

# **MT. BLUE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**



MT. BLUE MIDDLE SCHOOL  
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(REVISED 9/15)

## **PHILOSOPHY**

It is the belief of MBRSD that interscholastic athletics play an important role in the total educational development of our youth. Athletics allow the student to combine academic and athletic skills in a setting that enables the student to achieve his or her maximum potential. Competition in sports teaches a young person how to function as an individual within a team in such a manner that both the individual and team benefit. Competition under proper supervision teaches the athlete how to maintain a positive attitude while experiencing the emotions associated with both winning and losing.

High standards and expectations have been set for the athlete. MBRSD believes it is a privilege and an honor for a student to be part of an athletic team and a representative of his or her school and community. Therefore, high eligibility standards, self-discipline, honor and pride will be continually stressed.

It is also the belief of the district that the primary function of this institution is to educate our youth. Consequently, the welfare of the student and the total educational program of the student will take precedent in all decisions relating to a student's participation in the athletic programs of the district.

## **OUR CORE VALUES**

The Mt. Blue Middle School Department of Athletics:

- stands for the dignity and equality of all people.
- believes that all people can learn throughout their lives.
- encourages exploratory developmental participation in athletics.
- supports academic excellence.
- instills confidence through learning and achievement by positive reinforcement and constructive criticism.
- encourages initiative and supports and channels individuality.
- expects individuals to take responsibility for their actions and conduct themselves with integrity.

## **SPORTS AT MT. BLUE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **FALL**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Boys' Soccer  
7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Girls' Soccer  
7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Field Hockey  
6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> X-Country (Boys and Girls)

Football (not school affiliated)  
Cheering (not school affiliated)

### **WINTER**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Girls' Basketball  
7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Boys' Basketball  
6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Wrestling (Boys and Girls)

Alpine and Nordic Skiing (not school affiliated)  
Cheering (not school affiliated)

### **SPRING**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Baseball  
7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Softball  
6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Track (Girls and Boys)

### **TRYOUTS**

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they can meet the standards of:

- Academic eligibility
- School citizenship
- Parent permission
- Basic physical/health qualifications

In some sports more people try out than can be kept on a team. When this situation occurs, cutting is necessary. Cutting students is a difficult and agonizing process, and all coaches realize that sensitivity and communication are essential.

During the tryout period the coach will explain expectations and criteria used to select players. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she understands the information and can meet the criteria.

It is the coach's responsibility to evaluate and communicate with each athlete during the tryout period and decide which students will be placed on the team. After cuts have been made, students can approach the coach with questions specific to their own situations. Students cut from one team will be encouraged to participate on another team if there is space on that team.

## **PLAYING TIME**

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the middle school 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 his/her "playing time" he/she is encouraged to discuss them with the coach.

At the middle school level the emphasis is on participation. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time, but perhaps the most important are practice attendance, quality of effort, attitude, and commitment. Coaches will make a conscious effort to play all team members for as much time as is appropriate.

## **PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS**

### **Code of Behavior for Athletes**

Athletes must always keep in mind that an athletic contest is only a game designed and conducted to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well being of the individual player. The player must also realize that it is a privilege to participate in his/her school's athletic program. The athlete must remember that he/she is representing his/her family, school, and community both on and off athletic courts and fields.

The player will:

- treat officials with respect and approach them courteously when asking for explanations.
- accept victory modestly and graciously.
- respect decisions as they are made and abide by them.
- display positive emotion and behavior.
- never cheat, swear, bet, or grandstand.
- keep physically fit and observe all the training rules.
- use his/her influence on and off the court/field to help develop good spectator sportsmanship.
- exhibit courteous behavior towards visiting team members, team officials, and spectators.
- play for the joy of playing and for the success of the team.

## Eligibility

A student must be declared eligible by the Director of Athletics according to standards listed in this section. Extra curricular activities shall be considered part of the educational program of students. Students shall be monitored to assess successful participation in their school programs.

