

# SAYREVILLE WAR MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

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## HANDBOOK FOR STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT

Revised  
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**SAYREVILLE WAR MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL - STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT HANDBOOK**

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**DISTRICT SPONSORED ATHLETIC PROGRAMS**

	<b>VARSITY</b>	<b>JV</b>	<b>FRESHMEN</b>	<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>
<b>FALL</b>				
Cross Country Boys	X	X		X
Cross Country Girls	X	X		X
Field Hockey	X	X	X	2X
Football	X	X	X	
Soccer Boys	X	X	X	2X
Soccer Girls	X	X	X	2X
Volleyball Girls	X	X		
Tennis Girls	X	X		
<b>WINTER</b>				
Basketball Boys	X	X	X	2X
Basketball Girls	X	X	X	2X
Bowling Boys	X	X		
Bowling Girls	X	X		
Swimming Boys	X	X		
Swimming Girls	X	X		
Winter Track Boys	X			
Winter Track Girls	X			
Wrestling	X	X		X
<b>SPRING</b>				
Baseball	X	X		2X
Flag Football Girls	X	X		
Golf Boys	X	X		
Golf Girls	X	X		
Lacrosse Boys	X	X	X	
Lacrosse Girls	X	X	X	
Softball	X	X		2X
Volleyball Boys	X	X		
Tennis Boys	X	X		
Track Boys	X	X		X
Track Girls	X	X		X
Cheerleading	Football/Basketball		Competition	Middle School

## **SAYREVILLE'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATIONAL-BASED ATHLETICS**

Sayreville Public School considers participation in athletics to be an integral part of the overall educational experience. Sayreville's philosophy of education-based athletics is that athletics are an extension of a student's educational process. Integrating an education-based athletics philosophy will foster learning opportunities that focus on reinforcing values and skills used in the classroom and throughout life such as teamwork, responsibility, accountability, communication, leadership, empathy, and problem-solving. Students earn the privilege to participate in sports by maintaining academic standards and good conduct. Education-based athletics will in return maximize student participation and support the academic progress. Sports are full of teachable moments and coaches are the conduit through which the learning experience flows. Our coaches will provide a safe environment where athletes can learn, excel, and feel comfortable making mistakes. Together the students, coaches, administration, and parents will achieve Sayreville's philosophy of education-based athletics by developing students' education, character, skills, and values that will help them succeed beyond high school.

**THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPORTSMANSHIP**  
**(Courtesy of the NJSIAA and GMC)**

The COACH:

- Treats own players, and opponents, with respect;
- Inspires in the athletes a love for the game, and a desire to compete fairly;
- Is the type of person he/she wants the athletes to be;
- Disciplines those on the team who display unsportsmanlike behavior;
- Holds athletes to a responsible academic and school disciplinary code;
- Respects the judgment and interpretation of the rules by the officials, and
- Knows he/she is a teacher, and understands the athletic area is a classroom.

The PLAYER:

- Treats own teammates, and opponents, with respect;
- Plays hard, but plays within the rules;
- Exercises self-control at all times, setting an example for others to follow;
- Respects officials, and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument;
- Wins without boasting, loses without excuses, and never quits;
- Understands that academic and school discipline can affect athletic participation; and
- Always remember that it is a privilege to represent the school and community.

The SPECTATOR:

- Attempts to understand and be informed of the playing rules;
- Appreciates a good play no matter who makes it;
- Cooperates with and responds enthusiastically to cheerleaders;
- Shows compassion for an injured player, applauds positive performances, does not heckle, jeer or distract players, and avoids use of profane and obnoxious language and behavior;
- Respects the judgment and strategy of the coach, and does not criticize players or coaches for the loss of a game;
- Respects property of others, and authority of those who administer the competition, and censures those whose behavior is unbecoming.

## EXPECTATIONS AND ATHLETIC MISSION STATEMENT

Athletics at Sayreville Public Schools help students to become well-rounded individuals. At Sayreville Public Schools, we strive to become the educational-based premier athletic program in the region. To help the parent and athlete better understand how a competitive athletic program is conducted and what comprises our expectations, we have outlined several of our philosophies.

