



Operating Manual 2026-2027

The Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, homelessness, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or foreign language, prior academic achievement, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law. Retaliation is likewise prohibited.



Mission Statement

The mission of the Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Organization (MCSAO) is to oversee the regulation, organization and promotion of its member schools' interscholastic athletic programs. MCSAO provides opportunities for charter school student/athletes to compete at a high level and uses that competition to teach the fundamental values of teamwork, discipline, sacrifice, and sportsmanship. This will contribute to the students' overall educational experience and development as individuals. The MCSAO is committed to educating our youth for a rewarding future and working in partnership with local communities to establish and maintain charter school interscholastic athletic programs.

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SECTION I. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 **MCSAC Membership** – will consist of the Athletic Director appointed by the administrative team from each Member School or one (1) administrative team member from a Member School. Member Schools must, within five business days, notify the MCSAO Executive Committee of any change in the position of Athletic Director, and provide updated contact information. The MCSAC Membership is directly responsible for voting on items as requested by the Executive Committee.
- 1.2 **MCSAO Executive Committee** – is directly responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Directors for the implementation of rules, regulations, policies and guidelines pertaining to MCSAC governance and enforcing all rules and regulations adopted by the MCSAC. This includes the right to change dates and times of events if needed.
- 1.3 **MCSAO Board of Directors** – will consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Clerk and a Treasurer. The Board of Directors shall manage, operate and decide on all matters concerning the governing regulations and policies of the MCSAC. The Board of Directors shall have the sole authority to appoint the Executive Committee and such committees as are suggested in order to effectuate the purpose of the organization.
- 1.4 **Annual Meeting** – attendance is required for all Member School Athletic Directors and any new Administrative Team members. Also, any Member School placed on probation or whose membership has been terminated and is seeking re-admittance to the organization for membership, must attend the New Athletic Director Workshop. The failure of an Athletic Director or new Administrative Team member to attend shall be a violation towards the “Member in Good Standing Agreement” and may result in forfeiture of admittance to the MCSAC for that school year.
- 1.5 **New Athletic Director Workshop** – all new athletic directors are required to attend the New Athletic Director Workshop held prior to their respective annual meeting. The failure of an Athletic Director to attend shall be a violation towards the “Member in Good Standing Agreement” and may result in forfeiture of admittance to the MCSAC for that school year.
- 1.6 **Member in Good Standing Agreement** – Member Schools must uphold the MCSAO Mission Statement. All members of the MSCAC agree to:
- Commit to a fixed academic eligibility policy from July 1st through June 30th
 - Demonstrate good sportsmanship in accordance with Section V of this Operating Manual
 - Meet all MCSAC deadlines
 - Attend all required league meetings
 - Participate in all seasons, having equal opportunities for boys and girls
 - Demonstrate competitive progress
 - Forfeit zero competitions
 - Abide by all rules outlined in this Operating Manual

- 1.6.1** Member schools should abide by the preceding statements. A Member School that fails to meet any of these standards shall be in violation of this agreement. If a Member School is found in violation of this agreement the school's Athletic Director and Administration will be notified in writing by the Executive Committee, pursuant to the schedule described in Rule 1.6.2.
- 1.6.2** Each violation of this agreement by a Member School shall result in written notification issued by the Executive Committee to the Member School.
- 1.6.2.1** Upon a first violation, written notice shall be issued to the Member School's athletic director and the school will be fined \$100.
- 1.6.2.2** Upon a second violation, written notice shall be issued to both the Member School's athletic director and administration and the school will be fined \$250. A second violation may also subject a Member School to a probationary period consistent with Section 1.10.
- 1.6.2.3** Upon a third violation, the Member School will become ineligible for league play for one school year from the date of their infraction and the school will be fined \$500.
- 1.6.2.4** The MCSAO Board of Directors retains discretion to impose additional sanctions.
- 1.6.3** Violations accrued over the course of any given School Year shall expire upon the final day of the School year.
- 1.6.4** The failure to timely report scores or pay fees assessed pursuant to Rule 3.3 shall not constitute a violation of the Member in Good Standing Agreement.
- 1.7** **League Meetings** – attendance at all league meetings is mandatory. Athletic Directors are expected to be at league meetings on time and stay for the duration of the meetings. League meetings are utilized to advance and facilitate organizational/league business. Any Member School failing to attend will be penalized in accordance to Rule 1.6.
- 1.8** **Membership Dues** – are due and payable on or before the fourth Friday in September. Said fees help offset costs incurred by the MCSAC for the facilitation of tournaments (facilities, officials, awards, etc.). Member schools who fail to meet this deadline will be charged and billed a one hundred dollar (\$100.00) late penalty fee each month they are in arrears. All dues and penalty fees assessed against a Member School are due and payable no later than seven (7) days prior to the commencement of any MCSAC tournament event. The failure to pay any and all monies in compliance with this section shall result in that Member School's termination from any and all future MCSAC leagues and tournament events until all financial contributions are paid in full. Such failure to pay shall also be a violation of the "Member in Good Standing Agreement."

