

Gateway Regional School
Huntington, MA
Athletic Handbook
2025-2026



SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to introduce student-athletes and their parents/guardians to the philosophy behind our program and the regulations and policies, which govern it. Although this handbook cannot include every policy and rule that applies to athletics, the most crucial and fundamental rules are contained within. It is our expectation that parents and students will read this handbook in a thorough manner. In this way, misunderstanding about our rules may be avoided.. Students who register have provided us with the indication that they understand and will abide by all policies and rules of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, our league and Gateway Regional School.

SECTION TWO: PHILOSOPHY

Gateway Regional School believes that athletics are an important part of a sound educational program and that PARTICIPATION IS A PRIVILEGE available to all eligible students. While physical skill and demonstrated ability are primary considerations in determining actual participation, we believe that all aspects of secondary school athletics are subordinate to the essential purpose for which schools exist and must be controlled by educational considerations. This privilege carries with it serious personal responsibilities to the school, the student body, the faculty, and the town that the athlete represents. Interscholastic athletics provides the “other half” of education. The program strives to develop students' positive values and habits so that personal growth and development occur. Improved skill levels, a heightened sense of cooperation and competition, self-discipline, and realization of the value of group goals are just some of the objectives of the athletic program. Successful competitive performance in combination with educational considerations provides the cornerstone for our athletic program.. The program of athletics plays a unique role in joining the school and community. Civic pride and identification with Gateway Regional High School are results of athletic participation that can last a lifetime.

SECTION THREE: MISSION

Our purpose is to provide a sound, competitive interscholastic athletics program that represents the model manner, and provides student-athletes the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, ethically, and socially.

SECTION FOUR: DATES OF SEASONS

Interscholastic athletics encompass a fair amount of time within the school year for practice and participation. Athletics doesn't necessarily follow the calendar of the school year as fall tryouts/practices begin before school is back in session. All sports seasons practices and games may take place during non-school days or vacations. Spring postseason may last past the last day of school. This is a tentative schedule for each season:

Fall Sports: Typically start on the third Monday of August and potentially run through the Sunday before Thanksgiving

Winter Sports: Typically start the Monday after Thanksgiving, and potentially run through the third Sunday of March

Spring Sports: Typically start the third Monday of March, and potentially run through the second Saturday of June

SECTION FIVE: PARTICIPATION

Subject to restrictions on team size, the athletic program will be open to all students who are physically able to participate and who are eligible under local and state regulations. An unlimited participation policy will be used whenever possible. There are factors, however, which may indicate that the total number of players on a team are limited in order to maintain a high level of safety, coaching, playing time, and cost effectiveness. It is the judgement of the coaches that dictates the selection of participants during practice, technical, tactical, and game situations. Varsity team objectives are to be as successful as possible, which may lead to unbalanced game participation. However, all team members will receive ample training and practice opportunities. Sub-varsity teams objectives are to help develop increased player abilities with the goal of providing developed athletes to the varsity teams. Sub varsity team members will receive more equitable, but not equal, game time opportunities in comparison to varsity teams, but still with coaches discretion (safety, ability, attendance, and other factors as seen fit). All athletes are given fair and ample opportunity to demonstrate their abilities prior to the commencement of league and non-league competition.

SECTION SIX: MEDICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE

School insurance for the medical treatment of sport-related injuries is applicable only after the parents' health insurance if any, has been used. Our insurance is scheduled excess coverage and generally will not pay the full cost of treatment. The cost of medical benefit insurance on a total basis would be so costly as to effectively eliminate the program. While the coaching staff and other responsible school officials will do everything within reason to protect your child against injury including the provision of appropriate equipment, safe facilities, and training designed to reduce the impact of accidents, injuries will occur, and on a very rare occasion may be serious and disabling. If you are concerned about this possibility, you should discuss it with your child's coach.

