

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38
PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The Regional School Unit No. 38 Board recognizes the value of athletics as an integral part of the educational program. We further recognize the importance of maintaining a healthy balance among academics, athletics, and family.

The Board believes that participation in sports provides a significant learning experience and opportunity for personal growth. Learning in sports is closely related to learning in the classroom, supporting the Guiding Principles of Maine's System of Learning Results. In competition and practice, student athletes learn skills, strategies, relationships, leadership, self-discipline and responsibility. They also learn the importance of setting goals for themselves and the team, and planning how to achieve those goals.

The Board also believes that participation in sports is related to physical and emotional health and fitness. Sports provide the incentive for developing and maintaining healthy bodies and active minds. Sports promote habits of exercise and good nutrition that can last a lifetime. Participation in sports builds self-confidence and a sense of personal responsibility for making healthy lifestyle choices. Being part of a team also creates a feeling of belonging and offers a supportive network that contributes to emotional well-being.

Based on these beliefs, it is the Board's intent that the school unit offer students the opportunity to experience developmentally sound athletic programs.

At the high school level, the purpose of athletic programs is to promote healthy competition, sportsmanship, cooperation, integrity and citizenship. Interscholastic athletic programs will be designed to serve the needs of students who have shown that they are developmentally ready for competitive experiences. Whenever feasible, sub-varsity programs will be available to students.

At the middle school level, the school unit's athletic programs will be designed to meet the developmental needs of students through appropriate intramural and/or interscholastic activities. At this level, athletic programs will emphasize exploration of various sports, the strengthening of fundamental skills, teamwork, sportsmanship, and health and safety. It is the Board's intent that the programs promote opportunities for involvement of all team members in practices and play. The Board supports intramural activities for students not participating in interscholastic activities. The Board also supports activities whenever financial, staffing or other concerns require the school to limit the number of students participating in interscholastic activities.

Since middle school age students are in the formative years of athletic ability, every effort will be made to not make cuts at this level. If cuts are deemed necessary, they will be made in consultation with the principal, the athletic director and other coaches involved in the particular sport at the grade level.

The Board will be responsible for approving the school sponsorship of interscholastic athletic programs. The Superintendent/designee (e.g., Athletic Director) shall be responsible for making recommendations concerning the approval of new athletic programs or the modification or elimination of existing programs. The Board may articulate, through policy, criteria to be considered in decision-making or may delegate the responsibility for developing such criteria to the Superintendent/designee.

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Adopted by the RSU #38 Board of Directors: 04/27/09

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