

540 STUDENT ACCELERATION TO HIGHER-LEVEL ACTIVITIES POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the promotion of middle school athletes to compete at a high school level.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

It is the general policy of the Lakeview School District not to accelerate students from Middle School (grades 7-8) athletic programs to high school (grades 9-12) athletic programs when programs exist at both levels and run concurrently. Participation by students on athletic teams representing the high school of Lakeview School will normally be limited to those students who regularly attend high school classes. Such teams constitute an integral part of the total education program and are primarily designed to serve the needs of the high school students. This represents a basic guideline for athletic participation in our school district. However, on occasions, a middle school athlete in the 7th or 8th grade may be so physically gifted that consideration should be given to allowing the student to leave their middle school team and compete at the high school level. Such a decision requires a thoughtful and critical look at:

- 1) The needs of the student athlete and concern for their physical, mental and emotional well-being.
- 2) The effect on the student athlete's current grade level team.
- 3) The displacement of student athlete's currently on the team of the proposed acceleration.

At the middle school, emphasis shall be placed on participation and skill development as compared to the philosophy of stronger competitiveness and playing to win at the high school level.

III. DEFINITIONS

Grades 9-12 shall be considered as the high school program.

Grades 7-8 shall be considered the middle school programs considered for acceleration.

IV. EXCEPTION

Some 9th grade or junior varsity sports may have limited participants. A 9th grade or junior varsity sport that has limited participants may temporarily accelerate middle school participants on an as needed basis. The varsity coach of the activity must submit a written request of need to temporarily accelerate middle school participants to the Activities Director or High School Principal or in their absence the Superintendent in absence of the principal. These students would continue to play at their respective middle school level. This acceleration is intended to allow the district to field a team in a time when its current players are not available (because of injury, illness, etc.). The administrator will make a determination if the temporary acceleration is necessary. A permission form will be signed by the parents or guardians of the middle school athlete who is being accelerated. It must be turned in to the athletic director prior to the participation. The coach is responsible to verify that the permission has been signed and turned into the activities director.

The policy would not be applicable to the following Lakeview activities; Cross-Country, Cheerleading, Danceline, Track & Field, Softball, and Golf.

V. PROCEDURE

1. A formal request from the coach to the activities director must be made to accelerate the athlete and must be in writing.
2. A meeting will then take place between the head coach of the sport involved, the principal and the activities director. The three will discuss any issues (academic, social, eligibility, physical abilities, etc.) and make a consensus decision.
3. A meeting with both parents if available will be held to discuss the advancement.
 - a. If the consensus decision was a “no” a meeting will be held with the parent(s) to explain the rationale for saying “no”.
 - b. If the consensus decision was a “yes” a meeting will be held with the parent(s) to explain the advantages and disadvantages of acceleration.
4. The coach will be responsible to have both custodial parents sign all documents. The documents signify a meeting took place and the parents agreed the student athlete would be accelerated.

VI. PROBLEM CLAUSE

Within the course of the season, if the move is not working for the student, a meeting can be initiated by either the parent or the coach with the activities director and the principal to discuss any problems. If it is deemed that the move has not been the correct thing for the student, the student can be assigned to return back to their original team. However, the student cannot play on their original team and a higher level team at the same time.

Cross References: MSHSL Bylaws - 105, 302, 109, 303.4 and 105.00 Interpretations