

Medway High School

Guide to Student Athletics



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I. Preface

The following information will help answer many of your questions regarding interscholastic athletics in Medway. This booklet contains information regarding rules, practices and regulations that govern the athletic program at Medway High School and should be considered a supplement to the [Medway High School Student Handbook](#).

Please keep this booklet and refer to it whenever you have a question regarding your athletic experience. If you feel that your questions or concerns are not answered in this booklet, contact your coach or call the school's athletic director's office, (508-533-3239).

You are about to become a member of the Medway High School athletics programs. Medway Athletics is rich in tradition and an integral part of this community. The Athletic Department at Medway High School has six essential goals:

1. To provide an opportunity for maximum athletic development of players across the spectrum of ability.
2. To foster a strong sense of community involvement and participation.
3. To promote the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical development of our students.
4. To develop an understanding of the value of cooperation and competition.
5. To develop respect for rules and authority.
6. Finally, the most important goal of any athletic program is to HAVE FUN!!!

I would like again to welcome you to the Mustang Corral and wish our teams success in the upcoming season. The entire Medway Athletic Department is looking forward to your association with the athletic program at Medway High School and for you to remember:

“Once a Mustang always a Mustang”

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Rob Pearl

Director of Athletics

II. Introduction and Welcome

Medway High School believes that athletics plays a vital role in the total educational development of the student. Athletics function as an integral part of the curriculum by offering opportunities to assist in the development of sportsmanship, teamwork, skills and competition. Being a member of an athletic team is the fulfillment of an ambition for many students. It takes hard work and the willingness to assume responsibility to yourself, your school, and to others. You will be seen in a leadership role when you are on an athletic squad. Because of this, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride.

The Athletic Department welcomes you and wishes you much success and enjoyment as you journey through your interscholastic athletic career as a **Medway Mustang**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement of the Athletic Department mirrors that of the High School: The Athletic Department's mission, in partnership with community, is to foster an environment that encourages the pursuit of excellence for all through participation in sports. The athletic community strives to provide an atmosphere for students to learn life-long skills of teamwork, dedication, self-discipline and above all, sportsmanship.

We encourage families to be active supporters of our teams' efforts by providing positive role models that attend events to encourage all to compete to the best of their abilities. We also expect our supporters to be representatives of the Medway School Department, displaying good sportsmanship and fostering a positive environment.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Athletics is an extension of the educational program and as such is an extension of The Medway School District's reputation for excellence. Medway's Athletic Department's mission does not solely seek to create the skilled athlete but rather the athlete who demonstrates the character necessary to display poise and class in all endeavors regardless of the playing field.

Our coaches are charged with the responsibility to teach the values of accepting success graciously, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, tolerance, handling disappointments, leadership, organizational skills, participation within the rules, performing under pressure, persistence, work ethic, physical well-being, responsibility, sacrifice, self-discipline, social skills, striving towards excellence and teamwork.

ELIGIBILITY CHECK LIST

1. Pick up the Athletic Forms in the school nurse's office. Forms are available three weeks before the start of the season.
2. Ensure you have a valid physical on record.
3. Fill out eligibility forms. (make sure all information is valid and all signatures are present)
4. Return all eligibility forms including the MIAA medical information sheet to the Athletic Office.
5. The athletic fee is due on the night of the parent/athlete/coach meeting. Checks will be deposited upon being selected to your team. Checks will be returned should you not be selected, or you decide to no longer play before the first game occurs.
6. HAVE FUN!!!

III. Transitioning from Youth Sports to High School Sports

For students entering Grade 9, the transition from youth sports to high school sports can be daunting for both the athlete and the parent. Here are a few of the major differences to be aware of during the transition. Each one is discussed in more detail throughout remainder of this handbook.

