

2026 MPA SOCCER BULLETIN

(updated 7/21/26)

CALENDAR - SOCCER SEASON

July 27	First Practice for Harvest Teams
August 3-16	Hands-off Period (Sport Season Policy)
August 13	First Countable Game for Harvest Teams (after 3:00pm)
August 17	First Practice
August 21	First Interscholar Scrimmage (After 5 days of conditioning)
August 28	Schedules Due (Harvest teams due one week prior to 1 st game)
September 3	First Countable Game (After 3:00 p.m.)
October 9	Recommended Officials Due
October 19-23	On-line voting for Sportsmanship Banner (One week to vote)
October 20	Last Countable Game
October 21	Make up for October 20 games only
October 22	Heal Points Finalized
October 23/24	Regional Prelims
October 27	Regional Class A, C, & 8 Person Quarter Finals
October 28	Regional Class B & D Quarter Finals
October 30	Boys' and Girls' Class A, C, & 8 Person Semi Finals
October 31	Boys' and Girls' Class B & D Semi Finals
November 3	Class A, C, and 8 Player Regional Finals (Boys 4:00/Girls 6:30) Class A North – Class A South – Class C North – Class C South – 8 North – (B 4:00/G 6:00) 8 South – (B 4:00/G 6:00)
November 4	Class B & D Regional Finals (Boys 4:00/Girls 6:30) Class B North – Class B South – Class D North – Presque Isle Class D South –
November 7	^State Finals (Boys 11:00/Girls 1:30 unless otherwise noted) Class A: South Site – Class B: North Site – Class C: South Site – Class D: North Site – 8 Person: North Site (B 11:00/G 1:00) - Presque Isle

*All playoff games from the preliminary round through the semi-finals must be played by the date listed, except for the special circumstances listed below.

*All playoff rounds until the Regional Championships may be played early pending availability of officials with the class scheduled taking priority.

*Quarterfinal games may be played by any class on 10/26.

*May move the 10/27 game to 10/28 and 10/30 to 10/31 by mutual agreement.

^Potential SAT conflict.

*All regional championship games will be played at a field with an artificial surface scheduled in advance of the season. With the lack of turf fields in some parts of the state it is possible that a school will host and play on their home field.

*State championship games will rotate from a Southern Maine to Northern Maine site every year with the 5th year of a rotation looking to schedule games at an Aroostook County location.

MANDATORY RULES CLINICS AND EDUCATION

The head coach of each school's varsity teams is REQUIRED to attend the mandatory meeting for NFHS Soccer Rules Updates presented by the Maine Association of Soccer Officials (MASO), which will be offered through Zoom. For those unable to make the live session, make up of the meeting by viewing and signing off on the make-up will be the option.

2026 NFHS Soccer Rules Update

Time: Aug 4, 2026 6:30 PM Eastern Time

Join Zoom Meeting

([Add](#) link here)

1. *Each coach must complete the NFHS "*Concussion in Sport*" video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).
2. *Each coach must complete the NFHS "*A Guide to Heat Illness*" video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).
3. *Each coach must complete the NFHS "*Sudden Cardiac Arrest*" video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).
4. *Each coach must complete the NFHS "*Protecting Students from Abuse*" video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).
5. It is recommended that all team participants complete the "Sportsmanship" course available at www.nfhslearn.com ; and Captains take the "Captains Course" available at www.nfhslearn.com.

HANDS-OFF PERIOD

To provide a window of personal time like the time available prior to the winter and spring sports seasons, summer recess is defined as the time between the last day of the spring sport season to **August 3** or fourteen (14) days prior to the beginning of the fall sport season. This does not exclude individual students from attending camps during this two-week period of personal time if all other Sport Season Policy requirements are met. Individuals choosing to attend camps during this two-week period may use school protective gear or track and field implements.

The only contact a coach may have with athletes during this time is to continue the supervision of an off-season conditioning program that they had been involved with prior to the start of the hands-off period. Sport-specific drills used in any off-season conditioning program are not appropriate. Please refer to the MPA Coaches Handbook for additional information concerning this policy.

*Please note – Coaches may not organize, or be involved with, team activities during the hands-off period.

The soccer season, for member schools of the Aroostook League, may begin the Three weeks prior to their school's first regularly scheduled game. Games may not be scheduled any earlier than **August 13, 2026.**

OFF-SEASON TRAINING

A school's comprehensive off-season conditioning program may include such activities as muscular strength and endurance exercises, cardiovascular fitness activities, agility, speed, power, balance, coordination, and flexibility training. The program must be voluntary, open to all students, and should not include sport-specific skill development or coaching.

