

**Imlay City Schools
Department of Athletics**

Core Beliefs Regarding the Role of Coaches

Athletic preparation for contests provides numerous teachable moments for students, particularly when coaches assume the teacher responsibility of positive role models. Coaches, as teachers, should be role models to enhance the learning climate of athletics. In order for coaches to assist student-athletes in meeting the core beliefs of the program, we ask that they do the following:

Program Objectives

- Help players redefine what it means to be a winner through a mastery, rather than a scoreboard, orientation. Victory should be seen as a by-product of the pursuit of excellence. (Re: A ‘winner’ is someone who makes maximum effort, continues to learn and improve, and does not let mistakes, or fear of mistakes, stop them in their pursuit of excellence).
- Place an emphasis on effort rather than outcome and on learning rather than comparison to other players.
- Teach players that a key to success is how one responds to mistakes and to obstacles.
- Set standards for continuous improvement for players, with attention to mastering fundamentals and an understanding of the game.
- Encourage players, whatever their level of ability, to strive to become the best players and people, they can be.
- Encourage healthy competition not only for the tangible reward, but also for the development of positive attitudes that make athletic competition valuable and worthwhile.
- Assist students in developing attitudes toward individual health habits, appearance on and off the field, as well as a life-long interest in sport.
- Assist students in developing and maintaining the highest level of sportsmanship.
- Foster school spirit by promoting other sports and co-curricular activities.

Establish Effective Coaching Relationships with Student-Athletes

- Positively motivate players – refuse to motivate through fear, intimidation, or shame. Motivate players in ways that do not compromise their dignity.
- Use praise, compliments, and positive recognition to build confidence and self-esteem of players.

- Provide truthful and specific feedback and resist the temptation to give praise that is not warranted.
- Communicate criticism to players in ways that do not undermine their sense of self-worth.
- Establish order and maintain program/team discipline in a positive fashion.
- Listen to players and involve them in decisions that affect the team, as appropriate.
- Maintain a positive attitude and focus even when things are not going well.
- Use adverse situations as “teachable moments.”
- Do not demean yourself, your players or the environment.
- Treat student-athletes with respect, regardless of their ability to perform.
- Encourage players to make a commitment to each other and to encourage one another on and off the field.

Personal and Professional Conduct and Responsibilities

- Uphold the spirit and letter of the rules of the sport, MHSAA policies and handbook regulations.
- Demonstrate respect for opponents.
- Understand the important role of officials and show them respect, even in disagreement.
- Demonstrate integrity – a willingness to win without dishonoring yourself, the team, the sport and its rules.
- Maintain the highest standard of ethics, recognize each participant as an individual who will conduct him/herself in a manner befitting his/her responsibilities, and develop the kind of rapport with the broader school community that will improve the total educational program.
- Act as a role model for student-athletes, display leadership and develop respect from athletes, coaches, parents and community.
- Communicate important information to stakeholders of the program, most notably parents and school personnel, and including public relations with media as appropriate.
- Uses sound, acceptable coaching practices.
- Participate, as applicable, in activities to improve coaching performance.

The core beliefs are designed to serve as a touchstone for coaches throughout their daily practice. A parent feedback form will be mailed near the completion of your child’s sport season. It gives you the opportunity to give feedback based on the performance of the coach in the areas described above.

Requests for Parent Support of the Athletic Program

We are excited to have your child participate in the Imlay City athletic program. We invite you to work together with your child's coach and the Imlay City athletic department to ensure that the experience is positive and productive. Following are program requests of parents of student athletes that we believe will help accomplish that goal:

- Please be positive with your son / daughter. Let your child know that being part of a team is a significant accomplishment. Help them learn that the worth of participating in athletics is not limited to the tangible rewards, but also the development of positive attitudes, self-discipline and learning of life lessons that make athletic competition valuable and worthwhile.
- Please do not offer excuses to your child if he / she is not playing. Encourage your child to work hard, and do his / her best.
- Please encourage your child to follow the rules of the team, the school, and the game. Whether your child is a first stringer or fourth, rules pertaining to the team, the school and the sport apply.
- Please cheer often and loudly for your child's team! Positive cheering is always encouraged and welcomed. Belligerence or negative cheering is not constructive and is unwelcome. Coaches work closely with athletes and know their talents. Please respect that!
- Insist that your child be respectful of coaches and game officials and be a good sport. Self-respect begins with self-control. Please model good sportsmanship and "Spartan Pride."
- Please encourage our athletes to improve their self-image by believing in themselves, working hard, and thinking "team."
- Please remind your child that "winning" = giving maximum effort, continuing to learn and improve, dealing effectively and appropriately with adversity, and contributing to the greater good of the team.
- Please encourage your child to play for the love of the game.

