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HIGH SCHOOL

Unpacking what new AHSAA classifications mean for Montgomery area schools



Jaeden Day

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The [Alabama High School Athletic Association](#) announced a postseason and championship split between its private and public member schools for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 seasons on Friday, Jan. 23. The motion for the split passed with a 13-2 decision by the AHSAA Central Board of Control.

The [restructured model](#) will have six classifications for public schools and two for private schools, with the option for both to still compete against each other during the regular season.

The [multiplier and competitive balance factors](#) are no longer in play when concerning private schools, and CHOOSE Act funds will not impact athletic eligibility.

The decision is the biggest in recent AHSAA history, joining four other states that have a similar model.

With a big decision, comes ramifications —both good or bad. The [Montgomery Advertiser](#) is breaking down what the new AHSAA classification means to Montgomery area schools.

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What will those Friday night lights look like after AHSAA classification?

Familiar rivalries will still take shape like Montgomery Academy and Trinity Presbyterian who were placed in the Region 2, Class Private A together. There will also be some added flare to Region 2 with Saint James joining the fray.

On the public side of the coin, in Region 2 in Class 5A, Benjamin Russell will join the likes of Pike Road, Stanhope Elmore and Wetumpka. It's a region full of teams that made the 2025 Class 6A playoffs and is sure to be a competitive race to the region title.

The biggest change comes to Montgomery Catholic, who went from being in Class 5A in 2025 to Region 1 in Class Private AA where the geography of the region is widespread with new opponents. The Knights will face notable foes like McGill-Toolen and St. Michael Catholic.

Friday nights will feature similar rivalries with higher stakes and new faces squaring off in uncharted territories.

Did flag football take a hit in the Montgomery area with new classification?

Under the new model, high school flag football went from two classes to four. On paper, that might sound like a good change, but for the private schools that participate — there is only 14 teams competing for a championship.

Montgomery Catholic, the 2025 1-5A runners-up, are now in a classification with teams that have very little postseason experience. In 2025, Montgomery area teams ran the table in AHSAA flag football playoffs with Brewbaker Tech facing the Knights in the semifinal round.

With Brewbaker Tech, Tallassee and Marbury now in 1-4A on the public side of things, the competitive nature may take a turn for the worse when it comes to the postseason in the Montgomery area.

How often will private schools play public schools in the Montgomery area?

The option for private schools and public schools to compete during the regular season is still on the table, but how often will that happen when it comes to the Montgomery area?

With the AHSAA electing to wait until Feb. 6 to decide on a plan for the playoffs for classification, private schools are scrambling to find schools to fill non-region games. The desire is for private schools to face public schools

in regular season play, maintaining relationships student athletes have had since early playing days.

It remains to be seen how often private schools will face off with public schools during the regular season, with that outcome more likely to happen in football. But it there will be a strong push from private schools to maintain those existing relationships with public schools.