PRESEASON SCRIMMAGE

Based on the recommendation of the MPA Sports Medicine Committee all athletes must participate in five on-field practices prior to participating in a scrimmage play day or contest with another school. Teams are limited to five exhibition dates throughout the season. If a team qualifies for postseason play, they will be granted one additional exhibition date.

SCHEDULES / HEAL POINTS

Schedules and Heal Point standings will be maintained through the MPA website. Athletic Administrators must report all results as well as any rescheduled games to the MPA website.

A MAXIMUM of fourteen regular season games may be played. The MINIMUM divisor in computing the final Heal Point Standings shall be eight.

In the event of a tie in the Heal Point Standings head-to-head competition will be used as the tiebreaker. If a tie remains, a coin toss will determine placement, unless it is for the last play-off spot, where a play-in game will be played.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

PRESEASON SCRIMMAGES: Schools may not scrimmage or play a contest with another school until **Friday, August 21, 2026.** Every player, whether during the preseason or during the season, must practice for five calendar days prior to participating in a game, scrimmage, or jamboree. Schools are limited to 5 exhibition dates throughout the season. If a team qualifies for the post-season tournament, then one additional exhibition game may be added.

GAME SCHEDULES: All regular season postponed games must be made up at the next mutually available date. Saturdays and Columbus Day are to be considered playable dates. The submission of the Schedule, due August 28, 2026, for Fall 2026 competition, will constitute a school's eligibility for the regional tournament. Schools may play three games with an opponent when necessary.

Tournament: Game postponements must be approved by the committee chair.

Postponement of Games - For the purpose of tournament selection, no soccer game may be postponed or rescheduled except for one of the following reasons:

- A. One of the two schools are closed by the superintendent or Board for:
 - stormy weather causing dangerous traveling conditions,
 - an epidemic in the community,
 - the death of a school official, teacher or student.
 - B. The death of a father, mother, brother or sister of a student player.
2. The cut-off date is the final playing date – **10/20/26**. Make up for games postponed on **10/20/26** may be played on **10/21/26** only.
3. In case of postponement for any of the reasons listed above, the Soccer Committee may disregard such games if, in their judgment, the game cannot be rescheduled on a satisfactory date. For games postponed for reasons other than those listed above, the Soccer Committee may assign a loss to either or both teams.
4. Games suspended in the first half will be replayed in their entirety. If termination of the game occurs at any point after the completion of the first half the game is considered complete.

BONA FIDE TEAM RULE

A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for and actively participates in team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are prevented from missing high school practice or competition to compete or practice elsewhere.

- * Two waivers per student athlete per sport season may be granted by the principal on a case-by-case basis for extraordinary circumstances (e.g., If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a prestigious weekend event then a waiver may be granted. If a student/athlete were invited to participate in a nationally recognized tournament over a school vacation, then **that** waiver may be granted for that activity. If a request to miss practice every Friday because he/she is receiving specialized coaching from an outside team/coach, then a waiver should not be granted **because it violates the spirit and intent of the rule**).
- ** This policy is not intended to restrict dual sport participation in schools that allow dual participation.
- *** Penalty for violation of this policy:

1 st Violation	Suspension from play for one game/contest
2 nd Violation	Removal from team for remainder of season

(Effective Date: 2019 Fall Sport Season)

2026 NFHS AND MPA PLAYING RULES

The following NFHS and MPA rules are official for all games. In addition, the terms and conditions in this bulletin will govern all regular season and tournament games as indicated. In all tournament games, the game shall consist of two 40-minute halves. The Soccer Committee recommends that regular season games be 40-minute halves.

- A. **EQUIPMENT**: All equipment shall conform to Rules 1 and 4 in the National Federation Rule Book. All game balls shall conform to National Federation Rule 2, to include the NFHS authenticating logo.
- B. **FIELD OF PLAY**: Schools should be aware that all tournament games must be played on fields that are at least 110 x 60 yards. If a home school does not have a field which meets minimum standards, a suitable field must be found, or the game will be played at the opponent's home field. Every attempt will be made to play the Regional and State Championship games on an artificial turf field at least 110 x 65 yards.
- C. **MOUTH GUARDS**
The MPA no longer requires the wearing of a mouth guard, but strongly advises all players to wear a well fitted mouth guard in all practices and games.
- D. **MERCY RULE**:
The mercy rule for soccer in Maine goes into effect with a goal differential of 8 or more goals at the 60-minute mark or anytime thereafter declaring the game as complete.
- E. **UNIFORMS**
National Federation Soccer Rule 4, Section 1 is in effect. The visiting team shall wear solid white jerseys and solid white socks, and the home team shall wear dark jerseys and socks. Each jersey, including the goalkeeper's jersey, must be numbered on the front and the back. Players may wear caps under the following conditions: (1) knit, with no visor; (2) single color and all the same color; (3) no tassels; and (4) worn for warmth only; goalies' caps may be of different color from teammates (see Rule 4-2-1H).

