

WALT WHITMAN HIGH SCHOOL/STIMSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

2023-2024

ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENT-ATHLETES

All student-athletes must abide by the Walt Whitman/Stimson Code of Conduct. If a candidate is selected for a team, he or she accepts the **added** responsibility of representing the school and the South Huntington community as an athlete, and must also abide by the **Athletics Handbook**. Participation in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic athletics is a privilege and not a right. Therefore, any violations of these Code of Conducts may result in various forms of discipline including removal from interscholastic athletic programs.

Responsibility for all materials contained in the Athletic Handbook
Parents and students are responsible for knowing and understanding the guidelines and procedures contained in this handbook. Student participation on any athletic team implies that the student and their parents have knowledge and understanding of this handbook. It is available in the athletics office and on the school website. Parents and students must digitally sign the acknowledgment sheet prior to the start of the season.

Discretion and interpretation of this handbook
This information in this handbook shall not supersede the statutory powers of the Superintendent of Schools and Building Principal who have the authority to waive aspects of the regulations in this handbook or make any changes in special cases where it is determined that circumstances require such action, if such action complies with New York State Education Law, and does not deviate from the intended purpose of the regulations.

Appeals
All appeals to any action taken must be made in writing to the Principal no later than 48 hours after notification of the decision.

Interscholastic Athletics Rules and Regulations
Our interscholastic athletics program is guided by the approved policies of the South Huntington Board of Education, under the direction of rules and regulations set forth by the New York State Education Departmentt (NYSED) and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). Detailed information of these regulations that govern interscholastic athletics can be found via the NYSPHSAA Handbook.

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Dear Parents/Guardians and Students

Welcome to the South Huntington Athletic Department! Whether this is your first time in the program, or you have been with us for many years, I am confident that participation in our interscholastic athletic program will be a tremendous experience for all involved.

This handbook is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics. Your family's interest in this phase of our school program is gratifying. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences which assist students in their education and preparation for life.

When your son/daughter signs up for one of our sports programs, we believe there must be a commitment to certain responsibilities and obligations. This handbook will acquaint you with some of the specific guidelines that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the Department of Athletics to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school district. These rules rely on broad-based community support which can only be achieved through communication with parents. It is our hope to accomplish this objective by providing you and your son/daughter with this athletic handbook.

A special thanks to my predecessors, Bob Young, John DeLuca, Mary Stamm, Rick Punzone, Chuck Goering, and Jim Wright for establishing such strong foundations in the South Huntington community for me to build upon.

If there is anything I can do to make your participation a better learning experience, please feel free to contact me at (631) 812-3141.

Go Wildcats!

Sincerely,



David Barth, CAA
Supervisor of Physical Education, Health, Athletics, and Recreation

WELCOME TO THE

SOUTH HUNTINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

WHERE

SPORTSMANSHIP

IS AN

EXPECTATION

SO PLEASE

LET THE

PLAYERS PLAY,

LET THE

COACHES COACH,

LET THE OFFICIALS OFFICIATE

AND

LET THE SPECTATORS BE SUPPORTIVE



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AFFILIATIONS

Walt Whitman High School and Stimson Middle School are members of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), Section XI.

NYSPHSAA provides regulations governing all aspects of the athletic program, sets guidelines for all sports, and enforces uniform eligibility rules, as well as practice and game standards governing interscholastic athletics.

NYSPHSAA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of New York State interscholastic athletic programs is to foster the **quest for excellence** by creating an educational and competitive experience within an atmosphere of sportsmanship. Successful programs develop individual and team potential by promoting high standards of **competence, character, civility, and citizenship.**

EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF A QUALITY INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM:
The 4 C's were created to help develop character through sport. Beyond the basic skills taught, it is our goal to develop the character of our youth through our athletic program. High school athletics provide a unique opportunity for the development of not only physical conditioning and athletic skill, but also character traits essential for success in life. To that end, we challenge every South Huntington athlete to strive for the following.

Competence
A student athlete in a quality program is competent in terms of: Skill Development, Knowledge of the Game/Strategies, Fitness/Conditioning/Healthy Behaviors

Character
A student in a quality program demonstrates: Responsibility, Accountability, Dedication, Trustworthiness/fair Play, Self-Control

Civility
A student athlete in a quality program demonstrates civility towards others, showing: Respect, Caring, and Fairness

Citizenship
A student-athlete in a quality program demonstrates citizenship through actions showing evidence of Loyalty/Commitment, Teamwork, and Role Modeling



South Huntington School District Mission Statement

The mission of the South Huntington Community is to empower all children to maximize their potential by teaching them the necessary academic skills and enabling them to develop the positive social and moral skills required to become contributing members of society. We strive to provide all children with a safe and secure environment and a place where everyone is treated with respect.

Athletics Website

https://www.shufsd.org/district/wildcat-athletics

Game Schedules

www.SectionXI.org
www.GoWildcatAthletics.org

Athletics Social Media

X @WaltWhitmanAD

WaltWhitmanAD

Goals of the Athletics Program

The athletic program is considered an integral part of the total education process, and to ensure this, it is based on sound educational principles.

Athletics is an outgrowth of the physical education program. Through participation in physical education, intramurals, and athletics, students are offered an opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and socially. Athletics allows those students who have demonstrated a need for further development the opportunity to participate on a higher level. To ensure athletics place in the total educational process, the programs must follow the same goals and objectives that govern the physical education program.

1. To provide students with the opportunity to positively represent their school and community in a wide range of quality interscholastic athletic programs.
2. To establish and maintain an environment that values cultural diversity and gender equity.
3. To provide interscholastic athletic experience to as many students as possible.
4. To strive towards excellence.
5. To acknowledge that the real value of sport to the students is in the enjoyment derived from the activity itself and from the association developed among coaches and players in practice as well as in games.
6. To encourage fellowship, leadership, and cooperation in a competitive atmosphere.
7. To inspire a voluntary commitment to excellence in study, work, and play.
8. To establish a high level of physical fitness and well-being.
9. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play on and off the field.
10. To exhibit the ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play towards teammates, coaches, officials, opponents and spectators.
11. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.

Tradition-Pride-Commitment-Respect

Maintain the ***Tradition*** of South Huntington Athletics; Foster a sense of ***Pride*** throughout the school; Develop a need for ***Commitment*** to sport and school; ***Respect*** each other regardless of the individual differences that exist in all of us.

Sportsmanship and Fair Play

Hazing

Hazing is a crime in New York State. N.Y. Penal Law states: “a person is guilty of hazing…when in the course of another person’s initiation or affiliation with any organization, he intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person.”

