

Lutheran Sports Association of Missouri, Inc.
State Basketball Tournament
GRADE SCHOOL RULES
(Latest Revision: November 2025)

FORMAT

- 1.01** There shall be two divisions based upon sex and as further defined herein.
- 1.02** The number of teams in each State tournament will be based on the number of team applications received. The maximum total number of teams to be selected for participation during the State weekend shall be twenty-four (24). The Board of Directors' goal is to have at least 12 schools apply in each division so each tournament is an even 12-team formatted bracket. Some years we do not have 12 applications for each division. Examples of this would be as follows: 17 boy's teams apply and 11 girl's teams apply. The tournaments would be set as a 12-team boy's tournament and 8-team girl's tournament. The most either division can accept is sixteen (16) as long as there are only eight (8) applications in the other.
- 1.03** The State Tournament shall be conducted on a single elimination basis with a consolation bracket, in which a team will continue to play after a loss in a first round game.
- 1.04** Each team will be guaranteed to play a minimum of 3 games and play on Sunday. Depending on the number of teams selected, teams submitting entry applications must be prepared to play a game on Friday evening of the tournament, 2 games on Saturday, and/or perhaps 2 games on Sunday.
- 1.05** The State Tournament shall be conducted annually during the last week of February or the first weekend in March depending on gym space and availability.

TEAM SELECTION CRITERIA

- 2.01** The LSAM Board of Directors of the Lutheran Sports Association of Missouri, Inc. (LSAM) shall select, or cause to be selected by whatever means is appropriate in the circumstances, the most representative teams from across the state (see rule 2.03) for participation in each division.
- 2.02** The LSAM Board of Directors reserves the right to require preliminary playoffs in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, more entries are received for a division than can be accepted for participation and strength over another team cannot be determined. This game would be played at a neutral site located between the two schools.
- 2.03** There are no automatic bids. Teams will first be considered for participation in this "Tournament of Champions" by virtue of: (1) winning their league (2) winning a tournament, and/or (3) possessing a winning record. All other teams will be selected based upon applications received from each area the teams are located in (also see Rule 2.01).
- 2.04** Any team that is not considered according to rule 2.03 can be considered to be an "At Large" team. "At Large teams" will be evaluated and selected based on their state region (see Rule 2.05). If an area has no qualifier or does not have an 'At-Large" team apply, then other teams that have applied and are not selected from within their area will be considered by the Board of Directors for participation as an independent representative.

- 2.05** Schools are assigned to the following areas. These areas will be evaluated by the Board of Directors on an annual basis to adjust for the opening or closing of schools.

Area 1: St. Louis Small School Division

Area 2: St. Louis Large School Division

Area 3: Southeastern Schools around Cape Girardeau and Farmington

Area 4: Southwestern Schools around Springfield

Area 5: Central Schools around Jefferson City

Area 6: Western Schools from Concordia to Kansas City

LSAM desires to have the best team from each Area apply in order to represent that part of the State no matter what their record is. It is a 'State' Tournament and any team can have 'its day.' LSAM is careful not to put too many teams in the 'State' Tournament from the same league or area of the state.

- 2.06** Any late application received or not completed until after the entry deadline will be considered as having been received from an "At Large" team (see Rule 2.04) and will be accepted only if a State Tournament berth is available and time still remains to organize the State Tournament Weekend. The selection committee will give precedence to applications that are turned in by the deadline.
- 2.07** To be considered for selection, each team must submit an application in the format directed by LSAM no later than the deadline set by the board. This deadline is about one month before the 'State' tournament. All details can be found on the LSAM.org website. This application can be submitted by following the instructions posted on the LSAM website on the Basketball page. Not all leagues play their seasons at the same time and LSAM wants all schools to have a chance to participate in the State Tournament. Turn in your application by the deadline and include any attachment that would help the selection committee determine if your team should get invited.

TEAM ELIGIBILITY

- 3.01** Teams must be established squads that have represented a Lutheran grade school in an established league or tournament during the current basketball season.
- 3.02** LSAM will accept Co-Op teams for all team-related sports in which an individual cannot compete independently. Schools wishing to submit a Co-Op team for any LSAM-sanctioned event must apply for an exception prior to submitting their state tournament application. The full details of the Co-Op policy can be found in Addendum A, located at the end of this document.
- 3.03** Each team is allowed a maximum of three (3) persons to function as coach, manager, or statistician. Each team must have at least one (1) person who must be of at least twenty-one years of age to function in one of the above capacities.
- 3.04** Schools begin and end their seasons at different times across the state. A team must have played or have scheduled some official league, tournament and/or non-conference games in order to be eligible for participation in the State Tournament. This means that the school does have an organized team that plays other schools following some basketball rules similar to the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA). Certification and approval of entry application by the chairperson of the tournament or league representative may be required as provided in rules 6.03 through 6.05.

INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

- 4.01** Players must be students of the sponsoring grade school and have complied with the eligibility rules of their league(s) and/or tournament(s). A student is defined as a full-time student of the participating school. To participate in the State Tournament, players must have been full-time students before January 1 of the given tournament year. If there is a student/athlete in question, the school must submit a request for eligibility on school letterhead from the principal to LSAM as soon as the school's administration has read these rules before officially applying. The LSAM board will review the request and determine any approval.

- 4.02** All players must have participated in at least fifty percent (50%) of the entering team's total scheduled games. Evidence of such participation must be available in the form of scorebooks, sign-in sheets, etc., if requested by the Board of Directors. In order to qualify under this rule, a player will be considered to have played in a game if he/she dressed for the game. Exceptions may be permitted in the case of injury, illness, and late entry into the sponsoring school or similar circumstances, providing that advance approval is obtained from the Board of Directors prior to the entry deadline date.
- 4.03** For the purpose of meeting the requirements of Rules 4.01 and/or 4.02, a school will be considered to have had one combined basketball roster for boys and/or one combined basketball roster for girls during the current season.
- 4.04** The following age restrictions apply to the State Tournament
1. Without exception, a player must not have reached the age of fifteen (15) years of age, on the first day of September that precedes the State Tournament.
 2. Grade School Division players who will be fifteen (15) years of age, on the first day of February preceding the State Tournament, must submit with the team entry application an affidavit signed by the school principal on school stationery that certifies the player's full-time school enrollment for the entire academic year.
- 4.05** Each player, coach, manager, and statistician must be able to prove his/her identity by written signature at least sixty (60) minutes before the individual's first State Tournament game.
- 4.06** Any individual unable to comply with Rules 4.01 through 4.05, as applicable, will not be permitted to participate in the State Tournament.

CHEERLEADER ELIGIBILITY

- 5.01** Cheerleaders must be students of the sponsoring school and have complied with the eligibility rules, if any, of their league(s) and/or tournament(s).
- 5.02** Each cheerleading squad must have one (1) person to function as coach or manager and this person must be at least twenty-one years of age.
- 5.03** All cheerleaders and their coach or manager must be listed, and their signatures entered, on the official roster certified by the principal of the sponsoring school and submitted no later than the entry deadline date.
- 5.04** All cheerleaders must be in uniform upon arrival at a State Tournament site for a game in which they are participating
- 5.05** All cheerleaders and their coach or manager must be able to prove his/her identity by written signature and a currently valid school identification card or other acceptable proof of identity.
- 5.06** Any individual unable to comply with Rules 5.01 through 5.05, as applicable, will not be permitted to participate in the State Tournament.

TEAM APPLICATION

- 6.01** Each team is required to submit by the entry deadline date, which shall be established by the Tournament Director and approved by the Board of Directors, an entry application and the entry fee in the form of a check or money order made payable to the Lutheran Sports Association of Missouri, Inc.

- 6.02** All entry applications must be approved by the principal of the sponsoring school.
- 6.03** In the case of applications of league champions, the Board of Directors may require the approval of the league chairperson and/or additional information in the form of certified copies if the complete league schedule, score results of all games played by the applying team, the league roster, complete league rules, constitution, by-laws and any other information that the Board of Directors deem appropriate.
- 6.04** In the case of applications of tournament champions, the Board of Directors may require the approval of the tournament chairperson and/or additional information in the form of certified copies of the complete tournament schedule, score results of all tournament games, the tournament roster, tournament rules and any other information that the Board of Directors deems appropriate.
- 6.05** In the case of applications of independent teams, the Board of Directors may require the approval of the league and/or tournament chairpersons and/or additional information in the form of the certified copies of league and/or tournament schedules, score results, rosters, rules, final standings and any other information that the Board of Directors deems appropriate.
- 6.06** The official application and roster must contain the following information for each player: Signature, full name, date of birth, position, uniform numbers and certification by the team's school principal.
- 6.07** Acceptance of entry applications shall be final and entry fees accompanying approved applications shall not be refundable. If a team is not accepted, they will receive full reimbursement.

EQUIPMENT

- 7.01** Balls will be provided at each tournament site for each team. Other needed team supplies must be provided by the team's own school.
- 7.02** Each team is required to have two sets of numbered basketball shirts, each set to be of contrasting basic colors, numbered on the front and back in accordance with MSHSAA guidelines. Reversible shirts may count as both sets. Teams may use the uniforms of one of their local area teams that are not participating in the State Tournament in order to fulfill this requirement.
- 7.03** Under no circumstances will a player be allowed to participate in a game without a numbered basketball shirt, conventional basketball pants and conventional basketball shoes.

