Marquette University High School:

2026-2027 Jr. Hilltoppers Basketball Information Sheet & Program Overview

- The Jr. Hilltoppers Basketball Program embodies the values and mission of Marquette University High School athletics formed in the Jesuit tradition by creating "men for others." With an emphasis on player growth and development, the Jr. Hilltoppers Basketball Program teaches basketball fundamentals and develops life skills including a strong work ethic, fair play, good sportsmanship, morals, and leadership.

- Jr. Hilltoppers Basketball is a complement to, not a substitute for, the Parochial grade school basketball teams. Jr. Hilltoppers Basketball is not an AAU or traveling team program. Games will be played at local high schools and other venues in SE Wisconsin.

- **Who:** 4th – 8th Grade Boys (in 2026 – 2027) split by ability level. Every boy who tries out will be offered one of the four opportunities described below. See "*Team Assignments"* and *"Eligibility"* sections below for more details.

- **When:** Fall/Winter of 2026-2027 Season (with optional summer league at an additional cost). Tryouts to be held on Sunday, August 30th & Saturday, September 5th @MUHS (details below including link to register). No cost to tryout. Register for tryouts here: https://forms.gle/URZkJTMATDfjuaPQ6

- **What:** Team Practices, Skills Clinics, Scrimmages, WYBL (Wisconsin Youth Basketball League) or WPYBL (Wisconsin Premier Youth Basketball League) Games, Round Robin Play-Ins, and/or Tournaments Against Other High School Junior Basketball Programs.

- **Cost:** 4 Options
  NOTE: NEW IN 2026/2027. Every family will be asked to indicate their preference, but only option 4 will be a guaranteed option for all players. Boys must attend tryouts and be selected to receive an opportunity to play on a team that follows options 1-3. There will be a limited number of spots available per grade for options 1-3. The volume, talent, and commitment level of players along with the number of spots we receive in the WYBL will determine how many teams follow each format in each grade. However, there will be a max of 3 teams per grade across all options.

  1. **PERFORMANCE (Practices, WYBL, and either 3-4 Tournaments OR WPYBL):**
     - This option is for the most advanced and most committed players.
     - The target roster size will be 10 boys, but rosters will be no less than 8 & no more than 12 boys.
     - The boys who are selected to play on these teams will be expected to make this team a priority during the basketball months with a minimum of absences due to other commitments.
     - The cost will be $400 per player + uniform fee if needed. Uniforms must be purchased but can be reused for multiple seasons if they still fit your son. This fee will cover games in the WYBL league including the end of season league tournament and EITHER 3-4 tournaments OR the Saturday based WPYBL league.
     - Decision on whether teams enter into tournaments or the WPYBL will be determined on a team-by-team basis and will be communicated before the rosters are finalized.
     - These teams may seek out opportunities to have an additional practice some weeks.

2. **COMPETITVE DEVELOPMENT - SMALL ROSTER (Practices, WYBL + 1 Tournament OR Tournaments Only):**
    - This option is for players who are advanced enough to play on a competitive basketball team. However, they may not be one of the top 10 players in a grade and/or are looking for an option with a smaller investment of time and money.
    - The target roster size will be 10 boys, but rosters will be no less than 8 & no more than 12 boys.
    - Boys on teams who follow this format will still be expected to make this team a priority during the basketball season relative to other commitments. However, with less basketball volume, that is expected to be easier to manage.
    - The cost will be $325 per player + uniform fee if needed. Uniforms must be purchased but can be reused for multiple seasons if they still fit your son. This fee will cover 1 tournament per team in addition to the WYBL end of season league tournament. If the WYBL does not give this team a spot in the league, they may play in an equivalent number of tournaments instead.

3. **COMPETITVE DEVELOPMENT – LARGE ROSTER (Practices, WYBL + 1 Tournament OR Tournaments Only):**
    - This option is for players who are advanced enough to play on a competitive basketball team. However, they may not be one of the top 20 players in a grade and/or are looking for an option with a smaller investment of time and money.
    - The target roster size will be 15 boys, but rosters will be no less than 12 & no more than 20 boys.
    - Boys on teams who follow this format will be afforded more flexibility in choosing when they want to attend practices and games.
    - The team will play in the same number of games as the "Competitive Development – Small Roster" teams. However, no more than 10 boys will be rostered per game. All boys will be offered an equivalent number of opportunities to play in games first leveraging player availability to determine game rosters.
    - The cost will be $250 per player + uniform fee if needed. Uniforms must be purchased but can be reused for multiple seasons if they still fit your son. This fee will cover 1 tournament per team in addition to the WYBL end of season league tournament. If the WYBL does not give this team a spot in the league, they may play in an equivalent number of tournaments instead.

4. **DEVELOPMENTAL/PRACTICE-FOCUSED (Practice Player Only):**
    - Players will practice as their own group or mix in with teams at their grade based on ability level. When possible, attempts will still be made to allow all players in a grade to practice at the same time.
    - If similar ability level teams are ever very short on players, these boys may be given opportunities to be substitutes for games.
    - The cost will be $100 per player. No uniform is required, but the boys will receive a reversible practice jersey.

    We want to ensure that the program is not cost prohibitive for any family. We are happy to discuss financial assistance on an individualized basis.

- **Team Assignments:** We will offer four formats for families this year as described above, and we request that you provide us with your preference during the tryout registration process. Given the increasing interest in our program, it may not be possible to guarantee the preferred option as outlined above for every player. However, every boy who attends tryouts will be given the opportunity to participate in one of the four options, and we will not "cut" any boys.

  Team assignments will be based on skill, athletic ability, effort, attitude, coachability, and commitment level as determined by performance at tryouts, prior program participation, anticipated league placement, and volume of boys in each grade at various ability and desired commitment levels.