GATEWAY REGIONAL JUNIOR HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL RULES

1) TRYOUTS & TEAM SELECTION

1.1- Any student interested in trying out for any team must attend tryouts. All students should plan ahead and understand the time commitments they will have to commit to, to be part of the program. If a student cannot attend tryouts, they must meet with the

Director of Athletics (family outings and/or vacations, work, and other extracurricular activities are not reasons for missing tryouts). Inability to attend may effect placement in the program

1.2-The following is required that each student must completed before the student may tryout:

A current physical examination, by a physician, on file with the school nurse within 13 months of the first day of tryouts. Verification of passing a Physical Exam (within the last 13 months) is required to ben on file with the school nurse before participation is allowed. (Outside exams are permitted but must state specifically that the student is allowed to participate in sports.)

Interscholastic Permission/Registration Form

Pre Participation Head injury/Concussion form

Parent/Athlete Concussion Information Sheet

M.I.A.A Medical History Form

Academically eligible (grades will be checked by the Director of Athletics to ensure all athletes are eligible).

1.3- Each coach will explain his/her attendance policies and any other training and team rules. Your child will be required to follow all MIAA rules. In addition to the strict observance of these rules, your child will be expected to continue to meet all regular school obligations of citizenship and academic achievement. Coaches may make rules governing the conduct of players and the requirements of training and practice. These rules, which are not to be in conflict with any regulations of the high school or MIAA and must be approved by the Athletic Director and shared with players before they are in effect. Violations of these rules may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the team.

1.4- Not all students who wish to participate in interscholastic athletics may be able to do so. The size of a team is necessarily limited by the availability of supplies, equipment, and coaching staff. Cuts will be made, when necessary, on the basis of skill development, readiness for: competition, and observance of the rules. No child will be permitted to compete until in the opinion of the coach her or she is ready to do so.

1.5- Students cannot tryout for a team if they are academically ineligible.

1.6- Students cannot tryout for a team once the final roster has been handed to the Athletic Director.

1.7- Students may not change from one sport to another once the team roster has been submitted to the Athletic Director (unless there are extenuating circumstances). No student suspended or dismissed from a team may transfer to another team during that season.

1.8- MIAA RULE 24.Captain's Practice

The term "Captain's Practice" usually means the team's captain(s) organizing and conducting, without adult supervision, out-of-season practice for that sport. The MIAA does not in any way sanction, encourage, or condone "Captain's Practice" in any sport. "Captain's Practice", depending on the member school's involvement, may be a clear violation of the rule defining season limitations. There is also a serious practical consideration. If it can be demonstrated that a school is allowing "Captain's Practice", the liability responsibility for an injured athlete may be quite serious.

1.9-MIAA RULE 45. 45. Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g., practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs.

45.1 A student-athlete must be a team member for a minimum of 50% of the regular season schedule for that sport to participate in any MIAA Tournament competition. • A team member is defined as any student-athlete who attends practices or games for their sport team – e.g., Freshman basketball player moved to JV and then Varsity.

45.2 Bona Fide waiver requests for Saturday and Sunday practices only do not need submission to the MIAA rather approval determined by the High School Principal or principal's designee.

45.3 MIAA Bona Fide waivers are only allowed during the pre-season or regular season. Bona Fide Team Member Waivers (for missing any practice or game) are not permitted during MIAA postseason play. The postseason officially begins the day after the cut-off date.

45.4 Unattached athletes are not eligible for tournament participation (see Rule 30).

PENALTIES: First Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for one (1) contest and shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule or in tournament play.

Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation. Penalty Carry Over: An unserved portion of the penalty for a violation toward the end of a season will carry over to the very next high school season in which the student is a legitimate participant. For example, a soccer player who violates the rule by missing the last high school match (regular season or tournament) would serve the required suspension (1 game if first offense) at the start of basketball season, if that student is a legitimate basketball participant. 45.4 An ineligible student cannot be in uniform at an event. Attendance at the event will be determined by their High School Principal.2)

DISTRICT OWED OBLIGATIONS

2.1- Any fees due (including all financial obligations to the school) must be paid in full before a student can be issued a uniform and/or compete in an interscholastic game.

2.2- At this time, user fees have been waived by the Gateway School Committee.

3) UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

3.1- School equipment issued to your child for participation is his or her responsibility and must be returned promptly 48 hours after the final contest. **In cases where players/teams are in competition past their last day of school, uniforms will be required to be turned in immediately following the contest (home school students and students part of an athletic co-op will be required to return uniforms immediately after last contest).** Reimbursement from the student will be expected for loss or destruction beyond ordinary wear and tear. Violations of this rule will render the student-athlete

ineligible for further interscholastic competitions and intramurals. Seniors may not graduate until all uniforms and equipment are returned. The athlete must pay for all lost equipment.

