

Audubon Community Athletics & Activities Information Meeting

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why is the district holding this community meeting?

The purpose of the meeting is to present factual information, answer questions, and gather feedback from our community regarding proposed athletic sharing opportunities and recent changes to Iowa legislation affecting eighth-grade athletic eligibility and waiting periods.

No decisions will be made during the meeting. Instead, the meeting is intended to ensure everyone has access to the same information and an opportunity to ask questions and share perspectives before any future action is considered.

Is this discussion about whole-grade sharing or school consolidation?

No.

The conversations taking place are focused solely on athletics. They are not related to whole-grade sharing, school district consolidation, school closure, or changes to academic programming.

Why is additional athletic sharing being considered?

Participation numbers have changed over time in both districts. While Audubon has experienced declining participation in several girls' athletic programs, Exira-EHK has experienced declining participation in several boys' programs. District leaders continue to evaluate options that provide meaningful opportunities for student-athletes while sustaining competitive athletic programs.

Current participation data and enrollment trends will be shared during the community meeting.

Can historical participation numbers be shared?

Yes.

Historical participation data, current participation numbers, and enrollment trends will be presented during the community meeting and made available to the public afterward.

Why is Exira-EHK being considered instead of another district?

Prior to entering the current girls basketball and softball sharing agreements three years ago, Audubon administrators met with representatives from CRB, IKM-Manning, and Exira-EHK to discuss potential athletic sharing opportunities. After evaluating those discussions, Exira-EHK emerged as the most practical long-term partner based on factors such as participation numbers, geographic proximity, scheduling, and the ability to provide meaningful participation opportunities for student-athletes.

Since then, Audubon and Exira-EHK have developed successful partnerships in girls basketball, softball, cross country, and junior high football. Audubon, Exira-EHK, and IKM-Manning also continue to successfully share

wrestling and tennis. These existing relationships between students, coaches, administrators, and communities make Exira-EHK a logical partner as additional athletic sharing opportunities are considered.

What athletic programs are currently shared?

Audubon currently participates in several athletic sharing agreements.

Shared with Exira-EHK:

- High School Girls Basketball
- High School Softball
- Junior High Football
- Junior High & High School Cross Country

Shared with Exira-EHK and IKM-Manning:

- Junior High & High School Wrestling
- High School Boys & Girls Tennis

These partnerships have provided meaningful participation opportunities for student-athletes while producing significant competitive success.

What additional athletic sharing agreements are being considered?

The Exira-EHK Board of Education has approved the following proposals for Audubon's consideration:

- Three-year agreements for boys' shared athletic programs.
- Four-year agreements for girls' shared athletic programs (*the girls basketball agreement has already been approved by both school boards through a four-year agreement*).

The new high school sharing opportunities being considered include:

- Boys Basketball
- Boys Track & Field
- Girls Track & Field (which has been shared before)
- Baseball

A summary of all proposed athletic sharing agreements is included with the meeting information and will be reviewed during the community meeting.

Would all practices and home contests move to one community?

No.

The proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) calls for balancing practices and home contests between Audubon and Exira-EHK whenever practical.

The current intent is for basketball, baseball, and softball to each host approximately five to six varsity dates in each community. Depending on scheduling and facility availability, this number may vary from year to year. For the upcoming basketball season, the number of home contests may differ due to non-conference games that have already been scheduled.

Will my child have to travel farther for practices?

Practice locations will vary by sport and season. As with current sharing agreements, practices are expected to occur in both communities whenever practical. Specific practice schedules will be determined by coaches, facilities, and the needs of each program.

Transportation remains an important consideration, particularly during the summer months when regular bus routes are unavailable. District administrators will continue working with coaches to provide safe and efficient transportation while evaluating opportunities to improve transportation whenever possible.

Will participation increase or decrease if additional sharing is approved?

No one can accurately predict future participation. Participation decisions are made by individual students and families, making it impossible to know exactly how participation may change.

What if participation or enrollment changes significantly?

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will include a clearly defined process for reviewing or discontinuing a sharing agreement should significant participation or enrollment changes occur in either district.

How does the new eighth-grade participation legislation affect students?

Recent Iowa legislation changed the period of athletic ineligibility from **90 school days to 140 calendar days** for students who transfer schools under certain circumstances.

District administration will explain these legislative changes, along with other questions regarding eighth-grade participation, during the community meeting.

Can an eighth-grade student participate in both junior high and high school athletics?

Yes, provided the student is participating in different sports. For example, an eighth-grade student may participate in junior high basketball and high school golf during the same school year. However, a student may not participate on both the junior high and high school teams in the same sport during the same season.

Additional information regarding the new legislation and eighth-grade participation requirements will be available during and after the community meeting.

If athletic sharing is approved, what would the team names be?

For shorter-term sharing agreements, the host district's name appears first in the cooperative name.

Examples:

- **Exira-EHK Host:** Exira-EHK-Audubon Spartans
- **Audubon Host:** Audubon-Exira-EHK Wheelers

What happens after the community meeting?

Following the community meeting, the Audubon Board of Education will review the information presented, consider community feedback, and determine next steps.

If the Board chooses to move forward, any action would occur at a separate special meeting of the Board of Education.

Who can I contact if I have additional questions?

Please contact:

Sean Birks

Activities Director / Assistant Principal

Trevor Miller

Superintendent / Acting Secondary Principal