PARTICIPATING SCHOOL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION
2026 MHSAA CROSS COUNTRY

1. TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The MHSAA LP Cross Country tournament is conducted in four equal Divisions for boys and girls. Each school is assigned to one of nine Regional meets in each Division as determined by the site selection committee and MHSAA staff. Regional assignments will be posted on MHSAA.com and included in the fall "Tournament Notification Form." Each school is provided online and posted on the MHSAA website.

The UP Boys & Girls Cross Country Finals are conducted in three Divisions, with sponsoring Class "A," "B," and "C" schools divided into two divisions and sponsoring Class "D" schools comprising Division 3. There are no Regional qualifying meets in the UP tournament. Division assignments will be posted on MHSAA.com.

Dates
LP Regional Meets – October 30 or 31, 2026
LP Final Meet – November 7, 2026 @ Michigan International Speedway
UP Finals - October 24, 2026, hosted by Houghton High School @ Michigan Tech University Nordic Ski Trails

Team Qualifiers, Regional to Finals
Five runners must finish a Regional/Final race for a school to receive a team score.

The top three teams (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) will automatically qualify from the LP Regional to the Finals. THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF TEAMS QUALIFYING FROM A REGIONAL CANNOT EXCEED FOUR.

If a school finishes fourth (4th) in the Regional meet with four or more runners in the top 20 places and eight (8) or more complete teams finish the race, that school will also qualify a team for the Final Meet.

The maximum number of runners to represent a qualifying team at the Final Meet is seven.

Individual Qualifiers, Regional to Final Meet
Cross Country Finals qualification will include a minimum of seven individual qualifiers from each Regional race. All individuals receiving a medal (top 15) will advance. If the number of individual medalists is less than seven, then the additional qualifiers (up to seven) will be taken from the individual runners following 15th place.

2. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

NUMBER OF COMPETITORS - A school may compete with a maximum of seven entries and a minimum of one entry. At least five individuals must finish to be considered a complete team. Only complete teams will be scored. Individuals on the Master Eligibility List may be used as substitutes for TEAM entries in the Final meet. There are no substitutes for those entered in the individual race in the Final meet.

UNIFORMS/NUMBERS- Each team member shall wear the same color and design school uniform (jersey and trunks). Each uniform top may have a single manufacturer's logo/trademark no more than 2 ¼ square inches with no dimension more than 2 ¼ inches, While the uniform bottoms may have multiple logos/trademarks/references larger than 2 ¼ square inches around the waistband. Although members of teams must comply with this rule, boys teams and girls teams from the same school are not required to be attired alike. This rule applies equally to team and individual runs. Any type of sock and glove may be worn during competition without restriction. Any type of hat may be worn during competition without restriction.

Each competitor shall be provided a number by the Meet Manager and is required to be worn on either the front or back of the jersey, according to games committee/meet director instructions.

JEWELRY – Athletes may wear jewelry during competition without penalty. This includes sunglasses and watches. **There is no need for prior authorization from the MHSAA for religious headwear. An athlete may wear religious headwear in an XC competition.**

Temporary body adornment is not restricted by MHSAA rule and is allowed in competition.

To learn about the 2026 MHSAA LP Regional online entry process please visit:

For new users of athletic.net, please follow the directions to create an account for your school. For existing

users, please log into your account at **http://www.athletic.net** and go to your team homepage.

From your team homepage on athletic.net, click on the link near the top left that says "Edit Athletes," and be sure that your varsity roster is complete, including the proper grade for each athlete. You may upload your roster by importing or pasting it from an Excel spreadsheet.

Prior to the Regional entry deadline, go back to your team homepage on athletic.net and click the Regional meet title on your calendar. A link will appear that says "register athletes." Click that and enter your top seven or ten (as determined by the Regional host) athletes in the Regional meet. When you have completed the entries on athletic.net, hit the "save entries" button. You may change the athletes entered up until the electronic entry deadline which is Saturday, October 24, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.

If you have any difficulties, please send an email to **results@michigancrosscountry.com**

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3. OPT OUT POLICIES, ELIGIBILITY LISTS, ROSTERS

Schools must see that tournament managers receive an accurate Eligibility List by the Opt-Out Due Date. These forms are available at mhsaa.com. Failure to fulfill the above obligations by the specified Opt-Out Due Date will result in MHSAA penalties as stipulated in the MHSAA Handbook. For cross country, the LP Opt-Out Due Date is Friday, October 9, 2026; for the UP, the Opt-Out Due Date is Friday, October 2, 2026. **Schools must notify the tournament managers by the Opt-Out Due Date if they DO NOT intend to participate in a previously assigned MHSAA tournament.**

Additions or updates to the list (except transfer students who enroll after the dates in Regulation I, Section 9 [F]) 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.

Use of ineligibles - Individuals or teams that are defeated by an ineligible opponent or teams that allowed one or more ineligible students to participate do not advance in MHSAA tournaments. If placements in MHSAA tournaments are vacated because of an individual being ineligible or a team allowing one or more ineligible students to participate, other individuals or teams neither advance to those placements nor receive awards for those places.

