

# Georgetown Middle High School

## Athletic Department



Student-Athlete / Parent Handbook

2024-2025

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Dear Student-Athletes and Parents:

This handbook is written with the belief and understanding that you want to be aware of the part you play in making your experiences in our athletic programs both successful and harmonious. Please take the time to read and understand all the material covered in this booklet. There are many parts to this document, but I want to start by stating the commitment that we expect of our administration, coaches, and athletes.

- We pledge ourselves to honoring the dignity of each person, taking a personal interest in them as individuals, helping them whenever possible to resolve personal problems, and assisting each person in achievement of educational goals and aspirations.
- We wish to excel in athletics, just as we desire to excel in academics and all activities associated with Georgetown High School. We are determined to do our best to field competitive, well-coached teams composed of positive young men and women who, in turn, represent our school with pride, enthusiasm, and loyalty.
- Finally, we will work to ensure that your student-athlete's academic, athletic, and social experiences yield satisfaction and rewards that will continue to enrich their lives long after leaving Georgetown High School.

Sincerely,

Ryan Browner CAA,

Director of Athletics

## Introduction and Purpose of this Handbook

Georgetown Middle High School is governed by a series of rules and regulations issued by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), the Cape Ann League, the National Federation of High Schools, the Georgetown School Committee and the Georgetown Middle High School Administration.

The purpose of this handbook is to highlight the rules and regulations and provide clarity to many commonly asked questions. This handbook also provides all the necessary forms for proper registration to participate in athletics at Georgetown Middle High School.

It is the responsibility of our coaches, student-athletes and their parents to become familiar with our athletic code and policies of the athletic department. We encourage our students to participate in our athletic programs. All students must abide by the rules established by the Georgetown Public Schools and MIAA.

If you have further questions that are not addressed in this handbook, first contact your child's coach. If your questions or concerns are not addressed, please contact the Director of Athletics. We look forward to working with all student-athletes and their families and welcome you to the athletic program at Georgetown Middle High School.

### Georgetown Middle High School

Core Values & Beliefs with accompanying 21<sup>st</sup> Century Expectation for Student Learning.

### Georgetown Middle High School Philosophy

The Georgetown Public Schools has a proud athletic tradition which fosters pride in our community, school and our student body. Our athletic program is designed to be an integral part of the total educational experience for the student-athletes who choose to participate in our program. We believe that athletics is an extension of the classroom whereby student-athletes learn valuable lessons, not only specific to their sport, but ones that apply to everyday life.

We expect our coaches, athletes and parents to represent our school and athletic program with integrity, sportsmanship, a sense of fair play and respectful competition. It is our mission to help our athletes become the best young people they can become by stressing the ideals of teamwork, hard work, personal responsibility and mutual respect for the competition in victory and defeat.

It is in our athletic program that we strive to develop the student-athlete to the best of his/her ability. Our programs help mold character and skills such as self-control, self-direction, respect for self and others, and leadership in each student-athlete. In addition, we provide our students with a chemical free environment and promote a chemically responsible lifestyle.

Participation in the competitive environment of high school athletics helps prepare students for the competitive world. We strive to allow as many student-athletes as possible to participate and share the experience and benefits derived from team membership. Coaches at the middle school and sub-varsity levels will emphasize the development of fundamental skills, participation, training, character development, discipline and the team concept. In the interest of maintaining a sound athletic program, coaches at the

middle school and sub-varsity levels will provide opportunities for students at all skill levels to play providing that they faithfully attend practices and work to their potential. Participation at the varsity level is generally limited to the most skilled players and those with the ability to interact with other players for team success. Varsity coaches will determine the playing time of each member of their team but shall exercise discretion relative to the substitution role as it relates to the score, game, situation, and opportunity to use the greatest number of participation in an athletic event.

## Philosophy by Level

### Middle School Philosophy

To emphasize development of skills, team concept, and good sportsmanship; To teach the offensive and defensive philosophy of the sport. An emphasis is made to practice shortly after school. There is no weekend commitment. All students will play in all games.

### Freshman Philosophy

To emphasize development of skills, team concept, and good sportsmanship; To teach the offensive and defensive philosophy of the sport. An emphasis is made to practice shortly after school with occasional weekend commitments. All students will play in all games. Amount of time to play in games is based on daily effort and attitude in practice.

