



FREELAND
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

freelandathletics.com

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Dear Falcon Supporters:

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the world of athletics at Freeland Community Schools. We, along with 18 other schools, are members of the Tri Valley Conference. The conference is divided into two divisions, the TVC Red and the TVC Blue/White. Freeland is a member of the TVC Red division. The Freeland Community School District offers 15 different sports, of which many include sub varsity and middle school levels.

The Athletic Department is responsible for: the scheduling of teams, securing qualified coaches, contracting with game officials, preparing fields of play, securing transportation, purchasing equipment and uniforms, scheduling practice times, determining eligibility, securing volunteers to be scorers, security, and ticket takers, helping to monitor our student/athletes, instilling good sportsmanship, and making sure the event is actually played. As a supporter of Freeland athletics, your job includes: respecting the integrity and judgement of game officials, recognizing and showing appreciation for an outstanding play by either team, understanding the rules of the game, showing respect for opposing players, coaches and spectator support groups, using cheers that support the teams involved, being a positive role model through your actions, and enjoying high school athletics for the positive learning experience that it is.

The pages contained within this booklet should serve as a guide for how your son or daughter can experience Freeland athletics in the most favorable light possible. We have enclosed information, which is pertinent to the understanding, development, performance, dedication, commitment, and enjoyment of athletics here at Freeland. Before your child begins their athletic career at our school, please take the time to read through this booklet with them. Should you have any remaining questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Freeland athletic department at (989) 695-5986 during the normal school day.

We are looking forward to meeting many parents and athletes in the coming academic year. Please feel free to stop by and introduce yourself when you have a moment. Your children and the support you provide are what make Freeland athletics possible. We are excited about the future of our athletic program. We are encouraged and motivated by Falcon pride and tradition, and most of all we are appreciative of the opportunity to provide meaningful athletic activities to the young athletes of our community. It is our hope and goal to work positively with all student athletes and their adult supporters.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bell and the Freeland School District Athletic Coaching Staff

Go Falcons!!

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

Athletics is an integral part of a high school educational experience and is properly considered an extension of the classroom. The goal of the Freeland Athletic Department is to develop the character traits, leadership skills and sportsmanship of our students. We expect to positively impact our athletes not only in the techniques and strategies of their sport, but also in the attainment of life-long skills and appreciation for physical fitness. We want our student-athletes to understand that successful athletes are those who set goals and strive toward the accomplishment of those goals. Successful athletes are honest and hardworking students who endure personal sacrifice and persevere through the journey of self and team improvement. Those student-athletes who accept the challenges of participation and always give their best effort can only be classified as winners.

Middle School Philosophy: The purpose of Middle School Athletic Programs is to provide opportunities and to encourage students to participate in a variety of activities and prepare individuals for the high school level. Skill development, teamwork and love for sport are the fundamental objectives. At the Middle School level, we believe that participation in an athletic event is more important than the outcome of the contest. Therefore, every effort will be made to play all eligible athletes in every event as long as the athlete has earned the right to participate in contests. However, due to individual skill levels, playing time may not be equal and will be left to the discretion of the coach.

4 **Freshman Philosophy:** Freshman athletic programs strive to provide a positive learning experience for all players while building a successful team concept and fundamental skills. Athletes at this level will learn in both practice and in games the value of hard work, improved skill development, sacrifice, and teamwork as they prepare for the challenges at the JV and Varsity levels. While winning is always a goal, improvement is the focus at the freshman level. Playing time may not be equal and while it is our desire that every athlete participates in a contest, there may be some circumstances where an athlete will not be in the contest.

Junior Varsity Philosophy: Junior Varsity athletic programs are structured to prepare players for future participation in Varsity level sports. While continuing to build individual skills and team loyalty, players are also prepared to be competitive with opposing teams. Participation in contests is determined by the player's ability to contribute to the success of the team.

Varsity Philosophy: The educational value of interscholastic competition is measured in many ways. One of which is winning. Varsity athletic programs aim to be as competitive as possible while developing capable and mature athletes. Every player has a defined role and is expected to contribute to the success of the team. Participation in contests, however, is determined by the player's ability to assist the team in winning contests.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA):

All Freeland athletes, coaches and the Freeland Athletic Department will abide by all rules and regulations of the MHSAA including, but not limited to, those dealing with eligibility, number of contests allowed per season, use of registered officials and off-season activities.

