

APPLICATION FOR COOPERATIVE SPONSORSHIP OF AN ACTIVITY CONDITIONS

Cooperative agreements or sponsorship of any activity by two or more SDHSAA member schools or by a SDHSAA member school(s) and member school(s) in good standing of a neighboring state association will be considered under the following conditions:

1. All SDHSAA member schools will be eligible to apply for a cooperative sponsorship program.
2. The SDHSAA will not allow any cooperative sponsorship with an unaccredited high school or with students who are excused as per SDCL 13-27-2 and 13-27-3.
3. When two or more schools are involved with the cooperative sponsorship of any activity, the combined average daily membership (A.D.M.) enrollment (grades 9-11) of the schools involved shall determine the classification for that activity. (Exception: Football – refer to the Guidelines on page two of this section.)
4. The cooperative shall be continuous unless an Application for Dissolution is submitted to the SDHSAA. An Application for Dissolution is required from only one member school of the cooperative. A copy of the Application for Dissolution can be found in the forms section found on our website. The SDHSAA may terminate said cooperative based on valid reasons as determined by the SDHSAA to become effective at the conclusion of a school year.
5. The following deadlines will apply to cooperative applications or dissolutions of cooperatives:

Football	The very latest for applications or dissolutions shall be the January meeting of the Board of Directors prior to the start of a new scheduling cycle. All football cooperative agreements must remain intact for a minimum of two scheduling cycles .
Volleyball Basketball Soccer	The very latest for applications for or dissolutions of cooperative agreements in these sports shall be the April Meeting of the SDHSAA Board of Directors prior to the next competitive season.
Cross Country Competitive Cheer Competitive Dance Boys Golf (Class A & AA) Girls' Tennis Oral Interp	The very latest for applications for or dissolutions of cooperative agreements in these activities shall be the June meeting of the SDHSAA Board of Directors prior to the next competitive season.
Gymnastics Softball Wrestling One-Act Play Debate Large Group Chorus Large Group Band	The very latest for applications for or dissolutions of cooperative agreements in these activities shall be the November meeting of the SDHSAA Board of Directors for the in-session school year's competitive season.
Track & Field Girls' Golf Boys' Golf (Class B) Boys' Tennis	The very latest for applications for or dissolutions of cooperative agreements in these sports shall be the March meeting of the SDHSAA Board of Directors for the in-session school year's competitive season.

6. For any new or amended cooperative agreement, a resolution and statement from each school board must be submitted to the SDHSAA assuring that the purpose for sponsoring a joint athletic team or activity is in agreement with the PHILOSOPHY, and that the GUIDELINES will be followed.
7. **Following the biennial adoption of the alignments by the Board of Directors**, when a co-op is formed or dissolved, or if a school consolidation occurs, the resulting team(s) will be placed in their corresponding classification by enrollment. There will not be a corresponding adjustment of region alignments, however, for either the departing or receiving class, beyond that of the programs directly involved in the cooperative or consolidation action.

A waiver of this policy may be considered in emergency situations (i.e.: discontinuance of a program, school closing, etc.)

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy that will guide the SDHSAA in reviewing and approving the applications for Cooperative Sponsorship of activities is as follows:

The SDHSAA will attempt to increase the number of students who are participating in activities by making any activity available for students that would not be available in a member school if joint sponsorship did not occur.

GUIDELINES

The guidelines that will guide the SDHSAA in reviewing and approving the applications for Cooperative Sponsorship of activities are as follows:

1. The SDHSAA would prefer to see projects that combine small schools for sponsorship of an activity when a smaller school cannot maintain or support the activity alone.
2. Improving the quality of a team (i.e. better win-loss record) will not be valid criterion in deciding whether approval should be granted.
3. If an application for an activity is approved by the SDHSAA, all existing contracts between member schools and the newly approved cooperative must be honored by all parties.
4. The cooperative sponsorship shall be continuous unless an application for dissolution is submitted to the SDHSAA. However, the SDHSAA may terminate said agreement based upon valid reason as determined by the SDHSAA to become effective at the conclusion of a school year. An Application for Dissolution is required from only one member school of the cooperative.
5. Cooperatives are encouraged when a member school cannot maintain a team activity and therefore create a situation in which a student is not able to participate. Cooperatives for individual activities are discouraged but will be allowed provided conditions warrant.
6. When conditions change within a cooperative indicating that participating schools are able to maintain their own team, programs or activity, they are encouraged to do so.
7. A separate application must be submitted to the SDHSAA office from each participating member school for each cooperative activity.
8. Any football cooperative application that is submitted after the first year of the classification cycle will be classified according to the combined A.D.M. enrollment of the schools involved. There is no transition period for a new football cooperative insofar as classification is concerned. The most recent combined Average Daily Membership (A.D.M.) enrollment figures as submitted to the SDHSAA shall determine the classification of the cooperative for the ensuing year.

