

FINE ARTS EVENT DATES AND ELIGIBILITY

The Montana High School Association shall supervise and control interschool forensic and drama activities and interschool music activities, including District Music Festivals, State Solo and Ensemble Festivals, and the All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival. Event dates and eligibility regulations are included in the complete MHSA Handbook. Refer to the complete rules and regulations for these fine arts activities in the supplemental MHSA publications for the respective activities: the MHSA Forensics and Drama Booklet and the MHSA Music Booklet.

FORENSICS AND DRAMA

EVENT DATES Divisional Tournaments

Classes A and B-C January 23-24

State Tournaments

All Classes January 30-31

Teams and Student Eligibility

1. Only teams from member high schools may participate in MHSA division and state forensic tournaments. Any ninth-grade student enrolled in and attending an accredited junior high school in the same school system as a senior high school may be eligible to participate on that senior high school's forensic team. The eligibility of a ninth-grade student of a junior high school who has been approved for senior high school competition must be certified by the principals of both the junior and senior high schools.
2. In order for a student to be eligible to represent his/her school in any interschool speech and/or drama activity, he/she must comply with the following criteria:
 - a. A student must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance 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).
 - b. A student who is enrolled in the eighth grade shall be eligible to participate in all MHSA Speech, Drama and Debate events. All eighth-grade students participating must meet the academic requirements. All eighth-grade students participating in a high school contest must adhere to all other MHSA rules and guidelines. Each individual MHSA School District must adopt by school board action policies on whether or not they allow 8th grade participation.

Exception: students who are 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.

Exception: Non-public or home school students who meet the requirements of 20-5-109 can participate in MHSA member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

- 1) The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (besides enrollment).
- 2) The same rules of the MHSA apply including age, semesters and academics (see #3).
- 3) The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for students attending a home school must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA

school principal. Academic eligibility includes provisions 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.

- 4) The student may only participate in the school in the student's attendance area and cannot transfer.
- 5) ***For a homeschool student to be able to participate in MHSA sports or activities, the student must be a United States citizen, and he/she must be a Montana resident, as determined under the provisions of MCA 1-1-215.***

Exception: Home school or nonpublic school students who resides in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school, that is the only school that student may participate at during the student's high school activities career. There is no transfer in district after the initial approval.

- c. A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format utilized (i.e., block, traditional, trimester etc.).
- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. If a student is assigned an "incomplete" or a "condition" in a subject, he/she has not received a passing grade in this subject. The record at the end of the semester is final.
- g. No student may establish eligibility concurrently at two member schools. Dual enrollment is not recognized for the purpose of eligibility in MHSA activities.
- h. This rule is not applicable to IDEA '04 and Section 504 students when their individual education plans (IEP) under IDEA or their educational accommodation plans under Section 504 certify that the students are not required to meet this minimum academic to have passed twenty hours of prepared work per week. However, all students must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance ten hours per week. Special education or Section 504 certification that the student is not required to meet the minimum academic requirements may not be enacted retroactively (after grades have been assigned at the end of the previous semester).
- i. A student: 1) must not be a graduate of a four-year high school or of a secondary school with similar graduation requirements, 2) must not have earned enough credits to

have graduated and completed eight semesters of high school, and 3) must not have a GED.

3. The team that shall represent any member high school shall be selected by that school in any manner agreed upon by the principals, teachers, and students at that school.
4. The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol, or other mood-altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

Student Special Considerations

1. Special considerations implemented for a student identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or 504 shall not infringe upon the rights of other competitors. Accommodations should be made as not to create an unfair advantage but rather level the playing field.
2. When accommodations need to be made, the individual team or coach should attempt to do so within the rules and regulations mandated by MHSA and MFEA.
3. Requested accommodations to rules must be an inherent part of a current IDEA Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 plans.
4. It is the coaches' responsibility to inform event organizers of needed accommodations so that the information can be disseminated to those impacted.

Season and Tournaments

1. Practice and competition for interschool speech and drama shall begin the first week in October and conclude with the MHSA State Speech and Drama Meets on the last weekend in January EXCEPT, member schools holding a valid NSDA (National Speech and Debate Association) charter will be permitted to participate in the Montana District and the NSDA tournaments after the speech and drama meets.
2. Individual instruction (coaching) is acceptable after the season on a one-on-one basis - i.e., one entry per coach(es).

Instruction on a one-on-one basis out of season cannot be required of any student. The intent of allowing one on one instruction is to provide the opportunity for a student to improve his/her skills if he/she requests assistance.

3. The team coaching rule is suspended from June 1 - July 31. This means a coach of a team can coach his/her speech/drama students anytime, anywhere, during this period.
4. Students cannot be required to attend out-of-season practices, camps or contests.
5. Schools cannot in any way sponsor, finance, promote or be affiliated with any out-of-season events or tournaments.
6. During the regular season, a student may travel to only six two-day meets. If his/her school is hosting a two-day meet, this will not count in the limitation of the six two day meets. The MHSA divisional, state or NSDA Montana district meets will not count toward the limit of two-day meets.
7. During the regular season, a student may participate in a maximum of eleven (11) interschool meets. The limit on the number of meets that a student may participate in does not include MHSA divisional, state or NSDA Montana district meets. **Online NSDA Springboard Scrimmage events taking place during the regular season are exempt from the interstate meet restrictions and will not count toward a student's 11 interschool meet maximum. Any costs incurred due to participation in these events will be the responsibility of the competitors.**

8. Approval will not be granted for any member school to participate in any speech and/or drama meet lasting longer than two days.
9. Invitational meets: Any interstate meets in which four or more schools participate or which involves three or more state high school associations, any interstate meets where travel is more than 300 miles one way, or any interdivision meet involving three or more schools must have prior approval of the Montana High School Association Forensic and Drama committee and Executive Board. See Rule (I4), Association and Executive Board Rules and Regulations. The MHSA Executive Board has authorized the Executive Director to approve the invitational schedule.

