

# Minneapolis Public Schools

## Student and Parent Athletic Manual

(Manual contents are consistently under review and subject to revision.)



\*Schools may or may not offer all sports\*

<u>Fall Sports</u>	<u>Winter Sports</u>	<u>Spring Sports</u>
Football	Hockey	Baseball
Soccer	Basketball	Badminton
Cross Country	Alpine Ski	Lacrosse
Girls Tennis	Wrestling	Boys Tennis
Girls Swimming	Boys Swimming	Adaptive Softball
Adaptive Soccer	Adaptive Floor Hockey	Track and Field
Volleyball	Gymnastics	Softball
Cheerleading (Fall and Winter)	Nordic Ski	Golf
	Dance Team	Adaptive Bowling

**Athletics + Academics = Success**

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Dear Parents and Student-Athletes,

We would like to welcome you to the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Program! We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in personal growth and development. Minneapolis Public Schools believes in the development of young men and women through athletics. We feel that a properly structured, well-organized sports program meets student's needs for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our pledge to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity. Likewise, we believe that parents have committed themselves to certain responsibilities and obligations to the student-athlete. We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized athletic program. It is the role of the Athletic Department to make rules governing interscholastic competition. These rules need broad-based community support to be fully effective. This is best achieved through mutual communication between the Athletic Department, the student-athletes and the parents of each of our student-athletes. One way that we have committed to accomplishing this objective is through this athletic handbook for students, parents and coaches. The most important reason that our department exists is to ensure that students have an opportunity to partake in and enjoy sports during their time within the Minneapolis Public Schools. As an athletic department, we can assure you that students and the teams in which they are a part of are the guiding force in everything we do and every decision that we make. Our focus and primary objective, in making this handbook and in all that we do, will always be to do what is in the best interest of the student and their team. This combination shall ensure a promising and successful future for Minneapolis Public Schools Athletics. Thank You very much for taking the time to read the athletic handbook. It will not only allow you to become familiar with our policies and procedures, it will also allow for a smooth transition for you as a new or continued member of the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Program. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any member of the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Department.

Sincerely,  
MPS District Athletics

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

**Philosophy:** Athletics are an important part of Minneapolis Public Schools' educational program. We want to ensure that each student-athlete reaches their maximum potential.

**Mission:** It is our mission to Excel in Creating Excellent Athletics Opportunities for Students. Benefits of athletic participation include: Improved athletic knowledge and skills; Spending quality out-of-school time with supportive, mentoring adults; Gaining a better understanding of the diverse world in which we live and the unique cultural differences of its population; Learning how to relate to, and respond to, situations and individuals from a variety of backgrounds; Reflecting principles of hard work, integrity, motivation, perseverance and excellence; and Developing habits for a lifetime of physical activity, good health and wellness.

**Vision:** Balance student participation with the opportunity for athletes to compete at the highest level. The Athletic Department values: tiered levels of competition, a first class infrastructure, equitable allocation of resources, community engagement and promoting school pride. Specifically, the Athletic Department seeks to provide interested students with the opportunity to participate in its program of interscholastic athletics and is committed to the following:

- To offer a well-balanced and varied program of interscholastic athletics (based on numbers and the best interest of our student-athletes)
- To teach the value of competition
- To foster the development of athletic skills
- To encourage the development of a strong work ethic, self-discipline and self-sacrifice
- To teach the value of commitment, teamwork and cooperation
- To encourage the development of judgment, character, and leadership
- To teach the value of ethical conduct, sportsmanship, and fair play
- To encourage the development of loyalty and pride in one's self, their team, and the school community

**Student Expectations:** The Athletic Department expects the following of each participant in the school athletic program.

- To be a worthy representative of teammates, coaches, and the school community, abiding by school and community expectations
- To maintain health and fitness levels by following the training rules prescribed by the coach
- To reflect the knowledge that commitment to victory is nothing without commitment to hard work in practice
- To understand that athletics is just one part in the big picture with the cornerstone being that a Minneapolis Public School student strives to achieve excellence in all areas
- To learn to deal with adversity in an honorable way and to capitalize on growth opportunities
- To express feelings intelligently and appropriately
- To accept the responsibilities of team membership: support of teammates, cooperation, positive interaction, and mutual respect
- To learn how to balance a demanding academic schedule with an arduous athletic training schedule

**Definition of Winning:** Outscoring our opponents on the scoreboard is not always in our control. We cannot always control our level of talent. Certainly it is important that through a strong work ethic we maximize what we have, but everyone is born with a certain amount of ability. Injuries can also play a major role in whether or not a team is successful on the scoreboard. If we base our criteria for success on “winning them all”, we will be needlessly disappointed most of the time. Winning must be defined in such a way that we maintain a level of control. If success is not achieved, positive steps can be taken to assure positive results. There should never be a feeling of helplessness or despair, only a continual examination of attitudes and practices that brings about improvement. How is this to be done? Our criterion for success on the field or court is the achievement of excellence. Unlike victory over an opponent, we have control of our standards of excellence.

