

HORSEHEADS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS FOR INTERSCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS



ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

New York State Education Department

Preface.....	1
General Information.....	5
Resources	6

Horseheads Central School District Specific Athletic Placement Process

Introduction	8
General Information	8
The Complete App Process	9
Athletic Director	9
Athletic Director Checklist	12
District Medical Director.....	13
Checklist.....	15

Appendix

A. Horseheads CSD Parent/Guardian Permission Form	17
B. Horseheads CSD Physical Maturity Form	19
C. Horseheads CSD Coach's Sport Skill Evaluation/Recommendation	20
D. Horseheads CSD Physical Fitness Testing: Score Form	22
E. Horseheads CSD Notification of Qualified Athletes	23
F. Horseheads CSD Special Try-Out Processes	24
G. Horseheads CSD Physical Maturity Chart	25
H. Horseheads CSD Height and Weight Recommendations	26
I. Horseheads CSD Physical Fitness Testing: Instructions	27
J. Horseheads CSD Physical Fitness Testing: Scores	31

PREFACE

The Athletic Placement Process (APP) is a program for evaluating students who want to participate in sports at higher or lower levels, as approved by the Board of Regents as a part of the school eligibility rules in 1980, and is aligned with Learning Standards 1 and 2. Commissioner's Regulation Section 135.4(c)(7)(ii)(a)(4) states:

A Board of Education may permit pupils in grades no lower than seventh to compete on any senior high school team or permit senior high pupils to compete on any teams in grades no lower than seventh, provided the pupils are placed at levels of competition appropriate to their physiological maturity, physical fitness, and skills in relationship to other pupils on those teams in accordance with standards established by the Commissioner.

These standards state that students will have the necessary knowledge and skills to establish and maintain physical fitness, participate in physical activity, maintain personal health, and acquire both the knowledge and ability to create and maintain a safe and healthy environment.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has collaborated with the New York State Athletic Administrators Association (NYSAAA), the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), the Statewide School Health Services Center (SSHSC), district directors of school health services (commonly referred to as medical directors and previously known as school medical officers), and directors of physical education/athletics to promote physical education and interschool athletic competition statewide. This guide to the Athletic Placement Process is the result of that collaboration.

This document represents the shared belief of the NYSAAA, the NYSPHSAA, medical directors, directors of physical education/athletics, and the NYSED that physical education and interscholastic athletic competition are important to the development of the whole child, and that students benefit when they can participate in such activities at a pace that is consistent with their physical and emotional maturity, size, fitness level, and athletic skill.

Schools, both public and private, competing in interscholastic sports under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner's Regulations may choose whether or not to adopt a policy that permits students in the 7th and 8th grades to try out for a high school team, or that permits high school students to play at the modified level. If schools choose to have such a policy, the process outlined in this document is to be followed.

Normally, a student is eligible for senior high athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons, beginning with entry into the ninth grade. However, by satisfying the requirements of the APP, a student may receive extended eligibility that permits:

- a) participation during five consecutive seasons in the approved sport, after entry into the eighth grade; or
- b) participation during six consecutive seasons in the approved sport, after entry into the seventh grade.

THE INTENT OF THE APP IS TO PROVIDE A PROTOCOL FOR THOSE DISTRICTS THAT CHOOSE TO ALLOW STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 AND 8 TO MOVE UP; OR FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12 TO MOVE DOWN, ALLOWING THEM TO PARTICIPATE SAFELY AT AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF COMPETITION BASED UPON PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL READINESS AND ATHLETIC ABILITY RATHER THAN AGE AND GRADE ALONE.

Students do not mature at the same rate, and there can be tremendous developmental differences between students of the same age. **The APP is not to be used to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, provide an opportunity for middle school or junior high students when no modified program is offered, or to reward a student.** Instead, it is aimed at the few, select students who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness.

Effective July 1, 2017, Commissioner's regulation §135.4(c)(7)(ii)(a) was amended to clarify the conditions under which K-8 public school districts may employ the APP protocol to allow the opportunity for exceptional student athletes to participate in interscholastic sports at the high school(s) with which the K-8 school district contracts for the education of its high school students, when such students are bona fide students of the K-8 school district.

Commissioner's regulation §135.4(c)(7)(ii)(a)(4) was amended as follows, effective July 1, 2017:

(ii) Nothing in this subclause shall prohibit a bona fide seventh or eighth grade student, as defined by subdivision (g) of section 135.1, who is regularly enrolled in a public school district organized for pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade that contracts with a neighboring school district or districts on a tuition basis for the education of its high school students pursuant to Education Law sections 2040 and 2045 and section 174.4 of this Title, from seeking to participate in a high school team, in accordance with the standards described in item (i) of this subclause, provided that the boards of education of the sending school district (as such term is defined in section 174.4(a)(1) of this Title) and the receiving school district(s) (as such term is defined in section 174.4(a)(2) of this Title) adopt a resolution to permit such participation. In the case of seventh and eighth grade students attending a public school district organized for pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade that contracts with more than one neighboring school district for the education of its high school students, any such seventh or eighth grade student who participates in high school athletics pursuant to this subclause may select only one high school in which to compete during their seventh and eighth grade participation; if, following participation in a high school team during seventh and/or eighth grade, such student chooses to attend a different high school with which the student's kindergarten through eighth grade school district contracts for the education of its high school students, such student shall be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest in a particular sport for a period of one year.

The APP protocol contained within this guidance document in determining a student's eligibility for APP is applicable to 13 public school districts in the State that operate to serve students in grades K-8 only, and contract for the education of their high school students with other public-school districts pursuant to the provisions of Education Law §§2040, 2045 and Commissioner's regulation §174.4. However, NYSED recognizes that such school districts will face unique administrative challenges when employing the APP with the contracting district. The regulation requires the boards of education of the sending school district and the receiving school district(s) to adopt a resolution to permit such participation. In order to safely and appropriately implement the APP, the following considerations should be resolved and included in each board's resolution to employ the APP. This list is not intended to be exclusive, and each district may find additional administrative considerations that they wish to include in the resolution: those included below are simply a sampling of the issues that should be considered. Please note, that both school districts remain obligated to ensure compliance with the Commissioner's regulations.

