

SAN JUAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS



HANDBOOK FOR ATHLETES, COACHES, AND PARENTS

**SAN JUAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT-ATHLETE AND PARENT HANDBOOK**

MISSION STATEMENT

San Juan Unified School District aspires to be an outstanding educational-athletic organization that provides a positive experience to every middle school athlete. A positive experience is one in which student athletes:

- *Are exposed to high expectations and caring relationships.*
- *Learn “life lessons” that will benefit them in the classroom, on campus, and in the community.*
- *Promote a connectedness to school, school spirit, and positive school culture through participation in extra-curricular activities.*
- *Are coached using the principles of Positive Coaching Alliance.*

PHILOSOPHY OF STUDENT ATHLETICS

The San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD) recognizes the importance of athletics as an integral component of a student’s complete educational development. As such, we believe that all students should have an opportunity to participate in some form of interscholastic athletics and that such participation should encourage positive scholastic and social growth and achievement. All participants and teams will represent the school and community in a positive manner and will reflect the dedication and hard work that will be required to compete and be successful. Success will not be measured by records that are achieved by teams or individuals, but rather by the knowledge that each participant gave his/her best effort and prepared for each contest to the best of his/her ability. The San Juan Unified School District realizes that an effective interscholastic athletic program is the product of responsible cooperation between its four major components: the student-athlete, the coaching staff, the parents, and the site/district administration.

HONORING THE GAME

Sports provide a great framework for cultivating ethical behavior. Winning and losing gracefully are hallmarks of people equipped to live in and lead a civil society. Learning to treat people with dignity, especially under the pressure of competition, is one of the most valuable life lessons sports can offer. In sports, this is "Honoring the Game," respect for Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates and Self. These are the ROOTS of positive competition and a healthy team culture!

Triple Goal Competitors

A Triple-Impact Competitor® is an athlete who works to improve oneself, teammates, and the game as a whole. These individuals play a special role in Positive Coaching Alliance's and San Juan Unified School District's mission to turn middle school sports into a Development Zone, developing better athletes *and* better people.

Being a Triple-Impact Competitor is not easy. It requires commitment and sacrifice. Here are the three levels in which a Triple-Impact Competitor works:

1) Self

A Triple-Impact Competitor is committed to improving him or her self, always looking for ways to perform better.

2) Teammates

Help your teammates through positive reinforcement and by prioritizing team success. It's hard to look beyond oneself, but a Triple-Impact Competitor focuses on helping others.

3) The Game

With an underlying respect for the rules, opponents, officials, teammates and self, a Triple-Impact Competitor strives to make the game better.

Double Goal Coaches

Coaches determine the kind of experience our athletes have with sports. We are committed to the principles of Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA). We expect you to be a Double-Goal Coach, who strives to win (one goal), while pursuing the more-important goal of teaching life lessons through sports. PCA's Double-Goal Coach Job Description includes:

- Model and teach your players to Honor the Game.
- Teach ROOTS – respect for Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates, and one's Self.
- Hold a parent meeting and distribute PCA's Parent/Guardian Letter to help parents Honor the Game.
- Appoint a parent to be "Culture Keeper" for the team.
- Drill Honoring the Game in practice.
- Seize teachable moments to talk with players about Honoring the Game.
- Help players pursue mastery of their sport, not just scoreboard wins.

- Teach players the ELM Tree of Mastery (Effort, Learning, and bouncing back from Mistakes).
- Use a “Team Mistake Ritual” (like “Flushing Mistakes”) to help players quickly rebound from mistakes.
- Reward effort, not just good outcomes. Recognize players even for “unsuccessful” effort.
- Encourage players to set “Effort Goals” tied to how hard they try.
- Fill your players’ Emotional Tanks.
- Use encouragement and positive reinforcement as your primary method of motivating.
- Achieve the “Magic Ratio” of five positive reinforcements to each criticism or correction.
- Use the “Buddy System” to teach players to fill each others’ Emotional Tanks.
- Learn to give “Kid-Friendly Criticism,” such as criticizing in private, asking permission, using the Criticism Sandwich, and avoiding criticism in non-teachable moments.
- Have conversations with your players at every practice and game.
- Review Honoring the Game, the ELM Tree and the Emotional Tank throughout the season.
- Ask questions and encourage players to speak and contribute during team meetings.
- Use PCA’s Talking Points e-mail series to guide discussions with your players.

Your adopting these philosophies and actions will contribute to a positive, character-building youth sports experience for all the children our organization serves. Thank you for all your time and effort!

