
Parker/Marion Sports Cooperative Agreement

The Marion and Parker School Districts propose establishing a grades 7-12 athletic cooperative for the 2025-2026 school year, extending through the 2033-2034 school year: a 9-year commitment. For the 2025-2026 school year, this partnership would include Volleyball, Cross Country, Soccer, Girls/Boys Basketball, Boys/Girls Track, and Girls/Boys Golf. This new agreement is being created with Football, Wrestling, and Softball being added after the 2025-2026 seasons when the Marion School District's current Phoenix agreement with Freeman and Freeman Academy ends. By blending our resources and talents, we're striving to provide opportunities to actively participate and for our student-athletes to grow into leaders, both in sports and in life. This agreement, adaptable with mutual consent, will be reviewed annually in January at a cooperative committee meeting with both the Marion and Parker Sports Cooperative committee members each school year. Other meetings may be called on the recommendation of the administration and consent of both school boards.

Article I - Strength in Unity

By uniting Marion and Parker, we amplify opportunities for our student-athletes to have a viable option to participate and thrive physically, mentally, and socially. This partnership builds relationships, resilience, teamwork, and leadership skills that last a lifetime. A true partnership is sought, one rooted in cohesion and shared sacrifice, to ensure cooperative success and sustainability. Our communities gain too: united fanbases, larger crowds in the stands, and a legacy of pride that inspires kids to push harder, dream bigger, and lead boldly. The two schools are not just focused on combining teams, it would be our goal to help create a successful sports cooperative that challenges everyone to be better, positive, and looks to strengthen the bonds between our two towns.

Article II - Equal Partners in Finance

The Parker/Marion Sports Cooperative kicks off with an energetic, equitable financial partnership that drives success for our student-athletes and communities. From the 2025-2026 school year through 2033-2034 (excluding Football, Wrestling, and Softball in the year 2025-2026 year with the addition of adding these sports in 2026-2027), Marion and Parker commit to a 50/50 split for expenses to include equipment and uniforms. Coaching salaries to be split 50/50 (covered by each district's negotiated agreement), showcases our dedication to excellence. Each school district will maintain their own athletic trainer where the two trainers will share care plans for their athletes when injuries arise. Revenues from all season passes, gate receipts and transportation costs will be split between the

two districts. Gate fees will first go towards the cooperative budget, remainders will be split 50-50. All finances will be completed at the end of each season. The Parker annual track meet hosted by the Parker Booster Club will not be a part of the 50-50 split. All revenues from the Parker annual track meet will stay with Parker as this is a Parker Booster Club sponsored event.

Article III - A Collaborative Board

A co-op board, comprised of 1 administrator, 1 AD, and 2 board members from each school district. The board agrees to meet each year as noted above and on an as-needed basis.

Article IV – Activity Director Leadership

Each school will employ an Activities Director to collaborate and schedule games, secure officials, and oversee programs. Teamwork will be vital to ensure that games/matches/courts/fields/etc. are set up and ready to be played for each scheduled event. These two individuals will be strong driving factors, helping our new sports cooperative move forward season after season. The salary of each Activity Director is paid by the school they are employed in, based on the negotiated agreement in place per Article II. The duty of each Activity Director will be to inspect safe playing spaces at both locations. If the location conditions are deemed unacceptable by either AD or the SDHSAA the event will be moved to the next best location.

Article V - The Pheasant Legacy

Sporting colors of blue and white, with a tinge of red representing the name of the Parker-Marion Pheasants. The Parker-Marion Pheasants will soar under a shared fight song that will be written by the music staff and students from both Marion and Parker. A shared vision where we strive to encourage and support our student-athletes, allowing them to participate as a unified team, boosting one another's confidence while giving each town's fans a sense of pride in this new cooperative.

Article VI - Coaching with Balance

The cooperative is committed to recruiting top-tier coaches to lead our teams. Each district will have at least one coach to ensure representation, foster communication, and provide leadership within this partnership. For the inaugural year, current head coaches will re-apply if a head coach was already assigned from each district prior to the cooperative discussion (BBB). Athletic directors and administrators will collaborate to select head coaches, promoting equity. When a coaching positions open, a review team, led by athletic directors, will assess and interview all candidates, with principals optionally assisting.