  We will not have more than 3 teams per grade. The top team (Blue) in each grade will generally always follow the format of Option 1. The format of the other teams in each grade will depend on multiple factors including the number of boys, the talent level of the boys, and the interest level of the families as indicated during registration for tryouts. The format each team will follow will be communicated when your son is offered a spot on that team.

  Ultimately, the goal is to have all players face the level of competition for which each player is best suited. The leagues in which we compete make no guarantees on where each team will be placed. However, we will request placement in the divisions and tournaments that we believe provide the best development opportunities for each team. There is precedent with the WYBL league that MUHS enters 3 teams in each grade with 1 team at each of the High A or Low A (Z), High B (Y) or Low B, & C levels. However, we have had cases where we have not received placement for 3 teams in every grade level, in which case those teams only compete in tournaments.

- **Tryouts:** We request that players participate in at least 1 day of tryouts to be considered for a team. They may attend both days, but only 1 is required. Any boy intending to be considered for the program must register for tryouts by no later than August 23rd. For those who select Option 4 (DEVELOPMENTAL/PRACTICE-FOCUSED), attending tryouts is not mandatory. However, you must still complete the tryout registration and indicate that preference by the 8/23 deadline: https://forms.gle/URZkJTMATDfjuaPQ6

  Tryouts will be led by coaches from both our high school and junior programs, and they will involve a combination of drills and live competition. They will be held at MUHS on the following dates/times:

  1. **Sunday, August 30th**
     - 4th Grade: 12:30-1:30PM
     - 5th Grade: 2:00-3:00PM
     - 6th Grade: 3:30-4:30PM
     - 7th Grade: 5:00-6:00PM
     - 8th Grade: 6:30-7:30PM

  2. **Saturday, September 5th**
     - 4th Grade: 8:00-9:00AM
     - 5th Grade: 9:30-10:30AM
     - 6th Grade: 11:00AM-12:00PM
     - 7th Grade: 12:30-1:30PM
     - 8th Grade: 2:00-3:00PM

- **Team Offers:** We will start notifying all boys about their assignments on Friday, 9/12. However, it typically takes a week before we will be able to extend an offer to all families. Each family will have 24 hours to respond with a decision after being notified of their assignment. If you decide to have your son play, we will also need your online registration & participation fee completed shortly thereafter through TeamSnap.

- **Eligibility:** This program is designed for boys who are intending to attend MUHS. That is also a requirement for participation in the leagues. We also understand that in some cases with younger grades, this is not a decision some families can definitively make at this time. It is also important to note that participation in the Jr. Hilltoppers does not guarantee acceptance into Marquette University High School. All other steps and requirements of the admissions process would need to be completed in order to be considered for acceptance as a 9th grader. Accordingly, here are our eligibility requirements:

    1. *Scenario 1 (4th-7th Grade ONLY)* – Parents must acknowledge that your player meets AT LEAST ONE of the following criteria AND acknowledge that your high school preference for your son as best as you know it at this time will be for your son to attend MUHS:
        - Currently attends a Catholic grade school
        - Will be playing on a Catholic grade school basketball team through Christian Formation
        - Has a brother(s), father, uncle, or grandparent who attends(ed) MUHS

    2. *Scenario 2 (4th-7th Grade ONLY)* – Child DOES NOT meet one of the above criteria. Parents must acknowledge that your high school preference for your son as best as you know it at this time will be for your son to attend Marquette High School and have a conversation with the program director to discuss your circumstances.

    3. *Scenario 3 (8th Grade ONLY)* – For all 8th graders playing in our program it is our expectation that he will be attending MUHS in 9th grade. Parents must acknowledge that you plan to send your son to MUHS in the next school year. All players must take the entrance exam on 11/6 or 11/7 and apply to MUHS by the 11/1 Application Priority Deadline. Any players who have not fulfilled those requirements by the deadline will no longer be eligible to participate and will not receive any refunds for costs incurred.

- **Practices:** Practices begin on or after Sunday, September 20th. More details will come out about the practice schedule at a later time, but most will take place on Sundays until fall sports wrap up in early November. Once the fall sports are over, we will typically have 1 weekday evening practice and 1 weekend practice or weekend game(s). Most practices throughout the season will be held at Marquette High School, but the program is exploring other venues for regularly scheduled practices as well. If the typical location is unavailable for a regularly scheduled practice, the program may find an alternate time or practice venue. Generally, all available teams in the same grade will practice together at the same time with some drills and instruction happening as an entire group. This will allow the boys the opportunity to develop friendships with all the boys at the grade-level and give all the boys access to consistency in the instruction from the coaching staff.

- **Physical Examination Form:** Each participant will also be required to have a Physical Examination Form on file before he can participate in basketball activities. These are valid for 2 school years. To cover the full season, we will need evidence of a physical on or after April 1st, 2025. If we have one on file from any prior Jr Hilltopper sports' season that meets those requirements, a new physical form does not need to be provided.

- **Financial Assistance**: We want to ensure that the program is not cost prohibitive for any family. Please contact us directly if you would like to talk about financial assistance on an individualized basis.

- The financial goal of the program is merely to cover our expenses. This program does not fund any activities outside of Junior Hilltoppers Basketball. The fees collected are used to pay for equipment, tournament/league entry fees, referee costs, and program costs. None of the funds pay for use of MUHS facilities. All the head coaches in the program are selected by the MUHS coaching staff with most of them providing their time as volunteers. Some non-parent coaches may receive a modest compensation for their time and effort coaching in our program.

- Questions can be directed to: jrhilltoppersbasketball@muhs.edu