

Douglas High School



Athletic Guidebook

Guidelines

Polices

Procedures



Answers to frequently asked questions about Douglas High School athletics.

Excellence through Athletics

Brian Ginisi

Mary Sokol

Athletic Directors

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**All athletic policy agreements must be turned in to individual coaches before the beginning of athletic participation.*

Welcome to Douglas High School Athletics

Your child is about to take part in the Douglas High School athletic family, a group rich in tradition. For years, Douglas High School athletes have performed with dedication, skill, intensity, and desire. Many have been recognized for their skill and sportsmanship within the league, within the region and state, and even on the national level. Some have distinguished themselves by earning college scholarships. More importantly, the vast majority of our athletes have gone on to become valuable and caring members of their communities. The world of high school athletics offers many wonderful and exciting opportunities for your son or daughter. It is our hope that your child will seize these opportunities and make the most of them.

This booklet contains information regarding policies, practices, and regulations that govern every athletic program at Douglas High School. We believe that this information will help answer many of your questions regarding interscholastic athletics at Douglas High School.

Keep this booklet and refer to it whenever you have a question regarding your child’s athletic experience. If you feel that your questions are not answered in this booklet, contact your child’s coach first. He or she will be able to answer your specific questions. If your concern has not been addressed, you should then contact the Athletic Director. Please do not let your questions or concerns go unanswered.

We look forward to your association with the athletic program at Douglas High School. Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Kevin Maines
Principal

Mary Sokol
Athletic Director

Brian Ginisi
Athletic Director

Philosophy

The Interscholastic Athletics Program at Douglas High School is committed to the Mission Statement of Douglas High School:

Douglas High School exists to meet the educational needs of all students. With learning at the heart of all of our activities, our fundamental responsibility is to provide a learning environment which enables Douglas High School students to attain high standards of academic achievement, community service and personal development. This will empower our students to be self-confident, responsible, active members of an ever changing global society.

Athletics are an extension of the school day. Our coaches are charged with the responsibility of teaching athletes many of the values that will assist them in any endeavor. Namely, coaches will teach athletes how to *work together as a team*. They will teach athletes to *accept both disappointment and success graciously*. They will teach athletes to *accept accountability, to behave at all times with sportsmanship, self-discipline, tolerance, and leadership*. They will teach athletes to *maintain a strong work ethic, to participate within the rules, to perform under pressure with persistence, and to maintain a healthy and responsible physical well-being*. All the while, coaches will teach athletes to *constantly strive towards excellence*. This is obviously an awesome responsibility and we do our best to see that it is never taken lightly.

The athletic program strives to have all student-athletes play with poise and class. This value is part of the instruction that takes place at each practice session and game.

Tryouts are open to all students in grades 8 through 12, providing they are in good standing academically, are good school citizens, and are physically fit to participate. Participation in the program is a privilege which students earn by maintaining these standards. Eighth graders wishing to try-out for JV basketball may do so with permission from the Athletic Director first. Douglas supports a Middle School basketball program and players moving up is discouraged unless the number of players on the JV/Varsity level are so small that moving 8th graders up is in the best interest of the program

GOVERNING BODIES

THE MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (MIAA)

1. Douglas High School is a member in good standing of the MIAA. With membership, the Principal and Athletic Department agree to abide by all rules and regulations of the MIAA.

2. One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to sponsor and conduct post-season tournaments at the varsity level leading to the determination of district and state champions. When our varsity teams qualify for and enter such tournaments, we are subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament.

Dual Valley Conference

3. Douglas High School is proud to be a member of the Dual Valley Conference. The Dual Valley Conference is governed by the MIAA and its own constitution. The Principal of each member school agrees that his/her school will abide by all league rules and regulations. The Dual Valley Conference is comprised of six schools: Whitinsville Christian, Sutton, Nipmuc (Mendon-Upton Regional), Hopedale, Blackstone-Millville Regional, and Douglas.

Douglas School Committee

4. Additional policies, regulations, and rules are set by the Douglas School Committee and the Douglas High School Principal. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set additional policies, rules, and/or regulations as long as they are not less restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA.

