

2026 MHSAA CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Monday, January 12, 2026 – East Lansing

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chris Adams, Camden
Eve Claar, Ann Arbor
Aaron Crouse, Pontiac
Kendra Faustin, Comstock Park
Ross Gauthier, Birmingham
Mark Olmstead, Shelby
Mike Roy, Vicksburg (MIAAA)

Cody Smith, Romeo
Jeff Turner, Jonesville
Jason Vogel, Kent City

MHSAA STAFF

Camala Gillette
Cody Inglis
Mark Uyl (Recorder)

The Classification Committee began in the 1980s as a forum to discuss relationships between public and non-public schools. Eventually, two additional purposes were established: (1) to perform an intermediate review (between MHSAA sport committees and the Representative Council) of proposals related to MHSAA tournament classification for a sport, and (2) to review proposals related to the policies and procedures of counting students and collecting enrollment figures for school classification purposes as well as proposals affecting tournament classification generally. The Classification Committee is also asked to respond to subjects that are not directly related to classification. The Classification Committee has become the principal forum for reviewing policies and procedures related to cooperative programs.

Minutes of the 2025 meeting of the Classification Committee were reviewed with the group, and a reminder was provided on the scope and focus of this committee.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

SPORTS SPONSORSHIP UPDATE

The annual update was provided on current MHSAA membership demographics, which included current numbers of traditional public high schools, public school academies and non-public high schools. Statistics on school sponsorship by sport were provided, along with information on championships and runner-up schools, along with top 5 finalists in individual sports, based on the type of school (public and non-public).

UPDATE SURVEY RESPONSES & CURRENT ISSUES

Results from the Fall 2025 Update Meeting survey were shared with committee members, with special attention being given to areas with strong support. Discussion centered around the transfer regulation, with feedback being provided on the implementation of an online “Transfer Tracker” system that is being developed with FinalForms. Conversation also took place on the transfer regulation itself when transfer students do not play a school-sponsored sport in the previous season (e.g. non-school hockey, Police Athletic League, homeschool). There was consensus from the group that these transfer students should not have additional options outside of the traditional four locations (school attended, public school attendance area or closest non-public/charter school) that all other transfer students have available.

A good discussion took place on a number of current issues, including transgender eligibility, NIL and amateur status, the travel & competition rule, fifth quarter eligibility in some sports and the “links” rule. There was support for the fifth quarter allowance in most cases, and the committee wanted to allow contact and interaction between the high school and middle school when part of the same school district.

Approaches were discussed about late “drops” of teams, often after practice has begun. The concept of an “emergency” cooperative program was debated, with the most concern being for those senior students in that situation.

EMERGING SPORTS AND MHSAA SPONSORSHIP

Staff provided an update on the two newest MHSAA tournament sports, girls field hockey and boys volleyball, during 2025-26. There was no support for additional sports at this time, even though there was some discussion from the group for continued consideration of water polo, indoor track & field and girls flag football.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Create an MHSAA “study group” of member school personnel that will continue to analyze school demographics, championship data at all levels of MHSAA tournaments and success factors in assisting future classification processes. (10-0)