1. A coach at Sayreville Public Schools is hired based on leadership skills and knowledge in that sport. The head coach is responsible for the entire program. The head coach is responsible for team selection. Criteria for selection are established by the head coach with input from his/her assistants. Team selection, practices, discipline, and decisions regarding playing time are the responsibility of the coaching staff.
2. The Sayreville War Memorial High School athletic programs are competitive. Please understand that when your child signs up for a team, there is a very real possibility that he/she may not be selected if a squad reduction is necessary or not be placed on a level where you think he/she should. Coaches match the abilities of the student-athlete with the appropriate level.
3. Club teams, AAU teams, or the such like, do not automatically guarantee that your child will make the level or position that you may want them to play. Coaches look at talent levels in different ways. Coaches at Sayreville Public Schools are hired to evaluate your child's ability level and best fit for the current dynamics and needs of the overall program.
4. Playing time is something that is earned during practice sessions. Coaches must have confidence in a player that he/she will adhere to a game plan, demonstrate athletic competence, and have a high level of conditioning necessary to participate. Starting positions and playing time are not guaranteed to anyone. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach. Academics and discipline can affect athletic participation.
5. General requirements for Varsity awards in ALL sports:
  - Must be in good athletic and academic standing, complete the season and be eligible academically.
  - Be of good character, a good teammate, and a team player by adhering to the school and athletic code of conduct.
  - Attend all practices, games, meets, or matches unless excused by the coach based on a discussion prior to the absences with the student, parent, or doctor's note.
  - Contribute to the team's success (at practice, at games, and on the bench)
  - To be considered a **regular** member of the **varsity** team. Students may be "called up" and continue to play both JV and Varsity, if this happens on a regular basis or a player transitions to the varsity team, a letter may be awarded. Playing in a limited amount of Varsity contests or being "called up" for a few games, postseason, or practicing with the Varsity is not a guarantee that a student-athlete will earn a Varsity Letter. General criteria are based upon participation in approximately 50% of that year's contests or acquiring 5 varsity points in sports that award varsity points (i.e.: swimming or track)
  - Serving as a Team Manager or Statistician for the varsity level.
  - Injured players may receive a letter if, in the opinion of the head coach, he/she would have participated in the required amount of playing time, if they had not been injured, and also served the team in some capacity while injured.

**\*\*Athletes who do not achieve the guidelines established above, but make contributions to the team, may be awarded varsity letters at the discretion of the coaching staff and the Athletic Director. \*\***

Participating on a team at Sayreville Public Schools is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes should always remember that academics come first. Athletes should constantly check with their teachers for extra help and how they are doing in each class. Eligibility plays a key role in the student-athlete's ability to be on a team. In addition, students who are reprimanded for discipline reasons in school can affect athletic participation and subsequently may not be permitted to compete in athletic events. The penalties imposed by the coach for academic or disciplinary reasons will be done with consistency throughout the programs, however, please be aware that all sports seasons are different lengths, and the game, match, meet, or event varies from sport to sport. Therefore, it is the coach's responsibility to determine the penalties. (Example: Sitting one event during a track meet may/may not be equivalent to sitting one quarter in basketball) These determinations will be set by the coach and reviewed by the Athletic Director as needed.

Please note that NJSIAA transfer protocols may change yearly. Therefore please see NJSIAA transfer bylaws at [www.njsiaa.org](http://www.njsiaa.org). Please fill out the transfer form provided by the coach, and contact the Athletic Director with any questions.

### **Junior Varsity/Freshmen/Middle School Philosophy**

Sub varsity and Middle School athletics are an integral part of the success of the varsity program. Junior Varsity and Freshmen sports allow student-athletes to transition from recreational sports to organized school sport that may require six days of practice per week as well as an increased amount of games. **Moreover, a working sub varsity program will enable the student-athlete to mature in competition with other athletes who are in similar physical and mental conditions.** In addition, the sub varsity program is designed to allow for student athletes to grow and mature in their sport through a coaching philosophy that is not focused on winning contests. **The primary purpose is to foster the growth of the student athlete in competition.**

Teams that have a sub varsity or middle school level are encouraged to create situations that allow for all of the students to have game experience throughout the season. Sub Varsity coaches will determine the playing time for their athletes based on the student athlete's effort in practice as well as performance in contests. **Playing time is not an entitlement at any level of High School or Middle School Athletics but rather earned through dedicated practice and performance in contests.**

## **SUPERVISION OF ATHLETES AND FACILITIES**

The coaches' responsibility is to supervise their athletes during their seasons. This includes all school facilities, playing fields, gymnasiums, storage rooms, locker rooms and other areas used. All school areas used for practice must be cleaned and locked following a team's use. At least one coach will remain in the locker room area until all athletes have left for home. Coaches should not leave early or leave athletes unsupervised.

