

Mt. Blue Middle School

Athletic Handbook



Mt. Blue Middle School
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Philosophy

It is the belief of RSU 9 that interscholastic athletics play an important role in the total educational development of our youth. Athletics allow the student to combine academic and athletic skills in a setting that enables the student to achieve his or her maximum potential. Competition in sports teaches a young person how to function as an individual within a team in such a manner that both the individual and team benefit. Competition under proper supervision teaches the athlete how to maintain a positive attitude while experiencing the emotions associated with both winning and losing.

High standards and expectations have been set for the athlete. RSU 9 believes it is a privilege and an honor for a student to be part of an athletic team and a representative of his or her school and community. Therefore, high eligibility standards, self-discipline, honor and pride will be continually stressed.

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

Core Values

The Mt. Blue Middle School Department of Athletics:

- Stands for the dignity and equality of all people
- Believes that all people can learn throughout their lives
- Encourages exploratory developmental participation in athletics
- Supports academic excellence
- Instills confidence through learning and achievement by positive reinforcement and constructive criticism
- Encourages initiative and supports and channels individuality
- Expects individuals to take responsibility for their actions and conduct themselves with integrity

Sports Offered

Fall Athletics

Field Hockey (G, 6th-8th)

Soccer (B&G, 6th-8th)

X-Country (B&G, 6th-8th)

*if space allows to safely field a team including 6th graders (based on numbers of participants grades 7/8 first)

Winter Athletics

Basketball (B&G, 7th-8th)

Wrestling (B&G, 5th-8th)

Spring Athletics

Baseball (B, 7th-8th)

Softball (G, 7th-8th)

Track & Field (B&G, 6th-8th)

Non-School Sponsored Athletics:

Football - Contact Franklin Area Youth League - Tommy Farmer - arkaypizza@myfairpoint.net

Cheering - Contact Mt. Blue Rec Competition & Football Cheerleading - Sandra Farmer

Skiing (alpine & nordic) - F.A.S.T. - Information available at Titcomb Mountain

Please Note:

Basketball, baseball & softball are cut-sports, and there is a limit to the number of participants. Coaches are to carry no more than 15 athletes on these teams. The list of athletes that are chosen for these teams will be based on academic and co-curricular eligibility, try-out performance, and attitude.

Tryouts

Tryouts for programs are open to all students that meet the eligibility criteria for the particular sport. This will include:

- Academic eligibility (based on the previous reporting period (quarter or semester); with the exception of incoming 6th graders during the fall season)
- School citizenship
- Parent Permission / proof of health insurance
- Basic physical / health qualifications - athletic physical must be up-to-date and on file with the school

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

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

It is the coach's responsibility to evaluate and communicate with each athlete during the tryout period and decide which students will be placed on the team. After cuts have been made, students can approach the coach with questions specific to their own situation. Students cut from a team will be encouraged to participate on another team if available or in a recreational program if available.

Playing Time

There are many benefits gained by participating in athletics at the middle school level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, coping, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participation within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence.

Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is “playing time” during contests. If a student has questions about his/her playing time, he/she is encouraged to discuss them with the coach.

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

Code of Behavior for Athletes

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

The player will:

- Treat officials with respect and approach them courteously when asking for explanations
- Accept victory modestly and graciously
- Respect decisions as they are made and abide by them
- Display positive emotion and behavior
- Never cheat, swear, bet or grandstand
- Keep physically fit and observe all the training rules
- Use his/her influence on and off the court/field to help develop good spectator sportsmanship
- Exhibit courteous behavior towards visiting team members, team officials and spectators
- Play for the joy of playing and the success of the team

Eligibility & Code of Conduct

The following information has been taken directly from [Policy JJJ-R: Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Code of Conduct](#):

Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Code of Conduct for Middle and High School Students

Since participation in extra and co-curricular activities is a privilege, it is important that students, parents/guardians and other interested persons are aware of the following rules and regulations. As representatives of the schools, students are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. These rules are adopted by the School Board in order to support the social, emotional and physical well-being of students and promote healthy, enriching and safe extra and co-curricular opportunities for all students.

The following rules shall govern student participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. The list of extra and co-curricular activities will be updated annually by the principals and made available on request. Participation is defined as beginning with the first day of participation in any meeting, practice, contest or performance and ending at the conclusion of the activity or school year (whichever comes later).