**Definition of Excellence:** Excellence is the ongoing process of becoming better than we once were, particularly in the below list areas.

- Superior Work Ethic
- Personal Humility
- Team-ness Oriented
- Determination
- Mental Toughness
- Actions Deserving of Victory
- Respecting One Another
- Trust
- Sacrifice

All of these areas must be present to achieve excellence. The success of our teams will be a reflection on the degree to which the individuals on our teams develop these areas as fundamental components of who we are as a team and as individuals.

## **DEPARTMENT STAFF ROLES**

**District Athletic Director:** The District Athletic Director provides general oversight of all Athletic Programs. He/She develops a successful athletic program based upon an effective business plan by assessing program effectiveness, program quality and participation; develops action plans and metrics, analyzes operational results and controls expenditures; assures the effective allocation and utilization of resources. They direct the development of solutions for Department issues; monitors and evaluates Department work groups, and assures that the services and work products meet quality and safety standards. He/She directs fundraising and budgeting procedures and financial management; recommends efficiencies to keep costs within established financial guidelines; analyzes costs of materials, equipment, commodities and labor; accounts for revenues, manages finances and expenditures, and prepares financial reports; manages contracts for special services. In addition to monitoring athletic program operations; He/She manages assigned staff, develops priorities, and assigns tasks and projects; assures that appropriate services are provided, and goals are defined and achieved; develops staff skills and conducts performance evaluations. The District Athletic Director reviews operational reports, and assures that program activities meet MPS standards. He/She prepares and administers contracts; assures operations meet State laws, technical requirements, and quality standards; coordinates evaluation and reporting of program achievements.

**District Assistant Athletic Director:** The Assistant Athletic Director works in partnership with the District Athletic Director to maintain, organize, and administer the overall athletic program and ensure compliance with conference and school policies, rules and regulations. He/She may help with managing coaches as well as share responsibility for the overall direction, coordination, and evaluation of the Department of Athletics. Their duties include but are not limited to: coordinating District Alpine Ski and Hockey Programs (boys and girls); compiling, maintaining and updating game and practice schedules; coordinating transportation and officials; and assisting with event planning to tournaments; and any other necessary events. Additionally, he/she will attend and supervise athletic events, manage athletics related communication material and media relations, and assist in other areas as needed. The District Assistant Athletic Director supports District office and school site administration and athletic directors with the administration of a diverse and equitable athletic program. In addition to reviewing and approving the preparation and distribution of technical and financial reports to accurately reflect the operational trends and costs of the MPS Athletics Department operations the District Assistant Athletic Director meets regularly with staff to discuss and resolve schedules, priorities, workload and technical issues. He/She assists with the development of staff skills and is a key contact person with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Minnesota State High School League and outside partnerships.

**High School Athletic Director:** The Athletic Director is responsible for administering the Athletic Program at their assigned high school. The Building Athletic Director interprets and implements educational and athletic policies as they affect the sports program in the school. In essence, the BUILDING ATHLETIC DIRECTOR IS THE MANAGER OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM IN HIS/HER SCHOOL. Their duties include but are not limited to: hiring and training coaches, coordinating the athletic budget, scheduling games and coordinate practice schedules with head coach of each sport, approving and scheduling transportation and officials, conflict resolution, and overseeing all aspects of the Department of Athletics. He/She will advise the High School Administration, staff, teams, coaches, and parents of any changes and communicate the needs of the Athletic Department to the administration, booster club, and the District Athletic Office. This position reports directly to the high school Principal while also working closely with the District Director and Assistant Director. He/She must also be a positive representative of the Minneapolis Public Schools and the Athletic Department.

**Coaches:** All coaches are required to have Minnesota State High School League certification and meet all Minneapolis Public Schools guidelines prior to working with student/athletes. The coach is responsible for creating a fun, safe, and challenging environment in which his/her student-athletes will receive a high level of instruction and competition. The coach is also responsible for confirming game and bus schedules, turning in a roster prior to the season, distributing and collecting uniforms and equipment, completing game, injury and/or incident reports, and communicating with parents. The coach must also ensure that student-athletes are exhibiting good behavior on and off the court. The coach is expected to be a positive representative of Minneapolis Public Schools and the Athletic Department. This includes ensuring that the coaches conduct themselves in a manner that will bring honor and respect to our teams and school. He/She is expected to make decisions based on the collective interest of the team, while also developing each student-athlete to his/her fullest potential. The coach must be clear in expectations and available to student-athletes for positive mentorship on and off the field/court. He/She is expected to maintain high personal standards, motivate the players, and promote sportsmanship at all times.

