

# A New Start for Old Foes

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With this new school year, Reed City Area Public Schools entered a new academic and athletic conference. We left the Western Waterways Activities Conference (WWAC) and signed on to the Central States Activities Association (CSAA).

The WWAC was made up of Big Rapids, Ludington, Newaygo, Spring Lake, Grant, Morley Stanwood, Chippewa Hills, Holton, Hesperia, Tri County, Fruitport, Manistee, White Cloud, Fremont, Muskegon Orchard View, and Reed City. For the 2005-2006 school year, they split the WWAC into two divisions by school size. When this happened, it eliminated our rivalry games with Big Rapids. They have larger school populations and were in the larger division, and Reed City was in the smaller division. Not playing Big Rapids was a common topic of conversation around town last year. It was hard for those who grew up in these towns to fathom not playing one another.

As a member of the Reed City community, you definitely know when it is an event against Big Rapids, there are going to be a lot of people in attendance and emotions are going to run high. I know that neither school wants to lose to the other in any sport or activity they compete in.

So when the WWAC decided to go in a different direction, four of its schools, Reed City, Big Rapids, Chip Hills, and Morley Stanwood, jumped at the opportunity to join the CSAA. This allowed us to get back to playing each other on a regular basis and allowed us to stay in a conference that geographically is smaller than the WWAC.

The CSAA also broke apart, and three of its schools stayed with the conference, Central Montcalm, Lakeview, and Carson City-Crystal. So, we now have a seven-team conference, which will be a six-team conference next year, as Carson City will be leaving to join another conference. In regards to planning and working together, this conference has been very easy to work with. I think that the big reason for that is there are fewer schools, and the schools are much closer in size, so we have similar ideas and issues to deal with. There are fewer opinions on how things should be done and we're able to work cooperatively to get results that are in the best interest of kids.

So as we move forward, there will be bugs to work out as there are when anything is new, but joining the CSAA was a positive step for Reed City Area Public Schools. It got us back to our rivalry with Big Rapids, which are always entertaining. It also put us in a position to grow with this conference, hopefully add two more schools, and be a part of a stable group of schools that recognizes kids for both their athletic and academic achievements.