



## ANOKA-HENNEPIN SCHOOLS

# ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR SEVENTH AND EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Anoka-Hennepin Schools is a member of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) and students and teams that participate in MSHSL activities follow guidelines established by the MSHSL. These activities are designed to provide opportunities for students in grades seven through twelve to participate in high school athletics programs.

Anoka-Hennepin School District has a play-up process and procedure for students in grades 7 and 8 that has direct oversight by the associate superintendent of high schools and a common administrative decision-making procedure at the school level granting play-up participation based upon tryout performance.

## **PATHWAYS TO PARTICIPATION**

There are three potential pathways for seventh or eighth-grade student participation and accelerated play-up in high school athletics:

- **Lowest Level:** 7th/8th-grade student-athletes may be allowed to play at the lowest level of a high school program to ensure viability of that sport to align with Conference expectations of levels of play. In these cases, student-athletes in grade 9 will not be cut to make room for a 7th/8th-grade student-athlete at that lowest level.
- **Accelerated Play-up:** In cases where a 7th or 8th-grade student-athlete has demonstrated ability to compete at the high school level, the coach and activities director discuss the play-up opportunity. In these cases, a junior or senior may be evaluated as not having the ability to be retained at the JV/Varsity level.
- **Not offered at middle school:** In cases where a comparable program is not offered at the middle school level, the coach and activities director will determine if participation at the high school level is appropriate.

## **PROCESS**

A request to participate in high school athletics may be initiated by the student or the student's parent or guardian, by contacting the coach and/or activities director of the high school the student would attend. Upon receipt of a request, the high school activities director will provide the student and the student's parent or guardian with planning guidelines and conditions of which the student would be able to participate.

- a. Students who participate in a high school athletic program will not be permitted to leave their school of attendance prior to the established dismissal time for practice purposes.
- b. Dismissal for participation in regularly scheduled contests will be permitted as necessary.
- c. Transportation from the student's school of attendance to the high school for practice and scheduled contests will be the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.
- d. All fee requirements of the high school athletic program will be applicable.

- e. All MSHSL rules will be in place for the student.
- f. A student will be only eligible to compete for the high school in the student's school attendance area.
- g. Participation by a student on a high school team does not imply future 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.
- h. The 7th and 8th-grade athlete approval and registration process must be completed before high school sports registration closes for the sports season in which the student seeks to participate.
- i. Upon receipt of the recommendation and compiled data, the associate superintendent for high schools will review and approve or deny the request.
- j. Participation by a student on a high school team does not imply future placement on that team the following year.
- k. Conference policy only allows student athletes to compete at an athlete's grade level or above.

## ELIGIBILITY

A student's academic performance and attendance will be considered when determining whether to approve or deny a request to participate in high school athletics.

- A student who wishes to participate must have fewer than 2 unexcused absences in the last grading period prior to the season or activity period. If an athletic season or activity period continues across grading periods, the student must continue to meet the attendance requirements in order to remain eligible.
- A student who wishes to participate must achieve at least a 2.0 GPA in the last grading period prior to the season or activity period. If a grading period ends during an athletic season or activity period, students must continue to meet the academic requirements in order to remain eligible. Participation will be suspended and appropriate action may be taken for academic or attendance concerns during the season. Return to participation may take place if these concerns are remedied.

## COMMUNICATIONS

When a determination has been made, the high school activities director will contact all appropriate parties.