PLAYING RULES

- 8.01** Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) basketball rules shall govern play, except where specifically superseded by these rules or superseded by the direction of the Board of Directors.
- 8.02** A team must be ready to play at the scheduled game time or a game forfeit may be declared.
- 8.03** All games shall have at least two referees, one timekeeper and one scorekeeper. Referees shall be members of basketball officials' associations selected by the Board of Directors.

- 8.04** Six (6) minute quarters will be played in both divisions. Two (2) minute overtime periods will be played in both divisions.
- 8.05** Any player, coach, manager, statistician, or cheerleader ejected from a game shall automatically be ineligible to participate in the team's next game. Before such a game, the Board of Directors shall review the event of the ejection and gather or require any other information that the Board deems necessary to determine if a further penalty should be assessed. Such further penalty, if any, shall be assessed before the team's next game and may not be appealed.
- 8.06** Any protest must be submitted to the Board of Directors in accordance with MSHSAA rules immediately following the incident being protested. Play will be suspended while the Directors adjudicate the protest and the judgement rendered shall be final and may not be appealed once play resumes.

AWARDS

- 9.01** In each division of competition, one team trophy shall be awarded to all participating teams.
- 9.02** In each division of competition, one award shall be presented to the team and school's fans that best exemplifies the true spirit of Christian fellowship and sportsmanship, both on and off the playing court.
- 9.03** In each division of competition, one individual award shall be presented to the principal, athletic director, each player, coach, manager, and statistician on every team.
- 9.04** An all-tournament team will be selected in both divisions (boys & girls). The tournament committee will decide how many and how athletes are selected for the all-tournament team.

GENERAL

- 10.01** The principal, and the Principal's designees, shall be responsible to the LSAM and STATE hosts for matters pertaining to all athletic and non-athletic activities of their school at the State Tournament. In addition, they shall be responsible to insure that their school is properly represented at all STATE events and shall be responsible for the conduct of their participants and other persons from their school, including spectators. Coaches, managers and team captains shall also be responsible for team conduct both on and off the playing court.
- 10.02** It is the clear obligation of students, school staff, boards of education and all other official representatives of participating schools to practice and promote the highest principles of Christian behavior, sportsmanship and ethics of competition. It is also their obligation to maintain proper crowd control at all STATE activities. The LSAM, its directors, volunteers, host schools, tournament sites and tournament officials shall have no responsibility for crowd control or of the actions of school representative, including spectators. The Board of Directors shall have the full authority over all schools, their representatives and spectators and shall have full authority, at its sole discretion, to penalize any school, any of whose representatives or spectators may be adjudged upon competent evidence to have violated these obligations,
- 10.03** Housing accommodations, transportation, meals and incidental expenses shall be the responsibility of participating teams, except that all teams not commuting from their hometowns for each day's game schedule are to make their own arrangement for lodging.
- 10.04** Players and teams must comply with the eligibility rules of their own league(s) and/or tournament(s) and the State Tournament.

- 10.05** These State Tournament rules will not operate to make a player or team eligible when such player or team would be ineligible under the rules of the team's regular season league(s) and/or tournament(s). The rules of a team's regular season league(s) and/or tournament(s) will not operate to make a player or team eligible for the State Tournament when such player would be ineligible under State Tournament rules.
- 10.06** Requests for granting of exceptions to publish rules must be submitted in writing to all members of the LSAM Board of Directors no less than fifteen (15) days prior to the date by which a ruling on such a request is required. Rulings by the Board of Directors are final.
- 10.07** The Board of Directors reserves the right to collectively amend, and or allow exceptions to the rules of the State Tournament when deemed appropriate.

Addendum A

LSAM Co-Op Team Participation Guidelines

The Lutheran Sports Association of Missouri (LSAM) will accept **Co-Op teams** for all **team-related sports** in which an individual cannot compete independently. Examples include **volleyball, scholar bowl, and basketball**.

For **cross country** and **track**, individual athletes may compete at the state meet as individual participants only (unless they attend the sponsoring school), even if they have participated as part of a combined team during league play.

Application Process

Schools wishing to submit a Co-Op team for any LSAM-sanctioned event must **apply for an exception prior to submitting their state tournament application**. This process allows LSAM officials to communicate with league chairpersons, principals, and other school representatives to verify that:

- All participating students are from Lutheran schools, and
- Each athlete has met the required participation threshold before any state tournament competition.

Partnership Recommendations

It is the **recommendation of the LSAM Board** that any school seeking to form a Co-Op should **partner with the geographically closest Lutheran school**. Partnering with more distant schools for reasons unrelated to proximity may raise concerns of potential recruiting or competitive imbalance. This guideline is intended to preserve the spirit of fair play and ensure partnerships are based solely on geographic and enrollment needs.

Questions and Communication

Any questions regarding potential Co-Op teams should be directed to LSAM as early as possible to allow for proper vetting and approval.

Our goal remains to provide as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in LSAM events while upholding the **integrity, fairness, and Christian fellowship** that define our Lutheran school communities.