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Minnesota High School Equestrian Association

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2010

This Handbook is designed to provide program information for MHSEA members and their families. Members and their parents/guardians are to read the Handbook in order to become familiar with the MHSEA program and its policies and procedures.

MHSEA is a 501(3)(c) non-profit corporation whose mission is to promote equestrian disciplines as a high school team sport with an emphasis on education, citizenship and recognition of equestrian athletes. The MHSEA's officers, members and Board of Directors will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, creed, age, sexual orientation or physical handicap, in any manner, with respect to this program.

For more information please go to the MHSEA's website www.MHSEA.org.

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Dear MHSEA Members and Parents:

Welcome to the Minnesota High School Equestrian Association! Whether you are a new or returning member or a parent/guardian of a member, we believe the information contained in this Handbook will be invaluable. The purpose of this Handbook is to familiarize you with the policies, procedures, expectations and guidelines of the MHSEA. It is our hope that you will enjoy your MHSEA experience.

The MHSEA is proud of the dedication and hard work that our volunteer advisors, board members, committee chairs, sponsors and MHSEA parents and members provide. We also know that as good as our organization may be, we need to continually strive for improvement and so need your input and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me or any member of our board of directors with your feedback regarding this Handbook or any aspect of the MHSEA program.

Thank you for being a part of the Minnesota High School Equestrian Association.

Sincerely,

Laura Moran

Executive Director

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The MHSEA reserves the right to respond to input, assess suggestions and refine its program and/or amend this Handbook at any time and on an ongoing basis.

2010 MHSEA PROGRAM – SUMMARY

2010 Disciplines

Dressage, Eventing, Hunter/Jumper, Hunt Seat, Polo, Saddle Seat, and Western

Summary of MHSEA Membership Requirements - 2010

MHSEA registration fee **\$75** per member
 MHSEA fundraising amount **\$125** per member
The above amounts are non-refundable

Volunteer Requirements (Minimum hours Per Member)

10 hours equine-related by Member (at least **2** of those 10 hours must be volunteering for the MHSEA)
4 hours MHSEA-related by Parent/Guardian

MHSEA Registration

Completion of Online Registration
 Signed Member Registration Form (includes a Release of Liability Agreement)

School Registration

Completion of School required registration forms and payment of fees – process, timing and amounts vary according to school and will be coordinated by MHSEA and club advisor

Meeting Attendance – Attend 5 club meetings or MHSEA/club activities between April 15 and October 15

Year-End Paperwork

Year-End Worksheet – Each MHSEA member completes a Year-End Worksheet (regardless of riding level)
 Year-End Score Sheet – Any MHSEA member who rode competitively submits a completed Score Sheet for each discipline in which they competed

Important Dates - 2010

March 1	Online MHSEA registration begins
March 1	MHSEA Competition Season begins
April 15	Online MHSEA registration closes
April 15	MHSEA and school registration forms & opt-out payments due to Advisor
April 19	MHSEA and school registration forms & opt-out payments due from Advisor to MHSEA
April 23	MHSEA Fundraising Raffle begins!
May 15	Final date for MHSEA submission of school registration paperwork and roster to schools
May 21	MHSEA Fundraising Raffle ends - all money, raffle ticket stubs & unsold tickets due to Advisor
May 26	MHSEA Fundraising Raffle proceeds, ticket stubs & unsold tickets due from Advisor to MHSEA
October 15	MHSEA Competition Season ends
October 15	Advisor Year End Worksheets & Attendance Logs Due to MHSEA
October 15	Member Year-End Paperwork Due to MHSEA
December 5	Year-End Banquet

2010 MHSEA Equestrian Clubs

The MHSEA website (www.mhsea.org) contains a complete list of all approved MHSEA clubs for 2010.

Program Overview

In 2001, Laura Moran and her high school-aged daughter, Melissa, created the MHSEA program to provide young riders the opportunity to pursue a sport they love, enjoy the camaraderie of other high school equestrian athletes and represent their high school in “team” competition at the same time. The popularity of this program has grown tremendously since then, from 3 clubs in 2001 to more than 30 clubs in 2010!

Our program emphasizes providing high school equestrians of all levels and abilities with a positive team experience. High school students participating on an equestrian team benefit in the following ways:

- Members learn discipline and commitment as many train several days a week, year round.
- Competition helps build positive character and improves self-confidence.
- Team participation provides educational and leadership opportunities.
- Members learn the importance of community involvement and spirit through volunteerism.
- Participation may increase a member’s opportunity to attend post-secondary educational institutions allowing for continued equestrian competition and scholarships. *Many post secondary schools field equestrian teams.*

The MHSEA program operates through separate clubs each of which is made up of students from a specific high school. MHSEA clubs are not sponsored by or administered by the high school or a school district, nor are they Minnesota State High School League sanctioned. The MHSEA oversees and administers each high school club and is considered an "Independent Provider" to the various schools. As such, the MHSEA must demonstrate the validity of its program and the Varsity “lettering” criteria to school Athletic and Activities Directors usually on an annual basis. The MHSEA provides all administrative support and paperwork relating to the program at no cost to the school. Riders from a school who do not have an approved or active MHSEA club can still participate in the MHSEA as part of the MHSEA Independent Club. Such riders are eligible for all MHSEA awards but will not receive any school awards. *Further information on the MHSEA Independent Club is provided in the Appendices.*

As part of a MHSEA equestrian club, riders pursue their own riding program and training schedule. Each rider rides and trains with the trainer and within the discipline of their choosing. They compete at the level and venues determined by them and their trainer as appropriate for their financial resources, skill and competitive level. MHSEA club members are not required to ride or compete at any specified level for participation in the MHSEA. A member’s riding level and competition results are only considered in terms of MHSEA year-end competitive awards and school lettering awards.

MHSEA equestrian clubs do not hold “practices” as a club. The equestrian clubs do not have “coaches” provided by the school but instead the MHSEA provides a trained volunteer advisor who is often a parent of a member. The MHSEA does not provide horses or arrange for lessons or competition events other than MHSEA Team Challenges. MHSEA clubs hold periodic meetings throughout the MHSEA season that often involve addressing administrative tasks, attending horse related or MHSEA events, performing volunteer activities and generally promoting club camaraderie and having fun as a group. The MHSEA does organize and offer to its members various educational clinics and horse related events during the season.

It is important to note that the MHSEA program was not developed for the purpose of “lettering”. For schools that do award letters for the sport of equestrian, the MHSEA has established lettering criteria. Many MHSEA members in grades 10 – 12 will ride at a competitive level that may qualify them for a varsity letter at their school. MHSEA members in the 9th grade are not eligible for school letters. The MHSEA will coordinate directly with the school for all lettering requirements and awards.

Finally, due to the inherent risks associated with riding and being around horses, the MHSEA recommends that members have a basic knowledge of and familiarity with horses. The MHSEA program is meant to provide individuals having horse knowledge and experience with an opportunity to pursue an equestrian discipline in a competitive manner.

Board of Directors

The MHSEA board consists of volunteer board members and the MHSEA Executive Director. The MHSEA board members work with volunteers, high school athletic directors and the various equestrian discipline governing bodies to develop the MHSEA’s program guidelines and overall strategic direction. We welcome your input and invite you contact any board member if you have questions. We invite interested individuals to apply for board membership.