3.2- Team uniforms are for games only. They are not to be worn for practices and/or gym class. Any athlete that wears any piece of their uniform for other than games, could be suspended for one game.

3.3-NO CLEATS ARE TO BE WORN IN THE SCHOOL AT ANYTIME! Any athlete that wears their cleats in the building could be suspended for one game.

3.4- Wearing of jewelry is at the discretion of individual sports. (exception-medical forms of identification, training equipment)

4. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY (Higher Standard than MIAA standard)

4.1-Grade 7-8 students may not fail more than one core class (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies), and no more than two year long equivalent classes

4.2- Grade 9-12 students may not fail more than two year long equivalent classes

4.3- Fall - To be eligible for the fall marking period, students entering grades 10 through 12 are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year, the equivalent of five traditional year-long major English courses. Students entering grades 7 through 9 must have passed the equivalent of five traditional year-long major English courses, and passed three out of four core courses. Term grades cannot be used to determine fall eligibility.

4.4- Students must be academically eligible (based on MIAA eligibility requirement dates) on the first day of an athletic season to be able to participate in that season (ie. for winter sports, Q1 report card grades must be academically eligible)

4-5. Students may lose eligibility during the season at the time of new report cards if grades are below the eligibility standard, per MIAA rule.

MIAA RULE 51. Baseline Eligibility Requirements For a student to practice with, or to represent a MIAA member school in athletic competition, the student must be duly enrolled in that school. Additionally, the student must be a candidate for that school's diploma, subject to the jurisdiction of that school's principal (i.e. the principal must have the authority to suspend the student from classes), and under the supervision of that school principal (i.e. the principal must have control and knowledge of the student's daily attendance and achievement). Waivers are not permitted for Rule 51.

5. SUSPENSIONS

5.1- Any athlete suspended from school EXTERNALLY will not be allowed to practice, play, or participate in any team function during the time of suspension. The student will not be allowed to attend practice, travel with the team to any away game, or be on the bench at a home game. If the suspension includes a Friday, the athlete will not be allowed to take part in any activity on the weekend. The athlete must participate in a practice session before competing in a game situation.

5.2- Any student-athlete that has INTERNAL SUSPENSION will not be allowed to practice, play, or participate in any team function during the suspension. The student will not be allowed to attend practice, travel with the team to any away game, or be on the bench at a home game. The athlete must participate in a practice session before competing in a game situation. Special exceptions may be granted by the Principal and Director of Athletics.

5.3- Any student suspended under MIAA rules will not be allowed to dress in his/her team uniform during their suspension.

5.4- THE GATEWAY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE AUTHORITY TO SUSPEND FOR OTHER BEHAVIORAL CIRCUMSTANCES NOT LISTED.

6. HAZING & TAUNTING POLICIES

6.1- Hazing: any conduct or method of initiation into any team, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of a student is not allowed! Such conduct is a crime under Massachusetts's law and will not be tolerated. The penalty for hazing is dismissal from the team.

6.2-Taunting Policy: Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators, which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters.

Examples of taunting include but are not limited to "trash talk", defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/ hers skills, effort, sexual orientation or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response: intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including "in the face" confrontation by one player to another and standing over/ straddling a tackled or fallen player. In all the sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul and disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest / day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing M.I.A.A Expulsion Rules. A warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to the contest. At all M.I.A.A contest sites and tournament venues, appropriate management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials or the spectators are subjected to ejection.

7. ATTENDANCE

7.1- Students must attend at least a half day of school to participate in any team meeting, practice or game on that day

7.2- If a student is absent "unexcused" from school he / she is not eligible to practice or play and is also not eligible to travel with the team or be on the team bench

7.3- Any athlete who is absent "unexcused" from school on a day prior to a non-school day is not eligible to participate in a practice or game on the first non-school day following the absence. Excused absences must be verified by the High School Principal. Special exceptions may be granted by the principal and Director of Athletics. It is the philosophy of the athletic department that student-athletes are in school and at practice the day before a game.

