight semesters of high school eligibility remaining.
  - e. All other eligibility rules required of students Grades 9-12 will apply to Eighth Grade Students including but not limited to:
    - 1. Physical Exam
    - 2. Concussion Education
    - 3. Transfer Rule
    - 4. Award and Amateur Rules
    - 5. And any other relevant MHSA by-laws/rules and regulation

**Section (10) TRANSFER RULE**

- 10.1 Any student (**including eighth grade students allowed high school participation**) who transfers from one member high school, home school, or non-member school to a member high school is ineligible to participate in a varsity Association Contest for half the number of P.I. days in the current

school year of the school to which he/she transfers from the date of enrollment (first day he/she attends classes) in the school to which he/she transfers. A student and his/her parents or legal guardians must reside in the attendance area of the school in which he/she is enrolled except for a student enrolling in ninth grade for the first time **unless that student has been previously approved for high school participation** (see Section (12) Record of Transfer.) This rule applies to a student who transfers after twenty (20) days of enrollment or after he/she participates in an athletic contest while enrolled in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12, **EXCEPT** the following students may be declared eligible:

**Rationale:**

- With declining enrollments across the state smaller schools are having to co-op or use eighth grade students to field teams. Presently schools can only use eighth graders for basketball, volleyball and for track relay teams and only if they have need to fill a J.V. and/or Varsity roster.
- The MHSA now has over 200 co-op teams – up from about 140 six years ago.
- The MHSA has approved the following number of eighth grade students to participate in high school basketball and volleyball (very few were for track relay teams) over the past four years: 2013-14 – **193**, 2014-15 – **194**, 2015-2016 – **195**, 2016-2017- **225** 2017-2018 – **224** and **2018-19– 319** approved.

**Fiscal Note:**

There is no fiscal impact to the Membership.

**4. PROPOSAL TO AMEND AWARD RULE BY-LAW**

The MHSA Executive Board proposes the following amendment to By-Law, Article II, Section (15) Award Rule on page 14 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (15) AWARD RULE**

15.1 No award exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in value shall be given per event in any MHSA sanctioned sport or in any MHSA sanctioned interscholastic activity by a member school, by any person or by an organization to a student in recognition of that student's achievement or participation in any interscholastic activity. An event is defined as a sports camp, an invitational tournament/meet, a post season recognition function (i.e. sports banquet), or a fund raiser or similar function. Special awareness functions (i.e. pink week) are included as defined events with the following limitation: merchandise retained by students in conjunction with awareness events is restricted to disposable items such as basic t-shirts, socks, headbands/wristbands and similar items. Cash cannot be awarded. A single Association Contest is not considered an "event" for the purpose of this rule.

**INTERPRETATION**

1. Schools may provide training apparel for practice and/or workouts that will be fully depreciated and have no intrinsic value at the end of the season. These items may be provided by the school and/or its boosters, including general or team fundraisers, provided that the items are school-approved and are supplied on a gender-equitable basis. Allowable items are limited to one of each of the following: practice shirt, practice shorts, spandex, tights and a pair of socks.

2. The acceptance of awards and/or prizes in non-sanctioned sports or activities shall not endanger member schools' students' eligibility.

**3. Schools may provide warm up shirts (e.g. shooting shirts) to be worn on the field or court before a contest that may or may not have individual names printed on them. They can also display the school name/mascot, but no corporate sponsors names/logos are allowed. These items may**

***be provided by the school and/or its boosters, including general or team fundraisers, provided that the items are school-approved and are supplied on a gender-equitable basis.***

**Rationale:**

It has come to the attention of the MHSA office that many schools are allowing warm-up shirts (e.g. shooting shirts) to be worn on the court / field before games and may be in violation of the Awards Rule and in violation of the Ridgeway Decision. This interpretation would allow warm up shirts to be purchased, by the school or boosters, and worn on the court if they are school approved, meet the listed requirements and are supplied on a gender-equitable basis.

**5. PROPOSAL TO AMEND PENALTIES BY-LAW**

Granite High School proposes the following amendment to By-Law, Article VIII, Section (2) General Penalties on page 18 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (2) GENERAL PENALTIES**

2.7 (New) **Recruiting.** If the executive board finds that a school has broken the recruiting rule, the head coach of the sport/activity that the violation occurred shall be suspended for a minimum of one (1) regularly scheduled varsity competition following executive board hearing. The executive board has the right to increase suspension.

If penalties are imposed at the end of the sport/activity season and no contest remain, the penalty is imposed the first contest in that particular sport/activity the next school year.

**Rationale:**

There should be a specific penalty for the coach when the recruiting rule has been violated to deter future violations.