**Student-Athlete:** The student-athlete is expected to be a positive addition to the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Department. If a student-athlete must discuss an issue with the coach, he/she must communicate in a respectful manner to try and find a solution. If a situation cannot be reached, the Athletic Director may assist. Student-Athletes will be representing Minneapolis Public Schools on and off the playing court/field and are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively upon our program and school. Student-Athletes are expected to be respectful and exhibit good behavior in class, in practice, in games and in the community. If a student-athlete fails to conduct himself/herself in a manner that will bring honor and respect to our teams and school, he/she may be subject to penalties which may include game suspensions, ineligibility, or dismissal from the team. Any player who is ejected from a game will automatically be suspended for at least the next Athletic Contest pending the Officials' Report.

**Parents:** Parents play a vital role in the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletics Program. Parents model attitudes and behavior for their children. We invite all parents to attend home and away games, support the team, and encourage their children to practice and play hard. We are so appreciative of the assistance parents provide for their children in their athletic endeavors, whether driving them to an athletic event, volunteering to serve athletics as a member of the Booster Club, and sacrificing family time to accommodate athletic schedules. We also appreciate the support parents provide our coaches in their efforts to create a valuable athletic experience for all participants. It is important for parents to be mindful of and respect what the coaches are trying to do by avoiding interference or public criticism, especially in front of their children, other teammates, or community members. In regards to games, parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will bring honor and respect to our teams and school. At no time should a parent display inappropriate behavior toward an official, coach, administrator or student-athlete. Any Spectator/Parent who acts in a disruptive manner may be asked to leave the game and could be suspended until the situation is resolved.

**Athletic Opportunities:**

All teams can separate into B Squad, Junior Varsity and Varsity teams depending on the number of participants in each sport. (See Sports Offerings on Front Cover of Manual.) Middle School students (grades 7 and 8) may participate on high school teams per MSHSL Rules and depending on the number of participants in each sport understanding that they are responsible for their own transportation to the school or practice venue.

**Financial Obligation:** Although the District pays for most of the cost associated with the athletic program, some sports require specialized equipment or uniforms for which the cost is covered by the parents of the student-athletes. Below are the Minneapolis Public School Athletic Participation Fees:

- Hockey - \$240
- Football - \$90
- All Other High School Sports - \$75
- Middle School Sports - \$45 (fees to Community Education)

Students on Educational Benefits pay 1/3 participation fee - No Fee Waivers - Family maximum is \$750. See your school athletic director regarding special hardship cases. 10% of full pay school generated student participation fees are sent to District Athletic Office for equitable redistribution

**Ticket Prices:**

- Adults - \$6.00
- MPS Staff/Senior Citizens - \$4.00 (student ticket)
- Students (Not from host school) - \$4.00
- Students (from host school) - \$2.00 must show MPS Student ID
- Children under age 7 are free.

Discount Cards are sold at all schools. (These cards work for both home and away MPS events.)

Adult cards are \$40 for 10 entrances Student cards are \$25 for 10 entrances.

Special Promotional Events – Host Schools may select one “Free” entrance event per sport for students enrolled at their school. These dates are selected by the school administration.

**Sportsmanship:** The Minneapolis Public Schools have adopted a mission statement for sportsmanship:

“The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity permeate our culture. The values of good citizenship and high behavioral standards apply equally to all activity disciplines. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation as a concrete measure of the understanding and commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity.”

Our society has a history of discrimination in sports against females, racial minorities and the disabled. It is our responsibility to recognize and correct this in our small worlds, on our teams and in our neighborhoods.

**Minnesota State High School League Affiliations:** The Minnesota State High School League is a voluntary, nonprofit association of public and private schools with a history of service to Minnesota's high school youth since 1916. The Minnesota State High School League's Mission is to provide educational opportunities for students through interscholastic athletics and fine arts programs while providing leadership and support for member schools. Today, nearly 500 schools are members of the League. These member schools provide opportunities for athletics and fine arts competition for more than 200,000 high school students statewide each year. The League exists to provide competitive, equitable and uniform opportunities for high school students to learn valuable lessons through participation in athletics and fine arts. The League provides support for member schools with programs that address sportsmanship, chemical health, and scholarship recognition. The League also oversees more than 4,500 registered contest officials and judges. The League provides educational programs for coaches.

**Conference Affiliations:** The purpose of the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Conference is to provide an environment where athlete competition is kept in its proper perspective emphasizing sportsmanship. The Minneapolis City Conference is made up of 7 high school programs comprised of 10 Minneapolis Public Schools, which include: Edison/Heritage Academy, North, Patrick Henry/FAIR, Roosevelt/Wellstone International, South, Southwest and Washburn. In addition, Girls Swimming competes in the Tri-Metro Conference and Girls Hockey competes in the Metro West Conference. Boys Swimming, Boys Hockey, Boys/Girls Lacrosse, and Alpine Ski compete as Independents. We are proud of these affiliations and will respect their direction.

