

# MSDLT STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK

Approved by Board of Education on March 12, 2018

## ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

MSDLT recognizes that interested students should be given the opportunity to develop their potential as athletes in activities appropriate to their level of ability. MSDLT provides a program of interscholastic athletics that promotes participation for qualified students within the rules and regulations of the Indiana Athletic Association and the MSDLT Athletic Department. The goal of the MSDLT athletic department is to promote an environment that allows the MSDLT athlete to develop and to grow in the areas of teamwork, sportsmanship, leadership, self-discipline, and moral character. It is hoped that the lessons learned and the experiences gained from participation in athletics will play an integral part in the overall education of the MSDLT student-athlete.

## MSDLT/IHSAA POLICIES & GUIDELINES

Participation in athletics is a privilege earned by meeting the rules and standards set by schools, conferences and the IHSAA. Students who have questions concerning eligibility should contact the Athletic Director or Principal BEFORE they endanger their athletic eligibility.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY HIGH SCHOOL

1. In addition to IHSAA's requirements, MSDLT has the following GPA requirements for extracurricular participation:

Grade 9	Pass 5 credits
Grade 10	Pass 5 credits and a 1.667 GPA
Grade 11	Pass 5 credits and a 1.834 GPA
Grade 12	Pass 5 credits and a 2.000 GPA
2. In determining participation, the higher of the overall GPA or the current nine-week's grading period GPA will be used.
3. Any Special Education student who plans to participate should have an IEP that states the appropriate eligibility standard.
4. Credit awarded for summer school, correspondence classes, and evening classes may count toward the five-credit requirement.

5. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee may defer the implementation of the eligibility standard for a period not to exceed one (1) semester to allow for unforeseen circumstances.
6. Any student transferring from another school shall have the remainder of that semester as a grace period to meet the appropriate grade level eligibility standard. A student enrolling during the second grading period of a semester will have the following semester as a grace period. IHSAA requirements are always in effect.
7. All coaches, teachers, guidance counselors, and all other appropriate staff will continue to give assistance to all students unable to meet the eligibility standard.
8. Subject to IHSAA requirements, students not meeting the above standards can maintain eligibility by attending tutoring sessions twice per week. The coach will be responsible for coordinating those tutoring sessions and the coach will be responsible for reporting the attendance of those students to the director of athletics. Students not attending the required sessions will be ineligible for the following contest(s). They can regain their eligibility by attending the tutoring sessions the following week.

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

1. All student athletes must attain passing grades in at least six of seven classes to maintain eligibility for continued participation.
2. All student athletes must regularly complete college prep reading logs to maintain eligibility for continued participation.
3. Grades will be checked every 4.5 weeks to determine eligibility. Students who become ineligible to participate may not compete until the next scheduled interim or grading period report. They may continue to practice with the team at the coach's discretion. The date that grades are finalized in school's electronic grading system will be the date used for all such determinations.
4. Ineligible athletes may not dress in uniform, but they may sit on the bench during games.
5. Transfer students from outside MSLDT will be considered eligible to participate.
6. Transfer students from inside MSDLT will be eligible upon a review of the student's grades from the previous school attended.
7. Athletes must participate in ten (10) team practices before competing in the first athletic contest.

## **AGE LIMITS**

1. Seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) grade students may not reach their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday before the end of the season in which they compete.
2. Eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade students may not reach their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday before the end of the season in which they compete.
3. High school students may not reach their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday before the end of the season in which they compete, per IHSAA by-laws.
4. No student will be retained in school for the sole purpose of advancement of athletic achievement.

## **ATHLETE DEFINED**

An MSDLT athlete is defined as and includes all boys and girls representing MSDLT as they participate in interscholastic competition. Included under this definition are the members of our sports and their support personnel such as trainers, managers,

statisticians, etc. An MSDLT athlete currently in good standing with the Athletic Department may be eligible for the athletic weight training classes offered.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Student athletes are expected to make school attendance a priority. This includes attendance both the day of and the day after athletic contests. Student athletes and staff are expected to be in attendance at school on time the day following any athletic activities held the day before a school day. All efforts are made to avoid late activities on school nights, but sometimes they are necessary. Students must attend school all day in order to participate in an extracurricular activity after school. The Principal or Athletics Director must grant any exceptions. Extenuating circumstances must be brought to the attention of the Principal or Athletic Director, who alone have the power to grant exceptions to this rule.