**6. PROPOSAL TO ADD CO-OP TROPHY LANGUAGE**

The MHSA Executive Board proposes the following amendment to Awards, General Rules for Awards, on page 41 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**GENERAL RULES FOR AWARDS**

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

***New # (5) MHSA will provide one trophy for each co-op team and schools can purchase additional trophies for the other school(s) in the co-op.***

Renumber remaining sections.

**Rationale:**

The number of MHSA co-op teams have increased greatly over the past several years, from 140 a few years ago to over 200 presently. The cost of trophies has also increased and with two team and now many three team co-ops the amount paid by the MHSA exceeds the generous NWE yearly contribution for trophy and award purchases. The cost of extra co-op trophies far exceeds the amount of dues each school pays for a sport per year and those dues are to assist with the operating expenses of the MHSA.

**Fiscal Note:**

Cost of the additional trophy/trophies for additional schools in a co-op.

**7. PROPOSAL TO AMEND SEMI-FINAL TROPHIES FOR FOOTBALL AND SOCCER**

The MHSA Executive Board proposes the following amendment to Awards, Authorized Awards for MHSA Activities, Athletic Awards on pages 42-43 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**ATHLETIC AWARDS**

III. Football

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

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

V. Soccer

~~B. State Semi-Finalist (***Mailed to the school***)~~

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

**Rationale:**

Providing two trophies to the teams that lose the semi-final game hasn't been too well received by the teams that lose this game. The trophy lists them as semi-finalists however schools have expressed displeasure with what they view as a participant trophy with little meaning.

**Fiscal Note:**

There is no fiscal impact to the Membership.

**8. PROPOSAL TO AMEND GOLF COACHING RULE**

Hamilton High School proposes a change to the golf coaching rule in the General Rules and Regulations for Golf subsection (14) on page 71 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (14) COACHING**

- (14) **Coaching** – Each school may have up to two certified coaches on the course at the same time to give advice to participants representing that school each day of the competition from green to tee provided that:
- a. The coaches must have been approved by their local school district administration, have passed the MHSA Coaches Education Requirements, have completed the MHSA Golf Rules Clinic for the current season and have been a bona fide member of the coaching staff during the entire season.
  - b. The coaches are identified by tournament management before the start of the competition each day with credentials / access passes displayed on a lanyard which must be worn and visible at all times.
  - c. The coaches shall not give advice to, or ask for advice from, another school's participants;

- d. ~~The advice shall not be given during the playing of a hole but rather from the time all of the participants hole out on a hole until one of the players is ready to tee off on the next hole (or during a suspension of play);~~
- d. **Allow authorized coaches to coach a player up until the player and the player's ball are on the green. If any part of the player's ball is on the actual green, the ball is considered on the green. Once the player arrives at the green (no delay by the player) the coach can have no more communication with competing player(s) until all players in the group have holed out. When providing advice—a coach must not enter a bunker. Coaches are not to assist or instruct a player regarding any putting on the green. If no part of the player's ball is on the actual green, coach instruction is permitted. Coaches must understand that there is to be no delaying of play when providing instruction during the prescribed coaching time. The coach must understand this is additional time to coach player(s), but when visiting with players the pace of play shall not be delayed.**
- e. The advice shall be given in a private manner and does not unduly delay play.
- f. Motorized carts will be allowed for coaches if the golf course allows.

**Rationale:**

Allowing golf coaches to coach from tee to green will help with the overall quality of the game. The rule change will also give the coaches the ability to help monitor spectators, as well as, give them the ability to address speed of play to players who have fallen behind the group in front of them.