***After the inaugural season of this new coop, coaching positions will be reassessed to determine whether more/fewer coaches are necessary based on participants in each sport (athletic director recommendation to coop board and back to administration/ADs).

Our kids deserve the best, and this structure delivers: skilled coaches to drive more competitive practices in and out of season, sharpening skills and building endurance for clutch in-game moments. Seasonal evaluations will be completed by both Athletic Directors (administration may be involved as needed). Salaries will be paid based on the individual's home school district's negotiated extra-duty schedules per Article II. If a non-school staff member is hired in a coaching role, their salary will be based on (and paid by) the district they reside. The coop will strive to invest in mentors/coaches who push student-athletes to excel. Volunteers are also welcome in this new venture by being vetted with background checks and the appropriate required training to further add depth and mentors to our coaching ranks.

Article VII – Uniform and Equipment

New equipment is co-owned, with requisitions approved by administrators. Uniforms and gear are stored across both schools as needed. Parker/Marion Pheasant uniforms, in colors of blue, white, with a tinge of red will be ordered for all teams. Both districts will work together to determine whether the uniforms should say Pheasants or Parker-Marion.

Article VIII – Practice

Practices should be determined based on the breakdown/agreement of where the sports are to be held. The coop has a goal to utilize each school's facilities to the greatest extent possible. This breakdown can be found in Article XIX. Wednesday practices will be limited to in that students must be home in their respective community by 6:00 pm. JH to hold optional Wednesday practice with teams back in their hometown by 6:00pm.

Article IX - Celebrating Together

Both school districts will work together to determine the best method in which to celebrate all athletes. Homecoming coronation will be held independently, with each school crowning a king and queen. If coronations are held on the same evening, schools will collaborate so as not to overlap so attendance would be possible at both events. Each year the homecoming court will be recognized at the homecoming football game. Logistics such as homecoming parades will be worked out between the two school districts. Senior nights will take place at both locations for each sport.

Article X - On the Road as One

Athletic Directors coordinate transportation utilizing drivers from both Marion and Parker to ensure transportation to practice is available to participants. Costs for transportation

will be split 50/50. Additionally, this cooperative opens new flexibility where students can be allowed to drive themselves, per open campus policy, to and from practices in their own vehicles with parental approval. This empowers them with independence while allowing some additional flexibility in transportation/numbers. Non-driving coaches will ride on the school's transportation to practices.

Article XI - Cheering

Each sport requiring cheer will have up to the maximum number of cheerleaders allowed at the state level per sport (8 for basketball, 6 for wrestling, no max for football but use a reasonable number). Students in grades 7-8 will cheer for junior high games and students in grades 9-12 will cheer for varsity games. If cheer numbers are low junior high students will have the opportunity to cheer up at the discretion of the ADs. Tryouts for fall sports will be held in the spring of each year, while tryouts for winter sports will be held in the fall. Practices and location times will be at the discretion of the cheer advisor. Uniforms will be a 50/50 split cost between the two districts.

Article XII Insurance

Each district shall maintain insurance coverage for liability arising from activities carried out under this agreement. Policies shall be maintained at levels no less than the levels of coverage currently maintained by each district. Insurance does not cover volunteer coaches (i.e. workman's comp).

Article XIII - Rules That Bind Us

School Administrators will work to agree upon a consistent athletic handbook for consistency and fairness. Each district will enforce the athletic eligibility rules and handbook. Violations will be investigated by principals, Athletic Directors, and head coaches, with students and parents being notified by the student's home district/coaches detailing outcomes. The chain of command will be utilized in the event of a complaint, beginning with the athlete speaking with the head coach (see Article XVIII for chain of command). Athletes must have at least a 70% to be eligible to participate.

Article XIV - Event Duties

The home district will provide workers for managing the game/event. The districts will work cooperatively to provide an event game administrator from each school to help in providing a safe and positive atmosphere for all competing/in attendance.

Article XV - Passes for All

Season passes from either district grant access to all games, with staff and PK-12 students admitted free. Administrators agree on a unified gate fee for all events and will accept each

other's activity passes at home events. Regular season activity passes will not be accepted for SDHSAA tournament games.

Article XVI - Right Fit for Every Athlete

Grades 7-12 athletes shift levels based on ability or program needs with coach discretion, parent consent, and administrative approval. This flexibility ensures every kid finds their stride—whether in the weight room, on the field, or in the heat of a game. It's about putting talent where it shines and is appropriate, building complete teams that strive for success and kids who lead, all while sustaining a program that adapts to our athletes' potential.

