



JUNIOR HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT REGULATIONS, PROCEDURES AND ADVANCE PREPARATION MATERIAL TO ASSIST SCHOOLS

I. *MHSAA HANDBOOK* REGULATION III

SECTION 1(C) — Schools which have joined the MHSAA at the 6th-grade level may allow 6th-graders to participate on 6th-grade only teams and with or against 7th- and 8th-graders in individual sports (e.g., bowling, cross country, track & field, swimming & diving, tennis, wrestling) and, with the approval of their middle school league, this may also occur in team sports, in either case without the necessity of MHSAA Executive Committee waiver. Schools or school-sponsored teams not in a middle school league may make this determination on their own. A middle school league may enact a more restrictive policy with respect to 6th-graders' participation in team or individual sports.

SECTION 1(D) — Two or more MEMBER junior high/middle schools may conduct, with the approval of the Executive Committee, a Cooperative Program in the specific sports for which application has been made and approval has been granted. Programs are limited to grades 6, 7 and 8 and may include grade 9 only if it is not a part of the senior high school enrollment figure or athletic program.

Cooperative agreements which existed prior to the addition of 6th graders to MHSAA membership in 2016-17 or agreements among middle schools of the same school district or under the same governing board may include 6th graders in the cooperative program as determined under Regulation III, Section 1(C) above even if they are in separate buildings and with separate school administration. Additional Executive Committee approval is not needed to add 6th-graders in these instances; however, such 6th grade buildings must become MHSAA member schools.

II. PROCEDURES

- A. Application for a cooperative relationship must be made on MHSAA forms by the administration of the cooperating MHSAA MEMBER schools. It is recommended that junior high/middle school applications be submitted to the MHSAA 90 days prior to the first competition. The application must be accompanied by the following:
 - 1. A resolution of authorization by each board of education of the cooperating schools describing the purpose for sponsoring the cooperative program, or the body responsible for overseeing its administration locally.
- B. One school must be designated as the primary host school on the application and will be considered the official team name. All signatures and information as to the grades and sports sponsored must be provided.
- C. Applications for Cooperative Programs will be submitted to the MHSAA Executive Committee for approval. Among the criteria to be considered are:
 - 1. Lack of numbers of students to support a program.
 - 2. Lack of qualified staff to coach.
 - 3. Lack of facilities.
 - 4. Evidence of a desire to increase opportunities for participation in new programs, not win/loss records of existing programs.
- D. **Junior High/Middle School Cooperative Program agreements will be effective for one year and will renew automatically.** If a school withdraws from an agreement before one year, no other cooperative agreement in the same sports may be made with another school until the original one-year agreement period lapses. The agreements may be voided by informing the MHSAA in writing or using the Cooperative Program Dissolution Form.

III. ADVANCE PREPARATION MATERIALS: QUESTIONS FOR SCHOOLS TO CONSIDER

Schools should consider the following before initiating the application for Cooperative Programs.

- A. If you have an existing program, will students from another school replace students from your community and deny the sons and daughters of your local taxpayers the opportunity to participate in that activity?
- B. If two or more schools are cooperating to create a program where none has existed,
 - 1. Who will pay for and maintain/laundry uniforms and equipment, facility maintenance?
 - 2. Who will pay for travel to practices, to contests?
 - 3. Who will select, supervise, and pay coaches?
 - 4. If applicable, whose cheerleaders will cheer?
 - 5. Whose training rules, letter award guidelines, etc., will be followed?
 - 6. Whose local academic and other regulations will be followed?
 - 7. Can daily class schedules be coordinated?
 - 8. How will gate receipts be handled?
 - 9. Where and when will practices and games be held, and who will pay those expenses?
 - 10. Who will host and supervise events?
 - 11. Is athletic accident insurance coverage provided, and who pays for it? Have liability insurers been notified?
 - 12. Whose school identity, mascot, colors, etc., will be used?
- C. Will an existing sport suffer because of the creation of a cooperative program in another sport that season?

IV. GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS TO CONSIDER

- A. All issues should be addressed in writing in advance of the application and submitted with the application. Over time, many schools have sought a written historical record of the original arrangement.
- B. A "Cooperative Program Board of Control" should be appointed to oversee the Cooperative Program. It should consist of at least an administrator and the athletic director of each cooperating school. It should convene to initiate the program and to resolve disputes which may arise throughout the life of the program.
- C. Though not required, cooperating school districts should be adjacent. Travel distance between schools should be reasonable.
- D. Cooperative arrangements should be sought only in sports where opportunities are limited and it is not anticipated that students will be "cut" from the squad.
- E. Cooperative agreements are not intended for a single participant for a year or two but for a significant group of students for several years.

JUNIOR HIGH / MIDDLE SCHOOL APPLICATION TO FORM & SUPPORT A COOPERATIVE TEAM

(Page 1 of 2: Complete All Sections, All Signatures and Board of Education Resolution on Page 2)

1. It is requested that the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc. receive and accept this application to form a cooperative team in the sport(s) of ___ boys ___ girls _____
 ___ boys ___ girls _____
2. Please check the grade levels that will be involved in this cooperative agreement(s): **Check all that apply.**
If multiple sports and levels, please abbreviate each sport next to the intended grade level:

 ___ 6th grade only team _____ ___ 6th & 7th combined _____
 ___ 7th grade only team _____ ___ 7th & 8th combined _____
 ___ 8th grade only team _____ ___ 6th, 7th & 8th combined _____
3. All junior high/middle schools on this application have submitted an MHSAA Membership Resolution for the current school year. Yes No
4. The sponsors of this proposed cooperative team are members in good standing of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, Inc. and are identified as:

(Primary)_____ Middle School of _____ City
(Secondary)_____ Middle School of _____ City
(Secondary)_____ Middle School of _____ City
(Secondary)_____ Middle School of _____ City
(Secondary)_____ Middle School of _____ City
(Secondary)_____ Middle School of _____ City
5. Did any of the schools sponsor the sport(s) last year? Y N If yes, please indicate:
Schools_____ Sports _____
6. List other cooperative programs (sport and level) which already exist between these schools:

7. Official practices for this cooperative agreement shall commence _____. This agreement shall continue for a minimum of one year.
8. The applicants seeking cooperative team approval certify by their signatures below that all approvals, require study, planning and review have been completed and are attached to this application as documentation to support the application. Use additional application forms if more than two schools are involved in the application.

**COOPERATIVE PROGRAM BOARD OF CONTROL
(Submit With Application)**

We, the undersigned, agree to the conditions and content of this Resolution and will work cooperatively for the success of the program and benefit of our children.

Representing _____ School

Superintendent Signature

Board of Education Signature

Principal Signature

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Representing _____ School

Superintendent Signature

Board of Education Signature

Principal Signature

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Representing _____ School

Superintendent Signature

Board of Education Signature

Principal Signature

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Representing _____ School

Superintendent Signature

Board of Education Signature

Principal Signature

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Representing _____ School

Superintendent Signature

Board of Education Signature

Principal Signature

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Representing _____ School

Superintendent Signature

Board of Education Signature

Principal Signature

Athletic Director Signature

Date

Arrangements detailed in the “Advance Preparation Materials: Questions and Guidelines for Schools to Consider,” plus those unique to the cooperating schools on a separate sheet, should be addressed by the boards of education when considering this Resolution. The MHSAA will file the advance preparation material if the school submits it with the application.

Name of Person Completing this Application: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____