

Montgomery Athletics

Mission Statement:

The goal of the Montgomery Athletic Program is to provide an environment in which student athletes can learn to compete honestly and successfully in a safe and supportive atmosphere. While it is important that athletes and coaches strive to win, it is far more essential that our athletes place *sportsmanship*, *effort*, and *class* first among their priorities, understanding that true success cannot be measured by simply looking at the final result of the contest, but by the admirable methods through which it was achieved.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is responsible behavior that is characterized by fair play, graciousness in achievement, acceptance of defeat without recrimination or loss of motivation, and a spirit of generosity, concern, and respect for an opponent.

In recent years, the idea of sportsmanship has often been relegated to a secondary role. A need exists to again make this role primary and to restore placement of interscholastic athletics in an educational perspective. The problems are quite evident and will require a maximum effort by everyone involved in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

Effort

The individual effort put forth is much more important than the final outcome. Theodore Roosevelt said: “It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best knows achievement and who at the worst if he fails at least fails while daring greatly so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.”

Class

Class is a “style of excellence.” In victory or defeat class will always be noticeable. Class is as little as the team being on time to an away event to shaking the hands of a bitter rival after a loss. The Montgomery Athletic Department believes strongly in being “classy” in every aspect of athletics. Our athletes are proud to wear the green and gold uniform and take pride in representing the school and community with class.

Academics

The number one priority for your child at Montgomery High School should be the pursuit of academic excellence. We feel that athletics works toward the same end. Students are encouraged to seek extra help if necessary. Student athletes should take advantage of the extra help that is provided after school. Please see your individual teachers to find out what days they are providing extra help.

Athletics also provides student athletes with the opportunity to develop time management skills. Student athletes should work to budget time so that they can meet both their athletic and academic responsibilities. If they are experiencing difficulties in their areas, they should consult coaches for assistance.

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Eligibility

As a student athlete, eligibility to participate in any sport is dependent upon meeting all criteria of the NJSIAA and the Montgomery Board of Education.

To be eligible for athletic competition during the first semester (September 1 to January 31), a student athlete must have passed a minimum of 30 credits required by the state of NJ for graduation (120) during the immediately preceding academic year. All incoming 9th graders are automatically eligible during the first semester.

To be eligible for athletic competition during the second semester (February 1 to June 30) of the 9th grade or higher, a student athlete must have passed 15 credits required by NJ for graduation (120) at the close of the preceding semester (Jan.31).

Any summer work for failed courses during the previous academic year that have been completed and approved by the school may be used for eligibility purposes. No student shall be eligible for high school athletics after the expiration of eight consecutive semesters following his/her entrance into the 9th grade. A student who turns 19 before September 1st of any school year shall be ineligible for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Any transfer student who has not had a bona fide change of address must complete an NJSIAA Transfer Waiver Form and be cleared by the NJSIAA prior to participation in scrimmages or games.

Any transfer student who was on a varsity team or played in a varsity game and has not had a bona fide change of address will be required to sit out 30 days from the first scheduled game in a season. Any transfer student who has a bona fide change of address does not have to sit out any days regardless of previous varsity status.

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying (HIB)

HIB in any form is strictly prohibited. Coaches will inform students of this policy and its consequences. The policy is also outlined in the student handbook. It is the obligation of any Montgomery High School student athlete to report incidents of hazing to their coach or Athletic Director immediately. If you know of or suspect any possible future acts of HIB, you are encouraged to report it to your coach or the Athletic Director immediately.

Risks Involved in Athletics

When you sign the consent form required of all student athletes, you are informed of the risks involved in athletics. Despite all of the precautions taken in regard to preparation, equipment, facilities and training, the risk of injury still exists. The risk of injury is inherent in all sports, and despite the use of protective equipment and proper technique, the risk of injury may be severe, including fractures, brain injuries, paralysis and even death. While the risk of the most severe consequences is small, you must be fully aware that accidents can happen even under the most perfect circumstances.

