

2026 MPA CROSS COUNTRY BULLETIN

(7/27/26)

CROSS COUNTRY SEASON

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| Aug. 3-16, 2026 | - Hands-off Period (Sport Season Policy) |
| August 17, 2026 | - First Practice |
| September 3, 2026 | - Regular Season Meet (After 3:00 p.m.) |
| October 19, 2026 | - Entries must be posted to MileSplit by 8:00pm. |
| October 20, 2026 | - Entries Posted to Sub5.com |
| October 21, 2026 | - 12:00 Noon – Deadline for Changes to Regional Roster |
| October 19-23, 2026 | - Online voting for Sportsmanship Banner (One week to vote) |
| October 24, 2026 | - Regional Championships – South at Twin Brook, Cumberland
- North at Troy Howard Middle School, Belfast |
| October 31, 2026 | - State Championships – Cony High School, Augusta |
| November 14, 2026 | - New England Championships – Troy Howard MS, Belfast, Maine |

COACHING REQUIREMENTS

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Concussion in Sport*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*A Guide to Heat Illness*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Sudden Cardiac Arrest*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

*Each coach must complete the NFHS “*Protecting Students from Abuse*” video that is available at the NFHS website (www.nfhslearn.com).

The cross country season for member schools in the Aroostook League may be adjusted to begin earlier, up to the number of weeks the school is expected to be closed for the Harvest Break.

Each school will be assessed a \$100 entry for per gender for teams (regardless of the number of runners if 5 and over) or \$20 per individual (for schools entering under 5 runners) competing in the MPA Championship competition.

SWEEPER - It is a strong recommendation that all schools and leagues have a “sweeper” at all cross country meets. This should be a part of each school’s Emergency Plan. For the safety and security of all participants – Coaches should alert officials immediately if a student athlete doesn’t complete the race, the next race should not start until all competitors are accounted for. Sweepers will be MANDATORY at Conference, Regional and State Championships (2014).

HANDS-OFF PERIOD

In order to provide a window of personal time similar to the time available prior to the winter and spring sports seasons, summer recess is defined as the time period between the last day of the spring sport season to **August 3**, which is 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 as long as 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.

Please refer to the questions and answers which appear on the MPA website used to clarify the policy and questions you may have.

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)

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 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 at a later date should be considered.
 - b. Play shall not be resumed until **30 minutes** after the last flash of lightning.

- 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 lighting 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 and displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
 - b. All personnel, athletes and spectators should be clearly informed of available safe structures or shelters in the event a thunderstorm approaches the facility. 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.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The terms and conditions in this bulletin shall govern all regular season, regional, and state competition as indicated, in addition to the 2025 National Federation Track and Field Rule Book.

2. Teams and individual runners from schools in Class A, B and C must qualify for participation in the State Meet by participating in the Regional Meet. Individual runners from schools that do not have a cross country team may enter the regional tournament only if they have been attached to another school's team by a cooperative agreement.
3. Each school may compete in no more than nine (9) meets including its league meet. Not including Regionals or State Meets!
4. The length of course shall be the same for both boys and girls. The length of the regional and state cross country meets will be 2.9-3.1 miles.
5. The cross country uniform must be consistent with Rule 4.3, Articles 1-6, of the Track and Field Rule Book and appropriate situation rulings. Please note the following under Article 1:
 - b.6. – Bare midriff tops are not allowed.
 - b.7. – The top must hang below or be tucked into the waistband of the bottom when the competitor is standing erect.
 - c.3. – The waistband of a competitor's bottom shall be worn above the hips.
6. The following guidelines from the **2025** NFHS Track & Field and Cross Country Rules Book will be followed concerning inhalers.