Second Goal Parents

San Juan Unified School District and PCA’s mission is to make sports a Development Zone to develop Better Athletes, Better People. Parents have an especially important role to play as a Second-Goal Parent who helps their child become a Triple-Impact Competitor who makes self, teammates and the game better.

The Big Picture in Youth Sports

A Second-Goal Parent recognizes that there is a Little Picture and a Big Picture in youth sports. The Little Picture concerns things like whether the child is playing the right position, the team is winning, etc. The Big Picture, which often gets drowned out by the Little Pictures, is about what the child is learning from youth sports. There are two broad goals in youth sports: striving to win and building character so kids develop into successful, contributing members of society. As important as winning may seem, Second-Goal Parents let coaches and athletes worry about the first goal of scoreboard results. Second-Goal Parents have a much more important role to play: ensuring their children take away from sports lessons that will help them be successful in life. That is the Big Picture. Keeping your focus on the Big Picture is much more vital than being an extraneous back-seat coach. The lifelong impact you can have – that no one else can in quite the way you can – is with the life lessons your child takes away from their sports experience. No one can be there for your child in this way better than you. No one.

Endless Procession of Teachable Moments

If you embrace your role as a Second-Goal Parent, it will transform the way you see youth sports. It will help you seize the endless procession of teachable moments that will come your way again and again when you are looking for them. What might have seemed like a disappointing loss or a failure by your child becomes an opportunity to reinforce resiliency. A tough competition in forbiddingly hot, cold, or nasty weather can prompt a conversation with your child about learning to enjoy challenges. Whether your child succeeds or fails on the playing field, you will be able to use the experiences to reinforce the kind of person you want him or her to be.

A Second-Goal Parent focuses relentlessly on the Big Picture – helping their child take away the lessons that will help them be successful, contributing members of society. And, in the process a Second-Goal Parent is able to better enjoy their child's youth sports experience, which will end all too quickly.

ELIGIBILITY

Student athletes are eligible to participate for their middle school or K8 of attendance. If a K8 does not have a team, the athlete may participate with their partner middle school. San Juan middle grade students (6-8) who attend Choices Charter or Options for Youth may participate with the middle school within their attendance area.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Attending all classes is a high priority for all student-athletes:

1. Students must attend 50% (minimum) of the school day, excluding lunch, in order to participate in practice or competition that day.

2. Student-athletes in violation of this rule, as it relates to competitions, will be suspended for a minimum of one contest or game. (Subject to review with head coach and athletic director.)

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Athletes must be academically eligible under the following requirements in order to participate in competition. Any athlete who has 2 or more F's and/or U's in two different classes on a progress report or report card will be ineligible for competition for a minimum of 2 weeks or until the next progress report or report card is issued. If at the end of 2 weeks the athlete passes a grade check under the same requirements they will become eligible for competition. The first grade check will be based on the most recent progress report or report card issued prior to the start of the season.

EQUIPMENT

The individual sites provide funding to maintain and purchase proper equipment. Equipment is to be handled properly for financial reasons and also to teach students responsibility.

1. All equipment will be inventoried, numbered, and checked out by coaches.
2. Students are responsible for the security of their equipment and uniforms. In some cases, particularly with game uniforms, the replacement fee may be higher than the original purchase price because special processing and printing may be required to duplicate the uniform.
3. Students are expected to turn in the same piece(s) of equipment checked out to them.
4. Equipment should be returned in the same condition as it was received. Equipment and uniforms should be cleaned before being returned. Students are expected to make arrangements to have torn or ripped clothing repaired prior to turning it in to the coach.
5. All equipment must be returned within one week of the last contest.
6. No awards (letters, trophies, etc.) or grades will be issued until all equipment is returned and/or paid for by the student-athlete.
7. Students must return or pay for all equipment before they can practice or participate in another sport. In unusual circumstances when a significant amount of money is owed, arrangements for repayment can be made with the coach and the administrator in charge of athletics.
8. Students who leave a team prior to the end of the season must turn in their equipment and uniform within one week.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR

Student-athletes must comply with all rules and regulations as specified by California Education Code, California Penal Code, and San Juan Unified School District Board Policy and Administrative Regulations.

Profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, throwing of equipment or any similar displays of immaturity, and disrespect to any person or institution will not be tolerated. Athletes accept responsibility for their actions both on and off the field. An athlete's language and behavior should not embarrass himself/herself, the team, the school, the district, or the community. Defiant behavior and back talk toward any coach, school official, or game official will also not be tolerated. Any disagreements should be handled in private adult discussions.