Administrative Considerations:

- **APP Eligibility**

The resolutions should include a designation of which school district's administration will provide approval for a student to begin the APP eligibility process, including the administration of the sport skill evaluation, and the physical fitness test.

- **Medical Director**

The resolutions should either designate which district's medical director will be responsible for approval for the student to go through the APP, or how the two medical directors will cooperate to make such decisions.

- **Transportation**

The resolutions should include a policy addressing whether APP students will be eligible for transportation to practices or games, to the extent that such transportation is provided for such teams.

Transportation

- **Communication**

It is recommended that each district engages in continuous communication about the administration of the APP, including among the boards of education and parents.

Resources

Below is a sample APP policy currently in use which may be a useful resource:

- <https://emoschools-public.sharepoint.com/Parent%20Student/Health%20and%20Athletics/Selective%20Classification.pdf>

How to Use This Guide

The APP is a program that may be implemented at the discretion of local school districts. It is not mandated.

The APP is intended for use by student athletes in grades 7 - 12, and directly relates to specific interschool sport categories and levels of competition as follows:

Intermediate

- Grades 7 - 8

Commencement

- Grades 9 - 12

Athletic Competition Levels:

- Modified
- Freshman
- Junior Varsity
- Varsity

The main body of this document is organized to assist the medical director and the physical education director and/or athletic director in administering all aspects of the APP.

There is great diversity among student athletes throughout New York State. The APP was revised to assess a student's physical and emotional maturation, physical fitness, and sport skill, so that a student may be placed at a level of competition that should result in increased opportunity, a fairer competitive environment, minimized risk, and greater personal satisfaction. In districts that allow the program, safety must be of paramount importance.

The APP is to be used only when an individual athlete's athletic skills warrant moving to the commencement or intermediate sport competition level, and therefore, ideally, it should be initiated by the district's physical education director and/or athletic director and physical education staff, who recognize the student's skill. The APP may be used either prior to the beginning of the season, so that the student athlete can participate in the try-out period, or within the timelines specified by the NYSPHSAA Promotion Rule.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Physical education teachers, coaches, students, or parents/guardians may ask the physical education director and/or athletic director to evaluate a student, using the APP. Students will not be processed through the evaluation procedures without a request from the physical education director and/or athletic director and parent/guardian written permission. It is not the intent to evaluate all modified students, and evaluation should be considered only for those students with the appropriate physical and emotional readiness, and whose athletic abilities are outside of those of their age-related peers.

After the fall season of 2015, the following should be implemented:

If a student in grade 7 or 8 has reached the chronological age of 15 years old prior to July 1, he or she is eligible to participate on high school athletics without undergoing the APP; only medical approval by the district medical director is required, as these students are already at an advanced age and would otherwise lose eligibility due to aging out.

A student who has undergone the APP does not need the procedure repeated if he/she achieved the required scores for fitness, maturity, and comparable physical size for the desired sport and level, regardless of the school year in which the testing was completed.

If a student has undergone the APP evaluation procedure and participated in the 7th grade, the process would not have to be repeated in the 8th grade *provided they remain at the same level of athletic competition in the same sport*. If the student changes levels or sports, the student's scores should be reviewed to see if they meet the requirements for the desired level and sport. APP evaluation procedures must be repeated only if the scores do not meet the requirements for the desired level and sport.

If a student has attained an appropriate level of physical maturity and has a height and weight that are comparable to those of the proposed team members as determined by the medical director, they may proceed to the next level of skills assessment by the athletic/physical education director. If the medical director does not approve the student to participate in the desired sport and level, **he or she may not proceed any further in the evaluation process.** **Medical directors should not be pressured to change their decision.** If a student is approved by the medical director but fails to meet **more than one** of the physical fitness test standards, or if a student fails to meet an appropriate sport skill level as determined by the coach, **he or she may not proceed any further in the evaluation process.**

In conclusion, the district medical director and the director of physical education/athletics and ultimately the board of education ensure compliance with the APP. It is intended only for the student who is truly at a level of physical and emotional maturity, comparable physical size, fitness, and sport skill that is commensurate with the level of competition that they wish to pursue.

Whenever there is disagreement between a private health care provider and the district medical director, efforts should be made by both parties to come to agreement for the health and safety of the student athlete. In these cases, the primary concern should be allowing an athlete to participate to the fullest level of his or her potential safely, and neither the demands of parents, athletes, administrators, or coaches should confound that concern.

Resources Used to Develop Guidance for Medical Directors

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HORSEHEADS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPECIFIC - SPRING 2024

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS





Introduction:

Using the New York Stated Education Department (NYSED) guidelines, Horseheads Central School District has chosen to allow for the Athletic Placement Process (APP) to take place prior to each athletic season (Fall, Winter, and Spring).

The intent of the APP is to provide a protocol for districts that have chosen to participate, i.e., Horseheads Central School District, to allow students in grades 7 and 8 to move up; or for students in grades 9-12 to move down, allowing them to participate safely at an appropriate level of competition based upon physical and emotional readiness and athletic ability rather than age and grade alone.

The APP is not used to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, provide an opportunity for middle school students when no modified program exists, or to reward a student. Instead, it is aimed at the few, select students who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness. APP is intended only for the student who is truly at a level of physical and emotional maturity, comparable physical size, fitness, and sport skill that is commensurate with the level of competition that they wish to pursue.