Clarifying Parent / Coach Communication

As your child becomes involved in the sports program at Imlay City Community Schools, he / she 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 that your child may wish. This is an opportunity for your child to reap the benefits of involvement in athletics, as problem solving is a life-lesson that everyone needs to have in order to be successful. In such a case, your child should have a talk with his / her respective coach and discuss the situation. When your child handles the problem, it becomes part of the learning and maturation process.

There may also be situations that require a conversation between the coach and yourself. These are encouraged! This is a perfect example of how coaches and parents can work together to benefit children. It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please follow the following procedures to help promote a resolution to possible problem situations:

- Encourage your child to speak directly to his / her coach about the situation in an appropriate manner (time, place, and tone).
- If still unresolved, please contact the coach directly to speak about the issue – again, time and place are critical in order for this to happen in the best possible environment from which to solve the problem.
- If the concern is not resolved, please call the Athletic Director to arrange a conference. This meeting will be arranged with the coach, parent and Athletic Director. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach immediately before or after a contest or practice, and certainly not during a competition. These can be emotional times for both parent and coach. Meetings of this nature typically escalate a problem, not promote a solution.
- Again, our goal is for your student to have a positive and productive athletic experience – your input in problem situation is critical and welcomed!

Thank you for allowing your child to be a part of the athletic program at Imlay City Community Schools!

SELECTING TEAM MEMBERSHIP

The purpose of any athletic program is to provide an opportunity for as many students as is feasible within the constraints of a given sport. Due to the nature of some sports, more students try out than is feasible to carry on a team. In these cases, some students may not be selected for team membership.

The Imlay City School District affords qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in extracurricular athletics. We shall make reasonable modifications and provide aids and services that are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate, unless doing so would be a fundamental alteration to the program. We do require a level of skill or ability for participation in a competitive program or activity. Equal opportunity does not mean, for example, that every student with a disability is guaranteed a spot on an athletic team for which other students must try out. We do, however, afford qualified students with disabilities

an equal opportunity for participation in extracurricular athletics in an integrated manner to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student. We will make reasonable modifications to policies, practices, or procedures whenever such modifications are necessary to ensure equal opportunity, unless the requested modification would constitute a fundamental alteration of the nature of the extracurricular athletic activity.

The following guidelines will be used when selecting teams with limited membership:

1. Each student, irrelevant of previous experience, will be given equal opportunity to make a team.
2. An in-school notice will be made to all students at least five school days prior to the first scheduled practice session of the time, place, and date of the first practice session.
3. At the first practice session, the coach will carefully explain the specific criteria for selecting a player for the team.
4. **High school level:** A student will be given an opportunity to participate in a minimum of three different practice sessions before final team membership is determined. Coaches may extend the evaluation period beyond three days at their discretion.

Middle school level: Coaches may elect to use a two-tiered selection process with initial cuts occurring after three practice sessions. A minimum of five practice sessions will be used to determine final team membership at the middle school level.

5. At least ten days prior to the first scheduled practice session, the head coaches of all sports programs are to see that the athletic office is informed of the starting date and all related items so that this information can be distributed to local news media for publication.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

The Imlay City School District Code of Conduct for Student Athletes has been developed to provide a uniform set of rules and regulations to govern all district athletic participants regardless of which team or school they represent. The

Athletic Code of Conduct combines rules and regulations of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), which have been adopted by the Imlay City School District with specific district rules governing athletic participation. The Code of Conduct for Student Athletes will be in effect during the entire calendar year (12 months). Student athletes are to comply with all aspects of the Code if they desire to enjoy the privilege of continued eligibility for participation in athletics.

In addition, student athletes who incur school disciplinary action because of violations defined in the Imlay City High School Handbook are also subject to the disciplinary actions contained in this Code of Conduct for Student Athletes. Please note that when a student is academically ineligible to participate in contests and scrimmages, he/she still may practice with the team as long as he/she is not suspended from school as outlined in the Imlay City High School Handbook. However, the participant may forfeit the opportunity to receive an athletic award if loss of participation in contests prevents him/her from meeting the requirements for earning the award as outlined in the written supplemental team rules and regulations developed by the coach and distributed to each participant at the start of the sport season. Rules which have been adopted by the Imlay City School District and which are covered by MHSAA rules are indicated by an asterisk (*).

