Sayre Athletics

Parents/Player Handbook

2025–2026

Revised: June 20, 2025

Introduction

Welcome to Sayre Athletics. This handbook is designed to guide and support you in your role, with the goal of helping you succeed and grow as both a player and a parent. Whether you are an experienced or new player, it is vital that you understand and support Sayre Athletics and the positive culture we are working together to build.

Sayre has a proud tradition of interscholastic athletic competition at both the Middle School and Upper School levels. The Athletic Department is committed to building on this tradition by fielding competitive teams and fostering a culture of mutual support and excellence across all sports.

The Sayre Athletic Department plays a vital role in advancing the school's educational mission. We are committed to offering competitive, challenging, and inclusive educationally based athletic opportunities for all interested student-athletes. These experiences extend the walls of the classroom and are designed to inspire personal growth.

Our ability to fulfill this mission relies on a strong partnership among the Department of Athletics, coaches, teachers, student-athletes, and parents. As with any partnership, effective communication and clear expectations are essential to success. By working together, we can cultivate an athletic culture and tradition that reflects our shared values and provides student-athletes with the greatest opportunity to experience the many personal rewards that come through participation in athletics.

Mission Statement

The Sayre Athletic Department plays an integral role in fulfilling the school's mission to provide *"an education of the widest range and the highest order."* Our goal is to provide inclusive, co-curricular athletic opportunities that extend learning beyond the classroom, promoting personal growth and development as students strive to reach their full potential as learners, athletes, and individuals.

Philosophy

As a key part of the broader school community, the Athletic Department aims to provide a safe and inclusive environment that encourages all students to participate in interscholastic athletics for the joy of the game and the challenge of personal growth.We believe that participation in athletics positively shapes young people's hearts, minds, and bodies. Training and competing as a team fosters education and character development. Core values such as **sportsmanship, integrity, respect, compassion, commitment, sacrifice,** and **loyalty** must be central to every athletic experience at Sayre.

Membership and Affiliations

Sayre School is a member of the **Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA)**, which governs interscholastic competition for both public and private schools in Kentucky.

Sayre also competes in the **Class A** for Football, Track, and Cross Country—designated for smaller schools statewide. In most other sports, teams compete without class distinction, facing schools of various sizes. Additionally, some sports offer mid-season tournaments for small schools (the Class A Tournament).

Athletic Programs by Season

Fall Sports

Middle School (Grades 5–8):

- Volleyball (Girls) *(Practices begin in late September)*
- Soccer (Boys & Girls)
- Cross Country (Boys & Girls)
- Cheerleading
- Tennis (Boys & Girls)
- Golf (Boys)
  Note: Select opportunities to participate in Upper School Girls Golf may also be available.

Upper School (Grades 9–12):

- Cross Country (Boys & Girls)
- Soccer (Boys & Girls)
- Golf (Boys & Girls)
- Football
- Cheerleading

Winter Sports

Middle School (Grades 5–8):

- Basketball (Boys & Girls)
- Cheerleading
  Note: Opportunities may exist to participate in Upper School Swimming and Diving.

Upper School (Grades 9–12):

- Basketball (Boys & Girls)
- Swimming (Boys & Girls)
- Diving (Boys & Girls)
- Cheerleading

Spring Sports

Middle School (Grades 5–8):

- Lacrosse (Boys & Girls)
- Track & Field (Boys & Girls)
  Note: Opportunities may exist to participate in Upper School Tennis, Baseball, and Track.

Upper School (Grades 9–12):

- Tennis (Boys & Girls)
- Baseball
- Lacrosse (Boys & Girls)
- Track & Field (Boys & Girls)
- Boys Volleyball

Player Code of Ethics

As a student-athlete, I understand what it means to be a **Sayre Spartan** and agree to uphold and build upon the proud tradition of Spartan Athletics by following the expectations outlined below and in the Student-Athlete Handbook.

I agree to:

- Represent myself, my team, my coaches, and Sayre School with pride and integrity.
- Consistently display good sportsmanship and treat all players, coaches, officials, and fans with respect.
- Strive to give my best effort at all times, both in practice and in competition.
- Support my teammates and coaches through both my actions and my words.
- Honor my commitment to my team by attending all scheduled practices and games. If I am unable to attend, I will notify my coach directly and in advance to request an excused absence.
- Care for all Sayre equipment, uniforms, and facilities, and return all issued items in good condition at the end of the season.
- Use social media responsibly. I understand that while it can be a powerful tool to promote team spirit and community, inappropriate use can be harmful. I will not post or share content that reflects negatively on my team, coaches, Sayre Athletics, or Sayre School. *(Please refer to Sayre's Acceptable Use Policy for more details.)*
- Embrace the challenges that come with athletic competition as opportunities for growth. In moments of adversity, I will respond positively and work to resolve concerns directly with my coach in a respectful and mature manner.
- Refrain from the use of drugs and alcohol, understanding that they are harmful to my health, illegal, and detrimental to my performance and team commitment.