General Information:

The APP process is detailed on the APP timelines for each athletic season which can be found on the Horseheads Athletics website under the APP tab. Some important specifics:

1. The process starts with the **Varsity Head Coach** of the desired sport. They use their individual knowledge of the student and their abilities, the knowledge and experience of the program staff, and input from other stakeholders including the physical education teacher. Students will not be processed through the evaluation process without a request first from the varsity head coach and then approval from the athletic director.
2. A student who has undergone the APP evaluation process in 7th grade will not have to repeat the evaluation in 8th grade if:
 - a. They remain at the same level of competition in the same sport.
 - i. *Example: 7th Grade – JV Soccer and 8th Grade – JV Soccer*
3. If a student changes levels or sports, the student's previous scores are reviewed to see if they meet the requirements for the new desired level and sport. If they do not meet the requirements, the aspects of the APP that do not meet the requirements must be repeated.
 - a. This refers to both the maturity tanner recommended score and the physical fitness testing.
 - i. *Example: 7th Grade – JV Soccer and 8th Grade – Varsity Soccer*
 1. Will check maturity recommendation (Appendix G) and fitness score requirements if age changed (Appendix J).
4. **If at anytime the medical director/designee does not approve the student to participate in the desired sport and level, the child may not proceed any further in the evaluation process. Medical directors/designee take into consideration the height, weight, muscle mass, and Tanner rating as compared to the other athletes he/she/they would compete with.**
5. Families are allowed to appeal any decision. Whenever a disagreement, efforts should be made by both parties to come to an agreement for the health and safety of the child. ***The medical director/designee has final determination of all approvals.***



The Complete APP Process

PROCEDURES FOR THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

The director of physical education/athletics has the responsibility of ensuring that the APP is followed by all parties involved; that the medical director/designee is included at appropriate times; and that the final determinations are sent to the parents, competing school districts, and section iv. Students who pass all parts of the APP are permitted to try out. There are no waivers. A student must meet the appropriate standards of physical and emotional maturity, size, fitness, and skill, in order to qualify.

APP IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

ALL STEPS MUST BE FOLLOWED FOR EACH APP REQUEST.

Step 1

Varsity Sport Coach Skill Evaluation:

The Varsity Head Coach will rely on past personal observations and may consider input from the student's former coaches. Varsity Head Coaches only complete the initial evaluation. If the coach is unfamiliar with the student, the coach may wish to observe the student in a physical education class (see Appendix C). No other coach or member of the school community can make such recommendation.

Step 2

Athletic Director Approval:

The athletic administrator should confirm that the student is suitable for consideration, which includes the likelihood that the student would play in at least 50% of the games. Additionally, because of the increased time demands of participation at the high school level, the student's academic performance (as determined at the local level) should be at or above grade level. **Furthermore, administration should assess the student's emotional readiness to socialize with high school-aged students. If the student is not academically or socially ready, the student should not proceed through the APP.**

Step 3

Parent/Guardian Permission:

All students who are to be evaluated must first obtain written parent/guardian permission before any formal evaluations may begin (see Appendix A). If invited and prior to permission, the parent should have conversations with the student-athlete about the recommendation.

Step 4

Medical Clearance:

*****Must be completed BEFORE the physical fitness portion of the process (see appendix C and H)**

The student is assessed* by the districts medical director to determine whether if he/she/they has reached a stage of physical development that will lessen the likelihood of the student being injured by participating in the level and sport desired. If a student has attained an appropriate level of physical maturity and has a height and weight that are comparable to those of the proposed team members **as determined by the districts medical director**, the districts medical director approves the student to proceed to the next step in the process. If the student is not approved by the districts medical director to proceed **the APP process stops.**



***Please Note:**

In the past Selection Classification Process, the Tanner scores were required scores, based exclusively on the Tanner staging of sexual development. The requirement meant the students must be at an identical level of development per the chart. This was not realistic as there is generally a range of ages playing at a high school competition level. Additionally, the Tanner scores were identical for both sexes. This did not accurately reflect the earlier age of development of adolescent females versus adolescent males, which made it more likely that a less physically mature female could be approved to play at a higher level against physically matured females, and therefore be at greater risk of injury.

Therefore, the APP maturity assessment standards were revised as follows:

The district medical director is instructed to take into consideration the height, weight, muscle mass, and Tanner rating as compared to the other athletes he/she/they would compete with. This allows for a district medical director to use their professional judgment taking into account the totality of the student's overall physical development when determining whether or not the student is of a comparable or similar level of physical maturity in relation to those they wish to compete with. These changes to the Selection Classification Process were made to lessen, but not eliminate, the chances of injury for a younger student competing with older students who tend to be larger and more physically mature.

The Tanner scores (on chart H in this APP document) are no longer required numbers, as was the case in the previous Selection Classification Process but, are now recommended numbers for the APP.

*For the district medical director, determining the physical maturity level of the student is an important step in the APP process. **This is done to ensure that the student has attained a level of physical development at which the chances of growth plate or overuse injury is minimized.** Since the growth plate is the weakest area of the growing skeleton, weaker than the nearby ligaments and tendons that connect bones to other bones and muscles, **injury to a growth plate can lead to a serious and potentially permanent injury to a joint or long bone.** While growth plate injuries are usually caused by an acute event such as a fall or a blow to a limb, they can also result from overuse, such as when a gymnast practices for hours on the uneven bars, a runner runs long distances, or a baseball pitcher spends hours perfecting a curve ball. Growth plate trauma and other overuse injuries may occur in competitive sports such as football, basketball, softball, track & field, and gymnastics. The likelihood increases when students are doing a single sport year-round without substantial rest; **therefore, caution must be exercised in determining the physical maturity of students at this age level. Developmental staging reduces, but does not eliminate, the risks of injury to a younger student moving up to sport activities involving more developmentally mature students.** Since all growth plates might not be fully matured by the time a student reaches Tanner 5, care must be exercised in determining the physical maturity of athletes. The size of the student in relation to the other athletes is also a critical component in determining the risk of injury. **It is always best to err on the side of caution and keep a student at the age-appropriate level of play in order to safeguard the student. There will be many more years for the student to advance in athletics, and success is more likely if he or she does not suffer from permanent injuries.***



Step 5

Physical Fitness Testing:

This must be done by the Athletic Director or a certified physical education teacher who is **NOT** a coach of the sport for which the student will be trying out. The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process, and the student must meet the 85th percentile level for their age in 4 out of 5 test components (see Appendix D, I, and J).

For students trying out for swimming, see Appendix J for an alternate fitness test to the 1 mile walk/run- students trying out for swimming may choose to either do the 1 mile walk/ run or the 500 yard swim.

Exception to the physical fitness test requirement: Students who desire to try out for bowling or golf teams are not required to complete the physical fitness testing.

