

Policy Information

Series 5000 - Students

Activities

Middle School Student Athlete Participation in Interscholastic Athletic Program

Policy # 5132

The determination of middle school students for participation in the athletic program at the high school level shall be at the discretion of the Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics and in accordance with the "selection/classification" athletic placement process for all secondary school interscholastic athletic team membership. The athletic placement process ensures that students are placed at levels of competition appropriate to their physical and emotional maturity, physical fitness and ability and skills in that sport in relationship to other students on those teams. The District Medical Director and the Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics are responsible for implementing the athletic placement process consistent with the Commissioner's Regulations.

It is the policy of the Lakeland Central School District that middle school students will not participate in high school interscholastic athletic programs unless it is determined, in accordance with this Policy, that:

1. There is a combined team (grades 7-12), no modified team (e.g., track, golf, gymnastics) and middle school students will not bump high school students from the team.

OR

2. There are an insufficient number of high school students to field a particular sport and more aggressive recruitment for high school players has occurred. The determination to recruit middle school students shall not take place until at least one week after the start of a season.

OR

3. The student is an exceptional athlete in a particular sport. Each student will be evaluated individually on his or her merits to determine whether he or she is considered to be an exceptional athlete. In this situation prior to the student being evaluated under the athletic placement process:

A. The student and parents must agree to this participation. (Parent Permission Form)

B. The Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics will confirm that the student is appropriate for consideration, including the likelihood that the student would play at least 50% of the games, the student's academic performance is at or above grade level and the student is emotionally ready to socialize with high school students.

C. The District's Medical Director will determine a student's physical maturity level and compare the physical size of the student in relation to that of the students against whom the student would be competing. If the student is determined not to have attained the physical maturity level for the particular sport and level, the process will not be continued.

D. The sport coach will consider past personal observations of the student and input from the student's former coaches or may observe the student in a physical education class.

E. The student must have a physical fitness test and examination by a certified physical education teacher who is not the coach of the sport for which the student will be trying out (with limited exceptions for swimming, bowling and golf). The President's Physical Fitness Test will be administered.

F. The results of the three evaluations will be sent to the Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics, who shall maintain all records of students who successfully complete the athletic placement process. Only students who pass all part of the athletic placement process will be permitted to try out.

G. The student's participation must be approved by a review board consisting of the Middle School Principal, Middle School Athletic Coordinator, High School Athletic Coordinator or designees and the Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics. The review board shall consider the student's ability in the particular sport and whether or not there is comparable competition for the student at their current level of play in such sport. Only students whose level of excellence is so high that he or she cannot receive adequate competition at their level of play shall be allowed to participate at the high school level, at the appropriate level of competition. The review board shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools.

H. A list of the scores of all athletes who successfully complete the process and have been approved through the athletic placement process after the try-out period has been completed must be sent to:

- The Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics
- Athletic governing board or section office

4. All high school teams will be comprised of a minimum number of high school students, the regulated team numbers, as determined by the Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics in consultation with the high school coaches for each sport, prior to permitting the exceptional middle school student to become a member of that team.

5. No middle school student shall miss school or be released from school early to participate in practice or a game except for sectional competitions at the end of the season. If a middle school student is pulled out of school to practice or play during the regular season, the coach will not permit such student to play.

The Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics, in consultation with the high school coaches, will establish regulated team numbers by sport, by June of the prior school year, for the next following school year. Regulated team numbers shall be the number required to normally and typically field the team. Regulated team numbers will be filled with high school students in order to assure that high school students are not deprived of the opportunity to participate on high school interscholastic athletic teams. Any remaining places on the team may be filled with high school or qualified middle school students.

Notwithstanding the above, in the event there is an insufficient number of high school students to field a team in a particular sport, qualified middle school students may be brought up for that season only.

Policy References:

(Section 135.4[c][7][11][a & b] of the Revised Regulations effective October 29, 1980)

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