### Guidelines:

1. Approximately every two weeks teachers will receive a full list of all team and activity members and will attempt to identify students with deficiencies.
2. Students with deficiencies will be given a written warning to take home to have signed. It is the athlete's responsibility to bring the signed form to the athletic director in a timely manner. This warning will remain in place for the remainder of the season.
3. If the student/athlete does not show improvements by the next progress report, he/she will be removed from the team for two weeks. The teaching community and assistant principal/athletic director will determine if the athlete has shown sufficient improvement.
4. Upon demonstration of sufficient improvement by the following progress report, the athlete will again be able to participate in the sport. Otherwise, the athlete remains suspended for another two weeks.

Note: Eighth grade students should be aware of the Mt. Blue High School eligibility policy, which contains special provisions for freshman athletes in the fall. Incoming freshman from Mt. Blue Middle School who have maintained a passing cumulative average in all classes at their previous school will be eligible for extra-curricular participation as soon as they are officially registered for classes at Mt. Blue High School.

## Health Insurance

All athletes must be insured to participate on a Mt. Blue Team. MBRSD **does not** provide health insurance for students. Low cost insurance can be purchased through MBRSD at the family's expense.

## Physical Examination

Each athlete must have a current physical examination on file in the nurse's office to participate. The medical provider must specifically mention clearance to participate in sports. A physical is considered current two years from the date of the exam unless otherwise specified.

## Student Co-Curricular Policy

It is the belief of the Board of Directors of MBRSD that it is an honor and a privilege to participate in any co-curricular team in MBRSD as a member or manager. All members of a team are representative of not only their team, but of their school as well. As such, a representative, each is on display more than other school members are; therefore, more is expected from them. In view of these facts, the following regulations have been established for **ALL** team members.

1. **ALL TRIPS** shall be made in MBRSD vehicles only. If prior arrangements have been made, players may return home with their parents. (See transportation policy section of student handbook.)
2. Attendance at every practice and game is mandatory unless excused by the coach.
3. A student who is suspended from a team is ineligible for other sports teams during the current season.
4. Students who are absent or tardy on the day of a practice or game will be allowed to participate **ONLY** with permission from the school administration. Exceptions will be made for medical appointments and other **SPECIAL** situations.
5. All team members making away trips will be appropriately dressed. Appropriate dress is to be defined by the coach.
6. Grade averages are governed by district eligibility policies. (See eligibility section in handbook.)
7. Violations of any of these regulations may result in suspension from the team.
8. It is the responsibility of the parent and athlete to sign and return “MBRSD Athletic Information/Consent” and “Interval Medical History Questionnaire” forms to the coach.

**In addition to these regulations, the following are of utmost concern to MBRSD and violations will be dealt with more strictly.**

1. There will be **NO** consumption, possession, or sale of any alcoholic beverage or illegal drugs, nor shall there be any misuse of **ANY** drug.
2. There will be **NO** consumption or possession of tobacco in **ANY** form. This includes chewing tobacco.
3. There will be **NO** theft or vandalism

Violations of drug or alcohol policies will result in the following:

A. **First offense** will result in suspension from all scheduled practices and athletic contests for the rest of the season.

B. The student athlete accompanied by a parent/guardian must meet with the coach, Athletic Director and/or Principal to discuss possible further action. The athlete **must meet** with a substance abuse counselor for an informal assessment and appropriate follow-up. This must be done **BEFORE** returning to athletic competition the next season.

C. **Second offense** will result in suspension from **ALL** extracurricular activities for the remainder of that school year. If the offense occurs during the 2nd semester the student would not be considered for future eligibility until the beginning of the 2nd semester the following school year. Before the athlete is considered for future competition he/she must secure a formal assessment by a treatment facility or outpatient program and follow the recommendations of the professional doing the assessment. The student should read this provision in concert with the eligibility rules section of the handbook.

D. The student athlete will be reviewed by the Athletic Director, Principal and the Coach at the end of the semester to determine future eligibility.

E. Any student who has accumulated **three offenses** while being covered by this MBRSD policy from grades 7 through 12 must appeal to the Board of Directors for future eligibility consideration. The appeal will be a hearing held in executive session.