Safety of the students should be foremost in every coach's mind. In the event that a circumstance or situation arises that can be construed as dangerous or hazardous and which may compromise the safety of any students, the Athletic Director will notify the administration and/or maintenance with a recommendation for correcting or improving the situation.

Coaches should remain in the building until all team members have left the facility. Coaches are responsible for their athletes and are not to leave them unsupervised for any reason at any time. Coaches are expected to accompany their athletes to and from any school sponsored event. Under no circumstances will the student be permitted to take a trip alone.

All coaches will be required to submit to the Director of Athletics a list of days and times when his/her team is to practice over holiday recesses. A schedule will be drawn by the Athletic Director and will be strictly adhered to by the coach.

Coaches must supervise all athletes without exception. Keys are not to be given to any pupil to unlock areas. No athletes are to be in the building unless supervised. Students are to leave the area immediately after practices. If practice is canceled, athletes are to leave the premises. The coach must make sure the building is secure. If school is closed for an emergency, there will be no athletic practices unless permission is given by the Athletic Director.

## **GAME PROCEDURES (TRANSPORTATION)**

All bus schedules and dismissal times will be prepared by the Director of Athletics and given to each coach. It is the coaches' responsibility to be sure that athletes are notified of dismissal and bus times. It is also the coaches' responsibility to be sure that all athletes are on the bus going to and from a contest.

**Away Contest:** The coach will supervise athletes when they are using locker room facilities. He/she will check the locker room upon arrival and report any damage to the Athletic Director in charge before his/her team makes use of the facility.

**DO NOT** permit athletes to wander around the facility unsupervised. In the event of a problem, the coach will contact the person in charge before leaving the site.



## **POLICY FOR AWAY CONTESTS - LEAVING WITH PARENTS**

Any student who requests permission to leave away games and contests not on a school provided bus:

1. See the website for Transportation Waiver.
2. Waiver must be signed by a parent or guardian, given to the coach at least 48 before the contest to be approved by the Coach and Athletic Director.

## **COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES**

The success of the athletic programs at Sayreville Public Schools relies on effective communication among coaches, athletes, and parents.

At times, individual concerns about our athletic programs arise and, when they do, it is important for the athlete and/or parent to talk directly to the coach first. Past experience shows that when communication occurs among the people who are directly involved -- the student and/or parent and the coach -- concerns are generally resolved to the satisfaction of all participants.

Regardless of the circumstances, communications between and among athlete, parent, and coach should always conform to the highest level of respect and decorum. Additionally, communications of a sensitive nature should never take place in the 'heat of the moment' (e.g. immediately after a contest). Parents should allow some time to pass before engaging in such communication. Parents should not approach a coach about a problem, until 24 hours have passed from the athletic contest.

Appropriate communications that take place between a parent and coach may include:

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach regarding team policies previously outlined;
- The treatment of an athlete with regard to stated team policies;
- Ways to help an athlete improve;
- Concerns about an athlete's behavior;
- Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance;
- Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches, as these matters fall under their professional discretion, include:

1. Individual playing time;
2. Team strategy;
3. Play calling;
4. Playing time/performance of other student-athletes;
5. Selection of captains, and
6. Practice organization (i.e. – drills, scrimmaging, etc.).

When concerns cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all involved, then it is appropriate to involve the Director of Athletics.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN COACHING-STAFF AND STUDENTS**

As stated in Board of Education policy, electronic communications between a teaching staff member and a student, including but not limited to e-mail, telephone or cell phone, text message or instant message, computer, social media or other internet platform, that is of a personal nature is considered “inappropriate” and is strictly prohibited. Inappropriate electronic communication between a teaching staff member and a student includes, but is not limited to:

1. Communications involving the use, encouraging the use, or promoting or advocating the use of steroids;
2. Communications which include the use of profanities, obscene language, lewd comments;
3. Communications that are harassing, intimidating, or bullying;
4. Communications requesting or trying to establish a personal relationship with a student beyond the teaching staff member’s professional responsibilities;
5. Communications related to personal or confidential information regarding another school staff member or student; and
6. Communications between the teaching staff member and a student that a member of the school administration would determine to be inappropriate.

All e-mails between a coach and student/students must be sent or received through the school district’s e-mail system. A coach shall not provide a personal e-mail address to any student. Communications between a coach and a student via a personal cellular telephone and/or text message is also prohibited.