## **AWARDS/GIFTS**

Athletes may not receive any award in recognition for athletic ability that is not approved by both the principal and the IHSAA. Athletes may not accept awards, medals, recognition, gifts and/or honors from colleges/universities or their alumni. Athletes and parents with questions may refer to the IHSAA by-laws.

## **CHANGING A SPORT**

If an athlete is cut from a team, the athlete may join another team or program in that sport season. An athlete may transfer from one sport to another within the same sport season with the agreement of both coaches and the athletic directors. If an athlete quits or is removed from the team for any reason, the athlete cannot join another team or participate in any conditioning or weight-training program until the original team is no longer competing. For example: A football player cannot quit the football team to begin wrestling until the football team has played its last game. If the athlete wishes to appeal, a written appeal must be submitted to the athletic director.

## **CONFLICTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

MSDLT recognizes that every student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. However, students should be cautious about participating in too many activities. Interscholastic sports require a substantial time commitment that usually extends Monday through Saturday from the first official day of practice until the end of the tournament series. If a conflict between activities arises, the student should refer to the Schedule Conflict Policy found in the Co-Curricular and Non-Athletic Extra Curricular Activities section of the student handbook.

## **EQUIPMENT ISSUE AND RETURN**

MSDLT endeavors to provide each team member with the best and safest equipment. All equipment issued to an athlete is expected to be returned in the same condition as when issued (excepting normal wear and tear) or the athlete is expected to compensate the athletic department for the lost or damaged equipment. Failure to return equipment, including athletic locks, or to compensate the school for lost or damaged equipment, will result in forfeiture of post-season award, and the reasonable cost of the loss or damage will be added to the student's book rental.

## **MULTIPLE SPORT PARTICIPATION**

The MSDLT athletic department supports the concept of participation in more than one sport. Coaches should not establish expectations “out of season” which would prohibit or restrict a student’s participation in another sport which is “in season.” A student athlete who wishes to participate in more than one sport in the same season must have prior approval of the coaches and the Athletic Director. A schedule resolving all practice and competition conflicts must be established prior to the season and the student athlete will be asked to designate a “primary” sport if necessary.

## **PARTICIPATION ON TEAMS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

Athletes who participate as members of any similar teams on the same sport season, not under the direct supervision and management of their school, shall not be eligible for participation on the school team. Participation in other sports while participating on a school team should only be done with the knowledge of the coach.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

Students desiring to participate in interscholastic athletics must undergo a physical examination performed by a licensed medical doctor (M.D.) prior to practicing/participating with any team, including any open gym/workouts prior to official tryouts. The physical form, which must be signed by an M.D., may be picked up in the athletic office or on the MSDLT websites. It must be signed and returned to the athletic office prior to practice/participation of any kind. The doctor’s signature must be dated after April 1, preceding the current school year. It is valid for one school year. All information, including but not limited to HIPPA, Emergency Contact Information, and Consent to Treat, must be submitted to the school.

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Student athletes, managers, trainers, and other athletic support personnel must be students at MSDLT.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS INTO LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS**

Parents of high school students who wish to participate in athletics at MSDLT but who did not attend MSDLT during their intended sports season the previous school year are required to complete an *Athletic Transfer Report* Form which will be sent to the student’s former school and to the IHSAA for approval. The student cannot become eligible for competition until approval has been granted by the IHSAA. Students who transfer without a corresponding change in residence MAY be granted “limited eligibility” which allows for participation at the junior varsity level only for a period of 365 days. (Note: Athletic transfers do not apply to incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders who have not yet been enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.)

## **SANCTIONED SPORTS**

As a general rule, MSDLT sanctions sports which are sanctioned by the IHSAA. Sanctioning of any other sports by MSDLT would require School Board approval. Such approval would include consideration of available schools to schedule, costs, revenue, supervision, availability of facilities, availability of qualified coaches, student interest, etc.