*F. Please be advised that this policy provides for voluntary referral (i.e. self-referral and concerned person referral). All voluntary referrals will be initially evaluated by the Student Assistance Team and an action plan will be developed. Students who opt to follow this method will also adhere to the guidelines set forth by the MBRSD "Chemical Health Regulation" section II grades 7-12 School Voluntary Referral.*

#### **POLICY FOR SUSPENSION OF STUDENT ATHLETES FOR REASONS OTHER THAN STATED IN THE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

1. A coach may suspend a student from an activity for a period of time **NOT** to exceed five (5) days.
2. Should a coach feel that a suspension in excess of five (5) days is appropriate, the coach shall suspend for five (5) days and forward his recommendation for a longer suspension period to the Athletic Director and /or Principal.
3. All suspensions will be followed by a letter to the parent stating the reason for the suspension, whether the coach is recommending to the Athletic Director/Principal a longer period, and an invitation for the parent to meet with the coach and/or the Athletic Director and/or the Principal.
4. If, following this meeting with the school personnel, the parent is NOT satisfied the parent may appeal the decision to the Superintendent of Schools and ultimately to the Board of Directors.

## PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR PARENTAL CONCERNS

Parents who have specific concerns regarding coaches, team procedures and other information pertaining to a specific sport should adhere to the following chain of command when attempting to resolve the problem:

1. Arrange for a mutual time to meet with the coach to discuss the problem.
2. Contact the Athletic Director to discuss the problem.
3. Contact the school Principal to discuss the problem.
4. Contact the Superintendent of Schools to discuss the problem.
5. Schedule a time to address the School Board regarding the problem.

## TRANSPORTATION POLICY

All team members representing MBRSD in interscholastic competition or attending MBRSD sponsored events must be transported to and from the site of the event on MBRSD vehicles except under the following circumstances:

1. A student may return home with the students' parent or guardian if the coach has received written permission from that parent/guardian.
2. In the event of an unusual or special situation a student athlete may ride home from an away contest with parents other than their own parents. **Written permission** must be obtained and approved by the Athletic Director or Principal. They shall approve only those situations where special circumstances exist or hardship is avoided through the approval process.

It is the intent of the district to move students to and from activities on MBRSD vehicles whenever practical.

## PARENT/FAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Spectators should:

Realize that they represent the school and always conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Respect the decisions of the officials. Insist that visiting teams and spectators receive the utmost courtesy while in town and on school property. relations.

Inappropriate behavior at games may result in that individual being removed from the game site and being barred from future contests both home and away.



## COACHING EXPECTATIONS

A coach is in a strategic position as a teacher of attitudes and ideals of good sportsmanship and fair play, which are basic elements of good citizenship. The coach should remember that he/she teaches as much by example and deed as by what he/she “preaches”. Hence, the coach will model behavior that will help mold high character in boys and girls.

The coach should teach:

- That participation in athletics is a part of the student’s education.
- The athlete should neither ask for academic privileges nor receive them.
- That participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right, that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the team, to the student body, to the community and to themselves. In their play and conduct, they represent all of these groups.
- That it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly.
- Respect and consideration for opponents as either the guests or the host at a game.

The coach should:

- Eliminate, as far as possible, the practices which tend to destroy worthwhile values of the game.
- Emphasize and practice good sportsmanship, upright conduct and the spirit of fair play.
- Place a premium on the values of fair play.
- Cultivate respect for the authority of school personnel, coaches, and game officials.
- Be respectful of their opponents.
- Develop self-control, self-direction and sound judgment.
- Discourage profanity and obscene language at all times.
- Not solicit players directly or indirectly from other schools (by means of a friend or assistant coach).
- Recommend the use of competent officials and support their decisions. Any arguments with officials should be held in unemotional situations, never publicly, and only private with constructive intent.
- Pay close attention to the physical condition and well being of their players, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving the team’s chance to win.
- Recognize their superiors (the Athletic Director, the Principal, the Superintendent, and the Board of Directors) are responsible for the school and the coaches’ actions, and never violate this delegated trust.
- Recognize that their behavior should influence spectators in a positive manner.
- Be responsible for distribution and collection of all athletic equipment.
- Follow the guidelines stated in the Coaches’ Code of Ethics of the National Federation of the State High School Associations.