Step 6

Qualification Determination:

The results of the three evaluations will be sent and compiled by the Athletic Director. **Only students who pass all parts of the APP are permitted to proceed to try outs.**

Step 7

Try Outs:

The student is allowed to try out for the sport and level requested or the student must return to the modified level of competition. For students trying out for bowling, golf, cross country, and track and field, see instructions for try outs for these sports in Appendix F.

Step 8

Records:

The Athletic Director will record and must maintain all records of students who have successfully completed the APP. Items to be kept in the student's file are: **Coach's Sport Skill Evaluation, Parent/Guardian Permission and Result letters; Maturity Evaluation and Medical Director Form; Physical Fitness results;**

Step 9

Notifications:

A Notification List (see Appendix E) of the scores of all athletes who have successfully completed the process and have been approved through the APP **after the try-out period has been completed** must be sent to:

- The athletic director and/or physical education director of competitor schools
- Section IV Office



**HORSEHEADS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS CHECKLIST**

Athletic Placement Process – Athletic Directors Checklist

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

☐ **COACH'S SPORT SKILL EVALUATION/RECOMMENDATION** (Varsity Head Coach/Athletic Director)

- Recommendation received from Varsity Head Coach DATE _____
- Athletic Director Approval to Proceed DATE _____
- Athletic Director sends APP list to MS Nurse DATE _____
- Varsity Head Coach contacts Parents to Invite to APP DATE _____
- Varsity Head Coach communicates to AD the parents' intent DATE _____

☐ **PARENTAL PERMISSION AND APP PACKET** (Athletic Director/Parent/Student/MS Nurse)

- Athletic Director prepares APP Packet for each student DATE _____
- Packet picked up by parent of student DATE _____
- APP Packet turned into MS Nurse by deadline DATE _____

☐ **PHYSICAL MATURITY TESTING** (Medical Director/Designee)

- District Medical Director/Designee notifies parent of Date/Time of exam and confirms intent of parent to be present or not for exam DATE _____
- Physical Maturity Determination Made DATE _____
- If passed, District Medical Director/Designee provides APP Fitness Requirements to parent via email DATE _____

☐ **PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTING** (Athletic Director)

- Athletic Director notifies parents of testing Date/Time via email DATE _____
- Athletic Director notifies parents of Fitness Test results DATE _____

☐ **SPORTS TRY OUT** (Varsity Head Coach/Athletic Director)

- Student try's out for the team. Coach makes playing time determination.
Sends results to athletic director via email. DATE _____

☐ **RECORDS AND REPORTING**

- Athletic Director records results and notifies Section IV and schools. DATE _____



DISTRICT MEDICAL DIRECTOR

PROCEDURES FOR THE DISTRICT MEDICAL DIRECTOR

The director of school health services, commonly referred to as the medical director, (also known as the medical officer, or the school or district medical director) must approve a student's participation in interscholastic athletics [8NYCRR 135.1(7)(i)]. The medical director, who is a physician, or a nurse practitioner employed by the district has the responsibility of ensuring that all students who enter the school's interscholastic sport program are physically able to participate in the sport of their choosing. Special attention must be given to students in grades 7 and 8 who wish to move up to a higher level of competition. Students in grades 9-12 may qualify to move to a lower level of competition. This section will provide guidance for making the decision to allow younger students the opportunity to play at a higher level, or older students to play at a lower level, if they have the physical maturity, comparable physical size, fitness levels, and sport skill to do so safely and with success. Prior to being sent to the medical director, students are required to have written parent/guardian permission to participate in the APP, approval by administration to move to the desired level, and a recommendation from the athletic administrator.

IMPLEMENTATION

The medical director will determine:

- the physical maturity level of the student in relation to the sport and level in and at which they wish to participate (see Appendix B and G), using the Tanner Scale.
- the size, in height and weight, of the student in relation to the size of the average age and sex of the students against whom they wish to compete (Appendix H).

The medical director should take into consideration the height, weight, muscle mass and Tanner rating as compared to the other athletes he/she would compete with. For physical development and maturity, Tanner staging remains the least invasive tool to gauge a person's sexual maturity rating as an indicator of physical maturation. Best practice, therefore, would dictate that the medical director use the Tanner Rating Scale to ascertain the physical maturity of the student. It is imperative that the medical director is trained in Tanner staging if he/she does not conduct this assessment in their daily professional practice. Additional information on the level of contact of each sport according to the American Academy of Pediatrics is provided for further consideration in Appendix H.

The medical director may conduct the Tanner Rating examination him/herself with the prior informed consent of the parent/guardian and of the student. The school must make provisions that allow for a private, dignified, chaperoned examination, with a parent/guardian present if he/she and the student so desire. Alternatively, the medical director may decide to use, but is not obligated to use, the Tanner rating provided by a private medical provider. The spring 2024 APP program currently **does not** allow for the use of a private medical provider tanner determination. Currently, the APP process is under review for possible revisions to the program for the 2024-2025 school year. Additionally, for girls giving a history of having gone through menarche, assigning a Tanner rating of five without a physical examination may also be done at the professional judgment and discretion of the medical director, if the history given is consistent with observation of body appearance while clothed. Since a Tanner Rating requires an intimate examination, it is essential that school districts create a sound protocol with simple and clear information for parents/guardians and students to understand what is required during an examination and whether private medical provider assessments, or a student or parent/guardian reported history of menarche are acceptable.



For physical size comparability, the medical director should have access to the current height and weight of the student and compare that with the size of the average age and sex of the students against whom they wish to compete. Growth charts are the easiest method of accomplishing this. For consistency, it is recommended that the following growth charts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are used. (See the following page)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Growth Charts:

Boys: <http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/data/set2clinical/cj41l071.pdf>

Girls: <http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/data/set2clinical/cj41l072.pdf>

The medical director will approve the student to continue the APP if:

- the student is at an appropriate physical maturity* level for the desired level and sport; and
- the student is physically comparable with the average age and sex of the students against whom the student will compete.

The process stops if a student is not at a comparable physical maturity level or physical size in relation to the average age and sex of the students against whom he or she desires to compete, as determined by the medical director. The medical director does not need to do anything more than return that information to the physical education director and/or athletic director (see Appendix B). In cases where the medical director's determination differs from that of a private medical provider, there should be communication between the two to determine the best decision for the student in question. If there can be no consensus between the medical director and the private provider, the medical director's determination is final. It is advisable that the medical director complete his or her own examination of the student in such cases.