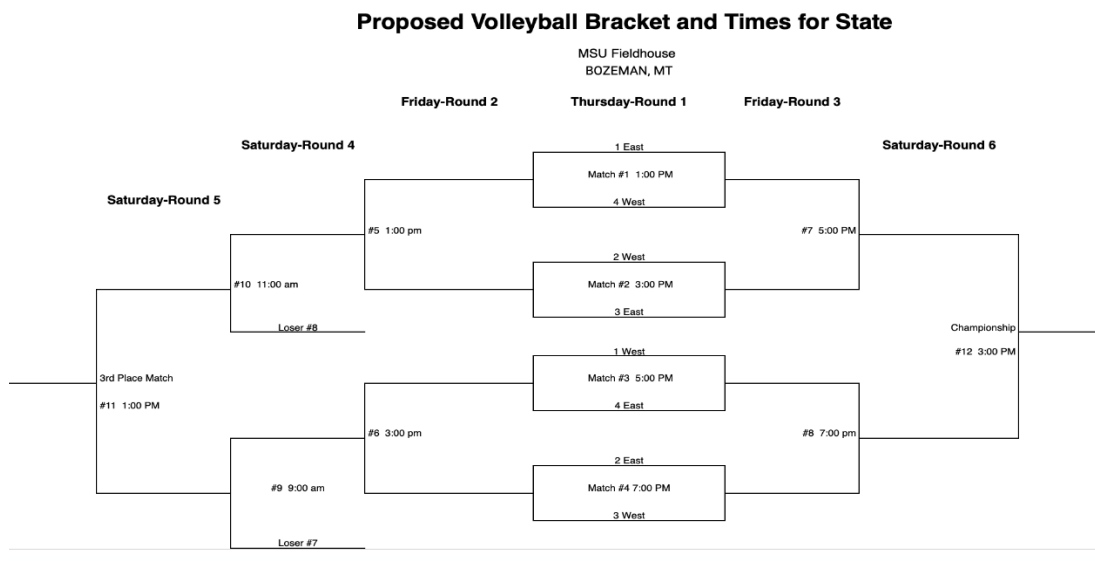
**Fiscal Note:**

There is no fiscal impact to the Membership.

**9. PROPOSAL TO CHANGE FORMAT OF THE STATE VOLLEYBALL BRACKET – ALL CLASSES**

Glacier High School proposes a change to the state volleyball bracket in the General Rules and Regulations for Volleyball subsection (7) on pages 98-99 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (7) TOURNAMENT BRACKETING**



**Rationale:**

1. The proposed format would create a TRUE championship match; 2 rested, healthy teams facing each other for the first time in the tournament, ready to battle. It's what our current Friday night at 6:00 pm match has become. Instead of one team resting and watching while the other team battles early Saturday morning for a chance to play in the championship, with little to no break between matches.
2. The vast majority of state volleyball champions in all classifications have been the team that has won their first 3 games. Since 1998 there have been 5 AA *if necessary*, matches; in 1 out of those 5 matches, the winner from Friday night's semi-final match lost the first championship game and came back to win the *if necessary* game.
3. Since 1998 the "AA" team that won Friday's night match won the championship match 17 times.
4. The proposed format would create two semifinal contests that allow additional fans to support their team.
5. The proposed format allows greater travel time and planning for fans to travel to a state championship game that may not attend.
6. 4 well-rested teams in the 2 semifinals will result in a better level of play versus the one "undefeated" semifinal.
7. 6 teams still in play on Saturday. This will allow for better potential support for 3rd place and championship matches.
8. With the proposed bracket, teams win 3rd place, not lose and end up 3rd.
9. The proposed bracket is better for the overall health of student athletes. The idea of 3 matches on Friday and right back up Saturday AM has never been conducive to a high level of play.
10. Under the current bracket, it will take 3 great days to win a title. Right now, a team needs two great days to win the tournament. A team could also win a trophy with one good day at the tournament.
11. With the proposed bracket, all championships are decided at the same time. Right now, if there is an "if necessary" game, the field house is often mostly empty, and some courts being disassembled.

**Fiscal Note:**

There is no fiscal impact to the Membership.

**10. PROPOSAL TO ADD GIRLS' WRESTLING AS A MHSA SANCTIONED SPORT**

The MHSA Executive Board proposes the following amendment to By-Law, Article I, Section (2) Dues on page 7 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (2) DUES**

**Add Girls' Wrestling to the list of sanctioned sports offered by MHSA.**

**Rationale:**

The MHSA membership voted to form a committee to study the addition of girls' wrestling as an MHSA sanctioned MHSA sport. The committee's recommendation is to add girls' wrestling as an MHSA sanctioned sport. Their recommendation included the logistics for the season, weight classes, weigh-ins, regular season and post season competition etc. Those recommendations were sent to each school in early December. The committee also recommended adding a boy's sport because of the equal number of sports required to be offered by each school pending review by MHSA legal counsel on current interpretations of the Ridgeway Decision. The committee evaluated various sports and recommended boys' powerlifting as it would be easy to administer and cost effective.



**Fiscal Note:**

The additional cost of administering the program if offered (coach – if not the same for boys), travel, etc.

**11. PROPOSAL TO ADD BOYS' POWERLIFTING AS A MHSA SANCTIONED SPORT**

The MHSA Executive Board proposes the following amendment to By-Law, Article I, Section (2) Dues on page 7 of the current MHSA Handbook:

**Section (2) DUES**

**A. Add Boys' Powerlifting to the list of sanctioned sports offered by MHSA.**

**Rationale:**

With the possibility the membership would approve the addition of girls' wrestling as a sport, the Ad-hoc committee wanted to provide an option to add a boy's sport if the current interpretation of Ridgeway continued requiring schools to offer an equal number of girls and boys sports. The committee realized that many larger schools already offer all MHSA sanctioned sports and may not be able to offer girls wrestling, if approved. The committee reviewed various boy's sport offerings and because it would be easy to administer and cost effective to implement, the committee recommended the Board add boys' powerlifting.