- 1.9 Membership Application Policy** - Schools seeking membership in the Massachusetts Charter School Athletic Conference (MCSAC) must adhere to the following procedures and expectations:
- 1.9.1 Application Deadline** - All membership applications must be submitted no later than February 28 for consideration for the following school year. Late applications will not be reviewed.
 - 1.9.2 Application Submission** - Interested schools must complete the official MCSAC Membership Application Form and submit all required supporting documentation to the MCSAO Board of Directors by the stated deadline.
 - 1.9.3 Presentation to Division** - Applicant schools will be required to present their proposal to the Athletic Directors of the division they are seeking to join. Presentations should include detailed information about the school's athletic program, facilities, eligibility protocols, sportsmanship practices, and alignment with MCSAC values and standards.
 - 1.9.4 Scheduling Expectations** - Schools applying for membership or reinstating a team that has previously forfeited all or a substantial portion of a season or that has discontinued, suspended, or ceased operation of a sports program must demonstrate the capacity and commitment to compete in a minimum of 50% of the season competition limits per MIAA Handbook Rule 34 across the sports they intend to offer. Incomplete or limited scheduling may negatively impact the application's or reinstatement consideration. Any Member School shall be required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the MCSAC Executive Committee that it possesses the organizational, financial, and operational capacity to sustain and complete its proposed athletic programs.
 - 1.9.5 Voting and Approval** - Following the presentation, a vote will be conducted among the Athletic Directors of the respective division. A two-thirds (2/3) majority is required for the application to be approved.
 - 1.9.6 Finality of Decision** - All decisions regarding membership applications are final and may not be appealed.
 - 1.9.7 Notification of Decision** - Schools will be notified of the decision in writing within two weeks of the divisional vote.
- 1.10 Probationary Policy** - Member schools that repeatedly violate league rules may be placed on probation for one full academic year. Probation may be triggered by two or more documented member in good standing violations within a school year, failure to comply with prior sanctions, or conduct that undermines the league's mission or operations. Schools placed on probation will receive written notice outlining the reasons for their probation. They must submit a corrective action plan within 30 days of receiving this notice. The league's Executive Committee will monitor the school's compliance throughout the year. At the end of the probation period, the Executive Committee will determine whether to lift probation, extend it, or remove the school from the league. All probation-related matters will remain confidential and be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee.
- 1.10 Deadline Extensions** – Requests for deadline extensions must be submitted in writing (email is valid) prior to the deadline date to the Executive Committee, who retain sole discretion to approve or reject any such request.

- 1.11 **Appeals Unavailable** – Any and all sanctions imposed pursuant to Section I of this Operating Manual, including but not limited to those imposed as a result of a violation of the Member in Good Standing Agreement shall be final.

SECTION II. GENERAL TERMS DEFINED

Members should also refer to the MIAA Handbook for further definitions

- 2.1 **Member School** – Member Schools enter the league upon the acceptance of an application submitted to the MCSAO. Any public charter high school which is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and also has a building Administrative Team, Athletic Director, a graduation ceremony, etc., in the state of Massachusetts which has met all MCSAC membership requirements, subject to the approval of the MCSAO board of directors which may not be unreasonably withheld but which may only be granted if admission is in the best interest of MCSAC, may be eligible to enter the league. Member Schools may not participate in any other athletic conference, unless MCSAC does not offer the relevant sport. A Member School's first and foremost obligation is to uphold the MCSAO Mission Statement and abide by the Member in Good Standing Agreement.
- 2.2 **Sports Season** – one of the three (3) time frames (Fall, Winter, Spring) marked by particular activities.
- 2.3 **League** – a group of no less than five (5) member schools that will, during a specific sports season, compete against each other in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth by the MCSAC membership.
- 2.4 **Criminal Offender Record Information Act (CORI)** – in accordance to M.G.L. c. 6, §§ 167-178B, all Member Schools are required to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees, coaches and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with team members.
- 2.5 **Head Coach** – It is the responsibility of the schools Administrative Team or Athletic Director to ensure that all teams have appropriate adult representation hereby known as the Head Coach. The Head Coach shall be a paid or volunteer member of a Member School's athletic staff as appointed by the Member School's Administrative Team or Athletic Director. The Head Coach is responsible, at all times, for the actions and behavior of his or her team and anyone associated with and representing their school. All Head Coaches must be in compliance with the MIAA Rule 33. Failure to do so will result in a violation of the "Member in Good Standing Agreement". Head Coaches shall also:
- 2.10.1 Promote and uphold the MCSAO Mission Statement, Placing a high value on good sportsmanship and the fundamental concepts of teamwork, discipline and hard work.

- 2.10.2** Be a positive role model by setting a good example for others to follow.
- 2.10.3** Teach their players about respect and courtesy for their opponents, coaches, referees and all involved in an MCSAC event.
- 2.10.4** Teach their players about the fundamental concepts of athletics and competition.
- 2.13** **Official Roster** – all member schools must submit an itemized list of participants from their school with the names of those participants including their uniform number and grade. All official rosters must be submitted into Arbiter by the first contest date set by the MIAA. The size of that roster is unlimited. Any student may be added to the Official Roster at any time during the season provided the student is enrolled in that Member School as a full-time student. Additions or changes to a participant's jersey number must be reported to the Executive Committee in writing prior to their next scheduled league contest.
- 2.14** **Team** – a group of student/athletes who are enrolled as full time-students in the member school, have met all school and MCSAC eligibility requirements, are supervised by a Head Coach who has been appointed by the Administrative Team or Athletic Director, has a schedule of league games, scheduled practices and uniforms.
- 2.14.1** A team must (1) be sponsored by its member school and under the jurisdiction of the members School Committee/Board of Directors, (2) register annually with the MCSAC and abide by all rules and regulations set forth by the MCSAC.
- 2.14.2** For team sports entered, member schools are obligated to identify at least one (1) boys and one (1) girls team per sport as their "varsity" team. Only teams which are so designated are eligible for regular season and tournament play/participation.
- 2.15** **Administrative Team** – The term “Administrative Team” refers to the Member School's leadership team and may include the Head of School, Principal, Executive Director and/or Dean of Students.
- 2.16** **School Year** – The School Year shall run from July 1 until June 30 of the following year.