(NOTE) Home teams recognizing cancer awareness by wearing pink colored jerseys and socks that conform to all other applicable jersey rules do not need a waiver.
- F. **TIE GAMES**
Regular season games ending in a tie at the end of regulation play shall be extended by two five-minute sudden victory overtime periods. Games still tied after the second five-minute overtime will be recorded as a tie game (teams change ends at the end of the first overtime).

8-PLAYER SOCCER

This division will compete under the following conditions and follow all other rules in the NFHS Rule Book.

- Cut-off date of July 1 to declare for 8-person.
- 8 Players per side.
- Regulation sized field.
- Reduced time of game – 30-minute half.
- Maximum roster size of 17 to play in the 8-person division. Teams will have a one-year grace period to move to 11-player soccer should the roster go over 17. The number cannot be reduced by cutting players.
- Classification numbers will be for two years, but schools may move into and out of 8-person soccer annually.
- There will be one classification of 8-person soccer in the classification cycle with a North and South region.
- 8 player teams may play 11-player teams for a maximum of four games on their schedule. Unless mutually agreed upon to use a 9, 10, or 11 players, schools must play 8 vs. 8. If playing with more than 8 players, the game should maintain 30 minute halves.
- The overtime rules will be the same as 11-player except the overtime periods will be 10 minutes in tournament play.
- The mercy rule will follow the 11-player rule after 45 minutes of play due to shorter halves.

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD (Online Voting October 19-23, 2026)

The Soccer Committee is committed to promoting and recognizing outstanding sportsmanship during the regular season and throughout the tournament. Good sportsmanship is conduct which imposes a type of self-control involving honest rivalry, courteous relations among the players, coaches, and officials, and graceful acceptance of results. To make the sportsmanship banner selection process meaningful the committee asks that coaches and athletes from all levels of the program be involved in the voting process.

Areas to be considered:

- A. Neat attire by players, coaches, and managers.
- B. Players supporting one another on the field/court/ice and from the bench.
- C. No acts of unnecessary roughness/taunting.
- D. No inappropriate gestures, language, or expressions.
- E. Players using appropriate and positive communication to their coach.
- F. Players and coaches treating officials with respect—no inappropriate gestures, language, or expressions.
- G. Positive community involvement.

Sportsmanship banners will be presented in all classes in both the North and South division.

Sportsmanship voting will take place after the season using the on-line sportsmanship voting link provided on the MPA website. Any school that receives an ejection, at any level in the program, shall be ineligible for the award. Schools that do not submit a sportsmanship ballot may not be considered for the award.

CUMULATIVE CARD SYSTEM

It is the responsibility of each school to monitor the number of cards given to athletes and coaches and to follow the guidelines that have been developed. The MPA Soccer

Committee has established a card reporting system as part of the game report, but at times there are technical problems or input errors. Players and coaches are to be held accountable for the cards that they have received, even if they don't match the total in the MPA system.

To help with the accurate reporting of cards, all teams will be required to maintain a scorebook at each match. The Officials will sign the scorebook at the end of each match to certify the assessment of yellow or red cards.

Indirect yellow cards that are assessed to a coach for an illegal equipment violation (shin guard, uniform) will not count toward the cumulative total for the coach. Any card given to an athlete for such a violation, which occurs after the first card has been given to the coach, will count toward the total.

Cards received during the preseason will not count toward the cumulative total. Any athlete or coach that receives three yellow cards or 1 red card during the preseason will be suspended for the remainder of the preseason as well as the first regular season contest.

Any red card given during the season, including the playoffs, suspends the athlete or the coach for the next game at the same level where the card was given. All yellow and red cards will count as one card in the cumulative card policy. It is important to note that any athlete that receives a yellow card must, by NFHS rule, be removed from the game. The length of time that the athlete is held from the game is now a local decision.

Below are the guidelines that will be in place during the 2026 regular season and the playoffs. Yellow and red cards will be separated in card counts:

3rd Yellow Card	1 Game Suspension
6 th Yellow Card	1 Game Suspension
All Subsequent Yellow Cards Beyond 6	1 Game Suspension for Each Card

Red cards will not be included in the card count as those will follow the MPA Ejection Rule of a one game sit out (2 games for fighting) for each of the first two cards. Any player or coach receiving 3 red cards will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

Two yellow cards in the same game result in a red card. For the purposes of card counting, they would be reported as one yellow card and one red card for that game.

Any player or coach with less than 3 yellow cards will be reset to zero for the playoffs at the conclusion of the regular season. If the coach or player has 3 or more yellow cards during the regular season their card count will not reset for the playoffs.

If a coach or player receives a yellow card that would qualify them for a suspension, they may finish the game and subsequently serve the suspension in the next countable contest.

