



City of Livingston Recreation Department

Youth Program Grade & Age Eligibility Policy Peer-Based Programming Standard

Adopted By: City of Livingston Recreation Department

Applies To: All City-operated youth recreation programs

1. Purpose

The City of Livingston Recreation Department is committed to providing safe, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate recreation opportunities for youth participants. This policy establishes clear and consistent standards for grade and age eligibility in peer-based recreational programs.

The intent of this policy is to support positive child development, promote participant safety, ensure fairness and equity, maintain program integrity and capacity, and align with local public school practices and developmental best practices.

2. Program Philosophy: Peer-Based Recreation

The Recreation Department offers peer-based programs, meaning participants are grouped with others at similar stages of social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. Peer-based programming supports appropriate instruction, healthy competition, positive peer interaction, and safe participation.

3. Grade-Based Eligibility (Primary Standard)

For peer-based youth programs, eligibility is determined first by grade of enrollment, consistent with the guidelines and enrollment practices of Livingston Public Schools.

Participants are expected to register in the division that matches their current grade of enrollment. Grade-based divisions align with community expectations and typical peer groupings.

4. Age & Physical Development Review (Secondary Standard)

When grade enrollment does not reasonably align with a participant's chronological age or physical development, the Recreation Department will apply age-based developmental standards as a secondary review.

This review may consider chronological age, physical size and strength, motor skill readiness, injury risk and safety considerations, and overall developmental appropriateness for the division.



5. Homeschool & Alternative Education Considerations

The Recreation Department recognizes that participants may be enrolled in homeschool programs, alternative or non-traditional education settings, or experience academic acceleration or delayed grade progression.

In these cases, grade level may be self-reported or documented by the family. The Recreation Department reserves the right to verify age, and age-based developmental standards may override grade placement when necessary to protect participant safety, fairness, or program balance.

6. Playing Outside Assigned Division

Requests to participate outside of the assigned grade or age-appropriate division are not routinely approved. Exceptions may be considered only when program capacity allows, participant safety is not compromised, competitive balance is maintained, and the exception does not displace grade- or age-eligible participants.

7. Registration Errors & Corrections

In the event of a registration system error or incorrect eligibility display, the Recreation Department reserves the right to correct placement, notify families promptly, and reassign participants to the appropriate division.

8. Equity, Safety & Risk Management

This policy ensures equitable access to recreation opportunities, consistent decision-making across programs and seasons, alignment with child-development standards, responsible use of public facilities and tax-supported resources, and reduction of injury risk and liability.

9. Appeals & Communication

Families with questions regarding eligibility are encouraged to contact the Recreation Department directly. Eligibility determinations are final once communicated.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with best practices in youth development, community needs, and program capacity.

Contact Information

City of Livingston Recreation Department

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Secondary Review Standards when using Chronological Age

For City of Livingston Recreation Department youth programs, chronological age eligibility is determined as of the beginning of the City's fiscal year.

Age Cutoff Date: July 1

A participant must be X years old on or before July 1 of the applicable program year to be eligible for that age-based division.

This standard is established to align with municipal risk-management best practices and the expectations of the City's liability insurer, the Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA).

When grade placement does not reasonably align with a participant's chronological age or physical development, age-based developmental standards may override grade placement to protect participant safety, fairness, and program integrity.