**6th Grade Participation in Sports at North Middle**

*On Thursday August 4, 2016, the North Carolina State Board of Education changed the policy regarding interscholastic athletics (HRS-D-001).   The new policy changes the grade level at which students may participate in interscholastic competition from grades 7 -12 to grades 6-12.  As part of this change, 6th grade students may participate in all interscholastic sports with the exception of football.*

* This year all sports except for football and volleyball will allow 6th graders to participate. (Volleyball will be included starting 2017-18 school year)
* Any participate must have an up-to-date physical. Physicals are good for one calendar year.
* Every student athlete must follow all coaches, county and state eligibility rules.

(See NIMS student handbook for details)

* Any student wanting to participate in Cross Country and Wrestling will be allowed to do so. (Wrestling has wrestle-offs to determine who wrestles at each weight class)
* For Volleyball (Starting 2017-18), Basketball , Cheerleading, Soccer and Baseball/Softball (Starting 2017-18) ; any student wanting to participate must try-out for a spot on the team. Some teams will have JV and Varsity Programs.
* Any student making a try-out based team, is not guaranteed playing time. Each athlete will earn playing time based on performance in practice and games.
* Most coaches typically have practice every day afterschool; times will vary based on availability of fields or courts. Coaches will set their own rules for each individual team at a pre-season parents meeting.
* Any 6th grader that makes a North Middle basketball team **can still** participate in the NIYAA league. This way, any 6th grade student that doesn’t make a team or doesn’t get the playing time they wish, can still participate in that league. Players can participate in both leagues, however, they **will not** be allowed to participate with their elementary school until the North Middle season is over. (After Christmas) NIYAA won’t start their games until late December, early January.
* It is a positive to allow 6th graders to participate in Middle School athletics, however, it will be an adjustment period for both parents, athletes and coaches.
* Schedule and sports information is always located at the NIMS athletic website or issathletics.com .
* If you have any additional questions feel free to call Coach Shore, Athletic Director at 704-876-4802.