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Sign-Up Dates & Due Dates for Athletic Medical forms

Fall Season

Player Interest Meetings – Usually Conducted During May or June

Forms Due – July

Season Begins – August

Winter Season

Player Interest Meetings – Usually Conducted During October

Forms Due – October

Season Begins – November

Spring Season

Player Interest Meetings – Usually Conducted During February

Forms Due – February

Season Begins – March

Please note: these dates are subject to change by the athletic department.

Athletic Programs Offered

Fall Season (September – November)

<u>Girls Programs</u>	<u>Levels Offered</u>	<u>Boys Programs</u>	<u>Levels Offered</u>
Soccer	V, JV	Soccer	V, JV, F
Field Hockey	V, JV	Football	V, JV, F
Tennis	V, JV	Cross Country	V, JV
Gymnastics	V, JV		
Cheerleading	V, JV		
Cross Country	V, JV		
Volleyball	V, JV, F		
Dance	V		

Winter Season (November - March)

<u>Girls Programs</u>	<u>Levels Offered</u>	<u>Boys Programs</u>	<u>Levels Offered</u>
Basketball	V, JV, F	Basketball	V, JV, F
Track & Field	V, JV	Track & Field	V, JV
Swimming	V, JV	Swimming	V, JV
Diving	V	Diving	V
Fencing	V, JV	Fencing	V, JV
Cheerleading	V, JV	Wrestling	V, JV
		Ice Hockey (Co-Op)	V

Spring Season (March – June)

<u>Girls Programs</u>	<u>Levels Offered</u>	<u>Boys Programs</u>	<u>Levels Offered</u>
Lacrosse	V, JV	Lacrosse	V, JV
Softball	V, JV	Baseball	V, JV, F
Track & Field	V, JV	Track & Field	V, JV
Golf	V, JV	Golf	V, JV
		Tennis	V, JV

****A LEVEL OF A SPORT MAY NOT RUN DUE TO A LACK OF PARTICIPATION****

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Athletic Trainer

Montgomery High School has two full time athletic trainers on staff that are available from early afternoon through the last practice or athletic contest Monday thru Saturday (as needed). Rehabilitation will take place after school and/or after practice depending on the trainers' evaluation. Every visit to the training room by an athlete is documented. The trainer can be reached at 609-466-7602 EXT. 6556 & 6558 if you have any further questions.

Montgomery High School is currently using an innovative program for our student-athletes. The program is called "ImPACT" (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). This computer-based program will assist our team physician, athletic trainers, and other medical personnel in evaluating and treating head injuries (e.g., concussion).

Each student athlete will be required to take the baseline test once each year. For more information regarding this program please contact the athletic training staff.

Insurance

The Board of Education provides accident insurance for students who participate in interscholastic athletic programs on an **EXCESS BASIS**. "EXCESS BASIS" means that **your** health insurance policy must be used **first** as the primary carrier to satisfy the claim.

When an injury occurs:

1. A student must inform the coach or athletic trainer immediately of any injury incurred during athletic participation. If injury doesn't surface immediately, the athletic trainer must be informed as soon as possible.
2. The athletic trainer will fill out an injury report, unless the injury takes place at an away game, then it is the coach's responsibility. If it is determined that the injury needs outside medical attention, the athletic trainer will forward the injury report to the nurse.
3. Parents must submit an insurance claim form for all medical expenses to their **personal** insurance carrier first.
4. The nurse will complete the appropriate section of the **school's** insurance claim form and mail it to the parents.
5. Claim forms should be submitted to the **school's** insurance carrier **after** the parent's personal insurance company has paid the medical expenses to the policy limit.

The responsibility for completion and submission of all claim forms lies with the parent. Filing all claim forms immediately and completely will assist in prompt claims service. Please visit the following website for more information - <https://www.mtsd.k12.nj.us/Page/19877>

Physicals

In order to participate in interscholastic athletics, a student must have a physical examination by the schools physician or the family physician. Physicals are only good for one calendar year. The best time for physicals are June through the first week of August. This will cover you for the entire school year. If you choose to have the physical done with your family physician, you must use the district physical forms. The Physical form is to be completed only once a year.

