

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Interscholastic athletics for boys and girls is an integral and desirable part of the district's secondary school educational program. Individual and team sports shall be based upon comprehensive physical education instruction and intramural activities, seeking broad participation from all eligible secondary students. Lifetime or carry-over sports are to be particularly encouraged and supported. Parity in the number and kind of sports activities for girls and boys is a clear objective of the district.

Student eligibility for participation on interscholastic teams shall include:

1. Authorization by the school physician;
2. Written parent or guardian consent (the written consent will contain information for parents on mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) and will provide a link to the State Education Department's web page on TBI); and
3. Endorsement by the Building Principal based on established rules and various league and State Education Department regulations.

Although the district will take reasonable care to protect student athletes, students may still sustain injuries. In order to most effectively ensure student safety, open communication between students, parents and coaches about the child's medical condition is critical. Coaches, and other appropriate staff, will receive guidance and training regarding recognition of injury and removal of the student athlete from play in the event of injury. Parents and/or students are expected to report injuries so that student health can be protected.

In the case of suspected or actual head injury, a student must be removed from play immediately. In order to resume participation following injury, including head injury, the student needs to receive medical clearance. The Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate district staff, including the school physician, will develop regulations and procedures to guide the process of return to play.

In recognition of the importance of appropriately managing head injuries, the Board authorizes the creation of a Concussion Management Team (CMT). The CMT will comprise the athletic director, the school nurse, the school medical director, a coach of an interscholastic team, and other appropriate personnel designated by the Superintendent. The CMT is charged with overseeing compliance with state training requirements, developing guidelines for use by coaches and physical education teachers and developing information for distribution to parents and students.

Athletic Placement Program

Purpose

The Board of Education recognizes that participation in interscholastic athletics provides valuable educational experiences for students. In accordance with New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) and New York State Education Department (NYSED)

requirements, the District may permit qualified students in grades 7 and 8 to participate in teams at higher levels of competition when it is determined to be in the student's best educational and athletic interest.

The purpose of the Athletic Placement (Selection Classification) Program is to provide a consistent process for determining whether a student possesses the physical maturity, athletic ability, emotional readiness, and academic standing necessary to safely compete at a higher level.

Eligibility

Students in grades 7 and 8 may be considered for placement on a high school athletic team only if:

- The sport is approved under the NYSPHSAA Athletic Placement Process;
- The student meets all NYSPHSAA age and eligibility requirements;
- The District completes the required evaluation process; and
- Final approval is granted by the Athletic Director or designee.

Evaluation Criteria

Students seeking placement at the varsity level shall successfully complete all components of the District's Athletic Placement Process, which includes:

- Medical Clearance
 - Completion of a current physical examination
- Physical Fitness Assessment
 - The Athletic Director will determine whether the student is physically fit enough to participate in that specific sport.
- Sport Skill Evaluation
 - Evaluation by the varsity head coach using a standardized sport-specific assessment.
 - Recommendation by the Athletic Director based upon the student's demonstrated skill level and ability to complete safely.
- Emotional and Social Readiness
 - Review by the Athletic Director, school counselor, principal, or designee to determine whether the student demonstrates the maturity, judgement, and emotional readiness necessary for participation with older students.
- Academic Eligibility
 - The student must remain academically eligible under District athletic eligibility rules.

Parent/Guardian Consent

Written consent from a parent or guardian shall be required before a student participates in the Athletic Placement Process.

Final Determination

The Athletic Director shall review all required documentation, including the recommendations of the Varsity or JV head coach, and any other individuals involved in the evaluation process.

The Athletic Director shall make the final determination regarding a student's placement at the varsity or JV level. In making this determination, the Athletic Director shall consider the student's physical readiness, athletic ability, emotional maturity, academic eligibility, and the best interests of both the student and the athletic program.

Approval shall be granted on a sport-by-sport and season-by-season basis. Participation in one sport shall not automatically qualify a student for participation in another sport.

The decision of the Athletic Director shall be final.

Course Credit

In accordance with existing Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, the Board of Education will permit students in grades 10-12 to receive credit towards high school graduation equivalent to physical education for participation in interscholastic athletics. Such credit will, in addition to other requirements, be contingent upon proven cardiovascular and physical fitness and competency in lifetime or carry-over sports. Standards for such fitness and competency shall be developed by the administration.

Cross-ref: 5420, Student Health Services

Ref: Education Law §§ 305 (42), 1709(8-a); 3001-b
 8 NYCRR §§135.4, 136.5
 Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. V. Doe, 520 U.S. 290 (2000) (constitutionality of student-led prayers at interscholastic athletic activities)
 Concussion Management Support Materials, www.nysphsaa.org
 Athletic Placement Process for Interschool Athletic Programs.
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ssd/documents/AthleticPlacementProcess2-11-15Revised.pdf>

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