A coach shall not accept friend requests from any student on a personal social networking website or other Internet-based social media website. Communication between a coach and student through social networking websites or other Internet-based social media websites is only permitted provided the website has been approved by the Athletic Director and all communications or publications using such websites are available to: every member of the team and their parents; and the Athletic Director. It is strongly recommended that *parent square* be used when communicating with athletic teams. In the event an improper electronic communication is sent by either a coach or a student, it shall be reported to the Athletic Director by the next school day. The Athletic Director will inform the school administration and take appropriate action as necessary. Improper electronic communications by a coach or a student may result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Social media can be a powerful tool for athletes, but it's important to use it responsibly:

- **Be authentic:** College Coaches and Fans can tell when something is real, so aim for a genuine connection.
- **Be positive:** Treat others well and only positively mention opposing teams or players.
- **Be mindful:** Do NOT post anything that you DO NOT want a College Coach, administrator, family member, police, or anyone to see that can be deemed inappropriate and remember that the internet is permanent.
- **Limit personal information:** Don't post your home address, phone number, birth date, or team travel plans.
- **Don't share injury or team information:** Never post about injuries or gossip about team matters.
- **Be consistent:** Consistency is key to branding, so make sure your social media posts are cohesive with your other online content.
- **Engage with fans:** Respond to comments and direct messages, by positively showing appreciation for your followers. Ignore or report negative comments. If you consider those comments as HIB, or simply inappropriate, report them immediately to a coach or administrator.
- **Attract College attention:** A well-managed social media presence can help you get noticed by potential College Coaches.

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY OF ATHLETES**

All students at Sayreville War Memorial High School wishing to participate in athletic programs under the sponsorship of the school are subject to the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) eligibility requirements. Eligibility requirements may also be superseded by specific rules and decisions in which Sayreville War Memorial High School holds membership.

Students must maintain a certain number of credits to be academically eligible to participate in interscholastic activities. The NJSIAA governs the eligibility of our athletes. They have instituted a set number of credits to be eligible.

An athlete's eligibility starts the first day he/she enters high school, regardless of what sports they have played. No student can participate in more than 4 years of athletics starting from the first day they enter High School.

An entering freshman is automatically eligible for fall and winter athletic programs in the school. All other students must pass at least 30.0 credits each year to be eligible for the athletic program in the first semester of the succeeding year. Summer school credits are applied to the preceding school year.

All students must pass 15.0 credits during the first semester to be eligible for any program that begins in the second semester (spring season).

A student, once eligible for a sport, is entitled to continuous participation until that specific sports season concludes. Please Note: a student may be suspended and/or removed from a team for violation of either athletic, academic, and/or school rules.

Any student who reaches the age of 19 prior to September 1<sup>st</sup> will not be eligible to participate in the athletic program under NJSIAA rules and regulations.

Middle school students are eligible all years attending middle school. However, academic accountability and violations of the school code of conduct may impact athletic eligibility. Any student who has multiple disciplinary actions or failing classes will have a conference with the coach and if needed a subsequent meeting with the athletic director/principal to create an eligibility contract and to determine eligibility status.

In order for students to compete in interscholastic athletics, they must completely fulfill all the regulations and requirements set forth by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Coaches must inform their squads of NJSIAA academic eligibility standards at the preseason meeting. Coaches will be provided the students academic eligibility/ineligibility status by the Athletic Director. It is the coaches' responsibility to check the academic eligibility/ineligibility list, confirm with the Athletic Director and inform the student and parents of an ineligible status. Current NJSIAA standards are available on the Sayreville and NJSIAA websites.

### **PHYSICALS**

No athlete may participate in a practice or competition without a completed and approved physical and registration clearance. The forms for the physicals and online registration are located on our athletic website. The athletic website is part of the district website: [www.Sayrevillek12.net](http://www.Sayrevillek12.net)

All forms must be returned to your school nurse, when school is in session. During the summer, return all paperwork to the main office.

### **TRYOUTS**

The Sayreville Public Schools Athletic Department encourages all students to participate in a sport. Individuals have the right to try out for the sport that they desire to play. Not every athlete who tries out will make the team. The coaching staff will put your child through various workouts to evaluate your child's ability level. The Athletic Department understands that this can be a very difficult adjustment for the student-athlete. The Athletic Department recognizes these concerns and is striving to maximize the options available to the student-athlete.

