Merchantville Board of Education 130 South Centre Street Merchantville, NJ 08109	File Code : 6145.1 / 6145.2 Adopted : 04/17/1984 Revised : 04/24/2018 Reviewed : 07/15/2024

Intramural Competition; Interscholastic Competition

The board considers all competitive extracurricular activities--academic, artistic and athletic--an integral part of the total educational program. Competitive activities shall be under the same administration and control as the rest of the school program and closely articulated with it.

Competitive activities and artistic expression can provide pupils with valuable experiences and opportunities. In this district, the emphasis in any competition or artistic expression shall be on providing such experiences and opportunities rather than on producing winning teams or providing entertainment. Practice for or performance in any competitive event shall not interfere with the regular educational program.

The board shall approve all proposed interscholastic competition, either as a schedule or as a discrete event, whichever is appropriate. The board must approve membership in any leagues, associations and conferences, and any agreements with other schools for a series of games or events. Contests of any kind between and among the schools of the district shall be approved by the chief school administrator.

The board shall appoint coaches, advisors, physicians and other necessary supervisory personnel upon recommendation of the chief school administrator. The chief school administrator shall also ensure that training programs/regulations are developed for all extracurricular athletic activities and that all physical facilities involved in any competition in which district schools take part shall be adequate, safe and sanitary.

Public recognition shall be given to participants in academic or artistic competitions in the same measure as to athletic competitors. The district's affirmative action resolution and plan for equity in school and classroom practices shall apply to determining eligibility for competition, approval of each competitive activity in which pupils officially represent the district, and district expenditure to provide facilities and coaches.

Parental Consent

No pupil may participate in a school-sponsored physical or artistic activity outside the general education curriculum without a signed consent form from a parent/guardian naming the activity and acknowledging that the activity may be hazardous.

Academic Eligibility

Academic standards for eligibility shall be those established by policy 6145 Extracurricular Activities.

Attendance Standards

Attendance standards shall be those set in policy 5113 Absences and excuses. In particular, a pupil shall not participate in a performance, exhibition, practice or athletic event unless he/she has been present in school that day or has been absent for an excused reason other than for sickness.

Disciplinary Standards

Disciplinary standards are based on board policies 5114 Suspension and Expulsion and 5131 Conduct/Discipline. Pupils on disciplinary probation or serving a detention or suspension may not practice, perform or compete. The chief school administrator shall decide at the end of a probation or suspension whether the pupil may return to practice and competition.

Special Education Pupils

To participate in interscholastic competition, special education students must meet the same requirements listed above and the physical eligibility requirements. Reasonable modifications must be provided to each qualified student seeking to participate in an extra-curricular activity. However, a modification may be denied if, based on an individualized assessment, the modification presents an objective health or safety risk to the student or to others, or where the modification would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program. A fundamental alteration is a modification that provides an objective advantage or disadvantage or requires a change in the rules of competition.

Equality and Equity in Athletic Programs

The district athletic programs shall be operated equitably with regard to the male and female teams including:

A. Relatively equal numbers of teams for male and female students;

B. Equitable scheduling of night games, practice times, locations and number of games for male and female teams;

C. Equitable treatment that includes staff salaries, purchase and maintenance of equipment and supplies;

D. Comparable facilities for male and female teams.

Physical Eligibility

All pupils in grades six through eight participating in intramural or interscholastic athletics must be given a medical examination within 365 days prior to the first practice session, with a health history update if the examination was completed more than 60 days prior to the first practice session of the first sport participated in. The medical examination shall be given at the student's medical home, as defined in file code 5141.3 Health examinations and immunizations. If a student does not have a medical home, the school physician shall conduct the medical examination. Examinations shall be made available throughout the school year consistent with the district athletic schedule. The examination shall be documented on the form approved by the commissioner of education and include, as a minimum, the components listed in the administrative code. In the event a private physician is used, the medical examination shall not be at the expense of the board of education.

