
MCPS ATHLETICS

CHINA PICKLEBALL EXCHANGE

Press Release

MCPS Student-Athletes to Participate in a Pickleball Exchange Trip to China

A delegation of 31 Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) student-athletes will participate in a pickleball exchange trip to China from April 9-21, 2025. The students will visit Shanghai, Shenzhen and Beijing. In each city, students will participate in a friendly pickleball competition. The trip is supported by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, using pickleball as a means of bringing students together, building positive relations and sharing cultural experiences.

A media day to learn more about the exchange program and to meet the players will be held at 4 p.m. on Monday, March 24, at Dill Dinkers, 40 Southlawn Court in Rockville.

MCPS is the first school district in the country to offer pickleball as a varsity sport. The MCPS pickleball program was piloted at 11 MCPS high schools in the fall of 2023 and expanded to all 25 high schools in the fall of 2024. The program was founded on the mantra “Pickleball for ALL,” as the sport is fully inclusive and brings all ability levels together to enjoy an activity that can last a lifetime.

In preparation for the trip, the delegation is participating in weekly pickleball practices and Chinese cultural engagement sessions.

The pickleball delegation is also being supported by Dill Dinkers, a nationwide community of state-of-the-art indoor pickleball facilities, and JOOLA, the world’s largest pickleball company. Dill Dinkers is hosting weekly pickleball practices for the student-athletes and JOOLA, the inaugural partner for the MCPS pickleball program, is providing paddles and apparel for the delegation.

“We are honored and excited to represent MCPS in this incredible opportunity to showcase the powerful impact of athletics in bringing people together,” said Jeffrey Sullivan, MCPS Director of Systemwide Athletics. “Pickleball is an inclusive sport that embodies our R.A.I.S.E. core values for MCPS Athletics and we look forward to engaging in spirited competition, while learning and embracing Chinese culture.”

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