

CLINTON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

Parent Packet



ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Athletic Placement Process (APP) is a New York State Education Department (NYSED) program that permits physically and emotionally appropriate students in 7th or 8th grade to try out for a high school athletic team. The number of students who are allowed to compete outside of their grade levels should be rare and is intended only for the exceptional athlete who has the physical and social-emotional maturity, sport specific skills, and physical fitness necessary to be placed with other athletes outside of their grade level. In addition, the athlete should perform well academically while competing at the advanced level as evidenced by successful academic performance past and present.

In order to begin the evaluation process, we must have your permission, which can be given by returning the Parent Permission Form that is included in this correspondence. This evaluation is a comprehensive assessment of your child's social-emotional and physical maturity; as well as athletic abilities, physical fitness, and sport-specific athletic skill in relationship to other student athletes at that level.

Physical maturity is determined during a physical exam by the District Medical Director, who is responsible for making the final decision after reviewing Tanner ratings, family growth history, height and weight, muscle mass, and other relevant data. Note that the district does not accept a history of menarche for girls in place of a physical maturity examination. Upon passing the medical clearance step of the process, the student may proceed to the sport skill and physical assessments. Students must pass all levels in order to meet the requirements of the APP.

It is important for you and your child to understand that, once the requirements are met and if he/she is accepted as a member of the team, he/she cannot return to a lower-level team (modified) in that sport in that season. Remember that at the higher level of play your child will be exposed to not only increased physical demands and potential for injury, but will also be exposed to a social atmosphere that is common among older students in a high school environment. Therefore, it is important to take into account your child's ability to handle all of the additional demands inherent in competing at the high school level.

Along with this correspondence, I am including a step-by-step guide that you may find informative and helpful in understanding the process, including the appeal process should you not be satisfied with the final decision of the school district.

Please feel free to contact me regarding this program or to discuss any aspect of your child's athletic placement. If you agree to allow your child's participation in this program, please sign and return the parental permission form to my office.

Sincerely,

Eddie Waskiewicz
Director of Athletics, Safety and Wellness

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

FORM PARENT/GUARDIAN

STATEMENT

I have read the attached letter and I understand the purpose and eligibility implications of the Athletic Placement Process.

My son/daughter (name): _____ has my permission to undergo the evaluation process and to participate in this program. I understand that the determination of physical maturity is a private examination involving inspection of breasts and genitals and will be performed by a licensed school health professional, and I give my permission for the examination. Upon passing the medical clearance, he/she may proceed to the physical fitness and skill assessments. I understand that passing the evaluation process does not guarantee my child a position on a team, but only permits him/her to try out.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

**Please return this form to the Director of Athletics, Safety and Wellness Eddie Waskiewicz.*

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

ALL STEPS MUST BE FOLLOWED IN ORDER

Step 1 Parent/Guardian Permission: All students who are to be evaluated must first obtain written parent/guardian permission before any evaluation may begin (see Appendix B).

Step 2 Administrative Approval: The athletic administrator should confirm that the student is suitable for consideration, which includes the following:

- because of the increased time demands of participation at the high school level, the student's academic performance (as determined at the local level) should be at or above grade level – the middle school principal needs to certify this component.
- the student's emotional readiness to socialize with high school-aged students should also be assessed by the middle school principal with consultation with the school counselor if needed.
- If the student is not academically or socially ready, the student should not proceed through the APP.

Step 3 Medical Clearance: The district 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 wishes to compete.

- If the student is determined to have attained the appropriate physical maturity level and comparable physical size for the desired sport and level(s) (See Appendix C and H), the student may proceed with **Step 4: Sport Skill Evaluation**
- If the student is determined to **not** have attained an appropriate physical maturity level for the desired sport and level, **the process stops**.

Step 4 Sport Coach Skill Evaluation: the student must receive a positive recommendation from the sport's coach, which includes the likelihood that the student would play in at least 50% of the games. The sport coach will rely on past personal observations and may consider input from the student's former coaches to complete the evaluation. If the coach is unfamiliar with the student, the sport coach may wish to observe the student in a physical education class. The sport coach will complete the Coach's Sport Skill Evaluation form and submit it to the Athletic Director.

Step 5 Physical Fitness Testing: This must be administered by a certified physical education teacher who is **not** a coach of the sport for which the student will be trying out.

- The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process
- The student must meet the 85th percentile level for their age in 4 out of 5 test components (see Appendix E, I, and J).
- For students trying out for swimming, see Appendix J for an alternate fitness test to the 1 mile walk/run- students trying out for swimming may choose to either do the 1 mile walk/ run or the 500 yard swim.
- Exception to the physical fitness test requirement: Students who desire to try out for bowling or golf teams are **not** required to complete the physical fitness testing.