## PROCEDURES FOR TRYOUTS

Choosing the final number of participants on a team is the responsibility of the coach with the approval of the Athletic Director. Before tryouts begin, the coach will provide information to the student-athlete. Such information shall include:

- Length of tryouts
- Athletes will be made aware of the tryout process
- Distribution of practice and game schedules-Coaches will explain the commitment necessary to the team
- Clear notification that tryouts are based on performance during the selection process. Tryouts are not based on summer participation, clinics or camps that the athletes participated in previous to selections.
- The coach will inform all individuals of his/her status of whether they made the team or not.

## ATTENDANCE

Athletes participating in a school-sponsored sport should expect to practice/compete every day after school and one day during the weekend (Saturday or Sunday depending on the athletic schedule).

During school vacations (teachers' convention, winter and spring breaks), all players are expected at all scheduled practices and games. It is expected that no athlete will be absent from regularly-scheduled contests. All coaches should communicate the entire season schedule when the team is named. Players should adhere to the coach's schedule and attendance policy.

Students arriving late to school (or leaving early) must be in attendance for at least four academic periods in order to participate in an athletic contest that same day. Friday's attendance can determine an athlete's eligibility for weekend contests.

## COLLEGE PLANNING

A strong academic background is a must for college admission. Student athletes aspiring to attend a Division I/II college athletic program must meet eligibility requirements dictated by NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). High School athletes are responsible for meeting these requirements, registering with the NCAA Eligibility Clearinghouse, requesting a high school transcript be sent to the Clearinghouse, and ensuring SAT/ACT scores are sent to the Clearinghouse. Students must become familiar with rules and regulations pertaining to college Division I/II athletics:

[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) and <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

The high school coaching staff and the high school Guidance Department can assist the student athlete by reviewing eligibility requirements and by providing requested information. It is the responsibility of the athlete to satisfy NCAA established criteria and to communicate frequently with the high school coach and the high school counselor regarding college plans.

Parents and students must understand that scholarships are not awarded by high school coaches. College athletic programs are the only ones who can provide the athlete with a scholarship. High school coaches can assist in the process by providing college coaches with information and recommendations. High

School coaches are aware of the rigor of college athletic programs. Therefore, students and parents should seek advice from the coach in making realistic college choices. A standout athlete at SWMHS may be ready for very competitive college athletics; on the other hand, he/she may not be a good candidate. Realistic input from the coach is very important.

All student athletes aspiring to attend a Division I/II collegiate athletic program MUST inform their school counselor and must be sure to enroll in NCAA approved academic courses in high school.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT, TRAINING RULES AND PERSONAL CONDUCT OF ATHLETES**

A major objective of the Sayreville Interscholastic Athletic Program is to provide wholesome opportunities for students to develop positive leadership habits and attitudes of social and group interaction. Remember that participation in interscholastic athletics at Sayreville War Memorial High School is a privilege granted by the Board of Education, and along with this privilege and its benefits come certain responsibilities:

It is expected that all athletes will participate in all practices and games, adhere to all rules set forth by the school and Athletic Department, as well as their individual coaches, and conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times. Those who do not are subject to appropriate school and team consequences. The following are basic guidelines for offenses and consequences:

Physical and moral training should rank high in our aims and objectives through athletics. Generally, it is the individual coach's responsibility to establish training rules for the team. There are, however, certain basic factors that should be constant for all teams and participants in the athletic program. Violation of these rules or conditions will result in penalties in proportion to the offense.

The conduct of all team members is the responsibility of the coach. Conduct on buses, in the locker rooms, on the practice field, etc., must be supervised at all times. You are responsible for and expected to enforce strict discipline at all times. Coaches should be made aware of disciplinary actions for behavior during the school day. Violation of school codes of conduct may affect athletic participation. Coaches should also be concerned about the behavior of athletes outside of school and if there is any nexus impeding the school day or process.

The use of drugs, drinking and smoking are direct violations of the most basic training rules and school rules. Any report of a squad member being involved in these actions demands immediate response by the coaching staff and a report to the Athletic Director.

Practice sessions are important to the success of our teams. Each athlete has an obligation to the team, the school, the coach and to himself/herself to be at every practice. Each absence from practice must be investigated and reviewed. Attendance records should be maintained. Excessive absences from practice and/or leaving a contest or practice, subsequently resulting in the player quitting the team, may result in dismissal. Each coach should develop a policy approved by the Athletic Director. If an athlete is dismissed from a team, the coach should inform him as to the specific reason; the Athletic Director should be notified.

