



510.1 ATHLETIC AND ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

I. PURPOSE

South Washington County Schools encourages the participation of both boys and girls in the district's athletic/activity programs. It is the district's Athletic/Activity philosophy that individual students will benefit through equal opportunities to grow physically and intellectually through their experience in interscholastic competition. Every reasonable effort will be made to provide the opportunity to students interested in participating in an activity, regardless of ability.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Participation in athletics/activities for all secondary students is limited by interest, ability, Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) rules and policies regarding eligibility and the following guidelines:

Category I Activities:

1. Sports - football, soccer, volleyball, basketball, hockey, wrestling, baseball, golf, softball, tennis, track and lacrosse.
2. Fine Arts Activities - declamation, debate, one-act play, high school musicals/plays, band and choir.
3. Grade 7 & 8 students will participate at their home schools and in organized programs external to the school (e.g. hockey).
4. An exceptional athlete/participant in grade 7 or 8 will be allowed to participate at the varsity (includes junior varsity) level according to the process set forth in this policy. 7th and 8th grade students eligible to participate in a high school athletic program must do so at the high school in the student's high school attendance boundary. **An exception to this policy will be allowed when teams are unable to field a 9th grade team. In this scenario, 8th graders will be allowed to play on the 9th grade team only.**

Category II Activities:

1. Sports - cross-country running, swimming, gymnastics, cross-country skiing, slalom skiing, adapted sports (soccer and softball).
2. All participation is at the high school level. 7th and 8th grade students eligible to participate in a high school athletic program must do so at the high school in the

student's high school attendance boundary.

3. Level of competition is determined by ability.

Criteria and Process for Approval of Exceptional Athlete(s)

1. Requests for allowing a student to participate in other than their assigned grade or designated level will be limited to varsity participation (includes junior varsity) and are not to consider promotion of the best athlete/participant of one grade level to the next grade level.
2. Requests are limited to the rare exceptional athlete/participant.
3. Requests may be made by the parents/student or the varsity coach.
4. All requests will be considered by the: parents, student, coaches (present grade level coach and varsity coach) and administration. A unanimous approval is required of all parties. Any one party may veto the request.
5. Consideration of all requests will be based on the social, psychological, educational, and physical best interests of the student.
6. The application and approval for an exception must be in place prior to the fourth Monday of the affected sport season.

POLICY ADOPTED: February 17, 2009

POLICY REVIEWED: April 2009

POLICY REVISED: April 23, 2009, December 4, 2014