"The use of an atomizer during competition containing a prescription drug designed to alleviate the asthmatic condition is not considered to be an illegal aid as long as a physician's statement documenting the need of the athlete to use the prescription is presented to the meet director/referee prior to the beginning of the meet."
7. **Entries for the Regional Championships - North and South:**

Electronic Entries: (Web Postings-www.sub5.com) All entries must be entered on MileSplit by **8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 19, 2026**. Rosters will be posted on Sub5.com Tuesday, October 20, 2026. Enter all potential runners up to **10** for each gender in case changes need to be made. **This will be the eligibility list for Regional and State Meets.**

 - If it is necessary to make a change after **October 19, 2026**, contact Dave Jeffrey (brewertiming@gmail.com) with an email notifying him of the change.
 - There is a **\$50 fine** for each team by gender not sent by the deadline on **October 19, 2026**.
 - **October 21, 2026** at 12:00 noon – Deadline for any changes to the regional entry roster. NO CHANGES TO THE REGIONAL ENTRY ROSTER WILL BE ALLOWED AFTER NOON ON WEDNESDAY, **OCTOBER 21, 2026**. Your regional entry WILL SERVE as your state entry.
8. Schools may enter **ten** competitors, any seven of which may compete. A team is defined as five or more competitors. Schools may enter fewer than five competitors with the understanding that those entered will compete as individuals.
9. To determine the team score, the places won by those individuals not representing a team are disregarded and the order of finish re-ranked. Five team members must finish to establish a team score.

10. Jury of Appeals-Each meet director shall appoint a jury of appeals which shall serve as the final authority in appeals that fall within the jurisdiction as defined by the National Federation Rules. The Jury of Appeals will be comprised of 3-5 members drawn from those officials or coaches who are supervising the meet. The referee shall not be a member. Coaches who wish to appeal a ruling must do so in writing with a **\$50 fee** included within 30 minutes of the announcement of the meet result. The fee will be returned to the school in the advent that the appeal is successful. NFHS guidelines will be followed in determining whether an appeal is allowable.
11. The number of teams qualifying for the State Meet in each class will be one-half of the teams that have registered 5 or more runners for the Regional race with a minimum of four teams qualifying in each region. The top 30 individual finishers in Class A, B and C in each region will qualify for the State Meet.
12. Schools that qualify at the regionals for the state meet are expected to compete in the state meet. Qualifying schools that do not intend to participate in the state meet must notify the cross country committee chair by the Monday following the regional meet of their intention not to participate. Qualifying schools that do not participate in the state meet and do not notify the cross country committee chair by the deadline of their intention to not participate will not be allowed to participate in the cross country regional championships for two years.
13. For each team sent to a Regional or State Meet, a school must send at least one adult to supervise the team members. The adult supervising a team may be a coach or an adult who has met the coaches' eligibility standards. If a runner participates in a race and is not listed on the regional eligibility roster, his/her team will be disqualified.
14. All designated Regional and State cross country sites are closed to all coaches and participants for inspection or practice seven (7) days prior to the meet, except that teams may inspect the course from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the Friday afternoon immediately preceding the Saturday Regional or State Meet. Teams or individuals who violate this rule will be **disqualified**. Teams who wish to view the courses before the course is closed must call the appropriate course supervisor to make the arrangements.
15. Race results will be given to coaches for review ten minutes prior to the awards presentation.

SIGHT-IMPAIRED ATHLETES

The Maine Principals' Association recognizes the special needs of sight-impaired athletes in cross country and encourages their participation in MPA competition. In cases where sight-impaired athletes are participating in a competition, some modification of current NFHS track and field rules regarding cross country may be necessary. Such modification will only be permitted with the prior approval of the MPA in writing. In principle, no rule modification that disadvantages any other competitor will be allowed.

1. A student may run with the use of a guide runner provided:
 - a. There is no light perception in either eye up to light perception but inability to recognize the shape of a hand at any distance or in any direction.
 - b. From ability to recognize the shape of a hand up to visual acuity of 2/60 and/or visual field of less than five degrees.
 - c. The use of a guide runner is approved in advance by the Cross Country Committee.

The student must have an ophthalmologist's eye report. The school will file the report with the Maine Principals' Association.

2. Methods of guidance

- a. Athletes shall provide their own guide for competition. The guide must be approved by the athlete's school principal.
- b. Competitor and guide in competition are to be regarded as a team.
- c. As the sight-impaired runner crosses the finish line, the guide must be behind the athlete.
- d. The method of guidance is the choice of the athlete. He or she may choose to use an elbow lead, or a tether, or to run free. Holding the athlete or the athlete's clothing is not permitted. Strapping or tying the hands of the athlete and guide to one another is not permitted. The tether used must provide at least 5cm lengths between the respective hands of guide and athlete.