> **N.Y. Penal Law 120.16 -** Hazing in the first degree
> "A person is guilty of hazing...when, in the course of another person's initiation or affiliation with any organization, he/she intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person and thereby causes such injury."
>
> **N.Y. Penal Law 120.17 -** Hazing in the second degree
> "A person is guilty of hazing...when, in the course of another person's initiation or affiliation with any organization, he/she intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct which creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such other person or a third person."

Identical definitions but for the last 5 words - 2nd degree addresses hazing when physical Harm does not occur, thereby broadening the definition of what constitutes "hazing".

Hazing will be defined to include, but not limited to, not only actual physical harm to the victim, but threatened harm and harassment, ridicule, and criticism and causing the victim to damage public or private property, for the purpose of initiation or admission into, or association with, any student team, club, group or association.

In order to ensure the safety of your children and the safety of others, it is necessary for the Athletic Department to require your acknowledgment that you fully understand the consequences that go along with any act of hazing involving your son or daughter. In the event your child has participated in a hazing activity, regardless to what degree, **NO** warning will be given and the following penalties can be invoked

Hazing has no place in interscholastic athletic programs, and concerns that parents and/or athletes have about hazing should be brought immediately to the attention of the coach and/or school administrators.

Sportsmanship and Fair Play

1. Visiting team members, students, and adult spectators are guests, to be accorded all the courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well-mannered, and well-intentioned host would normally give.
2. The visitors, in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school's facilities with care, while respecting the rules and customs of the home school.
3. Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their interpretation; these decisions should be accepted.
4. Spectators, student-athletes, and coaches must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of the school and their actions can relate directly to the team's success.

Athlete Sportsmanship Expectations

It is important for athletes to remember that participation is a privilege that is not to be abused by unsportsmanlike conduct. The South Huntington athlete is to demonstrate self-control and respect for teammates, other athletes, officials, and spectators at all times. District athletes are expected to treat opponents with respect before, during, and after competitions. Congratulations, shaking hands and other acts of good sportsmanship are expected. Students are expected to display good citizenship during the school day, on the athletic field, and in the community. You are representing the school district, so you are expected to act accordingly. Behavior that is less than acceptable will lead to temporary or permanent suspension from the interscholastic athletic program.

Spectator Code of Conduct

As a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, it is our belief that interscholastic athletics are an integral part of the secondary curricular program and an extension of the classroom. These expectations shall result in learning situations that contribute to the development of the attributes necessary for good citizenship.

Your enthusiasm as a spectator includes a vital responsibility for good sportsmanship. Your habits and reactions determine the quality of sportsmanship, which reflects directly upon our school and community. Sportsmanship requires one to understand his or her own bias and the ability to prevent the desire to win from overcoming rational behavior.

The integrity of the athletics program in South Huntington is bigger than any one participant, coach, or spectator. Therefore, it is important that everyone understands the goals and boundaries expected at all athletic events. Our goal is to provide an environment of positive sportsmanship for all involved in interscholastic athletics including, but not limited to, players, coaches, fans, and officials. The following **SECTION XI GUIDELINES** are how all spectators are expected to act:

Section XI Spectator Code of Conduct:

1. Spectators are an important part of the game and shall at all times conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.
2. Spectators shall at all times respect officials, coaches and players and extend all courtesies to them.
3. Wholesome cheering is encouraged.

4. Taunting, foul and abusive language, noisemakers, inflammatory remarks, and disrespectful signs and behavior are not acceptable.
5. Faculty-supervised pep bands are permitted during dead ball time. However, spectator noise makers or sound devices are prohibited.
6. Spectators shall observe and obey the rules and regulations of the school concerning smoking, vaping, food and soft drink consumption, and use of lavatory facilities and parking of cars. rev 10/20
7. New York State law prohibits alcoholic beverages of any kind on school property; the law further prohibits any person under the influence of alcohol to be on school property.
8. Spectators shall respect and obey all school officials, supervisors, and police at all athletic contests.

All spectators are expected to follow all directions from the event staff, coaches, and/or officials Abusive language or cursing will NOT be tolerated.

Violators of this code are subject to eviction from the area.

Game event supervisors, administrators, coaches, and officials have the right to eject any spectators who do not uphold these standards of behavior.

Spectators ejected from an event are subject to suspension from future events.

The aforementioned expectations are in effect for contests at home, away, and/or neutral site venues.

NYSPHSAA Misconduct Rule

Any member of the squad ruled out of a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct, including taunting, or for a flagrant foul shall not participate in that sport in the next previously scheduled contest with a member school or in NYSPHSAA tournament play. In individual sports, a multi day contest is considered to be a contest. The contest in which the athlete was disqualified must count in the total maximum number of contests permitted. Disqualifications from one season carry over to the next season of participation.

Any member of the squad who strikes, shoves, kicks, or makes other physical contact with the intent to annoy, harass, or intimidate an official shall be expelled from the game immediately and banned from further participation in all sports for a period of time to be determined by the section not to exceed one year from the date of the offense. ***NOTE:*** Members of the squad includes player(s), manager, scorekeeper, timers, and statisticians

Requirements for Participation

All potential athletes should attend the athletic interest meetings prior to each season. These specific dates will be communicated during morning announcements and posted signs. This is an opportunity to get important, team specific, information so that the students are fully prepared to participate come day one.

South Huntington School District utilizes ***Final Forms***, which is an online athlete management system that tracks and organizes paperwork specific to interscholastic athletics compliance and eligibility. Visit Final Forms to start the registration process, or visit the South Huntington Athletics Website.

Necessary Forms

A. Health Examination
   - A yearly physical examination is required. The physical covers all sports. The physical exam is good for 365 days from the date of the physical. Health Examination Form. Under no circumstances will any athlete be allowed to participate without the school nurse receiving all completed forms.

B. Interval Health History (IHH)
   - Required for participation**.**

C. Contact Information
D. Medications
E. Injuries and Hospitalizations
F. Past & Ongoing Health Conditions
G. Emergency Medical Authorization
H. Concussion Information
I. Athletic Handbook
J. Hazing Law
K. Athletic Eligibility Code
L. Sportsmanship and Spectator Code of Conduct
M. Dominic Murray Cardiac Prevention

Due Dates

It is imperative, for proper planning, that coaches know beforehand how many athletes they will have in attendance at practice. It is also important to understand that situations arise, and those needed at the school to clear the forms may not be available in certain moments. Therefore, all students must be considered eligible on Final Forms prior to the start of the season in order to participate on Day 1.