**Booster Clubs:** Booster clubs play a key role in supporting Minneapolis Public Schools athletic programs and we are very thankful for the many positive contributions they provide. A booster club is defined as an organization that is formed to **help support the efforts of a sports team or organization**. Support is shown in many ways, including volunteering time, raising money, and contributing funds to increase our students' opportunities and better enhance their experiences. Booster clubs exist entirely outside of the School District. They operate as separate entities and may perform, meet, or organize in any way, in accordance with the above-stated definition, **that supports or 'boosts'** an MPS sports team or organization. They establish their own governance, generate their own funds, have their own bank accounts, and, independently, decide how to use their funds. It is the charge of the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Department, in partnership with individual school administrations, to ensure that booster clubs operate within their defined parameters. MPS retains the right to disassociate itself from any booster club that does not abide by these parameters or fails to follow any other District policy or regulation or city, state or federal law, regulation, rule or ordinance. We would not be successful without our parents and truly appreciate your support and enthusiasm!

**Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Department Contact Information:**

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>ADDRESS / ZIP CODE 554xx (last 2 digits)</b>	<b>E-Mail</b>
District Director	Antony Fisher	668-0603	1250 W. Broadway Ave. (11)	<a href="mailto:Antony.fisher@mpls.k12.mn.us">Antony.fisher@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Assistant Director	Dave Wicker	668-0602 ; 702-0434	1250 W. Broadway Ave. (11)	<a href="mailto:Dave.wicker@mpls.k12.mn.us">Dave.wicker@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director Edison/ Heritage	Brett McNeal	668-1344 ; 212-8765	700-22 <sup>nd</sup> Ave. NE (18)	<a href="mailto:Brett.McNeal@mpls.k12.mn.us">Brett.McNeal@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director Henry/ FAIR	Kenny Maxey	668-1947 ; 702-4837	4320 Newton Ave. N. (12)	<a href="mailto:Kenneth.Maxey@mpls.k12.mn.us">Kenneth.Maxey@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director North	Kale Severson	668-1706	1500 James Ave. N. (11)	<a href="mailto:Kale.severson@mpls.k12.mn.us">Kale.severson@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director Roosevelt/ Wellstone	Dennis Stockmo	668-4859 ; 382-2647	4029-28 <sup>th</sup> Ave. S. (06)	<a href="mailto:Dennis.stockmo@mpls.k12.mn.us">Dennis.stockmo@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director South	Amy Cardarelle	668-4324 ; 805-4339	3131-19 <sup>th</sup> Ave. S. (07)	<a href="mailto:Amy.cardarelle@mpls.k12.mn.us">Amy.cardarelle@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director Southwest	Kim Royston	668-3035	3414 W 47 <sup>th</sup> St. (10)	<a href="mailto:Kim.Royston@mpls.k12.mn.us">Kim.Royston@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>
Director Washburn	Reggie Perkins	668-3457 ; 387-2624	201 W. 49 <sup>th</sup> St. (09)	<a href="mailto:Reginald.Perkins@mpls.k12.mn.us">Reginald.Perkins@mpls.k12.mn.us</a>

## PRACTICES, POLICIES and PROCEDURES

**Team Membership:** Minneapolis Public Schools are committed to providing middle school students interested in competitive athletics the opportunity to participate. We recognize that middle school athletics provides the introduction to competitive sports. Because it is important to have players learn the fundamentals correctly from the beginning, the emphasis of the middle school program will be developing skills and habits. The level of success achieved in high school athletics is directly related to the skills developed through the youth program. High school teams may have player limits set forth by the Athletic Director and/or Head Coach. Failure to attend tryouts can lead to disqualification from the selection process if tryouts are held.

**Eligibility:** Participation in athletics is a privilege, NOT a right. Students can earn the privilege through hard work, dedication, desire, and self-discipline. All students that are currently enrolled in grade seventh through twelfth grade and attend Minneapolis Public Schools are eligible to participate in athletics. All students in grades 7 thru 12 are eligible to participate in high school sports. All students in ninth— twelfth grade are eligible to participate in high school sports.

**Academic Eligibility:** Student-Athletes are expected to maintain passing grades in all classes. A student who wishes to participate must have an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or achieve at least a 2.0 GPA on the last report card prior to the season or activity period. If a report card is issued during a season or activity period, a student must remain eligible in order to participate. Students wishing to appeal their eligibility status must coordinate with their Building Athletic Director. For full details on Minneapolis Public Schools eligibility policies refer to MPS Policy 5560 located on the district website: <http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us>

**Conduct Eligibility:** Student-athletes are expected to maintain satisfactory conduct in all classes. Any student/athlete who does not maintain satisfactory conduct in a class may be subject to a behavioral probation period as determined by the School Administration.