The consent form, health history questionnaire, steroid testing, & concussion form must all be completed prior to **each** athletic season a student athlete participates in. All information must be provided and the form signed and returned before a student athlete may participate in practices or games.

All physicals must approved by the district doctor prior to being cleared to participate in athletics.

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Family ID

Family ID is an online platform that the Montgomery Township School District uses to communicate pertinent seasonal athletic information and to provide all necessary links for athletic forms to district families. Family ID needs to be completed for each student athlete (including managers) for each sport season the athlete is participating in. The link for Family ID can be found on the District Website under the Athletics Tab (Departments -> Athletics -> Registration Now Open). The Family ID platform provides the necessary links that student athletes will need to access all relevant documents (i.e. Medical Health History, Physical Form, Steroid Testing, Parental Consent, & ImPACT Test).

Steroid Testing

In Executive Order 72, issued December 20, 2005, Governor Richard Codey directed the New Jersey Department of Education to work in conjunction with the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) to develop and implement a program of random testing for steroids, of teams and individuals qualifying for championship games.

Beginning in the fall, 2006 sports season, any student-athlete who possesses, distributes, ingests or otherwise uses any of the banned substances on the attached page, without written prescription by a fully-licensed physician, as recognized by the American Medical Association, to treat a medical condition, violates the NJSIAA's sportsmanship rule, and is subject to NJSIAA penalties, including ineligibility from competition. The NJSIAA will test certain randomly selected individuals and teams that qualify for a state championship tournament or state championship competition for banned substances. The results of all tests shall be considered confidential and shall only be disclosed to the student, his or her parents, and his or her school. No student may participate in NJSIAA competition unless the student and the student's parent/guardian consent to random testing.

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 a greater benefit to the children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

- **Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach**
 1. Expectations and goals the coach has for your child as well as for the team/season.
 2. Location and times of all practices and contests.
 3. Team requirements, special equipment, strength and conditioning programs.
 4. Procedures to follow should your child be injured during participation.
 5. Team rules, guidelines, and consequences for infractions.

****Most of this communication takes place at the coaches/parent meeting during the pre-season****

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Chain of Command

Any concerns regarding your child and/or his/her athletic experience should follow the procedures listed below. Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches are playing time, team strategy, play calling, and other athletes. Playing time issues should be discussed between the athlete and the coach. If this has taken place and the athlete is still unclear as to his/her playing time/role, then a meeting can be set up with the coach.

1. Contact the coach to set up an appointment. If the coach cannot be reached call the Athletic Department and we will set up a meeting. **Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice.** These can be emotional times for both the coach and the parent. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions.
(If step 1 did not provide a satisfactory resolution, please proceed to step 2)
2. Contact the Athletic Department for an appointment with the Athletic Director & Coach to discuss the situation.
(If step 2 did not provide a satisfactory resolution, please proceed to step 3)
3. Contact the High School for an appointment with the Athletic Director & Principal to discuss the situation.

Remember, our coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interest of the total program. As your children become involved in the athletic programs at Montgomery H.S., 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 and your child wish. At these times, we need to collectively foster an environment of personal growth for our student athletes where social and emotional learning, both on and off the playing surface, is the focal point.

Playing Time

Playing time will be the sole decision of the coaching staff. Some of the factors that determine playing time are skill, athleticism, work ethic, coachability, attitude, player safety. While parents have the best interests of their child in mind, it is the job of the coach to be concerned with what is best for the team and program. **Playing time is a privilege not an entitlement.** At the high school level, there are no guarantees regarding playing time. Coaches will inform student athletes of their roles on the team and how that will affect playing time. Coaches will also provide student athletes with suggestions on how to improve and feedback on where they stand. Any questions or concerns regarding playing time should come from the athlete and be directed to the coach.

Making Athletic Teams / Squad Reductions

Although the Athletic Department would like to keep as many students involved in athletics as possible, there may be instances when a program, due to excessive numbers will have to make cuts. Carrying too many athletes is counterproductive and may result in a safety or supervision concerns. The following procedures will be followed if cuts are necessary. The determination of what players make athletic teams will be the sole decision of the coaching staff. Prior to the tryout period, players will be informed of the criteria for making the team. Coaches will use a rubric of their own design for each athlete trying out. Coaches may meet with those athletes that were cut if possible. The athlete may request a meeting to inquire as to why they did not make the team and what they need to improve on for the future.

