



NIPPERSINK MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK FOR ATHLETICS

Introduction

This handbook is prepared as a guideline for athletics at Nippersink Middle School. It is designed to provide a source for the policies and rules of the athletic department and serve as method of gaining conformity among the sports in those areas. We have attempted to include all areas, problems, and circumstances that normally occur in the daily performance of duties. However, we realize that all possible situations cannot be planned in advance. We will establish procedures for particular situations not covered by this handbook as they occur. Rules for athletes unique to individual sports are not included and are the responsibility of the coaches in the sport.

Nippersink Middle School Mission for Athletics

The Mission of the Nippersink Middle School athletic department is to create, foster, and build an environment that will provide the student/athlete with the opportunity to identify and develop their potential through interscholastic athletics.

We would like to make it known to both parents/ guardians and students alike the fact that there is a risk of injury, paralysis, and even death in virtually every activity. The benefits and joys of physical activity are tremendous. Statistics show that the rate of injury in athletics is far lower than those caused on a highway. By following the rules and regulations of the activity and/or the school, students themselves will greatly aid in the prevention of injury.

Participation in extra-curricular activities is a **PRIVILEGE** that provides opportunities, recognition, and responsibilities. This code pertains to all extra-curricular participants in athletics and school rules apply to students who participate in extra-curricular activities.

Requirements for Student-Athletes for Participate

1. Current Physical – Good for 1 calendar year
2. Sports fee paid – amount according to sport
3. Fundamentals of Sportsmanship Guidelines form signed by parent
4. Code of Conduct signed by student-athlete and parent

Sports Offered and Tentative Start Dates

* indicates sport where cuts could be made
^ indicates sport that does not have cuts

Fall (August – October)

- ^ 6-8th Co-Ed Cross Country
- * 7-8th Girls' Volleyball

Winter (October – December)

- * 7-8th Boys' Basketball
- * 7-8th Girls' Cheerleading

Winter (January – March)

- * 7-8th Girls' Basketball
- ^ 6-8th Boys' Wrestling

Spring (March – May)

- ^ 6-8th Co-Ed Track

Conferences

Nippersink Middle School will be competing in the Fox Valley Conference for the coming school year.

Attendance

Students are expected to be in attendance for school at least for a half day. No student will be allowed to participate in an after school sports event if they have not arrived at school by 11:30am.

Practices

Students may not use the office phone to call home after practices. There is a pay phone available in the lobby of the middle school if needed. Our practices at each of the schools in the district will take place at the following times, unless otherwise communicated well in advance by the coach. Coaches will make sure each player has a practice and game schedule at the start of each season that indicates location and time for each practice and game. Practices should last 1 ½ to 2 hours.

- Due to various activities at our schools and the multitude of sporting events and teams that need gym time after school, there are times when the only practice time available may be in the morning before school. This will be avoided when possible, but is necessary at times to accommodate our teams with practice time. These practices will be held only at Nippersink Middle School.

Parents should plan on having their child picked up at these times, unless told otherwise from their child's coach. A 15 minute window is a reasonable expectation for players to be picked up after practice. If a parent cannot pick their child up at the end of practice, other arrangements should be made for the child to be picked up. If a player is not picked up on time repeatedly, they may be removed from the team. A coach will let a player and parent know if a problem exists before going to this step.

Weekend / Extra Practices

Coaches may practice longer or have additional practices. If this is going to happen, they will inform players and parents well in advance of this schedule. Due to school holidays or tournaments, coaches may opt to have a weekend practice. Again, players and parents will be told well in advance of these changes, and weekend practices will not be mandatory.

Unexcused Absences from Practices

If a player has an unexcused absence from a practice, they will not be allowed to participate in the next game. This includes, but is not limited to detentions, not telling a coach personally they will miss a practice, or being in school and not showing up at practice. If a player has three unexcused absences, they may be removed from the team.

Excused Absences

Excused absences could include things such as family emergencies, family vacations or a player being sick. Coaches need to be notified if a player is not coming to practice by the parent or player. Sending word with someone other than these people is not acceptable, and will be considered unexcused. If the absence is extensive, there may be a reduction in playing time due to the nature of competitive team sports.