SECTION III. REGULATIONS/POLICIES

3.1 **Divisions/Tournament Eligibility**

Division Members

- Once a sport reaches five teams it is considered varsity and will be eligible for league play and have a tournament champion

- There are two regional divisions, North and South. Teams will be considered to be in a division once there are four eligible teams in a sport from that region. At this time the division will be eligible for end of season awards, e.g. Coach of the Year, or Division Most Valuable Player.
- If a region does not have four eligible teams, the teams in this region need only abide by the MIAA game minimum to be eligible.
- All division games must be completed to be eligible for tournament play and the division championship. Games may not be forfeited to accomplish this.
- The MCSAC strongly recommends that all division games be played or rescheduled prior to the final week of the regular season. The conclusion of the MCSAC regular season will not be extended under any circumstances, including weather events, acts of God, or other unforeseen issues. The MCSAC is not responsible for division games that are not played by the established deadline.
- If more than one game is played between two schools in the same division, the first game will be counted for the purposes of regular-season division championship determination.

Game Minimums

- A school must play each team in its division once.
- A school must compete in a minimum of 50% of the season competition limits per MIAA Handbook Rule 34
- All division games must be completed to be eligible for tournament play and the division championship.. A school may only play another Member School one fewer time than the MIAA allows for that sport.
- A school must schedule two fewer games than the MIAA maximum allows

Divisional Game Requirements

- Member Schools must play all of the divisional games to be eligible for tournament play and the division championship.. A team cannot forfeit a game to meet this requirement.
- If a Member School forfeits or is otherwise disqualified from any of its divisional games it shall be ineligible for tournament play and the division championship..

Divisional Championship Seeding

- The Member School that has the best win/loss record vs divisional opponents.
- If more than one game is played between two schools in the same division, the first game will be counted for regular-season division championship determination.
- For further determination go to 13.2.2

Tournament Seeding (sports offered by MIAA)

1. A Member School must be a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA).
2. Seeding will be determined based on the MIAA power rankings released after the final day of the MCSAC league's regular season. If a rating is not released after the final day of the MCSAC league's regular season, the most recent rating be used.
3. For sports with 13 or more participating teams, the top eight power-ranked schools shall qualify for the tournament. In sports comprising 10 to 12 teams, the top six schools shall advance, while for sports with fewer than 10 teams, the top four power-ranked schools shall participate in the tournament. If there is a tie in seeding, see Rule 13.2.
4. In the rare instance that a divisional champion isn't among the top power-ranked schools to qualify for MCSAC post-season tournament, it will be added as an additional team and increase the number of qualifying teams outlined in #3 by one. The added team will be seeded according to its power ranking.
5. A Member School must schedule three "TBA" games prior to the MIAA schedule commitment deadline.

Tournament Seeding (sports not offered by MIAA)

1. Member Schools must have an overall winning percentage of .500 or above and participated in a minimum of eight (8) games to be eligible.
2. Teams will be seeded by their overall winning percentage in relation to all divisions
3. If there is a tie in seeding, see Rule 13.2.

- 3.2 The Jack O'Brien Achievement Award** - The Jack O'Brien Achievement Award is presented annually to the MCSAC member school that has the most successful athletic program, defined as the member school that wins the most MCSAC Championships across all three seasons. Winning this award shows an embodiment of hard work, dedication, sportsmanship, passion, and commitment to excellence in high school athletics. This award recognizes the overall success and commitment to developing a high level of high school student athletes in all seasons.

Jack O'Brien Achievement Award Selection

Most MCSAC Championships won in a school year.

Ties after 1, most MCSAO Championship runner-ups

Ties after 2, most division titles

Ties after 3, most MCSAO semi-final appearances (cross country and track, 3rd and 4th place appearances count and carry weight as such. If tying schools finished in 3rd and 4th, the tie would go to the 3rd place school)

Ties after 4, most MCSAO quarter-final appearances (cross country and track removed from this tie-breaker)

Ties after 5, most MCSAO post season appearances (cross country and track removed from this tie-breaker)

Co-Champions

If a championship is won by a school participating in a COOP, the host school only gets credit for the championship as it pertains to the Jack O'Brien Achievement Award.

