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Cc: Kimberly Gears; rdespirt; Maria Pacis-Biederman; Tee Kay; John Popma; Hames Greg (gwhames@gmail.com); Nick Zajas
Subject: Re: 2025-26 Districts Welcome

Thank you all for your prompt action in getting leftover items to your assigned division directors. Out of 44 expired coaches, all but 9 have been brought up to date. For those 9 coach's teams, remember to remove them from GameSheet or we will view that they participated illegally. Same goes with players who are not eligible due to game counts.

The MAHA State Playoff Committee meets tonight, and I am glad to say that all exception requests have been passed along and recommended by your D4 Council. The decision lies with the SPC who will vote tonight.

We have received some questions about round 2 games. Those dates and times have been set for months and are based on much coordination between ice availability, assigned director availability, and other factors such as scorekeepers, officials, etc. The weekends for Round 2 and Hockey Day were shared with association leadership back in August to avoid any conflicts. Schedules will be posted on the D4 website to help with planning.

- For round 2, we will determine what four teams advance from their round 1 standings (top 1 or 2 teams in the division depending on age group).
- Those four teams will be scheduled as Seed 1 vs Seed 4 and Seed 2 vs Seed 3 based on the district seedings on record for travel groups.
- Tier III groups will play crossover games (Diamonds 1 vs Clubs 2 and Clubs 1 vs Diamonds 2) The top two 14U-B teams advance directly to Hockey Day.
- Payment is made to the host association which includes ice fees, officials, scorekeepers/timekeepers, and in some instances trainers if required by that rink. The host association will coordinate payment methods and handle paying everyone.

In the event that you received any suspension for unserved GMs or playing while unrostered, be sure to scan and send the scoresheets showing the coach serving the suspension to me for tracking. These suspensions cover the next three games for the team, regardless of if they are regular or district games.

Finally, a big thank you to Kim Gearn's for getting everyone's scheduled uploaded into GameSheet!!! We had a framework built, but that is a lot of games to enter dates, times, and locations for.

If you have any questions or outstanding documents to submit, please send those to your assigned division director and me.

Thanks,

John Popma
MAHA D4 Chair

From: John Popma <d4chair@maha.org>
Sent: Sunday, January 4, 2026 8:15 PM

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Subject: Re: 2025-26 Districts Welcome

Thank you all for your preparedness and helping things go so smoothly yesterday. From the D4 Council standpoint, we were very impressed at how few issues there were (I guess all of the emails and leadership meetings with associations is paying off).

Everyone should have received a sheet or information showing which D4 Council member is assigned to your division. Any follow-up items noted on your credential sheet should be sent to them as they will be covering the next credential check at round 2. Those items are required to fully complete your credential check.

Please be mindful of eligibility issues that come into play.

1. If you have players who have not reached the required game count for your age group: they are ineligible to participate in district games (they can still practice or play regular games).
2. If you have coaches that are redlined or expired, they are no longer on your roster: they are not allowed to participate in practice or on the bench for any events.

Like with serving penalties, take extra care to adjust your GameSheet lineup to remove these players and coaches. If they are listed, we will assume that they were there and participated while ineligible. We really really do not want to have to hold discipline hearings or suspend anyone....but sadly there are always those who feel that rules don't apply to them or nobody will find out.

Speaking of penalties, here is an important portion from the tournament guidebook (the full guidebook and the D4 guidebook can be found on the MAHA D4 website):

If a player receives a game misconduct in a District Championship Tournament game, that player must sit the next District Championship Tournament game. If the next game on the team's schedule is a regular season game, the player must sit that game to cover the USA Hockey game misconduct rule, plus the next District Championship Tournament game.

Enough of the formal stuff, let's get to some great hockey! I look forward to seeing some great games and maybe a few upsets as teams come together at the right moment, and you realize they actually have been paying attention all year.

All the best to all teams,

John Popma
MAHA D4 Chair

From: John Popma <d4chair@maha.org>

Sent: Wednesday, December 31, 2025 3:37 PM

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Subject: Re: 2025-26 Districts Welcome

Reminder that district credential check is set for Saturday January 3....just 3 days away!

Happy New Year to everyone.

John Popma
MAHA D4 Chair

From: John Popma <d4chair@maha.org>

Sent: Thursday, December 4, 2025 8:21 AM

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Subject: 2025-26 Districts Welcome

Hello Coaches and Managers,

I am happy to announce that we have things running smoothly, and I can get the information about districts out much earlier than in the past. There is so much planning that has already gone into districts...we are looking forward to the fun part when games start up.