**Team Selection/Playing Time:** It is our goal in team selection to find opportunities not only for participation, but more importantly, for success. Placing each student-athlete at the level where he/she can contribute physically and gain positive feelings from his/her efforts is important to the coaching staff. Disappointments are inevitable when teams are selected, and it is very important that student-athletes feel the support of teammates, parents, and coaches. We believe in our coaches. Their job is to manage and direct a specific sport. Their responsibilities include evaluating and selecting students for teams, as well as determining the degree to which each student-athlete will participate and they do this with considerable thought and sensitivity. During the selection process, coaches will evaluate skill level, athleticism, physical conditioning, positional play, trainability, punctuality, and various other attributes. We want our student-athletes to learn the value of being on a team and the contribution each must make. Team members have a responsibility to themselves, their teammates, and their coaches to learn and perform their role on the team. Teamwork requires the development of many interpersonal skills such as listening, following directions, accepting constructive criticism, being respectful, and supporting teammates and coaches. Student-athletes have an obligation to participate in practice sessions and games with full commitment and enthusiasm.

Minneapolis Public School Athletics believes that at all levels playing time in competition is earned in practice and is not an entitlement. Regardless of the subjective nature of the process and the potential for disagreement, the coach is the only one in a position to make team selections and decisions about playing time. Coaches WILL NOT discuss playing time with parents. Also members of a varsity team are not guaranteed playing time. Student-athletes should fully understand that by joining a team they are accepting the pleasures and benefits of participating as well as the responsibility and commitment to that team.

**Club/Select Teams:** Minneapolis Public School Athletics will take precedence over club or league competitions and practice sessions. Student-athletes will not be excused from Minneapolis Public School athletic practices or games in order to attend game or practice sessions for club or league teams. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to communicate his/her participation on club or league teams prior to the start of the season so that any potential conflicts may be worked out. Failure to communicate before the season may result in discipline determined by the Head Coach.



**Required Forms for Participation:** Prior to the start of each season, all parents and student-athletes must complete the following:

- Minnesota State High School League Athletic Expectations Form
- Minnesota State High School League Physical/Medical Release Form
- Minnesota State High School League Physical Examination Form (must be completed by Physician)
- Minnesota State High School League Transfer Form (if a student is transferring from another school and plans to participate in athletics)
- Minnesota State High School League Foreign Exchange Student Packet (if student is a foreign exchange student and is planning to participate in athletics)
- Minnesota State High School League Concussion Return to Play Policy. Failure to complete all forms required for participation will result in the student-athlete being declared ineligible to participate.

**Practice Times:** The coach of each sport, along with the Athletic Director will determine the team practice schedule. Weekend practices should be expected and will be determined and communicated by the coach. There may be circumstances where the practice times require adjustment. In those cases, parents and student-athletes will be notified in advance of the change in day and/or times. In most cases varsity or junior varsity practices will start after school and last until 6:00pm. Some teams may practice on Saturdays and before school. Practices will be held rain or shine unless the coach and/or Athletic Director cancel the practice or game. The coach will notify the parents and student-athletes in advance if there is a change to the practice schedule on these days. Some programs will have special practice schedules due to the nature of the sport and/or practice facility availability. These schedules will be communicated by the coach to student-athletes and parents prior to the season. It is important to understand that Minneapolis Public Schools uses Minneapolis Park and Recreation (MPRB) facilities. Facility use is dependent on MPRB schedules and availability.

**Cancellations:** In the event that the coach must cancel a practice, it is the responsibility of the coach and/or Athletic Director to notify the team and parents. Inclement weather does not determine whether practice will be held—the coach makes the determination. When available, indoor facilities may be used to hold practice in these circumstances. If a change is made in the practice schedule, parents and student-athletes will be notified as soon as possible. In most cases, it is the responsibility of the host school to make decisions regarding game cancellations. When hosting an event, schools will make every effort to make cancellation decisions by 2:00pm on the day of the event. When a game is cancelled, the coach may choose to hold a practice in its place. If the coach chooses to hold a practice in place of the cancelled game, he/she will communicate this information to the parents and student-athletes as soon as possible.

**Attendance:** Attendance at all games and practice sessions is mandatory for all team members. If a student-athlete will not be attending a practice, meeting, or athlete contest, the coach must be notified prior to the event being missed. Practice is held rain or shine unless otherwise noted by the coach. If a student-athlete is absent from school or misses a class unexcused, he/she may not be able to practice or play in a game that day. In the case that a player must miss practice (excused or unexcused), he/she will be expected to make up any work that was missed. Any student-athlete who leaves an athletic event without the permission of the Head Coach will be subject to suspension from the team.

**Outside Commitments:** Minneapolis Public Schools understand that from time to time a student-athlete may need to miss practice or game in order to fulfill outside obligations. While the coach is normally aware of these situations, not every student-athlete shares the same values. Student-athletes should discuss their outside commitments with the coach prior to season so that he/she is aware of these commitments in advance. Any student-athlete missing practice or game due to outside commitments are still subject to the same standards as the other student-athletes.