5. Sports at Douglas High School

Fall Soccer, Golf, Field Hockey, Football, Girls Volleyball, and Cross Country

Winter Basketball, Indoor Track, Ice Hockey (Hopedale Co-Op)

Spring Baseball, Softball, and Track & Field

To The Parents

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

6.1 **Communication you should expect from the coach**

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e., practices, special equipment, and out-of-season conditioning suggestions.
5. Procedure followed should your child be injured during participation.
6. Disciplinary issues that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

6.2 **Communication coaches expect from parents**

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any scheduled conflicts **well in advance**.
3. Specific concerns with regards to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations before the season.

As your child becomes involved in the programs at Douglas High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

6.3 **Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches**

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

It is very difficult to accept situations when your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches take their profession seriously. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for **all** students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

6.4 **Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches**

1. Playing time and or positioning at the varsity level
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling

4. Other student-athletes

6.5 There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern:

1. **First**, call the Athletic Department (476-4100, ext 1105) to set up an appointment.
2. The Athletic Director will arrange a return call from the coach or a meeting will be set up for you.
3. **DO NOT CALL THE COACH AT HOME!** A coach's time with family is severely limited during the season. The family's privacy must be respected.
4. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings under these circumstances do not promote productive discussion or resolution.

6.6 **If the meeting did not provide a satisfactory resolution:**

1. Call and set up an appointment with Athletic Director 508-476-4100, ext 1105.
2. The Athletic Director will listen carefully to your concerns and mediate a resolution between you and the coach.

REMEMBER: Your concerns are important to us. Never hesitate to follow the above procedures to make those concerns known. Together we can work to improve our athletic programs.

Commitment

7. When trying out for a team and after being selected to be a member of a team, Douglas High School student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games of that team. Practices will average two hours, exclusive of prep time, in duration. Weekend practices vary by sport and should be expected.

Interscholastic athletics demands much more commitment than a club or recreational activity. Students should make themselves aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for a team.

School/family vacations, extended absences

8. Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and games. Because of scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled

school vacations. Student-athletes who plan to be absent for an extended period of time due to vacation or a planned extended absence must discuss this situation with the coach prior to trying out for the team.

MIAA bona-fide team member rule

- 9.0 A “bona fide team member” of the school team is a student who is regularly present for and actively participates in all team practices and competitions. Bona-fide team members are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete on a non-school team.
- 9.1 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. Any student who violates this standard is also ineligible to participate in any MIAA tournament in that sport for that season. (MIAA Rule #45 and #95)
- 9.2 A coach does not have the right to excuse a team member from practice so that he or she may practice or play for another team.
- 9.3 The Principal and Athletic Director may request a waiver of this rule only in special circumstances. A Bone Fide Team Member Waiver from the MIAA must be completed at least 30 days before a possible violation.

Tryouts

- 10. Participation in athletics is a privilege given to those students who meet all requirements set by the MIAA and the Douglas High School. Students try out voluntarily and, for some teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period, the coach will provide a verbal explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student’s responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet these expectations. Students cut from a team are encouraged to try out for another team or club. Michael Jordan, one of the greatest basketball players of all time, was cut from his high school basketball team. If a student is cut, he or she is encouraged to work hard and try out again.
- 10.1 After tryouts begin, no athlete may leave one team (voluntarily or due to dismissal by the coach) and try out for another team without the consent of both coaches involved and the Athletic Director.

Daily team attendance

11. It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student-athlete is not going to be present at a practice or game. Practice is where plans for upcoming contests are devised and perfected. The coaches in our program expect their athletes to be present at all team related activities. Punishment for missed practices and games is at the discretion of the coach. Ultimately, coaches reserve the right to suspend or dismiss players for excessive absences.
- 11.1 Student-athletes are excused from team activities for *academic or religious reasons, family emergencies, illness or injury*. Prior notification to the coach is expected.

School attendance and tardiness

12. Douglas High School student-athletes are reminded at the beginning of each season of the requirements for good school and team citizenship. They are as follows: *Come to school every day, be on time for school and classes, attend all classes, do your homework, and behave at all times in a mature manner*. The abuse of any of these citizenship requirements could result in suspension or dismissal from an athletic team.
- 12.1 Student-athletes must be in school for the full day and are expected to attend all scheduled periods during that day in order to maintain eligibility to practice or play.
- 12.2 Student-athletes who are absent from school without prior administrative approval on the day of a practice or game are not eligible to participate for that day.
 - 12.2.1 Student-athletes who arrive at school late after the start of D Block, (the fourth period of the school day on normal day schedule, or the start of the fourth period on Activity Day schedule.) are not eligible to participate for that day.
- 12.3 If a student is dismissed from school for medical reasons, he or she cannot participate in a practice or a game on that day.
- 12.5 Certain absences, dismissals, and tardiness from school may be excused and, therefore, not affect a student-athlete's eligibility to participate. The administration will determine whether an absence, a dismissal, or tardiness can be excused based on mitigating circumstances.