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Tryouts

Athletes previously enrolled must attend all tryouts. Vacations cannot be used as an excuse to miss tryouts. The following exceptions will apply regarding excusal from tryouts:

- Any athlete new to the district, new to the district is defined by moving to the district between the day after graduation and the start of the school year, will receive a 3 day tryout.
- Any athlete waiting for medical clearance from a doctor after an injury.
- Athletes that transfer into the district after the tryout have been conducted, must notify the coach within 7 days of enrollment as to their intention to go out for the team.
- All tryouts must be completed by the first game of the season

Each team has its own set of general rules and guidelines specific to that program. All team rules will be cleared through the athletic department. It is the coach who determines whether an absence from a game or practice is excused or unexcused. All suspensions and detentions the cause an athlete to miss a practice or a game will be an unexcused absence and the athletic department rules regarding unexcused absences will be enforced.

Transportation

All students must travel to and from athletic events in assigned school transportation unless alternate transportation has been approved by the Athletic Department (you can access this form on our Athletic Department Page). The coach may allow an athlete to return home from an event by the student's parent or guardian only. The coach will release the student to the parent or guardian after a visual confirmation has been made. At this point, the parent or guardian of the student will assume all responsibility. Students are not permitted to leave a contest with another parent unless approved by the Head Coach and/or Athletic Director before the scheduled departure for that event takes place.

Alternate transportation arrangements must be made before the scheduled departure for each event that takes place through the office of the athletic director or the building principal. Alternate transportation requests must include written parental permission from all parents or guardians involved reason/s for the alternate transportation request and dates of transportation. Alternate transportation requests forms are available in the athletic office and on the athletic website.

Awards/Letters

Varsity letters will be awarded to student athletes who meet qualifications developed by the coaches & Athletic Department. These qualifications vary by sport. An athlete will be given a chenille letter and a pin for the first varsity letter earned. Each additional varsity letter earned, the athlete will receive a cougar pin and a certificate. Each athlete not earning a varsity letter will receive a certificate of participation.

Practices

The schedule for practice times and days will be determined by individual coaches but will generally occur right after school Monday thru Friday and Saturday mornings. Most practices will start between 2:30 & 3:00pm and generally last around 2 to 2 1/2 hours. Practices, for the most part, will be at various schools throughout the district. However, due to facility issues we may opt to move practices, and sometimes games, to independently owned facilities (i.e. McKnight Baseball Complex, Diamond Nation, Montgomery Rec. Center, Iron Peak, etc.); Transportation will be provided to these sites if need be. Sunday practices are not permitted unless approved by the athletic director & principal on a case by case basis. Students observing a religious holiday will be excused from practice. The Montgomery Athletic Department and all of our Coaches understand the importance of being a STUDENT athlete, thus attending extra help after school always supersedes the importance of attending practice on time. Those student athletes attending extra help should simply bring a pass from their teacher with them to practice to give to Coach.

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Games

Games generally start at 4:00pm or 6:00pm Monday thru Friday. Some programs do have night games that will start at 7:00pm. Saturday games are generally in the afternoon between 10:00am and 3:00pm. Some state, county, and conference tournament may be played on Sundays. Games will not be scheduled on religious holidays.

Schedules

All Athletic schedules are available on the athletic web site at, <https://www.mtsd.k12.nj.us/Page/5>. The schedules on the web site are updated daily and are the most reliable in case of schedule changes and weather postponements.

Directions

Directions are available on the athletic web site - <https://www.mtsd.k12.nj.us/Page/14>

Questions

Please contact the Athletic Office at 609-466-7602 x6567 if you have any questions or visit our web site at <https://www.mtsd.k12.nj.us/Page/5>

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Levels of Competition

Freshman Program

This level of interscholastic sports is for ninth grade students only. Sports conducted at this level focus on acquiring basic skills, learning game rules, the fundamentals of team play, appropriate behavior patterns, and healthy competition. It is important to note that playing time, even at the freshman level, is not guaranteed.