Meet the Coaches

Meet the coaches events will be held at the beginning of each Middle School and High School athletic season. At the High School level, there will be two scheduled nights (see below) for the Meet The Coaches night. At the Middle School level, these events will take place following a practice and done individually by each team. Dates for these

events will be communicated at the start of each season. At each of these events, you will have an opportunity to meet with the individual coaches to discuss team expectations, rules, guidelines and other pertinent information. **All student-athletes are required to attend this event and at least one parent guardian is encouraged to as well.**

Academics, Attendance, and Athletics

The athletics department recognizes that a student's primary responsibility is academic preparation. The Athletic Department supports the concept that students should work to their potential in the classroom and be committed to achieving maximum academic success. The coaching staff encourages all faculty and parents to contact them if a student-athletes is having difficulty in the classroom. Learning takes place in the classroom, athletic competition, and in school organizations. There must be a proper balance between the time requirements for all student pursuits.

Click – > ***Walt Whitman High School Eligibility Code***

Click – > ***Stimson Middle School Eligibility Code***

Students who miss or leave school because of illness cannot participate or attend practice/games as a member of the team.

Extra Help

In order to avoid a student being caught in the middle between a coach's requirement to begin practice and the student's need for extra academic help, the following guideline will be adhered to from the beginning of the school year.

1. The student will not be penalized if he/she comes late to practice with a pass in order to receive extra academic support. However, it is the student's responsibility to inform the coach no later than 12:00 p.m. the same day. If the student cannot get in touch with the coach, they should tell the athletic office.

Athletics Attendance

Athletes are expected to attend every practice and contest unless excused by their coach. If an athlete is in attendance at school, he/she is expected at practice. **There are no unexcused absences from practices or games.** Coaches also have the right to disqualify athletes from contests based on the number of days missed. Coaches may remove an athlete based on lack of attendance.

Students who are suspended from school on a day of a game or athletic practice, party, school dance, or other school affair scheduled after regular school hours are not eligible for participation or attendance at such events. **BOE Policy**: 7410

Individual team attendance policies will be presented at the 'Meet the Coaches' events so athletes and families are fully aware of the coaches expectations.

In the event a practice must be missed, the athlete is responsible to provide a valid reason. Disciplinary action in connection with continued participation on the team will be based on the coach's rules.

Physical Education Requirement

Because the interscholastic program is a direct outgrowth of the physical education program, any student-athlete excused from a physical education class for medical reasons may not participate in a practice, scrimmage, or contest on that same day. Additionally, students that are medically exempt from physical education class cannot participate on an interscholastic team. Certain medical conditions are exempt from this rule if the legal paperwork has been filed with the nurse's office and Athletic Directors office.

Academic Eligibility

1. Two (2) or more failures at the 5 week 'Academic Check' period- PROBATION
2. Two (2) or more failures on PROBATION at the 'Report Card'- INELIGIBLE
3. Two (2) or more failures on INELIGIBLE at the 5 week 'Academic Check' period- DISQUALIFIED

Students who are failing 1 or no classes at either the Academic Check or Report Card start the steps from the beginning:

- **Probation-** Fully able to participate
- **Ineligible-** Can practice, however cannot play in games/matches
- **Disqualified-** Removed from the team

Behavioral Eligibility

1. If a student is suspended from school, the student is ineligible for that period of time. The coach of each program has the right based on team rules to suspend the athlete longer.
2. 5-day+ suspensions: The student and parent/guardian may be required to meet with the Athletic Director and/or their appointee. Additional consequences, including dismissal from the program, may be implemented.

Appeals

All appeals to any action taken must be made in writing to the Principal and the Athletics Director no later than 72 hours after notification of the eligibility decision.

College Athletics

Many of our student-athletes express an interest in continuing their athletic participation at the collegiate level. While there are many opportunities for our athletes to play at the next level, athletic scholarships are limited and are available primarily for the "elite athlete'. The term "scholarship" very often has been used in an all-inclusive way. It should be noted that the term "scholarship" is referred to in different ways throughout varied sources. It could include any one or combination of other terms, such as financial aid, grants, loans, work study program and aid from private or government sources. Very often the amount and method of scholarship is dependent on the level or division of play at which a particular college competes. It is important for the student-athlete and parents to understand:

1. The type of financial package (if applicable) being discussed; and,
2. The obligations, terms, conditions and longevity of such arrangements; and,
3. How the financial package compares to the actual cost of attending the institution.

The following associations govern the conduct of collegiate athletics, the eligibility of the student-athlete and the availability of athletic scholarships:

- The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
- The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)
- The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)

There are other associations of colleges and conferences that may or may not affiliate with larger associations and abide by their rules. It is important to inquire about the school's affiliation, to insure that eligibility standards are met and that appropriate recruitment guidelines are followed.

Athletes who aspire to participate at the collegiate level and their parents, should discuss potential collegiate opportunities for play with the head varsity coach and guidance counselor, and our NCAA Corrdinator, Mr. Mike Buck in order to determine the "best fit" with respect to schools that match a student-athlete's academic and athletic potential. Although the appropriate time to discuss college options should be at the end of the athlete's junior year, planning for collegiate participation begins much earlier.

College Athletics Coordinator
Mr. Mike Buck
MBuck@SHUFSD.org

Core Course GPA

CoreCourseGPA.com is web-based software that allows school counselors, coaches, parents and student-athletes to easily track a student-athlete's progress towards meeting NCAA Eligibility Center requirements (formerly NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse) for both Division I and Division II.

CoreCourseGPA.com generates a detailed "Initial-Eligibility Status Report" which provides the student/parent, coach or counselor with both the Division I and Division II

core course GPA as well as corresponding minimum required SAT and ACT scores and a complete listing of the number of core course credits satisfied and the number to be completed.

CoreCourseGPA.com manages the varying NCAA initial-eligibility standards for each graduating class, including the Division I changes for the class of 2016 and the Division II changes for the class of 2018.

CoreCourseGPA.com software is made available via an annual license fee to schools or individual subscribers. The CoreCourseGPA.com software is customized for the specific core course offerings of each member high school.

In addition to providing a time-saving tool to calculate NCAA core course GPA, CoreCourseGPA.com also provides counselors, coaches, parents and student-athletes with pertinent information pertaining to financial aid, the recruiting process, recruiting rules and other academic subject matter.

Walt Whitman NCAA Eligibility Steps

College Athletics Commitment Celebrations

When a graduating senior is offered a partial or full athletic scholarship, there are national signing days during the student-athlete's senior year in which they are permitted to formally commit to the college or university. The student athletes receive a National Letter of Intent (NLI), which is an official signing of an NCAA contract between the student athlete and the university. Upon signing of the agreement (NLI), the student must participate at the university or lose the offered athletic scholarship. Receiving an athletic scholarship is a monumental accomplishment.

