



MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

9th Grade Governance Frequently Asked Questions

Making Changes in the League's Constitution, Bylaws and Policies

What changes need to be made to transition the League to full governance of grades 9-12?

- The Minnesota State High School League Constitution is the foundation on which all League Bylaws and Policies are built. The first step in making a change in the grade levels governed by the League is to amend the League's Constitution.
- Changes to the Constitution are only done through a Member School vote. Through the unanimous approval of a resolution by the Board of Directors, a vote to expand League governance to include 9th grade will take place in October 2024.
- If the Member School vote to amend the League's Constitution is passed, the Board of Directors is prepared to begin approving Board Policy changes throughout the 2024-2025 school year for full implementation in Fall 2025.
- The Representative Assembly meets in May 2025 to approve potential Bylaw changes.
- If a member school vote is successful, the change to the League governing grades 9-12 will be effective in the 2025-2026 school year.

MSHSL 9th Grade Governance Task Force

What are the task force's responsibilities?

- The Board of Directors called a 9th Grade Governance Task Force to study the potential changes in the League's Constitution, Bylaws and Policies and make recommendations on changes required to implement 9th Grade Governance.

Who makes up the task force?

- This task force consists of coaches, activities directors, principals and a superintendent from representative schools which vary in location, size and school type.

Current 9th Grade Information

Is a student in 9th Grade covered by the League-provided Catastrophic Accident and Concussion Insurance?

- Currently, if a student in 9th grade plays on a team with students in grades 10-12, that student is covered by the League's insurance. Students playing only with other students in 9th grade (and/or grades 7 and 8) are not covered by the League's insurance because the contest is not governed by the League.

Is a student in 9th grade subject to the League's Transfer Rules, Policies and Bylaws?

- Yes, all students in 9th grade, regardless of what teams they play on, are subject to the League's Transfer Rules, Policies and Bylaws. This would not change with the League expanding its governance to include all students in grades 9-12.

Does a student's 9th grade participation count toward their four consecutive years of participation?

- Yes, a student's 9th grade participation counts toward their four consecutive years of participation between grades 9 and 12 according to Bylaw 110. This would not change with the League expanding its governance to include all students in grades 9-12.

Member School Vote on MSHSL Constitutional Amendment

What is the amendment requesting?

- The Constitutional Amendment would expand the League's current model of governance for grades 10 – 12 to include all students in grade 9.

When will the vote take place?

- The Member School vote will be held electronically from Friday, October 4, 2024, through Friday, October 18, 2024.

Who may vote on behalf of the school?

- Each Member School may cast one vote. This vote is to be cast by either the designated school representative or the school's governing board designated representative. The suggested practice is for the district/school's lead administrator and the school's governing board designated representative to collaborate on the vote with the Activities Director.

What outcome is required to pass the vote?

- The vote requires 75% of our Member Schools to vote in this election to meet the quorum requirement. Of those who vote, a two-thirds majority is required for approval.

When would a change go into effect regarding the inclusion of 9th graders into the League?

- The timeline for implementation would be to expand the League to include all students 9-12 beginning in the 2025-2026 school year.

Potential Impacts on Schools and Coaches

How will this impact coaches who coach only in the 9th grade level and their ability to coach student-athletes from their school outside of the MSHSL season?

- Ninth grade coaches will be held to all League Rules, Policies and Bylaws. Ninth grade coaches may coach during the MSHSL season and may seek permission to coach during the Summer Coaching Waiver Period through their school's activities director, but they would not be eligible to coach their student-athletes during the school year outside of their season.

Would 9th grade teams be able to begin their season prior to the MSHSL season start dates as found in the 500 series of Bylaws?

- No, 9th grade teams would be MSHSL Teams and must comply with all League Rules, Policies and Bylaws. This includes, among other things, season start dates, number of contests and daily limits.

What will expanding governance to include all students in grades 9-12 and providing additional students with Catastrophic Accident and Concussion Insurance cost the League, and thereby its Member Schools?

- The total cost increase to the League to provide all 9th-grade students with insurance coverage is predicted to be \$20,000-\$30,000 annually. This is approximately 0.2 percent of the League's annual budget.

Potential Impacts on Students who Participate in League Activities

Will 9th grade participants be able to play on other levels of school teams?

- The recommendation is to change the term "school team" to "MSHSL Team" and from "non-school team" to "Non-MSHSL Team." A MSHSL Team would be any interscholastic team in a MSHSL program that has at least one student in grade 9 or above.
- Currently, students in grades 7-9 may participate on MSHSL Teams. This will continue, yet the task force has recommended that once a student participates on an MSHSL Team, they cannot participate in the same sport on a Non-MSHSL Team according to the League's Rules, Policies and Bylaws. This has been the clear intent of the 500 series of Bylaws for many years, and this language will create more consistency and clarity.

A 7th grade student participates with the middle school team and then is moved to the 9th grade team once the MSHSL season begins. Can the student participate on the middle school and MSHSL Team at the same time?

- No, the student cannot participate on a Non-MSHSL Team (the 7th grade team) while participating on an MSHSL Team (the 9th grade team) according to the 500 series of Bylaws.

Secondary Amendment

What is the second amendment that will be part of the Member School Vote?

- The Member School vote will also include a second amendment proposal. This amendment proposes changing and updating archaic, outdated and inconsistent language in the Constitution. These changes will be technical in nature and will not change intent or application.

Definitions

- **MSHSL Team:** An interscholastic team of students eligible for participation (grades 7–12 according to Bylaw 105) on a 9th grade, B squad, Junior Varsity, and or Varsity level team(s). Any 7 – 12 grade students who participate on, or plays against the aforementioned levels, are governed by the League’s Rules, Policies and Bylaws.
- **Non-MSHSL Team:** A team of students, which includes any students in grades 7-12 that do not participate in League interscholastic competitions and are not required to be governed by the League’s Rules, Policies and Bylaws.
- **Insured Students:** With passage of this Constitutional Amendment, all students who participate on MSHSL Teams would be provided Catastrophic Accident and Concussion Insurance. This would now include all 9th grade students and all 7th and 8th grade students on MSHSL Teams.