General Expectations:

1. Students in good standing may participate in the extra and co-curricular activities of their school. A student is considered in good standing if he/she is not the subject of any disciplinary action for violation of any policy or school rule and is currently academically eligible based on MPA guidelines and this policy.
2. All participants are expected to come to school ready to learn on all scheduled school days. Regular school attendance is required of all participants.
3. Students suspended from school (including in-school and out-of-school suspension) will not practice, participate, attend or compete in extra and co-curricular activities during the days of suspension.
4. Students are required to abide by all Board policies, school rules and any additional rules, and/or training guidelines imposed by coaches or advisors. Any additional rules and/or training guidelines must be consistent with Board policies and be approved by the Extra/Co-Curricular Administrator in advance of the season/activity.
5. Student use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs is illegal and negatively affects student health, safety and performance. Students participating in extra and co-curricular activities carry a responsibility to themselves, their fellow students, coaches/advisors, parents/guardian and school to set the highest possible example of conduct, sportsmanship and training, which includes avoiding any involvement with tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Therefore, students participating in extra and co-curricular activities may not engage in the prohibited behaviors and activities described in JICH-R at any time or place from the beginning of the student's first extra or co-curricular activity of the school year through the last extra or co-curricular activity of the school year. Any team, club, or group suspensions imposed that cannot be completed in the current year shall be carried forth to the next school year.

6. Students and their parents/guardians are required to sign the Extra/Co-Curricular Contract, as well as all other required paperwork, as a condition of participating in extra and co-curricular activities. Students participating in fall extra and co-curricular activities and their parents/guardians must sign the contract, as well as all other required paperwork, at the beginning of pre-season. All other students who plan to participate in extra and co-curricular activities at any time during the school year and their parents/guardians must sign the contract, as well as all other required paperwork, prior to beginning their first activity.

Rules and Regulations

A. Parental/Guardian Consent and Permission Forms

A student may not participate in any teams, groups, or clubs until a signed parental/guardian consent/permission form has been completed and returned to the appropriate school office each school year. This form must indicate permission to participate, verification of adequate and appropriate health/accident insurance (where applicable), and agreement to abide by all Mt. Blue Regional School District's District Rules and Regulations.

B. Academic Eligibility Rules

The Principal or his/her designee is responsible for certifying the eligibility of all students participating in extra and co-curricular activities.

A student must take six (6) courses/credits, in order to participate in extra and co-curricular activities. Students involved in extra and co-curricular activities **MAY NOT** drop courses that they are passing after the season ends unless there are extenuating circumstances and have the principal's permission.

All students must have a minimum course score of 60 and a meets-partially meets on Habits of Work at the end of each **quarter**.

All students must have a minimum cumulative course score of 60 and a meets-partially meets on Habits of Work at the end of the **year** in order to be eligible for the subsequent fall season.

The following supports are available for students:

- Teacher assistance before or after school
- Academic Support Block(MBC)/Targets Focus Lab (MBMS)
- Extended Day Program
- Extended Year Program
- Success and Innovation Center (MBC)

If a student fails to maintain eligibility status in any subject he/she will be declared ineligible to participate or compete in extra and co-curricular activities for the following quarter. Students who are placed on academic probation will be allowed an opportunity to participate, depending on their eligibility status.

Academic Probation is defined as follows: The student will be able to practice, but unable to compete or lead such activities until each course score and Habits of Work score for the current reporting period reaches an eligible level on the bi-weekly progress report. The student will be responsible for taking the progress report sheet to his/her teachers every two weeks, to monitor his/her progress. This sheet is to be returned to the Main Office and a copy brought to the coach or advisor. If the student is eligible at the end of two weeks, he/she may return to full participation in the extra or co-curricular activity, with continuing review every two weeks. Otherwise he/she will remain eligible to practice only. This policy applies to all sports, sports managers, jazz band, drama, class officers, student council, clubs, etc. It does not include any curriculum offering where credit is granted such as performing arts classes (e.g. chorus, concert band, orchestra, library aides, etc.)

If a student receives a failing or incomplete grade, he/she shall become ineligible when official academic reports are issued. Students with incomplete scores will have two weeks to make up incompletes and will remain ineligible until work is made up and assessed.

Students may gain eligibility by attending an accredited extended year program. The student's grade shall be determined by the formula prescribed by the district's extended year regulations.