1. Tryouts – Many teams require a tryout period to start the season. The length and duration of the tryout is determined by the coach of the team and there is a risk to being cut from the team. Please refer to section six for more information.
2. Athletic Fee – To play sports at Medway High School an athletic fee must be paid. The fee does not entitle the athlete to a specified amount of playing time or guarantee acceptance onto the team. This fee is used to augment the budget for the sport and to pay for transportation, uniforms, official, etc. Please refer to section seven for more information on playing time and section ten for more information on the Athletic Fees.
3. Practice Commitment – Possibly the largest change for the athlete and parent when going from youth sports to high school sports is the practice time commitment. All high school sports teams require a five day per week practice schedule and some can require six or seven days. It is very important that parents and athletes be ready to accept that time commitment. The athlete must figure out how to balance school work and practice time which can be difficult during the freshman year. Please refer to section VIII for more information on the commitments required.

IV. Governing Agencies

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)

Medway is a member in good standing of the MIAA. With membership, the Principal agrees to abide by all rules and regulations of the MIAA. When varsity teams qualify for and enter MIAA sponsored post-season tournaments to determine sectional and state champions, we are subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament, as set by the MIAA. The MIAA does not sponsor or sanction any sub-varsity tournament competition.

The Tri-Valley League (TVL)

Medway is also a member of the TVL. The TVL is governed by the TVL and its constitution. The Principal of each member school agrees that his/her school will abide by all league rules and regulations.

Medway School Committee

Additional policies, regulations and rules are set by the Medway School Committee and the Principal. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set additional policies, rules and regulations as long as they are more restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA.

V. Sportsmanship

Medway High School expects all parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship before, during, and after the competition. Medway students and student athletes are to adhere to the following fundamentals of good sportsmanship:

1. Show respect for the opponent at all times.
2. Show respect to the officials at all times.
3. Know, understand and appreciate the rules of the contest.
4. Maintain self-control at all times.
5. Recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation.

Displays of poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated and will be addressed on an individual basis.

The MIAA and Medway High School reserves the right to “warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one (1) calendar year any player, team coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship.”

VI. Communications

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to the student-athlete. As parents, when your student becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on the student-athlete. This begins with clear communication from the coach.

Communication You Should Expect From the Coach

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for all student-athletes on the squad
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out- of- season conditioning, in season participation on additional teams.
5. Procedure followed should the athlete be injured during participation
6. Discipline that may result in the denial of a student’s participation

Communication Coaches Expect From Parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any scheduled conflicts **well in advance**
3. Specific concerns with regards to a coach’s philosophy and/or expectations

As a student becomes involved in the athletic programs at Medway High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or the athlete wishes.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches

1. The treatment of the student-athlete, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help the athlete improve
3. Concerns about the student’s behavior

Coaches take their profession seriously. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen in the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with the coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues NOT Appropriate to Discuss With Coaches

1. Playing Time at the Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshman, and 3rd levels
2. Team Strategy
3. Play Calling
4. Other Student Athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

1. Call the Athletic Department (508-533-3239) to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, speak to the Athletic Director. A return call from the coach will be arranged, or a meeting set up for you.
3. **DO NOT CALL A COACH AT HOME!!!** A coach's time with family is severely limited during the season. The family's privacy should be respected.
4. **PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFRONT A COACH BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER A CONTEST OR PRACTICE.** These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings under these circumstances do not promote resolution.

Remember- Your concerns are important to us. Never hesitate to follow the above procedures to make those concerns known. Together we can work to improve our athletic programs.

VII. Tryouts

Participation in athletics is a **privilege** given to those students who meet all requirements set by the MIAA, the TVL and Medway High School. Students try out voluntarily and, in doing so, risk being cut. It is the judgment of the coaches that dictates the selection and number of participants for teams. All student-athletes should be aware that selection to a team one year does **not** guarantee placement on that team the following year.

Please note that selection to a team is a coach's discretionary responsibility. Selection to a team represents a culmination of both physical ability applicable to the sport and level of competition, and positive effort. Each coach has the discretionary right to promote a player or not select a player based upon attitude and effort displayed.

