

# Athletic Participation Fee FAQ

## Why did CMS stop funding middle school sports?

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, like most other school districts, has felt the economic downturn that began in late 2008. We made stringent cuts in 2009, including a reduction in force. This year, we have created a budget that includes reductions and efficiencies in our schools, while keeping as many resources in the classroom as possible. The Board of Education voted to eliminate district funding for middle school sports to save \$1.2 million to help reduce the budget deficit.

## If the Board of Education cut funding for middle school athletics, why does CMS still have middle school sports?

The Board of Education approved the implementation of a participation fee for middle school and high school student-athletes beginning in the 2010-11 school year. The fee revenue will help fund middle school interscholastic athletic programs. Participation in middle school athletics instills values and discipline that helps prepare students for the high school experience.

## What sports does the participation fee affect?

The participation fee affects all high school and middle school sports.

## How much is the participation fee?

The participation fee is \$100 per high school sport season and \$50 per middle school sport season.

The participation fee will be levied only when team rosters have been set after tryouts.

## How did the district come up with the participation fee amount?

The CMS athletics department researched athletic programs and participation fees at more than 20 school districts across the nation. Funds from the participation fees, along with the

\$1 surcharge from high school regular season ticket sales, is expected to raise the \$1.2 million needed to sustain the middle school athletics program in CMS.

## What if I cannot afford the fee?

Students considered economically disadvantaged (previously referred to as students who qualify for free and reduce-priced lunch) will be eligible for a fee waiver. Parents must apply for this waiver. Each applicant's status must be verified by the CMS Child Nutrition Department.

## How do I get the fee waiver form?

Waiver forms are available from your school's athletic director. They can also be downloaded from the athletics page of the CMS Web site: [www.cms.k12.nc.us](http://www.cms.k12.nc.us). Complete the application for waiver of athletic participation fee and return it to your school principal.

## Is there a participation fee discount for families with more than one child participating in athletics?

No.

## What are my payment options?

Pay online using a credit card or debit card. A processing fee will be added by the contracted vendor.

Make a payment by check or money order, at the front office of a CMS middle school or high school. Checks should be made payable to the school.

Cash payments will not be accepted.

## Can I receive a refund if I change my mind?

Refunds of a participation fee will not be given if a student-athlete quits a team, is removed from a team, withdraws from the school, or is injured during a practice and/or game and cannot play. Refunds in other circumstances beyond district control will be decided on a case-by-case basis. *Exception: A student-athlete who pays the participation fee in a sport that is cancelled prior to the first contest will receive a refund.*

# Athletic Participation Fee

## FAQ, *continued*

### **Is there a participation fee for each sport season?**

Every middle and high school student will be required to pay a participation fee each sport season (fall, winter and spring). A student who participates on more than one team during a season will pay one fee.

### **Does paying the participation fee guarantee that my child will play?**

No. The participation fee does not guarantee playing time.

### **What is the deadline for paying the participation fee?**

A student-athlete who makes a team must pay the participation fee by an established deadline. If the participation fee is not paid by the deadline, the student-athlete will be removed from future practices and games.

#### **High school fee deadlines**

Sept. 15, 2010    Fall Sports  
Nov. 30, 2010    Winter Sports  
March 14, 2011   Spring Sports

#### **Middle school fee deadlines**

Sept. 30, 2010    Fall Sports  
Dec. 21, 2010    Winter Sports  
March 21, 2011   Spring Sports

### **Are there any other fees that will support middle school sports?**

Yes. We will collect a \$1 surcharge from each high school regular season ticket sold.

### **How can I make a donation to support the CMS athletics program?**

Donate online using a credit card or debit card. A processing fee will be added by the contracted vendor.

Make a donation by check or money order, at the front office of a CMS middle school or high school.

Checks should be made payable to the school.

Cash payments will not be accepted.