The suspended athlete/coach may not participate at other levels of play until the suspension has been served at the level that the card was given. Once the regular season starts, any athlete or coach that was suspended beyond the last game of the season must sit out all contests through the first countable contest in which they compete. This would include sitting out a conference championship game, which is considered an exhibition game by the MPA, but not having it count as the countable game.

EJECTION RULE

In all team and individual sports (varsity or sub-varsity), ejection or disqualification from a game, meet, or match for unsportsmanlike behavior of any form, by a coach or a player shall result in the suspension of that player or coach. Once the regular season has begun, the coach or player ejected from a contest must sit out all contests, at all levels, until the coach or athlete completes the ejection penalty by sitting out the next game at the level from which he/she was ejected. This rule applies to a game, meet, or match suspended before completion as well as a completed contest. This penalty may not be served by sitting out an exhibition, sub-varsity, or other competition.

Prior to their return to play any player ejected from a game must complete the NFHS *"Sportsmanship"* video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

A suspended coach may not be present at the game site. Not being physically present at the site means the disqualified coach is not to be present in the locker room, on the sidelines, in the stands, or site area before, during, or after the game/meet.

Prior to their return to the sideline any coach ejected from a game must complete the NFHS *"Teaching and Modeling Behavior"* video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

Schools must complete the Ejection Report located on the MPA website after each ejection. Failure to report an ejection will result in a \$50.00 fine.

Any coach or player ejected from the last game, meet, or contest of a sports season shall serve a one game suspension in the opening countable game, meet, or contest in the next varsity sport in which he/she participates. The player/coach may participate fully in the preseason prior to serving the one game suspension.

Any player that leaves the bench to engage in a fight will be assessed a red card. If a coach is assisting in management of the situation, they will not be assessed a card. Fighting will result in a two-game suspension. Any player involved in a second fight will be assessed a four-game suspension. The official will determine if it was a fight and the player assessed and coach must be notified with the use of the word "Fighting" in reporting the card.

This policy will not prevent standing committees from imposing more restrictive disciplinary action. (Effective Date: 1996-97 Winter Sport Season; Revised 2008, 2009)

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The safety of athletes (*participants*), spectators, coaches/directors, school personnel, and all others present at an athletic contest must be the first and foremost concern to the contest officials and building administrators.

1. When an interscholastic contest has been scheduled and dangerous playing conditions exist, or severe weather is anticipated, the following should be considered:
 - a. Prior to beginning an athletic contest, when severe weather is anticipated, the head contest official and the principals of each school, or their designees, will meet to review the suspension and/or postponement procedures. This would include any playing rule book coverage.
 - b. The host school administrator will be responsible for informing contest officials, visiting school administrators and, if applicable, the individual responsible for public address announcements of designated shelter areas.
 - c. When lightning is observed, or thunder is heard in the vicinity of a contest conducted outdoors, play should be suspended.
 - d. If any other life-threatening condition occurs, play should be suspended immediately, and predetermined directions to safe locations will be announced.
2. When a suspension of a contest occurs, the following should be considered:
 - a. If the suspension is forty-five minutes or greater, resuming later should be considered, unless deemed a countable game (per NFHS rules of the first half of the game being completed). Rule 7-1-3 states *"In the event a game must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue play, the head referee shall declare it an official game if one complete half or more of the game has been played. If less than one-half of the game has been played, the game may be rescheduled from the start, or restarted from the suspension of play according to state association adoption."*
 - b. Play shall not be resumed until **30 minutes after the last flash of lightning or clap of thunder**.
 - c. When it appears that weather conditions are no longer a threat to the safety of participants, spectators, or contest officials, administrators from all schools involved will meet with the head contest official to determine if play will continue.
 - d. If play is to be resumed, contestants will be given at least a fifteen-minute warm-up period prior to competition.
3. If evacuation is necessary, the following should be considered:
 - a. If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators should evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced.
 - b. All personnel, athletes and spectators should be clearly informed of available safe structures or shelters in the event a thunderstorm approaches. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced. The person in authority must be aware of the amount of time it takes to get to each structure and the number of persons each structure can safely hold. For large events, time needed for evacuation is increased and there must be a method (i.e., announcement over loudspeaker) for communicating the need for evacuation and directing both athletes and spectators to the appropriate safe shelters.

- c. The most ideal structure is a fully enclosed, substantial building with plumbing, electrical wiring, and telephone service, which aids in grounding the structure. A fully enclosed automobile with a hard metal roof and rolled-up windows is also a reasonable choice. School buses are an excellent lightning shelter that can be utilized for large groups of people. However, it is important to avoid contact with any metal while inside the vehicle.

Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and do not use showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm as the current from a local lightning strike can enter the building via the plumbing pipelines or electrical connections. It is also considered unsafe to stand near utilities, use corded telephones or headsets during a thunderstorm, due to the danger of electrical current traveling through the telephone line. Cellular and cordless telephones are considered reasonably safe and can be used to summon help during a thunderstorm.

When caught in a thunderstorm without availability or time to reach safe structures, you can minimize the risk of lightning-related injury by following a few basic guidelines:

- Avoid being the highest object. Seek a thick grove of small trees or bushes surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch.
- Avoid contact with anything that would be attractive to lightning. Stay away from freestanding trees, poles, antennas, towers, bleachers, baseball dugouts, metal fences, standing pools of water, and golf carts.
- Crouch down with legs together, the weight on the balls of the feet, arms wrapped around knees, and head down with ears covered.

QUALIFICATION FOR INVITATIONAL SOCCER TOURNAMENT

Teams will be seeded for regional tournament play with two-thirds qualifying for the tournament according to their finish in the Heal Point standings. In regions that two-thirds would limit the field to less than 8 teams, it will be filled to 8 or include all teams in the region if less than 8. If more than eight teams qualify in any region, there will be preliminary play-off games to determine the eight teams that will play in the quarterfinals. Games will be held at the site of the higher seeded team until the regional championship game.

TIMER / FIELD MARKINGS

Schools are asked to comply with the NFHS Field Markings Rule (Rule 1, Section 5, Art. 1-3) including the marking of team and officials' area. For timers located in a scorers/timer's box above the field some form of communication with the box should be provided. The official timer at all tournament games shall be an adult. The signal signifying the end of the official time of each period of play in all tournament games shall be ended by the scoreboard horn or a hand-held air horn blown in the proximity to a game official.

- a. Countdown verbally the last 10 seconds of each period of play to the nearest official.
- b. Be aware of the position of the ball when it becomes dead.

- c. Signal when time for a period has expired.
- d. Signal two minutes after the end of the first and third quarters when applicable.
- e. Signal two minutes before the end of the interval between the first and second halves.

PRELIMINARY AND REGIONAL GAME SITES

Play-off brackets will be available on the MPA website (www.mpa.cc). Schools with boys and girls both playing a mid-week game on the same field on even-numbered years, girls' games will be played the following day. The reverse is true for odd-numbered years. Date changes within this paragraph must be by mutual consent. All tournament games are to be played at the site of the higher seeded team provided that the home field meets the minimum requirements of 110 x 60 yards, **including 8-Player**.

A **spectator restraining line or rope** must be in place at all tournament sites and enforced by the local administrators. If minimum requirements cannot be met, the game will be played at an available field which meets minimum requirements. If the host school cannot obtain such a field, the game will be played at the opponent's home field.

GAME TIMES

Saturday games may be played on Friday by mutual consent. Game time shall be set by mutual agreement between the administrations of the two schools involved. If agreement cannot be reached, the game time will be 2:00pm for a weekday game and 1:00pm on Saturday. If a host school has a lighted field, then the game time shall be 4:00pm. Schools are asked to notify the assigner and officials of the agreed starting time.

TOURNAMENT SITE/HOST PLAYOFF SITE POLICY

If a site conflict occurs with a school hosting an MPA regional or state championship game and a home regular season or playoff game then the game will be rescheduled, at the request of the host school, to the day prior to the championship game.

ADMISSION

The host school shall establish the admission fee to preliminary and regional play-off games. The host school should advise the visiting school of the fee at least twenty-four hours prior to playing the game. For Regional and State Championship games the MPA admission is \$12.00 (including convenience fee) for Adults and \$6.00 (convenience fee included price) for Students and Senior Citizens. All ticket sales will be sold online through GoFan [MPA \(Maine\) Events and Tickets by GoFan](#). There will not be cash sales on site at any venues.

STUDENT AND ADULT SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS

- Bare-chested individuals are not allowed.
- Noisemakers that in any way interfere with the play of the game are not permitted (i.e., air horns and whistles).
- Placards, signs, pennants and shakers on sticks that restrict the view of other spectators are prohibited. Signs or banners may be hung, provided they are not obscene, inappropriate and do not contain profane language.

- Any person throwing objects on the field will be removed immediately from the site. This includes confetti and streamers.
- Security will be instructed to detain any student perceived to be under the influence of an illegal substance. They will then contact parents.
- Mascots or other individuals are not allowed on the field.

OFFICIALS

The MPA Soccer Committee, or its designee, in conjunction with the Maine Association of Soccer Officials will assign officials for championship games based on the pool formed from local board recommendations. Three-person crews will be used for quarterfinal and semifinal contests when available. Assignment of officials through the semifinal contests in the regional tournament will be made upon request by regional assignors; assignors will not assign the same official as a referee to a school in successive games. Officials for regional championship games will be assigned by the MPA assigner and the DSC (3-man system) will be utilized. Class II officials will be used only when Class I officials are not available from the local or adjoining assignment area.