National Signing Day Dates: 2022-2023 NCAA Signing Days
Most Division I/II Sports: **November 8, 2023**
Division I/II Football (Early): **December 20, 2023**

Division I/II Student-Athletes who have their NLI on the dates listed above, will be invited to participate in a signing day celebration at Walt Whitman High School where friends and families are invited. If a student athlete is receiving an athletic scholarship but has not received the actual NLI prior to the signing day, the college coach can contact the athletic office verifying the NLI intentions. Confirmations of the contracts need to be finalized two weeks prior to the ceremony. Since Ivy League schools and military academies cannot offer athletic scholarships, students committed to participate and verified.

Since student-athletes can sign at any point throughout the school year, we will be conducting a **College Athletics Commitment Ceremony** in May, 2023 for **ALL** student-athletes (D1,D2,D3, JC, etc.)

The Athletic Program

Sports Offered

FALL SPORTS			
	MIDDLE SCHOOL	JUNIOR VARSITY	VARSITY
Football	X	X	X
Cheerleading	X	X	X*
Girls Soccer	X	X	X
Boys Soccer	X	X	X
Girls Volleyball~	X~	X	X
Boys Volleyball	X~	X	X
Field Hockey	X	X	X
Girls Tennis	X	X	X
Boys Cross Country	X		X
Girls Cross Country	X		X
Girls Swimming			X
Girls Gymnastics			X
Boys Golf			X
WINTER SPORTS			
Girls Volleyball~	X ~		
Boys Volleyball	X~		
Girls Basketball	X	X	X
Boys Basketball	X	X	X
Boys/Girls Wrestling	X	X	X
Competitive Cheerleading	X	X	X
Boys Swimming			X

Boys Fencing			X
Girls Fencing			X
Boys Winter Track & Field			X
Girls Winter Track & Field			X
Unified Bowling			X
SPRING SPORTS			
Boys Lacrosse	X	X	X
Girls Lacrosse	X	X	X
Baseball	X	X	X
Softball	X	X	X
Boys Tennis	X	X	X
Girls Track & Field	X		X
Boys Track & Field	X		X
Unified Basketball			X
Girls Badminton			X
Boys Badminton			X
Girls Flag Football			X

~Volleyball is a Fall sport in HS and a Winter sport in MS
*Gameday Cheerleading is a competitive Varsity Sport

Game Schedules

www.SectionXI.org
www.rschoolnewyork.org/public/genie/1264/school/3/

Middle School ("Modified") Program

Middle School "modified" programs offer an introduction to competitive athletics. At this point, the focus is on learning basic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, social and emotional growth, and healthy competition. The emphasis is to provide an opportunity for children through physical participation in a positive competitive environment to learn about their capabilities and appreciate the human physical potential.

Athletes are introduced to the benefits of physical conditioning and encouraged to become responsible for maintaining an appropriate fitness level. The "modified" program allows for game rules and requirements of play to be adapted, matching the competitive abilities of young inexperienced middle school athletes who have not yet reached emotional, social, physiological, or physical maturity.

The NYSPHSAA and Section XI have established sport specific practice guidelines, which govern the number of practices that each individual and team must have in order to be eligible for competition. There are also established guidelines that govern the number of contests allowed, and in certain sports, mandate days of rest between scheduled contests.

Coaches expect athletes to attend all practices and games, lasting between one and one half to two hours in duration, in preparation for the six to twelve contests that are scheduled against opponents from other school districts. The practice and game schedule will be communicated to you in advance. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each team member will exist over the course of a season, providing that the athlete meets program expectations. Athletes in all programs, regardless of level, are expected to be committed and give a full effort to practice sessions, maintain a positive and cooperative attitude, and show a willingness to meet the team's needs with respect to position and role. Every athlete is expected to demonstrate respect for others and promote positive sportsmanship. In addition, the athlete must have enough skill and physical maturity to safely participate in the competitive climate**. Playing time is governed by Section XI requirements.**

Junior Varsity Program

The junior varsity program is intended for those who display the potential for continued development into varsity-level players. Teams are comprised of mostly ninth-and tenth-grade athletes, however, middle school students (See Athletic Placement Process) will participate and juniors, who may be viewed as contributors at the varsity level, may be allowed to participate.

At this point in the athlete's development, the level of expectation increases substantially. The high school sports season (three seasons per year) is longer than the Junior High sports season (four seasons per year). Practice sessions at this level are longer and more intense, and skill requirements for participation in contests are greater. The atmosphere is more competitive, and in many cases, athletes who were able to meet the demands of play in the modified program will not be able to meet expectations of participation at the junior varsity level. **In most sports, athletes must be prepared for a competitive tryout situation, and should not assume that they will automatically make the team because they were involved in the program at the modified level.** Each season is treated as a new year, and tryouts are conducted accordingly.

Skill, conditioning, work ethic, and reliability are essential factors in an athlete's quest to move to the varsity level. At this level, athletes are expected to be committed to the program and continued self-development. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on

physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play, and social and emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development. The outcome of the contest does become a consideration at this level.

The realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that is vital to a successful junior varsity program and player. For team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season, providing the athlete meets program expectations. **A specified amount of playing time, however, is never guaranteed.** Athletes are expected to compete for a position, however playing time is not the only factor in team contribution- all players have an important role.

The time commitment of a participant involved in a junior varsity program is similar to that at the varsity level. Athletes and parents should be prepared for a six-day-a-week commitment for games and practices. **The athlete will be expected to make a full commitment to scheduled team practices during vacation periods.** With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.

Varsity Program

Varsity competition is the culminating experience for each sport's program. It is an experience provided for the highest level and most skilled athletes, since it is the most demanding and competitive. All high school students, regardless of age or grade, are eligible to participate at the varsity level. It is also possible for a Middle School student to be included on a varsity roster (See Athletic Placement Process).

One of the major goals of a varsity team is to win a league or division title, and/or qualify for postseason play in sectional, regional or state competition, as such the top players within the program, regardless of age or grade, will make up the team.

Squad size is limited in many sports at the varsity level, although several sports will accommodate more numbers in practice and in competitive situations. However, even in those sports where cuts are not made in a given year, athletes must still understand that opportunities to participate may be denied unless they meet program expectations, especially with respect to start dates, attendance and commitment. Athletes who do not meet program expectations will not be eligible to earn a letter award.

The number of participants on most varsity teams is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice, and to play the contest. **It is essential that each member understands and accepts his/her role on the team, as the number of roster positions is relative to the student's acceptance of his/her individual role in pursuit of team goals**. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed, since the outcome of the contest becomes an important consideration at this level. **Playing time is nonnegotiable and is left to the discretion of the coach.**

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for varsity play. Athletes will be expected to practice 2 to 3 hours per day, six days per week, **with commitment often extended into vacation periods for** all sports seasons. The expectation is the same for the starting player as it is for the player who sees little playing time, as every athlete involved in the team has a role in preparing the team for a demanding competitive schedule.

The varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction, skills, and strategy for all levels.

Senior Recognition

Senior Recognition Games, commonly known as "Senior Day" or "Senior Games" are held each season to honor the Senior student-athletes and their families for their years of commitment and dedication to the program. The format for each of these celebrations will vary by team, however, it is important to note that there can never be a guaranteed amount of playing, if any, in these games. The recognition and celebration for our Senior student-athletes and families will take place either before the game, at halftime, or afterwards. All efforts will be made by the coaching staff to play Senior student-athletes, however, that will be determined by the number of seniors on the roster, the skill level of the opponent, the score of the game, and the importance of the game. The overall goals of team will guide decisions on playing time.

Athletic Team Selection and Try-Outs

It is the philosophy of the Athletic Department to include as many participants as each team will allow. This is determined by the nature of the sport, facility space, and proper coach-to-athlete ratio for optimal safety and instruction.

Each student must be medically cleared prior to the start of the sports season. Coaches are **not** required to give students who fail to submit their paperwork by the proper deadline additional days to try-out. Athletes who miss the official start date, and express a late interest in tryouts may be denied the opportunity to participate in the program. Exception to this guidlines can be considered for those athletes that have a documented medical illness or an injury. Consideration will only be given to those that notify the coach or Director of Athletics in advance of the tryouts. Coaches are not obligated, or expected, to accept student's after the season has started. Situations will be handled on a case by case basis.

Students who transfer into the district during a season, and are eligible for participation per NYSPHSAA standards, will be given the opportunity to try-out for a team as long as it is deemed that his/her possible position on the team will not negatively impact the safety or instruction of the team.

The coach will explain the standards and expectations that will be used to evaluate athlete performance. At the end of this period the team selection is made. The coaches will

offer all athletes who tried out for the team and opportunity to discuss their individual try out.

A note for seniors:

One of the most difficult situations coaches face is the dilemma of a senior who has been in the program for years and now is viewed as a limited role player. Seniors will not be accommodated with a junior varsity experience, as this is considered a developmental program. Coaches are encouraged to be honest with seniors, and if it is clear to the coach during tryouts that the role of the senior will be limited, that information will be communicated. The senior presented with the opportunity to remain in the program with a limited role must be prepared to accept this role, and still meet all the expectations of the program with respect to attendance and work ethic, while still showing support for the team. This is a difficult challenge, and the senior must be willing to meet this challenge with a positive attitude if he or she wishes to remain a part of the team. If a coach feels that the athlete is incapable of adjusting to limited role expectations with a positive attitude, the coach may not provide the senior with the option of staying on the team.

Student/Family Vacations

When parents and student-athletes choose to take their family vacation during a sport season, it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry, personal conditioning, and performance level of the individual and the overall success of the team. Each and every individual on the team has a role, not just in the game, but in the practice climate as well, regardless of how much playing time the athlete is experiencing. Commitment during the vacation periods involves self-sacrifice, not only on the part of the coach and athlete, but the family as well. Junior Varsity and Varsity athlete attendance is expected during vacation periods.

Practices on Religious Holidays

Occasionally practices are held on Religious Holidays (when school is in and not in session). Coaches and team members are expected to respect the religious commitments and personal obligations of the family. Athletes and parents in these circumstances will be informed that the practice is optional, with no implication of any penalty for missing the practice.

Off-Season Workouts

Attendance at off-season workouts are not mandatory or required. However, if available, students are encouraged to take part in the many activities offered by the coaching staff including fitness and weight room programs, as well as sport specific skill sessions. Participation in these programs can enhance an athlete's skill and physical conditioning and provide them with an opportunity to connect with other students.

In-Season Definition

Season Start: As defined by the NYSPHSAA and Section XI
Season End: The season ends based on whatever occurs ***LAST:***

a) *End of season Team Celebration*
b) *The last competition for the team*

APP Guidelines

There is a New York State Education Department (NYSED) program that permits physically and emotionally appropriate students to try out for an athletic team that is outside of their grade placement. It is called the Athletic Placement Process (APP). The number of students who are allowed to compete outside of their grade levels should be few and far between. The program is intended only for the athlete who has the physical maturity, physical fitness, and sport skills to be placed with other athletes outside of his/her grade level. **BOE Policy: 7420**

The APP is not to be used to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, provide an opportunity for middle school or Middle School students when no modified program is offered, or to reward a student. Instead, it is aimed at the few/exceptional, select students who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness. Abuses in the program by decision makers who seek to satisfy the needs of the team, rather than considering the well-being of the student cannot be condoned. There are many potential physical and social/emotional pitfalls that must be avoided, and once a student is elevated, the decision is irreversible.

An emphasis shall be placed on assessing the social and emotional maturity stage of each student/athlete, especially in situations where student/athletes are attempting to participate on an advanced level. Academic and behavioral records are assessed when recommending a student.

Post-Season Eligibility

To be eligible for post-season play (sectional, regional, intersectional or state competition), a team must have competed in six (6) school-scheduled contests, which occurred on six (6) different dates, during the season. An individual is eligible to compete for the team if he or she has been an eligible participant on a team in that sport for a minimum of six (6) scheduled contests during the regular season. For football, a student must be an eligible participant for a minimum of three contests. Contestants in individual sports (cross country, tennis, track and wrestling) must have represented their school in six (6) scheduled contests during the season to be eligible. These required contests must occur on six (6) different dates and must be completed prior to the conclusion of the team's regular schedule. An athlete, who comes out late and/or misses part of the season due to injury, cannot come back and participate in post-season play without a medical waiver.

Mixed Competition

The purpose of the Mixed Competition Committee is to determine on an individual basis whether or not participation by a particular male student on a sports team organized for females in a district would "have a significant adverse effect upon the opportunity of

females to participate successfully in interschool competition in that sport" NYSED Regulation: Section 135.4 (c) (7) (ii) ©

2023-2024 Deadlines for Mixed Competition Approval:
Fall: *Varsity and JV:* August 11, 2023; *Middle School:* September 6, 2023
Winter: October 25, 2023
Spring: February 14, 2024

Duration of Competition

A pupil shall be eligible for senior high school athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sport commencing with the pupil's entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation, except as otherwise specified by the Commissioner Regulations. A pupil enters a competition each year when the pupil is a member of the team in the sport involved, and that team has completed at least one contest. The eligibility for the competition of a pupil who has not attained the age of 19 years prior to July 1 may be extended under certain circumstances. NYSPHSAA Handbook

Bona fide Student

A contestant must be a bona fide student of the high school represented and must be taking at least four subjects including Physical Education. A foreign exchange student may be considered a bona fide student if all of these eligibility rules are satisfied. A student in an education program in two schools may represent only the home school. NYSPHSAA Handbook

Athletic Award System

Middle School	Certificate (Each Season) Scholar-Cat Award
Junior Varsity	Certificate (Each Season)
Varsity	**1st Year:** 9” Chennell Letter **2nd Year:** Sport Specific Pin **3rd+ Year:** Gold Bar Certificate (Each Season)

***Athletes will receive the award that represents where they played the majority of the season. Junior Varsity Athletes who at times played on Varsity and/or are brought up to the Varsity level at the end of the season, or for the playoffs, may not receive a varsity award.**

3 Junior Varsity and **3 Junior Varsity** level student-athletes from each team will have the opportunity to earn awards for commitment, improvement, sportsmanship, and athletic ability. Recipients of these awards are to be determined by each individual coaching staff.