Funding & Financial Information

The Minnesota High School Equestrian Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation whose funding comes from membership fees, financial and in-kind donations, corporate contributions, and fund-raising events. The MHSEA does not receive any financial assistance or funding from the high schools that allow the MHSEA to organize equestrian teams using their names. High school equestrians participating in a MHSEA club bear the entire financial responsibility for their sport.

The MHSEA incurs a number of expenses throughout the year. We ask each family with members in a MHSEA club to participate in fundraising activities (or make a tax deductible contribution instead) to help defray these costs. **The amount each member is required to raise for the 2010 season is \$125.**

The following list provides examples of several of the areas in which the MHSEA incurs expenses each year:

- Program development including new club formation and discipline additions and modifications
- Educational clinics and events
- Advisor training and background screening
- Website maintenance
- Merchandise
- Financial assistance
- State and Federal registrations and filings
- Professional fees including accounting, tax and legal services
- Communication with participating schools
- Member recognition events, awards and prizes
- Year End Banquet
- Discipline Team Challenges
- Insurance
- General program administration including salaries, printing, postage, equipment and supplies etc.

As a Minnesota non-profit corporation, the MHSEA is required to prepare and file an annual report (IRS Form 990). Once filed, that report is posted on the MHSEA website for our members' reference.

Available Disciplines

The original MHSEA program offered two Olympic disciplines: Dressage and Eventing. Since then, the MHSEA has added several disciplines due to growth of the program, member interest and sponsor and volunteer support. The MHSEA often receives requests to include additional disciplines to make MHSEA available to an even broader range of youth riders and equine enthusiasts. The MHSEA board frequently reviews its current offerings and considers the potential for additional disciplines in light of strategic goals, and its administrative ability to support its existing program and new opportunities. Our expansion strategy is dependent upon the support we receive from each discipline's respective members, oversight organizations, and parent/guardian volunteers.

The MHSEA program currently offers the following disciplines:

Dressage: Dressage is a competitive equestrian sport practiced throughout the world and has been an Olympic sport since 1912. The purpose of the Dressage test is to demonstrate the intense athletic training the horse and rider have achieved by performing each movement with precision, balance, and suppleness.

Eventing: Eventing is also an Olympic sport. There are three phases: Dressage (explained above), Cross Country Jumping and Stadium Jumping. Cross Country Jumping takes place outdoors and is timed. Horse and rider jump over obstacles such as water, ditches and banks. Stadium Jumping is timed and takes place inside an arena with jumps set up like an obstacle course. Scores from the three phases are combined.

Hunter/Jumper: Jumper divisions are scored as described above for Stadium Jumping. For Hunters, horse and rider jump over a course of fences without regard to time restrictions, and are judged on the basis of their style, movement, consistency, and overall picture.

Hunt Seat: Riders and horses showing in Hunt Seat (in WSCA shows this is often called English Equitation or English Pleasure) display relaxed and poised form while moving freely on the rein with light contact on the bit. Ground covering gaits should be comfortable for horse and rider with transitions and patterns executed accurately and smoothly. The rider should show his/her horse to its best advantage.

Polo: The objective of Polo is to score goals against an opposing team. Riders score by driving a wooden or plastic ball into the opposing team's goal using a long-handled mallet.

Saddle Seat: Saddle Seat pleasure and equitation classes portray a picture of elegance, refinement and cooperation between horse and rider. The horse is to be collected and the rider should convey the impression of effective and easy control at each gait. Animated and easy ground covering action is desired with an emphasis on suitability to the division being shown. Style, presence and a more animated gait are often found in breeds within this discipline while still maintaining manners and conformation.

Western: In Western Pleasure, Western Equitation and Western Horsemanship classes, horse and rider are judged on riding posture, manner of movement and execution of a precise pattern. All three gaits should be executed accurately, precisely, smoothly and with reasonable promptness and minimal visible cueing. The Barrels, Poles, Keyhole and Jumping Figure 8 classes are timed events that require riders to guide their horses through a specified course. The rider's ability to accurately guide the horse as well as the horse's speed and agility are tested.

Team Challenges

A team challenge is a MHSEA sponsored contest that occurs within a discipline at a regularly scheduled show or competition. At a team challenge the results for the participating MHSEA members at that show are compiled on a club basis to determine the "winner" on a club and individual basis. For example, in the Hunter/Jumper discipline, the team challenge is held at a regularly scheduled local USHJA recognized horse show. Each club member who registers for the team challenge competes at the horse show as they normally would and enters the classes they and their trainer feel are appropriate. At the end of the show, each member's show results are collected and combined with the results of other riders from their high school equestrian club and compared to the combined results from other clubs. Equestrian clubs have a "team" at these challenges when they have at least 2 members registered to participate and who compete at the show. Team awards are handed out if there are at least 3 "teams" participating in the challenge. Individual winners are also determined at team challenges so that all riders are able to participate even if they do not have a "team". Team challenges promote camaraderie and team spirit and provide a fun opportunity for high school equestrians who ride at different barns or with different trainers to interact.

Members wishing to participate in a team challenge must register directly with the MHSEA prior to the show/competition at which the challenge is taking place. Normally, that registration is on-line via the MHSEA website and is well publicized in advance. It is important that members understand that the MHSEA team challenge online registration is required in addition to their regular show registration. Their registration to compete in the show itself does not also register them with the MHSEA for the team challenge.

The offering of a team challenge within a discipline each year depends on member interest, volunteer support and the ability to arrange an appropriate venue.

MHSEA Membership Requirements

MHSEA Registration, Forms & Fees

All high school students who wish to participate in an MHSEA club or MHSEA activity must be registered members of the MHSEA. MHSEA registration occurs online via the MHSEA website followed by delivery of printed out and signed copies of specified documents. MHSEA registration is considered complete when online registration has been performed, the MHSEA has received all required registration materials and all applicable registration fees are paid. For 2010, the online MHSEA registration period begins on March 1 and closes on April 15. However, additional registration may be permitted at the discretion of the Board of Directors from April 15 through April 30 subject to payment of a \$25 late registration fee in addition to all other amounts due.

At the time of the online registration, members (and their parent or guardian) will be required to print off the joining agreement (that includes a release of liability agreement) that is part of the online registration process, and sign and return that document to their Club Advisor by April 15. Other forms relating to a member's registration with his/her school may also be required and will be coordinated and communicated by each Club Advisor.

As part of MHSEA registration, each member pays a non-refundable MHSEA registration fee at the start of the season. The Board establishes the MHSEA registration fee on an annual basis. These fees are based on such items as administrative fees and expenses, insurance, program and award expenses, etc. The goal of the MHSEA is to provide the best program at the most reasonable cost to its members.

For the 2010 MHSEA season, the per member MHSEA registration fee is \$75.00.

MHSEA membership registration fees, and any other payments (including volunteer or fundraising opt-out payments) are **non-refundable**. A limited amount of funds are available each year as financial assistance for members unable to afford the entire amount of their registration fees.