**Holidays:** In order for teams to remain cohesive, effective and competitive, student-athletes may be expected to play and/or practice during non-school days (i.e., Summer Break, Winter Break, Spring Break etc.). These dates and times will be announced by the coach as early as possible in an effort to allow families to plan accordingly. If there is any question and the dates have not been announced, please contact the coach and/or athletic director. Students are not required to play and/or practice on a day of religious observation.

**Fall Pre-Season Summer Requirements:** The Minnesota State High School League governs the start and end date for all sports practices. Fall athletic teams begin practice in August prior to the start of school in order to prepare for early season competition. All candidates for high school teams are expected to be in attendance. If the student-athlete is not in attendance the first Monday in August and has not received clearance from the coach, it is at the discretion of the coach to allow him/her to try out for the team. Please know that Minnesota State High School League Policies dictate that all athletes have a period of acclimatization prior to participation in contests.

**Classwork:** On occasion when student-athletes must miss class to participate in scheduled athletic events, they are responsible for turning in class work that is due that day and they are responsible for making up any missed work in a timely fashion. If the student-athlete must miss class time due to an athletic contest, it is the responsibility of the student-athlete to reschedule the missed work for a date that is agreed upon by the student-athlete and teacher.

**Illness & Injury:** All injuries should be reported to the coach and/or Athletic Director at the time they occur so further injury can be avoided. If you are injured, remember the following:

1. Tell the coach and/or Athletic Director that you are injured before leaving the court/floor.
2. Report to Athletic Trainer for treatment plan
3. No matter how small the injury, get treatment
4. No one shall miss practice without a doctor's permission
5. Student-athletes are expected to attend team practices each day they attend school
6. A notice from the doctor/trainer should be given to the coach to end physical restrictions
7. Anyone who becomes sick, nauseated, dizzy, and/or very hot should notify the coach and/or Athletic Director immediately.

**Practice/Game Gear:** Student-athletes may be expected to wear sports-specific or school-specific practice gear for all practices. The coach will communicate this to the players prior at the beginning of the season. All game safety equipment must be worn during practices and games. This is a shared responsibility of the coach and student-athlete. Failure to bring one's equipment or uniform may result in the student-athlete not participating in the practice or game. The coach of each team will give further instructions regarding required practice gear. It is our highest recommendation that all parents and student-athletes strongly consider wearing mouth guards during contact sports contests and practices. Certain sports provide safety equipment for student participants. Families may elect to provide their own but must complete a District Waiver and return to school Athletic Director.

**Uniforms/Warm-Ups:** Minneapolis Public Schools athletic uniforms or warm-ups are to be worn only during interscholastic competition, practice, and on approved home game days with approval by school administration. Launder uniforms in cold or warm water, not hot, and never use bleach. Ironing may cause damage, as will very hot dryers. Student-athletes are responsible for all items issued to him/her. Any lost, damaged or stolen items must be paid for by the student-athlete before another is issued. In the event that the school year ends and a student-athlete has not returned all items issued to him/her, the student-athlete will be issued an obligation until all items are returned. All uniforms and warm-ups are due the day after the final game of the season or on the date set by the coach.

**Dropping/Dismissal from a Sport:** There will be times when some student-athletes make the decision to leave a sport before, during or after the season, although we highly discourage it. Whatever the reason, a student-athlete must follow the steps listed below:

1. The student-athlete must talk to the coach to see if a solution can be reached. A conference with the parents, student-athlete, coach, and Athletic Director or any combination thereof, may be required and is highly recommended before a student-athlete leaves the sport.
2. If a student-athlete leaves the sport, he/she must check out of the sport just as he/she would check out of any academic class. In addition, all equipment must be turned in clean and undamaged. The student-athlete must pay for any equipment not turned in.
3. There are no participation fee refunds for students who quit a sport.

**Substance Abuse and Hazing:** Any student-athlete found to be in violation of the Minnesota State High School League bylaws will automatically be subject to sanctions. Minneapolis Public Schools reserves the right to impose disciplinary action or other condition which it considers in its discretion, appropriate to the circumstances of any violation. This may include suspension from the athletic team for the remainder of season, as well as expulsion from the athletic program for the remainder of the school year. Substance abuse is a problem that affects its victims both physically and emotionally, and due to the strong and persistent nature of addiction, it can be an issue that's difficult to overcome. Minneapolis Public Schools forbids any form of hazing. Hazing is defined as a forced, required, intentional or negligent action, situation or activity which recklessly places any person at risk of physical injury, mental distress or personal indignity, or which encourages violation of any federal, state, local, or school law for the purpose of initiation into, or affiliation with, any organization affiliated with Minneapolis Public Schools. This applies regardless of the willingness of the participant. Hazing, with or without the consent of a student, is prohibited by Minneapolis Public Schools and a violation of that prohibition renders both the person inflicting the hazing and the person submitting to the hazing subject to discipline.