Medical exams/parental permission forms

13. All students who plan to participate in athletics must have written proof of a current physical exam signed by a physician. In order for the exam to be current, it must be dated within 13 months of any athletic involvement. It is strongly recommended that an annual exam be scheduled between June and August of each school year. Such an exam would cover a student for an entire school year.
- 13.1 In order to attain athletic eligibility, student athletes and their parents must provide the high school nurse with a copy of their most recent physical. It is strongly recommended that parents keep a copy of the physical.
- 13.2 The MIAA produces a two-part medical exam form that is available to parents in the high school's main office, which parents may use if they wish. The first side is to be completed by the athlete and parents, the second side must be completed and signed by a physician.
- 13.3 Before trying out for any sport, the student athlete must have a physical verification form that is provided by the coach and signed by the school nurse to verify that a valid physical is on file.
- 13.4 Parental permission forms, which contain important emergency and insurance information, must also be completed and signed by the athlete and parents.
- 13.5 Athletes will not be allowed to participate without the completion of the medical exam and parental permission forms unless there is just reason and permission has been granted by the Athletic Director.

Insurance

14. All athletes must have either private insurance, supplemental school insurance, or some other plan in order to participate in Douglas High School athletics.

Athletic fees

15. Douglas High School currently charges an athletic fee.
 - A. Fees will be collected by an athletic department representative and deposited in an athletic fund to be used solely by the athletic department. Fees must be

paid in full prior to the first game of the season. Please make checks payable to the Town of Douglas.

- B. The fee for all levels of each sport offered during the 16-17 school year is \$300 per student per sport with no annual cap.
- C. Parents may apply to the High School Principal for a waiver of these fees if they believe financial hardship will prevent their student from participating. Waivers will be considered confidentially and on a case by case basis.
- D. Any player who fails to make a team will receive a 100% refund.
- E. Any player who is removed from a team for disciplinary or academic reasons or who voluntarily leaves a team after making the roster *is not entitled to a refund*.
- F. Paying a user fee in no way guarantees playing time. Every effort will be made to play junior varsity and middle school team members as frequently as possible. No guarantee will be made to ensure playing time on the varsity level in any sport.

Academic eligibility

- 16. To maintain academic eligibility for any middle level, junior varsity, or varsity athletic team, a student may fail no more than one course, either major or minor.
- 16.1 Academic eligibility for a given term shall be official on the date report cards for the previous term have been issued. NOTE: the fourth quarter report card will be used to determine eligibility for the following fall season.
- 16.2 Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility.
- 16.3 A student receiving services through Special Services Education, whose individual education plan is a 502.4 or a more restrictive prototype, may be declared academically eligible by the principal provided that all other eligibility requirements are met.

Academic appeal process

- 17. A student may appeal academic ineligibility through his/her guidance counselor. The guidance counselor must feel that the extenuating circumstances warrant to arrange for an appeal. If the counselor feels that such extenuating circumstances exist, the counselor may ask for an academic review. These cases are very rare. An academic review

committee will minimally consist of the student's principal, a teacher, a coach, the athletic director, the guidance counselor and the student.

Time allowed for participation/age

18. A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than 12 consecutive athletic seasons beyond the 8th grade.
- 18.1 A student must be less than 19 years of age as of September 1st of the current school year.

Team rules and regulations

19. At the start of each season, a coach, with the approval of the Athletic Director, may issue a set of team rules and regulations to his/her team. It is suggested that these be in written form and passed out to the athletes.

Care of equipment

20. Students have a responsibility for all equipment issued to them. Each student is responsible for the proper care and retention of their equipment from the date of issue to the date of return. Equipment should be stored in a locked locker or locker-room at all times when not in use. Students will be charged the *current replacement cost* for any missing or vandalized equipment.
- 20.1 Payment for the loss is required at the time of the loss, prior to the next season of athletic involvement or graduation, whichever comes first.
- 20.2 No student will be allowed to try out for another sport until all outstanding equipment has been returned or paid for.
- 20.3 If an athlete leaves the team during the season due to injury, academic eligibility, disciplinary matters, or of his/her own volition, it is his/her responsibility to return all school equipment.