MHSEA Eligibility Requirements

- High school student who will be enrolled in grades 9 – 12 as of September 2010
- Compliance with school and/or district student eligibility requirements
- Completion of MHSEA online membership registration
- Payment of non-refundable MHSEA registration fee
- Completion of school-required paperwork and payment of any required school registration/activity fee (school requirements will vary and will be coordinated/communicated by the MHSEA and Club Advisors)
- Completion and return of all MHSEA-required paperwork to their Club Advisor by **April 15, 2010**
- Participation and completion of fundraising requirements.
- Completion of MHSEA volunteer requirements.
- Attendance at a minimum of 5 club meetings or club events between April 15 and October 15.
- Submission of a completed Year-End Worksheet to the MHSEA by **October 15, 2010**

Failure to fulfill all MHSEA eligibility requirements (including meeting fundraising or volunteer hours requirements (or making appropriate amounts of opt-out payments)) will result in the termination of a member's participation in the MHSEA. In such event, there will be no refunds of such member's registration fees or any other payments. Without exception, terminated members will not be able to participate in MHSEA clinics or events, Club activities or discipline team challenges and will not be eligible for MHSEA or school year end awards. In addition, this may make them ineligible for future MHSEA membership.

Member & Parent Volunteer Requirements

The MHSEA is predominantly a volunteer run organization. In addition, one of the primary tenets of the MHSEA program is volunteerism and community involvement. Accordingly, MHSEA membership requires specific volunteer commitments from each MHSEA member and their parent/guardian. There are numerous opportunities for members and parents to fulfill their volunteer hour requirements throughout the year.

Further information relating to volunteer requirements and opportunities is found in the Appendices to this Handbook.

Fundraising Requirements

Each MHSEA member is required to contribute to the success of the organization through fundraising. The MHSEA establishes the fundraising program each year and communicates the details of the program to members during the registration process. Fundraising is done by a member's participation in the MHSEA-approved fundraiser or by "opting out" by the payment of a non-refundable tax-deductible contribution to the MHSEA.

Each member is required to raise a total of \$125 (or make their "opt-out" payment) by a specific date that is set by the MHSEA each year. Failure of a member to satisfy their fundraising requirement by the due date will result in the termination of that member's MHSEA membership and that member will no longer be eligible for participation in club or MHSEA events, clinics, Team Challenges or any year-end awards.

A member may make a tax-deductible donation to the MHSEA for any portion of the fundraising requirement (i.e., if their fundraising efforts do not result in them reaching the required amount) or the full amount of \$125 (i.e., if they choose not to participate in the MHSEA fundraiser). To do so, members will need to make such payment using a

credit card via the MHSEA website or deliver a check (made payable to MHSEA) to their club advisor on or before the end of the fundraising period.

Further information regarding the specific dates and details of the fundraising program will be provided during the registration period.

High School & Athletic Department Requirements

MHSEA will honor all requirements and criteria specified by each high school. Excused absences due to competition are at the discretion of the school. Students participating in these clubs will follow their school's academic and behavioral standards for student participation as well as all applicable Minnesota State High School League eligibility requirements. Members and their parents are expected to know, understand and comply with all requirements or restrictions applicable to their participation. For more information go the MSHSL website www.MSHSL.org.

Club Organization

Club Advisor

MHSEA will train one or more adult volunteer(s) to advise each high school club. Advisors (and co-advisors) will be required to consent to a background authorization investigation performed by the MHSEA or the school, at MHSEA's expense. The advisor's responsibilities are:

- Attend the Advisor training and orientation session scheduled by the MHSEA
- Promote and publicize the Club throughout the year
- Prepare and post a schedule of Club meeting dates on the MHSEA website prior to registration
- Register online with the MHSEA and complete all application and registration requirements
- Set-up and supervise club meetings and prepare meeting minutes (and submit the minutes to the MHSEA to be posted on the website)
- Schedule a parent meeting before the season to discuss paperwork, fees, registration and program requirements
- Be familiar with and follow MHSEA guidelines and policies
- Communicate with members and parents in a professional manner
- Support the MHSEA mission statement and philosophy
- Demonstrate a positive attitude to members, parents, and school staff
- Be prepared and plan ahead for all team meetings
- Be a positive role model

The advisor is neither a trainer nor a coach. For consistency purposes, all communication with school athletic departments needs to be coordinated and directed by the MHSEA Executive Director. **Members, parents and advisors should refrain from communicating or contacting the school administration with respect to the MHSEA or their particular club unless they have already discussed and coordinated such contact or communication with the Executive Director.**

Member Positions

At the discretion of the advisor, the team may have members hold the following leadership positions although none of these roles are required:

Club Captain – The Club Captain must be willing to work closely with the club advisor. He/she will help plan, organize and run club meetings and will ensure all club guidelines are being followed. The Club Captain should be a junior or senior with prior MHSEA experience and someone who will actively recruit new members and be an active participant in club activities. If an advisor names a Club Captain the following leadership qualities should be present:

- Role model – hardworking, committed, dedicated, humble, lead by example, positive attitude, shows respect for others, good communication skills
- Exhibits good citizenship – dependable, loyal, trustworthy, has a great deal of pride in the MHSEA, club, school and community
- Good school behavior and academic progress
- Willingness to follow MHSEA and club rules and act as a liaison between teammates and advisors

The Club Captain position is a key leadership position that should be earned by the member's involvement in and commitment to the club and the MHSEA program.

Discipline Team Captains – Club advisors may choose one or more Discipline Team Captains if their club size merits the distinction. A Discipline Team Captain could be selected for a specific discipline if the club has 4 or more members riding in that discipline. Discipline Team Captains should be juniors or seniors with prior MHSEA experience who ride at the Varsity-level of competition. Discipline Team Captains should provide guidance and support to less experienced riders within their club and/or discipline.

Historian - The historian keeps a club scrapbook and submit photos to be used on the MHSEA website.

Student Liaison Advisor – This position is for 12th graders who would like to remain involved in the equestrian club during the spring of their senior year. This position is at the discretion of the team's advisor based on an individual's previous team participation and experience and subject to the approval of the MHSEA Executive Director. The Student Liaison Advisor is not allowed to compete as part of the team and will be ineligible for MHSEA team awards. Student Liaison Advisors are required to register with the MHSEA online and complete a joining agreement (with included release of liability agreement).

Club Meetings

Clubs are required to meet at least monthly between April 15 and October 15. Each member is required to attend at least 5 club meetings during that period. All meetings are to be scheduled in advance and the dates posted on the MHSEA website. The advisor (or Club Captain) will take attendance and keep minutes at meetings and the minutes will be posted on the MHSEA website. Club meetings are not required to be business only and clubs are encouraged to be creative in the club activities and keep the meetings fun and enjoyable. Examples of activities that have proven popular for club meetings are: bowling, group outings to movies, rodeos or horse shows, making horse treats or sewing saddle pads, visiting members' barns, group volunteering, and holding a movie night. **Note:** All clinics, parades and club functions on horseback may require additional insurance. Advisors must obtain approval from the MHSEA Executive Director **prior** to scheduling any of these functions or activities for their club.

MHSEA equestrian clubs are not permitted to assess or collect club dues from members.

During the MHSEA registration period, each club will hold at least one parent information meeting to provide returning and prospective members and their parents an overview of the program and required registration materials. Such meeting(s) will be scheduled by the advisor and held in late February or early March.

Club Photos

Clubs are encouraged to maintain a club scrapbook and to post pictures of club members, events and activities on the MHSEA website.

Participating Club Members

High school equestrians who do not ride at a Varsity or JV level of competition but meet all MHSEA and school-related membership requirements are considered Participating club members and may participate in all MHSEA clinics and events and club meetings and activities and will be recognized for their participation at the annual banquet.

Club Merchandise

The MHSEA has established a link on its website for all MHSEA and club-specific clothing and merchandise. Personalization is available and ordering/delivery is efficient and quick. Clubs are NOT allowed to organize, design or purchase club merchandise other than what is being offered through the MHSEA website.

