

December 2022

## EXECUTIVE CORNER

I hope everyone is ready for a great holiday season. Winter sports and activities are off to a great start and we are excited to have the gyms packed with fans cheering on our amazing student-athletes across the state.

We have several major changes in our winter sports this year. The shot clock in basketball is arguably the largest change to high school basketball since the three point line was added in the 1987-88 school year. The ordering, installation and implementation of shot clocks across the state has been a massive effort and I want to thank everyone in the MHSA membership for their efforts this fall and early winter. This list of thanks includes suppliers, corporate partners, administrators, coaches, installation crews and officials. We have been pointing towards the tipoff on December 1 of 2022 for a successful implementation and are very pleased with the initial results. Lastly, a big thank you to Greta Buehler, MHSA Basketball Liaison and Rob Tesch, MHSA/MOA Basketball Rules interpreter for their efforts in coordination of all aspects of implementation of the shot clock for schools and officials! Here's to a successful 2022-23 basketball season.

The second change is the new weigh-in rule in wrestling. This year all tournament weigh-ins will be the night before, including all postseason tournaments. Scott Wilson, MHSA Wrestling Liaison and Joe Sol, MHSA/MOA Rules interpreter have done an excellent job implementing this rule across the state for all boys and girls programs. This rule will allow teams to have safer travel and we are excited for the full implementation this season.

Also, we are pleased to report that MHSA fall championships went extremely well. On behalf of the MHSA Staff and MHSA Executive Board, I would like to thank each school and community that hosted our fall postseason events. These events could not take place without the school personnel and community members who volunteer and work so hard to ensure their success. This was the ninth year that the MHSA, in partnership with the NFHS Network, broadcast most fall state championship events. The Network will broadcast winter championship events including state wrestling and state basketball. The schedule of broadcasts will be listed on the home page of the MHSA website and all games broadcasted can be accessed through that site – [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org).

The staff has been busy wrapping up the fall events and, of course, continues working extremely hard preparing for the winter events.

The MHSA Executive Board just completed their November meeting where they acted on numerous items of importance to the membership. The complete synopsis of those actions is posted on [mhsa.org](http://mhsa.org) and was emailed recently to member schools, including specific items that were tentatively passed pending two-week notice for comments from affected schools. Please review those items for comment and contact me with any remarks, concerns or questions.

For the MHSA Annual Meeting, we have four proposals submitted: one By-Law submission and three Rules and Regulations proposals. I must state once again (even with four) that the limited number of proposals submitted is a credit to the member schools, to the Executive Board and to the MHSA Staff for being proactive in

addressing and resolving issues. Also, included is the MHSA budget for 2023-2024 with a 6% increase. Last year's budget reflected a 1.8% increase. **It is very important to note that this budget increase will not add any additional cost for the member schools.** The reason for the increase is because the MHSA has been able to increase our corporate partnerships revenue with our new partnership with Playfly to manage our relationships with the corporate partners. We will use this additional revenue to add many more services to the MHSA Membership, including developing a new MHSA website and many more additional tools to allow more effective communication with our member schools. The last dues increase was in 2005 and most of that increase went to establish the legal and technology reserves. We are now able to use the additional corporate partnership revenue and the NFHS Network money for the general fund, which is a better source for supplemental revenue than having to impose dues increases on member schools. If you have any questions regarding the budget, please feel free to contact me.

It is hard to believe that the Holiday Season is here once again. Our most important holiday wish is for you and all your family to have a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. And, as always, if you have any questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions please contact us.