It is important that coaches constantly remind players of these responsibilities:

- Student athletes should treat opponents with respect that is due to them as guests and fellow human beings.
- Student athletes should shake hands with opponents and accept victory or defeat with pride.
- Student athletes should exercise self-control at all times, respect officials, and not argue calls or make gestures.
- Student athletes should accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing the school and community.

### **PARENTS AND STUDENTS ONLINE TRAINING**

#### **HAZING:**

The Sayreville School District strictly adheres to all New Jersey Anti-Bullying Laws, including those related to hazing. Hazing is defined as any action or activity which diminishes the positive development of a person, which inflicts or intends to cause physical or mental harm or anxieties, which results in social ostracism, and/or which demeans, degrades, or disgraces any person, regardless of the intent or consent of participants.

Activities that may be considered hazing include, but are not limited to:

- Coercion, threat or intimidation to solicit money;
- Physical intimidation or striking (using physical force/contact in any manner);
- Permanent or temporary marking or branding;
- Forcing exercise or strenuous physical activities;
- Requiring personal servitude;
- Requesting or causing indecent exposure and/or the donning of inappropriate articles of clothing;
- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature;
- Any other behaviors, speech or writing that is deemed by the administration as offensive, lewd or unbecoming.

No student will plan, encourage or engage in any hazing activities of any kind. Students who engage in hazing activities of any sort will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season, and will be subject to all consequences as outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook.

A student observing any hazing activity should immediately report such activity to an employee of the school district. All student reports will be kept confidential.

Training for parents and students is provided on the Athletic Website under Parent and Student Resources.

### **POSSESSION AND/OR USE OF A BANNED SUBSTANCE:**

Is outlined in the school code of conduct and specified in the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA)

## PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF LIGHTNING

Termination, or temporary suspension, must always take place when an electrical storm is imminent. The decision to terminate or suspend a game/meet/event when an electrical storm is imminent may be made by either the host school or the official.

As noted previously, a chain of command and designated decision-maker should be established for each organized practice and competition.

### **Recognition:**

Coaches, certified athletic trainers, athletes and administrators must be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Since the average distance between successive lightning flashes is approximately 2-3 104 miles, any time that lightning can be seen or thunder heard, the risk is already present. Weather can be monitored using the following methods:

- Monitor Weather Patterns - Be aware of potential thunderstorms by monitoring local weather forecasts the day before and morning of the practice or competition, and by scanning the sky for signs of potential thunderstorm activity.
- National Weather Service (NWS) - Weather can also be monitored using small, portable weather radios from the NWS. The NWS uses a system of severe storm watches and warnings. A watch indicates conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in an area; a warning indicates severe weather has been reported in an area and for everyone to take proper precautions.

### **Management:**

- Evacuation - If lightning is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators must evacuate to available safe structures or shelters. A list of the closest safe structures must be announced or displayed on placards at all athletic venues.
- Thirty-minute rule - Once lightning/thunder has been recognized, it is mandatory to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30 -minute count must reset the clock and another count must begin.
- When one contest is suspended on a site due to thunder being heard and/or lightning being observed, all contests/activities on that site must be suspended.



**Education on Lightning Danger:**

Coaches, athletic trainers, officials, administrators, as well as athletes, must be educated regarding the signs indicating nearby thunderstorm development. Generally speaking, it is felt that anytime that lightning can be seen, or thunder heard, risk is already present.

**Criteria for Suspension and Resumption of Activity:**

Once lightning has been recognized or thunder heard, by an official, a coach, the host site management personnel, or by a lightning detection system, the game must be suspended immediately with all players, coaches, spectators, and officials directed to appropriate shelters.

After the suspension, the plan should include strict, documented criteria for the resumption of activities. It is mandatory to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard. Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count must reset the clock and another count must begin.

Once the contest has been suspended, the 30-minute mandatory suspension in play is in effect. If the lightning detection system gives an “all clear signal” prior to the end of the 30-minute suspension time, the contest shall not be resumed until the 30-minute suspension time limit has elapsed, per the NJSIAA and NFHS policy.

However, if a member school has a Board policy that states no play/no activity may resume until the lightning detection system gives the “all clear signal” even though the 30-minute suspension time has elapsed per NJSIAA/NFHS rule, that Board policy shall supersede NJSIAA/NFHS policy.