Horse Shows & Competitions

Each member is responsible for determining his or her own training and competition program, level and frequency. Neither the school nor MHSEA is responsible for a members' completion of registration or application requirements relating to clinics, horse shows or events. The MHSEA is strictly administrative and plays no role in setting up horse shows or training students to ride horses. These things are left to qualified professionals of each member's choice.

Varsity Level and JV-Level Riding Criteria and Descriptions

The MHSEA has established JV-level and Varsity-level riding criteria for each discipline. These criteria are used to determine a member's eligibility for school and year-end awards.

The MHSEA establishes scoring methodologies for each discipline that are used to determine the MHSEA year-end competitive awards (on both a team and individual basis). Eligibility for school awards is based on participation in qualifying competitions rather than placements. Scoring for year-end MHSEA competitive awards is summarized in these Appendices and a detailed description is included in the Year-End Score Sheet for each discipline as posted on the MHSEA website.

Members who wish to be considered for school and/or year-end MHSEA competitive awards must submit a completed Year-End Score Sheet for each discipline in which they competed along with their Year-End Worksheet. In addition to any tiebreaker descriptions included in a discipline's score sheet, the MHSEA has the ultimate authority to determine the winner of any tie by any means it determines appropriate (e.g., additional results or the number of volunteer hours performed by the member).

Note: All members who are in 9th grade at the end of the MHSEA Competition Season will be considered JV-level for year-end and school award purposes regardless of riding or competitive level, i.e., they will not be considered a Varsity-level rider.

MHSEA Qualifying Shows

The MHSEA will establish the dates for the MHSEA Competition Season on an annual basis. The MHSEA has defined qualifying horse shows, competitions and events for each discipline. MHSEA Qualifying Shows must occur during the MHSEA Competition Season (i.e., between March 1 and October 15). The definitions for the MHSEA Qualifying Shows for each discipline are as follows:

Dressage - *MHSEA Qualifying Dressage* shows are USEF recognized shows that utilize tests approved by the USEF or USDF.

Eventing - *MHSEA Qualifying Eventing* horse trials are USEF/USEA recognized horse trials.

Hunter/Jumper - *MHSEA Qualifying Hunter/Jumper* horse shows are USEF/USHJA B-rated or above shows.

Hunt Seat - *MHSEA Qualifying Hunt Seat* shows are any of the following:

- Shows offered by a USEF Recognized Breed association (e.g., Morgan, Arabian/Half Arabian, Saddlebred, Friesian, etc.) where the show rules incorporate the USEF rulebook
- American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) approved shows
- American Paint Horse Association (APHA) approved shows
- Appaloosa Horse Club (ApHC) approved shows
- Palomino Horse Breeders of America (PHBA) approved shows
- Pinto Horse Association of America (PthA) approved shows
- Pony of the Americas Club (POAC) approved shows
- Tri-State Horsemen's Association approved shows
- WSCA shows using WSCA approved judges and rules

Polo - *MHSEA Qualifying Polo* tournaments are any USPA sanctioned tournaments or any of the following eligible Twin Cities Polo Club Tournaments (these tournaments follow all USPA rules and riders are required to be members of the USPA). Eligible TCPC Tournaments are:

- TCPC Memorial Day Tournament
- 4th of July Tournament
- Upper Midwest Challenge
- MHSEA High School Team Challenge Tournament

Saddle Seat - MHSEA Qualifying **Saddle Seat** shows are any of the following:

- USEF approved shows
- Shows offered by a USEF Recognized Breed association (e.g., Morgan, Arabian/Half Arabian, Saddlebred, Friesian, etc.) where the show rules incorporate the USEF rulebook
- Tri-State Horsemen's Association approved shows

Western - MHSEA Qualifying **Western** shows are any of the following:

- Shows offered by a USEF Recognized Breed association (e.g., Morgan, Arabian/Half Arabian, Saddlebred, Friesian, etc.) where the show rules incorporate the USEF rulebook
- American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) approved shows
- American Paint Horse Association (APHA) approved shows
- Appaloosa Horse Club (ApHC) approved shows
- Palomino Horse Breeders of America (PHBA) approved shows
- Pinto Horse Association of America (PThA) approved shows
- Pony of the Americas Club (POAC) approved shows
- Tri-State Horsemen's Association approved show
- WSCA shows using WSCA approved judges and rules

Junior Varsity-Level Criteria

Members meeting the following criteria will be considered **Junior Varsity (JV)–level**:

- Fulfillment of all MHSEA eligibility, membership, volunteer and fundraising requirements
- Completion of a score sheet for the applicable discipline as part of their Year-End paperwork
- Training with a professional within the applicable discipline at least twice a month during the MHSEA Competition Season
- Fulfillment of discipline-specific JV-level riding criteria (see below) during the MHSEA Competition Season
- All 9th grade members riding or competing at or above the JV-level

Dressage – Compete in a total of 4 eligible classes at 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Dressage shows (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). Eligible classes are Training Level Test 4 or above.

Eventing – Compete in at least 2 different MHSEA Qualifying Eventing horse trials at the Beginning Novice or Novice Level or above.

Hunter/Jumper - Compete in at least 3 eligible classes at 2 different MHSEA Qualifying Hunter/Jumper shows (i.e., a total of 6 classes with 3 classes at each show). Eligible classes are:

- **Jumpers**: Classes having jumps set at .85 m (2'9") or higher
- **Hunters**: Classes having jumps set at 2'6" or higher in the Long Stirrup Equitation, Long Stirrup Hunter, Novice Equitation, MHJA Mini-Medal, Limit Children's Hunter, Limit Hunter, and Mini Working Hunter classes ONLY

Eligible classes do not include blue ribbon, warm-up, flat or under saddle classes, or unfilled classes (i.e., classes with 3 or fewer riders).

Members competing only in Jumpers classes may meet the JV-level criteria by competing in at least 2 eligible classes at 3 different MHSEA Qualifying Hunter/Jumper shows (i.e., a total of 6 classes with 2 classes at each show).

Hunt Seat -- Compete in a total of 4 eligible classes in 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Hunt Seat shows (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). Eligible classes are any of the following flat or under saddle classes:

Open Academy Hunter Pleasure

Open Academy Hunt Seat Equitation

American Saddlebred: ASB Country Hunter Pleasure, Open Hunter Pleasure, Open Hunt Equitation

Arabian & Half-Arabian: Hunter Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Hunt Seat Equitation, AHA Hunt Seat Medal (on the flat)

Appaloosa: Novice Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Morgan: Hunter Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Hunt Seat Equitation, AMHA Hunt Seat Equitation Medal on the Flat

Paint: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Palomino: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Pinto: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Pony of the Americas: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Quarter Horse: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

WSCA: Hunt Seat (English) Equitation, Hunt Seat (English) Pleasure

Polo – Compete in at least 2 MHSEA Qualifying Polo tournaments.