Article XVII - Parting Fairly

This agreement will be fulfilled for a minimum of 9-years. A 2-year written notice must be presented to the partnering school board. If the co-op dissolves, all shared equipment will be divided evenly or bought out by either party. If a breach of contract takes place prior to the 9-year term, the parting district will be charged a fine of \$75,000, the approximate cost of a single season. The \$75,000 penalty will be enforced regardless of the date of notification of the parting school district.

Article XVIII - Clear Accountability

Chain of command is to be followed with reporting training rule or misconduct issues.

The order for the chain of command is as follows:

1. Head Coach
2. Student's Athletic Director
3. Student's Principal
4. Superintendent
5. Student's Home Board

Principals, Athletic Directors, and head coaches will investigate, upholding transparency and consistency that keep our kids on track and our programs elite.

Article XIX – The Proposed Activity Breakdown

Football – (2026-2027):

Varsity and Junior Varsity Football – practice will take place in Parker unless otherwise noted by ADs and coaches. One varsity and one JV game will be played in Marion each year with the remaining games to take place in Parker.

Junior High Football – 50% / 50% split for practices unless otherwise noted by ADs and coaches. One junior high football game will take place in Marion each year with the remaining games to take place in Parker.

Volleyball – (2025-2026):

Varsity and JV Volleyball – 60% of games in Parker and 40% of games in Marion.

Junior High Volleyball – 50% of games in Parker and 50% of games in Marion.

Volleyball Practices – 50% / 50%

Cross Country – (2025-2026): ParMar***Coaches discretion

Soccer – (2025-2026): Keep existing Bobcat COOP in place (Marion, Parker, Freeman Public, and Freeman Academy)

Girls Varsity Basketball - (2025-2026):

Varsity and JV Basketball – 60% Parker and 40% Marion

JH Girls Basketball Games – 50% Parker and 50% Marion

Girls Basketball Practices – 50% Parker and 50% Marion or at coaches discretion

Boys Basketball – (2025-2026):

Varsity and JV Basketball – 60% Parker and 40% Marion

JH Boys Basketball Games – 50% Parker and 50% Marion

Boys Basketball Practice – 50% Parker and 50% Marion or at coaches discretion

Wrestling – (2026-2027):

Meets/Matches – 90% in Parker and 10% Marion (possibly 1 quad in Marion depending on events, could change depending on the year)

Practice – 100% in Parker

Boys and Girls Golf – (2025-2026):

Practices/Meets – 100% at ParMar Golf Course (Pre-season indoor practices in Parker)

Boys and Girls Track and Field – (2025-2026): 100% in Parker with coaches' discretion.

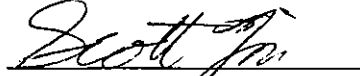
Softball – (2026-2027): 40% Parker and 60% Marion split for games and practices

The terms of this agreement shall commence on the date of approval by the SDHSAA and shall be in effect for a nine-year term.

Article XX – Absolute Terms

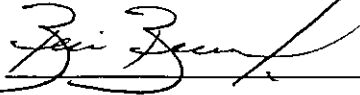
Absolute terms mean portions of this document are independent, permanent and not subject to annual review. As stated in Article XVIII, this agreement will be a 9-year commitment. If a breach of contract takes place prior to the 9-year term, the parting district will be charged a fine of \$75,000. Other terms include the Pheasant mascot, colors (blue, white, and red), new joint fight song, percentage of events, and a 50/50 split of financial costs.

Marion School District

 4/17/25

Scott Tieszen, Board President

Date

 4/17/2025

Brian Brosnahan, Superintendent

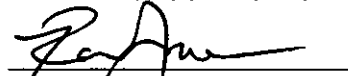
Date

 4/17/2025

Crystal Lange, Business Manager

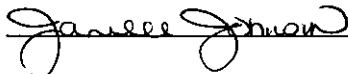
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Parker School District

 4/17/2025

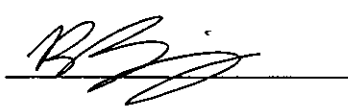
Ransom Jones, Board President

Date

 04/17/2025

Janelle Johnson, Superintendent

Date

 4/17/2025

Braden Bruening, Business Manager

Date