

Montgomery County Schools



Athletic Handbook
2024-2025

Montgomery County Schools Athletic Handbook

In line with the mission and vision of the Montgomery County Schools, our athletic programs will seek to support learning and teaching for every student in a safe, nurturing environment. We will support engaging students in rigorous educational experiences in and out of the classroom and create positive sports experiences for all participants stressing moral and ethical development as well as physical and intellectual growth. Sportsmanship and high standards will drive our athletic programs, and students and staff will be accountable for their actions as they represent our schools as coaches and student-athletes. Integrity, discipline, character, teamwork, and the value of hard work will drive our athletic programs, and these traits will be how we measure our success in athletics.

Code of Conduct for Coaches

- ❖ Outside coaches not employed full time or part-time by Montgomery County Schools must be at least 25 years of age and shall complete all required paperwork included in the coach's packet provided by the athletic director.
- ❖ All coaches shall complete the Ethics Training and sign the form provided and submit this form to the Human Resources Department at the Board of Education.
- ❖ All coaches must read the policy relevant to Student/Staff Relations and sign the form attached. This signed form must be submitted to the Human Resources Department.
- ❖ Coaches are required to review the NCHSAA PowerPoint presentation on eligibility rules before the season in which they coach. All coaches are expected to follow NCHSAA eligibility rules in all circumstances. The athletic director, and ultimately the principal of the school, is responsible for seeing that coaches know and follow all guidelines and policies.
- ❖ Coaches shall set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct with all student-athletes, parents, officials, school personnel, other coaches, the media, and the public.
- ❖ Coaches shall display the highest degree of sportsmanship and shall expect the same from student-athletes. Coaches shall discipline athletes who display unacceptable behavior, and

- shall, at all times, discourage behaviors that may result in ejections from any contest.
- ❖ Coaches are responsible for being knowledgeable about game rules and shall be responsible for the interpretation of rules to those involved in the sport. At no time shall a coach try to circumvent rules of the sport.
 - ❖ All coaches shall promote and work in harmony with the total interscholastic program of the school.
 - ❖ Coaches shall respect and support contest officials by avoiding conduct that will incite players or spectators against the officials.
 - ❖ Any spectator who accesses the playing surface during an athletic event will be banned from attending games for the remainder of the season
 - ❖ Coaches shall take an active role in the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse while stressing the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
 - ❖ Coaches shall supervise athletes at all times. Supervision shall include before and after practice sessions and before and after games. At no time should athletes be left alone.
 - ❖ Coaches shall follow all guidelines in maintaining clear, accurate, and up-to-date medical records that help keep students safe in their athletic participation and are bound by privacy laws in protecting such information.
 - ❖ Coaches shall routinely check physicals throughout the season to assure that no physicals are outdated. No athletes can be allowed to participate in sports unless a current physical is on file for them.
 - ❖ Coaches shall prohibit, at all times, any behavior that resembles hazing.
 - ❖ Coaches shall meet with parents of student-athletes before the beginning of every sports season. Student-athletes and their parents are required to sign contracts stating that guidelines and requirements for participation in that sport are recognized and will be followed.
 - ❖ Each coach has his/her policy on how he/she will select their team. In some sports, cutting a team down to a manageable size is a necessity. Coaches will explain their policy to prospective team members at the first meeting. A student-

- athlete may be cut from the team anytime during the season for the appropriate reasons.
- ❖ At the High School level, any paid coach must show verification of CPR & AED courses
 - ❖ Coaches shall allow a minimum of two (2) days for tryouts for all sports.
 - ❖ Coaches are not allowed to accept or receive any personal gifts from community members. Any team contributions or donations should be handled by your athletic director or administration.
 - ❖ Coaches and student-athletes are required to follow all guidelines for athletic participation as set forth by the State Board of Education, the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, the Montgomery County Schools, and the school where the student participates in athletics.
 - ❖ Coaches are responsible for following Board policies 4120, 4130, 4150 in terms of student domicile, student assignment, and participation in sports.
 - ❖ High school coaches are required to complete the Fundamentals of Coaching Class, Concussion Course, and CPR Training. A copy of your certificate of completion of each course should be sent to the Human Resources Department.

Guidelines for Operation of School-Based Athletic Programs

- ❖ Athletic Directors shall facilitate the presentation of the NCHSAA Eligibility PowerPoint for all coaches, including non-employee coaches.
- ❖ Athletic Directors shall facilitate parent meetings for all sports.
- ❖ Athletic Directors shall facilitate the process of getting physical forms to school nurses for review at the beginning of each sports season. Nurses shall submit a list of health concerns to the Athletic Director and Principal, making sure that they are aware of student athletes who have health issues.
- ❖ Athletic Directors and Principals shall be responsible for making sure that all coaches, assistant coaches, and trainers are aware of all health concerns, and that everyone involved with that

student-athlete understands how to deal with the health concern.

