

STRATH HAVEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

STRATH HAVEN MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS

A beneficial athletic program is one that provides personal growth and development, both physically and mentally. Athletics gives students opportunities to learn to accept personal responsibilities for success and failure, and to recognize the limitations and strengths of both. The athletic program at SHMS provides activities that will make a positive impact on both the school and community.

This handbook is to provide basic procedures and policies that apply to the Strath Haven MS athletic program. It should serve as a helpful guide to both students and parents.

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Philosophy

The primary purpose of the athletic program in the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District is to promote the ethical, physical, social, emotional, and overall well-being of the student-athletes.

The athletic program is an important and integral part of the total school program and open to participation by all students regardless of individual differences.

We believe that participation in athletics provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in their personal growth and development.

Athletic Participation

Selection of Interscholastic Participants

The Wallingford-Swarthmore School District reserves the right to limit the number of participants on interscholastic teams for reasons of supervision, safety, and the overall quality of the learning experience. Reasonable attempts by the school community will help to find alternative athletic opportunities for any student athletes who not selected for any interscholastic team. This may include participation in community athletic programs.

Participant Attendance and Team Rules

1. Each member of any school team is required to make a commitment to that sport during the season.
2. The school team should take precedence over non-school teams and activities. That commitment includes attendance at every practice and contest. A coach may, after evaluating the circumstances, dismiss, suspend, demote, or otherwise penalize an athlete for missing practices and games.
3. Students are required to maintain a high standard of academic success. Students must remain academically eligible in accordance with PIAA and SHMS academic eligibility requirements.
4. Absence for more than one-half of the academic school day will result in a loss of eligibility from extracurricular activities for that day.
5. Each team member must observe and abide by team rules, as distributed by the head coach. Violation of team rules will first result in counseling by the head coach and notification of parents. On the second instance, a suspension from the team for a period determined by the head coach and on third instance, the student athlete's dismissal for the remainder of the season.

Academic Eligibility Requirements

Point System

A grade of F = 2 points. A grade of D-, D, D+, or I (incomplete) = 1 point.

3 or more points = Ineligibility

Determination of Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity (Including 8th grade Hershey Park trip and music trip to Hidden Hollow) the following rules apply:

Student eligibility status will be determined on a weekly basis starting after the third week of each marking period. Any student who accumulates **three** or more points becomes ineligible for all extracurricular activities for the entire successive marking period UNLESS he/she/they redeem himself/herself/themselves. Athletic eligibility at SHMS is based off a 3-point system. The system is as follows: D (-,+) average is 1 point. F average is 2 points. Students who obtain three or more points are ineligible to participate in sport or any extracurricular activity for a **minimum of one week**. The SHMS Guidance Counselors will meet with the student and help outline an academic improvement plan to become eligible once again. An ineligible student may practice if they report to their teacher after school hours for extra help. Student must also obtain notice from said teacher stating that they are receiving help and give the note to the coach/athletic director. This is for practice only; evaluated on a day-to-day basis. Students deemed ineligible will remain ineligible for one week after the report cards are distributed

In circumstances with a student who continues to remain ineligible, one or more of the following may occur: 1. A parent conference with the student's team of teachers 2. A referral to the child study team 3. A strong recommendation for student participation in after school homework club and/or 4. The assigning of an adult to mentor the student.

A student's eligibility status can be reviewed at any time. Students deemed ineligible will remain ineligible for one week after the grades are distributed.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment and uniforms are issued to participants on a loan basis and are to be worn only when authorized by the coach. If any of the equipment is not returned at the conclusion of the season, an obligation will be issued to the participant for the fair cost of replacing it. Until the obligation is resolved, the participant is not permitted to participate in any further athletic seasons.

HAZING

Hazing by any member of an athletic team is not tolerated at SHMS. Instances of hazing/initiation **whether voluntary or involuntary** are not legal in the state of Pennsylvania and are not acceptable in the Strath Haven community. Any instances of hazing/initiation will result in **immediate dismissal** from the team. This includes, but is not limited to any form of humiliation, intimidation, or behaviors that endanger the health and safety of the student athlete.

INJURIES

Any student who participates in athletic competition must understand that a risk of injury always exists. The athletic staff at SHMS will do everything possible to minimize risks for student-athletes, both in practice and competition. Any injury/illness that occurs while under the direct supervision of the coaching staff, the student-athlete must notify the coach and /or athletic trainer for evaluation. Any injury/illness that occurs outside of school district supervision must also be reported to the coach or athletic trainer. Once a physician evaluates a student-athlete, the student must provide clearance/documentation to the athletic trainer **before** returning to participation in sport. Crozer-Keystone Health Systems Sports Medicine provides a physician to oversee the athletic trainer and treatment/care of our student-athletes.