The parents/guardians shall be sent written notification signed by the examining physician testifying to the pupil's physical fitness to participate in athletics. The reason for the physician's disapproval of the pupil's participation shall be included in the notification. The health findings of the medical examination for participation in athletics shall be made part of the general health examination record.

The chief school administrator shall present to the board for adoption procedures for administration of the required medical examination. The procedures for the medical examination to determine the fitness of a pupil to participate in athletics shall include a form for a medical history to be filled out and returned by a parent/guardian and a form to be filled out by the examining physician.

The medical examination to determine the fitness of a pupil to participate in athletics shall include, as a minimum, the following:

A. A medical history questionnaire, completed by the parent/guardian of the pupil, to determine if the pupil:

1. Has been medically advised not to participate in any sport, and the reason for such advice;
2. Is under a physician's care and the reasons for such care;
3. Has experienced loss of consciousness after an injury;
4. Has experienced a fracture or dislocation;
5. Has undergone any surgery;
6. Takes any medication on a regular basis, the names of such medication and the reasons for such medication;
7. Has allergies including hives, asthma and reaction to bee stings;
8. Has experienced frequent chest pains or palpitations;
9. Has a recent history of fatigue and undue tiredness;
10. Has a history of fainting with exercise;
11. Has a history of family members dying suddenly.

B. A physical examination which shall include, as a minimum, no less than:

1. Measurement of weight, height, and blood pressure;
2. Examination of the skin to determine the presence of infection, scars of previous surgery or trauma, jaundice, and purpura;
3. Examination of the eyes to determine visual acuity, use of eyeglasses or contact lenses, and examination of the sclera for the presence of jaundice;
4. Examination of the ears to determine the presence of acute or chronic infection, perforation of the eardrum and gross hearing loss;
5. Examination of the nose to assess the presence of deformity which may affect endurance;
6. Assessment of the neck to determine range of motion and the presence of pain associated with such motion;
7. Examination of chest contour;
8. Auscultation and percussion of the lungs;
9. Assessment of the heart with attention to the presence of murmurs, noting rhythm and rate;
10. Assessment of the abdomen with attention to the possible presence of heptamegaly, splenomegaly, or abnormal masses;
11. Assessment of the back to determine range of motion and abnormal curvature of the spine;
12. Examination of extremities to determine abnormal mobility or immobility, deformity, instability, muscle weakness or atrophy, surgical scars and varicosities;
13. Examination of the testes to determine the presence and descent of both testes, abnormal masses or configurations, or hernia;
14. Assessment of physiological maturation;
15. Neurological examination to assess balance and coordination and the presence of abnormal reflexes.

Insurance

The board will cover each participant in an extra-curricular activity with insurance coverage in consultation with the current insurance carrier.

Parents/guardians shall be strongly encouraged to participate in the supplemental pupil accident insurance program offered by the board.

Pamphlet on Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Once each school year, the lead person or designee shall distribute to parents/guardians of students participating in school sports, the New Jersey Department of Education's pamphlet on sudden cardiac death. The pamphlet includes a description of early warning signs and privately available screening options.

Fact Sheet on the Use and Misuse of Opioid Drugs

Once each school year, the chief school administrator or designee shall distribute to parents/guardians of students participating in the interscholastic sports program or cheerleading program the educational fact sheet developed by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the Commissioner of Health that provides information concerning the use and misuse of opioid drugs in the event that a student-athlete or cheerleader is prescribed an opioid for a sports-related injury. The district shall obtain a signed acknowledgment of the receipt of the fact sheet by the student-athlete or cheerleader and his/her parent or guardian.

Good Sportsmanship

The board believes that instilling habits of good sportsmanship should be one of the primary goals of athletic endeavors and that all district employees should model good behaviors in this area.

