

Cooperative Sponsorships

A Cooperative Sponsorship is a formal agreement between two or more schools to allow their students to compete on the same team. The Minnesota State High School requires approval for all new Cooperative Sponsorships. Cooperative Sponsorships allow schools who are not able to support their own team to pair with another school to share resources (coaches, equipment, supplies, facilities and participants) so that student/athletes have participation opportunities in the sport of their interest. Cooperative Sponsorships allow school districts to stretch their financial resources to create additional participation opportunities. Cooperative Sponsorships are designed to maximize participation and expose students to participation opportunities not offered in their school. Cooperative Sponsorships are in effect for a minimum of two years or until dissolved by all active participating schools.

| | What it is.... | Occurs when..... | Team colors | Marketing/Recruiting at home site |
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| Level 1 Cooperative Agreement- Individual Sports | An agreement between one or more home school(s) and a host* school. (Per MN State High School League regulations, a host school must be identified for each cooperative agreement, including district wide teams.) | Athletes from home school(s) would comprise 40% or fewer roster spots at host school. | Individual lifelong sport** athletes advancing to sectional competitions and beyond, will wear their home school colors/uniform. | Athletic director will notify all students of the sports opportunities by listing all available sports across the district - depending on registration at the high school, athletic director will determine the sports offered at the school and make connections with their "partner" school to serve the athletes interested in sports not offered at the school. |
| Level 2 Cooperative Agreement- Team Sports | An agreement between one or more home school(s) and a host school that leads to the creation of a district-wide collaborative team. | Athletes from home school(s) comprise 40% or more roster spots at host school. | Athletes will wear district-wide MPS uniforms created for the collaborative team. | |

* Host school will be the first school listed, the "partner" school(s) will be listed in succession. If the requested sport is not available at the first host school, the next host school will be identified as the closest school in geographic proximity to the home school offering the sport requested.

** Lifelong sports/activities, include but are not limited to: Golf, Dance team, Nordic & Alpine ski, Cross Country Running, Gymnastics, Swimming & Diving, Adapted Bowling and Tennis

For the 2017-18 school year, the Minneapolis Public Schools District Athletic Program reorganized to fit budget constraints. District Athletics made the difficult decision to consolidate high school athletic programs and eliminate an athletic director position. While the lack of high school level facilities at FAIR, Wellstone International and Heritage Academy were a major factor in the decision making process; many other key factors were studied including: geographic proximity, strength of program, MSHSL classification of program, number of participants, and ease of transition for student/athletes to cooperatively sponsored Host high school. Team practice times will be determined by schools and student issued Metro Transit GoTo cards can be used to transport students between schools. Below is a description of the decision making process for newly formed MPS Cooperative Sponsorships:

- **Patrick Henry/FAIR** – These two schools have a long history of working together in Cooperative Sponsorships. This dates back prior to the time when FAIR joined the MPS family. These schools are 5.8 miles apart and on the MTC bus line. FAIR does not have athletic facilities that are suitable for high school athletics (no track, no competition gym). Additional high school teams may be funded through equity budget line item. Middle school basketball will allow participation opportunities for 6th-8th grade students.
- **Edison/Heritage Academy** – These two schools have very close geographic proximity (2.7 miles) Heritage joined the District Athletic program in 2016/17. Heritage competed in men’s basketball only in 2016/17. Heritage Academy does not have a high school level competition gym. Heritage will have their own middle school basketball program (no cooperative sponsorship); this will provide opportunities for students in grades 6-8 at Heritage Academy. Middle school basketball has been added to create participation opportunities for 6th-8th grade students.
- **Roosevelt/Wellstone International** – These two schools have a long history of working together as Wellstone’s program was previously housed at Roosevelt. These schools are 2.8 miles apart. Wellstone’s main sport was soccer. Middle school soccer will allow participation opportunities for 6th-8th grade students.

Benefits of Cooperative Sponsorships:

- Students exposed to athletic offerings not offered at their school.
- Students will represent their “attendance” school as part of combined team.
- Students allowed the opportunity to work with other students who are not enrolled at their school.
- Students may be allowed to play at a higher level of competition.
- School District saves funding on coaches, transportation etc.
- Participating schools collaboratively work together to administer and run program
- Participating schools allowed to apply for “Joint” grants for equipment and supplies

Steps to ensure welcome feelings for all cooperative sponsorship participants:

- Merging of coaching staffs when possible
- Attract coaches with similar cultural background and student experiences.
- Inclusive practices must be expected of coaches, this may include team designed spirit wear, alternate alternative practice sights, alternate meeting sites, various practices to recognize all students participation for their school, inclusive score reporting,

Evaluation of Cooperative Sponsorships-The programs will be evaluated on the following items:

- Participation number by school
- Student/parent feedback (survey)
- Diversity of Coaching Staff
- Growth of program
- Commitment of Coaching Staff

These programs are communicated through:

- Websites
- Individual school announcement and recruiting efforts by coaching staff and AD
- Program and school meetings
- School flyers/announcements etc.

The Cooperative Sponsorship model is intended to grow the program with the hope that in future years, individual schools will be able to support their own programs.