

MEDFORD

COACH & ADVISOR

HANDBOOK



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MEDFORD SCHOOLS – ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

Medford Schools support and promote the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) rules and philosophies, and thus shapes its philosophy and handbook as a complement and extension. In support, each advisor/coach is expected to review and follow all applicable MSHSL rules and guidelines, the MSHSL Code of Ethics for Coaches, NFCA Coaches Code of Ethics, and the guidelines contained in this handbook.

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of Medford's athletic program is to promote the education and development of athletes through their involvement in extracurricular activities. Our school is committed to high standards, and we support the concept that athletics serve an essential role in our total educational program. In pursuit of the benefits of athletics, our goals for student athletes follow:

- Accept the responsibility to become an effective, contributing member of society.
- Perform as a positive role model on campus and in the wider community.
- Fulfill academic responsibilities, preparing oneself for life after high school.
- Maintain eligibility for participation in every athletic contest.

At all levels, our overall goals never waiver from those noted above, though additional clarification is necessary to define the competitive focus for the various levels.

- At the varsity level, our goal is to be as competitive as possible, playing our best high school athletes as determined by our coaches. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed. Playing time is earned through adherence to team policy, attendance at practice, and the acquisition of the needed skill set. Playing time is an earned privilege.
- At the b-squad and freshman levels, our goal is to work toward a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. Athletes at this level are expected to have visibly committed themselves to the program, team and continued self development.
- At the junior high level, the focus is on continued learning of various skills and game rules, an expansion on the fundamentals of team play, continued social and emotional growth, and an emphasis on healthy competition.

High School Programs

Participation in high school (varsity, b-squad, freshmen) athletics is a privilege for all involved, including parents, athletes, and coaches. In order to truly be a privilege, participation must be earned. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play competitively in the contest. Note that squad size in high school level athletics may be limited.

Junior High

This program is available to all athletes in 7th and 8th grade. At this level, cutting of athletes is not our desire. However, reducing team size may be necessary if the numbers are difficult to manage and/or pose a safety problem, or if the facilities are inadequate to support them. Ultimately, the number of teams and size of squads in any sport will be determined by participating teams in the Gopher Conference (allowing for scheduling), suitable game and practice facilities, and a safe environment.

Principles of good sportsmanship must prevail at all levels by all Medford participants, including coaches, players, and fans.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The head coach/advisor is responsible for development and operation of the entire program (7-12), and the assistant staff is responsible to him/her. The head coach/advisor is responsible for the development and installation of their philosophy for the youth program (K-6). The head coach/advisor will meet with his/her assistants prior to the season to discuss the program and the duties of each member of the staff, providing each with program information, expectations, and job descriptions.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is critical in all activities. In general, coaches/advisors will:

- Fully understand and adhere to the rules of the sport.
- Accept the decisions of contest officials and avoid any public criticism.
- Avoid offensive gestures or language.
- Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
- Teach and model sportsmanship.
- Provide instruction, training, and motivation without put-downs and/or abusive language.
- Educate and sensitize themselves to cultural differences, gender equity and disability issues.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All coaches/advisors need to be aware of the following eligibility requirements:

- Attendance at a pre-season sport meetings is required by each athlete in grades 7-12 prior to the athlete's participation in any sport.
- All athletes are required to have an insurance waiver on file in the activities director's office prior to participating in any activities.
- Any athlete intending to participate in high school interscholastic athletics or cheerleading must have on file in the activities office a current physical prior to participation in any practice, conditioning, game, or event. All athletes must have a physical examination performed by a physician within the previous three years.
- The Medford School District charges participation fees. No player is eligible to participate until proper satisfaction of the fee requirements.
- To be eligible to participate in MSHSL governed activities, a student must be making satisfactory progress toward the requirements for graduation from Medford High School. Athlete academic eligibility will be governed by the Medford School District Policy #514.
- An athlete may not practice or participate in any activity or program if absent from school due to illness or if suspended from any class. An absent athlete may participate in practice and/or activities if absent due to school field trips, pre-approved college visits, funerals, medical or dental treatment, et al, or if an ill athlete is in attendance by the beginning of second hour.
- If an athlete is cutting practice, his/her parents should be contacted and informed that continued occurrences will result in his/her removal from the team.

PARTICIPATION

Successful teams require participation of as many athletes as possible. Therefore, we discourage specialization.