Concussions

In the beginning of the 7th, 9th, and 11th grade season's student athletes will participate in the IMPACT examination to determine baseline results. This examination is a diagnostic tool that may be used to help determine a student athletes cognitive abilities post-injury compared to their baseline scores. Should a student-athlete sustain a head injury, they should notify the coach or athletic trainer immediately for evaluation. Once evaluated by the athletic trainer, the student athlete will need to see a concussion specialist **before** they can return to participation in sport. Once cleared for participation by a concussion specialist, student athletes must complete a 10-day return to play protocol. This protocol is used to help ease student athletes in their gradual return to sports. Please see the 'return to play protocol' under the "Concussion Protocols/Documents" tab on the MS athletic page at www.wssd.org

INSURANCE

All athletes participating in interscholastic sports must be in current standing with a health and/or accident insurance plan. This information must be included in the student-athletes PIAA sports physical form. Wallingford-Swarthmore School District provides a secondary insurance policy for student athletes participating in sport. This policy will assist in paying out of pocket expenses not covered by the student-athletes primary carrier. Please contact the athletic trainer for the appropriate information regarding secondary insurance.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

All student-athletes, prior to participation in any sport, must have a PIAA pre-participation physical examination (CIPPE). The completed forms must be given to the coach **prior** to the first day of practice.

Under PIAA rules, a physical examination is good for one academic year. Crozer-Keystone provides one-date free PIAA physical examinations by our team physician at the conclusion of each school year. We strongly encourage students to take advantage of this opportunity; however, students may choose to see their own physician. To be cleared for sport participation, the physical examination must be dated after June 1st.

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of others and provide greater benefits to student-athletes. As parents, when your children become involved in Strath Haven athletics, you have a right to understand the expectations placed on your child.

Parents can expect open, honest communication with coaches, to include:

- Expectations for student-athletes
- Locations and times of practices and contests
- Team rules and requirements
- Disciplinary issues which may result in suspension from participation

Parents are requested to express concerns directly to the head coach when they arise, and to notify coaches of any schedule conflicts well in advance. Concerns may include:

- The treatment of your child
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Coaches are considered professionals who must make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. There are certain issues that are **inappropriate** to discuss with a coach:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. When such conferences are necessary or desired, the following procedures are recommended:

1. Please encourage your child to speak directly with the coach. This will help our student-athletes grow into young adults.
2. Call/Email to set up an appointment (see SHMS athletic page for contact information).

3. If the coach cannot be reached, contact the Athletic Director, who will assist you in arranging a meeting.
4. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times for the parent, the athlete, and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

If the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

P.I.A.A

All secondary schools in the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District are members of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association.

PIAA by-laws that pertain to age, awards, attendance, health, transfers, residence, participation, representation, curriculum, and seasonal rules will be followed.

Each coach is responsible to know applicable rules, articulate them to team members and parents, and to inform them of policy and procedures.

Teams not participating in PIAA athletics will adhere to district policy and standards.

Policy on Equal Rights and Opportunity

It is the policy of the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District not to discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, and handicap in its educational and vocational programs or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504 and Title VI.

Assurance is given that services, activities, and facilities are accessible and usable by handicapped persons.

For information regarding civil rights and grievance procedure, contact the Coordinator of Title IX, Section 504, at 200 South Providence Road, Wallingford, PA, 19086. 610-892-3404

SOCIAL MEDIA

Much of the reporting on competition statistics and highlighting athletic talent is located on Social Media by reporters/staff/parents and students. We strongly recommend that our students use caution

and good judgment about what they choose to put on their social media accounts. Should conflict arise between athletes, social media platforms should not be used to address the situation. Conflicts can be resolved within the team members with the coach present. Students/Parents should not be criticizing the program or those associated with it on any social media platform. Instances where cyber-bullying are reported will be reviewed and consequences may result. This includes, but is not limited to, suspension/dismissal from the team. Coaches may establish their own personal guidelines and consequences for student use of the social media.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Student-athletes must keep in mind that they are in the public eye and that their personal conduct will always be subject to the scrutiny of their fellow students, fans, opponents, and the media. They therefore have an obligation to serve as positive role models by subscribing to the following:

- Showing respect for authority
- Maintaining academic eligibility and training rules
- Emphasizing the ideals of sportsmanship, loyalty, ethical conduct and fair play

Any display of unsportsmanlike behavior towards an opponent, official, or spectator during the season may result in possible suspension from the team.

During Home competition, the SHMS spectators are held to the same standard. Any display of disrespect or other unsportsmanlike conduct may result in removal from the sporting event. A warning may be issued by the coach, referee, or SHMS faculty member (Principal(s), Athletic Director, Athletic Trainer etc.); however, is not necessary, as these behaviors are not tolerated. If these behaviors become consistent, a spectator may be banned from sporting events for that season.

TEAM TRAVEL

All athletes are expected to ride the team bus to and from athletic contests. There is much to be learned from spending time with your teammates and coaches before and after a game.

We recognize that there may be extenuating circumstances that necessitate an athlete riding to or from a game with a parent. These would include such events as a family emergency, a medical or dental appointment. Travel release forms can be picked up in the Athletic Office or at www.wssd.org. The form must be submitted to the Athletic Director's office at least 24 hours before the date of the game in question. Athletes may not travel with anyone other than their own parent.

Strath Haven Middle School Reserves the right to change/update the Athletic Handbook as they see fit. The most up to date version of the Athletic Handbook can be found under the Athletics page on the SHMS school website @ www.wssd.org.