In addition, the runner may receive verbal instruction from the guide. Bicycles or other mechanical means of transportation may not be used by guides.

- e. At no time may the guide pull the athlete or propel the athlete forward by pushing. Infringement of this rule shall lead to disqualification.
- f. Whether or not a tether is being used, the athlete and guide shall be not more than 1m apart at all times and the guide shall not be in front of the athlete.

NOTE: Where extraordinary or accidental circumstances lead to a breach of this rule, it shall be the sole responsibility of the referee to decide for or against disqualification. The principles that will govern such a decision shall include consideration of any danger to or disadvantage suffered by another competitor in the same race.

- g. Guide runners must wear a bright orange running vest, in order that they are clearly distinguished from competitors.

REGIONAL INVITATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY MEETS - OCTOBER 24, 2026

North

Troy Howard Middle School, Belfast
Dave Jeffrey, Director
brewertiming@gmail.com

B - Boys – 11:00, – Girls 11:40
C – Boys – 12:20, - Girls 1:00
A – Boys – 1:40, - Girls 2:20

South

Twin Brook, Cumberland
Mike Griffin, Director
mgriffin@sad15.org

B - Boys – 11:00, – Girls 11:40
C – Boys – 12:20, - Girls 1:00
A – Boys – 1:40, - Girls 2:20

STATE INVITATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY MEET – October 31, 2026

Site: Cony High School

Meet Director: Mike Griffin - mgriffin@sad15.org

1. The definitions of teams and individual runners used in the Regional Meets will be applied in the State Meet.

2. The method of scoring used at the Regional Meets will be used at the State Meet.
3. The **2026** State Cross Country Meet schedule is as follows:
Class B Boys – 11:00 A.M., – Girls 11:40 A.M.
Class C Boys – 12:20 P.M., – Girls 1:00 P.M.
Class A Boys – 1:40 P.M., – Girls 2:20 P.M.

This schedule allows for course walks throughout the day, except within 15 minutes from the start of the next race.

4. The order of classes for future State Meets will be as follows:
2027 – C,A,B (Girls/Boys) 2028 – A,B,C (Boys/Girls) 2029 – B,C,A (Girls/Boys)

NEW ENGLAND COMPETITION November 14, 2026 – Maine

Individual athletes will be selected based on the results of state competition with the champion of each class and the next 22 finishers as determined by their times in the combined Classes A, B and C being invited to represent the state. Qualifying **teams must contact Dave Jeffrey @ brewertiming@gmail.com (631-9140) to verify their participation** by Sunday noon the day directly after the state meet.

Schools do not need to contact Dave Jeffrey about Individuals.

NEW ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP - Coaches / Entry & Fee Payment Process:



www.athletic.net

Coaches must have an athletic.net account for their respective high school team to register for the NE Meet. Each state meet results will be linked to www.athletic.net. You may only use the performance achieved at your state meet.

All entry fees must be paid ONLINE prior to the meet. There are no refunds. Entry fee is \$20 per athlete or \$140 per team per gender.

Online entry fees will be accepted starting at 6 p.m. on Monday, November 3rd and closes at 9 p.m. on Tuesday, November 4th. Coaches will receive an email notification that their entry has been accepted when entered. A team will not be charged unless their entry is accepted.

Issues please contact Rick Kates

Email: katesr@maldencatholic.org

New to www.athletic.net

<https://support.athletic.net/category/y2yqh7bw1i-getting-started>

Six teams will qualify for New England Competition. They will be:

1. The state champions from Classes A, B, and C will automatically qualify.

2. The state meet will then be rescored as one meet with all schools included in the rescoring. The teams, regardless of class, with the three best scores, not including the state champions, will qualify.

New England regulations only allow seven entries per team. If your team qualifies, please submit only seven names for the New England meet. Any changes in your state team competitors should be made at this time.

