

# Football Playoffs

This was the third year of a four-year trial format that brought out the first and second place finishers from a four-team district. The MSHSAA Board of Directors would like input from the member schools on the proposed changes for a new playoff system.

There will be three choices for the Board of Directors to review:

1. Return to the previous playoff system where only one team qualifies for the playoffs. If this system is chosen and the current start date is kept in place, all playoff games would be played on a Friday or Saturday.
2. Keep the current system in place where two teams qualify for the playoffs. If this system is chosen and the current start date is kept in place, the playoff games will still follow the Wednesday-Monday-Saturday format.
3. THE NEW PROPOSAL will create a nine-game regular season with schools scheduling all nine of these games. The 10<sup>th</sup> week will be the beginning of the District Championships. Teams will be placed into districts comprised of eight teams and seeded by a point system over the regular nine-game season. We are currently looking at the old point system that was in place in the 1970s, with some minor changes. The third game of the championship series would be the district championship game (there would be eight district champions and eight runner-ups). This format would more closely resemble the district championships in all of our other team sports. If this system is chosen and the current start date is kept in place, the playoff games will still follow the Wednesday-Monday-Saturday format. Below is an outline of the new system:

## 2012 Football Playoff Proposal (Nine-Game Regular Season)

*\*\*Proposal Subject to Minor Changes\*\**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Registration:** All schools that have indicated participation in the state football series will be assigned to a district. Schools will be assigned to districts for a two-year basis, beginning with the fall of 1990.
2. **Classification:** A school's classification will be determined by its co-ed enrollment in grades 9-12 as of the fourth Wednesday in September for public schools. For private and parochial schools, the official enrollment will be as of October 1. The enrollment for all boys' schools shall be doubled for classification purposes; the enrollment for all non-public schools and charter schools (2012) shall be multiplied by 1.35 for classification purposes.

The classification for playoffs shall be determined as follows:

- a. **8-Man Football:** Schools shall be in one class; only schools with enrollments of 200 or less may participate in 8-Man football.
- b. **11-Man Football:** Schools will be divided into six classes; this started with the 2002 season.
- c. **By enrollment:**
  - i. The largest 32 schools shall be in Class 6
  - ii. The smallest 64 schools are placed in Class 1
  - iii. The next 64 schools are placed in Class 2
  - iv. The next 64 schools are placed in Class 3
  - v. The next 64 schools are placed in Class 4
  - vi. The remaining schools are placed in Class 5

**Note:** If two or more schools of identical enrollment fall at a class breaking point, they shall be assigned to a class using the previous year's enrollment. If more than 320 schools register for football, Class 5 becomes the catch-all class. In 2010 there were 339 schools registered for 11-man football, thus Class 5 had 51 schools in it.

3. **Number of Districts:** There shall be two districts in 8-Man, four districts in Class 6, and eight districts each in Classes 1-5.
4. **District Assignment Procedure:** Schools are grouped in districts based on geographical location. Classes 1-4 and Class 6 will consist of eight teams. Class 5 and 8-man will be based on the number of teams in the region and the higher-seeded teams (1-2) will get byes in the district tournament if necessary. 8-man will have play-in games to the district tournament. Each team in the district will be seeded after week nine using the point system described in this manual.
5. **Minimum Games:** A team shall have scheduled at least half (five) of the number of contests permitted (nine) to be eligible for participation in the playoffs (By-Law 312).
6. **Individual Minimum:** In part, By-Law 312 indicates: "No individual student shall be entered who has not represented his or her school in interscholastic competition in that sport during the season." In football, this means a player must have played in at least one regular season contest (game playing Weeks 1 through 9) before the district contest.
7. **Regular Season:** Teams will schedule Weeks 1 through 9. Weeks 1 through 9 will be used to calculate the points earned for seeding purposes. (This manual will outline the point system. We are currently working on a point system that will be fair for all schools. There may be some minor changes, such as points allowed for playing up or down a class as to not penalize a larger school for playing a smaller school but reward the smaller school for playing up.)
8. **District Games Committee:** Each district will assign a local Athletic Director to serve for the two-year cycle as the District Chairman. Each district will assign two Athletic Directors to serve on the games committee for the two-year cycle.

- 9. District Officials:** It is the responsibility of the District Games Committee to hire officials for the first round of the districts (Week 10). In Classes 1-4 and Class 6, this would be four crews. The crews would be assigned after Week 9 to the games with the least amount of conflict. In Class 5 and 8-man, the committee would hire two or three crews, depending on their bracket. After Week 10, **all officials** will be assigned by the MSHSAA office.
- 10. Week 10 Gate Receipts:** Because each school will only have the ability to schedule games one through nine, your schedule may be five home and four away games or four home and five away games. In Week 10 the higher seed will host the game (#1 seed would host #8 seed, #2 seed would host #7 seed, etc.). To make Week 10 financially equitable to all schools, the gate receipts (less expenses) will be split 60/40, with the host team receiving 60% of the gate and the visiting team receiving 40% of the gate.
- 11. Week 10 First Round of Districts:** The higher seeded team will host the contest at 7:00 p.m. on Friday night in Classes 1-5. **No Contests** shall be played on Thursday or Saturday, with the exception of weather-related issues. Class 6 may host on Friday at 7:00 p.m. or Saturday at 1:00 p.m. If two teams share a local field and both teams qualify as a host team, the higher-seeded team will have the first option of hosting the game on their field. The lower-seed host team will have 24 hours to secure a different field; if they do not, the visitor team will have the option to host.

**12. District Seeding Procedures:**

- a. Points for a Win/Loss or Tie** (there is also a discussion about using the current +/-13 point system here).
- i. 30 points for a win
  - ii. 20 points for a tie
  - iii. 10 points for a loss
- b. Points for Playing Up or Down a Class** (this is under review and a change may be made to not penalize a larger school for playing a smaller school).
- i. One-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) point **CREDIT** for each class you play up (i.e., a Class 1 team plays a Class 3 team:  $\frac{1}{2}$  point +  $\frac{1}{2}$  point = +1 point).
  - ii. One-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) point **DEBIT** for each class you play down (i.e., a Class 4 team plays a Class 3 team: =  $-\frac{1}{2}$  point).
- c. Points for Strength of Schedule**
- i. Points from opponent's schedule by taking the sum of the win/loss record from each team you have played.
 

Team A:	$5W/4L = +1$
Team B:	$7W/2L = +5$
Team C:	$1W/8L = -7$
Total	$1+5-7 = -1$

- d. **Calculating Your Points:** Add all the points from the three categories above (a-c) and divide by the total number of games you have played (nine in most cases). Rank the points in order (highest to lowest) and the corresponding seed (highest to lowest, i.e., 1-8). See example from 2010 below:

<b>Team Name</b>	<b>Record</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Seed</b>
Valle Catholic	8-1	26.94	1
Thayer	7-2	25.17	2
Hayti	6-3	24.28	3
Chaffee	4-5	18.06	4
Portageville	3-6	16.56	5
Cabool	2-7	14.50	6
St. Vincent	2-7	13.83	7
Cleveland NJROTC	1-8	12.50	8

The point system would be tracked weekly on the website, and schools could follow their progress as the season unfolds. The outlined point system is a starting point, and we have included what this would have looked like if applied to this year's football season.

**Please click on the next link on the website (New Football Playoff Proposal Brackets) to view the brackets that represent what the playoffs would have looked like this year (2010) if we would have used the new system.**

**Please send all comments and suggestions to:  
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