**Guidelines for Athletics/Fine Arts Cooperation:** A student that is participating in a MPS theatre/music production should receive the permission of the Fine Arts Director and the coach of the sport they are interested in playing. If both the coach and the Fine Arts Director are supportive, the student is required to attend a tryout for both activities. If the student is selected to play on the team, the student-athlete must make every effort to attend team practices and games on the days that he/she does not have play practice or productions. The student-athlete may be required to make up for missed practice time through conditioning workouts. Students are expected to work out their schedules with the coaches/staff who are affected.

**Travel:** In most cases, Minneapolis Public Schools will provide transportation to away contests. All players are expected to travel with their team to the competition site. Under no circumstances shall students provide transportation for themselves or others (Policy 6230 F-1d). Any parent or guardian driving a private passenger vehicle must be a qualified adult volunteer and have undergone a criminal background check. If a student-athlete will not be returning with the team, verbal or written permission must be granted by parents and given to the coach before leaving. **STUDENT ATHLETES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE GROUP WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN A PARENT UNLESS PARENTAL PERMISSION IS RECEIVED.** Varsity teams periodically have overnight trips during the regular season or post-season tournaments. These trips require advanced District approval. Hotel and transportation arrangements are made by the Head Coach and/or Athletic Director. The nature of team travel will require implementing room curfews, limiting or denying student-athlete separation from the group, and defining appropriate dress and behavior while our student-athletes are representing our school. School rules are in effect when team travel occurs. Whether in or out of town, on or off the field/court, student-athletes are expected to uphold the highest standards of decorum. Transportation for practices is not provided by the District.

**Lettering:** High School Varsity student-athletes have the opportunity to earn a varsity letter based on their participation in competitive athletics. While the requirements for lettering may vary from sport to sport, general guidelines include the following criteria:

- Good practice habits
- Knowledge of and compliance with rules
- Sportsmanship and coach-ability
- Regular attendance at practices and games

Student-athletes who have played on a varsity team and earned a varsity letter are eligible to purchase a school specific letter jacket. The purchase of the letter jacket must be arranged through the individual vendor, typically a local sporting goods store.

**Season Awards/Banquet:** All season ending awards are decided by the program and may include season stats, practice habits, game performance and overall contribution to the team. Team and individual awards may be handed out at the end of each season. Sports banquets are formal recognitions of the accomplishments of each team and overall success of athletic program.

**Gym/Locker Rooms:** All Minneapolis Public School students, (Physical Education and Student-athletes) may be using locker rooms. Coaches will lock the locker rooms before leaving for practice and will reopen the locker rooms when returning from practice. The student-athletes are encouraged to put all personal items in the lockers for safe keeping. The Athletic Department, coaches, or Athletic Director are not responsible for lost or stolen items (uniforms, equipment, school issued materials, or personal items) that is in the locker room or surrounding athletic facilities.

**Facility Usage Policy:** Any usage of the facilities must be approved by the Director of Athletics. Student-athletes must be accompanied by an approved faculty supervisor when using the facilities. Non-Minneapolis Public School groups or individuals may be subject to a facility usage fee as well as an engineer overtime cost and administrative fee for facility usage. Such usage must be pre-approved by the Director of Athletics. No athletic events will be permitted on Sunday as per MSHSL Rules.

**Social Media:** Student-athletes are encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media or online communications, both within the Minneapolis Public Schools community and beyond. This practice is meant to protect students from unintended issues and consequences. Student-athletes who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts reflect on the entire Minneapolis Public Schools community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the Minneapolis Public Schools.

**Expectations:** Student-athletes are expected to abide by the following:

- Social media sites may not be used to publish disparaging or harassing remarks about Minneapolis Public Schools community members, faculty, coaches, teammates, opponents, referees, athletic or academic contest rivals, etc.
- Those who choose to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online media must ensure that their submission does not reflect poorly upon the school.
- To protect the privacy of Minneapolis Public Schools students and faculty, students may not, under any circumstances, create digital video recordings of Minneapolis Public Schools community members either on campus or at off-campus Minneapolis Public Schools events for online publication or distribution.
- You should assume anything you post on your personal account could be read by staff, opposing teams, coaches, alumni, or future employers. Be smart because your choice to participate in athletics or activities means that you are always "on the clock" when it comes to the rules and representing Minneapolis Public Schools. General athletics content may be posted, but social media should not be used to speak poorly about another athlete/coach/team/etc. Failure to follow the above guidelines, as with other MPS District policies, may result in disciplinary action.

**Best Practices:** When using Social Media student/athletes and parents should:

- Think twice before posting. If you wouldn't want your boss, parents, or future employer to see your post, don't post it. Don't post anything that you wouldn't say openly in a classroom setting.
- Be respectful. Be positive. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. It's the Golden Rule!
- Be honest. Be transparent. Always tell the truth.
- Remember many different audiences will see your posts including fans, alumni, kids, student athletes, parents, staff, and/or faculty.
- Remember that the internet is permanent. Even if you delete something, it's still out there somewhere.
- Avoid topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory, like politics and religion.
- Social media outlets can be very effective when used strategically but they can also be huge time-burners. Have a plan for your social media activity. Whenever you post something, make sure it adds value so that there is a return on your investment of time.
- Be in the right state of mind when you make a post. Don't post when you're angry or upset. Remember, the internet is permanent!
- Demonstrate Minneapolis Public Schools Pride!