Brian Michelotti  
Executive Director

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MHSA OFFICE SCHEDULE FOR THE HOLIDAYS –

This is a reminder to the MHSA member schools that the Association office will be closed December 23<sup>rd</sup> through January 2<sup>nd</sup>. The office will resume regular hours beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

### FALL SPORTS SEASON CHAMPIONS

The MHSA Staff and Executive Board would like to thank those schools that were such gracious hosts for staff and board members who attended or managed state events. The following schools won sport/athletic championships in Fall 2022:

#### **Girls' Golf**

AA Billings Senior  
A Polson

#### **Boys' Golf**

AA Helena Capital  
A Laurel

#### **Girls' Cross Country**

AA Missoula Hellgate  
A Hardin  
B Columbus  
C Manhattan Christian

#### **Boys' Cross Country**

AA Bozeman  
A Park  
B St. Ignatius  
C Manhattan Christian

#### **Girls' Soccer**

AA Gallatin (Bozeman)  
A Billings Central

#### **Boys' Soccer**

AA Missoula Hellgate  
A Columbia Falls

#### **Football**

AA Helena Capital  
A Fergus (Lewistown)

B Florence-Carlton  
8 Belt  
C-6 Big Sandy

## Volleyball

AA Billings Senior  
A Billings Central

B Huntley Project (Worden)  
C Manhattan Christian

## SPORTS EJECTIONS/SPORTSMANSHIP

To date, there have been forty-one (41) ejections, compared to forty-eight (48) at this same time last year. This is the third best fall ejection number we have had since we began tracking these numbers in 2005-06. Keep up the great work during the winter season.

Sportsmanship must be a top priority in every school. We encourage every member school to reinforce all of the sportsmanship rules and regulations that have been adopted and to continue to emphasize proper sporting behavior at all levels. As your students continue to view poor examples of sportsmanship which are seen on national television, please share with them how proper sporting behavior can be achieved in Montana high school activities. By working together, we will reduce these ejection numbers for winter sports.

To assist in promoting and recognizing sportsmanship in your school, the MHSA is pleased that Stockman Bank is continuing as the sponsor of the MHSA / Stockman Bank Sportsmanship Program. The MHSA / Stockman Bank Sportsmanship Program provides recognition for good sporting behaviors at regular season games through the medal program for players along with schools being able to recognize longtime fans for their positive support of high school activities as an MHSA / Stockman Bank Super Fan. Please contact the MHSA office to participate in these worthwhile programs that are offered at no cost to all MHSA schools.

## OFFICIALS' BALLOTS FOR TOURNAMENTS

Please remember that both the wrestling officials' ballot and the basketball officials' ballot will be e-mailed to school contacts from the Association office. Wrestling will be sent before the Christmas break and basketball after the break. We are no longer accepting ballots via US mail. Please email the ballot to Amy Bartels at [abartels@mhsa.org](mailto:abartels@mhsa.org). To be included in the tabulation process all ballots must be received in the MHSA office no later than the written deadline. The ballots will also be available for download at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org). Schools that do not return their ballots by the deadline date will receive a \$100 fine.

## ANNUAL MEETING PLANS

### CHECKLIST FOR 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

The MHSA Annual Meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown in Missoula on January 16, 2023.

Here is a checklist of all relevant details to help your school prepare for that event:

- ✓ **Reservations:** Call the Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown at 406-532-2059 and ask for David Anderson or email David at [david.anderson@hmissoula.com](mailto:david.anderson@hmissoula.com) to get appropriate room rates. Please cancel any guest room reservations that you do not intend to use so that other schools can reserve those rooms.
- ✓ **Registration:** This year we will be using GoFan as the registration platform for the MHSA Annual Meeting. Here is the link to register your attendees: <https://gofan.co/app/events/768389?schoolId=MHSA>. The deadline for registration is January 6, 2023.
- ✓ **Proposals:** The proposals for consideration at this year's meeting are enclosed and are also posted at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org). The proposals also will be emailed to schools.
- ✓ **Budget:** The proposed budget for the next fiscal year is included with this publication.
- ✓ **Agenda/Schedule of Activities:** A detailed agenda and a complete schedule will be emailed to member schools after the Christmas break.