Students are subject to all MHSAA rules and regulations even though such rules may not be included specifically in this document. A copy may be reviewed at the Athletic Director's office or at the Board of Education office.

Conduct unbecoming of a student-athlete on or off the playing surface, which in the opinion of the coaching staff or administration, is considered insubordinate or inappropriate to standards of conduct, attitude of sportsmanship. The coach can discipline the student-athlete at his/her discretion with the approval of the building administration.

SECTION I: RULES OF ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

The following rules of eligibility must be observed in order to participate in the interscholastic athletic program:

A. *ENROLLMENT

The student must be enrolled in the School by the Monday of the fourth week of the semester in which he/she competes. The student must reside in the school service area in which he/she attends school and must be enrolled in the school for which he/she competes.

B. *AGE

HIGH SCHOOL: A student in grades nine through twelve who participates in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under nineteen (19) years of age. When a student's nineteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year he/she is eligible for participation for the balance of that school year.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: A seventh or eighth grade student must be under fourteen (14) and fifteen (15) years of age respectively. A student who reaches that after September 1 is eligible for participation for the balance of that school year.

C. *PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND STUDENT APPLICATION

The student must submit the signed parent/guardian consent form and the signed student application form to the coach or to the athletic office prior to participating in tryouts, practice sessions, or contests. Students and parents are to read the "Code of Conduct for Students Athletes" and the Imlay City High School/Junior High School Handbook before signing the parent/guardian consent form and the student application form. The completed form will be kept on file in the athletic director's office during subsequent sports seasons.

D. *PARTICIPANT PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

A student must have a physical examination completed by a physician (M.D. or D.O.) certifying that the student is fully able to compete in athletics. The physical must take place on or after April 15 of the previous school year to be used for the current school year. The students must submit the completed physical form to the coach or the athletic office prior to participating in tryout, practice sessions, or contests. The completed form will be kept on file in the athletic director's office during subsequent sports seasons.

E. *SEASONS OF COMPETITION

A student, while enrolled in grades nine through twelve, shall be eligible to compete in no more than four (4) seasons in either first or second semester athletics. For example, a student may not compete in more than four (4) seasons of a particular sport: football, tennis, etc. Students

enrolled in grades seven or eight are not limited in the number of seasons of competition. A student shall be limited to participation in only one sport season when that sport leading to a state championship is sponsored twice during the school year.

F. *SEMESTER ELIGIBILITY

A student shall not be eligible to compete in any branch of athletics who has been enrolled in grades nine to twelve for more than eight semesters. The seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Enrollment in a school for a period of three weeks or more, or competing in one or more interscholastic athletic contests, shall be considered as enrollment for a semester under this rule. Students in grades seven or eight are not limited in the number of semesters in which they may be eligible.

G. *ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

IMLAY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS:

The MHSAA states that a student must have received passing grades in a minimum of four (4) classes during the previous semester and must maintain passing grades in a minimum of four (4) classes during the current semester to be eligible to participate in athletics. (Middle School must pass 4 out of 7 classes).

IMLAY CITY ELIGIBILITY POLICY:

- Marking period grades are checked at progress reports, five weeks into the semester. Then checked again at the seven week and nine week points of the marking period. for all student-athletes participating in a sport during a specific season.
- If a student-athlete has a failing grade (59.9% or lower), the student-athlete will be ineligible until all of their grades are passing with a (60% or higher).
- An ineligible student-athlete must attend two 45-minute study hall sessions during the week.
 - Study hall sessions will run from 2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
 - Middle School study hall sessions will be held on Tuesday and Thursday during their lunch periods.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

Any student who fails to meet any of the above regulations will not be allowed to participate until such time as he/she complies with the regulations in this section. The student is ineligible until deficiencies are corrected.