- 3.3 Scheduling** – contests with member schools should be the first priority of the school's Athletic Director. Commitments to MCSAC division play must be made one month prior to the MIAA commitment date of that season. Scheduling of non-league opponents should be secondary and utilized to round out regular season schedules. No games may be scheduled during the MCSAO playoff week at the end of the season. The MCSAC is not responsible for scheduling around non-league games at that time. Any changes in scheduling should be reported to the league office within 24 hours of that change taking place.
- 3.4 Reporting Scores** – following each MCSAC contest, the home team is responsible for reporting scores to Arbiter Sports within 24 hours. Failure to report game scores will result in the following fines. The first offense receives a warning; each subsequent offense will receive a \$50 fine.
- 3.5 Forfeitures** – The Athletic Director of a Member School must report their inability to play a scheduled game to the MIAA within 24 hours, and in doing so include the MCSAO Executive Committee. Both schools involved will submit an MIAA *Request for Determination* form. The MIAA will then decide whether the game is a no-contest or a forfeit. If deemed a forfeit, that must be reported to the MCSAC immediately. Failure to report the forfeit will be result in a Member in Good Standing Violation.
- 3.6 Postponements** – every effort should be made to reschedule games that are postponed due to travel, weather related issues, or referee assignments. Any postponed contests between member schools must be rescheduled at the earliest convenient time. The Athletic Directors of both schools in question should work collaboratively on this process. The home team is responsible for notifying the MIAA and MCSAC in writing within twenty four (24) hours of the schedule change.
- 3.7 Home Game/Site Supervisor** – the Athletic Director of the member school that is hosting a league contest is required to be on site from the time the visiting team arrives until the time the visiting team departs. Coaches are not considered responsible for home game supervision unless the coach is the Athletic Director of the host school. In this case, the Athletic Director must designate a qualified individual to serve as the game site supervisor until their coaching duties have been completed. In the event the league contest is played on a neutral field, the team designated as the “home” team will be deemed to be “hosting” the contest.
- 3.8 Fraudulent Documentation** – any participant, coach or school official who knowingly falsifies any official document(s) or participates under an assumed name will be

immediately suspended from further MCSAC participation for one (1) year from the date of the infraction. A hearing will then be scheduled and conducted by the MCSAO Board of Directors, a subcommittee or an ad hoc committee as duly appointed by and at the discretion of the MCSAO Board of Directors, to determine the re-entry status of those involved.

- 3.9 Suspensions** – where any member of the MCSAO Executive Committee directly observe the behavior of any game supervisor, coach, manager, team-staff member, player or spectator and find said behavior to be detrimental to the MCSAC and contrary to the organization’s Mission Statement, they may immediately issue suspensions. After issuing such a suspension, the Executive Committee member shall complete a Suspension notification form which shall be presented to the Executive Director for their review within twenty-four hours of said suspension. This temporary suspension will remain in effect until the member school’s Administrative Team and Athletic Director are notified of the length of the suspension. All suspensions issued pursuant to MCSAC specific rules and regulations are subject to the Appeals Process described in Section VI, all other appeals shall be taken in conformity with MIAA Rule 89.
- 3.10 Ejections, Serving Suspensions, and Suspension Notifications** – Any individual(s) associated with any MCSAC event who is ejected from an event is automatically suspended from participating in the next scheduled event.
- 3.9.1** Players may serve out their suspension on the bench but out of uniform.
- 3.9.2** All suspensions may be appealed.
- 3.9.3** Any school that fails to report a suspension will be in violation of the Member in Good Standing Agreement.
- 3.10 Chain of Command** – All questions or requests made to the league must come from the member school’s athletic director and not coaching staff or parents.
- 3.11 Rule Change Proposals** – Rule Change Proposals for MCSAC specific rules must be submitted in writing by the Member School’s AD to the Executive Committee two (2) weeks prior to start of the next season. At the next league meeting or, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, via email, the MCSAC Members will vote to approve or disapprove the proposal. All proposals require a two-thirds (2/3) vote margin to be approved; proposed rule changes to MIAA rules are governed by MIAA Rule 88.
- 3.12 Cooperative Team Policy** – Members Schools that would like to form cooperative teams for MCSAC league play may only do so with other MCSAC schools. If an MCSAC member school has been approved by the MIAA District Committee that same application and approval shall carry over to the MCSAC. If a Member School is applying for a COOP outside of the MIAA please see Appendix B.

SECTION IV. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- 4.1 **Academics** – participants must have a passing grade of a 60 or 2.3 in each subject in accordance with the academic guidelines set forth by their school.
- 4.1.1 All new high school member schools or current schools that have updated their policies are required to submit their school's Academic Policy to the league office by September 15, current to the upcoming school year and that this policy remain in effect and be adhered to for the entirety of that calendar year.
- 4.1.2 Any participant who is currently receiving special educational services under General Laws Chapter 766 and who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be declared eligible if all of their academic requirements satisfactorily meets the special education director's approval.
- 4.2 **Student Handbook** – all participants, first and foremost, are subject to the rules and regulations governing student behavior as cited in the Member School's student handbook. Violations of school rules resulting in suspension (in/out of school) from school will automatically preclude that participant's involvement in MCSAC contests until they have been officially readmitted to school.
- 4.3 **Attendance** – students should not be allowed to participate in any MCSAC contest on the same day they are absent from school unless the absence has been approved in advance by an Administrative Team member. Participants must be in attendance for at least 57% of the school day in order to be eligible to participate; Member Schools may set individual policies which are more stringent than that required here.

SECTION V. SPORTSMANSHIP

All participants, coaches, spectators and anyone associated with or involved in a MCSAC event are required to display, at all times, the characteristics associated with "good sportsmanship". Sportsmanship is the ability to treat everyone involved in an athletic contest with fairness, generosity, respect and courtesy regardless of the outcome of a game. This is symbolized by appropriate "handshakes" at the end of athletic competition. All of the rules listed below include but are not limited to; before contests, during contests, after contests, social media, electronic communication, etc. To the extent the MCSAC guidelines establish a more stringent standard than MIAA, the MCSAC standards shall apply.

