SPONSORSHIP AND EVALUATION OF RSU 19 ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

It is the Board's desire to offer RSU 19 student athletic programming that provides diverse, developmentally appropriate opportunities and encourage student participation. At the same time, the Board recognizes that resources may not be available to fund all of the sports in which students and the community have an interest. In order to provide students with meaningful athletic experiences while maintaining high quality, sustainable programs, the Board adopts this policy governing sponsorship and evaluation of the school unit's athletic programs.

Through sponsorship, RSU 19 assumes responsibility for and control of a particular athletic program. Sponsorship requires Board approval. RSU 19 assumes responsibility only for those interscholastic athletic programs the Board has designated as school-sponsored.

The Board will approve for sponsorship only those programs that are consistent with its philosophy and policies and with regulations established by the appropriate governing bodies, including the Maine Principal's Association (which refers to its regulations as "policies"). Sponsorship does not mean that funding will be provided in whole or in part through RSU 19's budget. Sponsorship is required even for activities that may be funded in full by booster organizations.

Sponsorship is required before any team may represent itself using the school name, to be eligible for league play and tournament participation, or to be eligible for school athletic awards.

In order to assess the sustainability of athletic activities, each ongoing activity will be evaluated on at least a five-year cycle. The Board has established the following process for the approval and evaluation of athletic programs.

Criteria for Approval and Evaluation of Athletic Programs

The Athletic Director shall be responsible for developing a process for evaluating potential athletic programs and assessing the viability of existing programs. The process shall take into consideration the following factors, which shall be applied consistently to all programs:

1. Student body interest;
2. Community interest;
3. Gender Equity;

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4. Impact on facilities;
5. Impact on existing programs;
6. Impact on administration and staff;
7. Expenses;
8. Availability of competition;
9. Potential to field competitive teams;
10. Alignment with Board philosophy and policies; and
11. Availability of funds, consideration of extraordinary costs (rental of facilities, transportation, specialized equipment), and other relevant data.

The process should include a scale for weighting and rating these criteria and for reporting a total score that may be used for comparison purposes.

Approval of New Athletic Programs

Sponsorship of all new interscholastic athletic programs must be approved in advance. The Superintendent or Athletic Director shall be responsible for making and supporting recommendations to the Board at least six months prior to the proposed starting date. Recommendations are to be made based on data from the evaluation process.

The Board may impose conditions that must be met for the program to be approved.

Following initial approval, new programs will be placed on a two year probationary status.

Six months prior to the end of the probationary period, the Athletic Director must submit a report to the Board including recommendations and support for continued Board approval. The Board may provide for continuing approval, deny approval, or extend the probationary status for one additional year. Probationary status shall not exceed 2 years.

Evaluation of Existing or On Going School-Sponsored Athletic Programs

Every athletic program will be reviewed on a five year cycle.

The purpose of evaluation is to ensure that all existing or previously approved programs continue to meet the standards and criteria established by the Board.

The Board may authorize a program to be reviewed out of sequence based upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

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The evaluation of existing or ongoing approved programs will be done using the same process used to assess proposed programs.

Based upon the data, the Superintendent shall make a recommendation to the Board as to whether the program should continue or be terminated. The Board may vote to terminate any program that it deems no longer sustainable or in keeping with Board philosophy, standards or criteria.

Delegation of Authority

The Athletic Director may appoint a program evaluation or review committee to perform evaluations of proposed and existing athletic programs. Any such committee must have balanced representation including the Superintendent and/or Athletic Director, a high school administrator, a middle school administrator, teachers who are employed as coachers, and community members. Any such committee will use the process for program evaluation.

The committee shall be advisory to the Board. While it may make recommendations to the Board, the Board retains full authority over RSU 19 athletic programs.

Cross Reference: JJI – Philosophy of Athletics
JJIBA – Hiring and Evaluation of Coaches
JJIBB – Sportsmanship
KJA – Relations with Booster Groups

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