- ❖ At the beginning of each school year, every school shall submit a Crisis Plan to the Deputy Superintendent that meets the requirements of the NCHSAA. Plans should be updated every year.
- ❖ All coaches, including non-employee and volunteer coaches, must go through the proper procedures for being hired as coaches in the Montgomery County Schools. That includes, but is not limited to a **completed application, health certificate, and background check. In addition, it is mandatory that all high school coaches complete the Fundamentals of Coaching Class and the Concussion Training Course.** Athletic Directors should provide this information to coaches. These should be completed before their coaching duties begin.
A school shall follow Board policy 5015 in working with all volunteer coaches.
- ❖ Athletic Directors must assure that background checks have been processed on every volunteer or paid coach before they are allowed to participate in practice sessions or games. Before they are allowed to work with students in any form, we must have a background check on file. Volunteer Tracker is a new resource for providing coaches with the required forms for the background check process if they are volunteer coaches. They will still need to complete the coaching packet provided to the Athletic Director.
- ❖ A certified First Responder should be on site for all home football contests.
- ❖ High schools are responsible for inspecting football helmets yearly. Middle schools shall inspect football helmets every two years (beginning 2007).
- ❖ It shall be the responsibility of the Athletic Director and Principal to adhere to all MCS policies that pertain to academics, attendance, domicile, school assignment, and participation in sports.
- ❖ Each school is responsible for implementing a concussion plan. This plan should be followed in the event of a possible head injury. A copy of this plan should be on file and reviewed with each coach and trainer. Each school is responsible for having

students and parents sign the concussion form indicating they have reviewed the plan. These signed forms should be kept on file at the school. (Concussion plan attached)

- ❖ All co-ed sports have both male and female coaches/chaperones or supervisors with athletes for practice and contests at all times.
- ❖ Random drug testing of athletes will be conducted by an outside screening company. These results will be kept confidential in the Human Resources Department.

Guidelines for Coaches' Pay and Verification of Experience

- ❖ Schools will hire coaches according to the MCS-approved coaches' pay scale which names the allotted coaching positions. Schools will not be allotted extra money for coaching positions that are not filled.
- ❖ Should a coach be hired to coach two sports (such as girls' and boys' basketball), the coach will be paid two salaries because these are two separate sports with two different practice and game schedules.
- ❖ Every coach shall fill out a verification of experience form that documents coaching experience in all sports. Verification forms must be signed and verified by the coach, the Athletic Director, and the Principal. **Verification forms must be turned in to the Human Resources Office at the Board of Education before being paid for coaching duties.**
- ❖ Coaches will be paid according to the MCS coaches' pay scale and shall be paid based on experience in the particular sport they are coaching.
- ❖ At the end of each sports season, a form for request of payment must be turned in to the county Athletic Director for approval. The form must be signed by the school Athletic Director and the Principal. The Principal and Athletic Director will verify years of experience in the sport coached, verify the amount to be paid, and sign the form which will be submitted to finance for payment.

Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes

In addition to the rules of this code of Conduct, a participating student must, at all times, conform to guidelines set forth by the school and school system. Students must also follow all rules set forth by his/her coach and shall not receive any special privileges with regard to meeting his/her obligations to teachers or any other school personnel.

- ❖ Any player who leaves the bench to engage in an altercation will be immediately suspended from the team and will likely face permanent removal for such conduct.
- ❖ Student-athletes shall be expected to hold themselves to higher standards of conduct and performance as they represent their schools.
- ❖ Student-athletes are responsible for knowing the rules of their sport and for following all state and local guidelines (i.e. – NCHSAA regulations).
- ❖ Students shall have a current physical on file at the school at all times. Physicals are valid for one year from the date of the examination, **and no student shall participate in sports without an up-to-date physical.**
- ❖ Parents shall attend a group meeting with the coach of the sport in which the student is participating. Parents and student-athletes shall sign a contract agreeing to adhere to all guidelines.
- ❖ Student-athletes are expected to travel with their team to all away contests and to travel back to the school with the team. Should extenuating circumstances arise, parents may transport their child from an event. Athletes may ride home from games with their parents only. (They are not permitted to leave with brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, friends, etc). The parents should communicate directly with the coach about transportation.
- ❖ Student-athletes may not be involved at any level with alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs either on-campus or off-campus. Such behavior will result in suspension and possible ejection from any sports team, according to Montgomery County, school, and team guidelines.