****Important Note on the Physical Maturity Examination:***

*For the medical director, determining the physical maturity level of the student is an important step in the APP. **This is done to ensure that the student has attained a level of physical development at which the chances of growth plate or overuse injury are minimized.** Since the growth plate is the weakest area of the growing skeleton, weaker than the nearby ligaments and tendons that connect bones to other bones and muscles, injury to a growth plate can lead to a serious and potentially permanent injury to a joint or long bone. While growth plate injuries are usually caused by an acute event, such as a fall or a blow to a limb, they can also result from overuse, such as when a gymnast practices for hours on the uneven bars, a runner runs long distances, or a baseball pitcher spends hours perfecting a curve ball. Growth plate trauma and other overuse injuries may occur in competitive sports such as football, basketball, softball, track & field, and gymnastics. The likelihood increases when students are doing a single sport year-round without substantial rest; therefore, caution must be exercised in determining the physical maturity of students at this age level. **Developmental staging reduces, but does not eliminate, the risks of injury to a younger student moving up to sport activities involving larger and more developmentally mature students.** Since all growth plates might not be fully matured by the time that a student reaches Tanner 5, care must be exercised in determining the physical maturity of athletes. **It is always best to err on the side of caution and keep a student at the age-appropriate level of play in order to safeguard the student.***



**HORSEHEADS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRICT MEDICAL DIRECTOR/DESIGNEE
ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS CHECKLIST**

STUDENT NAME: _____ **GRADE:** _____

☐ **MEDICAL DIRECTOR APPROVAL**

- Physical Maturity Form sent to Athletic Director

DATE _____

☐ **MEDICAL DIRECTOR DENIAL**

- Physical Maturity Form sent to Athletic Director

DATE _____

APPENDIX

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION (Page 1 of 2)

Dear _____:

There is a New York State Education Department (NYSED) program that permits physically and emotionally appropriate students to try out for an athletic team that is outside of their grade placement. It is called the Athletic Placement Process (APP).

Your child (name): _____ may be eligible to participate in the sport of _____ outside of his or her normal grade level. To establish the appropriate eligibility, we must have your permission to begin the APP and conduct evaluations.

This evaluation is a comprehensive evaluation of your child's emotional and physical maturity (including height and weight); as well as athletic abilities, physical fitness, and sport-specific athletic skill in relationship to other student athletes at that level. **Physical Maturity** is determined by the district medical director/designee during a physical exam, which uses the Tanner Scale and other various factors. **The Tanner Scale evaluation requires the inspection of the entire body by a licensed medical professional, including the breasts and genital areas.**

The district **DOES NOT** accept Tanner ratings from private medical providers. The district **DOES NOT** accept a history of menarche for girls in place of a physical examination. **The district medical director/designee has the final decision of the student's physical maturity determination.**

Only upon approval of the district medical director/designee, the student may proceed to the physical fitness and skill evaluations performed by the athletic department. Your students must pass all levels of the physical fitness and skill evaluations to meet the age and sport requirements of the current years APP.

If your child successfully meets the requirements of the APP, he/she/they will be allowed to try out for competitive high school athletics during 7th and/or 8th grade(s) or compete at the modified level if a student is in grades 9-12. Typically, a student is eligible for senior high school athletic competition in a sport for only four consecutive seasons, beginning with the student's entry into the ninth grade. However, meeting the Athletic Placement Process requirements established by NYSED, your child's eligibility can be extended to permit:

- a) participation during five consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the eighth grade; or
- b) participation during six consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the seventh grade.

It is important for you and your child to understand that, once the requirements are met and if he/she/they are accepted as a member of the team, he/she/they cannot return to a lower-level team (modified) in that sport in that season. Remember, at the higher level of play your child will be exposed to the social and emotional atmosphere that is common among older students in a high school environment. Therefore, it is important parents consider your child's ability to handle the additional emotional and social demands of this process.

Please feel free to contact me regarding this program or to discuss any aspect of your child's athletic placement process. If you agree to allow your child's participation in this program, please sign and return the parental permission form to the nurse's office at the Middle School. You may also stop the process at anytime by sending an email detailing your desire to end the APP evaluations to cdetaeye@horseheadsdistrict.com.

Sincerely,



Charles DeTaeye, Ed.D, CAA
Horseheads Central Schools Director of Athletics and Physical Education

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION (Page 2 of 2)

This form must be turned in by: Time: **3:00 pm** on the following Date: **February 16, 2025**, to the MS Nurse's Office.

Forms not turned in by the above stated deadline will not be considered for the Athletic Placement Process.

PARENT/GUARDIAN STATEMENT

I, _____ have read the attached letter and I understand the purpose and eligibility implications of the Athletic Placement Process.

My child (name): _____ has my permission to undergo the APP evaluation process and to participate in this program. ***I understand that the determination of physical maturity is a private examination by a licensed medical director/designee involving inspection of the entire body, including the breasts and genital areas.*** This will be done by a licensed school health professional, and I give my permission for the examination to take place on school grounds.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parents must select one option below by initialing the appropriate choice:

☐ I understand that, as a parent, I can be present during the physical exam. By placing my initials in the box, I am indicating my choice to **BE PRESENT** during the exam. The time and date will be communicated with me 72 hours prior to any examination, and I will make myself available for the designated exam time

☐ I understand that, as a parent, I can be present during the physical exam. By placing my initials in the box, I am indicating my choice to **NOT BE PRESENT** during the exam with my student and that they can be evaluated by the school district medical staff.

***NOTE:** Medical Gowns are available to the students for use.

DISTRICT USE ONLY BELOW THIS LINE Date submitted: _____ Received by: _____

Parent/Guardian **Will Be Present** for examination and appointment time will be confirmed at least 72 hours prior to exam.

Parent contacted with the time and date of the physical exam at least 72 hours prior and verified approval.

Call Date	Phone #	Name of Caller	Spoke with	Call Time	Physical Date & Time
***Failure of the parent to be present for scheduled appointment, will remove the student athlete from APP consideration.					