2. Tri-Valley Conference:

Freeland is a member of the Tri-Valley Conference. There are currently eighteen schools, divided into two divisions within the conference. They are as follows:

TVC Red

Alma
 Bay City John Glenn
 Birch Run
 Bridgeport
 Essexville Garber
 Frankenmuth
 Freeland
 Swan Valley

TVC Blue/White

Bullock Creek
 Carrollton
 Hemlock
 Ithaca
 Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS)
 Millington
 Nouvel Catholic Central
 Standish Sterling
 St. Louis
 Valley Lutheran

3. Sport Offerings:

The following activities are currently offered at Freeland:

Fall

Football
 Volleyball*
 Boy's Soccer
 Girl's Golf
 Boy's Cross Country*
 Girls Cross Country*
 Sideline Cheer
 Pom Pons*

Winter

Boy's Basketball*
 Girl's Basketball*
 Wrestling*
 Boy's Bowling
 Girl's Bowling
 Ice Hockey**#
 Competitive Cheer*
 Pom Pons*

Spring

Baseball
 Softball
 Boy's Track*
 Girl's Track*
 Girl's Soccer
 Boy's Golf
 #Boys
 Lacrosse

* Sport is also offered at the Middle School level

**Self Funded sport at the High School level

#Cooperative Programs

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

Too little, too late...Many junior and senior athletes in line to receive athletic scholarships are discovering that they will be academically ineligible to participate in Division I and II, III or NAIA colleges and universities because they have failed to meet the academic standards set by the NCAA or NAIA Eligibility Clearinghouse. If you see any possibility that your son or daughter might want to participate in college athletics, please check with his or her counselor for current NCAA or NAIA academic standards, (web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/) You can also review the recruiting webinar for parents, athletes and schools found on MHSAA.com.

It is the athlete's and the parent(s) responsibility to meet college entrance requirements.

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION: ELIGIBILITY

1. Enrollment

You must have been enrolled in a high school or junior high/middle school no later than the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1st semester) or the fourth Friday of February (2nd semester). A student must also be enrolled in and receiving credit in at least 66% of a full credit load potential for a full time student, in the school for which he or she is participating for.

2. Age

High school students become ineligible if they reach their nineteenth birthday before September 1 of the current school year. A disability waiver may be applied if disability meets the new MHSAA guidelines. The maximum age for a seventh grader is fourteen and for an eighth grader it is fifteen.

3. Semesters of Enrollment

You must not have been enrolled in grades nine to twelve inclusive, for more than eight semesters. The seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school beyond the fourth Friday after Labor Day (first semester), or fourth Friday of February (second semester), or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic contests, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester under this rule. No limit for seventh or eighth graders.

4. Semesters of Competition

You must not have competed for more than four first and four second semester seasons in a sport in a four-year high school.

5. Transfers

A student enrolled in grades 9 through 12 who transfers from one high school or jr. high/middle school to another high school is not immediately eligible to participate in an interscholastic athletic contest or scrimmage in the school to which the student transfers, UNLESS the student qualifies under one or more of the MHSAA exceptions. All transfers should contact the Athletic Director immediately for a ruling.

6. Previous Semester Record - High School

No student shall compete in any interscholastic scrimmage or contest who does not have to his or her credit in the official records of the school to be represented, at least 66 percent of full credit load potential for a full-time student for the last semester/trimester during which he or she shall have been enrolled in grades 9-12, inclusive.

7. Previous Semester Record- Middle School

No student shall compete in any junior high/middle school interscholastic scrimmage or contest during the current semester/trimester who does not have in the official records of the school represented for the last semester/trimester credit in at least 50 percent of the total periods carried. An academic term is a period during which a student has been enrolled in grades 6, 7 or 8, prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day of the fourth Friday of February, or during which he or she will have taken part in any interscholastic athletic contests. However, a first time 7th grade student may participate without reference to his or her record in the previous grade: but a student who repeats grade 7 or 8 is subject to previous semester/trimester academic requirements.

