

# INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

## Policy

It is the policy of the Board to provide an interscholastic athletic program for boys and girls to complement and supplement their educational programs. All school sponsored activities will be under the ultimate control of the School District and will comply with all policies and procedures of the school.

## Implementation

Athletic programs should meet the following criteria:

1. Programs should provide a wide basis of participation in both team and individual sports in interscholastic competition.
2. Programs should provide athletic facilities and opportunities for participation on an equal basis for girls and boys.
3. Programs should employ qualified personnel in coaching and supervision positions.
4. Programs should stress the educational as well as recreational benefits derived from participation in interscholastic sports.
5. Programs should conform fully with the rules and regulations of the Vermont Principals' Association.

The Board will make determinations related to individual activities to be included in the athletic program of the District based on the following considerations:

1. The level of student interest in participating in an activity;
2. The level of community interest in an activity;
3. The impact of adding or eliminating an activity on the balance of opportunities for girls and boys to participate in the total athletic program;
4. The potential of the activity to remain competitive with other participating schools; and
5. The availability of qualified personnel to coach and supervise the activity.

The following criteria for eligibility for participation in interscholastic sports are intended to set standards for academic eligibility:

1. Students should have passing grades in all courses taken during the previous marking period.
2. Students should be in good disciplinary standing as determined by the Principal.
3. Students should be in regular attendance and should be in attendance on the day of the event unless excused by the Principal.
4. Students will also meet the criteria set forth in the guidelines of the Vermont Principals' Association.

Date Warned: 12 August 2002  
 Date Adopted: 26 August 2002  
 Legal Reference(s): 16 V.S.A. §§1073 et seq. (Legal pupils)  
 16 V.S.A. §563(24) (Participation of home study students)  
 Cross Reference: Tuition Payment Policy (F16)  
 Admission of Resident Students (F13)  
 Admission of Non-Resident Tuition Students (F14)  
 Participation of Home Study Students in School Programs and Activities (F23)

## **Eighth Grade Participation on Varsity Teams**

It is the belief of the Canaan athletic program that the focus should not be on developing individual athletes or teams but rather on a developing a strong athletic program that benefits the entire school. In accordance with this belief Canaan Schools has developed the following policy regarding eighth grade participation on varsity sports teams.

Eighth graders will be allowed to play on varsity teams provided that their participation does not negatively impact Canaan's junior high programs. The following criteria will be used by the athletic director in making a determination on participation.

1. Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) rules state that eighth graders will only be allowed to participate on varsity teams if the gender population of grades 9-12 is less than fifty students. If Canaan Schools has fewer than fifty males or females, eighth grade participation is allowable.
2. Before allowing eighth grade participation on Canaan's varsity athletic teams a determination must be made of how many high school athletes are participating on each individual team. Using VPA guidelines for what is considered a normal compliment of players required for a team under the VPA member-to-member program, if the high school athletic participation for that team falls below 80% of the VPA's recommended number, eighth grade participation may be allowed.

Currently, the VPA recognizes the following as the normal compliment of players for a team:

Soccer-20 (80%= fewer than 16)

Basketball-12 (80%= fewer than 10)

Baseball/Softball-18 (80%= fewer than 15)

3. Before allowing eighth grade participation on Canaan's varsity athletic teams a determination must be made of how many junior high athletes are participating on each individual team. Canaan will not allow eighth grade participation on varsity teams if it negatively impacts fielding a junior high team. Eighth grade participation will only be allowed if the number of junior high participants (grades 6-8) is in excess of 70% of the VPA recommended normal compliment of players. The VPA recommends:

Soccer-20 (70%= greater than 14)

Basketball-12 (70%= greater than 9)

Baseball/Softball-18 (70%= greater than 13)

If all three criteria have been met, eighth graders will be allowed to participate on varsity teams with the following provisions:

1. The varsity team will be allowed to carry only enough eighth graders on their team roster to make up to 80% of the VPA's recommended normal compliment of players. (soccer 16, basketball 10, baseball/softball 15).
2. The junior high team numbers must remain equal to or greater than the established 70% threshold (soccer 14, basketball 9, baseball/softball 13).

To determine which eighth graders will participate on the varsity team a try out period will be held. The team's coach will evaluate the players and recommend to the athletic director which player(s) should be allowed to participate.

While the VPA does allow eighth graders to participate in both junior high and varsity teams in the same season, individual athletes are limited in their participation as follows

Soccer-28 halves

Basketball-80 quarters

Baseball/Softball-112 innings

It is the belief of the Canaan athletic program that eighth graders participating on varsity teams are there to play. Because of this, eighth graders are obligated to the varsity team. They will only be allowed to participate on both levels if exigent circumstances exist, e.g. the junior high program not being able to field a team. This determination will be made by the athletic director. Varsity and junior high coaches are expected to keep a full accounting of individual player participation. If any individual player reaches their limit they will not be allowed to participate in that sport for the rest of the season.

**Note:** The VPA does not recognize cross country as a team sport because athletes may compete as individual runners. The VPA does not recommend or suggest what a normal compliment of runners for a team should be.

The belief of Canaan Schools is that students should be encouraged to participate in extra curricular activities. In accordance with this belief, any junior high student wishing to join the varsity cross country team will be accommodated regardless of the number of high school runners participating.

Date Warned: August 31, 2009

Date Adopted: August 31, 2009