After tryouts begin, no athlete may leave one team (voluntarily or due to dismissal by the coach) and try out for another team. Consent of both coaches involved and the Director of Athletics must be acquired.

VIII. Playing Time

Perhaps the most emotional part of a student athlete's involvement in high school athletics centers around playing time. Some athletes participating in interscholastic athletics find that practices and expectations are intense and demanding.

It is the responsibility of the Medway High School coaching staff to decide which athletes should start a contest, which should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These coaching decisions, which are often difficult to make, are made **only by the coaching staff** and are approached very seriously after the coaches have observed the student athletes in practices sessions, game like situations, scrimmages and, at times, games. Factors such as practice, attendance, attitude, commitment, and of course, athletic skill enter into the decisions.

IX. Commitment to the Team

When trying out for a team and after being selected to be a member of a team, Medway High School student-athletes are expected to attend **all** practices and games of that team. Weekend practices and games vary by sport and should be expected.

Interscholastic athletics demands much more commitment than a club or recreational activity. Students should be aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for the team. On average each team practices two and a half hours per day, 5-6 days per week, for the duration of the season. **Playing time is the sole discretion of the coach of that sport.**

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student-athlete is not going to be present at a practice or game. Practice is where plans for upcoming contests are devised and perfected.

The coaches in our program expect their athletes to be present at all team related activities. Suspension or dismissal may take place as a result of such absences.

Student-athletes are excused from team activities for *academic or religious reasons, family emergencies, illness or injury*. **Prior notification of the coach is expected, if possible.**

MIAA BONA FIDE TEAM MEMBER RULE # 45

A bona fide team member of the school team is a student who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. Any student who violates this standard is ineligible for 25% of the total season number of games immediately upon confirmation of the violation. In addition, the student is not eligible for MIAA tournament participation in that sport.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Medway High School student-athletes must meet the requirements for good school and team citizenship. They are as follows: come to school every day, be on time for school and classes, attend all classes, do your homework, and behave at all times in a mature manner. The abuse of any of these citizenship requirements could result in suspension or dismissal from an athletic team.

Student-athletes are eligible to participate in athletics on a given day provided they are in school for four consecutive periods. In order to participate in a weekend game, a student must be present during school on Friday.

CLOSED PRACTICES

For safety and effectiveness, practice sessions at Medway High School are **closed** sessions. This means that parents, relatives, friends or spectators are **not permitted at team practices**. Any exception to this rule must be cleared by both the coach and the Athletic Director.

X. Athletic Eligibility

- A) **Medical exam** – all students who plan to participate in athletics must have written proof of a current physical exam signed by a physician. In order for the exam to be current, it must be dated within 13 months of any athletic involvement. **It is strongly recommended that an**

annual exam be scheduled between June and August of each school year. Such an exam would cover a student for an entire school year. The physical must be valid for the first day of practice.

- B) Academics** – If you pass less than twenty-four credits of prepared work during the marking period preceding any activity, a student is deemed ineligible for athletic participation. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed from the previous academic year the equivalent of five traditional year long major courses. (The MIAA requires twenty periods of prepared work). A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than four consecutive years after initially entering Grade 9. This limitation shall apply without regard to actual participation or attempt to participate in a sport.
- C) Student Athletic Participation for Interscholastic Athletics Form**--all students must pass in this form to eligible to participate. There are three distinct parts to this form: **Part 1-** Student Profile; **Part 2-** Parent Consent; **Part 3-** Medical clearance. All Parts must be completed and signed with the appropriate signatures. **Forms can be found in the AD's office, School Nurse's office or the Main Office.**
- D) Athletic Fees-** The Medway School Committee has authorized the Department of Athletics to asses an Athletic Fee to each student who will be participating on one of our athletic teams during each season. The fee aids in funding transportation for all teams as well as supplementing the budget for game officials and equipment. The fee is set on an annual basis. No one will be denied an opportunity to participate due to personal financial constraints, (all claims must be made to the H.S. Principal prior to team's first practice/tryout). The Medway School committee reserves the right to set an annual family cap as well.