8. Physical Examinations

No student shall be eligible to participate for a high/middle school for whom there is not on file in the offices of the superintendent or principal or athletic director of that school, signed statements for the current school year certifying that (1) the student has passed a physical examination and is physically able to compete in athletic try-outs, practices and contests (2) there has been consent for disclosure to the MHSAA of information otherwise protected by FERPA and HIPAA for the purposes of determining eligibility for interscholastic athletes: and (3) there has been a signed acknowledgement and assumption of risk by student and the parent or guardian or 18 year-old student, as well as an annual concussion awareness acknowledgement. The physical MUST be dated after April 15th of the previous school year.

In cases of serious injury or extended illness, including concussion or symptoms of concussion and symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest, there must be a statement signed by the examining MD, DO, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner that the student has been examined and is physically able to return to athletic tryouts, practices and contests. In addition, failure to comply with the concussion protocols shall result in forfeiture of contests.

9. Limited Team Membership

A student who, after practicing with (including tryouts) or participating in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest as a member of a high school athletic team, participates in any athletic competition not sponsored by his or her school in the same sport, during the same season, shall become ineligible for a minimum of the next three (3) days of competition and a maximum of the remainder of that season in that school year. See the Athletic Director for exceptions to this rule.

FREELAND'S ACADEMIC AND CITIZENSHIP ELIGIBILITY

1. Cumulative Grade

Each student athlete must be passing all classes that he or she is enrolled in to be eligible for participation in athletics. Eligibility will be checked each week and is based on the students' cumulative marking period or semester grade. Athletes failing any class will not be eligible for the next week of competition. The student and parent(s) should be contacted by the teacher involved. Coaches will make contact with the athletic department in regards to weekly eligibility. Weekly eligibility will be run each Friday morning, and will be enforced for the following week of competition, Sunday through Saturday. If an athlete receives a failing grade for three consecutive weeks, they may be removed from the team

Semester grades will be used for eligibility for the last week of the semester. A student failing a class at the end of the semester will be ineligible for the first two weeks of the new semester. Eligibility checks for the marking period/semester will begin during the third week of the new marking period/semester.

High School athletes are expected to attend competitions if they are ineligible, but may not dress. Middle School athletes are not allowed to attend competitions while they are ineligible.

2. Student Behavior

A student may be rated unsatisfactory in student behavior by two or more teachers. Student behavior will be checked each week with the grade eligibility. If a student is rated unsatisfactory by two teachers, he/she will be ineligible to participate in athletics for that eligibility period. A student will receive a separate probationary week, separate from academics, for behavior issues.

Eligibility Marks:

Grade reports will be pulled every Friday. At that time, any athlete with a failing grade will be ineligible to compete the following week. Athletes and parents should check Skyward for your athlete's grades on Wednesdays so they can communicate with teachers in advance of the athletic department running the Friday report, in an effort to bring their grade up prior to the report being run.

Eligibility week is from Sunday to Saturday.

FREELAND'S ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletes contribute to their school in a special way. They can either be a credit to athletics and to the school they represent or they can be a discredit. Proper conduct on the part of athletes is therefore of the utmost importance. This code of conduct has been formulated as a standard to be met by all athletes.

Athletes are very visible within the school and community. They are in a unique position to serve as positive examples to other students. Therefore, every athlete must conduct herself/himself in such a manner as to be a credit to her/his parents, the school, the community and to themselves. This standard should be upheld both on and off the field.

PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS IS A PRIVILEGE, NOT A RIGHT. THIS PRIVILEGE MUST BE EARNED.

SELF DISCLOSURE

If an athlete voluntarily reports a violation along with his/her parents, in a timely manner and before any official reports are made to the superintendent, principals, or athletic director, the athlete will have their first violation recorded, but will retain their eligibility to play in any contests or games. This rule applies only to the athlete's first violation.

Possession, use or abuse of tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances:

Any athlete at Freeland High School who is found to have been using or in possession of any tobacco, alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or performance enhancing drugs, through admission, compelling visual or documented evidence as determined by the Athletic Director and/or Principal, or information from Law Enforcement Agencies, will be disciplined under the following guidelines.

