

Middle-school interest is so great that options for large teams being studied

Sports at Cedar Grove-Belgium Middle School have become so popular that it's difficult to get playing time for all students, Principal Jeanne Courneene told the School Board on Jan. 11.

In 1992, the board adopted a no-cut policy for extracurricular activities in the middle school.

"In volleyball, we may be looking at one-hour blocks (of playing time) from 3 to 4 p.m. for seventh and eighth grades and 4 to 5 p.m. for fifth and sixth grades," Courneene said.

"We're also thinking about a fifth quarter in basketball, especially in seventh grade, for those who are suited up but not seeing adequate playing time."

Girls' middle-school basketball this year was basically cut in half. Half the team played the first part of the season and the remainder played the second half.

"If students don't get enough playing time by eighth grade, they tend to not go out. How do we keep that interest going? How do you balance competitive thinking with the best interests of the students?" Courneene asked.

"We're thinking about throwing out seventh-grade competition all together for round robins and playing here to keep the interest of the students, whether top notch or not top-notch players."

At Courneene's request, the board hired Jake Shanahan, a Cedar Grove-Belgium graduate, to coach seventh-grade basketball. Shanahan, who is pursuing a degree in special education from Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, succeeds Eric Zuelsdorf who recently accepted an out-of-town job.

So far, 93 middle-school students have signed up for track, which is coached by Phil Burns.

Courneene said an assistant middle school track coach is needed to provide supervision during practices, at meets and on the bus. Four parents volunteered to help last year, Burns said, and he expects they will volunteer this year.

"The more volunteers we can get, the better," Courneene said.

The board approved adding an assistant middle-school track coach position.

Non-sport activities are also popular with the student body.

Forensics, coached by teachers Gail Gonwa and Laura Hatfield, has 42 students and chess club, coached by Tracy Gerlach has 44 students. The teachers volunteer their time, Courneene said.

CG-B sports drawing big rosters

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