Updated 10/23/2026

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION
2025-26 MHSAA COMPETITIVE CHEER

1. TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The MHSAA Competitive Cheer Tournament will be conducted in four equal Divisions by enrollment. Schools sponsoring Competitive Cheer teams will be assigned to one of six District sites in each Division. Four teams per Division, per tournament site, will qualify from the District tournament level to the Regional tournament level. Teams will compete in a Round 1, 2, and 3 format to determine the District champion. The team that scores the most points after all three round scores have been totaled will be the District Champion.

Four teams per Division per tournament site will qualify from the Regional tournament level to the Finals tournament level. Teams will compete in the Round 1, 2 and 3 format to determine the Regional champion. The team which scores the most points after all three round scores have been totaled will be the Regional champion.

In District and Regional tournament competition, should there be a tie for fourth place, both fourth-place teams will qualify for the next tournament level.

Should there be a tie for first place at Finals tournament competition, a tiebreaker procedure will be instituted. A tie will be broken by checking the final score of Round 3. If a tie still remains, co-champions will be named.

Tournament Dates – 2026-27

Twenty-four Districts will be held on either Friday, February 12 or Saturday, February 13, 2027 at the posted sites and times at mhsaa.com. Regional competition will be held at four sites (2 per Division) with twelve teams competing at each site on Saturday, February 20, 2025.

Tournament Opt-Out Due Date:	**Fri., January 22, 2027**
District Draw Dates:	**Jan. 22 – Jan. 29, 2027**
District Tournaments:	**Fri., Feb. 12 and Sat., Feb. 13, 2027**
Regional Tournaments:	**Sat., Feb. 20, 2027**
Finals Tournament:	**Fri., Feb 26 and Sat., Feb 27, 2027**

2. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

Team Size – A minimum of four and a maximum of 16 team members are allowed on the floor for competition in Rounds 1 and 3. The number of participants in Rounds 1 and 3 must be identical but may differ from the Round 2 mandated number. Round 2 varsity mandated numbers are as follows: D1=12, D2=10, D3=8, D4=6. Varsity teams competing with less than their division mandated number are allowed to compete but receive a 10-point penalty if less than the number required are on the floor in Round 2. The Master Eligibility List submitted by the school, along with the Team Roster, may list as many eligible competitors as desired by the school.

Team Check-In – Each coach is required to declare the number of competitors that will compete in each round. Each coach must email the Round 1, 2, and 3 scoresheets, all penalty sheets and the Round 3 Routine Description Form to the Host Manager. Coaches should follow-up with the Host Manager regarding receipt of the seven documents. Managers may request the information early however, may not penalize a school unless they do not meet the 2 p.m. prior to the day of the meet deadline.

Admission for Non-competitors at MHSAA Tournament Sites – All team members who are eligible to compete with their qualifying team at Districts, Regionals or Finals must enter the facility together with their coach in order to be considered part of that team for admission purposes. It is appropriate to expect non-competitive sub-varsity cheer teams to enter with an admission charge.

Order of Competition – The Tournament Manager will conduct a blind draw to determine the order in which teams compete in each round of competition. No team will be required to compete first more than once or last more than once during District competition, nor will a team compete last then first in consecutive rounds. The same procedure will be followed at Regional and Finals competition. Regional and Finals order of competition will be drawn by Committee. The District Draw Dates are January 22 – January 29, 2027.

Finals Qualifying Procedures – Four teams from each District will qualify to compete at the Regionals (total of 12 teams per Division). Four teams from each Regional (total of 8 teams per Division) will qualify for Finals competition.

Determining Winners – Determination of a winner shall be the team that has accumulated the most points after all three rounds have been scored and the points totaled. The four District teams with the highest total points scored will qualify for Regional competition. The four Regional teams with the highest total points scored will qualify for Finals competition.

Tie-Breaker Procedures – Should there be a tie for fourth place at District or Regional tournament competition, both fourth place teams will qualify for the next tournament level. Should there be a tie for first place at Finals tournament competition, a tiebreaker procedure will be instituted. A tie will be broken by checking the final score of Round 3. If a tie still remains, co-champions will be named.

Competition Mat – The Finals competition mat is a 42' x 42' flexiroll – 1 3/8" thickness.

Banners – District and Regional hosts may allow each cheer team one school banner not larger than 4' x 8'. At the Finals, no banners are allowed.

Warm-up Area- A warm-up area must be provided for competing teams. Local Tournament Managers will provide competing teams with information regarding the mat that will be used as well as information regarding the warm-up area at their site.

Scores are Final – Scores that are the result of a clerical error made by the scoring table may be reviewed for correction. All scores are final 10 minutes after posted and judges have signed the master scoresheet.

Team Supervision – No individual or team may participate in an MHSAA event unless accompanied to the event by the coach, administrator or appointee of the school.