- ✓ **MIAAA Meeting:** The MIAAA will hold its regular meeting at 7:30 pm on Sunday in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.
- ✓ **MHSA Roundtable:** The MHSA Staff will conduct a roundtable discussion on Sunday before the Annual Meeting.
- ✓ **Master Basketball Scheduling Committee:** The Master Basketball Scheduling Committee will meet after the conclusion of the Annual Meeting on Monday, January 16. Schools may request changes in their master schedules at that time. For more information contact Greta Buehler at 442-6010.
- ✓ **Other Meetings:** If there are groups that plan to meet in conjunction with the Annual Meeting and a representative has not notified the MHSA of those meetings, please contact our office immediately to reserve a meeting room.

## MHSA EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

The term of two MHSA Executive Board members will expire in the coming year.

Jim Hawbaker, Billings Central Catholic Schools Assistant Principal has served as the MHSA Executive Board President for the past year and will complete his term of service in the spring of 2023. Jim was elected as the Class A Representative to the Executive Board in 2019.

Doug Reisig, from Missoula, has served as the Office of Public Instruction representative on the Board since 2019. He also completes his term of service in the spring of 2023.

Jim and Doug have been excellent board members and have represented the membership extremely well. Their input has always been student centered and we appreciate their meritorious service to the MHSA for the past four years.

The resulting vacancies will be addressed as follows:

The Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction will appoint a new member to serve on the Board beginning in September of next year for a four-year term.

The election of the new Class A representative will be held in January, and Jim will complete his term on the Board in April. There will also be an election of a new Class C representative. This position was vacated by Jim Goltz and Luke Koker was appointed to fill out the year until a new representative could be voted in to fill the rest of the term.

Kara Triplett, AD of Lambert and Richey Schools this year, is the Class C candidate for the Executive Board. Kara has been in Montana education for 32 years, 27 of those at Lambert. She has served as a Superintendent, Principal, AD, and Coach while in Lambert and the R&L co-op. She is passionate about activities and made her way back to Montana, after retiring in 2021. She has served as the President of the District 2-C and Eastern Division. She has assisted in facilitating postseason events in her area. "I am so excited to work for the Class C constituents and represent them at the MHSA level. Overall, I appreciate what the MHSA does for our schools, coaches, and athletes and will work cohesively with the committee, as we face the routine and new tasks to come."

Aric Harris, the Activities Director at Whitefish High School, is the Class A candidate for the Executive Board. Aric has been in education for 16 years and has spent the last 10 years serving as the Activities Director in Whitefish. In conjunction with his Activities Director duties, he has also served his district as a teacher and as an assistant football coach. Prior to his arrival back at his high school alma mater, he served as a physical education teacher, an assistant football coach and the head wrestling coach at Chadron High School in Chadron, Nebraska for six years. He has also served as the Montana Class A President. Aric has managed numerous postseason events at the Divisional and State level. Aric said, "I look

forward to serving on the MHSA Executive Board and working with administrators, coaches and advisors across the state."

## **WRESTLING**

### **DEADLINE FOR WRESTLING WEIGHT CERTIFICATION FORMS**

Starting this season, schools will need to create separate Track Wrestling accounts for boys' and girls' wrestling. Schools need to enter their rosters, schedules and WR1 information online at the Track Wrestling website. WR1 information must be completed and entered into the Track Wrestling System prior to December 21, 2022, for the current season. Schools then will enter weigh-ins after each tournament and then tournament managers will be able to print 50 percent rule forms for each wrestler prior to the divisional tournaments. Do not send the WR#1 cards to the MHSA office.