Physical education

21. All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students who are medically excused from physical education are not allowed to

participate in their team practice or game that day. The physical education staff will attempt to notify each coach on a daily basis of those students who did not participate in P.E. classes that day.

Transportation

22. The school provides bus transportation to most “away” contests. **Athletes must ride to and from events on the team bus**, follow bus regulations, and dress according to the policy dictated by the respective coach. Transportation to practice sites is the responsibility of the individual students. Athletes wishing to travel home with their parents must have a travel release form or written note signed by the Administration for that day and this signed form must be given to the coach prior to the bus departure.

Directions to away contests

23. The athletic office has directions to away games on file. Students and parents may get these prior to a contest. The school website will often post directions along with the game schedule in the Athletics Department page.

Building and facility access

24. No student is allowed access to any of the athletic facilities without proper supervision by a school staff member or coach. Students may not use the gymnasium or weight room unless a staff member is present.

Cooperative Team Agreements

25. An approved cooperative team agreement (or “co-op”) consists of an MIAA sanctioned agreement that a “guest” school may allow its student-athletes to participate in a team sport offered by another school, known as the “host”.
 - 25.1 Student-athletes from Douglas High School who choose to participate in a cooperative team agreement at a host school must abide by all of the policies and rules established by the host school, including specific team rules and regulations, academic eligibility criteria, and all other policies.
 - 26.2 Student-athletes from Douglas High School who choose to participate in a cooperative team agreement at a host school may have to provide their own transportation to and from the host school.

Playing time

27. Perhaps the most emotional part of a student-athlete being involved in high school athletics centers around playing time. The student-athlete becomes involved in interscholastic athletics for the first time and finds that practices and expectations are much more intense and demanding. Factors such as practice attendance, attitude, commitment, and, of course, athletic skill enter into the coach's decision to have them play.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by the Douglas High School coaching staff. It is the coach's responsibility to decide which athlete should start a contest, who should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These coaching decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff and are approached very seriously after having observed the student-athlete in practice sessions, scrimmages and, at times, games. At the freshman and junior varsity level, members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members in each game for as much time as practical. At this level, the coaching staff is teaching the offensive and defensive philosophy of the program along with the skills necessary to move along to the next level. Student-athletes who attend practices daily and fulfill all other team obligations should have the opportunity to display what they have learned in games.

At the varsity level, we look for our teams to compete against opponents at the highest possible level of execution. This is the highest level of high school interscholastic competition, and players, coaches, parents, staff, and the community wants the Douglas High School varsity teams to be successful on the field of play. As long as the score is being kept, Douglas High School should attempt to win as many varsity games as possible. In order to accomplish this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive, skilled team members. However, teams cannot and will not be successful without committed non-starters, role players, or second string team players. These players have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden when called upon. It is these student-athletes whose hard work in practice each day prepares the team for the upcoming contest.

Success should never be measured in wins and losses, but in the performance of our athletes. If they perform to the best of their abilities, they will always be successful, no matter what the final score may be. Team success always precedes individual statistics.

Team captains

28. It is a coaching decision as to how team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis.

- 28.1 It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and must be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to be more aware of team rules and student-athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program.
- 28.2 Captains of teams may be relieved of their position by the coach, in consultation with the Athletic Director, for violation of team, department, or school rules.

Security of personal belongings

29. All personal belongings should be locked up in a locker or team room while the student-athlete is trying out, practicing, or playing. All students should have their own lock for their athletic lockers and should never leave their locker unlocked or open while unattended. Douglas High School is not responsible for the loss of personal belongings.

Locker rooms and school facilities

30. Student-athletes are expected to respect the locker facilities, showers, and general areas of the athletic wing at both Douglas High School and other schools while visiting. We expect the student-athletes to take pride in their facilities and those of our opponents by using trash barrels and keeping these facilities in good condition. Any type of vandalism will not be tolerated!

School discipline obligations

31. A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is required to fulfill that obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The Athletic Department, in conjunction with the Administration, reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improved behavior.

Sportsmanship

34. Douglas High School expects all parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators are to treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect.

34.1 The MIAA reserves the right to *warn, censure, place on probation or suspend for up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school representative determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship*. Douglas High School in turn reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, both home and away.