We try not to cut students at the freshmen level. However, if the number of students trying out for a team creates a situation that is difficult to manage, poses a safety problem, or is problematic because of facility consideration, reducing team size may be necessary.

Junior Varsity Program

This level of interscholastic sports is primarily for tenth and eleventh grade students. Occasionally ninth grade students who have satisfied all selective/classification requirements and are placed at this level. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development. Emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements of strategies of team play, in addition to social and emotional development. Members are expected to exhibit a high level of dedication and commitment with the goal of becoming a varsity athlete.

Varsity Program

This level of interscholastic sports is the culmination of all other levels. Student athletes from grades nine through twelve are eligible to play at the Varsity Level. The number of participants at this level is determined by the need to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play a contest. A sound attitude coupled with an advanced level of skill is prerequisites for a position on a varsity roster.

The varsity program is the school district's "athletic showcase" and should always represent the best we put forward at any time. The excellence we seek from our coaches and athletes in the varsity phase of our athletic program is nothing less than the excellence we seek from all students and teachers in the classroom.

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Athletic Department Attendance Policy

Attendance

Attendance procedures are developed for the protection of both the athlete and the coach and for the orderly progression and development of the total team. Attendance at all practices, scrimmages and games is expected of all student athletes. Your child's participation in athletics requires commitment by both child and parent. Practices and games are scheduled not only on weekends, but also throughout all school vacations, although the exact schedules vary from sport to sport. At the beginning of the season, coaches will distribute practice and game schedules outlining required days. When your child makes a commitment to an athletic program, he or she also makes a commitment to their teammates. Failure to "live up" to these commitments will result in consequences as outlined by the athletic department and Coach.

Practices

Practices are essential for proper physical conditioning, improvement of techniques, and acquisition of teamwork skills. Teams cannot be developed to their fullest potential when all members are not present. Therefore, athletes are required to attend all scheduled practices and games unless excused by the coach. If a student cannot attend a practice(s), the student must realize that the chances of playing or making the team are greatly reduced. It must be understood that practices for athletic teams is tightly controlled and affected by NJ State Athletic Association (NJSIAA) regulations, beginning and ending dates for each season, games, religious holidays, weather, and academic requirements.

Practice schedules are set by coaches in a consistent and fair manner and are approved by the Athletic Director before implementation. Coaches will cover the schedule for practice and games/meets at the beginning of the season to avoid any misunderstanding. Communication between coach, parent and athlete is strongly recommended in all cases where a missed practice is anticipated.

Practices During Vacation/Off Days From School

Maintaining proper physical conditioning dictates the need to practice during the various school vacations that occur throughout the year. Practices and games cannot be arranged around the parents/athletes vacation schedule. Athletes who do not train for an extended period of time could be seriously injured if allowed to participate under highly competitive game or practice conditions.

Sunday Practices

Athletic teams are not permitted to practice on Sundays unless a county, conference, or state tournament game is scheduled on a Monday. If this occurs and the team is requesting a Sunday practice, approval from the Athletic Director, Principal, & Superintendent must be granted.

Sunday Games

There will be some state, county, and conference tournament games scheduled on Sundays for various sports. In addition, due to facility or weather related issues, there may be a need to schedule games on Sundays.

Religious Holidays

We try not schedule games on religious holidays, but sometimes that is unavoidable. Some teams will conduct practices during religious holidays. Any student missing a practice because of a religious holiday will be excused and no loss of playing time or status on the team will be administered.

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Excused/Unexcused Absences

It is the coach who determines whether an absence from a game or practice is excused or unexcused (after consultation with Athletic Director). No student athlete will be penalized for missed games or practices due to religious reasons, curricular responsibilities, or because of extra academic help. Any after school activities including class trips that are deemed curricular by the administration will be an excused absence. All athletes must be in school for a minimum of four hours to be eligible to participate in after school practices or games, unless excused by Administration.