### Junior Varsity Philosophy

There will be more emphasis on team unit, strategy development, and good sportsmanship. While the most skilled players may see more playing time at this level as it is more competitive, the focus continues to be on developing the athletes in preparation for play on the varsity teams. There is more time commitments required for practice and games and there is weekend and occasional vacation commitments. Opportunity to play is based on effort and skill level and an emphasis is made to allow all students an opportunity to play in every game. When there is no freshman team in a particular sport, the junior varsity team should follow the freshman philosophy.

### Varsity Philosophy

Teams are expected to compete at the highest possible level of execution so in many instances the most skilled players will play for the greatest number of minutes. Opportunity to play in games is based on skill level, effort, and judgment of the coach to optimize team performance. The amount of playing time is determined by the coach, however discretion will be used relative to the substitution of players as it relates to the score and game situation in an attempt to use the greatest number of players in a game. Varsity level requires the ultimate in time commitments required for practice and games and there are weekend and vacation commitments. Emphasizing skill development, team concept, and good sportsmanship in the preceding years will result in a competitive team at the varsity level. Our goal is to have all members of the team feel a sense of accomplishment, satisfaction, and pride in their team.

## Team Membership Rosters

It is the goal of the Athletic Department to provide the maximum opportunity for participation consistent with staffing levels and the practical limitations of the individual sports. The following represents the number of players a team must roster before cutting a candidate from the program.

### Fall Sports

Varsity Soccer	16
JV Soccer	20

Cross Country	No minimum
Golf	No minimum for practices; 12 for competition team
Varsity Volleyball	14
JV Volleyball	14

### **Winter Sports**

Varsity Basketball	12
JV Basketball	15
Freshman Basketball	15
Cheer	No minimum for games; 15 for competition

### **Spring Sports**

Varsity Softball	15
JV Softball	18
Varsity Baseball	15
JV Baseball	18
Varsity Lacrosse	20
JV Lacrosse	25
Middle School Track	No minimum

Because a sport is listed above does not guarantee it will run. Due to lack of enrollment and/or budgetary constraints, a program or certain levels of a program may not run.

If a sub-varsity sport does not have more than 50% of its try-out roster composed of high school students, the Director of Athletics reserves the right to cancel that sport for the season.

## **Administration of the Athletic Program**

- A. The Georgetown School Committee has statutory authority to approve, terminate and govern all athletic programs. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for administering the program and hereby grants such authority to the Director of Athletics in cooperation with the Middle High School Principal.
- B. The coaches are official representatives of the school in interscholastic activities. The coaches and assistant coaches have the responsibility of the guidance of their squads. It is the personal obligation of the coaches to have a thorough knowledge of the policies and procedures of the Athletic Department of Georgetown Middle High School as well as the Cape Ann League, MIAA and National Federation Rules.
- C. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is the official organization in Massachusetts for regulating and conducting athletic events, contests, and tournaments among member high schools. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Council (MIAC) is the policy making body. The Board of Directors administers the rules.
- D. The object of the Cape Ann League is to promote good sportsmanship in athletics and foster good feeling between member schools. The control and management of the league rests with the league principals. The rules and regulations governing the conduct for the various sports programs are prepared by the Director of Athletics.
- E. The Principal is responsible for all activities that effect students who attend Georgetown Middle High School. The Director of Athletics is responsible for the actual administering and operation of the

program. The Director of Athletics is responsible for leading a pre-season orientation session with all coaches reinforcing the philosophy and requirements of our athletic programs. This manual supersedes any individual coach or sport guidelines to the extent that contradictions exist. Any problem should follow the chain of command. See *Grievance Procedure*

## Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

In order to participate in an extra-curricular program, which requires two (2) or more days of commitment **per week** per quarter, a student must have a minimum average of 70 and not be failing more than one (1) subject. Incomplete grades are treated as failures until an official grade is submitted by the teacher. Grades from the most recent report card are applicable in determining eligibility. (Except, first quarter eligibility is determined by final grades in the past school year.)

