

**NLSchools** refers to all public K-12 English schools and school related facilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, Education Operations Branch and all employees working therein providing services and supports to such schools, including those who work in the areas of school facilities, student transportation, program implementation, student services, and procurement.

## Policy Name

School Athletics

## Policy Statement

The Department of Education believes students should have access to a wide variety of athletic experiences. The department designs programs to achieve maximum participation for all students in a safe and inclusive learning community. The department also believes that student who participate in athletic opportunities, along with their academic studies, are better positioned to achieve personal, mental and physical wellness.

## Background

The department recognizes the importance of having a diverse educational program that provides opportunities for all students to reach their maximum potential. In partnership with sport governing bodies, schools can effectively enhance student learning by encouraging participation in school-based and co-curricular activities. Through participation in age-appropriate athletic activities, students can further develop strong personal and interpersonal skills that will lead them into the 21st century.

Athletic activities directly link to the ongoing physical education curriculum and the provincial [Safe and Caring Schools Initiative](#).

## Scope

This policy applies to all students and schools within NLSchools and includes all sports under the jurisdiction of [School Sports Newfoundland & Labrador \(SSNL\)](#) and all school-sponsored sports under the jurisdiction of individual sport governing bodies in the province - e.g., Newfoundland and Labrador Volleyball Association (NLVA), Newfoundland and Labrador Basketball Association (NLBA), and others.

## Policy Directives

1. All aspects of supervision during school athletic programs must be carried out in accordance with NLSchools Student Supervision Policy, Volunteers in Schools Policy and the Student Travel Policy.
2. All schools will establish guidelines regarding eligibility for student participation on athletic teams while adhering to NLSchools policy and corresponding procedures.
3. All student athletes are expected to adhere to the Athletic Contract as developed by NLSchools, in a partnership with School Sports Newfoundland and Labrador.
4. School administrators will ensure that instructional time is protected when planning co- curricular and extra-curricular activities as per the Use of Instructional Time Policy and associated procedures.
5. Schools will ensure that student safety is the top priority for all students participating in athletic events.
6. NLSchools recognizes that there will be fees associated with athletic teams and events. All schools will adhere to finance and administration policies as outlined in the School Administrators Handbook: Managing School Generated Funds.
7. NLSchools supports corporate sponsorship and fundraising as a beneficial relationship between schools, students, school councils, and the school community. However, in accepting sponsorship, schools must ensure that sponsors do not market:
8. Products related to tobacco, vaping, drugs, or alcohol.
  - a) Products related to tobacco, vaping, drugs, or alcohol.
  - b) Products deemed inappropriate for students, in accordance with school and provincial government policy.

## Administrative Procedures

### Supervision

1. School administrators will ensure that all teacher-sponsors, coaches and student athletes are aware of their respective obligations under the Student Supervision, Volunteers in Schools and the Student Travel policies.

### School Athletic Guidelines

2. All schools will establish Athletic Guidelines regarding eligibility for student participation on athletic teams, in accordance with this policy and corresponding procedures. While the general guiding principles of this policy apply to the K-12 Athletics program, there are special considerations for K-6 students.

#### K-6 SCHOOL TEAMS

- 2.1 There will be no tryout and selection process for K-6 school teams. All interested, age-appropriate students will be given the opportunity to participate.
- 2.2 If the number of age-appropriate students wishing to participate is greater than can be accommodated on one team, a school will consider the following options:
  - 2.2.1 Establishing an additional team(s).
  - 2.2.2 Involving all players equally on a rotational basis throughout the competition season.
- 2.3 Schools may choose not to participate in inter-school competition. In this case, student participation in athletics may be achieved through an “in house” school league.
- 2.4 If a school has multiple age-appropriate teams at a given grade level, care should be taken to ensure teams are balanced in terms of experience and level of ability.
- 2.5 Schools are also encouraged to participate in athletic events that involve skill development, jamborees or “Participation Nation” style events.

## 7-12 SCHOOL TEAMS

- 2.6 A tryout and selection process must be in place for team selection in Grades 7-12. Schools will establish and follow the tryout and selection process for all athletic teams (e.g., number of tryouts, impartial selection process, number of players selected), as per their school's Athletic Guidelines.
- 2.7 Once a team has been selected, successful team members are informed in a way that respects the sensitivities of students not making the team.
- 2.8 NLSchools recognizes that, on occasion, students from a school's younger grades may be needed to form a team at an older grade level. This shall not be done in a way that diminishes the maximum participation of all interested and age-appropriate students at a particular school. If students from younger grades are needed to form a team at an older grade level, the following is required:
  - 2.8.1 Student athletes in intermediate grades (7-9) cannot displace student athletes in high school grades (10-12).
  - 2.8.2 When tournaments are designated for a specific grade level, players from lower grades can only participate if there is a shortage of players at the designated grade level.
- 2.9 NLSchools recognizes that, on occasion, a school may not have enough players to form a team and will require students from a nearby school.
  - 2.9.1 This can only occur once all interested and age-appropriate students are included on the team.
  - 2.9.2 In these situations, a school may reach out to another school, which does not have this particular athletic program, to inquire if any students are interested in trying out for this team.
  - 2.9.3 Administration and parents/guardians from the schools involved are required to sign off as acknowledgement of this agreement.
    - 2.9.4 Students are expected to follow all school athletic policies and guidelines for their team.