Parent/Guardian **Will Not Be Present** for examination and appointment time (confirmed 72 hours prior to exam).

Parent contacted with the time and date of the physical exam and verified approval to proceed without parent present.

Call Date	Phone #	Name of Caller	Spoke with	Call Time	Physical Date & Time
-----------	---------	----------------	------------	-----------	----------------------

Time of Physical communicated to parent via email.

Date email sent: _____

Parent contacted (***If elected to not be present***) on the day of the exam to reiterate the process and verify approval.

Individual Student informed of the physical exam process by Health office RN Initials _____ Witness Initials _____

*****If parents do not answer on day of exam, the approval from this form will be used.**

(Date of Call)

(Callers Initials)

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

PHYSICAL MATURITY FORM

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY ATHLETIC DIRECTOR:

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Home Address _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Age _____ Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

Parental/Guardian Permission Form Received: _____ Yes Date Received _____

Desired Level: _____ Varsity _____ Jr. Varsity _____ Modified

Desired Sport: _____ *Recommended Tanner Rating for this sport and level _____ * See Page 10

SCREENING PROCEDURES- THIS SECTION COMPLETED BY THE DISTRICT MEDICAL DIRECTOR

A. TANNER SCORE AND HEIGHT/WEIGHT ASSESSMENT

COMPLETED BY: _____ EXAM DATE: _____

CIRCLE THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE OF THE STUDENT, USING THE TANNER SCALE:

1 2 3 4 5

B. HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____

C. CHECK APPROPRIATE BOXES BELOW AND RETURN FORM TO ATHLETIC DIRECTOR.

Student is _____ approved _____ not approved for the sport of: _____

at the following level: _____ Varsity _____ Jr. Varsity _____ Modified

NOTES:

SIGNED: _____ DATE ____/____/____
District Medical Director/Designee

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

Coach's Sport Skill Evaluation/Recommendation

Page 1 of 2

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COACH

Coach _____ Sport & Level _____/_____

Student's Name _____ Gender: ☐ M ☐ F Age _____

The above-named student is being recommended for the Athletic Placement Process process because he/she/they is exceptional. As the Varsity Head coach of the program for which they want to try out, your complete assessment of his/her skill level is an important factor in this process. Please complete and return this form as soon as possible to the Director of Physical Education and /or Athletic Director.

NOTE:

*The number of students who are allowed to compete outside of their grade levels should be few and far between. The program is intended only for the athlete who has the physical maturity, physical fitness, and sport skills to be placed with other athletes outside of his/her grade level. Abuses in the program by decision makers who seek to satisfy the needs of the team, rather than considering the well-being of the student cannot be condoned. There are many potential physical and social/emotional pitfalls that must be avoided, and once a student is elevated, the decision is irreversible. Please keep in mind that, until you are notified by the director of physical education's office that the student has successfully completed the entire Interscholastic Athletic Placement Process, that student **may not attend** any practices.*

If you are familiar with the candidate, please write an evaluation of his/her skill level on the back of this sheet. Supporting information would be helpful in determining proper placement, so be specific. If you are not familiar with the candidate, you may wish to contact his/her former coaches for further assessment and/or schedule time to observe the student in a physical education class.

Which level team is the student trying out for?

☐ Modified ☐ Junior Varsity ☐ Varsity

Which level of play would you recommend for this student?

☐ Modified ☐ Junior Varsity ☐ Varsity

Compare this student's skills relative to other members of the team that the student is trying out for.

☐ Below Average ☐ Average ☐ Above Average ☐ Superior

What percentage of playing time would you estimate he/she would receive at that level?

☐ 10% ☐ 20% ☐ 30% ☐ 40% ☐ 50% ☐ 60% ☐ 70% ☐ 80% ☐ 90% ☐ Starter

Coach's Sport Skill Evaluation/Recommendation
Page 1 of 2

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

I attest that the student should not be considered for APP: _____ (Check if applicable)

*HCS D Athletic Placement Process,
Updated February 1, 2024*

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

Physical Fitness Testing: Score Form

The student listed below has been approved to take the Physical Fitness Test. Please proceed with the testing as described in the Physical Fitness Test Packet.

1.

Read the instructions for administering the five items carefully. **If you are the coach of the sport that the athlete wants to participate in, you may not be the tester.** Notify the Athletic Director that a new tester must be assigned.
2.

The test can be given in any time frame and in any order. Any of the five items may be retested up to the number of times defined by your APP district policy. Only the best scores should be recorded. *For Swimming see APP Fitness packet (Page 6), for an alternative portion of the fitness test. For bowling and golf, students are not required to complete a physical fitness test.*
3.

Encourage the student to do his/her/they best on each test item. Before commencing with the test, inform the student of the minimum qualification requirement for each component. **They MUST score in the 85th percentile for their age in 4 out of 5 test components.**
4.

Return this score sheet to the Athletic Director’s office as soon as the test is completed.

PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST SCORES:

Student Name: _____ Gender: _____ M _____ F Age _____

Desired Sport: _____ Desired Level _____

Test Administered By _____ Date _____

SHUTTLE RUN (nearest tenth) 1/10 seconds _____

V-SIT REACH Or SIT & REACH (feet and inches to nearest inch) _____

PULL UPS (# completed) Or RIGHT ANGLE PUSH UPS (# completed every 3 seconds) _____

STOMACH CURLS (one for each completed movement) number _____

ONE MILE RUN/500 YARD SWIM (minutes and nearest second) _____

Final Assessment: Student has: _____ **passed** _____ **did not pass** at or better than the 85th percentile

Signature _____

Date _____

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

Special Try-Out Processes

Bowling

If no modified team, any 7th or 8th grade student may be given the opportunity to try out for a junior varsity or varsity bowling team. At the completion of the try-out sessions, which must include nine games bowled over a three-day period, if the individual's bowling average puts him/her/they in the top eight of your bowlers at the desired level (Varsity or JV), he/she is eligible for the team.

