



*Greetings from the MHSAA office. We hope your fall activity seasons are off to a great start.*

**MHSAA/MOA Required Rules Clinics**

The MHSAA/MOA rules clinics once again will be provided in an online format for coaches and officials. This year all head coaches are required to view the clinic. However the MHSAA still encourages all members of the coaching staff to view the clinics. There is a gold information sheet enclosed explaining the procedure on accessing these clinics. Please share this information with your coaches of fall sports and with your cheerleading coach.

**Checklist for school activities administrators:**

The items listed below provide a checklist to assist a school activities administrator in getting the school activity season off to a good start and to ensure all students and coaches have a good year.

✓ **Submit a Record of Transfer Form**

The pink form that must be submitted to our office for any student who transfers to your school (except first time ninth graders) and desires to participate in athletics at any level. **These forms must be filed before the student is eligible to participate in an Association Contest on any high school athletic team at any level of competition.**

✓ **Check Foreign Exchange Programs**

Make sure your foreign exchange student's program is approved by CSJET. An approved list will be included with the August Activity News, or call the office for a copy. The list is also on the web at [www.csjet.org](http://www.csjet.org). Keep in mind that students in these programs must also meet all other eligibility requirements, i.e, age, number of semesters, academic grades, and they cannot have graduated from their high school.

✓ **Waiver of Transfer Rule Petition "Hardship Petition"**

Waivers must be filed by the school after the student is enrolled at your school. A waiver of the transfer rule is considered if the circumstances are beyond the control of the student applying for the waiver. If the behaviors that caused the extenuating circumstances are "self inflicted" by the student the petition is usually not considered. The information provided for the waiver is confidential, but please include as much

information as possible so a well-informed decision can be made. The student can participate only at the sub varsity level until the petition is approved. If the petition is approved the student is eligible for varsity competition, but if the petition is not approved he/she can play sub varsity but is ineligible for varsity competition for 90 PI days. All other eligibility requirements must be met such as age, number of semesters, academic grades etc. The student becomes eligible on the 90<sup>th</sup> P.I. day at 3:00 p.m.

✓ **Age Rule**

Any 19 year old (who turns 19 after midnight August 31<sup>st</sup>) can file a waiver of the age rule if the following is proved by the student – 1) student does not create a safety risk, 2) student does not skew the overall competitiveness of the activity, 3) participation will not exclude others, and 4) the student meets all necessary criteria to participate in MHSAA activities.

✓ **Academically Ineligible Students**

Students who are ineligible because of grades cannot participate in any Association contest (varsity or sub varsity) for a period of one semester. They can practice if the school allows but cannot suit up or participate in any games at any level of competition. They become eligible to compete on the Monday morning following the week in which the semester ends. A student who becomes academically ineligible also becomes ineligible on the Monday morning following the week in which the semester ends. A student must have received a passing grade in at least twenty periods of prepared class work in the last previous semester at the school where the student participates or during the last preceding semester in which he/she was in attendance to be eligible. If a student attended 20 days or more or played in an Association contest he/she has attended a semester and must have received credit and passed 20 periods. If he/she withdrew and didn't receive credit (or even W's) he/she did not receive credit and is ineligible. If a student had not attended school at all for the semester then the grades from the last semester attended are used.

✓ **MHSAA Sportsmanship Program**

Wheat Montana has elected not to continue their sponsorship of the MHSAA Sportsmanship Program including the certificate program used by many schools during the regular season and the Super Fan Program. The decision by Wheat Montana to

discontinue their sponsorship in the middle of the 2005-2006 year is disappointing, but as this update is going to print I am in negotiations with a major corporation to sponsor the MHSA Sportsmanship Program. This sponsorship will include the regular season recognition component, the Super Fan component and the new and exciting programs recommended by the MHSA Sportsmanship Committee and approved by the MHSA Executive Board. Further information will follow soon.

✓ **Check on your coaches' status concerning completion of the Coaches' Education Program**

All coaches (9-12), whether paid or volunteer, and coaching at any level must complete this program. The coaches education certification is good for three years and the MHSA **strongly recommends** that coaches complete the program before their season actually begins. Spirit (cheerleading) coaches are no longer required to complete the program. The website is [www.coacheducation.org](http://www.coacheducation.org) and until mid-August the password is "fairplay." Effective in mid-August, there will be a new registration page on which a coach must sign in each time she/he enters the curriculum. The coach will either select or be assigned his/her own password that must be remembered. The testing curriculum will also change with each login. See the coaches' education website for more details. All schools must submit the certification report listing whether coaches have completed the program or not. Schools will be subject to penalties for failure to submit this report. OPI renewal units are available if approved locally and if your district is an approved renewal unit provider. MHSA does not certify renewal units.

✓ **MOA Items**

Game fees are the same as last year but mileage is going up to .445 per mile. Per Diem stays at .08 per mile.

Two new additions to the MOA Handbook approved by the MOA Regional Directors' Board and the MHSA Executive Board are:

Per Diem provision added for tournaments conducted during the regular season. Per Diem allowance for invitational/regular season tournaments will be as follows: .08 cents per mile or \$15.00 per day,

whichever is greater if the official does not stay overnight, and \$25.00 per day if the official does stay overnight.

Also a statement was added regarding officials pools or individual officials contacting coaches or member schools - "Pools or individual officials shall not provide, either in writing or verbally, any information regarding availability of officials for postseason assignment to any voting member school(s) or coach(s)."

**MHSA Reference Manuals**

Reference Manuals were distributed to the membership during the 2004-2005 Annual Meeting and subsequently to those schools that did not attend. Last fall your school received updated materials for those same Reference Manuals. With the development of our new website (same address [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org)) these materials will now be available on-line in the same format as in your binder. Please download the forms for replacement in your binder or download the forms as you need them from the site assuring your school has the most current versions of the MHSA forms. We will not be mailing out the updated materials but if you have difficulty accessing or downloading any of the material please contact Theresa in our office for assistance.

**MHSA Handbooks and Directories**

The 2006-2007 MHSA Handbooks and Directories will be mailed to schools after Labor Day. The Directories will not be published until every member school has submitted the appropriate information. The MHSA Handbooks are in the process of being printed, but in the interim, the individual chapters of the Handbook are available in PDF format at [www.mhsa.org](http://www.mhsa.org) under HANDBOOK.

**Other Items of Interest ...**

I have enclosed a handout regarding MHSA Present and Future issues from my presentation at the MCA Clinic. Included is information regarding MHSA staff, MHSA Handbook changes, sport specific rule changes and possible future issues of the MHSA.

**The MHSA office staff is here to serve you!**

Please contact the office with any questions, concerns, comments or suggestions.

**Have a great fall season!**

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