Step 6 Qualification Determination: Only students who pass all required components of the APP process parts are permitted to try out. These parts are: Step 2 - Administrative Approval, Step 3 - Medical Clearance, and Step 4 – Sport Skill Assessment, and Step 5 - Physical Fitness Testing.

Step 7 Try Outs: The student is allowed to try out for the sport and level requested or the student must return to the modified level of competition. For students trying out for bowling or golf, see instructions for try outs for these sports in Appendix G.

Step 8 Records: The athletic director must maintain all records of students who have successfully completed the APP. Items to be kept in the student's file are: Parent/Guardian Permission and Result letters; Maturity Evaluation and Medical Director Form; Physical Fitness results; Coach's Sport Skill Evaluation.

Step 9 Notifications: A Notification List (see Appendix F) of the scores of all athletes who have successfully completed the process and have been approved through the APP **after the try-out period has been completed** must be sent to:

- The physical education director and/or athletic director of competitor schools
- Athletic governing board or section office

Important Note on the Physical Maturity Examination: For the medical director, determining the physical maturity level of the student is an important step in the APP. This is done to ensure that the student has attained a level of physical development at which the chances of growth plate or overuse injury are minimized. Since the growth plate is the weakest area of the growing skeleton, weaker than the nearby ligaments and tendons that connect bones to other bones and muscles, injury to a growth plate can lead to a serious and potentially permanent injury to a joint or long bone. While growth plate injuries are usually caused by an acute event, such as a fall or a blow to a limb, they can also result from overuse, such as when a gymnast practices for hours on the uneven bars, a runner runs long distances, or a baseball pitcher spends hours perfecting a curve ball. Growth plate trauma and other overuse injuries may occur in competitive sports such as football, basketball, softball, track & field, and gymnastics. The likelihood increases when students are doing a single sport year round without substantial rest; therefore, caution must be exercised in determining the physical maturity of students at this age level. Developmental staging reduces, but does not eliminate, the risks of injury to a younger student moving up to sport activities involving larger and more developmentally mature students. Since all growth plates might not be fully matured by the time that a student reaches Tanner 5, care must be exercised in determining the physical maturity of athletes. It is always best to err on the side of caution and keep a student at the age-appropriate level of play in order to safeguard the student.

Appeal Process: Education Law, Section 3208(a) provides a due process procedure to students or their parents/guardians to petition the courts for relief from a school district's exclusion of the student from participation in an athletic program. In the event of such disqualification, school authorities should advise the parents and the student of the availability of this process. The court may then grant such a petition, if it is satisfied that it is in the best interest of the student and that it is reasonably safe for the student to participate in the athletic program.

A copy of this law can be found on the following page and can also be accessed by the following link: <http://codes.findlaw.com/ny/education-law/edn-sect-3208-a.html>

New York Education Law § 3208-a. Special proceeding to determine physical capacity of student to participate in athletic programs

1. Upon a school district's determination that a student shall not be permitted to participate in an athletic program by reason of a physical impairment, based on a medical examination conducted by the school physician, the student may commence a special proceeding in the supreme court pursuant to the provisions of article four of the civil practice law and rules to enjoin the school district from prohibiting his participation. Such special proceeding may be brought in the county in which the student resides or in the county in which the school district is located.
2. The petition in the proceeding shall be a verified petition of a parent or guardian of the student. The petition shall have annexed affidavits of at least two licensed physicians setting forth that in their opinion the student is physically capable of participating in an athletic program, that participation would be reasonably safe, and any special or preventive measures or devices needed to protect the student.
3. The court shall grant such petition if it is satisfied that it is in the best interest of the student to participate in an athletic program and that it is reasonably safe for him to do so.
4. No school district shall be held liable for an injury sustained by a student granted an order under this section provided such injury is incurred during such student's actual participation in an athletic program and, provided further, that such injury is attributable to the physical impairment for which such court order was obtained.
5. Unless specifically prohibited by the court, an order granted pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be considered valid and sufficient for subsequent years, provided that the student has not changed athletic programs and, further, that two licensed physicians set forth current affidavits that, in their opinion, the student's physical impairment has not changed since the time of the original court order.
6. In no event shall a successful petitioner be entitled to costs in any proceeding brought pursuant to this section.
7. The school district shall not be responsible for providing or bear the cost of, any special or preventive measures or devices needed to protect the student unless such special or preventive measures or devices are contained in a student's individual education plan recommended by the school district committee on the handicapped and such student is a child with a handicapping condition, as defined in section forty-four hundred one of this chapter.
8. A physically impaired child eligible to commence a special proceeding as provided by this section shall be defined as any child determined by a school physician as ineligible for participation on the basis of the regulations of the state education department, the American Medical Association Guide for Medical Evaluation for Candidates for School Sports, or by any standard established by the school district involved.
9. An athletic program for the purpose of this section shall include intramural activities, inter-school activities, extramural activities, and organized practice as defined by section 135.1 by the commissioner of education's regulations.