**Evacuation Plan:**

All personnel, athletes and spectators must be clearly informed of available safe structures or shelters in the event a thunderstorm approaches. A list of the closest safe structures should be announced or displayed on placards at all athletic venues when applicable. The person in authority must be aware of the amount of time it takes to get to each structure and the number of persons each structure can safely hold. For large events, time needed for evacuation is increased and there must be a method (i.e., announcement over loud speaker) for communicating the need for evacuation and directing both athletes and spectators to the appropriate safe shelters.

**Safe Structures:**

The most ideal structure is a fully enclosed, substantial building with plumbing, electrical wiring and telephone service, which aids in grounding the structure. A fully enclosed automobile with a hard metal roof and rolled up windows is also a reasonable choice. School buses are an excellent lightning shelter that can be utilized for large groups of people. However, it is important to avoid contact with any metal while inside the vehicle.

Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and do not use showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm as the current from a local lightning strike can enter the building via the plumbing pipelines or electrical connections. It is also considered unsafe to stand near utilities, use corded telephones or headsets during a thunderstorm, due to the danger of electrical current traveling through the telephone line. Cellular and cordless telephones are considered reasonably safe and can be used to summon help during a thunderstorm.

When caught in a thunderstorm without availability or time to reach safe structures, you can minimize the risk of lightning-related injury by following a few basic guidelines:

- Avoid being the highest object. Seek a thick grove of small trees or bushes surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch.
- Avoid contact with anything that would be attractive to lightning. Stay away from freestanding trees, poles, antennas, towers, bleachers, baseball dugouts, metal fences, standing pools of water and golf carts.
- Crouch down with legs together, the weight on the balls of the feet, arms wrapped around knees, and head down with ears covered.

## CPR/AED PROCEDURES FOR ATHLETIC EVENTS

1. Automated External Defibrillators (AED) are designated for use by the athletic department during practice and interscholastic games/events. They will be checked periodically by the athletic trainer according to the equipment maintenance procedures as outlined in the operating instructions. Any abnormalities with an AED should be reported to the athletic trainer immediately.
2. For practices/games held indoors, an AED can be found in the nurses' office and cafeteria if needed. For outdoor events, the athletic trainer will keep an AED with him and additional AEDs may be designated for certain sports or kept in a set location (e.g. the blue shed on the stadium field).
3. All coaches are required to maintain current CPR/AED certification. Therefore, in the event of a cardiac event, all coaches are eligible to serve as members of the emergency response team.
4. If a cardiac event occurs during a practice/game where the athletic trainer is not in the immediate area, the coaching staff present will be the primary responders. Should an individual be unresponsive to verbal commands, the coach will designate someone to call 911 first and **then** the athletic trainer, although both can be notified simultaneously if possible.

The coach may then complete the primary survey and initiate CPR if warranted. The athletic trainer will utilize the AED upon arriving to the scene. **If a secondary AED is within proximity, the coach should utilize it based on their training instead of waiting for the athletic trainer to arrive.**

When speaking to EMS, the caller should calmly provide the following information:

- Inform EMS that there is an unresponsive person.
  - Give EMS the victim's name and exact location in the high school or on the grounds.
  - If the incident occurred in one of the gyms, inform EMS to enter the HS via door 31, across from the softball fields.
  - If the incident occurred outside on one of the fields, inform EMS to proceed to the ticket booth at the entrance to the football field, where a runner will meet them and direct them to the appropriate location. Be sure to designate someone to be the runner if needed.
5. After the AED has been used, all appropriate medical staff (e.g. nurses, athletic trainer) and administration (e.g. athletic director) will be notified of the incident and a written report will be completed. The manufacture's suggestions for maintenance of the AED after a cardiac incident will be followed, and the replacement of required components (e.g. electrode pads) will be performed.

