**Dear Parents,**

**RE: Basketball Participation for Grade 7 teams**

We would like to take a moment to address some important information regarding basketball at Spring Glen Junior High and provide clarification on our approach. We have been involved with sports at our schools for nearly 30 years, and realize that sometimes, in the midst of everything, we may make assumptions about what parents and students understand. For that, we apologize if there has been any miscommunication or confusion, especially if it has caused any frustration.

**Overview of Basketball Leagues:**

As part of the Westwind School Division, we offer three basketball leagues: one for Grades 7, 8, and 9. Over the years, we’ve often faced challenges with low numbers of players. To ensure we can field teams, we have traditionally invited Grade 6 students to join, even though the league is intended for Grade 7 and up. This practice has allowed us to provide more opportunities for students to participate. While we understand this may not always be the standard practice across all schools, we’ve continued this approach to benefit our students, and to my knowledge, only Mt. View has a similar policy.

**This Year’s Challenge:**

This year, however, we face a different challenge: instead of a lack of players, we have an abundance of students who want to participate. As a result, we now have more interest than we can accommodate, and it has created some difficult decisions. In a typical year, this would mean that Grade 6 students would not be able to participate, as the league is intended for Grade 7 players. We understand this may not meet the expectations of everyone, and we want to assure you that this decision is not made lightly.

**The Options:**

There are two main options in this situation:

1. **Limit participation to Grade 7 students only**, as per the league guidelines.
2. **Allow Grade 6 students to participate** on a rotating basis, ensuring they get some playing time. We would also look for exhibition games against other grade 6 teams and look for a tournament specifically for grade 6 students

We have chosen **Option #2**, as we believe in providing our students with as many opportunities as possible to engage and grow. We recognize that this means some students, especially the grade 6 ones, will not get as much playing time as others, but we believe this is the best way to give every student a chance to participate.

This will mean all students are allowed and encouraged to come to practises. Only a select number of grade 6 students will be allowed to play on game day. All of them can travel with the team and feel a part of it. The students will be told in advance if they will get to play that week. The choosing of which students get to play will simply be done by taking turns. We will also ensure that Grade 6 students have their own opportunities for additional play, such as special games or a tournament specifically for them.

**In Closing:**

We sincerely apologize if this information was not communicated clearly earlier. Our goal is always to offer the best experience for all students, and we appreciate your understanding and support as we work through these challenges together. Also because of limited playing time grade six students will pay reduced basketball fees. These guidelines apply to both the girls and boy’s teams.

These guidelines currently are for both the boys and girl’s teams. It is the boy’s team at this time that is more affected.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,

Jamie Barfuss
DJ Scott