Below you will find some links and other important information that will help you prepare for credentialling and districts.

Please refer to the MAHA State Playoff webpage at <https://www.maha.org/stateplayoffs> for forms and to view a video with instructions on completing the credential packet. Thank you to the associations that help their teams get their packets together and review the documents for teams ahead of credentialling! Your help is noticed and always appreciated.

Both the District 4 and State Playoff Guidebooks are posted on the D4 website at <https://www.mahad4.org/page/show/9281047-district-and-state-tournament-guidebooks>.

Please be sure to have two representatives from your team attend credentialling! We have 71 teams to credential, as well as girls' teams. Credentialling are some of the busiest days for the District Council and we appreciate your assistance in making things go smoothly for everyone.

We do NOT have access to GameSheets, so teams are expected to bring printed copies of all scoresheets. These scoresheets must include all information including penalties. All scoresheets must be signed by officials; if a handwritten scoresheet was transferred to GameSheets, both must be presented at credentialling.

We will continue to focus on suspensions during credentialling. With over 100 Game Misconduct and Match Penalties this year in District 4 alone, we have a lot to keep track of. The new process of teams submitting incorrect scoresheet within 7 days has worked well with almost 20 errors caught. That's said, we will not make any corrections at credentialling. Any suspension not properly marked on the scoresheet will be deemed to have not been served.

Please note that Head Coaches are responsible for tracking supplemental penalties (either players 4+ in a game, team 12+ in a game, or progressive major penalties). Remember that "2 and 10s" are technically a minor plus a misconduct penalty and count as two penalties. Teams found to have unserved suspensions may lead to additional suspensions for players or coaches, up to being suspended pending a hearing for playing an ineligible player.

Credentialling dates for District/State teams only (other teams will be credentialled at a later date). All credentialling will be done at Farmington Hills Ice Arena at 3550 Eight Mile Road Farmington Hills, MI 48335.

Saturday, January 3, 2026:

8:30am	18U-BB
8:45am	14U-AA/2011
9:00am	10U-AA/2015
9:30am	10U-A/2016
10:00am	10U-B
10:30am	12U-B
11:00am	12U-AA/2013
11:30am	12U-A/2014

12:00pm CLOSED/LUNCH

12:45pm 14U-A/2012

1:15pm 14U-B

1:45pm girls 16U Tier 2

2:15pm girls 10U Tier 2 and 3

2:45pm girls 12U Tier 2 and 3, 19U Tier 2 and 3

3:15pm girls 14U Tier 2 and 3

*Please arrive on time, at your designated time, and bring your ice schedule.

One important note is that ALL district and playoff games must be completed on GameSheets with updates emailed to Kim Gearn at kimgearns@comcast.net within 24 hours after the game by BOTH teams. This will allow the most accurate information to be posted on the D4 website.

Round 1 games will be scheduled at credentialling, can start as soon as they are entered into Gamesheets (hopefully we will be able to complete this quickly), and must be completed by January 25, 2026. These games will be played on home team ice with home teams responsible for scheduling officials. Please bring the rates you pay for officials to credentialling since each team is responsible for the cost of one official. Tier III/B teams will be placed into divisions by card draw and Tier II teams will be seeded in a snake format based on MyHockeyRankings as of December 26, 2025.

Round 2 games will be played at the rink of the division host association. I have requested cost and dates from each of the host. Those cost (including ice fees, official costs, medical personnel (if required), and timekeeper/scorekeepers) are paid to the host association by teams advancing to round 2. Some smaller divisions may have the top two teams advance directly to District 4 Championships. We heard a lot of positive feedback regarding having round 2 be designed as a semifinal compared to a long and more expensive 8-team tournament format. We will continue to use this style, with the top four teams advancing. Tier II teams will be placed based on the original seeding with the top seeded team playing the lowest seeded team advancing, and the second and third seeded playing each other. Tier III/B teams will play with the winners of each division playing the 2nd place team of the opposite division.

I know it all seems like a lot, but these are necessary steps to assure that all teams are on a level playing field in terms of MAHA and USA Hockey requirements. Your efforts are greatly appreciated and we are always thankful for those teams who arrive with all documentation completed and organized.

If you have any questions regarding your team's roster or history report, please contact your association registrar prior to credentialing. If you have any questions regarding D4 Districts, please contact the D4 Districts Coordinator, Kim Gears at kimgears@comcast.net.

Thank you for all you do to share the wonderful sport of hockey with your players.

John Popma

MAHA District 4 Chair