

Directors,

The information below along with the attached documentation hopefully outlines the evolution of the 8th grade participation rule(s) at the WIAA level and subsequent changes over the years. I have also attached documentation so that you can see how the Davenport School District has used this rule for a number of years and even supported an amendment to help modify the rule in support of allowing 8th graders to play high school sports.

Our goal is to develop district language that we can reference in the future.

### Highlights:

- Our league has always supported the use of 8th graders as long as member schools follow the WIAA rule.
- Our league has given member schools a “blanket” approval to follow the WIAA rule in regards to 8th grade participation in HS athletics.
- We have used 8th graders in our HS programs for a number of years but have always followed the current WIAA rule.
- In 2017, Davenport, Mary Walker, and St. Georges proposed an amendment to the WIAA to continue to allow small schools to use 8th graders. (See attached documentation)
- The Davenport School Board **previously approved** 8th grade participation as required by the WIAA rule. **(THIS is no longer required by the WIAA)**
- After researching this, we have not asked for approval since before covid. Noelle and I believe that the board granted us the authority to use 8th graders as long as we were in compliance with the WIAA rule. I cannot find any agenda or anything in the minutes to confirm this, it is just a recollection. Deanna might remember that far back? 😊

### Current WIAA Rule That Davenport Follows:

**18.21.2** With league approval, high schools with an enrollment equal to or less than one-half of the enrollment in the largest 2B school may allow eighth (8th) graders from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program for that classification cycle. **NOTE: 165 (Davenport: Classification # 147)** will be the enrollment cut-off for the 2020-2024 classification cycle.

***This is the rule that our district has been following this year. Our league has given blanket approval for our member schools to allow 8th graders to play up for many years.***

**Note:** <https://www.wiaa.com/subcontent.aspx?SecID=1039> (WIAA 2020-2024 Classification #'s)

### 2015-2016

#### 18.19.0 EIGHTH GRADE PARTICIPATION

##### 18.19.1 PRACTICE WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM

A. If a sport is not offered by the middle school, eighth graders may practice with the feeder high school as long as the number of weeks does not exceed the season limitation for middle level in that sport.

B. If a sport is offered by the middle school, eighth graders may practice with the feeder high school teams during the time period that the seasons run concurrently.

**C. The local school board must assume all responsibility for the middle level students participating with high school students.**

18.19.2: Participation With The High School Team - if a sport is not offered by the middle school and pending league support, a 1B or 2B high school may allow eighth graders from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program.

18.19.3: Participation With the High School Team - If a sport is offered by the middle school and pending league support, a 1B or 2B high school may use eighth grade students from WIAA member feeder schools/junior high to **SALVAGE** viable varsity or junior varsity high school teams in baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, and/or volleyball.

- A. The school must have a history of offering the sport at that level, and is not beginning a program at any level.
- B. Eighth graders could be used to **salvage** the high school varsity team if at any time during the season the number of participants on the high school team is at or below these specified numbers:
  - a. Baseball: 16
  - b. Basketball: 9
  - c. Football, 8-man: 14
  - d. Football, 11-man, 19
  - e. Soccer: 12
  - f. Softball: 16
  - g. Volleyball: 11
- C. Eighth graders could be used to **salvage** the high school junior varsity team if at any time during the season if the number of participants on the high school team is at or below these specified numbers.
  - a. Baseball: 25
  - b. Basketball: 16
  - c. Football, 8-man: 22
  - d. Football, 11-man: 30
  - e. Soccer: 19
  - f. Softball: 25
  - g. Volleyball: 17
- D. Any and all eligible eighth graders interested in playing at the high school level could practice with the high school junior varsity or varsity teams, but the combined roster for both the junior varsity and the varsity regular season contests would be limited to the specified numbers in 18.19.3. B and C on any given day.
- E. Combining contests in both the middle level and high school level, an eighth grader may participate in up to the maximum number of high school contests. Also refer to the specific sport sections in this WIAA handbook to verify daily, weekly or season limitations.

**CHANGES MADE IN THE 2016-17 WIAA HANDBOOK AS OF 7/27/16:**

**18.19.0 MIDDLE LEVEL PRACTICE WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM**

18.19.1 If a sport is not offered by the middle school, eighth graders middle level students may practice with the feeder high school as long as the number of weeks does not exceed the season limitation for middle level in that sport.

18.19.2 If a sport is offered by the middle school, eighth graders middle level students may practice with the feeder high school teams during the time period that the seasons run concurrently. 18.19.3 The local school board must assume all responsibility for the middle level students practicing with high school students.

18.20.0 PARTICIPATION WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM – If a sport is not offered by the middle school and pending league support, a 1B or 2B High schools with an enrollment equal to or less than one half of the enrollment in the largest 2B school may use eighth graders for that classification cycle may allow eighth graders from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program.

NOTE: 104 will be the enrollment cut-off for the 2016-2020 classification cycle.

18.19.3 PARTICIPATION WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM - If a sport is offered by the middle school and pending league support, a 1B or 2B high school may use eighth grade students from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to **salvage** viable varsity or junior varsity high school teams in baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball and/or volleyball.