Additional participation requirements follow:

- An athlete may participate in two varsity sports per season as long as it has been agreed upon with the two head coaches involved. A meeting prior to the season must take place with the parents, athlete, coaches and athletic director.
- At no time should any coach use any type of influence or pressure on a student-athlete with the intent of having an athlete participate in one activity over another.
- If an athlete decides to drop one sport and begin another after the start of the season, he/she may do so only after both head coaches and parents/guardians have been informed and final approval has been granted by the activities director.

LIMITING SQUAD SIZE & TRYOUTS

In a school our size, we would like to limit the instances in which 'cuts' are required in order to limit squad size. However, it's understood that reducing team size may be necessary if the numbers are difficult to manage and/or pose a safety problem, or if the facilities are inadequate to support them. It is our intent to offer activities options for all who wish to participate during a specific season, accomplished by offering multiple sports when possible (e.g., track and softball/baseball in the spring).

When a squad is too large, coaches/advisors should communicate as soon as possible with the athletes and parents, noting the challenges in fielding a team of noted size. Coaches/advisors must clearly outline the intention to reduce the roster to a manageable number.

- If planning to cut players, coaches/advisors must have a written description of the tryout procedure, approved by the activities director and given to athletes and parents. It's imperative that the coach/advisor follow those communicated guidelines.
- If a coach/advisor chooses not to use the tryout policy, a rotational basis could be established for 'dressing' players for each contest, keeping all players in the program and rotating the players on and off the roster throughout the season. Again, this policy should be in written form, approved by the activities director and given to athletes and parents.

MOVING ATHLETES UP

If a coach on the high school level feels there is an athlete in the 7th, 8th, or 9th grade program who should 'move up' to a higher level team, the case shall be handled individually according to the following procedure:

- The player should be evaluated to determine maturity (physical and emotional), necessity for the move (injuries? lack of numbers?), skill development (does this athlete possess the skills to succeed at the high school level?), and opportunity for ample playing time.
- If the player is deemed ready for playing up, the head coach must submit a written request to the activities director, meet with the parents, athlete, and activities director, and obtain written permission from the activities director and principal.

Athletes in activities where there is no junior high program or 9th grade would not be required to go through the above process.

WEIGHT ROOM AND STRENGTH TRAINING

All athletes in grades 7-12 are encouraged to use the strength and conditioning program. Coaches should attempt to build time into practice schedules for lifting in the weight room. The use of the same program will help build unity between all the athletic programs offered at Medford, and will lift up all programs by creating a strong foundation for our athletes. If athletes are in the weight room, there must be a supervisor in there with them.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The following practice guidelines are to be followed:

- Wednesday is recognized as "Church/Family Night" with no school activities after 6:00 p.m. Principal and/or activities director approval is required for any exceptions.
- No practices will be allowed on Sundays (MSHSL rule). No practices will be allowed without prior activities director approval on the following holidays: Christmas Day, Christmas Eve, Thanksgiving Day, and New Year's Day. With prior approval between coach/advisor, athlete and parent, athletes should be allowed to miss practices for family events during other holidays and non-school days.
- Practices must be conducted between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.
- Coaches will hand out a practice calendar at the beginning of the season with definite ending times.
- It is recognized that athlete initiated practices ('captains practices') do occur. Attendance at these practices must be optional, and coaches/advisors may need to counsel athletes to limit the time devoted to these practices. Although coaches/advisors may not be allowed to coach athletes during these practices, school staff must directly supervise athletes using school facilities and/or equipment.

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- In general, coaches/advisors should not conduct practices lasting more than 2 ½ hours.
- The activities director must approve twice-daily practices.
- Athletes will not be allowed to workout in the school building or on school property without the direct supervision of a coach/advisor.
- Any decision to cancel practice due to weather concerns must come from the activities director's office. No practices will be conducted on days when school has been called because of inclement weather.
- There is an on-going need for frequent communication between classroom teachers, coaches/advisors, parents and athletes, with an emphasis placed upon the importance of academics. It is understood that athletes be allowed to miss practice for tests, make-up labs, special help from teachers, etc.

MANAGERS

Coaches/advisors are responsible for selecting competent managers. The MSHSL does not permit elementary students to be managers. Coaches/advisors should outline and review manager duties with the assigned student(s).