- 5.1 **Taunting/Trash Talk** – any action or comment that is used to demean, bait or embarrass/humiliate others is strictly prohibited. Game officials are to treat any form of taunting as a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul and immediately disqualify the offender(s).

The offender(s) are required to leave the contest area immediately and are not allowed to return.

- 5.2 Threats of Physical Bodily Harm** – any participant, coach or spectator who willfully threatens physical bodily harm to anyone associated with a MCSAC contest/event(including spectators) before, during or after said event, must be immediately removed from the game site and will be suspended until further notice by the MCSAO Board of Directors until a hearing can be scheduled and conducted. The offender(s) future participation in the MCSAC will be determined at that time.
- 5.3 Physical Altercations** – any participant, coach or spectator who willfully attempts to injure anyone associated with a MCSAC contest/event (including spectators) before, during or after said event, must be removed from the game site immediately and will be suspended until further notice by the MCSAO Board of Directors until a hearing can be scheduled and conducted. The offender(s) future participation in the MCSAC will be determined at that time.
- 5.4 Direct Profanity** – any participant, coach or spectator who uses profane language directed towards a game official, participant, coach, spectator or anyone associated with a MCSAC contest/event before, during or after said event, must be removed from the game site and suspended for the next two (2) league games.
- 5.5 Indirect Profanity** – any participant, coach or spectator who uses profane language indirectly during a MCSAC contest/event will receive a warning on their first offense. Any further violations are subject to all rules pertaining to technical fouls.
- 5.6 Spitting** – any participant or coach who spits directly or indirectly at an opposing player, official or coach during a MCSAO contest/event will be removed from the game site and suspended for the next two (2) league games.
- 5.7 Failure to Report** – any incident that goes unreported will be considered a violation of the “Member in Good Standing Agreement.”
- 5.8 Best Interest of MCSAC** – All Members and student athletes shall always act in the best interest of MCSAC and seek to promote a fair and safe environment. Nothing herein contained shall be construed as exclusively defining or otherwise limiting acts, transactions, practices or conduct not to be in the best interests of MCSAC; and any and all other acts, transactions, practices or conduct not to be in the best interests of MCSAC are prohibited and shall be subject to such penalties, including permanent ineligibility, as the facts in the particular case may warrant.

SECTION VI. APPEALS

- 6.1** Appeals of MIAA rule violations must be taken in conformity with MIAA Rule 89. This

Section describes the Appeals Process for MCSAC specific rules only.

- 6.2** Appeals must be initiated within two school days by notifying the Executive Committee in writing. The notice must describe the decision being appealed and the grounds for the appeal, including the factual basis for the appeal.
 - 6.2.1** Upon receipt, the Executive Committee may decide the appeal without further hearing. In all appeals, the Executive Committee may, in its sole discretion, conduct an investigation. The investigation may be conducted directly by the Executive Committee or whomever they designate.
 - 6.2.2** The Executive Committee may, in its discretion, order a hearing where all relevant parties may present their positions. All relevant parties, including school principals, administrative teams, athletic directors, or coaches will be required to attend.
 - 6.2.3** Prior to the hearing date established by the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee will provide the relevant parties notice of the format of the hearing, which may be modified as needed on a case-by-case basis.
 - 6.2.4** The Executive Committee shall notify the appellant of its decision in writing. The aggrieved party may then appeal the decision of the Executive Committee to the Board of Directors. Any appeal to the Board of Directors must be initiated within two school days of receipt of the Executive Committee's decision.
 - 6.2.5** In considering the merits of the appeal, the Board of Directors shall not conduct any further investigation or hold any further hearings and must accept the Executive Committee's finding of facts.
- 6.3** All decisions of the Executive Committee shall be implemented immediately and shall not be stayed pending whatever further appeal a Member School may seek.

SECTION VII. PENALTIES

- 7.1** Violations of MIAA Rules shall be penalized by MIAA. This Section describes penalties imposed only as a result of MCSAC specific rule violations.
- 7.2** Pursuant to all MCSAO Bylaws, the MCSAO Board of Directors, the MCSAC Membership, subcommittee or ad hoc committee as duly appointed by the MCSAO Board of Directors, are authorized to warn, place on probation, suspend or terminate any participant, team, coach, school official, game official, spectator or member school who is found in violation of the Mission Statement of the organization or its rules, regulations and guidelines.
- 7.3** All penalties relating to the specific rules set forth by the MCSAC will be placed into effect immediately upon the rendering of any verdict by the MCSAO Board of Directors, the MCSAC Membership, subcommittee or ad hoc committee as duly appointed by the MCSAO Board of Directors upon the Board's approval.

- 7.4 The MCSAO Board of Directors, the MCSAC Membership, and any subcommittee or ad hoc committee as duly appointed by the MCSAO Board of Directors have the authority to determine and impose other specified penalties that are agreed upon and are levied to protect the best interests of the MCSAC.
- 7.5 No member school player, team, coach, game official, school official or school shall be terminated from the organization until the completion of the hearing process. In such cases, the Respondent/Accused shall be given written notice as to the nature of the allegations regarding said particular incident or related incidents by the Complainant. Each party will be provided the opportunity to present/submit oral and written testimony on their behalf prior to the rendering of any decision. Decisions of the Board of Directors are final.