Golf

If no modified team, any 7th or 8th grade student may be given the opportunity to try out for a junior varsity or varsity golf team. At the completion of the tryout sessions, which must include 18 holes golfed over a three-day period (the first three days of the individual's tryout when the course is accessible), if the individual's golf average puts him/her in the top 8 of your golfers at the desired level (Varsity or JV), he/she/they is eligible for the team.

Track and Field (Indoor and Outdoor)

If no modified team, any 7th or 8th grade student may be given the opportunity to try out for a junior varsity or varsity track and field team. At the completion of the tryout sessions, which must include at least 3 time trials in any one specific event over a three-day period, if the individual's time puts him/her/they in the top 3 of the events in which they will compete compared to your track and field runners at the desired level (Varsity or JV), he/she/they is eligible for the team.

Cross Country

If no modified team, any 7th or 8th grade student may be given the opportunity to try out for a junior varsity or varsity cross country team. At the completion of the tryout sessions, which must include at least 2 time trials over a three-day period, if the individual's time puts him/her/they in the top 10 compared to your cross country runners at the desired level (Varsity or JV), he/she/they is eligible for the team.

Rifle

Any 7th or 8th grade student may be given the opportunity to try out for a junior varsity or varsity rifle team. At the completion of the tryout sessions, which must include shooting at all three (3) positions over a three-day period (the first three days of the individual's tryout), if the individual's cumulative scoring average puts him/her/they in the top eight (8) of your shooters, he/she/they are eligible for the appropriate level team.

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

PHYSICAL MATURITY CHART

Recommended Tanner Scores for the Athletic Placement Process

Approved Sports	MALES				FEMALES		
	Fresh man	JV	Varsity		Fresh man	JV	Varsity
Archery *	2	2	2		2	2	2
Badminton *	2	2	2		2	2	2
Baseball +	2	3	3		3	4	4
Basketball !	2	3	4		3	4	5
Bowling *	2	2	2		2	2	2
Competitive Cheerleading!	2	3	4		3	4	5
Cross- Country *	2	3	3		3	4	4
Fencing +	2	2	2		2	2	2
Field Hockey!	2	3	4		3	4	5
Football !	2	3	4		3	4	5
Golf *	2	2	2		2	2	2
Gymnastics !	2	3	3		3	4	4
Ice Hockey !	2	3	4		3	4	5
Lacrosse !	2	3	4		3	4	5
Rifle *	2	2	2		2	2	2
Skiing (Downhill) !	2	3	4		3	4	5
Soccer !	2	3	4		3	4	5
Softball +	2	3	3		3	4	4
Swim*/Diving!	2	3	3		3	4	4
Tennis *	2	3	3		3	4	4
Track & Field*	2	3	3		3	4	4
Volleyball +	2	3	3		3	4	4
Wrestling !	2	3	4		3	4	5

Classification of Sports According to Contact (AAP)

*= Non Contact

+ = Limited Contact

! = Contact

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

**REFERENCE GUIDE FOR DETERMINING AVERAGE SIZE
BY GRADE LEVEL/AGE & CONTACT CATEGORY FOR APP**

50th Percentile Measurements for Height and Weight From CDC Clinical Growth Charts (http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/clinical_charts.htm)						
Level, Grade and Age			Boys		Girls	
Level	Grade	Age	Height	Weight	Height	Weight
Modified	7, 8	12-13	5' 0"	96 lbs.	5' 1"	99 lbs.
Freshman	9	14	5' 4 ½ "	118 lbs.	5' 3"	110 lbs.
Jr. Varsity	10-11	15-16	5' 7¾"	128 lbs.	5' 3¾"	114 lbs.
Varsity	11-12	16-18	5' 9"	144 lbs.	5' 4"	122 lbs.

Classification of Sports According to Contact (<u>American Academy of Pediatrics Medical Conditions Affecting Sports Participation</u>)		
Non-Contact	Limited Contact	Contact
Archery	Baseball	Basketball
Badminton	Fencing	Competitive Cheerleading
Bowling	Softball	Field Hockey
Cross-Country	Volleyball	Football
Golf		Gymnastics
Rifle		Ice Hockey
Swim		Lacrosse
Tennis		Skiing (Downhill)
Track & Field		Soccer
		Diving
		Wrestling

This sample resource was created by the New York State Center for School Health It is located at www.schoolhealthny.com – A-Z Resources, Athletics – 7/19

Horseheads Central School District
Athletic Placement Process

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST

INSTRUCTIONS

Curl-ups

This activity measures abdominal strength and endurance.

Curl-ups Testing

Here's what you do:

- Have the student lie on a cushioned, clean surface with knees flexed and feet about 12 inches from buttocks. A partner holds the feet.
- Make sure the arms are crossed with hands placed on opposite shoulders and elbows held close to chest.
- Keeping this arm position, the student raises the trunk, curling up to touch elbows to thighs, and then lowers the back to the floor so that the scapulas (shoulder blades) touch the floor, for one curl-up.
- To start, a timer calls out the signal "Ready? Go!" and begins timing the student for one minute. The student stops on the word "Stop."

Curl-ups Tip

Instruct helpers to count aloud the number of repetitions.

Curl-ups Scoring

"Bouncing" off the floor is not permitted. The curl-up should be counted only if performed correctly.

Shuttle Run

This activity measures speed and agility.

Shuttle Run Testing

Here's what you do:

- Mark two parallel lines 30 feet apart and place two blocks of wood or similar objects behind one of the lines.
- Student starts behind the opposite line. On the signal "Ready? Go!" the student runs to the blocks, picks one up, runs back to the starting line, places the block behind the line, runs back and picks up the second block, and runs back across the starting line.

Shuttle Run Tips

Be sure the participants understand the importance of running through the finish line. Participants should perform this activity on a gym floor or other appropriate surface.

Shuttle Run Scoring

Blocks should not be thrown across the lines. Scores are recorded to the nearest tenth of a second.

One Mile Run/Walk

This activity measures heart/lung endurance.

One Mile Run/Walk Testing

Here's what you do:

- On a safe, one-mile distance, students begin running on the count "Ready? Go!"
- Walking may be interspersed with running. However, the students should be encouraged to cover the distance in as short a time as possible.

One Mile Run/Walk Tips

Use a large enough running area so that no more than eight laps are necessary to complete a mile. Help participants learn proper pacing for the mile by having them run at the mile pace for short distances during warm-up time.