OFFICIALS' FEES 2026

Varsity \$100.00/ JV \$75.00

DSC/Diagonal (three-person officiating team) fees are as follows for **2026**:

Regular Season: Referee - **\$110.00**; Two Assistant Referees - **\$73.00**

Play-offs (125%): Referee - **\$137.50**; Two Assistant Referees - **\$91.25**

Regional (137.50%): Referee - **\$151.25**; Two Assistant Referees - **\$100.50**

State Champ. (150%): Referee - **\$165.00**; Two Assistant Referees - **\$109.50**

Table Official (4th Official) - **\$73.00 (no mileage)**

TIMERS

The official timer at all tournament games shall be an adult. The signal signifying the end of the official time of each period of play in all tournament games shall be ended by the scoreboard horn or a hand-held air horn blown in proximity to a game official.

TEAM SIZE

For all tournament games, thirty (30) medals will be supplied and only individuals on the bench will be recognized during the awards ceremony. All players and coaches must be listed on the MPA Eligibility Form.

AWARDS

Due to the limited number of committee members, the committee requests that the host school's principal or his/her designee presents the awards at regional final contests.

REGIONAL AND STATE TOURNAMENT

REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

All Regional Championship games will be hosted by the Maine Principals' Association at an artificial turf field. Every effort will be made to avoid a school playing on their home field, but due to the lack of turf fields in some regions of the state, it is not guaranteed. The fields for the Regional Championships will be selected prior to the start of the season. In the **even** numbered years, the boys will play first and the girls second. In the

odd numbered years, the girls will play first, and the boys will play second. The games will be 4:00pm and 6:30pm. For the 2026 championships the boys will play at 4:00pm and the girls will play at 6:30pm (The second game will begin 30 minutes following the awards of game one, if the first game is extended due to injury, overtime, or other delays). The higher seeded team will be the home team. Game times may be adjusted by the MPA Soccer Committee due to the circumstances at the host venue.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME SITES

Beginning in 2025, the State Championships will be scheduled with one class playing at each of five sites. In the even numbered years, the boys will play first and the girls second. In the odd numbered years, the girls will play first, and the boys will play second. Games times will be 11:00am and 1:30pm. For the 2026 championships the boys will play at 11:00am and the girls will play at 1:30pm (The second game will begin 30 minutes following the awards of game one, if the first game is extended due to injury, overtime, or other delays). Game times may be adjusted by the MPA Soccer Committee due to the circumstances at the host venue.

State championship venues will rotate between Northern and Southern sites. The Northern site will be noted if it is Presque Isle.

2026 – A South, B North, C South, D North, 8 North (Presque Isle)

2027 – A North, B South, C North, D South, 8 South

2028 – A South, B North, C South, D North (Presque Isle), 8 North

Schools may not practice on the site of the championship game unless it is the home field for a team participating in the game. Schools will then be permitted one practice session on the field prior to the championship game. Teams scheduled to play at Presque Isle only will be permitted one practice on the field pending availability due Gehrig Johnson Field being the only artificial turf field in Aroostook County. The North teams will be the home team at Northern Maine sites, and the South teams will be the home team at the Southern Maine sites.

EACH SCHOOL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF ITS STUDENTS AND FANS AT ALL MPA GAMES.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME POSTPONEMENT POLICY

1. The decision of whether to postpone a championship game rest solely with the soccer committee and site director in charge of the game. The decision will be made after consulting with the person in charge of the facility.
2. Once the game begins, decisions related to suspending a game are the responsibility of the game officials.
3. Schools traveling a great distance, possibly staying overnight, are reminded that they do so with the understanding that the game may be postponed.
4. Postponed games shall be played on a date established by the committee.

GAME BALL

The official ball for the tournament and state championship games is the Select Numero 10. All game balls used must be stamped with the NFHS authenticating logo.

BANDS

Band members in uniform will be admitted free of charge to state championship games. Bands will be allowed to perform only outside of the playing surface at all state championship games.

INTRODUCTIONS

In the Regional and State Championships, team members (players not in the starting lineup will be introduced as the warm-up period ends. Following the warm-up, teams will line up for announcements, and the starting lineups will be read for each team, followed by the National Anthem.

AWARDS

In the Regional and State Championships 30 medals will be provided respectively to the champions and runners-up with a championship plaque/trophy and a runner-up plaque. At the Regional Championships individual names will not be read in the awards ceremony to recognize each team. In the State Championship awards ceremony team members will be individually recognized as they receive their medal followed by the team award.