There is a minimum level of commitment expected for student-athletes to receive the above awards. Student-athletes who do not meet the minimum expectation as determined by the coach and Athletic director will not receive an award.

Section XI Gold Key Award
The Gold Key Award is the highest honor in Section XI that an athlete can receive for sports participation.

1. It is awarded to athletes who letter in eight junior varsity or varsity seasons in grades 10 through 12. Individual school districts can determine whether or not to include non-competitive cheerleading and/or kickline as criteria.

1. Section XI will present a certificate mounted on a plaque to each athlete who attains the necessary criteria to receive the award. Section XI will bill member schools for the cost of the plaque. The 10K Gold Key Charm is available for those member schools which wish to purchase it.

Wildcat Booster Club

Wildcat Booster Club strives to promote, foster, encourage and support interscholastic athletic programs, athletes, and teams in South Huntington. We promote cooperation and teamwork among all athletes and work to assist them in achieving their goals, on and off the field.

The Wildcat Booster Club is a 100% volunteer organization dedicated to supporting athletics and school programs in many ways including the purchase of special equipment not funded by the district, providing athletic awards and scholarships, financial support to assist athletes competing in State / National events and other contributions to our athletic program.

- Purchasing of Special Equipment not funded by the district
- Providing Athletic Awards
- Issuing Athletic Scholarships to graduating seniors
- Financial Support to Assist Athletes in State / National events
- Other Contributions to our Athletic Program

Meeting dates and times can be found on the district calendar.

https://www.wildcatbc.org/

The Health of the Athlete

Athletic Injuries

All student injuries must be reported to the coach or Athletic Trainer, who will then communicate this information to the school nurse. If the injury requires an examination by a physician, the student may not return to practice without the written permission of

the physician. The physicians written permission/restrictions must be recorded by the school nurse. Telephone permissions will not be accepted. Parents and/or students are expected to report injuries immediately so that student health can be protected.

Return to Play After Injuries

Any student-athlete under treatment by a private physician must have written permission from his/her physician in order to return to active status in the sports program. If an athlete misses five (5) days of practice due to illness or injury, he or she must be given clearance by a private and/or school physician before returning to play. The school physician has the final authority to determine the physical capability of a student to participate in a sport.

Athletic Trainer (Mr. Pete White- PeWhite@SHUFSD.org)

The Athletic Trainer provides emergency service for high school athletes and develops prevention strategies through appropriate training methods and physical conditioning programs, to ensure proper follow-up after an injury, the Athletic Trainer consults and discusses the nature of the injury with the parents, coach, school nurse and, if necessary, the school physician. The Athletic Trainers office is located in the North Gymnasium. It is the goal to provide the best medical coverage for all concerned based on the nature of the sport.

Athletic Insurance

Medical expenses arising from participating in a South Huntington athletic program, must first be submitted to the parent's insurance carrier. Any remaining balance can then be submitted to the school's insurance carrier which supplements the student's coverage in limited ways. Contact the school nurse for further information

Concussions

It is our goal in the South Huntington Athletics Department to provide our student-athletes with a safe athletic experience. Our coaches and athletic trainer are aware of these guidelines and are cognizant of their importance. Athletic team coaches are all trained in recognition of head injuries.

The Concussion Management and Awareness Act became effective July 2012 through the New York State Department of Education. If an athlete displays signs, symptoms, or behaviors that are consistent with a concussion, they will be removed from the game and will not be allowed to return. As per the new law, concussion information must be provided to families to help increase the awareness of concussions and improve the care given to those in recovery.

At some point, all South Huntington athletes in high risk sports will participate in the **ImPact Baseline Best**. ImPact (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) is the first, most widely used, and most scientifically validated computerized concussion evaluation system. The imPact was developed to provide useful information

to assist qualified physicians in making a sound return to play decisions following concussions. For more information visit https://baselinetesting.com/

Return to Play Protocol

The following protocol has been established in accordance to the National Federation of State High School Associations and the International Conference on Concussion in Sport, Prague 2004. The return to play protocol will be overseen by the Schools Athletic Trainer in conjunction with the head coach, school nurse and Director of Athletics.

Return to Play Steps (once symptom free for 24 hours)**:**
Day 1: Low impact, non-strenuous, light aerobic activity.
Day 2: Higher impact, higher exertion, moderate aerobic activity. No resistance training.
Day 3: Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter.
Day 4: Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter.
Day 5: Full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity.
Day 6: Return to full activities with clearance from the School Doctor/Athletic Trainer

If any concussion symptoms recur, the athlete should drop back to the previous level and try to progress after 24 hours of rest.

Concussion Education

Please refer to the NYSPHSAA *Student and Parent Information Sheet, Concussions: The Invisible Injury and Head Up Fact Sheet for parents* for more information. All information can be found on the South Huntington Athletics Website. The Heads Up Fact Sheet can be found on Page 34

The Dominic Murray Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is an emergency that happens when the heart suddenly stops working. SCA can cause death if not treated immediately, and even with treatment death may occur. Immediate treatment is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED). All public schools must have a staff member trained in the use of CPR and AED in school and at all school athletic events.

Preventing SCA before it happens is the best way to save a life. Both your family health history and your child's personal history must be told to healthcare providers to help them know if your child is at risk for sudden cardiac arrest. Ask your child if they are having any of the symptoms listed below and tell a healthcare provider. Know your family history and tell a healthcare provider of any risk factors listed below.

