

8th Graders in HS Sports -- Wayne CSD Policy

BACKGROUND

With the passing of new legislation, 8th graders in Iowa are now permitted to participate in athletics at the HS level, should local district policy allow it. Affected sports here at Wayne are: Football, G/B Cross Country, Volleyball, G/B Wrestling, G/B Basketball, G/B Track, G/B Golf, Baseball, and Softball.

Some key information surrounding this legislation:

1. Athletes may NOT participate at both the JH and HS levels during the same sport. This applies to softball/baseball as well. Once an athlete appears in one competition at either level, they are locked in at that level for the remainder of the season. They ARE allowed to go to HS open gyms and/or practices before competition starts, pending local decisions.
 - a. Athletes CAN play at the HS level for one sport and then at the JH level for a different sport (i.e., a JH girl can participate in JH volleyball, then HS basketball, then JH track, then HS softball).
2. A specific physical release form is required to be filled out for any 8th grader wishing to participate in HS sports. This can be done at the same time as their normal physical or separately. This form would be a one-time thing that would cover the entirety of their 8th-grade year
 - a. [Supplemental Provider Attestation -- 8th Grade Physical](#)
3. Academic Eligibility – 8th graders would NOT be required to meet the same state-level academic mandates as 9th-12th graders. Instead, those requirements would be up to local decision-making.
4. Transfer Rule – Any 8th grader who participates in a HS sport and then open-enrolls/transfers to another school before their 9th grade year would be required to sit out 140 calendar days, just like any other HS student-athlete who did the same. If an 8th grader does NOT participate in HS sports and then open-enrolls/transfers to a new school, they do NOT need to sit out the 140 calendar days, which is how it has been previously.

WAYNE CSD BOARD APPROVED POLICY

In order for a discussion to occur regarding moving an 8th grader up to play at the HS level, two things need to occur:

1. A parent/guardian of the HS athlete must submit their interest to the Wayne AD. This will be done via a Google Form that will be posted on the school website.
 - a. [8TH GRADER IN HS SPORTS \(PARENT SURVEY\)](#)
2. The HS Coach of the relevant sport must submit their interest to the Wayne AD. This will be done via a Google Form that will be posted on the school website and sent to all coaches at the beginning of each school year.
 - a. [8TH GRADER IN HS SPORTS \(COACH SURVEY\)](#)

Once the AD receives interest via this process from BOTH parties, they will communicate with both sides to arrange an in-person meeting to discuss what decision should be made. The parent, student-athletes, HS Head Coach and the AD MUST ALL be in attendance in person at this meeting. Additionally, either the secondary principal or the superintendent must be present.

EXCEPTION: If the HS Head Coach and AD are the same person, both the superintendent AND secondary principal must be in attendance.

At a meeting involving the AD, parents/guardians, the student-athletes, and the HS Head Coach, the discussion will be whether or not the 8th-grade student-athlete will move up to the HS level for that season.

During this meeting, the following items will be discussed:

1. Academic Expectations – If playing at the HS level, the 8th grader will have the same expectations and consequences as the HS teammates.
2. Athletic Expectations – If playing at the HS level, the 8th grader will have the same expectations and consequences as their HS teammates
3. Behavior Expectations – If playing at the HS level, the 8th grader will have the same expectations and consequences as their HS teammates. All HS codes of conduct, team expectations, and disciplinary procedures will apply.
4. Safety and Physical Readiness – All parties will discuss if the student can participate fully and safely in that sport. The separate physical readiness form from the IHSAA/IGHSAU will also be required before they can move up to the HS level.

5. Mental Readiness & Maturity – All parties will discuss if the student is mature enough and can mentally handle playing at the HS level
6. Team Role – All parties will need to have an honest discussion of the player's role on the HS team in the upcoming season. The AD will recommend that players only move up if it suits the development of the athlete AND is beneficial to the HS team. This discussion will be based on the best information we have available (player's ability, current roster quality/numbers, etc.) This discussion does NOT guarantee any amount of playing time. The 8th grader will be subject to earning more or less playing time based on effort, attitude, performance, etc., just like any other player.
7. Participation Requirements – Once an agreement is signed, the 8th grader is committed to playing at the HS level for the entire season. If they quit the team, they will NOT be allowed to participate at the JH level for that season. Also, participation at the HS level during one season does NOT guarantee participation at the HS level during a different season.
8. Other Factors as Necessary (Impact on JH program, playing with different teammates, longer seasons, longer travel, later nights, etc.

Should all involved parties (parent/guardian, athletes & HS Coach, AD, and the administration representative[s]) come to an agreement on moving up the HS level, a HS Early Participation Commitment Form must be signed by all parties. Once the form is signed, the student/athlete will not be eligible to return to that JH sport.

[HS Early Participation Commitment Form \(Wayne CSD\)](#)

Once this form is signed, the 8th grader is now a part of the HS program. Before signing the form, the athlete may participate in early-season practices before the first scheduled competition date in order to gauge their readiness. Once the first JH or HS competition date hits (whichever is earlier), if the form has not been signed, they will lose the chance to participate at the HS level.