- 1st Violation:** Suspension from a minimum of 10% of the scheduled athletic contests from the date of violation. The athlete must continue to practice, unless an agreement has been made with the coach.
- 2nd Violation:** Suspension from a minimum of 50% of the scheduled athletic contests from the date of violation. The athlete must continue to practice, unless an agreement has been made with the coach.
- 3rd Violation:** Suspension from athletics for one calendar year from the date of violation.
- 4th Violation:** Permanent suspension from athletics for the remainder of high school eligibility period.

In order for action to be taken, all incidents must be substantiated by one (1) of the following: student admission, compelling visual or documented evidence as determined by the Athletic Director and/or Principal, or information from Law Enforcement Agencies.

Violation of a Criminal Nature:

If an athlete is involved in a case of a criminal nature such as theft, vandalism, assault, etc., regardless of whether it was committed at school or off school property, their actions will be subject to review by the Athletic Director and/or Principal to determine if disciplinary action should be taken. If the need for disciplinary action is determined, the athlete will be suspended while a committee comprised of the principal athletic director, coach of the sport involved, and a district coach will be established to evaluate the situation.

This will include:

1. Reviewing the conduct of the athlete and the facts and circumstances of the incident
2. The athlete involved may request an informal meeting so that he/she may present his/her version.
3. School officials accepting, when possible, the recommendations of court officials in handling criminal law violations by students.

Upon review, the committee will determine what further disciplinary action shall be taken.

Hazing Policies:

Hazing is strictly prohibited. Because hazing is unsafe, and can discourage participation as well as negatively affect a student's enjoyment in athletic participation and school, all forms of hazing are prohibited. Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

10 Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

Any gesture or written, verbal or physical act that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know would have the effect of harming a student or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person, or damage to his or her property; any type of physical force, harm or injury inflicted by athletes on their team members such as: whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking or placing an unwanted substance on the student's body; any type of coerced or involuntary sexual or physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics, or other coerced or unwelcome confinement, restriction or other forced activity by athletes on their fellow team members; any coerced or involuntary activity by athletes on their team members that subjects the athletes to an unreasonable risk of harm or adversely affects their mental or physical health, safety, or welfare; any coerced or involuntary activity inflicted, encouraged or mandated by athletes on their team members, such as the consumption of alcoholic beverages, illegal, unauthorized, or foreign substances of any type whatsoever, tobacco or tobacco products, over the counter medicine or prescription drugs, or any other unreasonable risk of harm or activity that adversely affects an athlete's mental or physical health, safety, welfare or interest in the sport.

For the purpose of this rule, a team member's voluntary participation in hazing is not necessarily a defense to a claimed violation of this rule. Athletes, who organize or initiate hazing activities but do not directly participate in them, are equally subject to possible discipline as students who directly participate in acts of hazing. Student athletes are required to report suspected incidents of hazing and may be disciplined for failure to do so. Student athletes may not participate or initiate hazing activities against any athlete regardless of team affiliations (i.e. varsity athletes may not "haze" junior varsity athletes).

For lesser incidents, penalties shall be the same as for possession, use or abuse of tobacco, alcohol or controlled substances. Should the Athletic Director and/or Principal determine the incident serious enough that further disciplinary actions need to be taken, they have the ability to select the appropriate consequence from the disciplinary progression.

Cell Phone/Social Media/Cameras

Electronic communication devices are not allowed to be used inside of our locker rooms. Use of these devices in any manner that discredits the school, our students, students from other schools, or our district as a whole is prohibited. Should the Athletic Director and/or Principal determine the incident serious enough that disciplinary actions need to be taken, they have the ability to select the appropriate consequences.

Code of Conduct Notes:

- If necessary, suspension will carry over into another sport during the same school year, or will carry over into another school year, in order to meet or exceed the necessary discipline percentage. This will depend entirely upon the date of the violation and the number of contests involved in the suspension. Suspension will be for fewest number of full contests, in a completed athletic season, that meets or exceeds the necessary discipline percentage.
- Penalties shall be cumulative, beginning with the student's participation in interscholastic athletics in the 7th grade.
- Violations occurring over the summer, or at a time when the student is not involved in a sport, will carry over to the next sport in which the athlete participates

No handbook can list every offense that may be detrimental to students or the learning environment. Therefore, other offenses not listed but deemed inappropriate to the school environment are subject to discipline at the discretion of the School Administration.