SECTION VIII. SPORT SEASONS

- 8.1 **League** – Each Member School will play each division member during the regular season on a yearly basis in accordance to the leagues master schedule in order to qualify for tournament play. Commitments to MCSAC division play must be made one month prior to the MIAA commitment date of that season. Athletic Director's may then schedule additional non-divisional games at their discretion, opposing other member schools no more than twice.
- 8.2 **Completion** – the regular season will end with the completion of the varsity game schedule. The regular season will be followed by a single elimination tournament for qualifying Member Schools to determine a yearly champion. The exact times and location are TBA and will precede the MIAA State Tournament
- 8.3 **Scheduling Limits for Schools** – schools must schedule two fewer games than MIAA Rule 34 permits.

FALL

- 8.4 **Fall Start and End Dates** – the official starting date for team practices and/or tryouts during the fall season is determined by MIAA Rule 35. No Member School is allowed to hold workouts prior to this date. The MCSAC regular season end date will be the power ranking release date approximately ten days prior to the MIAA cut-off for the respective sport. No games played after this date will be counted toward MCSAC playoff qualification.

WINTER

- 8.5 **Winter Start and End Dates** – the official starting date for team practices and/or tryouts during the winter season is determined by MIAA Rule 35. No Member School is allowed to hold workouts prior to this date. The MCSAC regular season end date is the first Thursday of February. No games played after this date will be counted toward MCSAC playoff qualification.

SPRING

- 8.6 Spring Start and End Date** – the official starting date for team practices and/or tryouts during the fall season is determined by MIAA Rule 35. No Member School is allowed to hold workouts prior to this date. The MCSAC regular season end date is the second Thursday of May. No games played after this date will be counted toward MCSAC playoff qualification.

SPORTS RULES

All sports are governed by the Rules contained in the MIAA handbook. What follows are MCSAC specific rules which shall supersede and control in MCSAC contests.

SECTION IX - CROSS COUNTRY

- 9.1 Championship Meet** – The meet will include a 5K girls' championship race and a boys' championship race for high school participants. All races will be run on a designated course, with a course walk-through permitted prior to the start. Meets may be presided over by hired meet officials or, with mutual agreement, may be run by the coaches. Each team must run a minimum of five (5) runners in each race. Each team may run up to but not exceed a maximum of seven runners. The championship meet will be scored as follows: 1 point will be awarded for each place finished (i.e., 1st place = 1 point, 2nd place = 2 points, 3rd place = 3 points, etc.) with the top 5 runners from each team scoring and the 6th and 7th runners place being used to displace runners from other teams, but not included in the team score. The championship meet will be conducted in accordance with the USATF rules and regulations unless superseded by rules and regulation defined, herein.

SECTION X - FLAG FOOTBALL

- 10.1 Rules** – All MCSAC flag football contests shall be governed by the most current version of the official NFL FLAG Football Rules, as amended from time to time and published by NFL FLAG, which rules are hereby incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein. As of the date publication date of this Operating Manual, the NFL FLAG rules are accessible at <https://nflflag.com/coaches/flag-football-rules>

SECTION XI - OUTDOOR TRACK

- 11.1 Meets** – will consist of the events defined in 11.2 and will be contested for both boys and girls. Races will be seeded based on inputs from each of the coaches. Meets may be presided over by hired meet officials or, with mutual agreement, may be run by the coaches. Meets held during the regular season will be conducted in dual or tri-meet fashion in which

points will be award to top three finishers. 5- first, 3- 2nd, 1- 3rd and relays as 5 for first place. Meet results must be entered into athletic.net for championship consideration.

11.1.1 Championship Meet will be scored as follows: 10 points for 1st place, 8 points for 2nd place, 6 points for 3rd place, 4 points for 4th place, 2 points for 5th place and 1 point for 6th place. Relays will be scored as 10 points for 1st place, 5 points for 2nd place and 2 points for third place. The team with the highest point total wins. Meets will be conducted in accordance with the USATF rules and regulations unless superseded by rules and regulation defined, herein.

11.1.2 PREFERRED LANE LIST FOR HURDLES/DASHES/RELAYS: (Use the following key to determine preferred lanes)

11.1.2.1 6 Lane Track: 3, 4, 2, 5, 1, 6

11.1.2.2 7 Lane Track: 4, 5, 3, 6, 2, 7, 1

11.1.2.3 8 Lane Track: 4, 5, 3, 6, 2, 7, 1, 8

11.2 **Events** – The following events will be held at MCSAC Sanctioned meets. Officials and those running the meet will determine the order for regular season meets. Order may change due to time, weather, or permits but will include the 100M, 200M, 400M, 800M, 1 Mile, 2 Mile, 400M Hurdles, 4x100M Relay, 4x400M Relay, Shot Put, Long Jump and Triple Jump.

CHAMPIONSHIP MEET

Order of Track Events

- 100m Trials
- 400m Hurdles
- 1 Mile
- 100m finals
- 800m
- 400m
- 200m
- 2 Mile
- 4 x 100m
- 4 x 400m

Field Events

- Shot Put
- Long Jump
- Triple Jump

11.3 Participation Limits – An athlete may compete in a maximum of three events including relays during regular season and championship meets. A regular season meet may be restricted to three entries per event if the permit for the track necessitates this constraint. A school may enter up to six athletes for each relay team, listing the first four in order of appearance, followed by as many as two alternates to be designated by the Coach. During the regular season each team may enter only one relay team per race. In a championship race, in the event a Member school has two teams composed of two completely different sets of students athletes, exclusive of alternates, both teams may race.