The Executive Board also realizes that the normal process of approving a committee to study adding an activity during an Annual Meeting and then voting on their recommendation during the next Annual Meeting was not followed in this case, however, the Board's concern is that a boys sport, if even approved, would take another three years to add through this process. This option gives the schools the opportunity to decide if they want to add the boys' sport now or wait and go through the normal process. Unless the interpretation of Ridgeway is modified, and if the current interpretation of equal number of girls' and boys' sports continues, schools would have to ensure proportionality is met when adding girls wrestling (if approved) or have the capability to add another currently MHSA sanctioned boys' sport offering.

**Fiscal Note:**

The additional cost of a coach stipend, and possible travel costs to a few regionalized regular season competitions and to a state meet (if participants meet qualifying standards). Most schools would have the equipment / facilities to sponsor this sport.

## Girls Wrestling Ad-Hoc Committee – Implementation Plan

The committee discussed the addition of girls' wrestling in general and after very thoughtful sharing of thoughts and ideas came to a consensus that girls' wrestling should be added as an MHSA sanctioned activity.

The committee then went through each area and formulated the following specific recommendations regarding implantation of this sport:

- 1) The implementation of girls' Folkstyle wrestling will be on a minimum of a two-year pilot program.
- 2) Girls can participate, during this implementation time period, in regular season matches either against male or female competition. (Because of competition opportunities by region).
- 3) Girls can only participate in girls matches only during the post season.
- 4) Schools will determine if boys and girls will practice together, have the same coaches etc. By MHSA rules, a head coach will have to be designated for both programs (which can be the same individual).
- 5) Weight Classes – the proposed weight classes will be 103, 113, 126, 138, 152, 170 and 205 that align with current MHSA weight classes with possible adjustment to these proposed weight classes after the WR-2 submissions.
- 6) Weigh-in Procedures – the committee recommends all weigh-ins (including for males) be in a school approved singlet and worn as intended (excluding headgear and footwear). There will be no weight allowance given for uniforms.
- 7) Weight Management – For girls – the 50 percent rule will be in effect after the girls' weight classes are established by January 1 of each year. 50% rule: For health and safety reasons, Montana's weight control program shall require each girl wrestler to have at least one-half of weigh-ins after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season at the minimum weight the wrestler will compete in during the divisional and state tournament series.
- 8) Contested Events – same as the boys (18). Each individual wrestler may have no more than eighteen (18) contested events (where he/she weighs in and wrestles at the same physical location) with a maximum of fifty (50) total matches prior to the post season.
- 9) Post Season
  - One Classification
  - State Tournament Qualifiers:
    - Girls' Divisional tournaments will **not** be held.
    - All girls qualify for state during the two-year pilot program.
    - Schools can enter an unlimited number of participants per weight class, but only the two highest scoring girl's total scores count for team points.
    - Participants will be seeded at state (Track Wrestling)
- 10) Awards
  - Per General Rules for Awards (6)

## **Possible Boys' Powerlifting – Tentative Implementation Plan**

The Ad-Hoc girls' wrestling committee recommended to the Executive Board that they submit a proposal to add a boys' sport in addition to girls' wrestling. The committee reviewed various boys' sport offerings and because it would be easy to administer and cost effective to implement, the committee recommended the Board add boys' powerlifting. Also, adding a boy's sport would balance the offerings for MHSA sanctioned sports for boys and girls. The plan below is very tentative just to give schools an idea on what the implementation could look like but there will be more input and review before a final plan is approved by the Executive Board if the addition of this sport is approved by the membership.

- 1) The season would tentatively be scheduled in the spring to minimize conflicts with MHSA sports and the independent powerlifting association's season.
- 2) The season would start sometime after the end of Wrestling and Swimming (there is a need for a longer period of initial practices and recovery time between meets).
- 3) 15 practices seem to be the number that should be required before the first meet.
- 4) Meets would be Full Power – squat first, bench press second and dead lift third. There can be competition in the bench press and dead lifts only for individuals who do not want to participate in Full Power during the meet.
- 5) There will be team and individual competition.
- 6) Weight classes / Scoring / Judges / Qualifying Standards / etc. will be determined by guidelines and requirements from the appropriate U.S. governing body for Powerlifting.
- 7) Schools can schedule meets regionally each week with the understanding that teams will usually take a week off between meets for recovery but could choose from the meets scheduled.
- 8) Post Season – One classification and to start out, only a state meet will be held with qualifying standards to be met for participation. The state meet will be held around the first week of May.
- 9) Awards – according to MHSA General Rules for Awards.