- ❖ All student-athletes at the high school level are required to participate in the new Montgomery County Schools Random Drug Testing Policy. (See back of handbook for policy)
- ❖ If a student-athlete is placed in ISS on the school site or is sent to Montgomery Learning Academy on the day of a game for the entire day they will be ineligible to participate in a game on that day. If a student-athlete is placed in ISS for an entire day, the principal and athletic director will be allowed to decide if the student is allowed to participate in practice sessions for that day. If a student-athlete is only in ISS for 1 or 2 cores or equal to less than ½ of the school day, it will be the decision of the individual coach and principal for participation in practice sessions or games for that day.

*** It is the expectation of Montgomery County Schools that student-athletes that are assigned to ISS for any period of time should receive some type of disciplinary action by the coach (Example: running, afterschool detention, extra practice time, reduced playing time.) Student-athletes are expected to set standards for behaviors.

- ❖ Students who are involved in behavior that results in suspension (in or out of school) shall be held accountable for such behavior. Students suspended from school are ineligible to participate in practice or games during the period of suspension. Board of Education policy prohibits these students from being on campus during the time of suspension. A student suspended for violating the Board of Education's Drug and Alcohol Policy will be suspended from the team for the remainder of the season. Before any athletic suspension provided for under these rules shall take effect, the student shall be verbally advised by the head coach and Athletic Director of the alleged violation and the students will have an opportunity to explain or justify the action. If, after such conference, the head coach is satisfied that a suspension is warranted, the student and his/her parents will be notified.
- ❖ Any student-athlete charged with a crime in the community is required to report it to their coach by the next school day. A committee including the Principal, County Office Representative, and Athletic Director, will review the charges to determine continued eligibility. If the student-athlete is further convicted of a crime in the community the same committee will

review the case again. If the charge warrants immediate placement at Montgomery Learning Academy the student will be ineligible to participate in sports at their home school.

- ❖ No athlete may quit one sport and try out for another after the season has begun without the mutual consent of both coaches and the Athletic Director. Any athlete who quits a team without permission of the coach or who is officially dismissed from a team before the conclusion of the sports season (including playoffs) may not practice or participate with any other athletic team until that season is completed (including playoffs). An athlete is considered a member of a team if he/she is listed on the final team roster.
- ❖ Theft or malicious destruction of any school or individual's equipment or property will not be tolerated. These offenses, and any other serious violations of the code of student conduct that takes place on school grounds, will be reviewed by a committee for the assignment of appropriate consequences (including restitution) for the offense, based upon the facts of the specific case. The committee shall consist of the Head Coach, the school Athletic Director, the Principal, and the Deputy Superintendent. Any appeals of such consequences will be directed to the Superintendent. The final appeal of the Superintendent's decision by the parent and/or athlete is directed to the Montgomery County Schools Board of Education.
- ❖ Completion of the sports season is required for the student to be eligible for any award, letter (team, individual or academic). Exception: an injury that limits participation (with doctor's confirmation). No awards shall be given to any student suspended for the remainder of the season for Athletic Code violations. The coaches may determine other guidelines for awards.
- ❖ A student who has been injured and has had medical treatment cannot participate again until the date indicated by the student's doctor.
- ❖ All student-athletes are required to turn in uniforms and equipment that are issued to them unless otherwise approved and specified by the coach, Athletic Director, and/or Principal. An athlete may not participate in any other sport until all

equipment and uniforms have been returned to the coach of that team.

- ❖ The rules and regulations in this code shall pertain to any violations, on and off school premises, during the season of participation as students represent the school at all times.

Guidelines for Montgomery Learning Academy

Students currently enrolled in any program at Montgomery Learning Academy are not eligible to participate in any sports at middle or high school levels at their home schools.

Guidelines for Montgomery County Early College

Students attending Montgomery County Early College are eligible to participate in athletics at Montgomery Central High School.

Student/Parent Contract

We, the undersigned student and parent(s), have attended the meeting for participation in:

_____, on _____.
Sport Date

We have read the sports Code of Conduct for participation in athletics at Montgomery County Schools, understand the contents, and agree to abide by the regulations that govern sports participation in this sport and by Montgomery County Schools including Out-of-School Suspension for fighting or for violation of Board Policy #4325 (Drugs) during season (once tryouts have begun) will result in removal from team.

Student Signature/Date

Parent Signature/Date

Use of Activity Buses/Cleaning

Coaches are requested to ensure that all buses are clean upon their return to the school. All trash should be properly disposed of. It should not be expected for someone else to clean a mess that they did not create.