SECTION II: AWARDS

- A. A student may not accept from any source anything for participation in athletics other than an emblematic award. An emblematic award would include, but not be limited to, any medal, ribbon, badge, plaque, cup, trophy, banner, picture, or regular letter award.
- B. No acceptable award shall exceed twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars in value with the exception of the regular letter award of the school. The cost of engraving a medal or similar award need not be included in determining the value of the award.
- C. No one, such as a parent, friend, or other person, may accept an award on behalf of the athlete at any time prior to graduation from high school.
- D. Acceptance of such items as cash, merchandise, memberships, privileges, services, sweaters, athletic equipment, wearing apparel, and watches would be a violation.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

Any student violating any area of this section would be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition for a period of at least one semester from the date of the violation. If violation occurs after the Monday of the fourth week of a semester, a student is ineligible for the balance of that semester and the succeeding semester.

SECTION III: *MAINTAINING AMATEUR STATUS

- A. Students participating or planning to participate in interscholastic athletics may NOT (1) accept any money or other valuable consideration for participating in athletics, sports, or games, (2) receive any money or other valuable consideration for officiating at interscholastic athletic contests, or (3) sign a contract with a professional team.

- B. The rule in (A) above applies to the following sports: Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track, Volleyball, or Wrestling.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

A student violating this rule is ineligible and may not apply for reinstatement until the equivalent of one full school year has elapsed from the date of the last violation. After that date, the student may request reinstatement.

**SECTION IV: *OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL ATHLETIC
COMPETITION**

A student who has participated in any athletic contest as a member of a school team may not participate in the same sport in the same season in any athletic competition outside of and not sponsored by the school. The exception to this rule is the individual sport athlete who may participate in a maximum of two (2) individual sports meets or contests during that sport season while not representing his/her school. A student may not compete in any “all-star” contests at any time in any sport sponsored by the MHSAA during the school year.

A student may participate in only one sport during a given sports season unless league rules are to the contrary.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

A student violating rules in this section will be ineligible to participate in athletic contests and scrimmages for a period from a minimum of the next three contests up to a maximum of one school year depending on the violation.

**SECTION V: STUDENT ATTENDANCE REQUIRED FOR
ATHLETICS**

Students are to attend school during the total school day in order to participate in athletics during the same day or evening. Should there be a situation whereby a student cannot attend school who would normally receive an excused absence; the student will be allowed to participate in the contest with approval of the building principal or designee. In these cases, a prearranged excuse is preferred.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

A student with an unexcused absence from school may not participate in the athletic contest or practice scheduled for that day.

SECTION VI: ATTENDANCE AT ATHLETIC PRACTICE SESSIONS AND CONTESTS

- A. Attendance at practice sessions is essential to prepare athletes physically and mentally for athletic contests. All team members are required to be at all athletic practice sessions and contests at the times designated by the coach. Should situations occur when it is impossible for a participant to attend due to illness, injury, and other required school or family commitments, the student shall make prior arrangements with the coach for an excused absence.
- B. Teams may be practicing during regular school vacation periods. Participants are required to attend at the coach's discretion.
- C. Participation when there is a failure to ride the team bus for whatever reason is at the prerogative of the coach. Any alternative transportation other than the team bus must be prearranged (by submitting a transportation release form) to the athletic department/coach. The parent or guardian must submit written permission to the athletic department/coach for his/her consideration.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

Failure to attend regularly scheduled practice sessions or contests without an excused absence will lead to disciplinary action as outlined within the supplemental team rules distributed by the coach.

SECTION VII: TRAVELING TO AND FROM AWAY CONTESTS

Any student on a team traveling to an away athletic contest on school owned or chartered transportation or other such approved vehicles shall return to the home school in the same vehicle after the contest is over. The only exception is when prior written arrangements (submitting a transportation release form) are made and the athletic department/coach grants permission for the student to leave the contest site with his/her parent or guardian.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

Any participant not returning from any away contest with a team without permission of the coach is ineligible to participate in athletic contests for one calendar week from the date of the violation. The participant may practice with the team. A second violation will result in dismissal from the team for the remainder of that sport season.

SECTION VIII: UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Athletic participants are responsible for the care, security, and use of uniforms and equipment issued to them.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

Athletic participants will be responsible to pay the replacement cost for uniform or equipment items that are abused or not returned. Athletes will not be allowed to participate in athletics in succeeding seasons until this obligation is met.

SECTION IX: USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG SUBSTANCES

Participation in the athletic programs for Imlay City Schools is considered an honor and a privilege that demands responsibility to the school and the community.