Disciplinary Appeal Process:

Parents or guardians may request a conference with the Principal. Such request shall be within the period of the suspension. The Principal will judge whether the disciplinary action is reasonable, and will affirm or modify the determined disciplinary action. The Principal's decision will be final.

COMMON ATHLETIC CONCERNS

Athletic Registrations:

Athletic Registration will take place electronically at planeths.com. In the registration process you will get information concerning the sports physical, verification that you have read the concussion information form contained in the handbook, the athletic registration fee and handbook review verification. If you have questions or concerns with the electronic registration process, please contact the athletic office.

Equipment:

An athlete is financially responsible for all equipment checked out to him/her. Equipment must be treated as though it were their own. It must not be abused, and should only be worn during practices or games. All equipment must be returned to the coach at the end of the sport season. Athletes are required to pay for any lost items and may be restricted from participating in any other extra-curricular activity or practice session until this obligation has been met.

Transportation:

An athlete traveling to and from an away athletic contest as a member of a school team on a school approved mode of transportation shall return to the school or some predetermined drop off point after the contest is over. If written permission is given to the Coach, a student athlete may return home based on the written permission that was given to and approved by the Coach. A copy of the written permission should be attached to the transportation form provided by the transportation department.

Weekend transportation to all regularly scheduled athletic contests is not provided by the school district. State tournament transportation will continue to be provided. Special exceptions for weekend transportation may be approved by the athletic director.

Athletes represent the school while traveling as a team. It is expected that the athlete's conduct will be that of a good citizen at all times. Dress requirements may be established by each individual coach, and each athlete should dress in accordance with those requirements.

Attendance:

A student athlete must be in attendance at school **all day** in order to participate in that day's practice or contest. All day means the athlete must attend all of their scheduled classes.

Exceptions may be granted by the principal, athletic director or designee. The athletic office must have prior notice in order for the athlete to be excused from the all-day attendance requirement for practice and competition. The principal and/or the athletic director will make the decision for absences due to "unexpected situations".

An athlete who is on suspension from regular school attendance may NOT practice or take part in interscholastic competition on the day(s) in which the suspension is in effect.

Multi-Sport Athletes:

Athletes may not participate in more than one sport at any given time, unless prior arrangements have been made with the athletic director and the coaches that are involved. Athletes must notify, in writing, the athletic department as to which sport is primary. The athletic department will also receive a copy of a schedule showing which events the athlete will participate in. The athlete, parent(s) and each coach should sign and agree to the athlete's decision. Any athlete may, before the first contest of the season of a particular sport, elect to withdraw from a team in preference for another sport. However, once an athlete has participated in a game or meet as a member of a team, the athlete will not be permitted to change to another school-sponsored sport during that season without mutual consent of both coaches, and approval from the athletic department.

Insurance:

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury, which may range in severity. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate the risk. Participants have the responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury. Players must obey all safety rules, report all physical problems to their coaches follow a proper conditioning program and inspect their own equipment daily. For insurance purposes, athletes are covered under their own home policies. If an athlete is not covered under an insurance policy, they should explore the option of the catastrophic accident and concussion medical insurance provided through the MHSAA.

EXPECTATIONS

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 children. As parents, when your children become 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.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Locations and times of all practices and contests
3. Team requirements; i.e. practices, special equipment, out of season conditioning
4. Procedure followed should your child be injured during participation
5. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation

Communication coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of a schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

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

Examples:

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's attitude
4. Academic support and college opportunities

It is difficult to accept your child is not playing as much or where you hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgments based upon what they believe to be best for the team and all student/athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things should be left to the discretion of the coach.

Examples:

1. Team strategy
2. Other students/athletes

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

1. Call the coach to set up an appointment
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic director. A meeting will be set up for you.
3. If the problem is not resolved, then an appointment will be set up that will include the parent(s), coach and athletic director. In some cases, the student athlete may also be invited to the meeting.
4. If a resolution is not agreed upon after this meeting, the building principal should be contacted.
5. If no resolution is agreed upon at this point, an appointment can be set up with the superintendent.
6. "THE 24 HOUR RULE" Please do not attempt to approach or confront a coach before or after a contest or practice, in which you are unsatisfied. These are emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. If an appointment is needed, please see the above procedure.