The MPA will enter all qualified athletes and teams. Information will be distributed to all coaches in their post-season event championship packets and posted on the MPA web page. It is the parents' or school's responsibility to pay all fees, transportation, lodging, etc., for the athletes and coach.

The schools, which the qualifying athletes and teams attend, have an automatic waiver of the Sport Season Policy for the athlete and for the qualifying team. A coach may work with the qualifying athlete or team prior to the event and coach the athlete or team at the New England Competition. If a Saturday competition should be postponed to Sunday for any reason, Maine's athletes and teams may now participate with permission from the MPA Executive Director. This decision DOES NOT overrule a school committee decision.

A coach who holds current coach's eligibility status must be present and assume responsibility for a school's athlete(s) at the New England Competition.

CROSS COUNTRY CLASSIFICATION 2026-2027

CLASS A - 650+	CLASS B -- 400-649	CLASS C -- 0-399
NORTH	NORTH	NORTH
1. Edward Little, 1,136 2. Lewiston, 1,655 3. Bangor, 1,069 4. Oxford Hills, 1,021 5. Hampden, 749 6. Camden Hills, 737 7. Brunswick, 717 8. Messalonskee, 713 9. Mt. Ararat, 738 10. Skowhegan, 696 11. Brewer, 693 12. Mt. Blue, 694	1. Cony, 647 2. Nokomis, 614 3. Gardiner, 583 4. Hermon, 556 5. Medomak Valley, 552 6. Old Town, 536 7. Erskine, 533 8. Lawrence, 528 9. Ellsworth, 522 10. John Bapst, 508 11. Oceanside, 498 12. Waterville, 484 13. Mt. Desert, 476 14. Belfast, 471 15. Presque Isle, 456 16. Foxcroft, 431 17. Caribou, 422	1. Houlton/Greater Houlton, 382 2. Winslow, 367 3. Orono, 365 4. Bucksport, 358 5. Central, 311 6. Washington, 306 7. Dexter, 273 8. Maine Central Institute, 268 9. George Stevens, 254 10. Fort Kent, 251 11. Sumner, 238 12. Calais, 228 13. Narraguagus, 209 14. Machias, (B) 168 15. Woodland, 140 16. Hodgdon, 138 17. Searsport, 120 18. Bangor Christian/Penobscot Christian, 105/41 19. MSSM, 96 20. Deer Isle-Stonington, 91 21. Shead, 83 22. Washburn, 81 23. Wisdom, 72, 70 24. Jonesport-Beals, (B) 60 25. East Grand, (B), 42 26. Islesboro, 37 27. Fort Kent/Madawaska (G) 251/115 28. Schenck/Stearns, 102/132 29. Mattanawcook/Lee/Penobscot Valley, 294/117/129 30. Machias/Jones-Beals (G) 168/60
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, 835, 813 12. Biddeford, 689 13. Kennebunk, 701 14. Marshwood, 665 15. Westbrook, 704 16. Falmouth, 695 17. Fryeburg, 663 18. Cheverus^, 388	1. Freeport, 629 2. Morse, 629 3. Greely, 613 4. Gray-New Gloucester, 591 5. Yarmouth, 562 6. Lincoln, 555 7. Leavitt, 552 8. Cape Elizabeth, 511 9. York, 503 10. Lake Region, 500 11. Poland, 493 12. Mountain Valley, (B), 415 13. Spruce Mountain, , 407 14. Wells, 400	1. Oak Hill, 389 2. Maranacook, 369 3. Lisbon, 362 4. Traip, 290 5. Sacopee Valley, 281 6. Waynflete, 254 7. Hall-Dale, 251 8. Dirigo/Mountain Valley (G), 228/415 9. Dirigo, (B), 228 10. Winthrop, 226 11. Mt. Abram, 213 12. Old Orchard, 203 13. Carrabec, 196 14. Monmouth, 188 15. Madison, 167 16. Telstar, 164 17. North Yarmouth, 140 18. Richmond, 129 19. Valley, 63 20. Forest Hills, 49 21. Maine Coast Waldorf, 48 22. Seacoast Christian, (B), 30 23. North Haven, 25 24. Boothbay/Wiscasset, 163/141