It is especially important that the athletic director and coaches accept the responsibility for encouraging young athletes to handle themselves in a sportsmanlike way and be models of self-control and dignity for players and spectators. Coaches shall include discussions on courtesy and sportsmanlike behavior as part of pre-game activities. Student fans shall be reminded that their conduct reflects on the schools of this district and that poor sportsmanship will be disciplined.

Parents/guardians and other adult spectators shall also be encouraged to act as models for young people by demonstrating self-control and dignity at all athletic events.

Unsportsmanlike behavior as exhibited through verbal abuse, rude gestures, taunts, obscenities, thrown objects, etc., shall not be tolerated in students, staff or any persons in attendance at district athletic competitions. Discipline may include, but not be limited to, eviction from the competition and prevention from attending further competitions.

The chief school administrator shall prepare regulations on good sportsmanship and ensure their dissemination to students, parents/guardians and the community.

Key Words

Extracurricular Activities, Co-curricular Activities, Competition, Intramural Competition, Interscholastic Competition

Legal References

N.J.S.A. 5 17-1: Athletic code of conduct, permitted; "youth sports event" defined
N.J.S.A. 18A 11-3: Voluntary associations regulating conduct of student activities; membership; rules and regulations; appeals
N.J.S.A. 18A 26-2.1: Certification for director of athletics
N.J.S.A. 18A 36-20 Discrimination; prohibition
N.J.S.A. 18A 40-41: Sudden cardiac arrest pamphlet; development, distribution.
N.J.S.A. 18A 40-41.10: Educational fact sheet relative to use, misuse of opioid drugs for sports-related injuries.
N.J.S.A. 18A 40A-1: Instructional programs on drugs, alcohol, anabolic steroids, tobacco and controlled dangerous substances; curriculum guidelines
N.J.S.A. 18A 40A-9 et seq: Definitions
N.J.S.A. 18A 40A-10: Referral program in schools
N.J.S.A. 18A 40A-11: Policies for evaluations, referral, discipline
N.J.S.A. 18A 42-2: School orchestra not to compete with civilian musicians; exceptions

N.J.S.A. 18A 42-7: Participants in certain interscholastic extracurricular activities may earn varsity letter.
N.J.S.A. 18A 43-1: Accident insurance for pupils authorized
N.J.A.C. 6A 7-1.4 Responsibilities of the district board of education
N.J.A.C. 6A 7-1.7 Equality in school and classroom practices
N.J.A.C. 6A 9B-5.16 Athletics Personnel
N.J.A.C. 6A 11-4.14 Sports programs
N.J.A.C. 6A 16-2.1 Health services policy and procedural requirements
N.J.A.C. 6A 16-2.2 Required health services
N.J.A.C. 6A 30-1.1 Purpose and scope
N.J.A.C. 6A 32-9.1 General requirements
20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
29 U.S.C. 794 et seq Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Comprehensive Equity Plan, New Jersey State Department of Education
Krupp v. Bd. of Ed. of Union County Reg. H.S. Dist. #1, 278 N.J. Super. 31(App. Div. 1994) cert. den. 140 N.J. 277 (1994)

Cross References

1322 - Sample Policy: Contests for Pupils
3250 - Sample Policy: Income from Fees, Fines and Charges
3453 - Sample Policy: School Activity Funds
3541.31 - Sample Policy: Privately Owned Vehicles
5125 - Sample Policy: Student Records
5126 - Sample Policy: Awards for Achievements
5131 - Sample Policy: Conduct and Discipline
5131.1 - Sample Policy: Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
5141. 1 - Sample Policy: Accidents
5141. 3 - Sample Policy: Health Exams, Immunizations
5141. 8 - Sample Policy: Sports Related Concussion and Head Injury
5145. 4 - Sample Policy: Equal Educational Opportunity
6121 - Sample Policy: Nondiscrimination, Affirmative Action
6142. 4 - Sample Policy: Physical Education and Health
6145 - Sample Policy: Extracurricular Activities
6146 - Sample Policy: Graduation Requirements
6147.1 - Sample Policy: Evaluation of Individual Student Performance