Football-Specific Info:

An ADM cap of 56.0 students (grades 9-11) has been established as the cut-off between nine-man and eleven-man football. Schools with 56.0 students or above must play eleven-man football. There is no transition period for a new football cooperative insofar as classification is concerned.

UPDATED, 2020: For football classification purposes, if two (2) or more schools enter into a cooperative agreement, the larger school will be considered the “base” school and the smaller school(s) will be considered the “satellite” school(s). The entire ADM of the base school will be counted. The number of student participants from the satellite school(s) will be determined from the active participants listed on the roster submitted on the SDHSAA website on a staff-determined week of the preceding football season. For each active, rostered participant grades nine through eleven from the satellite school(s), **20%** of that school’s ADM will be counted up to 100%.

NEW in 2016: All co-operative agreements in the sport of football must now remain intact for a period of two classification cycles. If a co-op is broken by either school before the requisite number of years have passed, neither school will be eligible for post-season play unless a hardship is granted by the SDHSAA Board of Directors.

NEW in 2016: Rules that allow a nine-man team to apply for a two-year grace period are to remain in place. However, a requirement is now added that requires any team applying for a two-year grace period to demonstrate, using published South Dakota Department of Education figures, that the enrollment of the team in question will return to a nine-man classification level based upon those projections. Without this proof utilizing publicized numbers, no two-year grace period shall be granted.

9. When officials have been contracted by a school (the school) that is no longer going to offer a particular program due to: a) joining a Board of Directors approved cooperative, b) the school being closed, or c) a school discontinuing a program, payment of the officials shall be handled in the following manner:

- Responsibility for payment is solely between the school and the officials.
 - If the contracted officials are not able to replace the existing contracted date, the school shall pay the contracted officials.
 - If the contracted officials sign a contract to replace the existing contracted date, the school has no financial obligation to the officials.
 - The above provisions apply to written contracts only, verbal agreements are excluded.
10. Cooperative agreements involving a school(s) from a neighboring state must declare which state tournament series they will compete in at the time their application is forwarded to the SDHSAA office.
11. Students who open enroll from one school in a cooperative to the other school(s) in the same cooperative will not have to sit out the 45 school day waiting period only if all schools in the cooperative co-op in all athletic activities in the same gender.

Classification Appeal:

In alignment years, the Board of Directors may grant adjustments to the current classification formulas. In alignment years, requests for a classification appeal in all activities must be made two (2) weeks prior (to the January meeting of the Board of Directors. **(Next such meeting: January 2024)** No supporting materials will be accepted following deadline dates.

Basis for Appeal:

- 1) A school may appeal to change classification if it feels its classification is unjust.
- 2) The burden of providing evidence in support of the appeal is on the appealing school. The weight given to any particular criteria is at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors. No supporting materials will be accepted following deadline dates.
- 3) Should an appeal be granted, the appeal would apply for one alignment cycle only.

Timeline:

- 1) SDHSAA office receives ADM's from DOE the first Friday in December.
- 2) Requests for a classification appeal in all SDHSAA activities must be made two (2) weeks prior to the January meeting of the Board of Directors. No supporting materials will be accepted following deadline dates.
- 3) Appeal adoption/denial decisions in all SDHSAA activities shall be made at the January meeting of the Board of Directors.
- 4) Region alignment proposals shall be sent to SDHSAA member schools prior to the March Board of Directors meeting of a given alignment year as part of the meeting materials.
- 5) Formal Region alignment adoptions to be made during the March meeting of the Board of Directors.

Member schools may appeal classifications in all activities, athletic and fine arts, sponsored by the SDHSAA.

LIST OF CURRENT EXISTING ATHLETICS COOPERATIVES