## The Department of Education-SSNL Athletic Contract

(See [EDU - SSNL Athletic Contract](#))

3. All student athletes, parents/guardians, school staff and volunteers involved in school athletics are expected to adhere to [EDU-SSNL Athletic Contract](#).
  - 3.1 All student athletes must have an Athletic Contract on file prior to participating in any school athletics.
  - 3.2 A student athlete will be subject to disciplinary measures, which may include a suspension from the team for non-compliance with the Athletic Contract.
  - 3.3 By the end of September, prior to any athletic programs beginning, the school administrator will meet with all coaches and/or volunteers to outline school expectations with respect to [EDU-SSNL Athletic Contract](#), student conduct, communication, financial guidelines, travel, etc., and all associated policies and regulations. In the event that new coaches/volunteers are required throughout the school year, the school administrator is responsible for the above.

## Use of Instructional Time

4. School administrators will ensure that instructional time is protected when planning co- curricular and extra-curricular activities. As per Administrative Procedure 4.1 (e) of the [Use of Instructional Time Policy](#), school-sponsored sports tournaments and other school- sponsored events/activities begin after the instructional day whenever possible, with allowances for reasonable travel time for distant schools.

## Student Safety - Athletics

5. Schools will ensure that student safety is the priority when students are involved in athletic events.
  - 5.1 School teams are required to follow the [Student Travel Policy](#) and Administrative Regulations and the [Field Trip Protocol](#) as it pertains to the use of school buses versus motor coaches.
  - 5.2 All participants are required to complete co-curricular and extra-curricular consent forms, including medical consent, prior to participation in any extra-curricular activities. **It is the responsibility of administration to inform**

**teacher- sponsors/ coaches/parent volunteers of any relevant medical concerns/issues of student athletes. (See Sample Parent Consent Form)**

- 5.3 It is incumbent on the parent/guardian to provide accurate and applicable medical information regarding their child. (See Athletic Medical Consent Form)
  - 5.3.1 The parent/guardian must sign a medical declaration before a student can participate in the school's athletic program.
  - 5.3.2 It is important that parents/guardians are informed of participation levels of children, and that they inform teachers/coaches and or administration of medical concerns that may limit participation.
  - 5.3.3 It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the proper medical clearance is arranged before participation occurs.
- 5.4 When travelling with student athletes, teacher-sponsors must have contact/medical information in case of emergency. Teacher-sponsors must respect the confidentiality of this information (e.g., Allergies – EpiPen).
- 5.5 In a situation where a student becomes ill or is injured, every First Aid precaution must be taken, and the parent/guardian contacted at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 5.6 In a situation where an accident occurs, whether at the school or at a tournament, the teacher-sponsor must ensure that an accident report is filed, and the administration is informed (copy at the school and a copy sent to Director of Procurement and Business Services - Provincial).
- 5.7 All schools and travelling teams must have adequate First Aid supplies readily available for athletic competition. Each host school must have a person who is certified in First Aid/CPR.

### **Athletics Fees**

6. NLSchools recognizes that there will be fees associated with athletic teams and events. All schools will adhere to finance and administration policies as outlined in the School Administrators Handbook: Managing School Generated Funds.

- 6.1 Teams have the right to charge players an annual fee in place of paying on

an individual tournament basis. NLSchools encourages team coaches to consult with families and provide flexibility for payment, where needed.

- 6.2 A parent/guardian's inability to pay fees for registration or travel to events must not limit a student's participation. In other situations where fees may be charged to students, the school administration should strive to reduce barriers for participation and, in a confidential manner, make every effort to assist students with limited financial means.

### **Corporate Sponsorships and Fundraising**

7. NLSchools supports corporate sponsorship and fundraising as a beneficial relationship between schools, students, school councils, and the school community.
  - 7.1 The school council and school administrator must approve any corporate sponsorship for an athletic team/event in accordance with the School Fundraising and Conflict of Interest policies.
  - 7.2 Sponsorship of individual students or teams is intended to help defray a portion of the cost and is not intended to cover all costs of participating in an event.
  - 7.3 Corporate sponsor support will be used for athletic registrations, purchase of school uniforms, equipment, and travel expenses for students/coaches/teacher- sponsor(s) only. This must be approved by school council and school administration.
  - 7.4 In the event that fundraising is approved for the purchase of school uniforms/sports equipment/athletic supplies etc., all become the property of the school at the end of the athletic program/season.
  - 7.5 At the end of any athletic program/season, funds remaining in school accounts, including those provided by corporate sponsorship, become the property of the school.