

## **ATHLETICS POLICY**

### **Policy Statement:**

The Eastern School Board believes that School Athletics Programs should balance opportunities for student athletes with the need to provide participation opportunities for all. The Eastern School Board is committed to creating high quality educational and athletic experiences which prepare our learners to meet the challenges of a diverse global society.

### **Rationale:**

The Eastern School Board recognizes that athletic activities are an integral and valuable part of a student's experience at school. Schools can effectively support student learning by enhancing the regular school program with opportunities for student participation in a variety of age appropriate athletic activities.

Students may develop a variety of life skills through participation in athletic activities, including physical literacy skills, team collaboration, sharing and positive social values and behaviors. Athletic activities that are wisely selected, properly organized and supervised, may contribute to students' attainment of certain curricular outcomes.

Eastern School Board believes that activity such as intramural programs and athletics link directly to the ongoing Physical Education curriculum and Safe and Caring school programs.

When developing and promoting a School Athletics Program, the age of the students must be taken into consideration. Given the cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of younger students in primary/elementary, the Eastern School Board supports Interschool sports competition for K-6 that includes all interested students. To that end, school teams that are created through a tryout and selection process are reserved for students in grades 7 to 12. The focus of Athletics should be on 'fun and fitness' while at the same time, developing physical literacy to prepare students for lifelong physical activity.

### **Scope:**

This policy is applicable to all students and schools within the jurisdiction of the Eastern School District. This policy shall apply to all sports under the jurisdiction of School Sport Newfoundland and Labrador (see SSNL Athletic Policy for complete list), as well as, all sports under the jurisdiction of individual sport governing bodies (NLVA, NLBA, etc.).

## **Procedures**

1. The Eastern School District will establish Administrative Regulations that govern the application of this policy.
2. The Administrative Regulations will be reviewed by the CEO/Director of Education in collaboration with the District Administrative Staff.
3. Eastern School Board believes that it is most desirable that all supervision be performed by trained teachers. Teachers generally have training and experience dealing with groups of students and are best equipped to discharge the school board's obligation to provide supervision.
4. The Eastern School Board recognizes that some schools may not be able to secure teacher sponsors for all the student activities that occur in their school, and this necessitates the need for volunteer coaches who are not under the supervision of a teacher. In balancing the value of these student activities with any associated risks, the board believes the value of the activity outweighs potential risk if appropriate measures are taken.
5. Teams coached by a non-teacher volunteer (in the absence of supervision of a teacher sponsor), attending all sporting events within Eastern School District or outside of Eastern School District are treated as High Risk Volunteers and must meet the criteria outlined in the administrative guidelines including:
  - Experience working with youth for at least three years.
  - Possess or working towards an appropriate coaching certificate (or equivalent experience).
  - Possess a current certificate of conduct (including a Vulnerable Sector Check) completed by the RNC/RCMP.
  - Have reached the age of 21.
6. When non-teaching coaches are used without a teacher sponsor, parents of team members must sign a consent form acknowledging that the team will be supervised by a volunteer.
7. All sporting events which require an overnight stay either in Eastern School District or outside Eastern School District must have a teacher sponsor present.
8. Any non-teaching coach who does not meet all the criteria listed in the Administrative Regulations, must have a teacher sponsor present during all games and practice sessions.

9. The Eastern School Board considers the involvement of students in athletics as a privilege and those who avail of this opportunity must be prepared to accept certain responsibilities.
10. Schools have the discretion to charge a fee to offset the cost associated with an athletic activity/ program.
11. While respecting school's rights to charge a fee, student involvement in athletic groups or teams cannot be restricted by academic ability or inability to pay.
12. All schools will develop a policy regarding eligibility for student participation in athletic teams.
13. While the Eastern School Board recognizes that, on occasion, students from younger grades may be needed to form a team at an older grade level, it shall not be done in a way that diminishes the maximum participation of all interested, capable, and age appropriate students on senior teams.
14. The Eastern School Board supports corporate sponsorship as a beneficial relationship between the school and the business community. Corporate sponsors are to be approved by School Council and governed by the Eastern School District administrative regulation.
15. The Eastern School Board does not permit the use of alcoholic beverage or tobacco companies as corporate sponsors.