FACILITIES

The following facility-related guidelines should be followed:

- Schedule all facilities times through the Community Education Office, providing sufficient advance notice to ensure availability.
- Coaches/advisors are responsible for sharing in the duties of prepping fields, courts, or rooms, as well as clearing them after contests or practices. Head coaches/advisors will meet with the activities director and head custodian prior to the season to discuss expectations and responsibilities.
- Coaches/advisors are expected to work closely with the custodial staff for any special needs.
- All 'open gyms' must be scheduled through the Community Education Office. The recreational activities of open gym should be open to all, providing at least one week's notice of the scheduled date and time. During open gym times, there is to be no coaching of skills, no requirement or record of attendance, and no influence placed on an athlete's attendance. No athletes shall be given keys to open the gym or be allowed to supervise the open gym.
- Each coach/advisor will be issued keys for accessing his/her respective locker room, storage areas, practice/performance area and weight room.
- The storage hallway should stay closed and locked at all times.

BOOSTER CLUBS/DONATIONS/FUNDRAISERS

Prior to conducting a fundraiser or receiving any type of donation from a booster club, coaches/advisors must receive written approval from the activities director. All donations must be submitted to and approved by the Medford Public School Board. Note that any outside group or individual wishing to use the school facilities must contact the Community Education office.

EQUIPMENT

Each coach/advisor is directly responsible for all equipment used in his or her activity or sport throughout the entire program and will be held accountable for a detailed inventory at season's end (to be filed with the activities director). Athletes who lose equipment or uniforms assigned to them will be charged for a replacement. All equipment is to be cleaned and repaired, clothing items laundered or dry cleaned, and then stored in a secure place (as suggested by the activities director) at the conclusion of the season.

Team uniforms for all athletic teams, grades 7-12, are provided by the school. Uniforms at all levels will be replaced on a rotating basis. Coaches should note any individual uniforms that need to be repaired or replaced on their inventories and budget for them accordingly. Personalized uniforms, warm-ups, t-shirts, jackets or any other supplemental item to be purchased by the athletes must be approved by the activities director prior to order/purchase.

LOCKER ROOM & PRACTICE AREAS

Each coach/advisor is responsible for his/her own locker room and practice area, ensuring the safety of the athletes while also ensuring productive practice sessions can occur. No athlete should be left in charge of the locker room or practice area, nor should athletes enter equipment, training, or storage areas without permission. No athlete is allowed in the coaches' office without permission.

Locker rooms and facilities of other schools are also the responsibility of each coach/advisor. Upon arrival at a visiting school, each coach/advisor should inspect the locker room or area assigned to assess any existing damage to the facility, with a similar inspection upon departure. If an area has been damaged in any way, contact the activities director of the school and report what damage has occurred. When visiting other schools or facilities, locker rooms or assigned areas should be left neat and clean. The advisor or coach should be the last one out of the locker room or assigned area and should verify all is in order.

ATHLETE SAFETY AND HEALTH

The ongoing safety and health of our athletes is critical. The following items should be noted:

- Terry (TC) Carlyle is the school trainer and is available for personal visits with our athletes on Mondays over the lunch hour. Contact the high school office to schedule visits for a specific athlete. Coaches/advisors may also contact TC with questions or concerns at 213-1924.
- Training kits are available to each team at the beginning of the season. Each kit is stocked with training and first aid supplies, with additional supplies available in the training room. If supplies run low or become depleted, contact the activities director.
- All coaches/advisors are recommended to have current first aid and CPR certification. Copies of their certification are to be on file in the activities director's office. Note that First aid and CPR classes are offered quarterly through Medford Community Education and will be at no charge to any Medford Public School coach or advisor.

INJURIES

In the event an injury:

- If a doctor referral is made, it is mandatory to fill out an "Activities Accident Report" and submit a copy to the activities office.
- If the injury requires immediate medical attention, call the hospital or doctor and make arrangements before taking the injured person in for medical treatment.
- If the person is suspected of having a life threatening injury and/or a head, neck or back injury, 911 should be called immediately.
- If medical transport is required and the athlete's parents/guardians are not present, send an advisor or coach along with the injured athlete to the doctor or hospital. The coach/advisor should stay with the injured athlete until his/her parents/guardians arrive. If only one coach or advisor is present, send a parent or another responsible adult.
- A "Physician's Approval to Resume Participation" form must be given to the athlete upon his return to school. This form must be signed by a doctor and on file in the activities director's office before the athlete is allowed to participate in practice or play again. The coach/advisor may be held responsible for any legal action that could result from the injury if the above reports are not on file in the activities director's office.

EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL FOR CONTESTS

Prior to the start of the season, coaches/advisors should receive permission from the principal and activities director for events requiring early dismissal from school. In addition, notify the high school office three days in advance with a list of players impacted by any early dismissal.

CANCELLATION OF A CONTEST

The final decision to cancel games or contests will come from the activities director, principal, or superintendent office. There will be no games or contests on days when school has been called because of inclement weather. Varsity conference games and contests will always be rescheduled. Attempts will be made to reschedule non-conference and non-varsity contests, if open dates and facilities are available.

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SCRIMMAGES

Scrimmages (home or away) may be arranged at the discretion of the head coach or advisor, with the prior approval of the activities director. The school will provide transportation for one away scrimmage per activity per season. Arrangements must be made with the activities director.

VISITING TEAMS

Visiting teams should be greeted by the coaching staff, activities director, or building supervisor upon arrival. They should be shown to the locker room and competition area. They should also be given any special instructions regarding facilities, timeline for the event, and any special activities planned (e.g., extended halftime). For security reasons, the visitor's locker rooms will be locked during the competition, and Medford students will not be allowed to enter.

TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

All transportation and travel needs for activities will be arranged through the activities director's office in coordination with the transportation director. The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Athletes must ride to and from activity contests and events in school provided transportation or school authorized transportation, unless written authorization is provided by a parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian is transporting more than one athlete, a written approval must be obtained for each athlete.
- Athletes shall be transported to the school for drop-off.
- The school is responsible for all members of the entourage from the time of departure until the time of completed return. Any coach or advisor who disobeys the above procedure may be held legally responsible for any incident that may happen.
- Coaches must make sure all athletes are picked up before they can leave.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

All overnight trips must be approved by the activities director before the first game or event of the season. Transportation, lodging, chaperones, fees, etc. must all be approved by the activities director. A permission form must be given to parents with details of the trip at the sports meeting at the beginning of the season. A sample permission form is include at the end of this handbook.

SCOUTING

Scouting of opponents is permitted, provided scouts abide by all MSHSL and conference rules. Medford School does not provide transportation or any funding for scouting.

AWARDS/BANQUETS

Criteria for All-Conference, Sub-Section, Section and State awards are determined by the by-laws of the respective governing bodies. Team awards may be established and presented by the coaching staff of each activity. The handbook provided for and reviewed with athletes at the beginning of a season should outline all awards.

The head coach/advisor will develop specific lettering criteria for each activity, to be reviewed annually with the activities director. In general, lettering criteria should be strong enough that a letter must be earned, yet also attainable by those who invest consistent effort. The lettering criteria will be presented to the participants and parents/guardians at the preseason meeting.

M-Club will pay for team awards up to \$75 per activity. Award expenses beyond this amount are the coaches/advisors responsibility, though additional funding may be sought from outside boosters (following proper procedure). Each activity or sport should hold an awards banquet at the conclusion of their season, in which team and individual awards, letters, and other awards are celebrated. No money is budgeted for these banquets.

EVALUATIONS

The activities director will evaluate each head coach/advisor at the conclusion of their season. In addition, evaluations may be sought from assistant coaches, athlete participants, or parents.

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Head coaches/advisors should meet individually with and evaluate each assistant coach/advisor in the program, grades 7-12. All evaluations will be filed with the activities director.

SEASON REPORT & SUMMARY

A season report and summary is required of each coach/advisor in our system. Assistant coaches/advisors should turn these into the head coach/advisor, who turns these into the activities director. These reports should include information relating to game/meet results, team/individual statistics, participation numbers, and letters and honors achieved.

SUMMER WAIVER

Summer coaching waivers will be signed by all coaches prior to summer vacation. This will permit athletes to receive coaching from the high school staff. High school athletes may also attend a camp or clinic owned or coached by a member of his or her school's coaching staff provided the coach has a summer waiver on file.

ATTENDANCE AT OTHER COACHING MEETINGS/EVENTS

Coaches/advisors are expected to be available for meetings with the activities director, as appropriate. In addition, all are strongly encouraged to attend coaches' clinics as part of their professional growth and development, as well as attend state tournament competitions for the sport he/she coaches. A reasonable amount may be budgeted by the head coach/advisor for clinic registration fees and mileage. Finally, in-season coaches/advisors for grades 7-12 are required to attend the pre-season meeting with athletes and parents, in which head coaches/advisors are required to distribute a team handbook to athletes and parents/guardians.