Violation of any of the above behavior guidelines could result in one or more of the following consequences: benching, suspension, or dismissal.

UNREST PLANS

If a physical conflict should occur on the playing field/court during a contest, the following action will take place: All athletes in the sideline/bench area will remain there, and all athletes on the field/court are to move immediately to the sideline/bench area. All parents/guardians, fans, etc., are to remain in the stands or in the sideline/bench area if there are no stands. No unsportsmanlike words or actions are to come from any players, fans, or coaches. Violation of the above policy by a student can result in disciplinary action from both the school administration and the athletic department. It is the responsibility of every coach to inform, demonstrate, and practice the above action plan.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes, performers or competitors involved in a fight, while in uniform and/or at a performance/competition will have the following consequences:

First Offense - One game or performance suspension/school suspension;

Second Offense - Complete removal from the team and school suspension;

Each situation will be evaluated on an individual basis by the administration. The appropriate coach or advisor will provide input.

LEAVING A TEAM

Students are encouraged to try a variety of sports and students may leave a team prior to the first contest, excluding scrimmages, without penalty, by personally notifying the coach that they no longer wish to participate. After this "try-out" period, students may leave a team under the following conditions:

1. It is the student's responsibility to notify the coach that he/she no longer wishes to participate. The coach may request that the student explain the reason(s) for leaving the team. If the coach and student mutually agree that the student can leave the team, the student may leave without penalty. The student may not begin

- practicing another sport until the season (including play-offs if applicable) has ended. This includes any off-season programs.
2. If a student is dismissed from a team, the student may not begin practicing another sport until the season has ended. This includes any off-season programs.
 3. If a student communicates with a coach, but no agreement can be reached, the student may appeal to the athletic director. If the student feels the decision is still unfair, he/she may appeal the athletic director's decision to the principal.

THESE RULES ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE PUNITIVE, AND PENALTIES WILL BE IMPOSED ONLY AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION. THE INTENT OF THESE RULES IS TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO BE RESPONSIBLE IN THEIR ACTIONS AND TO COMMUNICATE IN AN ADULT MANNER WHEN THEY PLAN TO END A COMMITMENT TO A SPORT OR WHEN THEY DISAGREE WITH A COACH.

TRAINING RULES

For health and safety reasons, students should understand that the S.J.U.S.D. believes that the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs is not acceptable for middle school athletes. Any violation of these training rules may also result in school disciplinary action according to the S.J.U.S.D. Code of Conduct and California Education Code. The coaches believe that the current glamorization of the use of tobacco and alcohol by some professional athletes is misleading and believe that middle school students should be aware of the negative effects of their use.

The following information concerning tobacco, alcohol, and drug use is the policy adopted by the athletic departments and the district administration of the S.J.U.S.D. It is a policy designed to be supportive and helpful to students/athletes, not just punitive. Students and parents must realize that it is their responsibility to follow this cumulative policy, and repeated offenses during the season will result in progressive consequences. Reported offenses must be documented in writing.

TOBACCO – SMOKING AND CHEWING POLICY

Any student-athlete who smokes, chews, or possesses tobacco in any form at any time during the season or at any off-season team activity will suffer the following consequences.

1st OFFENSE: The student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic contests for **two** weeks from the date of the infraction. In addition he/she must agree to a parent, coach, student conference. With the coach's permission, the student-athlete may continue to practice with the team.

2nd OFFENSE: The student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic contests for **four** weeks from the date of the infraction. In addition, he/she must successfully complete a tobacco abuse program that is approved by the athletic

director. With the coach's permission the student-athlete may continue to practice with the team.

3rd OFFENSE: The student-athlete is ineligible for **one** calendar year.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

Any student-athlete who uses/possesses alcohol, drugs, or performance enhancing drugs in any form at any time during the season or at any off-season team activity will suffer the following consequences:

1st OFFENSE: The student-athlete will be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic contests for **four** weeks from the date of the infraction. In addition, he/she must successfully complete a chemical abuse program that is approved by the athletic director. With the coach's permission the student-athlete may continue to practice with the team.

2nd OFFENSE: The student-athlete will be ineligible for all practices and interscholastic contests for **one** calendar year. In addition, he/she must successfully complete a chemical abuse program that is approved by the athletic director.

REPEATED OFFENSES: *Repeated offenses of the above policy may result in permanent expulsion from all athletic activities. Record of offenses is cumulative during the entire middle school career of a student-athlete.*