Students who lose course credit for failing to satisfy the provisions of the district's attendance policy will be considered ineligible immediately at which point they may petition to be put on probation. This probation will include the student maintaining passing scores in all courses that total six (6) or more credits, as well as have no further undocumented absences. The student will be monitored every two weeks (attendance and scores) in order to participate. Mt. Blue School District encourages their students to monitor their eligibility throughout the whole year.

Health Insurance

All athletes must be insured to participate on a Mt. Blue team. **RSU 9 does not provide health insurance for students.** Low cost insurance can be purchased through RSU 9 at the family's expense.

Physical Examination

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

Policy for Suspension of Student Athletes for Reasons other than Stated in Student Handbook

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

Procedural Guidelines for Parental Concerns

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

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

The order outlined above must be followed and skipping steps is not an appropriate way to handle the situation.

Transportation Policy

All team members representing RSU 9 in interscholastic competition or attending RSU 9 sponsored events must be transported to and from the site of the event on RSU 9 vehicles except under the following circumstances:

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

It is the intent of the district to move students to and from activities in RSU 9 vehicles whenever practical.

Parental/Fan Responsibilities

Spectators should:

- Realize that they represent the school and always conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Respect the decisions of the officials. Insist that visiting teams and spectators receive the utmost courtesy while in town and on school property.
- Inappropriate behavior at games may result in that individual being removed from the game site and being barred from future contests both home and away.

Coaching Expectations

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

The coach should teach:

- That participation in athletics is a part of the student's education.
- The athlete should neither ask for academic privileges nor receive them.
- That participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right, that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the team, to the student body, to the community and to themselves. In their play and conduct, they represent all of these groups.

- That it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly.
- Respect and consideration for opponents as either the guests or the host at a game.

The coach should:

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

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

Athletes and their families can expect the following from coaches:

- **Communication** - Practice, game schedules and other time commitments, consistent with the guidelines mentioned previously in this booklet, will be distributed in writing to all team members. Team rules and regulations, in addition to ones stated in this booklet, will be well-defined, distributed, discussed, and enforced with all team members. It is the responsibility of each player to demonstrate that he/she understands the information and can meet the criteria. Self-discipline of all student athletes will be encouraged. Penalties for rule violations will also be well defined, and applied fairly and consistently.

- **Individual Success** - The coach will make every attempt to provide an opportunity in practice and contests for each athlete to succeed to the best of his/her abilities. The least skilled athlete deserves the same energy of teaching as the highly skilled.
- **Social and Emotional Growth** - The coach will attempt to assist each athlete to grow socially and emotionally. This aim is most easily accomplished with positive feedback and timely and sensitive communication with each individual team member.
- **Team Spirit / School Spirit** - The coach will attempt to instill and promote school and team spirit and cohesiveness.
- **Athletic Performance** - Individual performance by an athlete will be critiqued by a coach and shared with each student at the appropriate time. Each athlete will be encouraged to work towards his/her full potential and each coach shall be involved in developing a positive self-image in all team members. Coaches will not negatively critique an athlete, team or opposing team's performance.
- **Skill Development** - Each athlete will be taught the rules and skills of the game. In addition, each athlete should leave our program technically and tactically improved and with a better understanding of the sport.
- **Approachability** - The coach will be available to all of his/her athletes. Team members are encouraged to approach the coach about any topic relating to their participation in the sport. Students should make every attempt to approach the coach when there is sufficient time for worthwhile discussion. Coaches should be open and receptive and encourage these individual opportunities to educate and communicate.

Injury Procedure

All coaches will be encouraged to complete a course in First Aid and CPR. All coaches will be encouraged to complete a training seminar in athletic training / conditioning and to update those when necessary.

1. Report the incident immediately and complete the appropriate accident / injury report within 24 hours of the incident occurring and turn into the Athletic Director.
2. The coach is responsible for accompanying the injured athlete to the hospital when the parent is not available.
3. If necessary, the play shall be suspended if a team has only one coach and that coach must go to the hospital with the injured athlete. The remaining team members will be left in the care of the RSU 9 bus driver on away trips or the opposing school's officials.
4. RSU 9 coaches shall not attempt to render aid which exceeds their expertise. Where there is doubt regarding an athlete's condition, a coach should seek a medical diagnosis from a qualified person.

Evaluation of Coaches

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

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

Athletic Facilities

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

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

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