Saddle Seat - Compete in a total of 4 eligible classes in 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Saddle Seat shows (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). All classes must use a cut-away/traditional saddle seat saddle. Eligible classes are:

Open Academy English Pleasure

Open Academy Equitation

Arabian: English Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Country English Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Saddle Seat Equitation, AHA Saddle Seat Equitation Medal

Morgan: Park Pleasure; Classic Pleasure (Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor), English Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Saddle Seat Equitation, UPHA Challenge Cup, AMHA Medal, AHHS Youth Roadster Under Saddle

Hackney: Pleasure Pony Under Saddle; AHHS Youth Medal Pleasure Pony under Saddle, Roadster Pony under Saddle

American Saddlebred: 5-Gaited, 3-Gaited and Park Performance classes; Show Pleasure; Country Pleasure; Park Pleasure. All classes include Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse. Saddle Seat Equitation, UPHA Challenge Cup, ASHA Medal, USEF Saddle Seat Medal, Good Hands Medal

Tennessee Walking Horse: Plantation Pleasure, Lite-Shod Pleasure, Trail Pleasure. All classes include Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse.

Western -- Compete in a total of 4 eligible classes in 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Western shows (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). Eligible classes are:

Open Academy Western Pleasure

Open Academy Western Equitation

American Saddlebred: ASB Western Country Pleasure, Open Western Pleasure, Open Western Bridle Path, Open Western Equitation

Arab & Half-Arabian: Western Pleasure (Open, Amateur, Jr. Exhibitor, Jr. Horse), Western Seat Equitation, AHA Western Horsemanship Medal, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Appaloosa: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Morgan: Western Pleasure (Open, Amateur, Jr. Exhibitor, Jr. Horse), Western Seat Equitation, Western Equitation AMHA Medal, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Paint: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Palomino: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Pinto: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Pony of the Americas: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Quarter Horse: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Tennessee Walking Horse: Western Plantation Pleasure, Western Lite-Shod

WSCA: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Varsity-Level Criteria

Members meeting the following criteria will be considered **Varsity-level**:

- Fulfillment of all MHSEA eligibility, membership, volunteer and fundraising requirements
- Training with a professional within the applicable discipline at least twice a month during the MHSEA Competition Season
- Completion of at least 150 hours of practice and training (including time spent in competition) during the MHSEA Competition Season
- In grade 10, 11 or 12 at end of MHSEA Competition Season
- At least 1 year previous MHSEA membership (riding at any level)
- Fulfillment of discipline-specific Varsity-level riding criteria (see below) during the MHSEA Competition Season
- Completion of a score sheet for the applicable discipline as part of their Year-End paperwork

Dressage - Compete in at least 4 eligible classes at 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Dressage shows (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). Eligible classes are:

- First Level test with scores of 60% or higher. At least two of these tests must be test 4
- Second Level or above, any test of the level, no minimum score requirement

Eventing – Compete in at least 2 different MHSEA Qualifying Eventing horse trials at the Training Level or above **and** complete the course and receive a placement in at least one.

Hunter/Jumper - Compete in at least 3 eligible classes at 2 different MHSEA Qualifying Hunter/Jumper shows (i.e, a total of 6 classes with 3 classes at each show). Eligible classes are:

- **Jumpers**: Classes having jumps set at 1.0 m (3'3") or higher
- **Hunters**: Classes having jumps set at 3' or higher in the Children's Hunter, Junior Hunter, Open Equitation, MHJA Hunt Seat Medal, or Low, Modified, or Working Hunter classes ONLY.

Eligible classes do not include blue ribbon, warm-up, flat or under saddle classes, or unfilled classes (classes with 3 or fewer riders).

Members competing only in Jumpers classes may meet the Varsity-level criteria by competing in at least 2 eligible classes at 3 different MHSEA Qualifying Hunter/Jumper shows (i.e., a total of 6 classes with 2 classes at each show).

Hunt Seat

Compete in a total of 6 eligible classes at 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Hunt Seat shows (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). Eligible classes are any of the following flat or under saddle classes:

American Saddlebred: ASB Country Hunter Pleasure, Open Hunter Pleasure, Open Hunt Equitation

Arabian & Half-Arabian: Hunter Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibit/Jr. Horse), Hunt Seat Equitation, AHA Hunt Seat Medal (on the flat)

Appaloosa: Novice Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Morgan: Hunter Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Hunt Seat Equitation, AMHA Hunt Seat Equitation Medal on the Flat

Paint: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Palomino: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Pinto: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Pony of the Americas: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

Quarter Horse: Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation

WSCA: Hunt Seat (English) Equitation, Hunt Seat (English) Pleasure

Novice-level and Academy-level classes are NOT considered eligible classes.

Polo – Compete in at least 2 MHSEA Qualifying Polo Tournaments as a Level -1 (B) (or above) polo player.

Saddle Seat - Compete in a total of 6 eligible classes at 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Saddle Seat shows (i.e., at least one class must be at a separate show). Eligible classes are:

Arabian: English Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibit/Jr Horse), Country English Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Saddle Seat Equitation, AHA Saddle Seat Equitation Medal

Morgan: Park Pleasure; Classic Pleasure (Amateur/Jr. Exhibit), English Pleasure (Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibitor/Jr. Horse), Saddle Seat Equitation, UPHA Challenge Cup, AMHA Medal, AHHS Youth Roadster Under Saddle

Hackney: Pleasure Pony Under Saddle; AHHS Youth Medal Pleasure Pony under Saddle, Roadster Pony under Saddle

American Saddlebred: 5-Gaited, 3-Gaited and Park Performance classes; Show Pleasure; Country Pleasure; Park Pleasure. All classes include Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibit/Jr. Horse. Saddle Seat Equitation, UPHA Challenge Cup, ASHA Medal, USEF Saddle Seat Medal, Good Hands Medal.

Tennessee Walking Horse: Plantation Pleasure, Lite-Shod Pleasure, Trail Pleasure. All classes include Open/Amateur/Jr. Exhibit/Jr. Horse.

Novice-level and Academy-level classes are NOT considered eligible classes.

Western

Compete in a total of 6 eligible classes at 2 or more MHSEA Qualifying Western shows during the season (i.e., at least one class must be from a separate show). Eligible classes are:

American Saddlebred: ASB Western Country Pleasure, Open Western Pleasure, Open Western Bridle Path, Open Western Equitation

Arab & Half-Arabian: Western Pleasure (Open, Amateur, Jr. Exhibitor, Jr. Horse), Western Seat Equitation, AHA Western Horsemanship Medal, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Appaloosa: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Morgan: Western Pleasure (Open, Amateur, Jr. Exhibitor, Jr. Horse), Western Seat Equitation, Western Equitation AMHA Medal, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Paint: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Palomino: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Pinto: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Pony of the Americas: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Quarter Horse: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Tennessee Walking Horse: Western Plantation Pleasure, Western Lite-Shod

WSCA: Western Pleasure, Western Horsemanship, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole Race, Jumping Figure 8

Novice-level and Academy-level classes are NOT eligible classes.

Discipline Specific Scoring & Results Verification Requirements

Scoring

The following scoring methodologies are used by the MHSEA to determine placements for year-end competitive award purposes. Within each discipline, various tiebreaker methods are used at the discretion of the MHSEA including additional scores, penalty points (Eventing), goals scored (Polo), or number of MHSEA volunteer hours.

The disciplines of **Dressage, Eventing, Hunt Seat, Saddle Seat and Western** assign points based on a member's placement in an eligible class. Each discipline requires a specific number of results be submitted. Placements in eligible classes having 4 or more riders are scored as follows:

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Points	15	13	11	9	7	5	3	1

Placements in eligible classes having 3 or fewer riders are scored as follows:

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Points	7.5	6.5	5.5

For the above disciplines, a member's total points in the discipline is the total of their points for the requisite number of submitted placements for eligible classes.