TIE GAMES - ALL TOURNAMENT & CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

Play-off games ending in a tie will be extended by a maximum of 2 fifteen-minute sudden victory overtime periods in 11 player and 2 ten-minute sudden victory overtime periods in 8-player. (Teams will change ends after each overtime.) A player that is issued a yellow card during the overtime may return to play at the coach's discretion, including the penalty kick tie breaker. If still tied after the second overtime, the penalty kick alternative (listed below) will be used. During the penalty kick tiebreaker teams may move their benches to the center of the field on either side of the center circle as to not interfere with the goal keeper's vision.

Misconduct / Injury:

If a one of the selected kickers for a given round is cautioned, disqualified, or is injured and deemed unable to continue by a certified medical professional:

- If the kicker has already taken a kick, the outcome of their kick does not change, they are not replaced in that round, but they also become ineligible to participate for the rest of the contest.
- If the kicker has not already taken a kick, the kicker is replaced by another player on the roster who is not already named as a kicker in the current round, and, if it is an even numbered round, did not take a kick in the previous odd numbered round. (I.e. In even rounds, a kicker from the prior round cannot replace a selected kicker in the case of misconduct / injury) If the kicker cannot be replaced, reduce to equate.

Reduce to Equate

Kicks are always taken in equal sets. If at any point, one team does not have 5 eligible kickers or replacement kickers in a given round, the number of kickers selected by each team for the round will be reduced to accommodate this (i.e. 9 players - 4v4, 8 players - 3v3, 7 players - 2v2, 6 players - 1v1). If no kickers are eligible to kick in a given round

(i.e. a team has less than 6 total kickers), all players become eligible to take a kick in the round. The penalty kick tiebreaker will not be stopped if a team falls below 7 players and will continue provided each team has at least 1 eligible kicker.

First Round

1. If the score remains tied, all coaches, officials, and team captains shall assemble at the halfway line to review the following procedure:
 - a. The head referee shall choose the goal at which all the penalty kicks shall be taken.
 - b. Each coach will select five players, including the goalkeeper from the team roster, (except those who may have been disqualified) to take the penalty kicks. A player who receives a yellow card after the completion of the two overtime periods, and/or during the taking of the penalty kicks tiebreaker, is ineligible to participate for the remainder of that contest.
 - c. A coin toss will be held and the team winning the toss shall have the choice of kicking first or second.
 - d. Teams will alternate kicks. There is no follow-up on the kick.
 - e. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall be declared the winner. **However, when a team is mathematically eliminated the contest is over.**
 - f. Add one goal to the winning team score and credit the team with a victory. An asterisk (*) may be placed by the team advancing to indicate the advancement was the result of the tie-breaker system.

Second Round

- a. Each coach will select five different players, including the goalkeeper from the team roster, (except those who may have been disqualified) to take the penalty kicks. A player who receives a caution during the penalty kick tiebreaker is ineligible to participate for the remainder of that contest. (If there are less than 10 players on a team each team will play with an equal number of players. Ex. 4 or 3)
- b. Teams will alternate kicks. There is no follow-up on the kick.
- c. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall be declared the winner. **However, when a team is mathematically eliminated the contest is over.**
- d. **In 8-player soccer the first three shooters must be different from the first round before repeating shooters.**

Third Round

- a. If the score remains tied, continue penalty kicks with the coach selecting any five players from the roster to take the next set of alternating penalty kicks. Teams will alternate kicks. There is no follow-up on the kick.
- b. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall be declared the winner. **However, when a team is mathematically eliminated the contest is over.**

Fourth Round

- a. If the score remains tied, continue penalty kicks with the coach selecting any five players other than those used in the third set. Teams will alternate kicks. There is no follow-up on the kick.
- b. Following five kicks for each team, the team scoring on the greatest number of these kicks shall be declared the winner. **However, when a team is mathematically eliminated the contest is over.**
- c. If the score remains tied the same process will continue in subsequent rounds until a winner is declared.
- d. **In 8-player soccer the first three shooters must be different from the second round before repeating shooters.**

SUSPENDED TIE GAMES

Tournament games which are suspended with the score tied shall be replayed in their entirety on a date determined by the MPA Soccer Committee.

