

## **SUBJECT: SPORTS AND THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

### **General Principles and Eligibility**

Athletics are an integral part of a well-balanced educational program. 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 (NYSPHSAA) and the State Education Department. The Board supports within its resources a broad sports program with equal access for both males and females, as well as qualified students with a disability, with an emphasis on maximum participation, through interscholastic and intramural activity. The District will comply with recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) regarding Title IX equal opportunity for males and females in the District's total athletic program regarding any of the following factors which may be applicable:

Athletic eligibility requires that the student:

- a) Provide written parental or 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 & pass satisfactorily the medical examination administered by the school physician/nurse practitioner or the student's personal physician. The school physician or 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 NYSPHSAA.
- 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;

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- e) Assignment and compensation of coaches;
- f) Locker rooms, practice, and competitive facilities;
- g) Available medical and training facilities and services; and
- h) The nature and extent of support, publicity, and promotion.

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 treatment are not required.

The District's Title IX Coordinator(s) will coordinate the District's efforts to comply with 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 athletic director.

**Booster Clubs**

The 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.

Private fundraising, including student-initiated fundraising, is permissible under Title IX. Further, compliance with Title IX does not mean that teams must "share" proceeds from fundraising activities. It does, however, place a responsibility on the District to ensure that benefits, services, treatment and opportunities overall, regardless of funding sources, are equivalent for male and female athletes.

In accordance with OCR, in order for the District to be in continuing compliance with Title IX requirements, the District must assure that services, benefits and opportunities in its athletic programs are provided on an equivalent basis to both boys and girls, including those services, benefits and opportunities that are provided through the use of outside financial assistance such as donations, fundraising by coaches, and booster clubs.

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### **Selection/Classification Process**

The Board approves the use of the selection/classification process for all secondary school interscholastic team members. The Board directs the Superintendent to implement the procedures and maintain a file of those students deemed eligible as a result of those procedures.

### **Athletic Placement Process for Interschool Athletic Programs (APP)\***

The APP is a method for evaluating students who want to participate in sports at higher or lower levels, consistent with their physical and emotional maturity, size, fitness level, and skills. The Board approves the use of the APP for students in grades no lower than seventh grade to compete on interscholastic athletic teams organized for senior high school students, and for senior high school students to compete on interscholastic athletic teams organized for students in the seventh and eighth grades. The Superintendent will implement procedures for the APP, and will direct the athletic director to maintain records of students who have successfully completed the APP.

### **Student Athletic Injuries**

No injured student will be allowed to practice or play in an athletic contest. No student should be allowed to practice or play in an athletic contest if he/she is suffering from an injury. 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 his or her coach of all injuries. No student will be allowed to practice or compete if there is a question whether he or she is in adequate physical condition. A certified athletic trainer or physician's certification may be required before an athlete is permitted to return to practice or competition.

### **Concussions**

A student who has sustained or is believed to have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury (concussion) must be immediately removed from athletic activities. If there is any doubt, it shall be presumed that the student is so injured until proven otherwise. Before being permitted to return to athletic activity, a student must be symptom free for not less than twenty-four (24) hours and have been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. Additionally, for extra class athletic activities, a student must have received clearance from the School District Medical Director to participate in such activity.

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**Students with Disabilities**

The District shall provide a qualified student with a disability an opportunity to benefit from the District's extracurricular programs to the same extent as that of students without a disability provided that such participation shall not result in a fundamental alteration in the program or the nature of the extracurricular athletic activity or otherwise alter the character of the competition. No student shall be excluded from participating in any program or activity based upon any generalizations, assumptions, prejudices, or stereotypes regarding any disability. District personnel shall use the same selection criteria for all students and may adopt bona fide safety standards related to participation by students in any program. The District shall also provide reasonable modifications or aides and services so long as there is no fundamental alteration in any program and provided that no student would receive an unfair competitive advantage by reason of such modification or aid. The Superintendent shall develop rules and regulations to ensure the participation of students with disabilities.

**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.

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

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NOTE: Refer also to Policies #3420 -- Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment in the District  
#3421 -- Title IX and Sex Discrimination  
#7520 -- Accidents and Medical Emergencies  
#7522 -- Concussion Management

Adoption Date 9/28/10  
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