

**ATHLETICS: SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE STUDENT PARTICIPATION
IN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS SCHOOL BOARD POLICY**

The School Board for the Anoka-Hennepin District #11 believes that with few exceptions, high school athletic teams should be made up of high school students. Every attempt will be made by coaches to recruit high school students for participation in activities. However, there are situations where 7th and 8th grade students will be allowed to participate on high school athletic teams to guarantee the viability of offering the activity or ensure the health and safety of individual team members.

Category 1:

7th or 8th grade participation is rarely allowed for the following athletic teams because of high numbers of high school participants:

- Football
- Volleyball
- Boys Hockey
- Boys Basketball
- Girls Basketball
- Baseball
- Dance Team
- Boys Golf
- Boys Lacrosse

If high school participation numbers fall to a level that impacts the viability of offering a Category 1 activity, consideration will be given to placing the activity in Category 2. Category 1 activities may be moved to Category 2 with and only with unanimous consent of the District Activities Directors, the Associate Superintendent and notification of the School Board. In very limited circumstances an acceleration request will be considered. A high school student who wishes to limit their level of competition (junior varsity, B-Squad, exhibition) may do so by submitting a request in writing to the coach or activities director. The request should include a parent signature.

Category 2:

Limited 7th and 8th graders may participate at the lowest level of high school competition to guarantee viability of an activity. The expectation will be that the lowest level of high school competition must have at least 50% of its roster filled by high school students. If, due to roster size, the number of 7th and 8th grade students is limited, try outs will be held to fill out the squad. Participation of any 7th or 8th grade student is not allowed if it is necessary to cut a high school student from the team. Category 2 activities are listed below:

- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Softball Girls
- Golf

In limited circumstances an acceleration request will be considered. A high school student who wishes to limit their level of competition (junior varsity, B-Squad, exhibition) may do so by submitting a request in writing to the coach or activities director. The request should include a parent signature.

Category 3:

7th and 8th grade students may participate on high school teams if, and only if, no high school athlete is cut or denied from competing at the varsity level due to the presence of a 7th or 8th grade student. Category 3 activities are listed below:

Wrestling (four lowest weight classes, if necessary)
 Boys Swimming
 Girls Swimming
 Girls Tennis
 Boys Tennis
 Cross Country Running
 Track
 Alpine Skiing
 Nordic Skiing
 Adapted Athletics
 Gymnastics
 Girls Hockey
 Girls Lacrosse

In limited circumstances an acceleration request will be considered. A high school student who wishes to limit their level of competition (junior varsity, B-Squad, exhibition) may do so by submitting a request in writing to the coach or activities director. The request should include a parent signature.

The following conditions apply to the 7th and 8th grade athlete:

- a. 7th and 8th grade students who participate in a high school program will not be permitted to leave his/her school of attendance prior to the established dismissal time for practice purposes.
- b. The student's schedule will not be changed to include a study hall the last period of the school day.
- c. Dismissal for participation in regularly scheduled contests will be permitted when necessary.
- d. Transportation from the 7th or 8th grader's school to the high school for practice and scheduled contests will be the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.
- e. All fee requirements of the high school program will be applicable.
- f. All Minnesota State High School League rules will be in place for the 7th and 8th grade student.
- g. 7th and 8th grade students will be eligible to compete only for the high school of their respective attendance area.
- h. Participation by a 7th or 8th grader on a high school team does not imply placement in that high school for the purposes of district policies or state law including but not limited to internal transfer, Open Enrollment, Charter Schools, Magnet Schools, Online Learning or State-Approved Alternative Programs.

Acceleration Policy

The Board recognizes that in addition to consideration of team viability, the Board will also provide limited opportunity for middle school students to participate on a varsity level team where their skill level, based on objective factors, benefits the team as a whole and provides for a positive experience for other members of the team. Parents may talk with the school's Activity Director to learn more about the philosophy of ISD #11 athletics and activities and the process for acceleration. It should be understood that few such requests will be honored and that a team of five district administrators, representing all five high schools and two school board members must unanimously approve these requests. The committee shall document and retain the rationale and reasons for its decisions to ensure fair, uniform, and consistent decision making. When participation by a middle school student on a high school team occurs, a high school student impacted by this move must be assured a roster position on the regular season varsity or junior varsity team.

In adherence to MSHSL rules, any Middle School student granted permission to compete at the Varsity level is eligible to do so only at the High School which is considered their "public school district attendance area." This policy follows current MSHSL rules/policies. Any determinations made are for the given season/school year and are no guarantee for subsequent years.

The Activity Director at each high school will provide an annual report of 7th and 8th grade participation in each activity to their building Principal, Superintendent and School Board on a yearly basis.

Anoka-Hennepin School District No. 11
Anoka, MN 55303

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