35. **Expectations of Parents, Guests and other fans**

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

36. **Suggested Positive Behavioral Guides**

1. Applaud during introduction of players, coaches, and officials.
2. Accept all decisions made by officials.
3. Shake hands with the other team at the end of the contest, regardless of the outcome.
4. Treat competition as a game, not a war.
5. Search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching.
6. Applaud at the end of contest for the performances of all participants.
7. Demonstrate concern for injured player, regardless of team.
8. Encourage supporting people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.

37. **Unacceptable Behavior**

1. Yelling or negative chanting or gestures toward an opponent.
2. Booming or heckling an official's decision.
3. Criticizing officials in any way.

4. Taunting or trash talk.
5. Refusing to shake hands or to give recognition for good performances.
6. Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches or participants.
7. Laughing or name calling to distract opponents.
8. Using profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.

MIAA chemical health rule: Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs

38. During the season, 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 other controlled substance. 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 physician.

First violation:

When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive interscholastic events, or two weeks of a season in which the student is a participant whichever encompasses the greater number of contests. 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.

Second and subsequent violation:

The student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve consecutive athletic events or twelve consecutive weeks, whichever encompasses the greater number of contests in which the student is a participant.

Out of season athletes:

The MIAA rule will be in effect during the school day and at all extra-curricular and school sponsored activities. School is considered to be any location where a school sponsored activity is taking place. The prescribed penalties listed above will commence for the "out-of-season" student-athlete at the start of his/her next athletic season.

All athletes and a parent or guardian must attend the chemical health meeting prior to the start of the athletic season. No exceptions will be made. Dates are announced prior to the first week of school.

Steroids

Anabolic androgenic steroid use at the high school level is of grave concern. Some athletes in sports use steroids and the seriousness of the problem has been well documented. A recent study

indicates that more than six percent of high school seniors use steroids. About two-thirds of them tried steroids before the age of sixteen.

Douglas High School coaches take a proactive role by informing players of the dangers and side effects of steroids. The use of steroids is considered to be cheating. We stand opposed to the use of steroids by athletes and all members of the student body.

Out-of-season sports involvement

Participation in out-of-season clinics, camps, leagues, or other related sport activities is strictly up to the discretion of the student-athlete and his/her parents. While such participation will undoubtedly improve one's knowledge and skill, it is the individual's decision whether or not they wish to become involved in such activities. Participation in such activities will have no bearing on a student-athlete's participation on a Douglas High School athletic team. The Athletic Department encourages all students to take full advantage of the activities we offer and become involved in more than one sport.

According to MIAA rules, *“Neither a coach nor any other representative of the school may require an athlete to participate in a sport or training program outside of the MIAA defined sport season.”* Voluntary conditioning sessions open equally to all students in the school, which are entirely devoid of sports-specific activity, may be conducted between seasons; provided no candidate is either required to participate or penalized for not doing so. A “candidate” is defined as a varsity or sub-varsity athlete who participated in the high school program at some interscholastic level in that sport the previous season.

Hazing- Massachusetts State Law – Chapter 536, Sections 16-19

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, or that which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person. Incidents of hazing must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials as soon as reasonably practical.

Section 17: Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Such conduct often includes 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 the physical safety

of any such student or other person, or which subjects 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 a crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such a crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonable or practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Postponed Contests

Many contests throughout the year are postponed due to factors such as inclement weather. In most instances it is the “home” school that calls for a postponement. By Dual Valley League rules, games are to be made up on the next available open date on both schools’ schedules, including weekends, whenever practical. Games will not be played on Sundays, unless a Sunday is the only available date to complete the game by MIAA cutoff date for season records.

Decisions on postponements are made as late in the day as practical for proper notification of all interested parties. On school days, the most common time is about 1:30PM for afternoon contests. If there are any questions as to the status of a contest, calls can be made to our athletic office (508)476-3332 ext. 342.

Due to scheduling conflicts, it is sometimes necessary to cancel rather than postpone sub-varsity contests. Because of league standings and or tournament qualification regulations, cancellations of varsity contests are extremely rare.

When school is canceled due to inclement weather, all practices and games are also canceled for that day.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS. (see [Senate, No. 2469](#)) Approved by the Governor, July 8, 2010

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to enhance forthwith the public health of school athletes, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 111 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 222. (a) The department shall direct the division of violence and injury prevention to develop an interscholastic athletic head injury safety

training program in which all public schools and any school subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association rules shall participate. Participation in the program shall be required annually of coaches, trainers and parent volunteers for any extracurricular athletic activity; physicians and nurses who are employed by a school or school district or who volunteer to assist with an extracurricular athletic activity; school athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; and a parent or legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity.