## Tryouts

All students who meet the MIAA eligibility requirements, pass a physical examination, and are members in good standing at Georgetown Middle High School are welcome and encouraged to try out for a team. In addition, the following tryout policies shall apply:

**Tryouts/Team Selection** Students should understand that participation in athletics is a privilege. Students try-out voluntarily and for some programs, there is a risk of not being selected to a team. It is the judgment of the coaches that dictates the selection and number of participants for teams. Before the tryout process begins, coaches will provide an explanation of his/her expectations and try-out criteria. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate that he/she can meet those expectations. Only official try-out sessions will determine an athlete's placement on a team. Students who do not make a team will be informed as to the reasons by the coach. Students are encouraged to try-out for another team if there is space and final cuts have not yet been made

With the approval of the Middle/High School Principal, middle school students may participate at the highest level offered by the school. In instances where cuts need to be made, middle school students can not displace a high school student from participation in the program.

## Conduct

Proper conduct is expected both on and off the field by all participants in our athletic program. The behavior of each student-athlete is expected to set a good example since they represent not only themselves but also the school and its entire student body. We expect our athletes to take pride in themselves, their team and their school and be gracious in defeat and modest in victory.

Respect for facilities (locker rooms, fields, etc.) used by Georgetown athletes, both home and away, is expected and falls under the category of proper conduct.

Student behavior that brings undue notoriety or that reflects unfavorably upon the individual, team, or school, may result in suspension or dismissal from the team activities on the determination of the coach, Director of Athletics, and ultimately the Principal.

There will be no refund of user fees for student-athletes removed from athletic teams. Student-athletes on a payment plan will owe the balance.

## ATTENDANCE

### Excused/Unexcused Absences

Attendance in school is the most important factor that contributes to a student's success. The expectation of Georgetown High School and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is that students will attend all of their classes on school days, unless there is a recognizable reason for that absence. To address absences from school Chapters 76 of the General Laws of Massachusetts allow the following reasons to excuse an absence:

1. Illness of the student
2. Court appearance
3. Death or serious illness in the family
4. Family emergency
5. Religious observance
6. School sponsored event
7. Suspension

Due to state law, parents/guardians do not have the option of keeping a student out of school other than the reasons listed above. While a parent/guardian may approve of the absence, the administration will use the state guidelines to make the final determination as to whether or not the absence is excused. Some examples of unexcused absences include but are not limited to:

1. Car problems
2. Missed bus
3. Oversleeping
4. "Skip Days"
5. Working

If a student has four or more excused absences throughout the semester, professional documentation may be required by administration in order for the absence to be excused.

If a student does not attend school on Friday and has a co-curricular event (games, rehearsals, plays, concerts, dances, etc.) on Saturday and /or Sunday, he or she may not participate in the co-curricular event.

### Notification of Unexcused Absences

When a student has missed two (2) or more periods for five (5) school days or has missed five (5) or more school days in the school year due to unexcused absences, the parents will be notified and provided with the opportunity to meet with the principal, or principal's designee, to develop an action plan to address the student's school attendance.

### Procedure for Reporting Absences

A parent/guardian must call the school on the day of the absence, stating the reason for the absence. In addition, when the student returns to school after an absence, a signed parent note must be turned into the office. The note should reiterate the reason for the absence. The repetition of both a phone call and a note will ensure that the student's record correctly reflects his/her true attendance history. Absence notes will not be accepted after one week from the return to school. If a student's absence is not excused by a phone call and a note, he/she will be considered truant.

### Absence and Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Any student who is absent from school may not participate in co-curricular activities for that day. The General Laws of Massachusetts require that any student who enters the school after the half-way point of the school day be counted as absent. Therefore, any student who arrives at school after 11:00 a.m. will be counted as absent, and will not be eligible for co-curricular activities. This time designation is not affected by the excused/unexcused status of the student.

### Absence from Physical Education Classes

Any student who cannot participate in physical education due to illness must bring a signed note to the nurse for his/her signature and then give it to the physical education teacher before class. No student may be excused from physical education for more than five days without a doctor's note.

### Anticipated Absences

Absences that are foreseen and meet the state guidelines for excused absences i.e. illnesses, operations, deaths in the family, are eligible for pre-assigned work. In general, a twenty-four hour notice must be provided to obtain these assignments.

### Excessive Absences or Attendance Issues

If a student is absent for seven days due to an illness, the return to school must be accompanied by a doctor's note. A court appearance will be excused only by a note from the clerk of courts or other court officer written on appropriate letterhead.

It is not the intention of this policy to punish students who must be absent for reasons which are beyond their control or to encourage students to be absent unnecessarily. The policy intends to encourage attendance at school, which the entire educational community values most highly.