THERE SHOULD NEVER BE ANY PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH ANY OF OUR COACHES.

Research indicates students involved in co-curricular activities have a greater chance for success during adulthood. Many of the character traits required to be a successful in athletics are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope the information provided in our handbook will make both your child's and your experience with the Freeland athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.

TEN BASIC BELIEFS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS IN MICHIGAN

1. Interscholastic athletics were begun outside the school day and curriculum and remain there as voluntary, extracurricular programs in which qualifying students earn the privilege of participation.
2. Interscholastic athletics are not courses offered by schools but are tools used by schools to reach and motivate students and to rally support within the community for schools academic and activity programs.
3. In order to justify school sponsorship, interscholastic athletics must be compatible with the academic mission of schools, giving priority deference to the academic schedule and requiring proper decorum at athletic events.
4. Interscholastic athletics are secondary to the academic program of schools and are partners with schools' non-athletic activities in providing students opportunities to develop loyalty and school spirit, to practice teamwork, hard work, discipline, sacrifice, leadership and sportsmanship and to gain lifetime appreciation for the arts, sports and healthy lifestyle.
5. There is equal potential to achieve these objectives in every sport and on the sub varsity as well as varsity level.
6. Proper philosophy of interscholastic athletics emphasizes participation by many, not for few, and academic scholarship in school, not athletic scholarships to college.
7. To promote competitive equity and a program that is educational in both its means and its ends, the policies and procedures of interscholastic athletics must be determined by school representatives, not by courts, legislators or commercial interests.
8. Schools, through their elected boards of education and their appointed administrators, are solely responsible, legally and practically, for governing and conducting interscholastic athletics at the local and league levels.
9. Any statewide organization which schools join to assist their administration of interscholastic athletics must be independent of outside interests and guided exclusively by the direct input of its member schools.
10. Interstate competition in interscholastic athletics is unnecessary in most situations; regional and national events are harmful to the purposes of interscholastic athletics in Michigan.

UNDERSTANDING CONCUSSION

Some Common Symptoms

Headache	Balance Problems	Sensitive to Noise	Poor Concentration	Not "Feeling Right"
Pressure in the Head	Double Vision	Sluggishness	Memory Problems	Feeling Irritable
Nausea/Vomiting	Blurry Vision	Haziness	Confusion	Slow Reaction Time
Dizziness	Sensitive to Light	Fogginess	"Feeling Down"	Sleep Problems
		Grogginess	Lost Consciousness	

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 a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A concussion can be caused by a shaking, spinning or a sudden stopping and starting of 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. A concussion can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussions can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If the student reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you notice symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. A student who may have had a concussion should not return to play on the day of the injury and until a health care professional says they are okay to return to play.

IF YOU SUSPECT A CONCUSSION:

1. **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY- DON'T HIDE IT, REPORT IT.** Playing or practicing with concussion symptoms is dangerous and can lead to a longer recovery. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to regular activities, including sports. Ignoring symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes it worse.
2. **KEEP YOUR STUDENT OUT OF PLAY-** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let the student return to play the day of injury and until a health care professional says it's okay. A student, who returns to play too soon, while the brain is still healing, risks a greater chance of having a second concussion. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. Repeat or second concussions increase the time it takes to recover and can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting the student for a lifetime. They can be fatal. It is better to miss one game than the whole season.
3. **TELL THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION-** Schools should know if a student had a previous concussion. A student's school may not know about a concussion received in another sport or activity unless you notify them.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS:

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

CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. A student should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body s/he exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people/places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless or agitated
- Has unusual behavior
- Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.)

HOW TO RESPOND TO A REPORT OF A CONCUSSION:

If a student reports one or more symptoms of a concussion after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, s/he must be kept out of athletic activity the day of the injury. The student shall only return to activity (practice, scrimmage or competition) with written unconditional permission from an MD, DO, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner. During recovery, rest is key. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration (such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Students who return to school after a concussion may need to spend fewer hours at school, take rests breaks, be given extra help and time, spend less time reading, writing or on a computer. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be monitored *by* a health care professional.

Remember: Concussion affects people differently. While most students with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.