Sports scheduling, conference and section updates

The Central Minnesota Conference will have a different look starting next school year. Pierz will be leaving the conference to join the Granite Ridge Conference while Royalton will take their place in the CMC. This conference shifting took place starting in August of 2018. Conversation about the possible realignment has been occurring for the past couple of years. The school administration of conference schools meet twice a year to make these decisions. Royalton’s enrollment, location, facilities and activities offered will match up well with the CMC.

If you have ever wondered how the Minnesota State High School League decides how to break down the schools into sections and places them in which class, I will try to give you a short version of their process. Each school reports their enrollment in grades 9-12 in October to the Minnesota Department of Education. In March the league uses those number to place schools into classes and sections. For instance, football has 7 classes while track has just 3 classes. They fill the largest class based on the largest enrollment first and the next largest next. For example, basketball has 4 classes. The league will place the largest 64 schools in 4A, next largest 64 schools in 3A, next largest 128 schools in 2a and the rest in 1A. Each sport works like this placing a predetermined amount based on enrollment into each class. Section placement will be released at the end of March this year.

Schools are given the opportunity to petition down. The process has specific stipulations and your enrollment must be within 4 students of the cutoff number. There are also many other variables that are required for a school to ask to be placed in a lower classification. Schools are then asked to fill out an appeal process. A committee will hear and read through the petitions that schools might submit to make a decision about a school asking to compete in a lower class. It is very rare that the MSHLS grants schools to be in a lower class than their enrollment places them in. Schools can opt up in a class as well. This is also rare because the only advantage for a school to do this would be for travel or competition level. Schools are not funded based on the class they participate in. MSHSL doesn’t give high schools money based on which class they compete in.

Have you ever wondered how the sports schedules are developed? Most schedules are done 1 year in advance. Most sports develop a conference schedule first. Those are given to the activities directors and then the non-conference teams are added to fill in the schedule. Coaches work with the activities director to develop the schedule for the next year, by recommending opponents or tournaments they would like to be in. Wrestling has become the most difficult activity to schedule, because of the limited events we can schedule. Wrestling can only have 16 contests, but each individual wrestler can wrestle up to 45 matches. This means more events are tri, quads and tournaments. That is why Kimball has only had 2 home wrestling events this season. When you wrestle quads you will only host every fourth year. Other sports are pretty simple to schedule you just have 1 opponent and will rotate home and away every other year. We try to keep a balance of home and away events, but sports that do tournaments will often travel more often to compete at home. I hope the information on how schedules are developed along with how Kimball might be classified in various sports is helpful. Check out [www.mshsl.org](http://www.mshsl.org) to learn more.