Travel for Practices

Students **must ride the bus if their team practice occurs anywhere other than Nippersink Middle School.** They cannot use any other means to get to practice. Buses will take players to both schools, but will not bring them back to the middle school. Parents should plan on picking their child up at the site they are practicing at. **PRACTICE AND GAMES WILL BE AT THE SAME GYM LOCATION FOR THE SEASON, UNLESS CHANGES ARE INDICATED BY THE COACH OR ATHLETIC DIRECTOR.** Travel from home games or practices may be with whomever the player's parent designates for this responsibility.

Travel for Games

Students will be transported to and from away games. The bus will depart and return to the middle school. Athletes may go home from an away athletic contest with their parents only after confirming with the coach in person and signing the check out form. Rides with siblings, relatives, friends, or other parents are not allowed. If an emergency situation exists that requires alternative transportation, please contact the athletic director by phone, and send written permission for your son or daughter to ride home with another specific parent. **THIS IS IN EFFECT FOR TRAVELING HOME FROM AWAY GAMES ONLY.** Travel from home games or practices may be with whomever the player's parent designates for this responsibility. Games that are held at Spring Grove Elementary or Richmond Grade School are considered home games. Players need to ride the bus with their team to these locations, but the bus will not bring the players back to the middle school. Parents need to pick up their child at the site of the home game

Game Times

4:00 P.M. unless otherwise notified. Some games may be delayed due to transportation situations that exist for other schools. We will notify parents if these situations are brought to our attention.

- These are teams we expect to start late for our **home games** due to transportation conflicts.

- Northwood and Creekside (start time will be 4:30 P.M.)

Eligibility Policy

Athletics and Extra-Curricular Activities – A student's first responsibility is to his or her schoolwork and grades. It is believed that students who do not achieve in accordance with their abilities do not have time to participate in extra-curricular activities or sports. It is further believed that students who display a negative attitude, poor conduct, or less than full effort should not be representing the school in extra-curricular activities. Therefore, participating in sports or extra-curricular activities will be allowed only as long as grade, attitude, conduct, and effort warrant it.

Grades, Attitude, Conduct and Effort – To determine player's eligibility status, teachers will evaluate students on a weekly basis. The judgment of student's behavior and attitude will be incorporated into the effort grade and will be based upon how well they follow the classroom guidelines; their academic status will be based upon a weekly eligibility progress report. **An academic or effort grade average of less than a "C-" or any failing grades indicates that additional effort is needed and does not warrant participation in extra-curricular activities. THE LOWEST PERCENT FOR A "C-" IS A 72.**

Ineligibility **for participation in games** will be monitored on a weekly basis. The eligibility grade is determined by what grade a student-athlete is receiving on each Thursday at the end of the school day. The reporting period will begin the next morning at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, and will continue to 8:00 a.m. the next Friday. Special circumstances may be appealed to the athletic director.

1. A student-athlete is ineligible for one FULL week (from Friday to Friday), and may resume participating in games if they raise their grades to eligibility status by the next Thursday (the day teachers hand in eligibility to the office). Eligibility would resume
2. A student-athlete may still participate in practices during their ineligibility. If they are ineligible for more than one week, a player and coach may determine it is in the student-athlete's best interest to miss practice as well to become eligible.
3. If the ineligibility becomes chronic, a student-athlete may be removed from the team to focus on academics.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Nippersink Middle School Athletic Department has established a Chain of Command that will be strictly enforced with regard to communication between disgruntled parents and fans and Athletic Department personnel. The Chain of Command is as follows:

1. Parent, Athlete-Coach
2. Parent, Athlete-Coach involved and Head Coach (if involved coach is an assistant).
3. Parent-Coach, Head Coach, and Athletic Director
4. Parent-Coach, Head Coach, Athletic Director/Associate Principal, and Principal.

ALL MEETINGS BETWEEN PARENT OR FANS AND ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL WILL BE BY APPOINTMENT. APPOINTMENTS WILL BE ARRANGED THROUGH THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S/ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE.

- **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A COACH MEET WITH A DISGRUNTLED PARENT OR FAN BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER A GAME OR MATCH. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR.**
- Athletes involved will always be present at meetings between parents and coaches.

PARENT AND/OR PLAYER COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Athletics, by its very nature, demands that a coach make numerous judgment calls during the course of a season. Athletics also dictates that a coach has effective discipline so the athletes can complete in a safe, organized, and goal oriented activity. During the course of any season, it is possible that parents may have complaints concerning a coach's decisions regarding their son/daughter's playing time or disciplinary action that a coach may take involving their child. Therefore, the following procedure will be followed so that all parties involved will be treated responsibly and equitably.