In developing the program, the division may use any of the materials readily available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program shall include, but not be limited to: (1) current training in recognizing the symptoms of potentially catastrophic head injuries, concussions and injuries related to second impact syndrome; and (2) providing students that participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, including membership in a marching band, the following information annually: a summary of department rules and regulations relative to safety regulations for students participation in extracurricular athletic activities, including the medical protocol for post-concussion participation or participation in an extracurricular athletic activity; written information related to the recognition of symptoms of head injuries, the biology and the short-term and long-term consequences of a concussion.

(b) The department shall develop forms on which students shall be instructed to provide information relative to any sports head injury history at the start of each sports season. These forms shall require the signature of both the student and the parent or legal guardian thereof. Once complete, the forms shall be forwarded to all coaches prior to allowing any student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity so as to provide coaches with up-to-date information relative to an athlete's head injury history and to enable coaches to identify students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.

(c) If a student participating in an extracurricular athletic activity becomes unconscious during a practice or competition, the student shall not return to the practice or competition during which the student became unconscious or participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until the student provides written authorization for such participation, from a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, certified athletic trainer or other appropriately trained or licensed health care professional as determined by the department of public health, to the school's athletic director.

If a student suffers a concussion as diagnosed by a medical professional, or is suspected to have suffered a concussion while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the student shall not return to the practice or

competition during which the student suffered, or is suspected to have suffered, a concussion and shall not participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until the student provides written authorization for such participation, from a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, certified athletic trainer or other appropriately trained or licensed health care professional as determined by the department of public health, to the school's athletic director.

(d) A coach, trainer or volunteer for an extracurricular athletic activity shall not encourage or permit a student participating in the activity to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of a student, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

(e) The superintendent of the school district or the director of a school shall maintain complete and accurate records of the district's or school's compliance with the requirements of this section. A school that fails to comply with this section, as determined by the department, shall be subject to penalties as determined by the department.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be construed to waive liability or immunity of a school district or its officers or employees. This section shall not create any liability for a course of legal action against a school district, its officers or employees.

(g) A person who volunteers to assist with an extracurricular athletic activity shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of this section, unless such person is willfully or wantonly negligent in his act or omission.

(h) The division shall adopt regulations to carry out this section.

SECTION 2. Penalties for noncompliance with the program or regulations promulgated pursuant to said section 222 of said chapter 111 shall not be imposed before January 1, 2011.

Approved July 19, 2010

Participation Requirements for Students and Parents

A. Pre-participation Requirements:

- (1) Each year, a school district or school 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 athletic 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 parent shall:

i. Complete current Department-approved training regarding head injuries and concussions in extracurricular athletic activities; and

ii. Provide the school with a certificate of completion for any Department-approved on-line course or a signed acknowledgement that they have read and understand Department-approved written materials, unless they have attended a school-sponsored training at which attendance is recorded or satisfied other means specified in school policies.

b. Before the start of every sports season, the student and the parent shall complete and submit a current Pre-participation Form, or school-based equivalent, signed by both, which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history; any head, face or cervical spine injury history; and any history of co-existent concussive injuries.

B. 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, or a school-based equivalent, and submit it to the coach, school nurse or person specified in school policies and procedures.

201.009: Documentation and Review of head Injury and Concussion History and Forms

A. The school shall ensure that all forms or information from all forms that are required by 105 CMR

201.000 are completed and reviewed and shall make arrangements for;

(1) Timely review of all Pre-participation and Report of head Injury Forms, and school-based equivalents, by coaches as to identify students who are at greater risk of repeated head injuries.

(2) Timely review of all pre-participation Forms which indicate a history of head injury and Report of Head Injury Forms, or school-based equivalents, by:

c. The school nurse, and

d. The school physician if appropriate; and

(3) Timely review of accurate, updated information regarding each athlete who has reported a history of head injury or a head injury during the sports season by:

- e. The team's physician if any, and
 - f. The school's certified athletic trainer if any.
- B. The school may use a student's history of head injury or concussion as a factor to determine whether to allow the student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity or whether to allow such participation under specific conditions or modifications.

