



2025-2026

Basketball

Information

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2025-2026 Basketball Tournament Format

A. TENTATIVE TOURNAMENT DATES*

Cut-off Date: February 19, 2026

Bracket Release: February 21, 2026

Tournament Begins: February 23, 2026

Note: If both AD's agree, games may be played on the day following the bracket release date.

Anticipated State Finals: March 13-15, 2026

**Dates subject to change*

B. QUALIFYING CRITERIA

1. A school must schedule and complete in a minimum of 50% of the season competition limits per Handbook Rule 34 (10 contests) to be eligible for tournament play.
2. As many as three games with a single opponent may be played and will count toward tournament qualification.
3. All team sports will qualify the top 32 teams by division.
4. Teams not power seeded in the top 32 but meeting 50% qualifying criteria will be eligible for the tournament.
5. All team sports will be seeded by power ranking system.
6. Top 4 seeded teams placed in four brackets (1, 2, 3, 4)
7. The rest of bracket positions filled with remaining teams by power ranking system. After the top 32 teams are power seeded, the remaining teams with 50% or better record will be seeded from the bottom of each bracket.
8. All games will be at home site of higher seed for the Preliminary Play in games, Round of 32, Round of 16 and Round of 8.

C. FORFEITED CONTESTS

When a forfeit win is awarded to a school due to the termination of their opponent's basketball program or failure to fulfill their contractual obligation, for power ranking purposes, the score will be entered as 10-0.

D. SEEDING / PAIRING ANNOUNCEMENT:

1. Seeding is to be done by a Seasonal Seeding Committee. Members of the Seasonal Seeding Committee will include one chairperson (or designee) from each sport of current season, and 4 Tournament Management Committee members. Tournament Directors and Executive Liaisons will be present but are non-voting members. All decisions made by the Seasonal Seeding Committee are final. No appeals regarding seeding decisions will be allowed.
2. Seeding will be done by a power rating system:
 - Team's average margin of victory + average of opponents' ratings = overall rating
3. Tie Breaking Procedure (Seeding)
 - a. Head-to-head Competition
 - b. The higher average of each team's opponents' rating, based on the power rating formula.
 - c. League Champion
 - d. Coin flip
 - Only 2 teams tied – use coin flip
 - More than 2 teams, all team names will be put into a hat. Once team name will be drawn – that team wins the tiebreaker. All other remaining teams will return to step 1.

In a tie breaker for tournament seeding every match played including exclusion games are counted.

Note: If a tie involves multiple teams (more than 2) and a team is eliminated, the procedure starts over at step one with the remaining teams.



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4. Pairings and Tournament Information will be available on MIAA website, <http://www.miaa.net> throughout the tournament.
5. Tournament match results should be called in to the Tournament Administrator by the winning team, as soon as possible, from the game site.

E. SITE INFORMATION

1. All games will be at home site of higher seed for the Preliminary Play-in games, Round of 32, Round of 16, and Round of 8.
2. For basketball tournament games, home sites must have the following minimum capacity per round:
 - Preliminary Play-in and Round of 32: Minimum capacity of 250
 - Round of 16: Minimum capacity of 500
 - Round of 8: Minimum capacity of 1000 or permission of the Tournament Director
 - Semi-Finals and Finals: MIAA Pre-determined sites
3. If home team site is not acceptable the following will apply:
 - Home school AD finds an acceptable site
 - Lower seed will host the game
 - If both sites are not acceptable, Tournament Administrator will place game at an acceptable site within MIAA site policy
4. The MIAA will provide sites for State Semi-Finals (round of 4) and State Finals as defined by TMC Site Policy.
5. Home venues must meet the following standards:
 - Condition of playing surface
 - Crowd Control
 - Seating capacity
 - Ticket sales control
 - Locker rooms
 - Handicap Accessibility

PLEASE NOTE: The Tournament Administrator may change the site or date of any tournament game after consultation with the MIAA Staff Liaison. Reasons for a change may include, but are not limited to, safety, expense, logistics or other.

F. GAME RULES

The 2025-26 NFHS Basketball Rules as modified in the MIAA Handbook or this format will be utilized for all MIAA Basketball Tournament Games.

G. ASSIGNMENT OF TOURNAMENT GAME OFFICIALS

1. All officials must be enrolled with the MIAA in order to receive a tournament assignment.
2. Three officials will be assigned for all basketball tournament games.
3. Officials must have officiated a minimum of 10 MIAA high school games during the regular season.
4. Officials should have demonstrated experience in the mechanics, procedures and techniques involved in officiating for crews of three officials.

H. TEAM ROSTERS

Team rosters shall include a maximum of fifteen (15) players. In addition, each team will be allowed not more than eight (8) additional people on the bench, **including players not eligible to play** for a total of twenty-three (23). These eight (8) people shall include coaches, managers, and medical personnel. **NO** spectators are allowed on the bench.

I. GAME MANAGEMENT

1. **Uniforms** – The team with the higher seed will be the home team throughout the tournament. The home team may wear a uniform color other than white or light, as long as there is a clear contrast with the opposing



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team's uniform color. If the home team opts to wear a color other than white or light, they must inform the visiting team in advance, and the visiting team must wear a contrasting color. (MIAA Handbook Rule 66.9).