7.4- Athletes are expected to attend all scheduled competitions (league or non-league) and practices during the course of the entire season. As a general rule, Sundays will not be utilized by the athletic department for games. Rescheduling, however, (for any reason) may necessitate using Sundays. Athletes missing games or practices for religious reasons and/or family emergencies will not be penalized in any way.

7.5- Athletes must participate in their regular scheduled physical education classes or they will not be allowed to practice or play on that day.

7.6- Athletes who miss practices or games due to family outings, holidays, vacations, jobs, or participation in extracurricular activities other than athletics risk losing their position in the team lineup, playing time, and/or game suspensions. This also applies to non-mandatory school trips and events. It is against the region's athletic policy to move games due to the absence of players due to non-mandatory school events or absences for personal reasons.

7.7-Due to the increased number of conflicts for athletic activities and other activities, athletic activities will be rescheduled for the following reasons: prom, semi-formal, graduation, weather related issues, and unplayable field/facility conditions. Secondary priority will be made for mandatory school events (such as NHS induction and mandatory band concerts). There will be no priority to change games due to non-mandatory field trips (in this case, junior varsity games may be canceled to allow for a varsity competition to take place). For the most part, varsity schedules are set at least six months in advance, depending on the sport. Please check your schedules when planning activities or attending non-mandatory field trips.

8. TRANSPORTATION

8.1- Athletes must travel to and from contests in transportation provided by the school.

8.2- A parent/ guardian can take their child home from any away contest, but must see the coach first and sign-out their child.

8.3- Special exceptions may be granted through written parental consent (by all parties involved) provided to the athletic director at least one day in advance. Student-athletes

will not be granted permission to transport other student athletes to/from road events (if a parent directly takes possession of their student-athlete and then allows them to ride with another student, that is their prerogative).

8.4-Should an emergency situation arise, the coach shall use his/her professional discretion. Any decision will be reported to the Director of Athletics.

8.5- Failure to abide by these rules may result in a one-game suspension.

9. INJURIES/CONCUSSIONS

9.1- Students must report all athletic injuries to their coach and/or athletic trainer.

9.2- If an athlete sees a medical professional for any injury or serious illness, they will need a medical release from that physician prior to further participation in a sport.

9.3-56. Student Eligibility/School Requirements: Physical Examinations/Concussion Training/Medical Coverage

56.1 All students must pass a physical examination prior to participation in High School Athletics. A physical exam covers the student for 13 months from the exam date. A student's eligibility will terminate once a physical has reached the 13-month limit. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Licensed Physician, Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner. The Sports Medicine Committee has recommended the use of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Preparticipation Physical Evaluation forms which can be found by clicking [here](#) and also can be found in the 'For Members section'. For reporting purposes of the 13-month physical examinations, only the Medical Eligibility Form can be used for submission to the school. Note: Written doctor medical clearance notes do not take the place of an annual physical. PENALTY: A student in violation shall be suspended for the number of contests in which they participated without a proper physical. Teams do not have to forfeit these contests.

56.2 Concussion Training Requirements: In accordance with Massachusetts General Law 105 CMR 201.000, "the following persons annually shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Department as found on the Department's website: (1) Coaches; (2) Licensed athletic trainers; (3) Trainers; (4) Volunteers; (5) School and team physicians; (6) School nurses; (7) Athletic Directors; (8) Directors responsible for a school marching band, whether employed by a school or school district or serving in such capacity as a volunteer; (9) Parents of a student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity; and (10) Students who participate in an extracurricular athletic activity." Additional information can be referenced here: [Department of Public Health in regard to the Concussion Law](#).

56.3 Each school's medical person/staff is responsible for the members of that team. In the event of injury, that medical person/staff will make the final judgment as to whether a student-athlete may return to play. See Rule 56.5 below regarding concussions.

Whenever a medical person is on duty at an athletic event, they shall be responsible for both teams (unless the other team has its own medical person present). When a physician is not present at an athletic event, a licensed/certified athletic trainer, if available, shall be considered the higher medical authority on-site when an EMS is providing medical coverage at the same event. Their judgment will be final. Physical disqualification by the medical provider renders the student ineligible. PENALTY: The penalty for playing an ineligible student, due to physical disqualification specified above, is forfeiture.