In addition, if there are any mechanical problems that you have become aware of, please notify the Athletic Director or administration.

No coach is allowed to use a specific bus. Decisions are made based on the number of players traveling and the distance of travel.

The school treasurer will keep the bus schedule for transportation and any questions should be directed to that person. Also, all activity bus keys will be kept in the office. Please return keys immediately after using the bus to make them available for others.

Coaches should consult with their Athletic Directors to assure that buses are reserved for athletic events through our online Travel Tracker program.

Reporting Accidents and School Insurance

Any accidents occurring during practice or game participation should be reported to the office immediately. An accident report form should be completed with details of the injury. The office staff will complete the school insurance form that will be given to the parent/guardian.

School insurance is a secondary policy if the parent has additional insurance. All accidents should be filed with both insurance companies if parents have additional insurance.

Physicals

All athletes participating in sports are required to have an updated and current physical. Physicals are good for 395 days only. If a physical expires during the season, coaches may not allow that athlete to participate in any activity until they receive an updated physical.

Eligibility

Coaches must be certain that all athletes are eligible before allowing them to participate in activities. Coaches must check current physicals, grades, attendance, and any other information that might prohibit eligibility. Eligibility sheets (pink sheets) must be turned into the office **one week before** to the first contest for principal approval.

A copy of eligibility sheets must be submitted to the Deputy Superintendent before the 1st contest. The signature of the principal is required on eligibility sheets.

Parent /Athlete Pledge

Pledge forms must be signed before the first contest and given to the Athletic Director. Pledge forms should be signed at the parent meetings that are required to be held at the beginning of each sports season.

Purchase of Supplies/Equipment

A purchase order signed by the principal is necessary before any purchases are made. No purchases will be made without the authorization of school administration. If supplies are purchased without prior approval, the invoice will be the responsibility of the purchaser. If you have equipment needs, please submit these in writing to the Athletic Director or the Principal for consideration. We would like to be able to assure that all teams have the equipment **needed** for their sport. We may not be able to provide all of the **wants** of the team, but we will do our best to provide the safest and most up-to-date equipment possible within our financial means.

Teamwork

All coaches are encouraged to be supportive of other coaches and the sports that they coach. All coaches are expected to support athletes who wish to play multiple sports and should work with other coaches to support the athlete.

The athletic department should be able to rely on all of its members for needs and assistance. We can accomplish much more when we all work together for the same outcome.

High School Athletic Booster Clubs

Schools are very fortunate to have the support of Athletic Booster Club members. They have always made every attempt to assist with any athletic needs that arise. They attend games and help out in many ways. Many of them serve in the capacity of coaches and volunteers. Please make efforts to attend Booster

Club meetings and give your ideas for plans. However, please remember that equipment and supply needs are to be submitted to the Athletic Director. Budgets can be reviewed at that point and requests may be made to the boosters for their consideration and assistance. We have many needs at our schools, but if we work together with our boosters we can find ways to meet those needs. All teams should have their needs considered, and we want to be fair in our requests.

Supervision of Athletes

Coaches should never leave athletes unsupervised. A member of the coaching staff should remain with them before practice, after practice, or when they are waiting for a ride home.

Reporting Seasonal Records/Conference/State

Coaches should turn in their season records to the athletic director at the end of each season. Please include overall record, conference players, conference titles/placement, and state playoff information. We need to maintain these records for future reference.

Inventory

Coaches should turn in their equipment and uniform inventories at the end of each season to the Athletic Director.

Solicitation of Funds from Community

Individual coaches shall not solicit funds or accept any money, for any reason, from the community without prior permission from the Principal and Athletic Director.

Transporting Student/Athletes

At no time should a coach transport a student of the opposite sex in their vehicle, even if you have the permission of a parent/guardian. This is a liability that no coach should assume. Always assure that your athletes have transportation and are not left alone, but you should not volunteer to take them home.

Athletes are not allowed to drive themselves to and/or from games. Athletes may ride home from games with their parents only. (Not brothers, aunts, uncles, friends, etc.)

Social Media Communications Involving Students

Coaches should use professional judgment when using social media or other electronic communications at all times. All electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the school system must be school-related and within the scope of the employee's responsibilities. All coaches are prohibited from knowingly communicating with current students through personal

social media without parental permission. An internet posting on a personal social media website intended for a particular student will be considered a form of direct communication with that student in violation of policy unless the parent has consented to the communication.