11.4 Championship Meet –Events include those defined in 11.2 and will be contested for both boys and girls. Only participants listed on athletic.net will be allowed to participate. No additions allowed. Separate boys and girls champions will be awarded. Races will be seeded based on regular season results/top finishers. Coaches can utilize the updated Top Finishers List to decide which events they wish to place their participants in. Meets may be presided over by hired meet officials or, with mutual agreement, may be run by the coaches.

11.4.1 The “**Honest Effort**” rule will be enforced. If an athlete is scratched from an event, then they are scratched from all other events that follow. This includes the relay.

Explanation: If an athlete is set to run in the 1600 and the 800, the runner may not scratch only from the 1600. They would also be scratched from the 800 as well, but the athlete would be able to scratch from the 800 after running the 1600.

SECTION XII. ALL LEAGUE SELECTIONS

12.1 The following protocol outlined herein will determine the Varsity All-League Team selections for each respective sports season. Any school that forfeits more than one game in a season or doesn’t complete all their division games is disqualified from All League selections and divisional awards (MVP and COY) . The number of players selected will be determined by the number of positions associated with said sport at the start of a contest (soccer 11, basketball 5, etc.).

Sports with 5-7 Players

- Teams finishing the season in 1st will get 4 selections

- Teams finishing the season in 2nd-4th will get 3 selections.
- All other teams making the playoffs will get 2 selections.
- Teams finishing out of the playoffs will get 1 nomination.

Sports with 9-11 Players

- Teams finishing the season in 1st will get 5 selections
- Teams finishing the season in 2nd-4th will get 4 selections.
- All other teams making the playoffs will get 3 selections.
- Teams finishing out of the playoffs will get 2 selections.

Cross Country

- Runners finishing 1st-3rd will receive a medal along with being recognized as All-League, along with 4th-7th place runners.

Track

- Runners finishing 1st-3rd will receive a medal along with being recognized as All-League.

Divisions will hold a virtual meeting within the week prior to the end of the MCSAC regular season. Athletic Directors will bring their All-League nominations to this meetings and select the MVP and COY for each division. Failure to attend may result in loss of selections. Coach of the Year selections will be based upon coaches whose teams qualified for tournament play. Ties for MVP will go to the player that is closer to graduation, if still tied and for COY the Executive Committee will determine the winner.

All nominees for All League must:

- participate in more than 60% of the games counted for League Standings.
- demonstrate exemplary leadership on their teams.
- act with appropriate sportsmanship to teammates, coaches, fans and officials throughout the season.
- demonstrate their on-the-court talents in games throughout the season, warranting praise of coaches throughout the league.

SECTION XIII. TOURNAMENT

13.1 Qualifying Criteria – to be eligible to compete in the end of season tournament, all member schools must have:

13.1.1 Fulfilled all financial obligations (7) days prior to the date of tournament commencement.

13.1.2 Submitted all game scores and team's current record to the League.

13.1.3 Be considered a member in good standing.

13.1.4 Have completed all division games.

13.2 Seeds – will be based on the following criteria

13.2.1 Best MIAA Power Ranking Rating

13.2.2 Head-to-Head competition decides ties (including in track and cross-country)

13.2.3 Most wins

13.2.4 Ties after step B, fewest points allowed vs. each other (VB – Sets then individual points)

13.2.5 Ties after step C, fewest points allowed vs. league opponents

13.2.6 Ties after step D, number of victories vs. opponents with a winning percentage.

13.2.7 Ties after step E, coin toss.

The higher seeded team is always designated as the home team. The tournament is based on a one (1) game elimination premise.

13.3 Site Selection – the MCSAC will make a best effort to secure a neutral site for all championship games. In the event a neutral site is not secured, the higher seed will be given the opportunity to host. If they are unable, the opponent will be given the opportunity to host. The MCSAO Board of Directors, and the MCSAO Executive Committee will work collaboratively in seeking tournament venues which meet the following criteria:

13.3.1 Safety of all the participants involved (players, coaches, game officials, spectators, etc.).

13.3.2 Neutrality

13.3.3 Adequate seating for spectators

13.3.4 Location

13.3.5 Site Expenses

13.3.6 Ability to charge admission

13.4 Game Official Assignments – will be assigned by the designated Assignor for semi-final and championship games. Assignors will do their best to select officials selected that have not officiated contests that include teams they have been contracted for, during regular season play, to officiate.

For rounds hosted by higher seed, the higher seed is responsible for securing the officials and paying for them. The following guidelines are set forth for all playoff games.

- Basketball - two man crew required, three optional
- Soccer - two officials required, three optional
- Baseball and Softball – two umps required
- Volleyball - one official required, two preferred

13.5 Ticket Sales – utilized to help offset tournament costs. Separate fees will be charged to students and adults attending MCSAC sponsored events.

13.6 Award Ceremony – will be held at the conclusion of each championship game.

13.7 Postponements – will be warranted when conditions are considered to be detrimental to the health and safety of students, coaches, school officials, game officials and spectators (i.e. unsafe traveling due to weather).