Students are to refrain from use of tobacco, alcoholic beverage and any controlled substance, look-alike or mood-altering chemicals at all times. Optimum physical and mental condition is necessary for high performance in athletics. It is vital to safeguard the personal health and safety of each participant. The Imlay City School District recognizes this and is aware of the negative impact that chemical use can have on their teams. Because this is so important and because the District wants to help any student athlete who may have a tobacco or chemical use problem, the following rule is in effect:

Regardless of the quantity, a student athlete shall not (1) use or have in possession tobacco or tobacco products including smokeless tobacco, (2) use or have in possession a beverage containing alcohol, or (3) use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away, marijuana, or any controlled or look-alike substance including anabolic steroids. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

THE FOLLOWING PENALTIES ARE CUMULATIVE

FIRST VIOLATION:

After confirmation of a first violation, the student athlete will not be allowed to participate in athletics for a minimum of the next one (1) consecutive interscholastic athletic event or two (2) weeks of a season whichever is

greater. The student athlete may practice until reinstated on the team. In order to be reinstated on the team, the student must:

1. Participate in a follow-up conference with parent, coach, building athletic director, and principal.
2. Participate in the mandatory drug workshop consortium if violation is for alcohol or other chemical abuse. (The cost of the workshop is the responsibility of the family.)

SECOND VIOLATION:

After confirmation of the second violation, the student athlete will be dismissed from the team and will be excluded from all athletic interscholastic participation for the remainder of that sport season.

In the case of alcohol or other chemical use, in order for the student to be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletics in future sport seasons during the remaining school year, the parent and student must show evidence that the student has undergone professional assessment for chemical dependency at a Michigan State Department of Substance Abuse Services approved agency. (The cost of the program is the responsibility of the family.) These conditions would be clarified in a required conference with student, parent, and athletic director.

THIRD VIOLATION:

After confirmation of a third violation in a subsequent sport season, the student athlete will be dismissed from the team and will be excluded from all athletic interscholastic participation for the remainder of the school year. In the case of alcohol or other chemical use, in order for the student to be allowed to participate in athletics in future school years, the conditions outlined in the second violation above must be met. Any further violation in a future school year would be treated as a third violation.

SECTION X: SUMMER AND OFF-SEASON PROGRAMS

A variety of sports camps, schools, clinics, and training programs are offered to athletes during the off-season and summer months by individual coaches, parks and recreation department and the district community education program. These programs provide opportunities for aspiring athletes to improve their skills in a chosen sport. These summer and off-season programs are voluntary. Athletes

shall not be required to enroll in these programs as a condition for membership or placement on an athletic team the succeeding season.

SECTION XI: SUPPLEMENTAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Supplemental team rules and regulations unique to a given sport shall be developed by individual coaches with the approval of the building principal. These rules will generally define expectations relating to participant attitude and cooperation and will include criteria for earning a varsity letter award. These rules must be in writing and distributed to participants at the start of the season.

FAILURE TO COMPLY:

Failure to abide by the supplemental rules and regulations distributed by the coach will lead to disciplinary action as outlined therein.

Within the provisions of this Code of Conduct for Student Athletes, and the written supplemental team rules and regulations, the coach may suspend or exclude a student from athletic participation. A team member who is suspended from school as outlined in the Imlay City High School Handbook may not participate in practices or contests because the suspension covers all school activities. However, a team member ruled academically ineligible to participate in contests and scrimmages may still be able to practice with the team. Any participant who is dismissed from the team for the remainder of a sports season will have forfeited the opportunity to earn an athletic award.

SECTION XII: APPEAL PROCEDURES

A participant found in violation of Sections V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, and XI may appeal the outcome of the disciplinary action taken for noncompliance. Only the parents or legal guardian may initiate the appeal process.

- A. An appeal of a decision to impose a disciplinary action may be initiated by submitting in writing an appeal to the building principal or designee within two (2) school days of the date the penalty was applied.
- B. Based on the review of the appeal, the building principal shall communicate his/her decision to adjust, revoke, or sustain the disciplinary action. The decision of the principal is final.

- C. In all cases of disciplinary action, student will be reminded of the appeal options and procedures to be followed.

NOTE:

MEDICATION:

Any student/athlete who takes prescribed or over-the-counter medication must have a form (Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1 or Authorization for Non-Prescribed Medication and Treatment Form 5330 F1a) filled out by his/her parent or doctor and submitted to the front office before they will be allowed to take any medication at school or at a school function. (See Medications in your student handbook).