The Athletic fee is non-refundable, except in case of serious, incapacitating injury, which would prevent further participation. **The fee allows a student athlete to participate on a team. It does not guarantee a specific amount of playing time.** No fees will be refunded after the first contest.

Fees are due on the date specified by the Athletic Director. Any student that does not pay their fee will not be given a uniform

For a more detailed list of eligibility requirements please consult the Medway High School Student Handbook.

XI. Physical Education Requirement

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students who are medically excused from physical education are **not allowed** to participate in their team practice or game on that day. If a student does not change for PE on a given day, he/she will not be eligible to practice/play that day.

XII. Transportation

The school provides bus transportation to all away athletic contests. **All team players must ride to and from all games on the team bus.** Exceptions must be requested in writing by the athlete's parent/guardian advance to the Athletic Director or Academic Deans.

XIII. Team Captains

It is a coaching decision as to how team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game by game basis.

Captains of their teams may be relieved of their position by the coach, in consultation with the Athletic Director, for violation of team, department, school, league or MIAA rules.

XIV. Equipment and School Facilities

Student-athletes are expected to respect the locker facilities, showers and general areas of Medway High School and while visiting other schools. We expect the student-athletes to take pride in their facilities and those of our opponents by using trash barrels and keeping these facilities in good condition. **Any type of vandalism will not be tolerated!**

All athletic equipment not returned within **five days** of the close of the seasons will be billed at full replacement cost. Athletes who have failed to meet their financial obligations will **not** be allowed to participate in any capacity in any sport.

XV. Student-Athlete Discipline Procedures

All athletes are required to follow all rules and regulations of the Medway High School student handbook. A student-athlete with a school or teacher disciplinary obligation is required to

fulfill that obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. **Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason.** The Department of Athletics, in conjunction with Medway High School's Administration, reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improved behavior.

ATTENDANCE

In order to participate in the practice or game, a student must be present in school that day for at least 4 consecutive periods or have prior written permission from an administrator.

COACHES

Athletic coaches may have rules governing the conduct of players and the requirements of training any practices. These rules are to be set and presented to the athletes prior to the start of the season. Violations of these rules may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the team.

XVI. Concussions

The State of Massachusetts instituted a Head Injury and Concussion law in August of 2011. Parents/Guardians, and the student athlete, must complete a concussion awareness program to learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Such programs can be found at www.nfhslearn.com or www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training. A head injury report must be submitted to the Athletic Director prior to start of every sport season. This report must identify all head injuries sustained by the student-athlete. Complete guidelines can be found at www.miaa.net.

XVII. MIAA Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco Rule #62

During the school year, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools *may* develop more stringent requirements. Please refer to the [Medway High School Student Handbook](#) for more information on Medway's policies.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

MINIMUM PENALTIES:

First Violation: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for 25% of the season in which the student is a participant. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practices for the purpose of rehabilitation.

Second and Subsequent Violations: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a second or subsequent violations have occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for 60% of contests in which the student is a participant.

Penalties shall not be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

Note: Any student-athlete violating this rule forfeits the right to be recognized for any awards at Medway High School he/she may be eligible for, at the end of the season, (Other than participation level).

Also, should a student that violates the Chemical Health rule be selected for an all-star game during that season of play, he/she will not be eligible to participate.

XVIII. Hazing

Massachusetts State Law- Chapter 536, Sections 16-19

Hazing is defined as any conduct, or method of initiation into any student organization, which willfully recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Incidents

of hazing must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials as soon as reasonably practical.

XIX. Bullying

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm, or of damage to his/her property,
- placing a target in reasonable fear of harm or of damage to his/her property,
- creating an unwelcoming or hostile environment at school for another person,
- infringing on the rights of another person at school, or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs whether on or off school grounds, at school bus stops, on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the district, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district.

The Medway Public School District is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and harassment. For more information on the district's bullying prevention plans, please refer to the documented policy which can be found at <http://www.medwayschools.org/studentsparents/default.htm> .