### Tardy to School

Students must come to school on time and prepared to learn. Students who are not seated in their classroom by 7:30 a.m. are tardy and must sign in at the office. Tardy notes must be brought to the office no later than 24 hours after the tardy has occurred or the consequences earned will be given out to the student. Students who arrive to class after the 7:30 a.m. bell without an office pass will be sent to the office to obtain a tardy pass. Any student who enters the building after 8:00 a.m. must have a note or a phone call from a parent/guardian to ensure the tardiness is not the result of truancy. Any student who intentionally avoids signing in at the office

will be given a day of **in school suspension**. Excusable reasons for tardies will follow the same guidelines for excusable absences; as listed below:

1. Illness of the student
2. Court appearance
3. Death or serious illness in the family
4. Family emergency
5. Religious observance
6. School sponsored event
7. Suspension

If a student has four or more excused tardies throughout the semester, professional documentation may be required by administration in order for the tardy to be excused.

Due to the fact that everyone experiences unforeseen circumstances that could lead to a late arrival at school, the first four unexcused tardies of each quarter will not lead to consequences. Upon the fifth unexcused tardy the consequences stated below will come into effect.

Students who incur an unexcused tardy beyond the four allotted per quarter:

1. 5th Tardy - Letter Home via email.
2. 6th Tardy - Detention
3. 7th Tardy - Detention
4. 8th Tardy - Detention and \*Loss of all extracurricular activities.
5. 9th Tardy - Detention and \*Loss of all extracurricular activities.
6. 10th Tardy - Parent Meeting and \*Loss of extracurricular activities.

Subsequent tardies may result in In School Suspension and the child being referred to the court system for neglect (51A) or as a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA).

\*Loss of extracurricular activities means that the student is **Not** eligible to participate in or attend any co-curricular events (practices, games, rehearsals, plays, concerts, dances etc.) for that day.

The principal, or principal's designee will meet with the student and parents to develop an action plan to address the student's school attendance.

## Vacation Policy

During school vacation weeks. The Cape Ann League schedules games for Junior Varsity, Varsity and occasionally Freshman Sports. Athletes that are playing on a team that plays over the vacation week should be aware of these guidelines.

If a student-athlete is going on an educational, school sponsored trip, there is no penalty regarding their status or playing time on the team. However, a coach may decide to limit a player's time or change their positioning based upon the player's readiness to perform. These are viewed as strategic decisions and not penalties for

going away. For example, if a student is away for a week, returning to the starting lineup without sufficient practice time could be detrimental to the player or team.

Students cannot be suspended for more than one game if they miss games during school vacation for a family vacation. This is left to the discretion of the coach.

## Uniforms and Equipment

Students are issued uniforms each season as well as other equipment. The student is responsible for any and all equipment issued to her/him, and if said equipment is lost, stolen or damaged beyond ordinary wear and tear, the student will provide proper restitution. A student who does not return a uniform will not be issued a uniform for the next season and will be considered "not in good standing". Uniforms must be returned directly to the coach at the end of the season.

## User Fees

All sports fees must be paid before the first game of each season, or the student-athlete should be on a payment plan. An athlete will not receive a uniform or be allowed to play until this has been rectified. If there is an unpaid balance from previous seasons, the athlete will not be allowed to tryout until the balance is taken care of. Students who qualify for free/reduced lunch will receive free/reduced user fees. Special arrangements may be made by contacting the Director of Athletics. If a student quits or is removed for academic or disciplinary reasons, he/she will not receive a refund of user fees. Student-athletes on a payment plan will owe the remaining balance of his/her user fees. User fees are used for MIAA dues, Cape Ann League dues, transportation, coaches and officials. Those that qualify for free or reduced lunch also qualify for free and reduced sports fees. You must fill out the necessary forms and be approved to qualify. Forms can be located on the district website.

## Lockers and Valuables

Students are encouraged not to bring valuables to school, but if they cannot avoid this and cannot leave their valuables in the main office, they must take the responsibility to lock them up in their athletic or physical education locker. The school holds no responsibility for items left in the building. Items left unlocked in the locker room will be discarded.

## Team Captains

One team captain of all teams may be elected by the team at the conclusion of the season. One team captain will be appointed by the coach at his/her discretion. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game basis. There should be no more than 3 captains per team.

Captains are expected to be leaders of their respective teams and should be ready to assume certain duties as outlined by their coach and Director of Athletics. They are expected to model the team rules and student/athlete responsibilities for all other team members.