STEP 1:

If a parent has a complaint, they will discuss the particular complaint with the coach. The son/daughter of the parent will be present at this meeting. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A COMPLAINT GO BEYOND THIS STEP IF THE ISSUES HAVE NOT BEEN DISCUSSED BETWEEN THE COMPLAINANT AND THE COACH.

STEP 2:

If the complaint has not been resolved in STEP 1, the complainant will contact the Athletic Director/Associate Principal and schedule a conference with the Athletic Director/Associate Principal and the coach. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A COMPLAINT GO BEYOND THIS STEP IF THE ISSUES HAVE NOT BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE PARENTS, COACH, AND ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL.

STEP 3:

If the complaint has not been resolved in STEP #1 and STEP #2, the complaint will contact the Principal and schedule a conference with the COACH, the Athletic Director/Associate Principal, and the Principal. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A COMPLAINT GO BEYOND THIS STEP IF THE ISSUES HAVE NOT BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE PARENT, COACH, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, AND PRINCIPAL.

These procedures are designed to insure that all complaints are processed fairly and equitably. The Superintendent and/or the Board of Education WILL NOT be involved in any athletic grievance until all three steps are followed.

ATHLETIC/EXTRA-CURRICULAR CODE DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY:

- I. This code is enforceable for the entire year. The code takes effect the first day a student becomes a member of an athletic/extra-curricular team (first practice of the first sport an athlete plays).
- II. All athletic/extra-curricular participants will refrain from the use or possession of drugs/alcohol, look-alike drugs, or tobacco or the use, possession, buying, or selling of any illegal drugs, look-alike drugs, or illegal drug paraphernalia at any time during their middle school career. Any athletic/extra-curricular participant using drugs prescribed by his/her physician as medication is operating within the guidelines of this policy. An athletic/extra-curricular participant is required to follow the school's Drug/Alcohol policy throughout the school year or they are subject to the sanctions of Section III.

The following sanctions shall apply to all athletic/extra-curricular participants whether or not they are currently engaged in an activity at the time of a violation, in addition to any sanctions imposed under the Drug/Alcohol Policy:

- A. First Offense--Students will be subjected to:

1. A suspension of 50% of the regular scheduled contests. This suspension will carry over into the next season or athletic/extra-curricular activity the participant is involved in, if the suspension is not completed in the activity in which the participant is currently involved. In order for the suspension to be fulfilled, the athlete must complete the season. Any contest(s) missed because of out-of-school suspensions for a violation of the Drug/Alcohol Policy will count towards the contest suspension.
2. Referral to the school counselor and mandatory enrollment in a school-approved substance abuse education program and successful completion of said program. The student may return to their team when their suspension is completed as long as the student is enrolled in the substance abuse education program and continues to fulfill the obligations of said program. Notice of failure to do so will result in removal from the team and forfeiture of any award. The student would not be eligible for any future athletic/extra-curricular activity until that obligation is fulfilled.

B. Second Offense--Students will be subjected to:

1. A suspension of all athletic/extra-curricular activities for a calendar year (365 days) from the date of the infraction.
2. Referral to the Student Assistance Program and mandatory enrollment in a school-approved substance abuse education program and successful completion of said program. (See III.A.2 above)

C. Third Offense--Students will be subjected to:

A suspension of all athletic/extra-curricular activities for the remainder of their enrollment at Nippersink Middle School.

- IV. A violation will be considered a second/third offense if it is committed within 365 days of the previous offense.

- V. Athletic/extra-curricular participants on suspension for training rules violations must practice with the team and sit, out of uniform, with the team during all activities involved during the suspension period, unless serving an out-of-school suspension. Students serving out-of-school suspensions will not be permitted to practice, play or be present on school grounds or at any school activities.

- VI. A first violation will not automatically result in the participant forfeiting the opportunity to be eligible for an award. A second violation will result in forfeiture of all school awards for the season.

- VII. In each instance, any athletic/extra-curricular participant who has been suspended by the provisions of this rule must submit, in writing, to the Athletic Director (athletes) or Principal (all non-athletic participants) a request for reinstatement in the activity program. This request should state the athletic/extra-curricular participant's justification for reinstatement.