The **Hunter/Jumper** discipline only assigns points for placements in eligible classes having 4 or more riders using the following table:

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Points	15	13	11	9	7	5	3	1

In the Hunter/Jumper discipline, no points are awarded for placements in classes having 3 or fewer riders. For the Hunter/Jumper discipline, a member's total points is the total of their points in the requisite number of submitted placements for eligible classes.

In the **Polo** discipline a member's placement in eligible polo tournaments or matches is assigned points based on the following table for tournaments having 4 or more teams competing:

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Points	15	13	11	9	7	5	3	1

For tournaments having 3 or fewer teams competing, the following points are assigned:

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Points	7.5	6.5	5.5

Verification of Results

Members are required to obtain verifiable results of their placements and submit such results to the MHSEA along with their Year-End paperwork. Such results are usually obtainable from the website of the breed or discipline organization overseeing the show. The MHSEA will confirm the results submitted by the member. It is the member's responsibility to provide the results they wish to be used and all supporting documentation. The MHSEA is not required to correct, replace or supplement results supplied by the member that are incorrect or missing. It is the member's responsibility to prepare and submit complete and accurate Year-End paperwork. Members participating in eligible classes at MHSEA Qualifying Shows but who do not place should include documentation evidencing their participation with their Year-End Paperwork.

Acceptable Documentation -- The following documents/print outs will be considered acceptable results verification documentation for a member's Year-End paperwork **IF** it contains sufficient information to verify (i) that the show was a MHSEA Qualifying Show, (ii) that the member was the rider, (iii) that the class was an eligible class for the discipline and riding level, (iv) a member's placement, and (v) the number of participants in the class:

DRESSAGE – a printed copy of the member's scores from www.usdf.org and copies of the scored tests for each submitted result.

EVENTING – a printed copy of the rider's results from www.USEA.org website.

HUNTER/JUMPER – a printed copy of the rider's results from the MHJA, USHJA or USEF websites or a printed copy of the member's show results received upon checking out of show.

HUNT SEAT – a printed copy of the rider's results from an official website of the USEF or the breed or other organization hosting the MHSEA Qualifying Show.

Members wishing to include results for WSCA Hunt Seat (English) Equitation or WSCA Hunt Seat (English) Pleasure must also submit verifiable results showing their placements in those classes at a MHSEA Qualifying Show. Since the WSCA website does not display sufficient information to verify results in those classes, a Member wishing to include results for those classes are required to obtain from the WSCA or the saddle club hosting the show a verifiable copy of the show results indicating the necessary information state above.

POLO – a printed copy of the rider's results from the Twin City Polo Club website (www.twincitypolo.com). Results or participation verification not found on the Twin City Polo Club website can be obtained by emailing Craig Robbins at craig_robbins@msn.com.

SADDLE SEAT -- a printed copy of the rider's results from an official website of the USEF or the breed or other organization hosting the MHSEA Qualifying Show. Show results or participation verification not found on an official website can be obtained by emailing Marcy Eickholt at meickholt@msn.com.

WESTERN – a printed copy of the rider's results from an official website of the USEF or the breed or other organization hosting the MHSEA Qualifying Show.

Members wishing to include results for WSCA Western Pleasure, WSCA Western Horsemanship, WSCA Barrels, WSCA Poles, WSCA Keyhole Race or WSCA Jumping Figure 8 must also submit verifiable results showing their placements in those classes at a MHSEA Qualifying Horse Show. Since the WSCA website does not display sufficient information to verify results in those classes, a member wishing to include results for those classes is required to obtain from the WSCA or the saddle club hosting the show a verifiable copy of the show results indicating the necessary information state above.

The MHSEA discipline-specific Year-End Score Sheets are posted on the MHSEA website and contain greater detail than the above summary.

Year-End Awards

Each year the MHSEA holds an annual banquet to recognize all of its members and to present All-Member Awards, Competitive Awards and school letters. All MHSEA members (regardless of riding level) who fulfill all membership, fundraising and volunteer requirements will be eligible for consideration for year-end recognition and awards from the MHSEA and their school. A member does not have to ride competitively to be considered for many of the MHSEA awards. All year-end awards will only be distributed at the annual MHSEA banquet at the end of the season. Award recipients will NOT be announced until that time. Members are encouraged to attend the banquet to support club members, share camaraderie and to receive awards. If members are unable to attend the banquet they will need to arrange for delivery of their awards, at their own expense, directly with the Executive Director. In order to be eligible for any year-end recognition including competitive awards and school letters, members must have met all MHSEA membership, volunteering and fundraising requirements. **All awards are at the discretion of the MHSEA Executive Director.**

MHSEA Year-End Awards – All-Member Awards

MHSEA Community Service Awards. The MHSEA participates as a Certifying Organization in the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) program and encourages its members to track their volunteer hours on the PVSA system. MHSEA members who do so are eligible to receive recognition for completion of significant volunteer time. These awards consist of a certificate signed by the President of the United States of America as well as a gold, silver or bronze lapel pin depending on the number of volunteer hours the member performs and logs on the PVSA website. The number of required hours varies by age group but for the majority of MHSEA members are as follows: Gold – more than 250 hours, Silver – 175-249 hours, and Bronze – 100-174 hours. Hours can be logged from October 16th from one year through October 15th of the next.

Further information regarding the PVSA is included in the Appendices to this Handbook.

Executive Director's Awards. Each year, the MHSEA Executive Director recognizes the unique contributions or involvement of several MHSEA members by giving out Executive Director-determined awards. The specifics of these awards may vary from year to year depending on the recipient and/or MHSEA needs or activities however, in past years the following awards have been presented:

- *Favorite Recap(s) submitted as part of the Year End Worksheet*
- *MHSEA Club of the Year Award*
- *MHSEA Most Valuable Member Award*
- *MHSEA Sportsmanship Award (Sponsored by the Tri-State Horseman's Association)*
- *MHSEA Executive Director Award*
- *MHSEA Volunteer of the Year Award*

Detailed descriptions of the awards and the nomination process for the same are included on the MHSEA website.

MHSEA Photography Contest. Each year the MHSEA holds a photography contest in which MHSEA members can submit photos they have taken during the season. Submitted photos are posted on the website and the winning photograph is announced at the annual banquet.

MHSEA Horse Drawing Contest. New for 2010, the MHSEA will hold a horse drawing contest in which MHSEA members can submit drawings they have done during the season. Submitted drawings will be posted on the website and the winning drawing will be announced at the annual banquet.

MHSEA Year-End Awards - Competitive Awards

The recipients of the competitive MHSEA year-end awards are determined on a team and individual basis and, if there are sufficient numbers of qualifying riders within a discipline, on a Varsity-level and JV-level basis as well. Discipline-specific team awards are awarded to the teams within a discipline having the highest score. Teams consist of 2 or more riders from the same club riding in that discipline and team awards are only given in disciplines having three or more teams. Discipline-specific individual awards are awarded to riders within a discipline with the highest score. Individuals can be on more than one discipline team and can win awards in more than one discipline.

Each year, the specific requirements for each award as well as the discipline-specific scoring procedures will be included in the Year-End Awards Worksheet and Score Sheets and posted on the MHSEA website. All awards are at the discretion of the MHSEA and the MHSEA has the authority to determine appropriate scoring methodologies and rules to determine the results.