Captains of a team may be relieved of their position for violation of team rules and/or conduct policy.

All captains shall become members of the Captain's Council. The Captain's Council will meet annually with the Director of Athletics for leadership training and to discuss topics relevant to the school's athletic program.

Any student who is a captain, and violates the chemical health rule, will lose this title for the remainder of the current season and also the remainder of the current school year. **Penalties shall be cumulative for 12 months from the day before the date of the first violation.**

Once the student has lost their captainship for a season, they do not have the right to appeal the decision if the student feels they have proven themselves to be a role model for our student-athletes. All appeals should be made to the Director of Athletics.

## Letter Qualifications

Varsity letters will be awarded to players who have been on the varsity roster after tryouts and is in good standing at the end of the season in a cut sport. In order to receive a letter, an athlete must be academically eligible at the end of the season. Any athlete removed from the team for disciplinary reasons will not be eligible for a letter. Academically disqualified athletes or players removed from teams will not be allowed to attend the end of the year banquet. Seniors who do not meet the roster requirement will also receive a varsity letter. The Director of Athletics will have discretion with regard to unusual circumstances. The first varsity letter earned will receive a Chenille Royal G letter and a pin representing the sport in which the letter was earned. Each additional letter earned will receive a Pin representing that sport. All participants in all levels that finish the year in good standing will receive a certificate of participation. Cooperative team's letters are determined by the host team criteria.

## Schedules

The Cape Ann League is currently transitioning to a new software and is not complete. All current schedules can be located on [ArbiterLive.com](http://ArbiterLive.com) until the new website is updated.

## Disciplinary Actions

While we believe that all athletes are committed to following the rules of the athletic department, situations may occur that require disciplinary action. The following procedures will be used in these circumstances after the athlete has had the opportunity to meet with the coach, Director of Athletics and/or Principal.

### Suspension from a Team

A student may be suspended from a team temporarily (games and/or practices) by the coach, Director of Athletics and/or Principal. Causes for suspension include but are not limited to: suspension from school; unsatisfactory grades; person misconduct; unexcused absences from meetings, practice or games; unsportsmanlike conduct; violations of school or athletic department rules.

### Removal from a Team

A student may be removed from a team by the coach, Director of Athletics and/or Principal. Removal from a team by the coach will result only after a consultation with the Director of Athletics and/or Principal. Causes for removal include, but are not limited to: repeated violations of the code of conduct and discipline; repeated violations of athletic policies; personal conduct which warrants such actions before, during or after school hours; verbal or physical attack on any team member, opponent, fan, coach or official; repeated acts of unsportsmanlike conduct; not participating while able in athletic events. There will be no refund for an athlete removed from a team. Athletes removed from a team may not participate with the team in any way. Athletes removed from a team are not eligible for banquets, letters, pins or awards.

## Grievance Policy

The grievance procedure at Georgetown High School has five levels: Teacher/Coach, Department Head/Director of Athletics, Assistant Principal, Principal. Within the four levels, any student/parent who has a concern arise with a staff member may appeal that decision to the next highest level. If a student or parent breaks the chain of command, they will be sent to the appropriate lower level. All emails sent to the athletic department or above are public domain and can be shared with coaches and/or athletes.

The grievance procedure is as follows:

1. The athlete/parent contacts the coach regarding the concern.
2. The athlete/parent may then appeal that decision to the Director of Athletics.
3. The athlete/parent may then appeal that decision to the Assistant Principal.
4. The athlete/parent may then appeal that decision to the Principal.

If the issue arises at a level beyond Step 1, then the appeal process continues from that step up to Step 4. If the issue has not been addressed at an appropriate lower step, the athlete/parent must seek that individual first. (i.e. a problem with playing time cannot start at the Assistant Principal level, it must start with the coach)

## Banquets

Student athletes will not be allowed to attend their end of the season banquet if they were removed for any reason, including academics or discipline. Student-athletes will also not be eligible for the banquet if user fees are not current or if the student has any obligations to the school (books, uniforms, etc.) Ineligible students cannot receive awards, letters, pins, or jackets. Students must be in school per the school's attendance policy the day of the banquet to be eligible to attend.