3. OPT OUT POLICIES, ELIGIBILITY LISTS, ROSTERS

The Team Roster along with a current Master Eligibility List must be provided to the District Tournament Manager no later than the Opt-Out Due Date of **4 p.m. on January 22, 2027.** The Junior Varsity and Freshman Master Eligibility Lists should also be sent if there is intent to use any Junior Varsity and Freshman team members). It is imperative that the Tournament Manager and the MHSAA be notified by or before the Opt-Out Due Date if a team does not intend to enter the District Tournament.

If the Team Roster and Master Eligibility List are received after the Opt-Out Due Date, but before the draw is made; they may be accepted with the payment of a $50 late fee. The $50 late fee is due in the hands of the manager before the draw. Late fees may be retained by the host school.

Additions or updates to the Master Eligibility List (except transfer students who enroll after the dates in Regulation I, Section 9 [F] – February 1, 2027, for winter sports) may be accepted by the Tournament Manager if submitted and received prior to the start of competition for any team in the first level of that tournament to which the school is assigned. All players on the Master Eligibility List submitted are eligible for tournament play even if the individual names are not on the roster.

Ineligible Players – Teams that are defeated by teams that have allowed an ineligible student to participate do not advance in MHSAA tournaments. Placement in MHSAA tournaments is vacated as a result of a team allowing one or more ineligible students to participate.

Withdrawals – Tournament management is to contact the MHSAA Office if a school withdraws or fails to show for scheduled competition after the Opt-Out Due Date for team sports or the pairings, heat assignments or flights are determined for individual sports of the first level of the MHSAA tournament in that sport.

The MHSAA staff person responsible for the sport will request from the school principal a written explanation for the no-show/withdrawal. If the reason is determined to be unacceptable by MHSAA Staff, the MHSAA Executive Director will place the school on probation for the next two school years. A second offense within the two-year probationary period will cause the school to be prohibited from tournament play in that sport for the two years following the second offense.

4. DRAW PROCEDURES

After Team Rosters and Master Eligibility Lists are due and received, the Host Manager will conduct a blind draw for each round of competition to determine the order in which the teams will compete. No team shall compete first more than once and no team shall compete last more than once in the three rounds. No team which competed last in the previous round should be first to compete in the next round.

Schools should be contacted regarding the time and date of the draw. This draw must be held between January 22 – Jan. 29, 2027 and the order as drawn shall be printed and made available to each school prior to the day of the event.

5. TIME SCHEDULES
District, Regional and Final time schedules in Girls Competitive Cheer will be posted at mhsaa.com.

6. AWARDS
Districts – A team trophy will be awarded to the winning team at each site. In addition, each winning team member will receive a medal (maximum of 20 medals).

Regionals – A team trophy will be awarded to the winning team at each site. In addition, each winning team member will receive a medal (maximum of 20 medals).

Finals – Champion and Runner-Up trophies will be awarded in each Division and individual medals will be presented to the winner and runner-up team members, (maximum of 28 medals).

Only MHSAA approved awards are to be presented to student-athletes at MHSAA tournaments. If a school wishes to purchase additional Regional or Finals medals, they can be ordered by using the Additional Medal Order Form.

Extra Medal Order Form

7. LIMITS OF COMPETITION
Teams and individuals may have a maximum of 12 dates of competition during the regular season. MHSAA tournament dates do not count against season maximums.

8. FINANCES
Competing Team Expenses – Each team will assume its own expenses for competition in the District and Regional tournament levels of play. The MHSAA will reimburse by formula, Finals Tournament competing teams after the series is completed. Overnight lodging for Finals competitors will not be arranged or reimbursed for schools located within 75 miles of the tournament site.

Spectator Admission –

District Tournaments:	$8 Students and Adults
Regional Tournaments:	$10 Students and Adults
Finals Tournaments:	$13 Students and Adults (includes ticket processing and parking).

Digital tickets will be sold via GoFan for the District and Regional rounds of the tournament. The cost for Competitive Cheer Finals is $13 for each Division and will be sold through CMU.

9. OFFICIALS SELECTION/ASSIGNMENTS
Tournament Judges at District, Regional and Finals competition will be assigned by the MHSAA Judges Assignment Committee. Coaches of schools that sponsor Competitive Cheer are invited to recommend judges for the Competitive Cheer Tournaments. These recommendations will be used as an aid in the assignment of judges to each District, Regional and Finals Competitive Cheer Tournament. To be selected to work a District, Regional or Finals, the judge must be registered and must have attended an MHSAA online or face-to-face Competitive Cheer Rules Meeting.

