

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Important: The principal or designee is responsible for informing all students (preferably at the beginning of the school year) of the provisions of the following MCPS Athletic Regulations.

(See Board Policy 3330P)

Objectives:

1. To provide a planned and balanced program of inter scholastic athletics for as many students at possible, consistent with available facilities, personnel, and financial support.
2. To cooperate and manage these athletic activities in harmony with the basic philosophy of the Board of Trustees.
3. To promote cooperative thinking and unification of interest and effort among the coaches of the respective schools in the District and of the respective sports within each school.
4. To develop and maintain the highest type of sportsmanship.
5. To develop proper attitudes toward winning and losing.
6. To encourage and develop respect for fellow athletes whether they are teammates or members of opposing teams.

Organization: The middle school principals, or their designees, shall supervise and administer the athletic program of Missoula County Public Schools' middle schools.

Eligibility: The MCPS Interscholastic Program offers a competitive sports program for boys and girls in grades six, seven and eight as developed by middle school principals and submitted annually to the Board for review.

Boys and girls must demonstrate good citizenship and make satisfactory effort in school to be eligible to participate. In doubtful cases, the principal, coaches and involved teachers may make decisions on this on a week-to-week basis, with the final decision being that of the principal. A player becomes ineligible on his/her sixteenth birthday.

Personnel: Every attempt shall be made to employ coaches who are certified as teachers by Montana's certification standards. However, each building principal, with the approval of the Superintendent, may employ coaching staff who are not certified if an adequate number of certified personnel are not available.

Coaches in both the private schools and public Missoula County Public Schools in the Athletic Program are to be screened carefully in terms of their ability to coach the sport, their integrity and character, and their intent and willingness to cooperate with the athletic policy established by the Missoula County Public Schools Board of Trustees.

All coaches are expected to attend scheduled meetings of the District called by the middle school principal/designee.

An update providing participation numbers and other pertinent information will be presented at the June Personnel, Negotiations and Policy Committee Meeting each year.

Behavior Standards: It shall be the responsibility of the principal and coach of the respective sports to set all dress standards and standards of conduct and that these standards are made known to the participants and their parents and are maintained throughout the sports season.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Non-Prescriptive Drugs: At no time shall a member of a team or other participating groups use or has tobacco or any intoxicating beverages or drugs.

Participants who fail to observe these training rules or to qualify under the eligibility requirements shall:

1. First Offense – Suspended from team participation and the right to participate in any school activities until the requirements of the school officials, principal, advisor, or coaches concerned have been met.
2. Second Offense – Suspension from team membership and participation in any interscholastic activities for the remainder of that sport season.

Cheerleading: Schools will not have cheerleaders; however, pep clubs or other means of promoting school spirit are encouraged.

Supervision: Crowd control at any athletic event is the home school principal's responsibility. Efficient management of interscholastic athletic contests at home and away is an important aspect of administering a sound school athletic program.

The players shall be under the direct supervision of the coach.

Officials will be furnished by the middle school principal/designee for basketball and volleyball. The middle school principal/designee shall assign officials for each of the boys' or girls' games.

Practice Sessions: Practice sessions shall be limited to three squad practices per week per sport in season, or two practice sessions and one game. These sessions shall not exceed two hours, including showers and clean-up time. Parents should be informed of the team's practice schedules. Practice games are permitted at the discretion of the coaches and the permission of the principal. Student spectators at these games should be discouraged. A maximum of two night games per team (one at home and one away) per season will be allowed. Team coaches and school principals must make the arrangements for night games including informing the officials assigned to the game. The middle school principal/designee is to be informed of the date, place and time of night games.

Scheduling: Game schedules are made up by the middle school principal/designee and are subject to change from year to year, depending on budget and the number of teams at each grade level. No games of any kind will be played with teams outside Missoula County Public Schools other than private schools that have been accepted into the Missoula County Public Schools' Athletic Program. There will be no tournaments or post season games. Games are to begin as near 4:00 p.m. as possible. Departure time for teams traveling to other schools may be any time after 3:15 p.m., depending upon the discretion of the principal.

Teams shall not arrive at other schools for away games prior to dismissal of the host school.

Awards and Pictures: No letters will be awarded to individual players. Certificates of participation may be awarded.

There shall be no team championship recognition through any media. Athletic team pictures will not appear in the newspaper unless pictures of all teams are presented.

Waiver Forms: A physical examination by a medical doctor for participation in the athletic program is no longer a requirement. However, appropriate waiver forms absolving the School District and School District employees of any liability which may result, are required. Completed waiver forms shall be kept on file in the principal's office. Coaches are responsible for collecting said forms and should make certain that one is on file for each athlete. A waiver form must be on file any time a student turns out for a sport unless there is one already on file for the current school year.