SOCCER CLASSIFICATION 2026-2027

CLASS A 665+	CLASS B 421-664	CLASS C 211-420	CLASS D 0-210	8 PERSON
North	NORTH	NORTH	NORTH	NORTH
1. Lewiston, 1,655 2. Edward Little, 1,136 3. Bangor, 1,069 4. Oxford Hills, 1,021 5. Hampden, 749 6. Mt. Ararat, 738 7. Camden Hills, 737 8. Brunswick, 717 9. Messalonskee, 713 10. Mt. Blue, 694 11. Brewer, 693 Boys - 11 / Girls - 11	1. Skowhegan*, 696 2. Cony, 647 3. Nokomis, 614 4. Gardiner, 583 5. Hermon, 556 6. Medomak Valley, 552 7. Old Town, 536 8. Erskine, 533 9. Lawrence, 528 10. Ellsworth, 522 11. John Bapst, 508 12. Oceanside, 498 13. Waterville, 484 14. Mt. Desert, 476 15. Belfast, 471 16. Presque Isle, 456 17. Foxcroft, 431 18. Caribou, 422 Boys - 18 / Girls - 18	1. Houlton/GHCA (G), 382/23 2. Winslow, 367 3. Orono, 365 4. Bucksport (G), 358 5. Central, 311 6. Washington (B), 306 7. Mattanawcook (G), 294 8. Mt. View, 288 9. Maine Central Institute, 268 10. George Stevens/Deer Isle-Stonington (B), 265 11. Fort Kent, 251 12. Sumner, (B) 238 Boys - 8 / Girls - 9	1. Fort Fairfield, 149 2. Hodgdon, 138 3. Penobscot Valley, 129 4. Madawaska, 115 5. C. Aroostook, 108 6. S. Aroostook, 107 7. Schenck/Stearns (G), 102/132 8. MSSM, 96 9. Washburn, 81 10. Easton, 73 11. Ashland (G), 63 12. Van Buren (G), 52 Boys - 9 / Girls - 12	1. Houlton/GHCA (B), 382/23 2. Bucksport (B), 358 3. Washington (G), 306 4. Mattanawcook (B), 294 5. Dexter, 272 , 273 6. George Stevens (G), 254 7. Sumner, (G) 238 8. Calais, 228 9. Narraguagus/Machias (G), 239 10. Penquis, Valley , 178 11. Piscataquis, 143 12. Woodland (G), 140 13. Schenck/Stearns, (B) 120 14. Lee, 117 15. Deer Isle-Stonington (G), 91 16. Shead, 83 17. Katahdin, 74 18. Wisdom, 70 19. Ashland (B), 63 20. Jonesport-Beals (B), 60 21. Van Buren (B), 52 22. East Grand, 42 23. Penobscot Christian, (G) 41 Boys - 16 / Girls - 16
SOUTH	SOUTH	SOUTH	SOUTH	SOUTH
1. Thornton, 1,287 2. Portland, 1,146 3. Sanford, 1,075 4. Bonny Eagle, 1,034 5. Deering, 1,033 6. South Portland, 990 7. Noble, 940 8. Windham, 935 9. Scarborough, 911 10. Massabesic, 870 11. Gorham, 813 12. Westbrook, 704 13. Kennebunk, 701 14. Falmouth, 695 15. Biddeford, 689 16. Marshwood, 665 17. Cheverus^^, 388 Boys – 17 / Girls - 17	1. Fryeburg, 663 2. Freeport, 629 3. Morse, 629 4. Greely, 613 5. Gray-NG, 591 6. Yarmouth, 562 7. Lincoln, 555 8. Leavitt, 552 9. Cape Elizabeth, 511 10. York, 503 11. Lake Region, 500 12. Poland, 493 Boys – 12 / Girls - 12	1. Mountain Valley (B), 415 2. Spruce Mountain, 407 3. Wells, 400 4. Oak Hill, 389 5. Maranacook, 369 6. Lisbon, 362 7. Traip, 290 8. Sacopee Valley, 281 9. Waynflete, 254 10. Hall-Dale, 251 11. Winthrop, 226 12. Mt. Abram, 213 13. North Yarmouth^^, 140 Boys – 13 / Girls - 12	1. Narraguagus (B), 209 2. Old Orchard (G), 203 3. Monmouth, 188 4. Machias, (B), 168 5. Wiscasset/Boothbay (G), 141/163 6. Telstar (G), 164 7. Buckfield, 149 8. Woodland (B), 140 9. Richmond (B), 124 10. Bangor Christian (B), 105 11. Penobscot Christian, (B) 41 Boys – 8 / Girls - 5	1. Mountain Valley (G), 415 2. Dirigo, 228 3. Carrabec/Madison (B), 196/167 4. Carrabec (G), 196 5. Madison (G), 167 6. Telstar, (B) 164 7. Wiscasset/Boothbay, (B) 141/163 8. Richmond (G), 124 9. Searsport, 120 10. Bangor Christian (G), 105 11. Valley, 63 12. Temple, 56 13. Rangeley, 49 14. Pine Tree, 43 15. Greenville, 38 16. Vinalhaven/North Haven, 35/25 17. Islesboro, (B), 37 Boys – 12 / Girls - 13

^^Applied Up

*Applied Down

Schools have tentatively committed to 8 or 11-player and is subject to change.