School Year-End Awards (Varsity Letters)

Most schools allow equestrians to receive a school letter if the member meets specific criteria established by the MHSEA and approved by the school. Varsity lettering criteria may differ from the criteria for MHSEA year-end awards. For schools that do allow equestrians to receive a varsity letter the following criteria shall apply:

- Fulfillment of all MHSEA Varsity-level criteria (as described in the Appendices to this Handbook)
- In grades 10 – 12 at the end of the MHSEA Competition Season (i.e., 9th grade members are not eligible for a Varsity letter regardless of riding ability or competition level)
- Training at a competitive level with a professional within the applicable discipline throughout the MHSEA Competition Season
- Executive Director discretion and recommendation

The MHSEA Varsity-level riding criteria are based upon an advanced level of competition and completion of 150 or more hours of practice and/or training during the MHSEA season. Members may qualify as a Varsity-level rider in more than one discipline if the member meets the criteria for each discipline. Detailed information as to the discipline specific Varsity-level and JV-level criteria is included in the Appendices to this Handbook.

Senior Letter

The MHSEA Executive Director has the discretion to recommend the award of a varsity letter to graduating seniors who have not otherwise competitively qualified for one based upon such member's multi-year involvement in MHSEA, their participation in their club, and their compliance with MHSEA membership, volunteering and fundraising requirements.

Perpetual Trophies

The MHSEA presents the champion teams within each discipline with a perpetual trophy (i.e., the same trophy is presented to the winning team each year) for display at their school (if acceptable to the school). The advisor is responsible for returning the trophy to the MHSEA the following October.

APPENDICES**A. MHSEA INDEPENDENT CLUB – DESCRIPTION**

High school equestrians who attend a school without an approved MHSEA Equestrian Club or are homeschooled in a district where there is no school approved MHSEA Equestrian Club, have the opportunity to participate in the MHSEA as a member of the MHSEA Independent Club.

In order to be considered for inclusion in the MHSEA Independent Club, students must:

- Meet MHSEA Eligibility Requirements (except any related to school registration); and
- Submit a completed MHSEA Independent Club request form.

The MHSEA will review each situation on a case-by-case basis to determine feasibility and whether such request can be accommodated.

If an individual's participation in the MHSEA Independent Club is approved by the MHSEA, the member will:

- Be matched by the MHSEA with an appropriate MHSEA approved school Equestrian Club for purposes of meeting attendance (that club will be referred to as the "Host" Club)
- Be required to meet all MHSEA Membership Requirements (excluding any school registration) including on-line registration and payment of membership fees, volunteering (parent and member), fundraising, submission of a Year End Worksheet and attendance at a minimum of 5 meetings held by the Host Club between April 15 and October 15
- Be eligible for all MHSEA Year-End Awards and discipline-specific Team Challenges
- Be eligible to participate in all other MHSEA events, clinics and contests as a full MHSEA member

However, the Member will NOT:

- Be considered a member of the Host Club for purposes of MHSEA Year End Awards or Team Challenge participation
- Participate in the Host Club's team photos, yearbook submissions or any type of school related advertising or promotions
- Be eligible for school-related awards (at either his/her own school or at the Host Club school) such as Varsity Letters or participation certificates based on MHSEA participation

MHSEA members who switch schools during the Competition Season from a high school with an approved Club to a high school without an approved Club shall be considered Independent Club members for Year End award and recognition purposes.

APPENDICES – CONTINUED**C. VOLUNTEER RELATED INFORMATION – MEMBER & PARENT VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS*****MEMBER REQUIREMENT***

- Each member is required to perform a minimum of **10** hours of volunteer time for one or more equine-related organizations
- Members must perform at least **2** of those 10 hours volunteering directly for the MHSEA (the MHSEA is an equine-related organization)
- The other 8 hours can be spent volunteering for the MHSEA or one or more other equine-related organizations
- Hours spent by a member volunteering for the MHSEA (over and above the required minimum of 2 hours) will count towards the member's remaining 8 hours of required volunteer time
- A member may perform all 10 hours of required volunteer time volunteering for the MHSEA

PARENT/GUARDIAN REQUIREMENT

- A member's parent/guardian is required to provide a minimum of **4** hours of volunteer time directly to the MHSEA
- Hours spent volunteering for an equine-organization other than the MHSEA do not qualify as part of the required 4 hours
- The requirement is per member (i.e., if a family has 2 children as members, the parents/guardians need to perform a total of 8 hours of volunteer time to the MHSEA)

APPROVALS & VERIFICATION

- Hours spent by a member or parent/guardian volunteering for the MHSEA:
 - DO require the prior approval of the MHSEA Executive Director, an MHSEA Board member, Committee Chair or Discipline Chair
 - DO require the completion of a Volunteer Verification Form
- Hours spent by a member volunteering for an equine-related organization other than the MHSEA:
 - DO NOT require prior approval from the MHSEA
 - DO require the completion of a Volunteer Verification Form

Members and Parents/Guardians are required to obtain verification of all volunteer hours performed using the Volunteer Verification Form (a copy is included in these Appendices and is also available on the MHSEA website). Such Volunteer Verification Form(s) must be submitted to the MHSEA with a member's Year-End Worksheet.

MHSEA VOLUNTEERING - There are numerous opportunities for members and parents to volunteer for the MHSEA throughout the year. The following are just a few examples of volunteer opportunities available:

- Data entry and office assistance
- Newsletter preparation, production and mailing
- Participation on a MHSEA committee (e.g., Discipline, Silent Auction, Volunteer Coordination)
- Clinic, Event, Team Challenge or Banquet planning
- Sponsor relations and development
- Scholarship development and grant writing
- PVSA Registration and volunteer hour tracking
- Horse Expo
- Photography at MHSEA events
- Website development and maintenance

Members are encouraged to track volunteer hours performed for equine-related organizations other than the MHSEA on the PVSA website (www.presidentialserviceawards.com).

APPENDICES – CONTINUED**D. VOLUNTEER RELATED INFORMATION – EQUINE-RELATED DESCRIPTIONS & EXAMPLES**

To satisfy the MHSEA's volunteer hours requirements a member can volunteer at a variety of equine-related, non-profit organizations or events. The MHSEA is an equine-related no-profit organization and thus hours spent volunteering for the MHSEA will count towards a member's volunteer hours requirement.

A member cannot count any volunteer hours that result in personal gain for him or herself, a parent or trainer, or a for-profit group (with the exception of recognized horse shows). This means that if a member receives anything in exchange for the time spent volunteering, such as clinic rides, lessons, coaching at shows, money or "credit" towards show or clinic fees, board costs, and/or lessons, that volunteering time cannot be counted towards the MHSEA required volunteer hours.

When a member volunteers for an equine-related organization other than the MHSEA, they need to complete a Volunteer Verification Form (see below and also on the MHSEA website) and obtain the signature of a responsible individual managing, supervising or operating the non-profit organization or event verifying their performance. For example, if a member volunteers at a therapeutic riding program s/he would obtain the signature of the riding instructor or person administering the program the day the member volunteered. Another example would be if the member volunteers at a USHJA clinic put on at a local training facility, they would get the signature of the USHJA (or local affiliate organization) person who is setting up, running or managing the clinic. Members are to turn in their completed (and signed) Volunteer Verification Forms with their Year-End Worksheet in October.