Coaching supervision - No individual or team may participate in an MHSAA Tournament event UNLESS ACCOMPANIED TO THE EVENT BY THE coach, administrator, or appointee of the school.

4. DRAW PROCEDURES – NA

5. TIME SCHEDULE

In 2026, Boys run first. At the LP Regionals and UP Finals, the first run will begin no earlier than 9 a.m. It is suggested that when there are two divisions, the smaller division will compete first, followed by the same gender of the larger division, e.g., Girls Division 3 run, Girls Division 2 run, Boys Division 3 run, Boys Division 2 run. A Friday LP Regional shall be conducted after 3 p.m. A waiver to start earlier may be requested if a school is hosting multiple Regionals. The length of the course at the Regional and Final meets will be 5000 meters.

6. AWARDS

LP - Regional – First-place teams receive a trophy and 7 team medals. The top 15 individuals in each Division receive medals.
Finals – First and second-place teams in each Division receive a trophy and 7 team medals. The top 30 finishers in each Division receive medals.

UP – The winner and runner-up schools in each Division at the Final Run will receive trophies, provided three or more schools compete in a division. Medals will be awarded to the first fifteen individuals in each division at the

Final Run. Seven medals will also be awarded to members of the winning and runner-up schools in each Division. BY REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL ACTION, ONLY MHSAA-APPROVED AWARDS MAY BE PRESENTED.

Extra/Replacement Medal Order Form –

EXTRA/REPLACEMENT MEDAL ORDER FORM

7. LIMITS OF COMPETITION

Teams and individuals may have a maximum of 15 competition dates during the regular season. MHSAA tournament dates do not count against season maximums. An athlete may not participate in more than one level on the same day. A JH/MS student who is eligible by rule to compete for their HS team (schools under 100 enrollment in grades 9-12) can only compete in one MHSAA XC Regional (either HS XC or JH/MS), but not both MHSAA Regional events.

8. FINANCES

Regional spectator admission is $8 or $10 per carload. Final admission is $13, which includes parking. GoFan Digital ticketing will be used. The 2026 MHSAA XC Finals Information document, published closer to the MHSAA tournament, will provide more information on the ticket process.
Participating teams assume all costs at all levels of the MHSAA Tournament.

Schools qualifying individuals for the Final Meet will be granted admission only for those qualifiers. Each team and individual qualifier represented at the Regional or Final Meet will be provided admission for three other persons, including the coach, manager, or other support personnel.

9. 50/50 POLICY

MHSAA tournament hosts may conduct 50-50 raffles, provided the host site manager requests and obtains the appropriate license from the State of Michigan. **https://www.michigan.gov/cg/raffles**

10. OFFICIALS SELECTION/ASSIGNMENTS

The MHSAA and host schools will assign meet officials for all levels of the tournament.

11. PLAYING RULES/ADAPTATIONS

All National Federation Track & Field & Cross Country rules will be followed, including scoring and ties. All contestants are expected to maintain their position in the chute until released or be subject to disqualification.

Games Committee - A Games Committee (3-5 persons) is to serve at all Regional Meets and is to comprise the Meet Manager, one official (other than the referee), and one to three coaches. This committee shall serve as the Final authority. All Regional Cross Country Managers should invite three area coaches to review the course layout before printing the course map and before the competition. These three coaches should, if possible, meet and review the course as a group.

12. MEDIA

MULTIMEDIA POLICIES - *Audio/Video/Still Photography Rights* – The MHSAA owns the rights to all multimedia (audio, video, still, Internet) at all levels of its tournaments. Still and video photography is allowed by individual spectators from the seating area of the venue unless the host school District or facility has a previously existing policy which is more restrictive.

The MHSAA has exclusive multimedia arrangements for its Finals events. MHSAA Handbook Regulation II, Section 14(A) reads as follows: “No school may sell or rent videos (DVD, tape, or film) or sell still images of contests which are part of an MHSAA tournament without the permission of the MHSAA.” If a school wishes to authorize an individual(s) to create multimedia content, the principal or athletic administrator must contact the MHSAA for passes and access. Refer to the publication, **Media/Streaming Information**, for more information.

VIDEO STREAMING (POSTSEASON) - The broadcast and streaming rights of MHSAA post-season tournament events belong exclusively to the NFHS Network, Bally Sports Detroit, the MHSAA, and those media outlets which have pre-arranged to secure those rights. Teams participating in MHSAA Tournaments are *prohibited* from streaming live video of any portion of an event over the Internet - including using social media platforms or any other method. Likewise, individual spectators are also prohibited from live-streaming video through any means. Participating schools are responsible for informing their students, parents, and other fans of this policy and to assist the MHSAA upon request in enforcing it.

Outlets broadcasting tournament games – audio or video – on over-the-air, cable or internet – live or delayed – must receive advance permission from the MHSAA to originate the event. Tournament managers will receive approval by e-mail for each outlet.

VIDEO STREAMING (REGULAR STREAMING) – Video streaming during the regular season is allowed by the home/host school in a couple of different ways. If the home/host school is a member of the NFHS Network, they must stream games to the NFHS Network first and foremost. They can also produce a stream to broadcast on a school-controlled page (separate from the NFHS stream). Additionally, NFHS Network members can partner with local media to broadcast regular season home games on the media outlet's channel/website. Schools that are not members of the NFHS Network can stream regular season home games to a school-controlled webpage. Refer to the Multimedia Regulations for more information.