## Co-Ops

Georgetown High School attempts to provide as many opportunities for participation as possible through the use of co-operative teams. Co-operative teams are approved by the state every 2 years, and are not intended to create competitive advantages. Student-athletes must be considered eligible by both the host school and visiting school's eligibility standards (academic, disciplinary, etc.) and must follow the host school's user fee policy. User fees paid when Georgetown is the visiting co-op do not apply to the family cap. Student-athletes must provide their own transportation to all practices and games.

Fall:

Golf (Georgetown Host-Whittier visitor)

Football (Pentucket-Host)

Winter:

Girls Ice Hockey (Newburyport Host- multiple schools are visitor)

Boys Ice Hockey (Pentucket Host- Georgetown visitor)

Co-Ed Swim (Triton Host-Georgetown/Newburyport visitor)

## Transportation

Georgetown will provide bus transportation to and from the event, of all scheduled away contests. Players are expected to travel to and from games with the team. If a student has an extenuating circumstance (academic, religious, or physical) and must be transported to the event in private transportation, she/he **must** fill out the *Parent Permission Form for Travel* and turn it into the coach in advance. No transportation will be provided for practice or cooperative sports practice.

## Player Coach Communication

Communication is an important part of the athletic program and should be done so in a proper, professional way. Coaches may only communicate with the team as a whole (i.e. group email, group text) or through the captains. Coaches will not communicate electronically with individual players. Players may call, text, or email the coach to let them know they will be absent from practice or a game. Players and coaches should not communicate through social media per Georgetown School Committee Policy.

## Curfew

Coaches can set a reasonable curfew on the night before games/competitions and check in via phone call. There can be consequences of loss of participation for a student breaking curfew.

## Sportsmanship

“The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity should permeate all interscholastic athletics in our community. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Our athletic fields should be the laboratory to produce good citizens reflecting “fair play” in every area of life.”

Expectations of Parents, Guests, and Other fans:

- Game attendance is a privilege and not a license to verbally assault others or to be obnoxious.
- Respect the entire playing of the National Anthem.
- Respect decisions made by contest officials.
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.
- Become aware of the purpose of the league and rules to keep winning in its proper place.
- Respect fans, coaches and participants.
- Be a fan...not a fanatic!
- Recognize outstanding performances on either side of the playing field

Suggested positive Behavioral Guides:

- Applaud during introduction of players, coaches and officials.
- Accept all decisions by officials.
- Handshakes between participants and coaches at the end of contest, regardless of outcome.
- Treat competition as a game, not a war.
- Search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance of coaching.
- Applaud at end of contest for performance of all participants.
- Demonstrate concern for injured players, regardless of team.
- Encourage supporting people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.

Unacceptable Behavior

- Yelling or negative chanting or gestures toward the opponent.
- Booing or heckling an official's decision.
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call.
- Taunting or trash talk.
- Refusing to shake hands or to give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches, or participants.

- Laughing or name calling to distract an opponent.
- Using profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.

Spectators engaging in unacceptable behavior will be given one warning and will then be immediately removed from the site. Students may face further discipline including social probation.

#### IEP/504/BIP

If necessary to ensure a student's educational or athletic participation in the Georgetown Public School District's athletic program, coaches will be informed and provided training as necessary by the Georgetown School District Staff (special education or guidance) of any athlete who requires the implementation of an Individual Education Plan, Americans with Disabilities Act 504, and/or a behavior plan (BIP) to ensure appropriate access to a Georgetown School District athletic program.

## MIAA Mission Statement

The mission of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is to serve member schools and the maximum number of their students by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic activities which will enrich the educational experiences of all participants. The MIAA will promote interschool athletics that provide lifelong and life-quality learning experiences to students while enhancing their achievement of educational goals.

## MIAA Philosophy

Within high school sport programs, young people learn the values associated within discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership and organizational skills, participating within rules, physical well-being and healthy lifestyles, striving towards excellence, and many other characteristics that come quickly to the mind of any educator. If interscholastic athletics are to be justified as school activities, then values such as these must be the priorities of every program. Ethics, playing within the spirit of the rules, and good sportsmanship (which is good citizenship) must be woven into the fabric of the high school athletic program. In the education of 65% of the young people attending MIAA member schools, athletic participation is a critical component. What should drive those responsible for student-athletes and their programs is the educational mission of school activities. For many students, the most stable environment in their lives is that provided by high school activity programs. Often the best opportunities for crisis intervention, drug prevention, "day care" programs, and the like are school activity programs. The cost is minimal, while the worth is maximal.

