

SPORTS AND THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

General Principles and Eligibility

Athletics are an integral part of a well-balanced educational program. Therefore, the Board supports within its resources a broad sports program with equal access for both males and females, with emphasis on maximum participation, through interscholastic and intramural activity. The District's interscholastic athletic program will conform with the Commissioner's regulations, as well as the established rules of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association and the State Education Department.

Interscholastic sports teams that have a season's overall record of .500 or division record of .400 or better at the end of the regular season may participate in sectional or intersectional competition. Any individual or individuals who qualify for sectional or intersectional competition may also participate. The final decision to participate shall be made by the Extracurricular and Athletics Director.

Athletic eligibility requires that the student:

- a) Provide written parental/guardian consent. The consent form must contain information regarding mild traumatic brain injuries (concussions) as specified in the Commissioner's regulations.
- b) Obtain medical clearance from the school physician/nurse practitioner or the student's personal physician. The school physician/nurse practitioner retains final approval on any physicals performed by a student's personal physician.
- c) Meet the requirements for interscholastic competition as set forth by the Commissioner's regulations and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.
- d) Comply with all District rules, codes, and standards applicable to athletic participation.

Title IX Compliance

The Board supports equal athletic opportunities for members of both sexes through interscholastic and intramural activities. To ensure equal athletic opportunities for its students, the District will consider:

- a) Its accommodation of athletic interests and abilities (the nature and extent of sports offered, including levels of competition, team competition, and team performance);
- b) Equipment and supplies;
- c) Scheduling of games and practice time;
- d) Travel costs and opportunities for travel;
- e) Assignment and compensation of coaches;
- f) Locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities;
- g) Available medical and training facilities and services;
- h) The nature and extent of support, publicity, and promotion including cheerleading, bands, programs distributed at games, and booster club activities.

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The District may consider other pertinent factors as well. Each of the factors will be assessed by comparing availability, quality, type of benefits, kind of opportunities, and form of treatment. Identical benefits, opportunities, or treatments are not required.

The District's Civil Rights Compliance Officer will coordinate the District's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX. This person will be appropriately trained and possess comprehensive knowledge about applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. To the extent possible, the District will not designate an employee whose other job duties may create a conflict of interest, such as the Extracurricular and Athletics Director.

Booster Clubs

The School District has a responsibility under Title IX to ensure that boys' and girls' programs are provided with equivalent benefits, treatment, services, and opportunities regardless of their source. When determining equivalency, therefore, benefits, services, and opportunities attained through private funds including donations, fundraising, and booster clubs must be considered in combination with all benefits, services, and opportunities.

Athletic Placement Process for Interschool Athletic Programs (APP)

The APP is a method for evaluating students (CCSD and Outside School Athletes) who want to participate in sports at higher or lower levels, consistent with their physical maturity, size, fitness, and sport-specific skills compared to other student athletes in accordance with the standards established by the New York State Commissioner of Education. The District Board of Education approves the use of the APP for all pupils in grades seven (7) and eight (8) to complete on interscholastic athletics teams organized for senior high school (grades 9-12) pupils, or senior high school pupils to compete on interscholastic athletic teams organized for pupils in the seventh and eighth grades. The APP process must be completed 2 weeks prior to the start of the season for which the student athlete is trying out.

The superintendent will implement procedures for the APP and will direct the Extracurricular and Athletics Director to maintain records of students who have successfully completed the APP during the year prior to the start of a particular sport's season; and report these results as required by state regulation. If a student athlete does not meet the stop-wise expectations at each level of the APP, then that pupil shall not proceed any further in the evaluation process. This includes (1) review of Sports and the Athletic Program policy, (2) written parent/guardian permission using the district form, (3) administrative approval, (4) documented medical clearance by the district medical director, (5) coach's sports skill evaluation based on past personal observation in a competitive environment by the sport coach, and (6) sport-specific physical fitness testing (if required), (7) Extracurricular and Athletics Director documents these qualifications showing that the student athlete passed these parts of the APP, (8) Extracurricular and Athletics Director sends out correspondence regarding results of evaluation, (9) Extracurricular and Athletics Director maintains the student's record, and (10) notifications sent from Extracurricular and Athletics Director. Only after the director of athletics has documented these qualifications showing that the student athlete passed these parts of the APP will the Extracurricular and Athletics Director permit the pupil to try out, or even attend practices, for a team in question. Any district coaches of the sport in question shall not administer the physical fitness test. The Tanner Scale for physical maturity will be used.

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Once a student athlete has successfully completed the APP process, that pupil is not required to repeat the APP for that sport and level again but is no longer eligible to compete at a lower level unless their physical maturity, size, fitness, or sport-specific skills change; in that case, the APP evaluation must be repeated upon a new written request by the parent or guardian.

The District will not use the APP to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, provide opportunities for student athletes when no other modified programs are present, or to reward students. It is for the few, select students who can benefit from such placement because their level of readiness is comparable with the level of competition found in already-eligible members of the district's proposed team.

The goal, as stated by New York State Department of Education in 2016, is increased opportunities for student athletes, a fair competitive environment, minimized risk, and greater personal satisfaction – with safety paramount.

If a student athlete in grade seven (7) or eight (8) has reached the chronological age of fifteen (15) years old prior to July 1, that pupil is eligible to participate in high school athletics without undergoing the full APP; only approval by the district medical director is required. Pupils seeking to try out for bowling or golf are not required by state or local regulation to complete the physical fitness test portion of the APP.

New York State Education Law, Section 3208(a) provides a due process procedure to petition the courts for relief from a school district's exclusion of student participation in district interscholastic athletics.

Student Athletic Injuries

No injured student will be allowed to practice or play in an athletic contest. An appropriate medical professional should diagnose and treat an athlete's injuries. The coach should ensure that any player injured while under his or her care receives prompt and appropriate medical attention, and that all of the medical professional's treatment instructions are followed. The injured student has an obligation to promptly inform the coach of all injuries. No student will be allowed to practice or compete if there is a question whether he/she is in adequate physical condition. A physician's certification may be required before an athlete is permitted to return to practice or competition.

Athletic Program - Safety

The District will take reasonable steps to minimize physical risks posed to students participating in the interscholastic athletic program by:

- a) Requiring timely medical examinations of participants;
- b) Employing certified or licensed staff to coach all varsity, junior varsity, and modified practices and games;
- c) Providing or requiring certified or licensed officials to officiate all competitions;
- d) Ensuring that its players' equipment is safe and operates within the applicable manufacturers' guidelines;
- e) Ensuring that all home fields, courts, pools, tracks, and other areas where athletes practice, warm-up, or compete are safe and appropriate for use; and
- f) Providing professional development and training opportunities for all coaching staff.

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Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 USC Section 1681 et seq.
45 CFR Part 86
8 NYCRR Sections 135 and 136

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #3420 -- Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment in the School District
#7522 -- Concussion Management

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