56.4 Medical Alert Bracelets/Anklets are approved for wearing in all sports, provided they are taped to the body and marked in red. 56.5 Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or competition and must not return to practice or competition that day. Refer to Massachusetts General Law 105 CMR 201.000 for mandated concussion management protocols.

10. CHEMICAL HEALTH RULES (MIAA Rule 62)

MIAA Chemical Health Brochure

10.1- Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco
Chemical Health Brochure 62.1 From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, vape pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; drug paraphernalia; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer,” inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one’s mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by their doctor. This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g., many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements. If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again. If a violation of this rule occurs while the student is serving a school suspension (either in-house or out-of-school), the chemical health violation penalty period will not begin until the school suspension period has concluded. If, on the other hand, the school suspension is directly related to the violation of the Chemical Health Rule, then the suspension and chemical health penalty will be served concurrently. MIAA Handbook July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025
Minimum PENALTIES: (also see Rule 32.8 – Ineligible Students)

First violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season. Clarity on penalty application: To calculate the "number of events/seasons", count those events on your schedule where the team (vs. an individual) will compete (excluding the potential of MIAA Tournament qualification). Double duals, tri, or quad competitions held on one day count as one "event". The intent of first offense penalties is to render the student ineligible for approximately 25% of that season's schedule, a football player who misses the last football game of the season would then be required to miss the first two basketball games of the next season. The baseball player who serves a penalty of fewer than five games in the spring would be required to miss the first football game of the fall season. In the former case, the football player has served 50% of his penalty, and then would be required to serve 50% of the basketball penalty (i.e. 2.5 games, which is rounded down to the whole number). In the second case, if the student serves 1, 2, 3, or 4 games of baseball ineligibility, then the carry-over of the penalty in the fall season would require missing the first football game. The minimum in any carry-over would be 1 event.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that the student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If a student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season. MIAA Handbook July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025 54 Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty [ies] during the fall season of the next academic year). If a student is not an athletic participant for one full year after affirmation of a violation, then

the penalty period would close, and the student would face no consequence. Prior to any chemical health violation, a student's request for and enrollment in a substance abuse treatment shall not in and of itself constitute a violation of the chemical health/alcohol/drugs/tobacco Rule 62.

SECTION SEVEN: VIOLATION PROCEDURES-

The coach of each sport, the Director of Athletics, or Principal shall determine if a violation of the athletic rules and regulations has taken place. In all cases, infractions of the athletic code must be reported to the Director of Athletics. If disciplinary action is taken, (including temporary or permanent suspension, censure or reprimand) an athlete may have his/her case reviewed upon request.

Review Procedure:

1. The student and/or parent may ask to meet with the coach and/or Director of Athletics. This request must occur within two school days of the disciplinary decision by the coach.
2. If not satisfied, the student and/or parents may ask to meet with the Principal, Director of Athletics and coach.
3. Final decision on these matters rest with the Principal.

SECTION EIGHT: LOCAL ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNING BODIES

ALL STUDENT- ATHLETES MUST ABIDE BY ALL SCHOOL RULES AND RULES SET BY OUR GOVERNING BODIES, MIAA (HYPERLINK "<http://www.miaa.net>") and PVIAC (HYPERLINK "<http://www.pviac.net>").

The superintendent of the schools is ultimately responsible for all phases of the Gateway Regional High School athletic program.

The Principal is specifically responsible for all school activities that affect students in his/her building. All local M.I.A.A authority and responsibility is vested with the principal.

The Director of Athletics is responsible for the actual administration and mechanics of operation of the program.

Local rules and regulations cannot supersede M.I.A.A or league rules but may be stricter.