All excused absences must be cleared with the coaches well in advance if possible. All unexcused absences must be approved by the Athletic Director before the Athletic Department's consequences can be administered.

All detentions that cause an athlete to miss a practice or a game will be considered an unexcused absence and the athletic department rules regarding unexcused absences will be enforced.

Any athlete that is assigned in-school suspension will not be permitted to practice or play in a game on the day/s of the in-school suspension. In-school suspensions will be treated as an unexcused absence and fall under that consequence guide. If this is the athlete's first unexcused absence and the in-school suspension falls on a game day, which will be the completion of the penalty against the athlete.

If a player is disqualified from a contest, the NJSIAA rule will be administered and the athlete will be ineligible to play in the next two games (one game for football) and the penalties will increase with subsequent disqualifications.

If a player receives a game misconduct (not a DQ) and is ejected from the game, the player will be ineligible to play in the next game. The player can practice and be on the sidelines for the next game. If a second offence occurs, the player will be ineligible for the next two games. If a third offence occurs, the athlete will be suspended from the team for the remainder of the season.

Athletic Department/Team Consequence

The Athletic Office leaves the day to day operations of our Sports Teams to the Head Coach. This trust that we have in our coaches also extends to discipline and what they feel is appropriate. Below are the possible tiered consequences:

- **Unexcused Absence For Practice:**
 1. 1st Unexcused Absence - Change in Role (i.e. starter now comes off bench)
 2. 2nd Unexcused Absence - 1 game suspension
 3. 3rd Unexcused Absence - 2 game suspension
 4. 4th Unexcused Absence - Suspension & possible dismissal from team

- **Unexcused Absence For Game:**
 1. 1st Unexcused Absence - 1 to 2 game suspension
 2. 2nd Unexcused Absence - 2 to 3 game suspension
 3. 3rd Unexcused Absence - Dismissal from team

Participation in the Athletic Program here at Montgomery is a privilege and not a right. Our student athletes need to be committed to each other and to their coaches and as a result we take unexcused absences very seriously. Each scenario will be reviewed on a case by case basis in conjunction with the Athletic Director.

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Out of School Suspension (level 2 Suspensions)

1st Suspension – The athlete returning from suspension will have to practice an equal number of days that they were suspended from school before they can return to play. For example if an athlete was suspended for 5 days, they will not be permitted to play in any games until 5 days of practice have been fulfilled. If a game falls on any of those 5 days, the athlete will be expected to practice on that day to be counted as a practice day.

2nd Suspension - Possible Dismissal from the team & meeting with player, Head Coach, & Athletic Director

Athletes are not permitted to practice or compete in any contests while under out of school suspension. Athletes are not permitted to attend any athletic contest home or away while under out of school suspension.

Missing Practice for Vacations (multiple days missed)

Our Athletic Programs continue to operate when school is not in session (i.e. weekends, Holidays, etc.). AS A RESULT, THE SCHEDULING OF A VACATION DURING A SPORT SEASON, REGARDLESS OF REASON, IS NOT AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. The penalty for missing practice or games during vacations will be at the coaches' discretion.

****Any student-athlete who fails to demonstrate good citizenship or observe school rules for pupil conduct may forfeit his/her eligibility for participation in athletic competition****

Parent Code of Conduct

1. Be there for your child & listen to their feelings.
2. Be realistic about your child's physical ability & help your child to set realistic goals.
3. Be a supporter of the entire team & not just your own child.
4. Respect your child's coach and the countless hours they spend creating a positive experience for your child & others.
5. Don't relive your own athletic past through your child.
6. Avoid engaging in "dinner table" practices & critiques - this is the time your child may need you the most.
7. Control your emotions at games and events.
8. Enjoy & Savor the moment - these times will be over before you know it.
9. Allow your child's coaches to coach them hard & bring out the best in your child.
10. **BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL**

“The ultimate victory
in competition is
derived from the
inner satisfaction
of knowing that you have done
your best and that you have
gotten the most out of what you
had to give.”

Howard Cosell

GO COUGARS