## **BASKETBALL**

### **REMINDERS FOR GAMES AND PRACTICE**

**Players Starting a Game:** NFHS basketball rules state that a team must begin the game with five players (unless the MHSA has given a sub-varsity team permission to start a game with four players). If a team has no substitutes to replace disqualified or injured players, it must continue with fewer than five. When there is only one player participating for a team, the team shall forfeit the game, unless the referee believes that team has an opportunity to win the game. Remember that by MHSA rules, students of member schools are prohibited from playing in a preliminary (sub-varsity) contest and starting in the varsity contest on the same day. **Coaches must ensure that this MHSA rule is not violated.**

**MHSA Quarter Rule:** The quarter rule (page 55, item #8 of the MHSA Handbook) is a MHSA rule that a basketball official should not regulate or administer. If a player fouls out, and all but one of the bench personnel have also fouled out, the official shall follow NFHS rules stating that if the team has a substitute available (on the bench and in uniform) the coach is required to sub in a player so the team has five (5) players on the floor, even if the available substitute has used up all of their quarters. **Schools and coaches are responsible for monitoring the MHSA quarter rules.**

**Practice Requirements:** By MHSA rules (pages 22 and 55 of the MHSA Handbook) only students who meet all MHSA eligibility requirements such as enrollment, age, semesters, academics, physical examinations, etc. are eligible to practice with and participate on member school teams. Exception: students who are eligible in every way except academics may participate in practice if the school allows. Individuals must have a minimum of ten (10) days of practice prior to participating in a MHSA basketball contest.

### **ALLOWABLE NON-VARSITY BASKETBALL CONTEST FORMATS, GAME AND QUARTER LIMITS**

1. Contest is four (4) quarters of eight (8) minutes in length:  
Game limit – Contest counts as one (1) game toward the game limitation for that squad.  
Quarter limit – Each eight-minute quarter in which a student-athlete participates counts as one quarter toward the quarter rule limit.
2. Contest is three (3) quarters of eight (8) minutes in length:  
Game limit – Contest counts as one (1) game toward the game limitation for that squad.  
Quarter limit – Each eight-minute quarter in which a student-athlete participates counts as one quarter toward the quarter rule limit.
3. Contest is two (2) quarters of eight (8) minutes in length:  
Game limit – Contest counts as one-half (1/2) game toward the game limitation for that squad.  
Quarter limit – Each eight-minute quarter in which a student-athlete participates counts as one quarter toward the quarter rule limit.
4. Contest is four (4) quarters of four (4) minutes in length:  
Game limit – Contest counts as one-half (1/2) game toward the game limitation for that squad.  
Quarter limit – Participation in any part of one (1) or two (2) four-minute quarters counts as one (1) quarter toward the quarter rule limit. Participation in any part of three or four

four-minute quarters counts as two quarters toward the quarter rule limit.

5. Contest is two (2) quarters of eight (8) minutes in length and two (2) quarters of four (4) minutes in length:  
Game limit – Contest counts as one (1) game toward the game limitation for that squad.

Quarter limit – Each eight-minute quarter in which a student-athlete participates counts as one (1) quarter toward the quarter rule limit. Participation in any part of one or two four-minute quarters counts as one quarter toward the quarter rule limit.

### **SHOT CLOCK INFORMATION**

2022-23 Shot Clock Rules and other information can be found on the MHSA website at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org) under the Basketball and Rules and Regulations tabs.

## **MHSA / MONTANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AIM HIGHER**

### **AIM HIGHER WORKSHOPS**

All schools are invited to send students to come enjoy the fun and interaction offered during the MHSA / Montana Army National Guard AIM Higher workshops. In the morning session leadership, mentoring, team captain training, hazing awareness, and vaping prevention are the focus, while the entire afternoon is dedicated to sportsmanship. For lunch, participants are treated to pizza and drinks. New activities are added each year and if you have not been to a workshop in a few years, please consider participating because we know your school, students and faculty will find the day rewarding.

Workshops will be held in Great Falls on December 7, 2022 and in Billings on January 25, 2023. Please submit your registration as soon as possible if you are interested in attending.

## **MOA**

### **REMINDERS**

As we start the winter sports of both girls' and boys' basketball and wrestling, please keep in mind the need to house all your officials in secure places where their safety is ensured. Please escort them off the court to their room and be aware of their need for security as they leave your building. We have had some reports of placing officials with teams in team locker rooms or in classrooms, which would be unacceptable.