In circumstances where a school brings a JV squad to an invitational in addition to its varsity squad, and under a separate code number, that JV squad shall not compete for sweepstakes rankings.
10. Opportunity for extra entries must be stated in the invitation.
11. Tournament hosts must clearly indicate in the original invitation all entry deadlines and fees, including drop fees.
12. Tournament directors are strongly encouraged to distribute approved judging instructions with each ballot.
13. ***The tabulation room will be open to paid member coaches of the Montana Forensic Educators Association to observe the tabulation procedure. Those coaches who are not paid members will not be allowed entrance to the tab room but will still be allowed to view feedback and results.***

MUSIC

EVENT DATES

District Music Festival Dates: www.mhsa.org.

When participating in any activity where school musical groups or students are involved, (pep bands, tours, invitational festivals, contests etc.) local school administrators are to be held responsible for assuring the MHSA office that participation in the district music festival by all curricular/credit-bearing performing groups of that school for the year has been or will be a fact.

II. ELIGIBILITY

1. Only high school students from member schools of the Montana High School Association may take part in the district music festival. There is an exception for grade school pupils through grade eight of the same school system that are regular members of the high school curricular performing groups.

Grade school students through grade eight of the same school system may be permitted to participate in high school band, orchestra, chorus, or other instrumental or vocal ensembles without affecting their eligibility after they become high school students. However, students below the ninth grade may not participate at the state level. These students may be permitted to participate in high school band, orchestra, chorus, or instrumental/vocal ensembles at the district level. A county high school and a public elementary school in the same city shall be considered parts of the same school system.

Exception: Eighth grade students who participate regularly in a curricular ensemble, perform at the district festival and earn a Superior rating would be eligible to participate at State if they meet general eligibility requirements, no parts are doubled in the ensemble, and they comprise one-quarter (1/4) or less of the ensemble members. Permission for eighth grade participation must be requested by the school and authorization granted by the MHSA Executive Director.

Requests must be made and approved prior to the District Music Festival.

2. In order for a student to be eligible to represent his/her member school in any MHSA music activity (such as District festival, State festival, All-State Band/Choir/Orchestra), he/she must meet the following criteria:

- a. A student must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance 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: students who are 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.

Exception: Non-public or home school students who meet the requirements of 20-5-109 can participate in MHSA member school extra-curricular activities with the following stipulations:

- 1) The same standards for participation must be met as those required of full-time students enrolled in the school (besides enrollment).
- 2) The same rules of the MHSA apply including age, semesters and academics (see #3).
- 3) The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for a student attending a nonpublic school must be attested by the head administrator of the nonpublic school. The academic eligibility for extracurricular participation for students attending a home school must be attested in writing by the educator providing the student instruction with verification by the MHSA school principal. Academic eligibility includes provisions 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.
- 4) The student may only participate in the school in the student's attendance area and cannot transfer.

Exception: Home school or nonpublic school students who resides in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school, that is the only school that student may participate at during the student's high school activities career. There is no transfer in district after the initial approval.

- 5) ***For a homeschool student to be able to participate in MHSA sports or activities, the student must be a United States citizen, and he/she must be a Montana resident, as determined under the provisions of MCA 1-1-215.***

- b. A student: 1) must not be a graduate of a four-year high school or of a secondary school with similar graduation requirements, 2) must not have earned enough credits to have graduated and completed eight semesters of high school, and 3) must not have a GED.

- c. No student may establish eligibility concurrently at two member schools. Dual enrollment is not recognized for the purpose of eligibility in MHSA activities.

3. In order for a student to be eligible to represent his/her member school in an all-state music group or an interschool music group/entry at the district level which may qualify for a

state solo & ensemble festival, he/she must also comply with the following:

- a. A student must have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared class work per week or its equivalent during the last preceding semester in which he/she was enrolled at the school where the student participates.

- b. If a student is assigned an "incomplete" or a "conditional" in a subject, he/she has not received a passing grade in this subject. The record at the end of the semester is final.

- c. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 school weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format utilized (i.e., block, traditional, trimester etc.).

- d. This rule is not applicable to IDEA '04 and Section 504 students when their individual education plans (IEP) under IDEA or their educational accommodation plans under Section 504 certify that the students are not required to meet the minimum academic requirements to have passed twenty hours of prepared work per week. However, all students must be enrolled in twenty hours per week and in regular attendance ten hours per week. Special education or Section 504 certification that the student is not required to meet the minimum academic requirements may not be enacted retroactively (after grades have been assigned at the end of the previous semester).

4. A student must be an enrolled member (receiving credit) of a curricular/credit-bearing performing group, and that group must participate in the district festival. Curricular/credit-bearing performing group refers to bands, choirs and orchestras. These represent the curricular study of music and promote ensembles outside of the school. Piano soloists must also be a member of a curricular performing group or an accompanist of a curricular performing group. In exceptional cases, where a member school does not have a high school music program, any student studying with a private teacher may enter the district and state music festivals with the approval of the local school administrator provided the appropriate MHSA dues are paid.

5. In schools using full immersion block schedules, students who earned, or will earn, a full credit in a curricular/credit-bearing performing group are granted the same eligibility as students who participate in a curricular performing group for an entire year in schools following traditional schedules.

6. A student must be approved for participation in the music festival by an administrator of the member school where the student is in attendance.

7. The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood-altering drugs during participation. Violation will cause the director/coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

Refer to the MHSA Music Booklet at www.mhsa.org/music for specific information regarding participation in District Music Festivals, State Solo and Ensemble Festivals, and the All-State Band, Chorus and Orchestra Festival.