MEDIA/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Our programs are in the eye of the public, subject to constant praise and criticism. How we act and conduct ourselves at games, meetings, in school, downtown, or any public event, will be a reflection on our entire activities program. We need and solicit the support of the entire community to maintain a first class activities program. Coaches/advisors are, therefore, encouraged to take an active part in community activities and events. Coaches/advisors should always be cooperative and remain positive in their comments when being interviewed or giving scores, statistics, and game highlights/summaries to the media.

Each coach/advisor is responsible for the publicity of his/her activity or sport. Head coaches/advisors are required to keep team rosters, schedules, and updated results posted on the Minnesota State High School League website (www.mshsl.org). Head coaches/advisors are also responsible for reporting game results to the following media outlets:

1. Owatonna People's Press 444-2375

All coaches/advisors should also make regular contributions to the CAST.

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE (MSHSL)

All coaches/advisors are encouraged to become members of the Minnesota State High School Coaches Association and the individual Sport Associations for the sports they coach. The MSHSCA provides a number of benefits for its members, one of which is \$1,000,000 liability insurance for classroom and coaching. Coaches must be members of their sports associations in order for their athletes to be recognized as All-State.

Each coach/advisor is responsible for knowing the MSHSL rules governing his/her sport. These rules can be found at www.mshsl.org. Each head coach/advisor is responsible for completing the MSHSL-sponsored rules interpretation meeting in his/her sport.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A summarized listing of duties and responsibilities for the activities director, head coach/advisor, and assistant coach/advisor is on file in the high school office. Each coach/advisor should obtain a copy of these responsibilities and review them annually.

MEDFORD PARENT/COACH - COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Our recommended communication process between coaches and parents is outlined in the "Medford Parent/Coach – Communication Guidelines" document on file in the high school office and also on our school website. Each coach/advisor should review the details of this policy.

SCHEDULING OF EVENTS AND PRIORITIES FOR HANDLING POSSIBLE CONFLICTS

1. Once the scheduling of athletic events has been completed, copies will be available for principal and fine arts personnel.
2. A meeting of the principal, activities director, advisors and directors will then convene to schedule all fine arts activities.
3. Events scheduled after that date will have to clear the master schedule which is to be kept in the activities office.
4. School activities that have been scheduled and appear on the master schedule in the activities office take priority over late scheduled or rescheduled activities, unless the normal progress for advancement may be affected.
5. First consideration will be given to the activity that may have its advancement affected.
 - a. Official sub-section, section, and state additions or corrections should take precedent over non-conference and locally scheduled events.
 - b. All performances (games, meets or concerts) take priority over a practice or rehearsal.
 - c. A concert will take priority over a JV or "B" squad game or meet.
 - d. A JV or "B" squad game or meet will take priority over a practice or rehearsal.
 - e. All Gopher Conference tournaments where a conference championship is determined, sub-section, section or state activities will take priority over any other scheduled activities or practices.
 - f. All 7-12 music activities will take priority over high school practices. A high school event will take precedence over a middle school level activity.
6. When a scheduling conflict appears, the following procedures should be followed:
 - a. The activities director and coaches/advisors/directors involved will meet to see if the adopted rules can handle the conflict.
 - b. If the adopted rules do not apply or when an agreement on the interpretation cannot be reached, the activities director and coaches/advisors/directors involved will meet with the principal to resolve the conflict.

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SAMPLE OVERNIGHT TRIP PERMISSION SLIP (PRINT ON LETTERHEAD)

[Student Organization & Trip Name]

Dates:

Departure and arrival times:

Brief description of activities:

Hotel accommodations: [Name of Hotel, Address, Phone]

What you should bring:

Cost to the student:

Meals:

Special instructions:

Date permission form and money is due:

Advisor contact information:

Detach lower portion and return to coach or advisor.

Student Name:

Date:

I _____ (parent/guardian) hereby give permission for
_____ (student name) to attend the overnight trip described above. I understand that all school and organization rules and expectations apply while on this trip. I agree to follow all instructions and rules given by the coach or advisor. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action or being sent home early at parent's expense.

Parent contact information:

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date