A. The school must have a history of offering the sport at that level, and is not beginning a program at any level.

B. Eighth graders could be used to salvage the high school varsity team if at any time during the season the number of participants on the high school team is at or below these specified numbers.

Baseball: 16  
Basketball: 9  
Football, 8-man: 14 Football, 11-man: 19  
Soccer: 12  
Softball: 16  
Volleyball: 11

Changes made in the 2016-17 WIAA Handbook Page 6 8/2/2016 9:30 AM

C. Eighth graders could be used to salvage the high school junior varsity team if at any time during the season the number of participants on the high school team is at or below these specified numbers.

Baseball: 25  
Basketball: 16  
Football, 8-man: 22 Football, 11-man: 30  
Soccer: 19  
Softball: 25  
Volleyball: 17

D. Any and all eligible eighth graders interested in playing at the high school level could practice with the high school junior varsity or varsity teams, but the combined roster for both the junior varsity and the varsity regular season contests would be limited to the specified numbers in 18.19.3.B or C on any given day.

**2016-2017: Revised 2/23/2017 ALL NUMBERS WERE REMOVED**

## **18.20.0 EIGHTH (8 th) GRADERS PARTICIPATION WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM**

**18.20.1** High schools with an enrollment equal to or less than one-half of the enrollment in the largest 2B school may allow eighth (8th) graders from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program for that classification cycle.

**NOTE:** 104 will be the enrollment cut-off for the 2016-2020 classification cycle.

**18.20.2** Provided all conditions of eligibility are met, any student will have four (4) years of eligibility after entering the ninth grade.

**18.20.3** Combining contests in both the middle level and high school level, an eighth grader may participate in up to the maximum number of high school contests. Also refer to the specific sport sections in this WIAA handbook to verify daily, weekly or season limitations.

### **2017-2018: WIAA Previous Rule**

**18.20.0 EIGHTH (8th) GRADERS PARTICIPATION WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM 18.20.1** High schools with an enrollment equal to or less than one-half of the enrollment in the largest 2B school may allow eighth (8th) graders from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program for that classification cycle.

**NOTE:** 104 will be the enrollment cut-off for the 2016-2020 classification cycle.

**18.20.2** Provided all conditions of eligibility are met, any student will have four (4) years of eligibility after entering the ninth grade.

**18.20.3** Combining contests in both the middle level and high school level, an eighth grader may participate in up to the maximum number of high school contests. Also refer to the specific sport sections in this WIAA handbook to verify daily, weekly or season limitations.

### **2022-2023: WIAA Rule**

## **18.21.0 EIGHTH (8th) GRADERS PARTICIPATION WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM 18.21.1**

### **FEEDER MIDDLE SCHOOL/JUNIOR HIGH - DEFINITION**

A. Public schools – the middle school/junior high whose students will progress to a specific high school.

B. Private schools

1) A designated private feeder school owned and operated by the high school; or

2) In the case where no designated private feeder school exists, the middle school(s)/junior high(s) in the public school district where the private high school is located.

**18.21.2** With league approval, high schools with an enrollment equal to or less than one-half of the enrollment in the largest 2B school may allow eighth (8th) graders from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program for that classification cycle. **NOTE: 165 (Davenport: Classification # 147)** will be the enrollment cut-off for the 2020-2024 classification cycle.

***This is the rule that our district has been following this year. Our league has given blanket approval for our member schools to allow 8th graders to play up for many years.***

**Note:** <https://www.wiaa.com/subcontent.aspx?SecID=1039> (WIAA 2020-2024 Classification #'s)

**18.21.3** With league approval, any 2B school with an enrollment of 166 or more, or a 1A school may allow eighth (8th) grade students from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in the high school program with the intent to maintain a varsity and a junior varsity program in baseball, basketball, soccer, softball, or volleyball. Eighth graders cannot be brought up to establish a C squad. **NOTE:** If a 2B or 1A school is not a member of a league, WIAA District approval is required.

**18.21.4** With league approval, any 2B school with an enrollment of 166 or more, or 1A school may allow eighth (8th) grade students from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate in any high school program except football if that sport is not offered at the middle level/junior high. **NOTE:** If a 2B or 1A school is not a member of the league, WIAA District approval is required.

**18.21.5** With league approval, any 2B school with an enrollment of 166 or more, or 1A school may allow eighth (8th) grade students from a WIAA member feeder middle school/junior high to participate at the high school level if at any time during the season the number of participants on the high school team is at or below these specified numbers. **NOTE:** If a 2B or 1A school is not a member of a league, WIAA District approval is required.

**Baseball:** 25

**Basketball:** 16

**Soccer:** 25

**Softball:** 25

**Volleyball:** 17

2022-2023 WASHINGTON INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION HANDBOOK | 12/6/22 37 Q&A = ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN Q&A IN APPENDIX 18 18.21.6 Whether the seasons run concurrently, or during different times during the school year, combining contests in both middle level and high school, an eighth (8th) grader may participate in the maximum number of high school contests. Also refer to the specific sport sections in this WIAA handbook

to verify daily, weekly or season limitations. 18.21.7 Provided all conditions of eligibility are met, any student will have four (4) years of eligibility after entering the ninth grade.