Coaches who fail to act as positive role models or who fail to abide by the principles associated with positive behavior may be subject to the dismissal from the coaching assignment.

**Athletes and their families can expect the following from coaches:**

- **Communication:** Practice, game schedules and other time commitments, consistent with the guidelines mentioned previously in this booklet, will be distributed in writing to all team members. Team rules and regulations, in addition to the ones stated in this booklet, will be well-defined, distributed, discussed, and enforced with all team members. It is the responsibility of each player to demonstrate that he/she understands the information and can meet the criteria. Self-discipline of all student athletes will be encouraged. Penalties for rule violations will also be well defined, and applied fairly and consistently.
- **Individual Success:** The coach will make every attempt to provide an opportunity in practice and contests for each athlete to succeed to the best of his/her abilities. The least skilled athlete deserves the same energy of teaching as the highly skilled.
- **Social and Emotional Growth:** The coach will attempt to assist each athlete to grow socially and emotionally. This aim is most easily accomplished with positive feedback and timely and sensitive communication with each individual team member.
- **Team Spirit/School Spirit:** The coach will attempt to instill and promote school and team spirit and cohesiveness.
- **Athletic Performance:** Individual performance by an athlete will be critiqued by a coach and shared with each student at the appropriate time. Each athlete will be encouraged to work towards his/her full potential and each coach shall be involved in developing a positive self-image in all team members. Coaches will not negatively critique an athlete, team or opposing team's performance.
- **Skill Development:** Each athlete will be taught the rules and skills of the game. In addition, each athlete should leave our program technically and tactically improved and with a better understanding of the sport.

**Approachability:** The coach will be available to all of his/her athletes. Team members are encouraged to approach the coach about any topic relating to their participation in the sport. Students should make every attempt to approach the coach when there is sufficient time for worthwhile discussion. Coaches should be open and receptive and encourage these individual opportunities to educate and communicate.

## **INJURY PROCEDURE**

1. All coaches will be encouraged to complete a course in first aid and emergency procedure.
2. All coaches will be encouraged to complete a training seminar in athletic training and to update that training when necessary.
3. Coaches will file appropriate accident reports with the building principal and report all injuries to the Athletic Director.
4. The coach is responsible for accompanying the injured athlete to the hospital when the parent is not available.
5. If necessary, the play shall be suspended if a team has only one coach and that coach must go to the hospital with the injured athlete. The remaining team members will be left in the care of the MBRSD bus driver on away trips or the opposing school officials.
6. MBRSD coaches shall not attempt to render aid which exceeds their expertise. Where there is doubt regarding an athlete's condition, a coach should seek a medical diagnosis from a qualified person.

## **EVALUATION OF COACHES**

Each coach employed by Mt. Blue Middle School is evaluated continuously on his/her performance throughout each athletic season.

1. Coaches are formally evaluated by the Director of Athletics.
2. Evaluation procedures/processes will be reviewed with all coaches prior to the beginning of each season.
3. Monitoring or observation of coaches will be conducted openly and with full knowledge of the coach.
4. If a problem is identified in the evaluation, then a written corrective plan will be developed by the Athletic Director/Principal for the next season. Failure on the part of the coach to successfully complete the plan of action and/or the identification of future problems in the next season will result in the coach not being recommended for the ensuing season.

## ATHLETIC FACILITIES

**Locker Rooms:** Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers being left open or unlocked. On road trips, when no lockers are available, it is highly recommended that students leave valuables at home or give them to parents or a member of the coaching staff for safekeeping at the game site. Students should never bring large amounts of cash or other valuable personal items to school, nor should they leave them at school.

**Care of Facilities:** Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Vandalism is cause for dismissal from a team and further disciplinary action by the school administration.

**Athletic Shoes:** At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building. Serious injury could occur as well as destruction of the gym and hall floors.