

120 Combining Teams for Athletic Participation-

The combining of teams from two or more schools to form a single team may be permitted by the Section in order to foster the emergence of a new sport, support a school that has a declining number of participants in a sport and/or financial reasons. The combining of teams will be subject to the following guidelines:

- 120.1 A school may not combine with another member school unless the sport in question has Board of Education approval in both districts.
- 120.2 If the request is not approved at the league level, the Section will not hear the request.
- 120.3 The combining of schools application (Section VI website, “Forms and Information”) must be submitted, including all signatures, to the following in the order listed for approval:
 - 120.3 a) All leagues involved
 - The respective sport’s chairperson would need to be notified.
 - Federated sports would apply directly to the Athletic Council.
 - 120.3 b) Athletic Council - via the Section VI Executive Director.
 - 120.3 c) NYSPHSAA – via the Section VI Executive Director.

It is the responsibility of the athletic director(s) of schools involved to see that the request is forwarded to the leadership of their respective League(s) and the Section office. A spreadsheet listing each application and status/approval date is posted on the Section website. Paper copies are filed at the Section office.

- 120.4 Schools will combine teams for a period of one year. Classifications are determined by the approved NYSPHSAA criteria and graduated structure (below). An annual application and approval will be required at various levels. (see 120.3)

120.4a 100% of the BEDS is taken into account from the school with the largest BEDS number. The combined team determines the host school. A percentage of the BEDS of the remaining school(s) is dependent upon the association’s “**Sport Specific Formula**”

2018-2019 Formula	2019-2020 & 2020-2021 Formula Sport Specific
Class AA = 100%	Five Classes (100% 100%, 100%, 40%, 30%)
Class A = 100%	Four Classes (100%, 100%, 40%, 30%)
Class B = 100%	Three Classes (100%, 40%, 30%)
Class C = 40%	Two Division (100%, 40%)
Class D = 30%	

*Team Sports – The **sport specific formula** is to be used for up to 3 team mergers. 100% of all schools in a combination is used for 4 or more teams.

- 120.5 Final approval by the Athletic Council must meet the following deadlines:
 - Fall Sport: Must be approved no later than the previous March meeting.
 - Winter Sport: Must be approved no later than the previous May meeting.
 - Spring Sport: Must be approved no later than the previous September meeting.
 Applications received after their deadline will only be considered for unforeseen and extenuating circumstances, not for member school administrative error.

120.6 Combining of Schools Committee

The Combining of Schools Committee is charged with the responsibility of meeting at the end of each season, in order to review data pertaining to the combining of teams across the Section and make any necessary recommendations to the Athletic Council, in order to improve the process.

120.6a It is mandatory that the Section receive a copy of each combined team's end of season report (online form, Section VI website, "*Forms & Information*"). This data is imperative in determining future performance and will influence future approval/denial and/or placement.

Reports are due after the season according to the following schedule:

- Fall Season: November 30
- Winter Season: March 20
- Spring Season: June 20

120.6b It is mandatory that the sports chair review the end of season report for each combined team and submit, to the Section office, any recommendations and whether they endorse the continuation of the combined team for the subsequent season.

120.6c Completed end of season reports will be submitted to the Combining of Schools Committee. The Combining of Schools Committee will:

- Utilize the following factors when making decisions on combined teams and determining the level of "Dominance":
 - Won a sectional championship
 - High placement at sectionals
 - Request by schools/leagues/sport chair
 - Transfers
 - Determine where teams are appropriately competitive
 - Returning players
 - Schedule
 - Program history
- Ensure that the annual application process is understood by all of the athletic directors.

Consider having a maximum number of schools combining for a sport, perhaps **four (4)**, however also provide for an appeal process under unusual circumstances, in order to go above four (4) schools

120.6d Section VI Athletic Council reserves the right to deny public schools' combined application, however, the member schools could request to move up a classification and re-apply or appeal to the Section VI Executive Committee.

120.6e If the request is not approved at the Section level, the State Association will not hear the request. Denials, at the Section level, will be communicated via formal correspondence including rationale for the decision. If the request is not approved, schools will be notified, in writing, why the request was denied. If the request for a combined team is denied, the host school would have the opportunity to submit an appeal to the Section VI Athletic Council (in accordance with the Section VI Constitution Article 11 - Grievance/Appeal Procedure).

120.7 Demerge Protocol: Not to support demergers after the season has started. Any consideration for demergers will not be accepted after the start of the season. If schools decide to demerge after the season begins, the team will remain at the elevated classifications. 120.7 Approved 11/14/2018 AC