Officials are assigned using the main MHSAA Arbiter group (#107891) for postseason assignments. If you have not had access to this group in the past, you will see an invitation to be added in the upper right-hand corner of your page in the dropdown menu once you've logged in. Please accept that invitation in order to view and pay the officials assigned to your games.

10. PLAYING RULES/ADAPTATIONS
The *2026-28 Girls Competitive Rules and Regulations Manual* contains the guidelines that will be followed at all regular season and MHSAA Competitive Cheer events. This Manual clarifies legal and illegal stunts and specifies required spotting techniques for each type of stunt and dismount. The safety rules provided in this Manual are designed for High School Competitive Cheer teams with modifications included for 7th and 8th grade teams. A spotter is required for stunts in which the supporting arm(s) of the base(s) is fully extended above the head. The spotter must touch, watch, and assume the correct position which is away, not under the flyer.

11. MEDIA
For information on credentials, drones, locker room privacy policy, microphones, photographers, flash photography, postgame interviews, press box, results, streaming (audio and video), and videotaping, go to this Media/Streaming Information PDF.

Media credential requests for District and Regional meets are processed by local managers. Credential requests for Competitive Cheer Finals will be handled by the MHSAA.

Merchandising/Promotion Policies
Use of MHSAA Logo – The MHSAA logo and acronym are registered trademarks. MHSAA tournament trophy designs are also copyrighted. Use of these legally protected marks requires written permission of the MHSAA. Contact the MHSAA Communications Director for additional information.

Souvenir Program Policy – Teams winning Regional titles in selected sports must fill out and email program information and a team photograph to the MHSAA office to be used in the souvenir program for the Semifinals and the Finals in the event the team qualifies for Final round play. Program information kits are available on the respective sports pages of the MHSAA Web Site. Those sports are as follows: baseball, boys and girls basketball, girls competitive cheer, football, ice hockey, boys and girls soccer, softball, girls volleyball, team dual wrestling. Complete directions for filling out and submitting information and photographs is included with each kit. All program information and photographs must be submitted by email.

12. MEDICAL EMERGENCY POLICY

Host school Tournament Managers should follow all local school district policies regarding medical emergencies for participating athletes, coaches, student and adult spectators for competition conducted in school facilities. It is advised that AED devices be readily available during tournament competition. In addition:

- Trainers are an allowed expense for the tournament host and are encouraged, but not required.
- If your school requires immediate and continuous attention, you are encouraged to bring your own certified athletic trainer (t your school's expense) to cover your team's needs and to also assist in the event if called upon. Your school's certified medical professional may not overrule certified medical professionals provided by tournament management.
- All MHSAA concussion protocols will be followed.
- MHSAA policy on tornado watches and warnings shall be followed.
- MHSAA policy on managing heat and humidity shall be followed.

When MHSAA tournament contests are contests are conducted at non-school facilities, plans should be developed for the following needs and/or circumstances:

- Student, coach and spectator shelter for outdoor events.
- Host facility emergency equipment such as AED's fire escapes, etc.
- Emergency communications, i.e. phone numbers, school administration contact.
- Coordination with facility management regarding evacuation, first aid, on-site responsibilities.
- Medical transport or first responder contact procedures.
- Proximity/directions of nearest medical facility.
- If your school requires immediate and continuous attention at post season team competitions, you are encouraged to bring your own certified athletic trainer (at your school's expense) to cover your team's needs and to also assist in the event if called upon. Your school's certified medical professional may not overrule certified medical professionals provided by tournament management.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For all MHSAA tournaments conducted at either school or non-school facilities, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is required to be within visible distance of the event.

13. NOISEMAKERS

Use of artificial noisemakers is prohibited at MHSAA indoor tournament competitions. Tournament managers have the authority to restrict use of any devices which in their judgment disrupt the integrity of the competition, compromise judge's rulings or cause significant problems for other spectators.

14. SPORTSMANSHIP

When a student is disqualified during a contest for flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct, that student shall be withheld by his/her school for the remainder of that day of competition and for at least the next day of competition for that team.

When a coach is disqualified during a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct, that coach shall be prohibited by his/her school from coaching for the remainder of that day of competition and from coaching at or attending at least the next day of competition for that coach's team.

Failure of the school for any reason to enforce this regulation will prohibit the school from entry in the next MHSAA tournament for that sport, or from the remainder of the current tournament if the disqualification occurs during an MHSAA tournament or during the last regular-season contest.

Disqualifications from one season carry over to the next season in that sport for undergraduates and coaches, or the next season in any sport for seniors. If the playing rules for a sport specify an additional penalty or more rapid progression, or use of such a progression for other violations, the playing rules apply.