### Concussion Evaluation Form

High School Nurses  
Middle School Nurses  
Thomas Law – Certified Athletic Trainer

Phone: 732-525-5200 ext. 8100  
Phone: 732-525-5200 ext. 7100  
Phone: 732-525-5200 ext 8322

Dear Physician:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is suspected of having sustained a concussion while participating in \_\_\_\_\_ at a Sayreville Public School and has been referred to you for evaluation. The student/athlete presented with the following concussion sign(s) and/or symptom(s) upon his/her initial evaluation:

- |                           |   |                    |                 |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| Headache                  | Dizziness   | Nausea             | Vomiting        |
| Balance Problems          | Light Sensitivity                                 | Noise Sensitivity  | Amnesia         |
| Concentrating “Fogginess” | Feeling Slowed Down                               | Drowsiness/Fatigue | Visual Problems |
| Loss of Consciousness     | Abnormal ImPACT test results compared to baseline |                    |                 |

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

At the direction of our school physician, Sayreville War Memorial High School and Sayreville Middle School follow the concussion guidelines set forth by the Zurich Concussion Consensus Statement(\*1), the NJSIAA(\*2) and NJ State Law(\*3) as described below:

#### **Return to Play Guidelines**

First time concussed athletes with no loss of consciousness and signs/symptoms lasting less than 7 days may return to play when he/she meets the following criteria:

1. Asymptomatic (with no use of medications to mask headache or other symptoms).
2. Completion of the Zurich Activity Progression (see below) once asymptomatic for 24 hours and medically cleared to do so.
3. ImPACT scores return to within normal limits of baseline (if applicable).

Any loss of consciousness, signs/symptoms lasting 7 days or longer, or repeat concussions within one calendar year will require a minimum 7 day asymptomatic period and medical clearance before beginning the Zurich Activity Progression and will be managed on an individualized basis, as approved by the school physician. The asymptomatic period for any concussion may be extended at the discretion of the Sayreville School District physicians, nurses and athletic trainer. Physician clearance notes inconsistent with the concussion policy may not be accepted and such matters will be referred to our school physician.

#### **Return to Activity Progression**

We follow a step-by-step activity progression based on the recommendations of the Zurich Consensus Statement from the 3rd International Congress on Concussion in Sport (\*1) as follows:

- Step 1: Light aerobic exercise (i.e.: stationary bike, elliptical machine)
- Step 2: Moderate aerobic exercises (begin running program)
- Step 3: Functional exercises (increase running intensity, begin agilities, non-contact sport-specific drills)
- Step 4: Non-contact practice activities
- Step 5: Full contact practice activities
- Step 6: Full game play

Each step is separated by 24 hours. If any symptoms occur, the athlete will drop back to the previous level and try to progress again after 24 hours of rest has passed.

### **ImPACT Testing**

The Sayreville School District requires all athletes in grades 6 to 12 to take annual pre-sports baseline and post-concussion neurocognitive testing using the ImPACT® (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) software program to assist in the management of head injuries. The 20-minute program tracks neurocognitive information such as memory, reaction time, brain processing speed, and concentration. We conduct a post-concussive test when the athlete is asymptomatic and continue to test the athlete until his/her scores return to normal. Please note that this program is used only as a tool in making return to play decisions. Additional information about ImPACT® can be found at [www.impacttest.com](http://www.impacttest.com).

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

High School Nurses Phone: 732-525-5200 ext. 8100

Middle School Nurses Phone: 732-525-5200 ext. 7100

Thomas Law – Certified Athletic Trainer Phone: 732-525-5200 ext. 8322

**For the Physician: Please complete the section below.**

Return to Activity - Please Check One:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ A concussion **has** been sustained. The student/athlete **is not cleared** for sports or physical education, but may start the Zurich Activity Progression under the supervision of the athletic trainer after being asymptomatic for 24 hours and once ImPACT scores are comparable to baseline, if applicable. Students not participating in sports must be asymptomatic for a week before resuming physical education.

\_\_\_\_\_ A concussion **has not** been sustained. The athlete is asymptomatic (with no use of medications to mask headache or other symptoms) and **is cleared** for unrestricted sports and physical education; he/she meets the criteria outlined in this policy. I certify that I am trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have different recommendations beyond the above recommendations (please specify below):

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Please provide a separate note if a physical education excuse or any other academic accommodations are necessary.

Physician's name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ **Physician/Provider's Stamp**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE NOTE: According to NJ state law signed by Governor Christie in December 2010 (P.L. 2010, Chapter 94) (N.J.S.A. 18A:40-41.3) and the NJ Department of Education Guidelines, physicians evaluating concussed athletes must be "trained in the evaluation and management of concussions." By signing this form the physician is indicating he or she has received such training.

References:

- 1 McCrory et al. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 2009: 44(4) : 434-448.
- 2 New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association Medical Advisory Board. *NJSIAA Policy Statement*, April 2010.
- 3 P.L. 2010, Chapter 94, N.J.S.A 18A:40-41.3 signed by Go