Sports Injuries and the Liability of the Coach

Coaches must be aware of what proper supervision should entail:

- Never leave the site where the activity is occurring.
- Be in a position to supervise.
- Anticipate problems. As a professional coach, you are expected to be able to identify potential dangers and take precautions against them. Included are such concerns as:
 1. Defective equipment
 2. Lack of safety measures
 3. Equipment/clothing which is poorly fitted or defective
 4. Activities that are inappropriate for the capabilities or conditioning of the participants.
 5. Behavior that is inappropriate and could escalate into problems.
 6. Activities that could be or could lead to hazing.
- Never permit “horseplay” or undisciplined “rowdy” behavior.
- Never knowingly permit rules, regulations, or safety procedures to be violated.
- When introducing new skills or activities, never permit individual performances until you are confident that all group members are familiar with the skill/activity and the proper safety procedures.

Coaches must plan lessons to provide a reasonable progression of activities appropriate to the maturity and condition of the participants. Knowledge of, and ability to, properly apply first aid and emergency care procedures are also included in any consideration of what makes a coach competent. The coach must adequately communicate the risks involved and be certain that the participants understand and appreciate those risks. Coaches must understand that knowledge of the risks is not enough. Warning the participants is

not enough. There must be, on the part of the participants, an understanding and appreciation of the risks. Remember, an individual assumes only those risks of which he/she is knowledgeable and which he/she should appreciate.

Coaches, therefore, should:

- Explain the risks involved in the sport or activity.
- Provide an opportunity for the participants to gain an appreciation for those risks.
- Instruct in the precautions which can contribute to a reduction of the risk of injury.
- Consistently repeat - in various forms, the lessons related to (a) risks, (b) possible consequences, and (c) safety precautions.

Equipment and Facilities

Coaches have a responsibility to protect their athletes from the hazards presented by defective equipment. The fitting of football equipment is an example of an area in which coaching responsibilities are present. Likewise, coaches have obligations in overseeing the use of equipment, training apparatus, and sports areas to assure that proper and appropriate use is made of them.

Coaches should be aware that they are expected, by the courts, to appropriately inspect the areas and facilities used in their activities. Once an unsafe condition has been noted, it must immediately be called to the attention of those responsible for correcting such conditions. Having noted and reported the unsafe condition, the coach now has the obligation of protecting participants from the dangerous situation until it is corrected. This “protection” may include removing the activity from the area.

Among the areas that should be inspected by the coaches for reasonable safety include gyms, courts, fields, bleachers and stands, safety devices, and locker-shower facilities.

If any of these appear to be unsafe areas, a report should be made to the Athletic Director or the administration.

In light of the prevalence of MRSA, coaches should be particularly aware of the cleanliness of equipment and should make concentrated efforts to disinfect training equipment, weight machines, and athletic facilities as is feasible and practical. As with any health issues, coaches should work closely with school nurses, the Athletic Director, and administration to prevent and treat any concerns that affect an athlete's health.

Attendance Requirements for Practice/Game Participation

Students must be in attendance 50% of the school day to be eligible to participate in practice or games.

If there is a contest to be held on Saturday, athletes must be in attendance 50% of the day on Friday.

- If an emergency arises (ex. Illness, death, etc.) approval can be given by the Principal only to excuse the ½ day attendance rule for game days or a Saturday contest.

STUDENT-ATHLETE ATTENDANCE POLICY

(Effective June 2015)

As of 2015, the North Carolina High School Athletic Association has turned over the enforcement of the attendance policy for student-athletes to local LEA's.

At our spring 2015 Athletic Directors Meeting, we determined that beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, a student-athlete cannot miss more than 15 class sessions in at least 3 of the passing classes for semester eligibility.

If a student exceeds 15 absences in a class that he/she receives credit for, it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the student makes up any additional absence time over the 15-day limit. If a student fails one class, makeup time is not required for that class.

Off-season workout sessions and afterschool athletic activities

CANNOT be incorporated in the make-up time.

Example:

John Doe passes 1st, 2nd, and 3rd period but has 17 absences in each of the 3 classes and he fails 4th period and has 25 absences in that 4th-period class, for John Doe to be eligible in our local attendance policy he would be required to make up 9 hours in the 3 passing classes.

The students' teachers should be utilized in creating a make-up schedule for mandatory time.

If you have questions please consult with your Athletic Director or contact Dr. Jack Cagle.

Coaches Contract

As a coach of Montgomery County Schools, (paid or volunteer), I have read and understand the contents of the 2017 - 2018 Athletic Handbook.

I agree to abide by these guidelines and regulations set forth by Montgomery County Schools.

Signature of Coach

Date

Signature of Athletic Director

Date

(Coaches should sign this form and turn it into the Athletic Director at their school. Athletic Directors should keep these on file).