SECTION NINE: SCHEDULES, WEBSITES, & CONTACT INFORMATION

Schedules can be found on the District website/ under "Departments"
Other websites with High School Information: www.miaa.net, www.pviac.net, and www.nhsf.org

Athletic Department Contact Information:

Mr. Matthew Bonenfant, Director of Athletics Ph: 413-685-1101 Fax: 413-667-8739

Email: athleticdirector@grsd.org

SECTION TEN: RELATIONS WITH BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The Gateway Regional School committee recognizes that the endeavors and objectives of booster organizations and similar groups can be valuable means of stimulating interest in and endorsement of the aims and achievements of our public school system. Generally, actions initiated by booster organizations provide the atmosphere and climate to weld together desirable community-school relationships. Fund-raising by booster organizations will be limited to a service provided or a product received. Students will not be allowed to stand in their uniforms with a can or similar device to collect money.

SECTION ELEVEN: THE STUDENT-ATHLETE COMMITMENT

DAILY/WEEKLY COMMITMENT

During tryouts and after team selection, the head coach will explain expectations related to practice times and locations and game schedules. Student-athletes are expected to make at least a five-day, two- to three-hour daily commitment to the team each week. Attendance may have an impact on playing time, and membership on the team. At the junior varsity levels most teams do not practice or play on weekends, but student-athletes may expect practices or games each school day, as well as vacation days. Normally, practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day taking place sometime between 2:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. The preparation times before and after practices or games bring the usual total time to three hours per day. At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace, and student-athletes should expect regular involvement during these times (as well as other non-school days). Because many of our teams share facilities, and because some teams use facilities off campus, practice and game hours may vary considerably. Coaches will provide a schedule at all levels, in all sports, of practices and games. Student-athletes are expected to provide their own transportation to and from practices. The Gateway Regional School does not provide transportation at any level to and from practices.

PLAYING TIME

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the interscholastic level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, coping, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is "playing time" during contests. If a student has questions as to their "playing time" they are encouraged to discuss them with the coach

The following are coaches' guidelines for this all-important topic:

JUNIOR VARSITY TEAMS

At the junior varsity level the emphasis is on participation. The emphasis on the junior varsity team is balanced between participation and development. Winning is a pleasant byproduct. Coaches will make a conscious effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time but perhaps the most important are practice attendance, quality of effort, attitude, commitment, and athletic ability.

VARSITY TEAMS

While coaches at the varsity level will make a strong effort to play all team members, the emphasis at the varsity level shifts towards fielding competitive teams with the goal of being competitive in as many games as possible. This emphasis may result in uneven playing time among the student-athletes, with some not playing in every game. The coach makes the often-difficult decisions of who starts, who plays and for how long.

SECTION ELEVEN: PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

Your child has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and activities. Supporting policies that govern school competition and the conduct and training of school athletes enables our community to create programs with positive opportunities and experiences for all students. Participation in athletics and activities is an extension of a student's school experience and provides many valuable life lessons to young student-athletes. Gateway Regional School is committed to providing a challenging, meaningful, and positive extracurricular experience for students, parents, and coaches. Participation in athletics and activities is an extension of a student's school experience and provides many valuable life lessons to young student-athletes. Gateway Regional School is committed to providing a challenging, meaningful, and positive extracurricular experience for students, parents, and coaches. Athletics and extracurricular activities complement, support, and extend a student's overall academic experiences. Involvement in athletics and activities provides opportunities to develop character, discipline, leadership, responsibility, and skill.

- A successful athletics and activities program requires the cooperation and support of coaches, athletes, parents/guardians, students, community members, and school personnel. Conduct and training of school athletes enable our community to create programs with positive opportunities and experiences for all students.

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

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

COACH'S EXPECTATION OF COMMUNICATION

- Concerns should be expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts should be communicated in advance
- Understanding of a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
- As your children become involved in the programs with Gateway Regional School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.
- Team concerns/questions should be communicated in the following order: Coach, Athletic Director then the School Principal. If the School Principal is contacted first, the parent will be redirected to the Coach.
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches include playing time, team strategy, play calling, and other student-athletes (except to report a violation of athletic handbook or school handbook violations).
- These are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These interactions are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

COMMUNICATION TIMEFRAME EXPECTATION

Please allow 24 hours to receive a return of all phone calls and 48 hours for returned emails from the coach, Athletic Director, and/or Principal.

* Negative comments and unsportsmanlike behavior toward other parents, athletes, coaches/sponsors, or officials will not be tolerated and may result in removal from that event, possibly for the remainder of the season. That would include entering the field/court of play without being requested.