Remember, per MHSA/MOA rules, that schools must go through the local officials' pool when hiring officials unless the official(s) is an approved non-pool affiliated official. Also, all varsity contests require MOA registered officials. Any hiring question may be directed to Amy Bartels at [abartels@mhsa.org](mailto:abartels@mhsa.org).

Ballots for the selection of postseason officials will be e-mailed soon and they will also be available for downloading from the MHSA website. Schools will receive ballot information and instructions to give to their coaches and will return to Amy Bartels directly at [abartels@mhsa.org](mailto:abartels@mhsa.org), unless otherwise indicated on the ballot.

## **SPIRIT**

### **Administrator's Checklist of Spirit Programs**

With the proper procedures, safety rules, supervision and equipment in place, cheerleading can be a very rewarding, relatively safe activity for young people. The following checklist is provided for administrators to help them provide a safe environment for their cheerleading program. It is recommended that the administrator and the cheer coach meet periodically to discuss needs, objectives, and goals of the program. Reminder that all certificates must be directly mailed to Amy Bartels at [abartels@mhsa.org](mailto:abartels@mhsa.org).

- Does your cheer/dance coach have a copy of the 2022-2023 Spirit Rules Book?

- Has your cheer/dance coach completed the mandatory Cheer and Dance Safety Course (only if team stunts), NFHS Concussion Course and MHSA Rules Clinic? All administrators need to monitor spirit coaches certifications.
- Is there supervision at all official events (practices, games, etc.)?
- Is adequate matting provided?
- Does the squad follow a conditioning and flexibility program?
- Is the coach trained in proper skill development/progression and safety procedures?
- Are there written, oral and posted warnings concerning the risk involved?
- Is there an "emergency plan" in place?

#### Note for Schools with Spirit Teams Attending Competitions

If your spirit team(s) are considering participating in any cheer/dance competitions (in or out-of-state), please be aware of the following:

- MHSA does not prohibit participation in competitions provided that all minimum MHSA safety requirements and other applicable rules are enforced.
- Permission to attend in or out-of-state competitions is within the authority of each local school district.

#### Spirit Participation at State Events:

ALL schools will be required to submit roster numbers once their participating schools team(s) have made the state tournament.

Schools administration will be notified at the soonest possible date with tournament information.

#### **Reminders for Basketball Spirit Participants**

Per rules found in the National Federation Spirit Rules Book specifically pertaining to basketball, please note the following:

- Spirit participants shall stand outside the free-throw lane lines extended toward the sidelines throughout a basketball game.
- Spirit participants shall remain outside of the playing area during a 30-second or less time-out during a basketball game.
- Participants must not stunt or tumble during a basketball game when the ball is in play, including free throws.

## **MUSIC NOTES**

#### **MUSIC COMMITTEE TO MEET**

The MHSA Music Committee will meet in January in conjunction with the Annual Meeting. The Music Committee will convene on Sunday, January 15th, at 3:00 p.m. and continue their meeting into Monday. For a complete copy of the agenda, contact the MHSA office.

## **ATTACHMENTS (Links)**

1. Proposals for the 2022 Annual Meeting
2. Annual Meeting Registration Information
3. [2023-2024 Proposed Budget \(Link\)](#)



***Enjoy a happy and safe holiday season!***

#### Staff Members

Brian Michelotti, Executive Director  
 Kip Ryan, Senior Associate Director  
 Scott Wilson, Associate Director  
 Amy Bartels, Assistant Director  
 Greta Buehler, Assistant Director  
 Anna Doran, Administrative Assistant



#### Executive Board Members

Jim Hawbaker, Vice Principal, Billings Central High School (President)  
 Doug Reisig, State Superintendent's Appointee, Missoula (Vice-President)  
 Luke Kloker, Principal, Fairview High School  
 Steve Thennis, Principal, Helena High School  
 John Fitzgerald, Superintendent, Red Lodge High School  
 Krystal Zentner, MTSBA Appointee, Bridger  
 Jimmy Patelis, Governor's Appointee, Billings