The signs or symptoms are:

- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise or with excitement or startled

- Racing heart, palpitations, or irregular heartbeat
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, or extreme fatigue with exercise
- Chest pain or discomfort with exercise
- Excessive shortness of breath during exercise
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

Student's Personal Risk Factors are:

- Use of diet pills, performance-enhancing supplements, energy drinks, or drugs such as cocaine, inhalants, or "recreational" drugs.2
- Elevated blood pressure or cholesterol
- History of health care provider ordered test(s) for heart-related issues

Student's Family History Risk Factors are:

- Family history of known heart abnormalities or sudden death before 50 years of age
- Family members with unexplained fainting, seizures, drowning, near-drowning or car accidents before 50 years of age
- Structural heart abnormality, repaired or unrepaired
- Any relative diagnosed with the following conditions:
    - Enlarged Heart/ Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy/Dilated Cardiomyopathy
    - Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy
    - Heart rhythm problems, long or short QT interval
    - Brugada Syndrome
    - Catecholaminergic Ventricular Tachycardia
    - Marfan Syndrome- aortic rupture
    - Heart attack at 50 years or younger
    - Pacemaker or implanted cardiac defibrillator (ICD)

SCA in students at risk can be triggered by athletic activities. To decrease any chance of SCA in a student, the Interval Health History for Athletics must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian before each sports season unless a physical examination has been conducted within 30 days before the start of the season. This form has questions to help identify changes since the last physical examination or health history was completed. School personnel may require a student with health or history changes to see a healthcare provider before participating in athletics.

Finally, the law requires any student who has signs and symptoms of pending SCA to be removed from athletic activity until seen by a **physician.** The physician must provide written clearance to the school for the student to be able to return to athletics.

Rules and Guidelines

Carry-Over Suspension

If a student is suspended from athletics for any reason and the violation occurs near the end of the sport's season in which the athlete cannot fulfill the terms of his/her violation in that sport the suspension will carry-over until the suspension is fulfilled. This includes the next sport the athlete participates in or the same sport next year. For example, if the athlete is suspended for two football games and only one game remains in the season, the athlete must also miss his/her first basketball game or lacrosse game until the suspension has been served.

Removal from a team

A student may be removed from a team for inappropriate behavior or actions that are contradictory to the teams and department's mission statement as determined by the coach and/or athletics director. Actions deemed to have a negative impact on the safety or well-being of those associated with the sport (i.e. Teammates, Coaches, officials, supervisors, etc.) will result in removal from the team.

Appeals

If a student or his/her parent disagrees with the disciplinary penalty relating to participation in extracurricular activities, the student or his/her parent must make a written request to the building principal for review of the penalty no later than 72 hours after notification of the eligibility decision.

Quitting a Team

One of the lessons taught in athletics is perseverance. When an athlete makes a commitment to a team, they are making a commitment to the coach and their teammates. Quitting a team is strongly discouraged, and **failure to finish a prior season may be taken into account in roster decisions in the following years.** Athletes who wish to quit a team after the first 6 days of the season, or once try-outs have been completed will not be eligible to compete on another team within the same season unless provided permission from the Athletic Director.

Injured and Ineligible Athletes

There should be a strong sense of belonging to the team even when personal injuries or academic ineligibility would restrict the individual's participation in practices and games. An injured or academically ineligible player is expected to be at practices and games as if he or she were healthy. Injured or academically ineligible players who do not continue with the team will be deemed as quitting. An athlete who quits will be removed from the team roster and forfeit any post-season rewards such as team pictures, letters, awards, etc.

Cell Phones

Cell phone use after school is permitted, however, unless given specific instructions from their coach, cell phones should not be used during any practice or games. There should

be no cell phone use in the locker rooms. Any violations should be reported to the coach immediately.

Social Media

Students are cautioned regarding the use of social media. Disparaging comments or pictures made online toward teammates, coaches or other team personnel have a negative effect on the team and create an unsafe environment for instruction. Such instances would call for a meeting between the student, parent, school principal, athletic director and/or other support staff as needed. Consequences will be levied based on the outcome of the investigation.

Students should be concerned not only with what they post but also with what others post, which may show them in a negative light. Should the school or coaches receive information or pictures from such sites suggesting violations of the South Huntington School District or Athletic Code of Conduct, will be held to the appropriate consequences. Students should be aware there ordinarily is no opportunity to present excuses or defenses once pictures or other information have been posted online.

Protection of Valuables

All students are given the opportunity to have a lock and locker in their respective athletic team locker rooms. It is the responsibility of the student to protect his/her valuables and secure them in a locked locker. It is not the responsibility of the coach to hold a student's valuables. It is preferable to leave all valuables at home. Students should not share lockers with a teammate or friend, as they will be held responsible for any damage or items found in the locker, whether it is theirs or not. Students must use a lock provided by the school.

Team Bus Travel and Transportation

All athletes are expected to travel to and from away contests on the bus provided by the South Huntington School District. If a student misses the district-provided transportation to a contest, he/she must be transported by his/her own parent. This must be approved by the Athletic Director or Principal.

Under certain circumstances or exceptional situations, a student may be excused from riding to or from athletic contests by school-authorized transportation. A *Travel Release Form* must be submitted to the team's coach 24 hours in advance. Coaches do not have the authority to release students without a signed *Travel Release form.* This privilege is kept to a minimum since the athletic philosophy continues to be that a student is part of a team in all phases of team activity. Travel Release Form

Use of Equipment

School equipment issued to your son/daughter for participation is his or her responsibility and must be returned promptly upon request. Athletic equipment is not to be worn without the consent of the coach. Athletic uniforms are **not** to be worn during physical education class.

Reimbursement from the student will be expected for loss or destruction beyond ordinary wear and tear. Failure to return or pay for equipment issued to you will result in your exclusion from the next sport season. If you are a graduating senior, you will be excluded from events such as senior awards, prom, etc. until reimbursement has been submitted.

Care of Facilities

Athletes are expected to treat all facilities with care and respect, whether at a home event or visiting another facility/school. Any damage caused by athletes must be paid for in full (or an appropriate agreement reached by parents and school) **before being allowed to participate in further athletic activities**. Suspension from athletic activities will be considered.

Communication (Player, Parent, Coach)

The relationship between athletes, coaches, and parents is of utmost importance to a successful program, however, guidelines need to be followed. Athletics in the **South Huntington School District** provides students with a safe environment to advocate for themselves and voice any concerns that they may have. We ask that **Player Coach** communication be the first line with any concerns or conflicts that the students may have. If the situation goes unresolved, the appropriate communication channels for a variety of topics are listed below.

Athletic Concerns
STEP 1 - Coach; if not resolved …
STEP 2 - Mr. Barth; Sup. of Physical Education, Health & Athletics (for athletic events); if not resolved …
STEP 3 - Assistant Principal; if not resolved …
STEP 4 - Building Principal; if not resolved …
STEP 5 - Superintendent of Schools

It is inappropriate to discuss concerns immediately before or after an athletic event or practice. Emails do not provide an opportunity to express tone and are often the source of more discontent. We encourage athletes and parents to have direct communication over the phone or in person following the steps listed above.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Team rules and expectations the coach has for the team.
- Locations and times of practices and contests.
- Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
- Discipline that result in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from players:

- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Notification of any concerns with teammates.
- Questions on ways to improve.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches or Athletic Director:

- Playing time.
- Team Strategy.
- Play calling.
- Other students/athletes.

Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach.

Concussions: The Invisible Injury

Student and Parent Information Sheet

CONCUSSION DEFINITION

A concussion is a reaction by the brain to a jolt or force that can transmitted to the head by an impact or blow occurring anywhere on the body. Essentially a concussion results from the brain moving back and forth or twisting rapidly inside the skull.

FACTS ABOUT CONCUSSIONS ACCORDING TO THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

- An estimated 4 million people under age 19 sustain a head injury annually. Of these approximately 52,000 die and 275,000 are hospitalized.
- An estimated 300,000 sports and recreation related concussions occur each year.
- Students who have had at least one concussion are at increased risk for another concussion.

In New York State in 2009, approximately 50,500 children under the age of 19 visited the emergency room for a traumatic brain injury and of those approximately 3,000 were hospitalized.

REQUIREMENTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Education:

- Each school coach, physical education teacher, nurse, and athletic trainer will have to complete an approved course on concussion management on a biennial basis, starting with the 2012-2013 school year.
  - School coaches and physical education teachers must complete the CDC course. (www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html)
  - School nurses and certified athletic trainers must complete the concussion course. (http://preventingconcussions.org)

Information:

- Provide concussion management information and sign off with any parental permission form. **The NYSPHSAA will provide a pamphlet to member schools on the concussion management information for parents.**
- The concussion management and awareness information or the State Education Department's web site must be made available on the school web site, if one exists.

Removal from athletics:

- Require the immediate removal from athletic activities of any pupil that has or is believed to have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury.
- No pupils will be allowed to resume athletic activity until they have been symptom free for 24 hours and have been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. For interscholastic athletics, clearance must come from the school medical director.
  - Such authorization must be kept in the pupil's permanent heath record.
  - Schools shall follow directives issued by the pupil's treating physician.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of a concussion are the result of a temporary change in the brain's function. In most cases, the symptoms of a concussion generally resolve over a short period of time; however, in some cases, symptoms will last for weeks or longer. Children and adolescents are more susceptible to concussions and take longer than adults to recover.

It is imperative that any student who is suspected of having a concussion is removed from athletic activity (e.g. recess, PE class, sports) and remains out of such activities until evaluated and cleared to return to activity by a physician.

Symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Decreased or absent memory of events prior to or immediately after the injury, or difficulty retaining new information
- Confusion or appears dazed
- Headache or head pressure
- Loss of consciousness
- Balance difficulties, dizziness, or clumsy movements
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or sound
- Nausea, vomiting and/or loss of appetite
- Irritability, sadness or other changes in personality
- Feeling sluggish, foggy or light-headed
- Concentration or focusing problems
- Drowsiness
- Fatigue and/or sleep issues – sleeping more or less than usual

Students who develop any of the following signs, or if signs and symptoms worsen, should be seen and evaluated immediately at the nearest hospital emergency room.

- Headaches that worsen
- Seizures
- Looks drowsy and/or cannot be awakened
- Repeated vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Unable to recognize people or places
- Weakness or numbing in arms or legs, facial drooping
- Unsteady gait
- Change in pupil size in one eye
- Significant irritability
- Any loss of consciousness
- Suspicion for skull fracture: blood draining from ear or clear fluid from the nose

STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE FOR CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

Schools are advised to develop a written concussion management policy. A sample policy is available on the NYSPHSAA web site at www.nysphsaa.org. The policy should include:

- A commitment to reduce the risk of head injuries.
- A procedure and treatment plan developed by the district medical director.
- A procedure to ensure proper education for school nurses, certified athletic trainers, physical education teachers, and coaches.
- A procedure for a coordinated communication plan among appropriate staff.
- A procedure for periodic review of the concussion management program.

RETURN TO LEARN and RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOLS

Cognitive Rest: Activities students should avoid include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Computers and video games
- Television viewing
- Texting
- Reading or writing
- Studying or homework
- Taking a test or completing significant projects
- Loud music
- Bright lights

Students may only be able to attend school for short periods of time. Accommodations may have to be made for missed tests and assignments.

Physical Rest: Activities students should avoid include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Contact and collision
- High speed, intense exercise and/or sports
- High risk for re-injury or impacts
- Any activity that results in an increased heart rate or increased head pressure

Return to Play Protocol once symptom free for 24 hours and cleared by School Medical Director:

Day 1: Low impact, non strenuous, light aerobic activity.

Day 2: Higher impact, higher exertion, moderate aerobic activity. No resistance training.

Day 3: Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter.

Day 4: Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter.

Day 5: Full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity.

Day 6: Return to full activities with clearance from School Medical Director.

Any return of symptoms during the return to play protocol, the student will return to previous day's activities until symptom free.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT TEAM

Schools may, at their discretion, form a concussion management team to implement and monitor the concussion management policy and program. The team could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Students
- Parents/Guardians
- School Administrators
- Medical Director
- Private Medical Provider
- School Nurse
- Director of Physical Education and/or Athletic Director
- Certified Athletic Trainer
- Physical Education Teacher and/or Coaches
- Classroom Teachers

OTHER RESOURCES

- New York State Education Department
- New York State Department of Health
http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/concussion/htm
- New York State Public High School Athletic Association
www.nysphsaa.org/safety/
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
http://cdc.gov/concussions
- National Federation of High Schools
www.nfhslearn.com – The FREE Concussion Management course does not meet education requirement.
- Child Health Plus
http://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/managed_care/consumer_guide/about_child_health_plus.htm
- Local Department of Social Services – New York State Department of Health
http://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/ldss/htm
- Brain Injury Association of New York State
http://www.bianys.org
- Nationwide Children's Hospital – Concussions in the Classroom
http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/concussions-in-the-classroom
- Upstate University Hospital – Concussions in the Classroom
http://www.upstate.edu/pmr/healthcare/programs/concussion/classroom.php
- ESPN Video – Life Changed by Concussion
http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=7525526&categoryid=5595394
- SportsConcussions.org
http://www.sportsconcussions.org/ibaseline/
- American Association of Neurological Surgeons
http://www.aans.org/Patient%20Information/Conditions%20and%20Treatment/Concussion.aspx
- Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport – Zurich
http://sportconcussions.com/html/Zurich%20Statement.pdf

IT'S A **GREAT DAY** TO BE A **WILDCAT**!