APPENDIX A



THIS FORM IS TO BE FILED AT SCHOOL WITH ORIGINAL INJURY REPORT FORM

RETURN TO ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

TO BE COMPLETED BY A SCHOOL OFFICIAL

Record No.:

1. STUDENT'S NAME:

SCHOOL:

HOME ADDRESS:

TEL.:

GRADE:

AGE:

2. Injury(illness) information:

Time and date of injury:

Contest or practice:

Type of injury:

Sport:

Position played:

Coach:

Tel.:

TO BE COMPLETED BY PHYSICIAN

3. Description of injury:

4. Referred:

Recommendations/restrictions:

a. No restrictions (discharged) as of (Date):

I have examined (Student):

and certify that he/she is

recovered from

incurred on (Date):

b. No practice or completion until: (Date):

c. Expected return to activity (after further evaluation): (Date):

d. Please state restrictions which you require (e.g. no contact, light practice only, etc.):

e. Other:

PHYSICIAN'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

COACH'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

PARENT'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

APPENDIX B



COOPERATIVE TEAMS

A. POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

The power to approve cooperative team applications rests with the MCSAO Executive Staff. The Executive Staff shall set policies, regulations, and guidelines to provide a workable structure for cooperative play.

The policies established by the Executive Staff shall:

- ◆ Respect the goals of the petitioning school districts;
- ◆ Protect competing schools from competitive disadvantage;
- ◆ Guarantee increased participation;
- ◆ Ensure that no displacement of athletes occurs; and
- ◆ Rest on a firm financial commitment by the schools involved to support a viable team.

B. DEADLINES

Any proposal to form a *new* cooperative team must be in complete form and submitted to the MCSAO Executive Staff at least one month in advance of the initial practice date for that sport. *Renewals* of existing cooperative teams must also be submitted at least one month in advance of the initial practice date.

C. POLICIES

1. A cooperative team proposal shall be the result of thoughtful, deliberate discussion and decision-making among the leaders of the schools and districts involved. If the school committees, superintendents, school principals, and athletic directors of the petitioning schools are of one mind that a cooperative proposal is good for their students, schools, and communities, then the EXECUTIVE STAFF will consider that “local” position.
2. If division members are convinced by those proposing a cooperative team that the proposal is appropriate and does not present a competitive threat, then the EXECUTIVE STAFF will consider this the “regional” position.
3. A proposal should demonstrate that the cumulative student participation in the combining schools will be greater under the cooperative plan than it was during each of the previous two years. This requirement protects against cooperative programs being stimulated by the withdrawal of financial support by any of the schools involved. If either school has a sufficient number of students, then a request for a cooperative team will be denied.
4. No consideration will be given to cooperative proposals which result from the elimination of the sport due to financial cutbacks during the two years immediately prior to the request.



Cooperative proposals will not be considered if they are driven by a desire to “save money” at the risk of decreasing the number of potential student participants.

5. Cooperative team proposals will only be considered if they increase the number of student participants. Cooperative team requests will not be approved unless necessary to sustain a previously existing team or to create a new team, based solely on numbers, and not at all on specialized player positions.
6. Cooperative teams will only be approved if required to support a single varsity program. If sub-varsity opportunities presented themselves subsequently, then that would not interfere with the approval status of that varsity cooperative team. On the other hand, approval will not be granted for stand-alone sub-varsity teams.
7. The cooperative team will be assigned to the division to which the host school is assigned.
8. A school may not send students to two different cooperative programs in a single sport.
9. The filing school shall designate the host for all levels (e.g. sub-varsity) which are to be sponsored in that sport. (This does not preclude one host for a girls’ sport and a different host for the boys’ sport.)
10. A cooperative team cannot result in the displacing of students from the host school; i.e. host school students may not be cut from participation in that sport (with the exception of middle school students).
11. The host school configuration will continue to determine eligible grades for the cooperating school that included more than grades 9 through 12.
12. All liability associated with the formation and conduct of approved cooperative team rests with the host school which exempts the MCSAO and its agents from all liability and responsibility. A schools participating in a cooperative team shall hold MCSAO harmless and agree to indemnify MCSAO against any loss arising from the cooperative team’s participation.
13. Co-operative proposals must be limited to MCSAO member schools.
14. Cooperative proposals will be granted for no more than one year.

D. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

All cooperative team athletes must meet the eligibility standards of their own school as well as the host school.

E. GUIDELINES



The principal of the host school shall assure that during preliminary local discussions adequate attention is given to the following:

1. A sufficient reason for sponsoring a cooperative team
2. An appropriate name for the cooperative team
3. Suitable practice arrangements
4. Fair competitive arrangements
5. Safe and adequate transportation arrangements
6. Provisions for physical examinations and medical coverage
7. Insurance provisions
8. The setting and monitoring of academic standards for eligibility
9. The purchase, repair, and cleaning of equipment
10. Source and control of finances
11. Guidelines for the termination of a given program
12. Use and maintenance of facilities
13. Selection, supervision, and payment of coaches
14. Selection and supervision of cheerleaders
15. Involvement of band and/or drill teams
16. Coordination of class/school schedules
17. Ticket prices and sales, disbursement of gate receipts
18. Student spectator and fan control and supervision
19. Cooperative team identity: mascot, colors, etc.
20. Award policies (school letters and certificate design)
21. Governance for the resolution of disputes
22. Identification of, and rationale for, programs eliminated within the past two years



Massachusetts Charter
School Athletic Organization
51-59 Summer St.
Everett, MA 02149

Ph. (617) 389 7277
www.mcsao.org

F. PROCESS

The Athletic Director of the host school must:

1. Complete the online MCSAO form: APPLICATION FOR A COOPERATIVE TEAM in the Members Only section of the MCSAO website.
2. The Executive Staff will not act on any request that is not supported by the majority of the league schools or the majority of the opponents (if competition in that sport does not occur within a league structure).