INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools
Educating, developing, and inspiring our students for lifelong success

Series Number **604.4.1.3AR** Adopted **February 1983** Revised **September 2025**

Title **Middle School Student Participation in High School Junior Varsity and Varsity Athletic Activities-Gifted Athletes**

1. **Definitions and Scope -** A gifted athlete is a seventh or eighth grade student who exhibits physical and emotional maturity, and who has the ability to be a consistent starter on a junior varsity or varsity 9-12 high school team. This regulation does not govern the 7-12 high school sports of Gymnastics, Girls Hockey, Softball, Figure Skating, Girls Wrestling, Boys/Girls Alpine Ski and Boys/Girls Nordic Ski. In addition, this regulation does not govern circumstances in which middle school athletes are permitted to fill roster spots on 9th or 10th grade athletic teams due to low high school participation.

2. **Process**

   2.1 A request to participate in high school athletics may only be initiated by the student and the student's parent or guardian, by contacting the athletic director of the middle school the student attends. Initiation of the request shall not begin with or involve any high school staff member.

   2.2 Upon receipt of a request, the middle school athletic director will provide the student and the student's parent or guardian with District Procedure 604.4.1.3.2P, Parent/Guardian Request Form: Middle School Student Participation in High School Junior Varsity or Varsity Athletic-Gifted Athlete and District Regulation 604.4.1.3AR, Middle School Student Participation in High School Junior Varsity and Varsity Athletic Activities-Gifted Athletes .

   2.3 A prospective intradistrict transfer student or a student who seeks to be open enrolled through the state enrollment options program must declare at the time of application for their first high school sport (grades 7-12 or gifted athlete) which high school will be their school of attendance for ninth grade. This can be accomplished by attaching District Procedure 502.4P, Intradistrict Student Transfer Application, or District Procedure 502.4.1P, State Enrollment Options Form, to the gifted athlete parent/guardian request form cited in section 2.2 (604.4.1.3.2P). The enrollment application will be processed in the spring of the student's eighth grade year. Gifted athlete approval does not guarantee acceptance or provide preference in the transfer process.

   2.4 Gifted athlete registration deadline - The gifted athlete registration process must be completed before high school sports registration closes for the sports season in which the student seeks to participate. A new gifted athlete Parent/Guardian Request Form (604.4.1.3.2P) must be completed for each season.

      2.4.1 After the form (604.4.1.3.2P) has been completed and returned to the middle school, the middle school athletic director will investigate the physical, emotional and social growth levels of the student through contact with the middle school coach and appropriate staff members and, if necessary, the school psychologist. The athletic director will also investigate the high school program offerings.

      2.4.2 If a student has recently moved into the district, or the middle school does not offer a similar program, or there is minimal information from a middle school coach's perspective, the high school varsity coach will be permitted to evaluate the student's athletic abilities on a "tryout basis." If a tryout is offered, the high school coach will then share his or her evaluation with the middle school athletic director.

   2.5 Upon receipt of all relevant staff information, the middle school athletic director, high school athletic director and high school head coach will discuss the application and make a recommendation to the director of secondary education, or designee. The completed gifted athlete Parent/Guardian Request Form ((604.4.1.3.2P) will be sent to the director of secondary education or designee along with a copy of the student's grades.

2.5.1 A middle school student shall not be approved to participate in high school athletics if the student received a failing grade during their most recently completed trimester.

2.5.2 A student's grades, attendance, social/emotional development and behavior, will be considered when determining whether to approve or deny a request to participate in high school athletics. Such a decision requires a thoughtful and critical look at those elements inherent in deciding what will be in the best interests of the student, as well as the effect on the middle school and the high school programs. The needs and total welfare of the student, concern for the student's academic, physical, mental and emotional well-being, and the student's best interests will be of highest priority in any such consideration.

2.5.3 A student who is approved to participate in high school athletics may be placed on an academic improvement contract if there are concerns about the student's academic performance at the time of their application or after it is approved.

2.6 Upon receipt of the form, the director of secondary education or designee will review and approve or deny the request.

2.7 A student who is approved to participate on a high school team is still required to tryout and be selected for the team (for those sports with competitive tryouts) and to complete all registration requirements applicable to high school athletes.

3. **Communications**

   Upon receipt of a decision, the middle school athletic director will contact all appropriate parties and provide the student's parent or guardian a written copy of the decision.

4. **Non-Athletic Competitive Activities** – On rare occasion, a seventh or eighth grade student of exceptional talent or skill may seek to participate in a non-athletic competitive Minnesota State High School League activity. This regulation and its related procedure will apply to such a request with reasonable adjustments made to the process as necessary to reflect the non-athletic nature of the activity.