While winning contests, rather than losing them, is a laudable goal, it should not supersede the primary priorities of high school sport programs. What should be the rationale behind high school activities is preparing students to succeed rather than merely to win games. Win or lose, students should learn lessons of a lasting and positive nature.

If the success of any high school athletic program is measured by an undefeated season, then 99% of the thousands of high school teams, which participate annually in Massachusetts, have failed. If a league championship is the measure of success, then 85% of our programs are failures. Even if success is measured merely by qualification for MIAA end of season tournaments, then 50% of our students are "losers".

What should be encouraged is participation in varied activities under different teacher/coach role models. The percentage of student-athletes who complete their formal athletic experiences at the high school level is overwhelming (well in excess of 90%). Schools should focus their attention upon goals other than championships or the development of “blue chip” athletes. Young people need varied activities: time at the beach, time to study and, in fact, time just to be kids. Young people need to learn, to think, and simply to grow up. Schools should guide them, through athletics, to allow that to happen as comfortably as possible.

### Physical Exams

All students must pass a physical examination within 13 months of athletic participation. A sports physical terminates 395 days subsequent to administering and must be renewed immediately (should an athlete be “in season”) to maintain eligibility. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Physician, Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner. A report from the attending physician must be filed with the student’s records by the school nurse before a student is allowed to participate in any tryout, practice or contest. PENALTY: A student in violation shall be suspended for the number of contests in which he/she participated without a proper physical.

### Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

#### **Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco**

*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; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. 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 his/her doctor. This MIAA statewide minimum standard is 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.*

#### Minimum PENALTIES:

**First Violation:** When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the students to be heard that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests 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. 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.)

**Second and Subsequent Violations:** When the Principal conforms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests 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 his/her 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. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal part of an event will be truncated. (i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.) **Penalties shall be cumulative for 12 months from the day before the date of the first violation.** 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.

## Transfer Students

A student who transfers from any school to a MIAA member school is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which that student participated at the varsity level or its equivalent during the one-year period immediately preceding the transfer. A waiver request is available for transfer students with special circumstances. Varsity participation is defined as any appearance, as a competitor, in a varsity interschool game, match or meet other than a scrimmage. The equivalent will be judged by the MIAA executive staff on the basis of the quality of non-school sport program participation. The parent/guardian of all transfer students who intend to participate in athletics should contact the Director of Athletics immediately upon considering a transfer to Georgetown Middle High School.

## 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 practices and 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.

Any student who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two contests or two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately upon confirmation of the violation. In addition, the rules also state that "Any tournament(s) in that sport for that season.

## Age Limits

A student shall be under nineteen years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year, provided that his/her birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. For grade nine competitions, a student shall be under 16 years of age but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that the sixteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year.

## Time Allowed for Participation

A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than 12 consecutive athletic seasons (i.e. eligible during only four consecutive academic years) after first entering grade 9.

## Hazing

The laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts prohibit hazing. The Department of Education requires that every school (other than elementary schools) in the Commonwealth alert students and parents to the legislation by presenting a copy of the law. In compliance with that regulation, the law is printed in its entirety below.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, as amended:

Section 17. Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred (100) days, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections 18 and 19, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical and mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section 17 and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril of himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement officer as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500).

Section 19. Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections 17 and 18.

An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said section 17 and 18 shall sign an acknowledgement stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections 17 and 18.

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Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The board of regents and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

## Managing the Care of Students with Athletic Concussions/Injuries

The recognition and treatment of athletes who have suffered a concussion has become a national priority. An increasing number of studies have revealed that concussions, not properly treated, can result in permanent physical and cognitive deficits.

Recovery from a concussion requires limitation of physical activity, especially sports activity, and physical education activities. In significantly symptomatic students, mental activity should also be limited to allow the brain time to heal. In light of this information, Georgetown Public Schools seeks to provide a safe return to activity for all students after a concussion and has developed the following policy.

### Training Program

- A. 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. Certified athletic trainers;
  3. Trainers;
  4. Volunteers;
  5. School and team physicians;
  6. School Nurses
  7. Director of Athletics;
  8. Directors responsible for a school march band, whether employed by a school or school district or serving in such capacity as a volunteer.