201.010: Exclusion from Play

- 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 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 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 or his or her designee shall communicate, by the end of the next business day, with the Athletic Director(s) and school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or competition for 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 reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.
 - i. The plan shall be developed by the student's teachers, the student's guidance counselor, school nurse, certified athletic trainer if on staff, neuropsychologist if available or involved, parent, members of the building-based student support and assistance team or individualized education program team as appropriate and in consultation with the student's primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student's recovery.

- ii. The written plan shall include instructions for students, parents, and school personnel, addressing but not be limited to:
 - 1. Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate;
 - 2. Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed;
 - 3. Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities;
 - 4. Frequency of assessments, as appropriate, by the school nurse, school physician, team physician, certified athletic trainer if on staff, or neuropsychologist if available until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized; and
 - 5. 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.
- iii. The student must be completely symptom free and medically cleared as defined in 105 CMR 201.011 in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities.

201.011: 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 Director, unless another person is specified in school policy or procedure, a Department Post sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and authorization Form (herein after "Medical Clearance and Authorization Form"), or school-based equivalent, 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.

- A. Only the following individuals may authorize a student to return to play;
 - a. A duly licensed physician:

- b. A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician; or
 - c. A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery
- B. By September 2023, physicians, nurse practitioners, certified athletic trainers, and neuropsychologists providing medical clearance for return to play shall verify that they have received Department-approved training in post traumatic head injury assessment and management or have received equivalent training as part of their licensure or continuing education.

HEADS UP CONCUSSION In Youth Sports

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Concussion?

Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.

If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of concussion listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, s/he should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says s/he is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or "pressure" in head
Is confused about assignment or position	Nausea or vomiting
Forgets an instruction	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or blurry vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light
Answers questions slowly	Sensitivity to noise

Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Confusion
Can't recall events after hit or fall	Just not "feeling right" or "feeling down"

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS ON CONCUSSIONS

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding", "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or "pressure in head"
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

How Can You help Your child Prevent a Concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rule for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly. Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

What Should You do if You Think Your Child has a Concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away.

A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.

2. Keep your child out of play.

Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon – while the brain is still healing – risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

3. Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion.

Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach

REMEMBER, IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON!!!

Taken from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:

www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit: www.cdc.gov/injury

A FACT SHEET FOR ATHLETES ON CONCUSSIONS

“WHEN IN DOUBT-SIT IT OUT”

CONCUSSION Facts

- Concussion is a brain injury that alters the way your brain functions
- Concussion can occur from a blow to the head/body
 - Following contact to the head
 - Contact with the ground
- Most concussions occur without being knocked unconscious
- Severity of injury depends on many factors and is not known until symptoms resolve and brain function is back to normal.
- All concussions are not created equally. Each player is different, each injury is different and all injuries should be evaluated by a physical.

CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS

Different symptoms can occur and may not show up for several hours. Common symptoms include

• Confusion	• Feeling more emotional
• Dizziness	• Balance problems
• Double/fuzzy vision	• Feeling sluggish, foggy or groggy
• Headache	• Sleep disturbances
• Difficulty concentrating	• Irritability
• Slowed reaction time	• Sensitivity to noise and/or light
• Amnesia/difficulty remembering	• Loss of consciousness
• <i>Nausea</i>	

Symptoms may worsen with physical or mental exertion (e.g. lifting, reading, computer use)

WHY SHOULD I REPORT MY SYMPTOMS?

- Practicing or playing while experiencing symptoms can prolong the time to recover and return to play.

- Unlike other injuries, there may be significant consequences of “playing through” a concussion. Repetitive brain injury, when not treated promptly may cause permanent damage to your brain.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE HAD A CONCUSSION?

Report it. Never ignore symptoms even if they appear mild. Look out for your teammates. Tell your Coach, Athletic Trainer or Team Physician if you think you or a teammate may have had a concussion.

Get it checked Out. Your school, teammates, coaches, and trainers have your health and well being as its first priority. You will need to get clearance by a physician before returning to your sport.

Take Care of Your Brain. “Traumatic brain injury can cause a wide range of short – or long term changes affecting your thinking, sensation, language, or emotions”.

Taken from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:

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For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit:

www.cdc.gov/injury

Signature of Agreement

I have received a copy of the Douglas Middle/High School Athletic Policy Handbook. I have read and understand all athletic policies.

(student)

(date)

(parent)

(date)

******Both Parent and Student must sign Blue Card as acknowledgement that they have read and understand all policies contained in Athletic Guide Book******