## **INSURANCE**

MSDLT administrators, coaches and trainers are safety conscious and are trained to instruct athletes in the safe and proper techniques of their individual sport(s). However, as discussed below, participation in athletics inherently involves risk and could result in injury to student athletes. In recent years, the IHSAA has carried catastrophic insurance to cover major injuries incurred during participation in approved IHSAA sports programs. More information about the IHSAA plan is available upon request at the athletic office. **Neither the IHSAA nor MSDLT carry any kind of first dollar medical insurance for athletic injuries.**

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

MSDLT offers a variety of ticket plans for the convenience of students, parents and patrons. Substantial saving on admission costs to events can be realized through the purchase of annual all-sports tickets, good for entry into all respective school athletic events except IHSAA, county or conference events, or special events. Students and patrons may also purchase single session tickets at the gate for any event they wish to attend. For further information, contact the respective school athletic office.

## **TRAVEL**

MSDLT athletes are required to travel to and from athletic contests and special events in school-approved vehicles under adult supervision provided by MSDLT. Extraordinary circumstances should be submitted to the Athletic Directors for review prior to the day of the event. Students must have parent release forms signed and in the athletic office prior to a change of transportation. Coaches may allow parents to sign off responsibility if they wish to take their son/daughter home from competition.

## **WEIGHT ROOM**

The high school weight room is available for use by athletes before/after school as scheduled by their coaches. No student shall use the weight room facilities without adult supervision. Students are urged to request assistance from the coaches when planning and initiating a workout regimen. Weight training classes are available to be taken during the day at MSDLT. See your coach or counselor for details on these classes.

## **CONDUCT AND CHARACTER**

MSDLT athletes are expected to present and to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of respect and honor at all times both in and out of season. What is best for the team should be foremost in the mind of each athlete and not until the team has been eliminated from competition should the advancement of the individual take precedence. Athletes are also expected to place good sportsmanship ahead of the desire to win and should not engage in any tactics that might provide an unfair advantage over an opponent. Good sportsmanship also applies to the treatment of officials and is expected when athletes

attend other sporting events as spectators and supporters. Athletes should refrain from engaging in negatives such as vulgar language, disrespectful and violent behavior, use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs, theft, vandalism, and other behaviors that will bring discredit upon themselves, their teams, their families, and their school. In short, MSDLT athletes are expected to maintain a higher standard of conduct than that of those not involved in athletics.

## **MSDLT ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES, RULES, AND CONSEQUENCES**

Without limiting the applicability of the Conduct of Character section above, the following specific rules apply: Athletic rules and consequences are cumulative and in effect year round. In the case of one calendar year suspensions, the Principal and Athletic Director will determine the date on which the suspension will end. The athletic season is defined as commencing with the first practice and ending with the last contest. All consequences take effect immediately upon declaration by the Athletic Director and will include contests in succession. An athlete who does not complete the season in good standing, or is in violation of a rule between the last contest and the awards ceremony, will forfeit any awards earned. When an athlete is serving a percentage of a season suspension, it is at the discretion of the coach to determine the athlete's attendance at athletic contests and practices involving the team. An athlete must adequately fulfill the terms of the suspension for credit to be given.

**RULE 1:** Athletes shall not possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, stimulants, depressants, marijuana, steroids, or alcohol. (Use of an authorized drug as prescribed by a registered physician shall not constitute a violation of this rule.)

### **Consequences:**

1<sup>st</sup> offense – Suspension from 20% of the total number of regular season games. Suspended athletes may not dress for any competition or be involved in any recognition ceremony during the suspension. If less than 20% of the regular season remains, the athlete will be removed from the team, forfeit any awards, and will serve the remainder of his/her suspension in the next sport season in which he/she participates.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – One calendar year suspension from athletics.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Removal of all athletic privileges for the remainder of his/her career.

**All student athletes in violation of Rule 1 must also complete a Drug Deferral Program after each violation.**

**RULE 2:** Athletes shall not possess or use any tobacco products.

### **Consequences:**

1<sup>st</sup> offense - Suspension from 15% of the total number of regular season games. Suspended athletes may not dress for any competition or be involved in any recognition ceremony during the suspension. If less than 15% of the regular season remains, the athlete will be removed from the team, forfeit any awards, and will serve the remainder of his/her suspension in the next sport season in which he/she participates.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – One calendar year suspension from athletics.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Removal of all athletic privileges for the remainder of his/her career.