**Parent/Coach Communication:** All Coaches (fall, winter, spring) will hold a parent meeting prior to the first game in each sport. Parents are encouraged to be in attendance. The meeting will typically be held prior to or early in the season and allow parents to meet the coach for their student-athletes sport, ask questions, and receive all information pertinent to the season.

**Appropriate Student / Adult Relationships:** At all times, students will be treated by District employees with respect, courtesy and consideration and in a professional manner. Each District employee is expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in all interpersonal relationships with students. Such relationships must be and remain on an employee-student basis. District employees must be mindful of the inherent positions of authority and influence over students. Sexual relationships between District employees and students, without regard to the age of the student, are strictly forbidden and may subject the employee to criminal liability. This practice applies to all District employees at all times, whether on or off duty and on or off of District locations. District employee actions that violate this practice include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Dating students.
2. Having any interaction/activity of a sexual nature with a student.
3. Committing or attempting to induce students or others to commit an illegal act or act of immoral conduct which may be harmful to others or bring discredit to the District.
4. Supplying alcohol or any illegal substance to a student, allowing a student access to such substances, or failing to take reasonable steps to prevent such access from occurring.

District employees shall, whenever possible, employ safeguards against improper relationships with students and/or claims of such improper relationships. Excessive informal and social involvement with individual students is unprofessional, is not compatible with employee-student relationships, and inappropriate. District employees will adhere to applicable standards of ethics and professional conduct in Minnesota law. District employees must gain parental consent and authorization through the school district before communicating with students through means outside of the District communications channels or electronic technology network. The request for consent must define the methods and purpose of the communication. This applies to the use of employee's personal phones or email accounts, text messaging, or other digital electronic communication technologies.

**Reporting and Investigation:** Complaints and/or concerns regarding alleged violations of this policy shall be handled at the building and/or District level. All employees shall cooperate with any investigation of alleged acts, conduct or communications in violation of this policy. Upon receipt of a reported violation, the District will take appropriate action to investigate and determine if a violation has occurred. If so, resulting action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination or discharge. It also may include reporting to appropriate state or federal authorities, including the Board of Teaching or the appropriate licensing authority.

**General Concerns or Issues Protocol:** Any emergency situation or potential criminal behavior should be reported immediately to the school's Athletic Director or building Principal.

**Step 1:** One of the greatest opportunities for student-athletes is learning skills for effective conflict resolution. When there is a concern, student-athletes are encouraged to speak with their coach directly. It can be very satisfying for all parties involved when student-athletes and coach are able to find mutually agreeable solutions for an issue that they are preempting to resolve.

**Step 2:** If the coach and student-athlete are unable to resolve the issue together, then parents may contact the coach. If a parent has a concern to discuss with the coach, the parent should contact the coach at an appropriate time for both parties. An upset parent should wait at least 24 hours before approaching a coach or parent after an athletic event. Under no circumstances should a parent approach a coach or another parent in a harsh manner or immediately before, during, or immediately after a practice or a game. Taking time to reflect on the situation, as well as honest and respectful communication should allow for more effective dialogue ensuring a more successful experience for everyone. It is not appropriate for a parent to request feedback from the coach about team strategy (including playing time), play calling, or other student-athletes. It is appropriate for a parent to contact the coach with concerns about their son/daughter's behavior, their skill development, and for physical treatment advice.

**Step 3:** If the discussion with the coach does not resolve the issue, parents and coaches may contact the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

**Step 4:** if the Athletic Director is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution, the parent may contact the school Principal or appropriate administrator.

**Communication Tools:** Coaches may communicate regularly with parents and student-athletes in person, via school email or by school phone. The coach will provide a contact number for parents and student-athletes to use in the case of an emergency ONLY.

**Athletic Websites:** There are a number of websites with important information pertaining to Minneapolis Public Schools Athletic Programs. They include:

District: [http://athletics.mpls.k12.mn.us/Athletics\\_Department.html](http://athletics.mpls.k12.mn.us/Athletics_Department.html)

Conference (schedules): <http://www.mpls.city.org>

Adapted Athletics (schedules): <http://www.maaconference.org/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=175>

Minnesota State High School League: <http://www.mshsl.org/mshsl/index.asp>

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**Minneapolis Public Schools Student-Athlete/Parent Contract for Participation**

We have read and agree to fully abide by the terms of the Minneapolis Public Schools Athletics Handbook. Failure to comply with the policies set forth in the handbook may result in my suspension and/or dismissal from a sports team and, potentially, dismissal from the sport program.

- Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Student-Athlete Signature \_\_\_\_\_
- Printed Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_