2. **Warm-up Time** – Each team will be permitted a minimum of 15 minutes pre-game warm-up. Please note – multi-game schedules at some predetermined venues may require a reduced warm-up time. Such times will be communicated in advance to participating schools and will never be less than 10 minutes.
3. **Equipment** – Towels and practice balls must be furnished by each team.
4. **Pre-Game Captain's Conduct** – Teams entering the gymnasium prior to the contest should not run through the area occupied by the opposing team or under the basket where opponents are warming up. Teams should only enter, jog and warm up on their half of the court.
5. **Cheerleaders** – Varsity basketball cheerleaders, accompanied by their advisor, and numbering not more than twenty (20) will be admitted free to the tournament games in which their school is participating. They must, however, be in uniform and accompanied by an adult who is an official school representative.
6. **Fan/Spectator Support Items** – Horns, posters, noisemakers, confetti, pompoms, balloons, spirit towel, thunder sticks and banners are not to be allowed inside any gym.
7. **Game Disqualifications** – The host school must send reports regarding ejected students or coaches to the tournament director.
8. **Post-Game Behavior and Sportsmanship** – Officials will have the authority to issue game exclusion penalties to coaches or players for unsportsmanlike behavior on the court after the buzzer has indicated the end of the game.
9. **Solicitations** – Solicitation of funds is not permitted at tournament sites. *Fundraising activities by the host schools and host sites must be approved by the MIAA Staff Liaison.*

J. OFFICIAL BALL

Beginning with the State Semi-Finals the official Spalding ball will be used and supplied by the Tournament Director.

Boys: Spalding TF-1000 Legacy (76-8138)

Girls: Spalding TF-1000 Legacy (76-8148)

K. PRACTICE REGULATIONS

No competing team is to practice on a tournament site after the tournament cut-off date. (Exception – if it is a team's home site.)

L. POSTPONEMENT

The rescheduling of a postponed tournament game will be the decision of the MIAA Staff Liaison and Tournament Administrator in consultation with the participating school administrations.

M. SUSPENDED GAME

If a game is suspended for some reason, the game will be completed from that point, on the next available date. However, the Tournament Director reserves the right to call the game a complete game and also to change the site of the continuation of the game.

N. MEDICAL COVERAGE

A licensed athletic trainer, physician, physician's assistant, certified EMT, or nurse practitioner will be available at all contests. This coverage will be provided by the Host School in tournament rounds at the site of the higher seeded team. The MIAA will provide coverage at the State Semi Final and State Final sites.

O. SAT/SAT SUBJECT TESTS

1. Basketball Tournament Games may be scheduled on a Saturday – the same date as an anticipated SAT Test Date. Schools are encouraged to be aware of this date and collaborative if scheduling a game on this date. A listing of all dates and sports that may take place on scheduled College Board exam dates can be found on the MIAA website. College Board dates can be found here - <https://www.collegeboard.org>



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2. The College Board offers a ***SAT® Program Alternate Test Date Policy***. As stated in their published material: “The SAT Program will consider granting an alternate test date when the following criteria are met: The conflicting event must be unexpected. Regularly scheduled sporting events or previously scheduled school activities, such as a prom, are not considered unexpected. **An event such as an academic or athletic competition, in which students have advanced through the competition or into post-regular season competition, can be considered an unexpected event.**”
3. **SAT School Day:** Allows high schools to administer the SAT to students during the school day, thus avoiding weekend athletic conflicts.

P. PARTICIPATING SCHOOL SUPERVISION PROTOCOL

Prior to each round of tournament play, the respective Tournament Administrator will communicate with participating school Athletic Directors regarding pertinent school supervision responsibilities, including the number of school supervisors (range is typically 1-8 in number) requested for the upcoming game.

For State Semi-Finals and State Finals:

1. No later than 24 hours before game, please contact the respective Tournament Administrator with the names of your school's designated site supervisors.
2. The list should include a minimum of 3 supervisors. **(Principal or designee, Athletic Director or designee, and the appropriate number of additional school staff.)**
3. Supervisors are asked to arrive at the game site and sign in with the Tournament Director or designated Site Director no later than 30 minutes before game time. The wearing of MIAA issued vests or related apparel may be requested.
4. Upon arrival, the Tournament/Site Director shall review the roles/responsibilities, to include:
 - Observe and monitor the school's spectators upon entrance into the gymnasium and assist in seating students in your designated area. **It is understood that the Tournament Administrator/Site Supervisor will determine and post the designated student seating section for all participating schools.**
 - Remain stationed in close proximity to your spectator section. The Site Director will request any specific supervisor placements based on venue and spectator needs.
 - Remain visible to your spectator base and accessible to tournament staff until spectators exit gymnasium.
 - Help ensure positive behaviors and sportsmanship.
 - Assist in ensuring that no one other than team players, bench personnel, and school leaders has access to the playing court (before, during, and after game).

For Award Ceremonies: Post-Game State Finals

1. Prior to the completion of game, the Principal and Athletic Director are asked to report to the scorers' table and assist the Tournament Director with the program.
2. Monitor post-game handshake.
3. Assist with the team line-up as designed by the tournament staff.
4. Assist with presenting medals and awards.