One Mile Run/Walk Scoring

Always review students' health status before administering this test. Give students ample instruction on how to pace themselves. Allow them to practice running this distance against time, as well as sufficient time for warming up and cooling down before and after the test. Times are recorded in minutes and seconds.

Pull-ups

This activity measures upper body strength and endurance.

Pull-ups Testing

Here's what you do:

- The student hangs from a horizontal bar at a height the student can hang from with arms fully extended and feet free from the floor, using either an overhand grip (palms facing away from body) or underhand grip (palms facing toward body). Small students may be lifted to the starting position.
- The student raises his/her body until chin clears the bar and then lowers his/her body to the full-hang starting position. The student performs as many correct pull-ups as possible.

Pull-ups Tips

Spend as little time hanging from the bar beforehand as possible because the extra time on the bar may reduce the number of pull-ups performed. Discourage any leg kicking or body swinging, as this may also decrease the number of repetitions.

Pull-ups Scoring

Pull-ups should be done in a smooth rather than jerky motion. Kicking or bending the legs is not permitted and the body must not swing during the movement.

Right Angle Push-ups

Right angle push-ups are a good indicator of the range of strength/endurance found in kids, whereas some kids are unable to do any pull-ups. Pull-ups remain an option for those students at higher levels of strength/endurance.

Right Angle Push-ups Testing

Here's what you do:

- The student starts in push-up position, with hands under shoulders, arms straight, fingers pointed forward, and legs straight, parallel, and slightly apart (approximately 2-4 inches) with the toes supporting the feet.
- Keeping the back and knees straight, the student then lowers the body until there is a 90-degree angle formed at the elbows, with upper arms parallel to the floor. A partner holds her/his hands at the point of the 90-degree angle so that the student being tested goes down only until her/his shoulders touch the partner's hand, then back up.
- The push-ups are done to a metronome (or audio tape, clapping, drums) with one complete push-up every three seconds, and are continued until the student can do no more at the required pace. The student should remain in motion during the entire three second interval.

Right Angle Push-ups Tip

As with the pull-up, spend as little time in the starting position beforehand in order to increase the number of repetitions. Any extra movement may also decrease the number of repetitions.

Right Angle Push-ups Scoring

Record only those push-ups done with proper form and in rhythm.

V-Sit Reach

This activity measures flexibility of the lower back and hamstrings.

V-Sit Reach Testing

Here's what you do:

- A straight line two feet long is marked on the floor as the baseline.
- A measuring line four feet long is drawn perpendicular to the midpoint of the baseline, extending two feet on each side and marked off in half-inches. The point where the baseline and measuring line intersect is the "0" point.
- Student removes his/her shoes and sits on floor with measuring line between his/her legs and the soles of his/her feet placed directly behind the baseline, with the heels 8-12 inches apart.
- With hands on top of each other, palms down, the student places them on measuring line.
- With the legs held flat by a partner, the student slowly reaches forward as far as possible, keeping fingers on the measuring line and feet flexed.
- After three practice tries, the student holds the fourth reach for three seconds while that distance is recorded.
- **Rules:**
 - Legs must remain straight with soles of feet held perpendicular to the floor (feet flexed).
 - Students should be encouraged to reach slowly rather than "bounce" while stretching.

V-Sit Reach Tip

Participants are most flexible after a warm-up run. Best results may occur immediately after performing the endurance run.

V-Sit Reach Scoring Rules

Scores, recorded to the nearest half inch, are read as plus scores for reaches beyond baseline, minus scores for reaches behind baseline.

Sit and Reach Testing

This activity measures flexibility of the lower back and hamstrings.

Sit and Reach Testing

Here's what you do:

- A specially constructed box is used, with a measuring scale marked in centimeters, with 23 centimeters at the level of the feet.
- The student removes shoes and sits on floor with knees fully extended, feet shoulder-width apart and soles of the feet held flat against the end of the box.
- With hands on top of each other, palms down, and legs held flat, student reaches along the measuring line as far as possible. After three practice reaches, the fourth reach is held while the distance is recorded.
- **Rules:**
 - Legs must remain straight
 - Soles of feet against box
 - Fingertips of both hands should reach evenly along measuring line.

Sit and Reach Tip

Participants are most flexible after a warm-up run. Best results may occur immediately after performing the endurance run.

Sit and Reach Scoring

Scores are recorded to the nearest centimeter.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

Physical Fitness: Scores Required for the Athletic Placement Process

SEX	AGE	Curl-Ups # in one minute	Shuttle Run in seconds	Choose one ¹		1 Mile- Walk/Run min/sec*	Choose one ²	
				V-sit Reach in inches	Sit & Reach in centimeters		Pull-Ups # completed	Right Angle Push-ups # every 3 sec.
Males	11	47	10.0	4.0	31	7:32	6	26
	12	50	9.8	4.0	31	7:11	7	30
	13	53	9.5	3.5	31	6:50	7	35
	14	56	9.1	4.5	33	6:26	10	37
	15	57	9.0	5.0	36	6:20	11	40
Females	11	42	10.5	6.5	34	9:02	3	19
	12	45	10.4	7.0	36	8:23	2	20
	13	46	10.2	7.0	38	8:13	2	21
	14	47	10.1	8.0	40	7:59	2	20
	15	48	10.0	8.0	43	8:08	2	20

SWIMMING

The swimming endurance component of the physical fitness test allows the athlete to choose which endurance test he/she prefers. It will be necessary to choose one: either the one mile run (see Appendix J) or the 500 yard swim.

SWIMMING TIMES REQUIRED FOR 500 YARD SWIM

BOYS

LEVEL	500 Yard Swim Time (min:sec)
Modified	9:15
Freshman	9:00
Junior Varsity	8:45
Varsity	8:30

GIRLS

LEVEL	500 Yard Swim Time (min:sec)
Modified	10:00
Freshman	9:45
Junior Varsity	9:30
Varsity	9:00

¹ Upper body strength can be measured by performing pull-ups, or right angle push-ups.

² Flexibility can be measured by performing the V-sit Reach or the Sit and Reach