



# MAHOPAC HIGH SCHOOL

*Every Child, Every Challenge, Every Day*

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## ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

### Parent/Guardian Permission

Dear Parent/Guardian:

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),

The intent of the Athletic Placement Process is to provide mature and exceptionally skilled students a mechanism allowing them to participate safely at an appropriate level of competition. The program is not to be used to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, or reward a student. Instead, it is aimed at the few select students who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness.

**In order for a student to participate in the APP, a request must first come from the coaching staff. Coaches are required to fill out the coaches' sport skill evaluation form.**

Your child (name): \_\_\_\_\_ may be eligible to participate in the sport of \_\_\_\_\_ outside of his or her normal grade level. In order to establish the appropriate eligibility, we must have your permission to begin the APP.

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 during a physical exam, using the Tanner Scale. The Tanner Scale requires the inspection of the entire body, including the breasts and genitals. The district does accept Tanner ratings from private medical providers. The district does accept a history of menarche for girls in place of a physical examination. Upon passing the medical clearance, the student may proceed to the physical fitness and skill assessments. Students must pass all levels in order to meet the requirements of the APP.

***\*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. 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.

If your child successfully meets the requirements of the APP, he/she will be allowed to try out for competitive high school athletics during 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade may not classify up to a high school team. Exception: Due to the nature of the sport, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader may only go through the process for Gymnastics and Bowling. Under normal circumstances, 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, by 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 is accepted as a member of the team, he/she 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 atmosphere that is common among older students in a high school environment. Therefore, it is important to take into account your child's ability to handle the additional demands.

Please feel free to contact me regarding this program or to discuss any aspect of your child's athletic placement. If you agree to allow your child's participation in this program, please sign and return the parental form to my office.

Sincerely,



Physical Education Director & Athletic Director

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### ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS -PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

#### PARENT/GUARDIAN STATEMENT

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

My son/daughter (name): \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to undergo the evaluation process and to participate in this program. I understand that the determination of physical maturity is a private examination involving inspection of breasts and genitals and will be done by a licensed school health professional, and I give my permission for the examination. Upon passing the medical clearance, he/she may proceed to the physical fitness and skill assessments. I understand that passing the evaluation process does not guarantee my child a position on a team, but only permits them to try out.

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date