The following are examples of volunteer activities that can and can't be counted toward the equine-related volunteer hours requirement:

Volunteer Activities that DO COUNT	Volunteer Activities that DON'T COUNT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horse shows recognized by USEF, APA, USDA, USHJA, USEA, NCAA, IHSA, ANRC, approved by the Tri-Sate Horsemen's Association, or qualifying as a WSCA horse show: scribing, running, set-up/tear down, office work, ring steward, bit checker, scoring, getting lunch for show staff, etc. • Similar activities at horse-related competitions or events that are organized by the Twin City Polo Club or a breed association where the event or competition is held at a public venue and/or advertised and open to the public. • Clinics organized by a non-profit organization: set-up/tear down, scribing, dragging arena, etc. • Non-profit horse camps, as long as you do not get paid in any way. • Polo Classic or Benefits: Set-up/tear down, assist organizers during the day, etc. • Helping on a committee of a non-profit organization such as CSDEA, MHJA or MHSEA. • Horse Expo: IF you are volunteering with MHSEA or to help another <u>non-profit group</u>. • Volunteering at non-profit horse organizations, i.e., MHSEA, Hoofed Animal Rescue, We Can Ride and other therapeutic riding programs, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Horse Shows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grooming and/or braiding • Riding along with your friend(s) on the courtesy ride/golf cart • Partnering with someone when the job only requires one person to do it, etc. • For-profit clinics held to make money • Routine barn/stall cleaning, grooming, riding/watching, etc., at your barn or in preparation for, or during a clinic • For-profit horse camps • Helping your barn's trainer do his/her job (i.e. grooming, riding, lessons, saddling, helping students, barn chores, etc.) • Helping at a schooling show or clinic held at your barn with only riders from your barn able to attend/participate

APPENDICES – CONTINUED**E. VOLUNTEER RELATED INFORMATION – “OPT OUT” CONTRIBUTION**

Members and/or Parents may make a non-refundable tax-deductible donation to the MHSEA for all or any portion of the volunteering requirement (i.e., if they do not wish to perform any volunteering, they only intend to volunteer for a portion of the required number of hours, or at the end of the Competition Season they have not completed the required number of volunteer hours).

The amount of such “opt-out” contribution is calculated as \$25 per hour of volunteer time not performed.

To elect the “opt-out” contribution, a parent or member needs to make such payment using a credit card via the MHSEA website at any time. Members/parents may also make such payment by delivering a check (made payable to MHSEA) to their club advisor during the registration period, or if after the close of the registration period, delivering a check to the MHSEA. All payments must be made and received no later than October 15 for the member to have been deemed to fulfill their volunteering requirement for MHSEA membership and Year-End award eligibility.

APPENDICES – CONTINUED**F. VOLUNTEER RELATED INFORMATION – PVSA REGISTRATION & TRACKING INSTRUCTIONS**

The MHSEA participates in the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) program as a Certifying Organization. The Presidential Volunteer Service Award is a Presidential honor that recognizes the valuable contributions of volunteers nationwide who are serving others through their current volunteer activities or lifetime service. The MHSEA encourages its members to participate in the PVSA program by logging their volunteer hours on the PVSA website. As a PVSA Certifying Organization, MHSEA will identify eligible recipients, verify their service hours and distribute the resulting awards to outstanding volunteers at the Year End banquet.

The MHSEA encourages each member to log their volunteer hours on the PVSA website. The MHSEA will register all new MHSEA members and provide them with the appropriate log in information. Returning members do NOT need to reregister with the PVSA each year.

The MHSEA will log hours spent by members volunteering for the MHSEA into the PVSA website for the member. Members are encouraged to log additional non-MHSEA volunteer hours into the PVSA website themselves.

To log volunteer hours, members can reach the PVSA site (www.presidentialserviceawards.com) via a link provided on MHSEA's website.

MHSEA members wanting to pursue a Presidential Volunteer Service Award may enter volunteer hours and community service projects in addition to their MHSEA required 10 hours of volunteering into their PVSA account. For PVSA award purposes, all volunteer hours must be completed and logged within the MHSEA's 12-month volunteer period that runs from October 16th in one year to October 15th the next year. Members can qualify for a new award each year.

Parents and Advisors are also encouraged to register with the PVSA and log their own volunteer hours.

APPENDICES – CONTINUED

G. VOLUNTEER HOURS VERIFICATION FORM



VOLUNTEER HOURS VERIFICATION FORM

Use this form to verify your performance of all equine related volunteering.

Volunteer Name: _____

If Parent, Name of Member: _____

School/Club: _____

Date	Number of Hours	Show/Event/Non-Profit Group (e.g., MHSEA, CSDEA, Horse Expo, etc)	Describe Volunteer Activity (i.e., what did you do?)	Event/Show Official or Group Supervisor Name and Signature

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Print off form
- Use form to record all volunteer hours
- Obtain signature of an official or supervisor at the event, clinic, organization or show where you volunteer
- Attach completed form with Year-End Worksheet and turn in to the MHSEA in October
- For further information on volunteering requirements see the MHSEA Program Handbook or go to the MHSEA website (www.mhsea.org)
- Members are encouraged to log their non-MHSEA volunteer hours onto the PVSA (www.presidentialserviceawards.com)

APPENDICES – CONTINUED**H. GRIEVANCE PROCESS****Grievance Process**

Most problems are best solved through discussion. The grievance procedure begins with a communication between the Executive Director and the member/parent with the grievance. Participants are encouraged to observe the “24” hour rule which urges a party to wait at least 24 hours if reasonably possible, before approaching the Executive Director on the matter. The 24-hour waiting period permits passions to subside so that the parties may address issues objectively.

If the member/parent believes their question/issue is not adequately resolved by the Executive Director they may contact the chair of the Board of Directors, but should do so only after exhausting all reasonable efforts to resolve the matter with the Executive Director. The member/parent should submit a written complaint in a timely manner to the Board chair, stating as many specifics as possible.

The chair will collect the necessary information and input and bring the matter to the attention of the Board. The Board shall make its determination as to the resolution of the matter and such resolution shall be final and non-appealable.

APPENDICES – CONTINUED**I. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY****Financial Assistance Policy**

As part of its annual budget, the MHSEA will determine a dollar amount that will be set aside as a Financial Assistance Fund. The total amount of Assistance that is awarded to all families cannot exceed the amount budgeted. Amounts will be provided based on a first come, first served basis.

Financial Assistance is designed to help families get through periods of financial stress. It is not designed as an annual subsidy, and is limited to 2 years per individual member. Preference will be given to those applicants whose families qualify for public assistance programs such as school lunch subsidies, medical assistance and unemployment insurance.

Financial Assistance will be provided to cover MHSEA Registration fees only. Only in instances of severe financial hardship will it be granted to cover all or portions of the volunteer hours or fundraising Opt-out amounts.

Families receiving Assistance will be required to provide volunteer hours to the MHSEA either by working at MHSEA events or clinics or providing administrative assistance or other duties as specified by the Executive Director of the MHSEA. The number of required volunteer hours will be formally documented between the family and the MHSEA.

Families who do not fulfill their Financial Assistance obligation (as specified and documented by the MHSEA) will not be eligible for aid in subsequent years.

Financial Assistance is provided at the sole discretion of the Board of the Minnesota High School Equestrian Association. All information is kept confidential.

Should a recipient's financial status improve at a later date and they wish to make a repayment/donation to the MHSEA, that donation would be greatly appreciated.

All families requesting Financial Assistance must complete the Financial Aid Application. Incomplete Applications will be returned. (Application is available online). Requests for financial assistance must be submitted prior to the close of online registration for the relevant program year.