VIDEOTAPING- Competing schools may videotape games in which that school competes. The tape is not to be used to second-guess decisions made by game/meet officials. Schools wishing to videotape games at other sites may do so without securing advanced permission but must tape from the stands unless press box space is available. 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). The tape may not be distributed, sold, rented, or loaned for commercial purposes.

DRONES - For the purposes of the policy, the word "drone" applies to all Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The policy is written for all MHSAA tournament contests, while local laws and policies control all regular-season contests.

Drones are prohibited for all indoor tournament contests in all sports. For outdoor sports local, state, and federal laws govern the use of drones. Drones may never be flown over spectators, athletes, or the playing surface. All drones must stay outside of the "restraining line" or the normal footprint of the playing surface. This includes never flying over bleachers, press box, or anywhere that spectators sit or gather for a contest. The operator of the drone must be registered with the FAA and follow local, state, and federal law when flying the drone. https://www.faa.gov/uas/getting_started/register_drone

Drones can never be used to scout opponents' games or practices. Non-school facilities reserve the right to restrict drone use on their property. An exception to this policy may be made in specific cases for MHSAA broadcast partners, provided the management of the tournament facility permits the presence of UAVs for broadcast purposes under the control of the MHSAA.

POST-GAME INTERVIEWS -- Coaches should be readily available to meet with the media shortly after the conclusion of a contest. It is recommended that approximately five minutes after the game, managers provide a location other than the team locker rooms for post-game interviews with coaches and/or players the coach may wish to designate for interviews. Locker room access should ***never*** be allowed to media. Inasmuch as many media outlets are often on deadline following contests, interviews should be granted before any lengthy team meetings occur.

LOCKER ROOM PRIVACY POLICY - Using devices of any kind to capture or transmit images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, dressing areas, training rooms, weigh-in rooms, showers, restrooms, or other areas where there is an expectation of privacy during MHSAA tournament events. Tournament managers or athletic directors that discover such use should move immediately to have the device removed and inform the head coach or athletic director of the identity and nature of the activity of the person involved.

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.

PHOTOGRAPHERS – still and video – may be granted appropriate access to shoot (i.e. sidelines, baselines), if they are from an accredited media outlet. Schools participating in the Finals of baseball, football, lacrosse, soccer, softball, basketball, competitive cheer, ice hockey, volleyball and team dual wrestling will be allowed two credentials: one for still image photography and one for video. Depending on the sport/location – the video credential may be restricted to certain parts of the facility. For example, a specific platform at the Breslin Center or Ford Field. These passes will have those designated areas marked on them. Because of the large number of teams involved for individual events (bowling, cross country, golf, gymnastics, skiing, swimming & diving, tennis, track & field, individual wrestling), no passes and access will be authorized for schools

13. 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, 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 explain why no additional action should be taken.

14. WEATHER POLICIES, SUSPENSIONS, POSTPONEMENTS

When teams are delayed in arriving at tournament sites due to inclement weather, management is encouraged to consider delaying competition for a few hours and/or playing games/matches within brackets of teams/ individuals who 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 will be conducted on the scheduled day.

Every effort should be made to complete play on the originally scheduled tournament date. MHSAA policies apply regarding suspension of competition when thunder or lightning is present and tornado policies as stated in the MHSAA Handbook. However, MHSAA tournament weather delay timeframes (e.g. how long to wait) do NOT follow the regular season guidelines. For example, games may be delayed by more than 90 minutes in an MHSAA tournament scenario. Common sense and discussion with participating team administrators will dictate the maximum length of a delay.

In many cases, MHSAA tournament regulations differ from NFHS playing rules and regular season guidelines. However, when contests are interrupted due to weather, it is imperative to know what NFHS playing rules and MHSAA tournament regulations require regarding resumption of play and weather-shortened regulation contests which become official. If playing rules allow, interrupted games shall resume at the point of suspension. Also know that an interrupted game can be considered a complete/official game by mutual agreement of both teams.

15. 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 that 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.

17. 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.

18. LOCKER ROOM PRIVACY POLICY

Using devices of any kind to capture or transmit images is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, dressing areas, training rooms, weigh-in rooms, showers, restrooms, or other areas where there is an expectation of privacy during MHSAA tournament events. Tournament managers or athletic directors that discover such use should move immediately to have the device removed and inform the head coach or athletic director of the identity and nature of the activity of the person involved.

19. SPECTATOR POLICIES

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

- Banners are allowed with Meet Manager approval.
- Noisemakers must be approved by the Meet Manager. Air horns and whistles are not allowed.
- Body paint is not allowed.
- Food/beverage coolers may be allowed with some restrictions with Meet Management approval.
- Recorded music may be played prior to the meet in the team area.
- Smoking is not allowed at the tournament site.
- 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).
- 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 spectators paying admission or attending with other approved teams 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 -

RETURN TO ACTIVITY AND POST-CONCUSSION CONSENT FORM