9. Parents of a student who participate in an extracurricular activity; and
10. Students who participate in an extracurricular activity.
- B. The required training applies to one school year and must be repeated for every subsequent year.
- C. Georgetown Public Schools will maintain a record of completion of annual training for all persons specified by 105 CMR 201.007(A) through:
  1. A certification of completion for any Department-approved on-line course; or
  2. A signed acknowledgement that the individual has read and understands Department-approved written material required by 105 CMR 201.008 (A)(1).
- D. Game official shall complete one of the training programs approved by the Department as specified on the Department's website annually and shall provide independent verification of completion of the training requirement to schools or school districts upon request.

## Participation Requirements for Students and Parents

- A. Pre-participation Requirements
  1. Each year, Georgetown Public Schools shall provide current Department-approved training, written materials or a list and internet links for Department-approved on-line courses to all students who plan to participate in extracurricular activities and their parents in advance of the student's participation.
  2. All students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities and their parents shall satisfy the following pre-participation requirements:
    - a) Each year, before the student begins practice or competition, the student and the parents shall complete current Department-approved training regarding head injuries and concussions in extracurricular athletic activities and provide the school with a signed acknowledgement that they have read and understand Department-approved written materials.
    - b) Before the start of every sport season, the student and the parent shall complete and submit a Pre-participation forms (included as part of the registration), signed by both, which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history; and head, face or cervical spine injury history, and any history of co-existent concussive injuries.
    - c) In order to be eligible all student athletes in all contact sports must take ImPact testing before the first practice or tryout of the season. Student-athletes playing non-contact sports of Cross Country, Middle School Track, and Golf will be given the opportunity to take a baseline test, but will not be required to do so.
    - d) Functional Movement Screening will be offered once a year during ImPact Testing. A grading system that documents movement patterns key to normal function and evaluates potential risk for injury. The FMS assesses combinations of muscle strength, flexibility, range of motion, coordination, balance and proprioception.
    - e) There will be a mandatory parent/player meeting led by the Athletic Trainer before each athletic season to ensure compliance with concussion training. This will occur on the same night as signups/coaches' meetings. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a player being ineligible for the sport. Alternative arrangements can be made with the athletic department to make up the training in extreme circumstances. A parent must only fulfill this requirement for the first sport the child plays that year (i.e. a parent is not required to attend the spring meeting, if he attended the fall meeting).
    - f) When any athletic injury occurs, which requires removal from play, the Athletic Trainer will notify the parents via phone or face to face as soon as possible, but no longer than 24 hours after the injury. In the case of a severe injury, the parent will be immediately notified.

## Ongoing Requirements

If a student sustains a head injury or concussion during the season, but not while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the parent shall complete the Report of Head Injury Form, and submit it to the coach, athletic trainer or school nurse.

## Exclusion from Play/Re-entry Process to School

- A. Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.
- B. The student shall not return to practice or competition unless and until the student provides medical clearance and authorization as specified in 105 CMR 201.011.
- C. The coach/athletic trainer shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness. The coach/athletic trainer also must provide this information to the parent in writing whether paper or electronic format, by the end of the next business day.
- D. The coach/athletic trainer shall communicate, by the end of the next business day, with the Director of Athletics and school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or completion for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.
- E. Each student who is removed from practice or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion shall have a written graduated re-entry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.
  1. The plan shall be developed with input from the following, as appropriate:
    - (a) The student's teachers,
    - (b) The student's guidance counselor,
    - (c) School nurse
    - (d) Athletic trainer
    - (e) Parent
    - (f) IEP team (if applicable)
    - (g) In consultation with the student's primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.
  2. The written plan shall include instructions for students, parents and school personnel, addressing but not limited to:
    - (a) Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate;
    - (b) Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed;
    - (c) Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities;
    - (d) Frequency of assessments, as appropriate, by the school nurse, primary care physician, certified athletic trainer, and school physician until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized; and
    - (e) A plan for communication and coordination between and among school personnel and between the school, the parent, and the student's primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.
  3. The student must be completely symptom free and medically cleared as defined in 105 CMR 201.011 in order to begin graduated re-entry to extracurricular athletic activities.

## Medical Clearance and Authorization to Return to Play

Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the Athletic Trainer, a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (Medical Clearance and Authorization Form), or appropriate doctor's note, prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. This form must be completed by a physician or one of the individuals as authorized by 105 CMR 201.011(A). The ultimate return to play decision is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate.

Only the following individuals may authorize a student to return to play:

1. A duly licensed physician;
2. A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
3. A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician or;
4. A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.