

MAINE PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following information is intended to facilitate your discussion as you prepare to establish classification placement for all schools.

Your charge is to establish classification for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 based upon school enrollments in grades 9-12 as of April 1, 2010. In cases of schools with single sex enrollments, the enrollment figure is doubled for purposes of classification.

The following is a procedure previous Classification Committees have used in going about their work:

1. The membership will be notified by email of any suggested changes in classification cutoff enrollments.
2. Individuals from the Committee will then contact individually those schools affected by the projected change in enrollment cutoffs.
3. The respective sports committees will be notified of any proposed changes in enrollment cutoff figures.
4. The Committee takes a final vote on establishing cutoff enrollments in each of the activities.

A suggested timeline for you to consider might be:

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| ⇒ | October: | Initial meeting and set tentative cutoff enrollments in fall sports |
| ⇒ | October: | Set tentative cutoff enrollments in winter sports |
| ⇒ | Beginning of November: | Set tentative cutoff enrollments in spring sports |
| ⇒ | Beginning of January: | Finalize all cutoffs |
| ⇒ | February: | Send proposed cutoffs in all sports to membership by email |
| ⇒ | March: | Final adjustments (if necessary) |
| ⇒ | April: | Report to membership |

The classification system presently being used by the MPA sprang from the work of an Ad Hoc Committee that made a final report to the membership and which was accepted by the membership in 1983. Excerpts from that report follow:

“The committee met again this fall and finished its work. Following are our recommendations:

The committee tried to give their deliberation a philosophical base that would result in a logical thread running through the whole report. This is not easy, and the committee would be the first to point out that this does not always happen because of the complexity of the problem.

The committee made the initial decision that the reason to classify is to insure equality of competition and not necessarily equality of numbers of schools participating in a sport. The committee felt that, for the individual student, a chance to compete on a reasonably equal basis was far more educationally sound than to compete so that each school had an equal chance number-wise to win a championship. From a practical point of view, most students go through their high school years playing a particular sport without winning a state championship. The program should provide them with an educationally sound experience which can only come from equal competition.

The second decision fell naturally from the first. Classification should be by enrollment. This translates into the fact that schools of more or less the same size will compete against each other. This does not entirely answer all the problems of a large state geographically with a relatively small population that is not spread evenly across it. In certain areas, the committee has made some compromise because of this.

The committee felt that the key ingredient at any level was the quality of the program. If a school that was properly classified and playing schools in its size range did not win, the program was at fault, not classification. The athletic director, the coach, and the school board must upgrade the program.

The third decision was reached after the committee had gone through what they called team sports and tried to do the individual sports. There are sports where individuals compete against individuals and then these wins and losses are totaled to get a team score.

The committee immediately found that these will not always fit the enrollment criteria and must be approached in a somewhat different way.

From these decisions, the following decisions were made:

- 1) Enrollments for participating schools within a class should be the same statewide.
- 2) Girls' and boys' teams representing a school within a sport should compete in the same class.
- 3) Schools may apply upward but not downward.
- 4) There must be a minimum of seven schools competing within a class in order to determine a champion. This should rise to 10 in 1985."

"This constitutes the findings of the committee. The committee makes one more recommendation. The MSSPA should establish a standing Committee on Classification. The purpose of this committee would be to classify all schools according to the regulations of MSSPA and to approve classification changes. The philosophical basis of this committee would be to create the opportunity for equal post season competition."

Excerpts from previous meetings:

".....schools applying to be placed in a higher class must make a commitment for four years." (10/84)

"..... In those sports where the classification system is the same for boys and girls teams, a school's application for a higher class must be for both the boys and girls teams." (10/84)

".... in cases where classification is determined by league affiliation, the classification committee reserves the right to assign schools to leagues or conferences." (10/84)

For purposes of classification, single sex schools will have their October 1 enrollment doubled. (Classification Committee minutes -- 4/2/93)