Any coach who is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct two or more times during a season, any player who is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct three or more times during a season, and any coach or player who is ejected for spitting at, hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing or intentionally and aggressively physically contacting an official at any time during that season, is not eligible to participate in the MHSAA tournament for that sport that season. If the tournament disqualifying ejection for that individual occurs during the MHSAA tournament, that player or coach is ineligible for the remainder of that tournament. If a team is removed from competition in protest, the contest is forfeited to the opponent and the coach and principal of the removed team must appear before the Executive Committee to indicate why additional action should not be taken. The Executive Committee may also require the appearance of personnel from other schools and game officials.

If the coach is ejected from the contest and an assistant coach, or an assigned school representative is not available to continue as the coach the event is terminated and forfeited to the opponent.

When a contest is interrupted or it ends prematurely because of breakdown of proper sportsmanship and whether or not the on-site officials forfeit the contest to one team, one or both schools may be subjected to any or all, but not limited to, the following: censure, probation with competition, probation without competition, forfeiture, loss of privilege of revenue sharing, expulsion. In addition, it may be required of one or both schools that their coaches and administrators appear before the Executive Committee to indicate why additional action should not be taken.

Team Spectator Sports Celebrations – During contests, officials will penalize under applicable sportsmanship or playing rules those student-athletes or coaches who leave the field of play and contact or approach spectator areas for celebration. Each school shall assign an acceptable number of adult crowd control supervisors to be stationed in front of its student cheering sections. At the conclusion of contests, prior to or after awards are presented, athletes shall not enter spectator areas or physically contact spectators in the stands. Similarly, spectators shall not run on the floor. Athletes shall not enter spectator areas and physically contact spectators in the stands. Any cost for repair or replacement to facilities damaged as a result of celebrations shall be paid by the school involved directly to the host facility within 30 days of the bill being submitted to the school. MHSAA reimbursement or revenue sharing will be withheld until paid by the offending school. Future tournament hosting privileges or school reimbursements to offending schools may be withheld if payment is not made.

15. WEATHER POLICIES, SUSPENSIONS, POSTPONEMENTS

When teams are delayed in arriving at tournament sites because of inclement weather management is encouraged to consider delaying competition for a few hours and/or playing games/matches in brackets of teams/individuals that are present and prepared to participate. If, after a reasonable delay, fewer than 60% of the scheduled teams/individuals have not arrived, the tournament must be rescheduled. If 60% or more of the scheduled teams/individuals are present, the tournament is to be conducted on the day scheduled.

16. INJUNCTION, RESTRAINING ORDER, PROTESTS

If an injunction or restraining order is served or presented at an MHSAA tournament site and such purports to require the eligibility of or participation by a student or team which a school and/or the MHSAA has ruled to be ineligible under MHSAA regulations, the on-site tournament manager is to suspend the entire competition (team competition) or events in which that student is intending to participate (individual competition). If the meet has begun, it shall be completed.

Protests will not be reviewed by the MHSAA. All disputes must be decided at the site before the contest proceeds. The judges will make the final decision regarding meet events. The Tournament Manager will resolve all next contest concerns.

17. TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Use of alcohol or tobacco, including e-cigarettes or other smoking devices, is prohibited at MHSAA tournament events by players, coaches and spectators. Managers should stress in coaches meetings that they are not to use tobacco at the tournament venue.

18. YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

During the MHSAA Tournament events, the MHSAA expects all designated managers, volunteer or paid staff assisting in the event, officials or any other personnel to follow local school district policy and state statute regarding the mandatory reporting of child abuse, bullying, hazing and sexual harassment. A report of such activity shall be made to legal authorities and to the MHSAA Executive Director or his designee

19. SPECTATOR POLICIES

The following general policies apply to spectators at MHSAA Competitive Cheer Tournament events. Tournament managers may also have additional school, facility or institutional restrictions and/or policies.

a. Banners are allowed with Meet Manager approval (no larger than 4’ X 8’).
b. Noisemakers are not allowed at MHSAA indoor tournaments.
c. Body paint and bare chests are not allowed.
d. Smoking is not allowed at the tournament site.
e. Coolers are not allowed.
f. Signs on sticks are not allowed.
g. Helium-filled balloons are not allowed.

h. Spectator Videotaping – Spectators may tape games from their normal seating area but are not to interfere with the view of other spectators or news media personnel covering the activity. A manager is not required to provide electrical hook-ups; or tripod space and may arrange spectator videotaping from a designated location(s).
i. The policies of the local host site shall prevail with respect to pets/animals. In the absence of local host policy, animals or pets shall not be permitted to enter MHSAA tournament venues; including spectator and team areas. However, properly marked or documented service animals that are leashed or harnessed at all times may accompany a spectator paying admission or attending with other approved team or school personnel. Individuals who bring service animals are asked to bring their own waste disposal bags and request special seating in advance of the event if this is needed.

20. RETURN TO ACTIVITY & POST-CONCUSSION CONSENT FORM