**RULE 3:** An athlete who commits an act that would otherwise constitute a felony, misdemeanor, act of delinquency or status offense may face the following:

**Consequences:**

1<sup>st</sup> offense – The penalty is to be determined by the principal and athletic director with the maximum of a 365-day exclusion from athletics. Any student arrested or detained as a juvenile on such a charge may be suspended from any participation pending investigation of the incident.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – One calendar year suspension from athletics.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Removal of all athletic privileges for the remainder of his/her career.

**RULE 4:** Stealing and vandalism – an athlete shall not vandalize property at school or at other schools or have in their possession any stolen item from any source, including uniforms or equipment from MSDLT or other schools. An athlete shall not commit an act of theft. An athlete who commits these acts may face the following consequences:

**Consequences:**

1<sup>st</sup> offense – The penalty is to be determined by the Principal and Athletic Director with the minimum penalty being suspension from 20% of the total number of regular season contests and maximum penalty of removal from the team. The suspension will begin after it is determined that the athlete was in violation of this rule. If less than 20% of the season remains, the athlete will be removed from the team, forfeit any awards earned, and will serve the remainder of his/her suspension in the next sport season in which he/she participates.

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – One calendar year suspension from athletics.

3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Removal of all athletic privileges for the remainder of his/her career.

**RULE 5:** Any athlete that is in violation of school rules will be punished according to the Student Handbook. The athlete may be subject to further disciplinary action in accordance with the rules of each sport. If an athlete is suspended out of school for any reason, he/she will be ineligible for all contests during the term of suspension. Out of school suspended athletes cannot practice during that time.

**RULE 6:** Specific team rules may be set forth by the coach of each sport. These rules and the penalties for violations will be given to the athletes by the coach at the mandatory parent meeting of that sport. These written regulations will be on file in the athletic office.

**APPEALS:**

An athlete and parent/guardian may appeal a disciplinary consequence or other ruling to the Athletic Appeal Board by notifying in writing the Assistant Principal in charge of student activities within five business days after notification of the decision. If written notification is not received within five business days, the right of appeal is forfeited. The Athletic Appeal Board is composed of the Assistant Principal in charge of student activities, the Athletic Director(s), two school faculty members not affiliated with the athletic department, and the coach of the team of which the athlete is a member.

The Assistant Principal will set a date for a meeting and will notify all parties involved. The purpose of the appeal meeting is to inquire informally into the athlete's alleged violation and to allow the athlete and parent/guardian to speak on the athlete's behalf. It is NOT an evidentiary hearing. Both sides will make every effort to acquire as much

factual information as possible. The entire meeting will be recorded with copies available upon request to the parties involved. The Athletic Appeal Board may limit attendance at the meeting at its discretion. The Athletic Appeal Board will deliberate in private and render a decision within five days after the meeting, at which point the parent/guardian will be notified of the decision.

The decision of the Athletic Appeal Board may be appealed to the Principal in writing within five business days of notification. Again, if there is no appeal within those five days, the right of appeal is forfeited. The Principal will review the situation and render a final decision.

## **RECOGNITION OF STUDENT-ATHLETES**

The MSDLT high school athletic departments hold three college signings per year to recognize senior student-athletes who will be competing at the college level. In addition, individual teams typically hold award recognition events.

The MSDLT middle schools hold three seasonal award recognition events.

When it comes to official recognition of these student-athletes, the MSDLT athletic departments only recognize those athletes who officially compete for MSDLT, not club teams who are not associated with MSDLT.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE RISK OF INJURY FOUND IN SPORTS**

Participation in athletics carries with it the very real potential for injury. It is reasonable to believe that at least one time during the four-year career of a student athlete that he or she will face an injury that will result in missing one or more days of practice or contests.

The MSDLT athletic departments provide our athletes with the best sports medicine care available. Each school has certified athletic trainers who are associated with Community Health Network, and we have a sports medicine doctor to assist our athletes when they are injured. It must be clearly understood by our student athletes and their families that even with the proper coaching and support of our coaching staff, the use of proper equipment and tremendous facilities, injuries will take place. These injuries can range from, but are not limited to, mild soreness, bruises, sprains and strains, dislocations, broken bones and concussions. It should also be clearly understood that some of these athletic injuries might result in catastrophic injuries including partial or full paralysis and in some instances death.

We need your help as a student athlete and as a family. Proper rest, nutrition, and the adherence to the rules and guidelines established by the MSDLT athletic departments and the coaches of your sport, will go a long way to assure that injuries are minimized.