

Title: Participation of Eighth-Grade Students in High School Activities

The Council Bluffs Community School District Board of Education authorizes participation by eligible eighth-grade students in high school interscholastic athletics and some approved activities, subject to Iowa law and all applicable rules and policies of the Iowa State Board of Education, Iowa High School Athletic Association, the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union, and Council Bluffs Community School District Board of Education.

The purpose of this policy is to expand appropriate participation opportunities for eighth-grade students while maintaining student safety, competitive balance, and proper student-athlete growth and development. This policy is intended to allow participation only when such placement is educationally appropriate and developmentally suitable. The overall goal of the District athletic and activity programs is to challenge students, but to pair that with the ability to experience success, no matter what the sport or activity may be.

An eighth-grade student may be approved to participate in the corresponding feeder high school activities program only if the student is academically eligible, in good standing with respect to the high school handbook and good conduct policies (Policy 612), athletically ready, and ultimately at the discretion of the MS and HS administrators, activities directors and head coaches or sponsors.

Before any eighth-grade student may compete at the high school level, the following steps must take place:

1. The eighth grade student's parent/guardian must submit a request form to their respective middle school administrator/activities director.
2. Once the request form is received, middle school administration will assess the students academic standing, school attendance, physical maturity and emotional readiness to participate at the high school level.
3. If approved, the student then shall be assessed by the Head Coach/Sponsor or designee of the respective activity. The assessment will include the student's activity-specific skill and overall ability to participate safely and successfully at the high school level.
4. Final approval shall be made by the high school activities director following the assessment and recommendation from the Head Coach and coaching staff. This will be a

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meeting with all stakeholders (parents, students, admin and coaches) and a final decision will be made. Eighth-grade participation shall not be used solely to fill roster positions except in documented circumstances of program need, and only when the placement is determined to be safe and appropriate.

Any eighth-grade student who is approved for high school participation and begins a high school season, which is defined as being placed on the roster, are, by law, ineligible to compete at the middle school level for the entire season. Once assigned to high school participation in a sport for a season, the student shall be governed by the training, conduct, attendance, eligibility, and participation rules applicable to high school athletes in that sport. Additionally, for activities that take place off school grounds, eighth-grade students are required to provide their own transportation to all team activities, as required by high school students, i.e., swimming, golf, bowling, etc., unless transportation is provided by the district for all participants.

For purposes of this policy, CBCSD will use the following classifications:

Open Placement Sports/Activities: (Not offered at the middle school)

Fall: Girls Tennis, Boys Golf, Girls Swimming

Winter: Boys Swimming, Girls/Boys Bowling

Spring: Girls/Boys Soccer, Girls Golf, Boys Tennis

Summer: Baseball and Softball

Activities: Dance Team, Speech

Eighth-grade students can be allowed to participate without coaches assessment in most, but not all, open placement sports. However, limitations may be put in place by the Activities Director and Head Coach in open placement sports based upon program participation numbers, competitive opportunities, and other factors that may interfere with the appropriate growth and development of all student-athletes in the program.

Limited Placement Sports/Activities: (Offered at both middle & high schools)

Fall: Girls/Boys Cross Country, Football, Volleyball

Winter: Girls/Boys Basketball and Girls/Boys Wrestling

Spring: Girls/Boys Track and Field

Activities: Music (Band, Orchestra and Vocal)

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The expectation is that eighth-grade students will continue to participate in middle school-level sports; however, selected eighth-grade students can participate at the varsity high school level if approved by the outlined procedures listed above. Participation shall be permitted only upon a specific finding that the student demonstrates exceptional readiness to compete at the high school level. Once the determination is made, students will participate strictly at the high school level in that sport. Participation at the high school level in one sport does not affect the student-athlete's standing in any other sports.

Once an eighth-grade student is promoted to the high school level, he/she is expected to follow all high school participation guidelines established by the Board and defined in the activities handbook. The District reserves the right to deny or revoke eighth-grade high school participation when such participation is inconsistent with student welfare, team safety, academic expectations, or governing rules.

Cross References: 511, 511.1, 612Legal References: 20 U.S.C. §§
1681-1683; 1685-1686.
34 C.F.R. Pt. 106.41 Iowa Code §§
216.9; 280.13-.14. 281 I.A.C.
12.3(6), 12.6., 36.8.Approved: July 28, 2026

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