

Many times the question is asked, “What is the difference between the Bemidji High School Gymnastics Program and the USAG Aerials Program?” Here is an attempt to clarify the differences and help you determine the plus and minuses of both programs to best determine your needs, goals, desires. (What one may deem a plus, another may deem a minus -- the decision should be based on YOUR needs not someone else’s!)

Bemidji High School Gymnastics Program	Bemidji Aerials USA Gymnastics Jr Olympic Program
- More of a team activity with little emphasis on individual	- More individual emphasis with some emphasis on team
- Can participate in fall and spring sports (Participation in Circus will be limited if participating a spring sport)	- Hard to participate in other extracurricular but not impossible (You may need to miss some practices if doing multiple activities)
- Can work with High School Coaches during the season and 2 months during the summer	-Year round training is possible and encouraged and Coaches are available year round
- Cost is limited to the High School Activity fee during the season. If practicing during off season, fees need to be paid to Gym Bin	-A fee is charged for gymnastics practice and meets
- The High School is responsible for providing uniforms Individuals usually must purchase warm up leos	-Each child must purchase their own uniform and warm up (The BGC purchases the warm up pants)
-The High School provides transportation to away meets for those competing	-Parents must arrange for transportation to and from meets
- Meets are close together which does not allow a lot of time to work on advanced skills or improvement between meets	-More time between meets allows for further improvement of advanced skills and routines
- A gymnast may specialize in certain events rather than compete all around	- All gymnasts must compete each event (all around)
- Only 5 Varsity gymnasts compete in each event per meet and 6 JV per event. Gymnasts must compete for those spots.	- All gymnasts compete each event (all around). There is no limit to the number of gymnasts who can compete.
- No skill progression required. Gymnasts work on desired skills to put in routines in the time allowed before the season and between meets	-USAG sets strict standards in skill progression which allows advancement only when each skill is learned properly which prepares gymnasts for learning advanced skills easier, with better form and safety
- The High School offers more meets, mostly during the week with a few on the weekends with about 4 home meets per year	- Fewer meets, all on weekends with one home meet per year
- 2 BHS Gymnasts have qualified for state in BHS history.	-Many USAG gymnasts have qualified for the state meet.
- State is highest level of advancement	- There are opportunities for gymnasts to go to State, Multi-State Regionals, and Nationals
- Only top High School gymnasts in each state have good potential for college scholarships	- All high level USAG gymnasts have good potential for scholarships
- Gymnasts create their own routines	-Optional Gymnasts (Level 7 and up) work with a Choreographer to develop routines which include all required skills Compulsory Gymnast (Level 1-6) must all perform routines Choreographed by a USAG official
-2 coaches, all gymnasts coached as a team	- Several coaches -- split into skill level groups for coaching
- Several Team activities usually planned throughout the year	- Few organized team activities.
- Note: Parents have noted with gymnasts in grades 7-12 on the same team, parents of younger gymnasts should consider the discrepancy in “age appropriate” behavior & conversations which can take place during time together, on bus rides, socializing in and out of the gym, etc. -- this is NOT to say that any child is behaving inappropriately for their age, it is just to be noted that what is acceptable for a senior may not be for a 7th grader.	- Gymnasts of varying ages may be in the same practice group. Younger gymnasts are given a separate locker room, parents transport them and most social events for this group are family events. (i.e. families traveling together or meeting to eat together after meets, etc.)