

Hippersink Middle School

Athletic Handbook



Do you have the Courage?

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 prior to first competition – amount according to sport
3. Fundamentals of Sportsmanship Guidelines form signed by parent
4. Code of Conduct signed by student-athlete and parent
5. Concussion Policy signed by parent

Athletic and Extra Curricular Eligibility

Students are required to maintain a “C” average in each class. Students cannot receive a “D” or “U” in any class or they will be considered ineligible. The eligibility cycle will run for one week, starting on Friday and ending the following Friday. Once a student is ruled ineligible, they are ineligible for that entire week

(Friday through Friday). Special situations may be appealed to the athletic director. Each athletic season lasts approximately 6-8 weeks, and students who are chronically ineligible (3 weeks or more-approximately ½ of the season) may be removed from the team.

Participation

Each student participating in a sport will need to follow the rules and regulations for each activity as outlined in the Nippersink Middle School Handbook for Athletics. Each athlete will also need to follow any rules set up by any individual conference or tournament they may be participating in.

Concussion Policy

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) implemented a national playing rule regarding potential head injuries. The rule requires a student athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion in a practice or game will be removed from participation or competition at that time. A student athlete who has been removed from an interscholastic contest for a possible concussion or head injury may not return to that contest unless cleared to do so by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic trainer. If not cleared to return to that contest, a student athlete may not return to play or practice until the student athlete has provided his or her school with written clearance from a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.

Cross-References:

PRESS 7:305, *Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries*

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 use the office phone to call home after practices but are highly encouraged to have arrangements made prior to the end of practice. 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 may 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. If situation exists that requires alternative transportation, please contact the coach by phone and/or 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 may be 4:15 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. Their academic status will be based upon a weekly eligibility progress report. **An academic 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 70.**

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 Friday at noon. 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 Friday (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.

Extracurricular Athletic Activities Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all school-sponsored activities that are neither part of an academic class nor otherwise carry credit or a grade. This Code of Conduct will be enforced 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.¹

This Code does not contain a complete list of inappropriate behaviors for students in extracurricular athletic activities. Violations will be treated cumulatively, with disciplinary penalties increasing with subsequent violations and a student may be excluded from sports or activities while the school is conducting an investigation regarding that student's conduct.

Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to seek assistance from the student assistance program regarding alcohol or other drug problems. Family-referrals or self-referrals will be taken into consideration in determining consequences for Code of Conduct violations.

The student shall not:

1. Violate the school rules and School District policies on student discipline including policies and procedures on student behavior;
2. Ingest or otherwise use a beverage containing alcohol (except for religious purposes);
3. Ingest or otherwise use tobacco or nicotine in any form;
4. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute any product composed purely of caffeine in a loose powdered form or any illegal substance (including mood-altering and performance enhancing drugs or chemicals) or paraphernalia;
5. Use, possess, buy, sell, barter, or distribute any object that is or could be considered a weapon or any item that is a look alike weapon. This prohibition does not prohibit legal use of weapons in cooking and in sports, such as archery, martial arts practice, target shooting, hunting, and skeet;
6. Attend a party or other gathering and/or ride in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors;
7. Act in an unsportsmanlike manner;
8. Violate any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and reckless driving;
9. Haze or bully other students;
10. Violate the written rules for the activity or sport;
11. Behave in a manner that is detrimental to the good of the group or school;
12. Be insubordinate or disrespectful toward the activity's sponsors or team's coaching staff;
13. Falsify any information contained on any permit or permission form required by the activity or sport.

Hazing is any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to belong to a team or group, regardless of his or her willingness to participate. *Bullying* includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication) and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Due Process Procedures

Students who are accused of violating the Code of Conduct are entitled to the following due process:

1. The student should be advised of the disciplinary infraction with which he or she is being charged.
2. The student shall be entitled to a hearing before an appropriate administrator.
3. The student will be able to respond to any charges leveled against him or her.
4. The student may provide any additional information he or she wishes for the administrator to consider.
5. The administrator, with the help of other staff members if needed, may interview material witnesses or others with evidence concerning the case.
6. If the administrator finds, after reviewing the evidence, that the violation occurred, he or she will impose sanctions on the student, as follows:
 - a. Sanctions for violations other than drug and alcohol will be based on the nature of the offense and the number of offenses, and may include suspension from all sports or activities for one of the time periods described below:
 - A specified period of time or percentage of events, competitions, or practices;
 - The remainder of the season or for the next season; or
 - The remainder of the student's school career.
 - b. Sanctions for alcohol and other drug violations, including tobacco, nicotine and products composed purely of caffeine in a loose powdered form, will be based on the following:

First violation

First violation

- Use, ingestion, possession, buying, selling, offering to sell, bartering, or distributing: A suspension of one third of the total number of performances, activities, or competitions or the remainder of the season, whichever is shorter. This penalty may be reduced if the student is enrolled in a drug or alcohol counseling program.
- Attendance at a party or riding in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed: A suspension of one sixth of the total number of performances, activities or competitions, or the remainder of the season, whichever is shorter.
- The student will be required to practice with the group, regardless of the violation (unless suspended or expelled from school).

Second violation

- Use, ingestion, possession, buying, selling, offering to sell, bartering, or distributing: A suspension of 12 weeks or 1 season, including suspension from all performances, activities, or competitions during this period. To participate again in any extracurricular or athletic activity, the student must successfully participate in and complete a school-approved alcohol or drug counseling program and follow all recommendations from that program.
- Attendance at a party or riding in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed: A suspension of one third of the season and all extracurricular group performances, activities, or competitions during this period.
- The student may be required to practice with the group (unless suspended or expelled from school).

Third violation

- Use, ingestion, possession, buying, selling, offering to sell, bartering, or distributing: A suspension from extracurricular or athletic activities for the remainder of the student's school career.
- Attendance at a party or riding in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed: A suspension of one calendar year from the date of the suspension, including all extracurricular activities during this period.

7. The administrator will make a written report of his or her decision and rationale. The student may appeal the decision to the building principal.

All students remain subject to the district's student discipline policy and/or the school's student handbook and the disciplinary measures listed in them.

STUDENT SPORTS SPECTATORS

All students attending the activity must stay in the building at all times. Students who leave will not be allowed back in the building. To avoid congestion in the hallway all students must be in the bleachers, unless they have a refreshment to finish during the half time of the game. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave. There will be an admission charge of one dollar for adults and fifty cents for students. Tournament admission will be determined by the school that is hosting the tournament.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

All school rules apply for extra-curricular activities. Students are strongly encouraged to become involved in school activities. In general, clubs and organizations meet before or after school. Specific information on membership and participation will be in the school monthly newsletter.