

Athletic Placement Process (APP) – Updated for 2026–27

What is the Athletic Placement Process?

The Athletic Placement Process (APP) is designed to determine whether 7th- and 8th-grade students are physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially prepared to safely participate on a junior varsity or varsity-level athletic team.

For the first time since 2017, New York State has made significant changes to the APP.

Who made these changes?

The New York State Board of Regents officially adopted the updated APP regulations effective July 29, 2026. While the regulations have been adopted, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) is continuing to develop additional guidance to assist schools and districts with implementation.

Sauquoit Valley Central School will continue to monitor guidance from NYSED and will adjust local procedures as necessary to ensure compliance with all state requirements.

Why is the APP changing?

The updated process is intended to modernize the APP while continuing to prioritize the health, safety, and overall well-being of student-athletes.

The revised process places greater emphasis on a student's overall readiness to participate in a particular sport rather than relying primarily on physiological maturity.

What is changing?

Several important changes have been made to the APP:

- **Invitation is required.** 7th- and 8th-grade students may only try out for a high school-level team if they are invited by the school or district Athletic Director. Once students are invited to participate, the same selection criteria must be applied consistently to all students being evaluated.
- **The Tanner Sexual Maturity Scale has been eliminated.** The previous assessment of physiological maturity is no longer part of the APP. NYSED determined that there are more appropriate, less intrusive, and research-based methods for evaluating a student's readiness for interscholastic athletics.

- **Greater emphasis on overall physical readiness.** Healthcare providers will evaluate a student's overall physical readiness for participation while considering research-based factors associated with injury risk.
- **The APP will use the standard school athletics physical.** A separate medical examination specifically for the APP will no longer be required. The APP will utilize the same pre-participation health examination required for participation in school athletics.
- **A broader evaluation of readiness.** The new process will consider overall health, injury risk, physical fitness, strength, sport-specific skills, knowledge, and safety rather than focusing solely on physiological maturity.

What does this mean for Sauquoit Valley athletics?

The purpose of the APP remains unchanged: to ensure that students being considered for participation at a different competition level are appropriately prepared and able to participate safely.

At Sauquoit Valley, our goal is to provide a process that is **safe, fair, consistent, and equitable** for every student-athlete.

Based on the regulations adopted by the Board of Regents, Sauquoit Valley's process will include the following:

1. Coach Recommendation

Coaches will identify student-athletes whom they believe may be appropriate candidates for the Athletic Placement Process based on their abilities, skills, physical readiness, and potential to compete successfully at the higher level.

2. Athletic Director Review and Invitation

The Athletic Director will review coach recommendations and determine which eligible student-athletes will be invited to participate in the APP evaluation process.

Parents and guardians may not request that a student be evaluated through the APP. Students must be identified and invited through the school's process.

3. Parent/Guardian Permission

Parent or guardian permission will continue to be required before a student participates in the APP evaluation.

4. Student Evaluation

Coaches will evaluate invited student-athletes using objective, sport-specific criteria. Evaluations may include areas such as:

- **Physical fitness**
- **Sport-specific skills**
- **Knowledge and understanding of the sport**
- **Personal and social responsibility**
- **Overall readiness and safety**

Coaches will establish a consistent evaluation process and apply the same criteria to every student participating in the evaluation for that sport.

For example, if a coach determines that a one-mile run is an appropriate component of the evaluation for a cardiovascular sport such as cross country, track and field, soccer, or basketball, that assessment will be administered consistently to all students being evaluated for that sport.

How long will the evaluation process take?

At this time, NYSED has not provided specific guidance regarding the required length or structure of the evaluation period.

Sauquoit Valley will communicate additional information to families once NYSED provides further guidance and the district finalizes its procedures.

What happens next?

This fall, 7th- and 8th-grade student-athletes who have already been identified by coaches will participate in the new APP process.

In accordance with the updated regulations, **parents and guardians cannot request that their child participate in an APP evaluation.** Students must be identified and invited through the established school and Athletic Director process.

Sauquoit Valley will also be reviewing and revising its existing APP procedures and related policies to reflect the changes required by New York State.

As NYSED releases additional implementation guidance, we will continue to review our procedures to ensure they remain fully compliant with state requirements while providing safe, equitable, and meaningful athletic opportunities for our students.

Where can I learn more?

NYSED is continuing to develop additional implementation guidance. In the meantime, families who would like to review the regulations adopted by the New York State Board of Regents can view the document below:

[New York State Board of Regents – Adopted APP Regulations](#)

Sauquoit Valley Central School will provide additional information as NYSED releases further guidance and as our local procedures are finalized.