I further recognize that being an athlete extends beyond the season and agree to:

- Stay on top of my schoolwork and maintain strong academic performance, organizing my time so I can meet both academic and athletic commitments.
- Take care of my body through proper nutrition, sleep, and self-care.
- Maintain my training, fitness, and flexibility during the off-season by participating in team training sessions and/or pursuing my own athletic development.

Parent Code of Ethics

As a parent of a Sayre student-athlete, I understand and support the goals of the Sayre Athletic Department. I agree to:

- Serve as a role model by demonstrating good sportsmanship and positively representing Sayre at all athletic events.
- Encourage and support my child in honoring their commitment to their team, coaches, and school.
- Abide by Sayre's Acceptable Use Policy regarding the use of social media, especially in reference to athletics.
- Foster my child's personal growth by encouraging them to take responsibility for their athletic experience, including communicating directly with coaches.
- Be respectful and supportive of all athletes, coaches, officials, and fans.
- Support my child's coaches and refrain from coaching or officiating from the sidelines.
- Volunteer or assist with team needs when possible during the season.
- If my child experiences a challenge that cannot be resolved through direct communication with the coach, I will schedule a meeting with the coach at an appropriate time to discuss the matter constructively.

Coaches Responsibilities

Pre-Season Responsibilities

- Read and familiarize yourself with both the **Student-Athlete Handbook** and the **Coaches Handbook**.
- Schedule and hold a **Team and Parent Meeting** to cover:
    - Team rules and expectations
    - Athletic Department policies (Student/Parent Athletic Handbook)
    - Practice and game schedules
    - Communication plans (email, TeamSnap, etc.)
    - Sportsmanship expectations, playing time philosophy, and coaching strategies
    - Transportation policy
    - Academic eligibility expectations

    - Hazing and anti-bullying policies
    - School attendance and participation rules
    - Chain of communication
- Collect and verify **player physicals** (must be current and complete before any participation in practices or games). Email copies to:
    - Athletic Director
    - Assistant Athletic Director
    - Athletic Trainer
- Submit finalized **game schedules** to the Athletic Director and Assistant Athletic Director for transportation and event coordination.
- Upload team **rosters to Arbiter** for student eligibility certification.
- Recruit and confirm **support staff** as needed:
    - Team managers
    - Scorekeepers
    - Video operators
- Submit a **team equipment order request** to the Athletic Director.
- Inventory and distribute all team equipment to players.
- Coordinate practice and game **facility usage** with the Athletic Department.
- Enter and confirm game schedules in:
    - **Arbiter** (for official scheduling and referees)
    - **TeamSnap** or other team communication platform
    - **Hudl** (optional for video recording)
- Confirm all game dates, times, and locations with opposing coaches and schools.
- Send game-day logistics (parking, bus information, GoFan ticketing, etc.) during the week of the event.
- Coordinate **team photos**. If the Athletic Department's date does not work, arrange an alternative that meets the required deadline.

In-Season Responsibilities

- Promptly update any **schedule changes** with:
    - Athletic Director
    - Facilities Director
    - Website Coordinator
- Always bring your **medical kit** and ensure **you have mobile access to Google Drive**, which contains the players' physicals.
- Immediately notify parents, the Athletic Trainer, and the Athletic Director of **injuries or illnesses**.
- Report **contest results within 24 hours** to:
    - bmilosch@sayreschool.org
    - rlittle@sayreschool.org
    - jnahra@sayreschool.org

    - rgoodman@sayreschool.org
    - (Notify news media and Arbiter if applicable)
- Confirm transportation with the **Athletic Transportation Director** for all away events.
- Submit a **weekly sports update** to the Athletic Director by **Monday at 9:00 AM** (starting when games begin):
    - Format: 4–8 sentences, paragraph style
    - Include game scores, team highlights, and notable individual performances
    - Used for website and social media updates
- A coach must be present **before athletes arrive** and remain **until the last athlete is picked up** for all practices and games.
- Communicate frequently with athletes, families, and administrators. Share all schedule changes and updates promptly to avoid confusion.

End-of-Season Responsibilities

- Submit **award recipients** (bars, letters, or certificates) to the Athletic Director.
- Schedule and coordinate **end-of-season banquets** (see guidelines below).
- Collect, inventory, and store all team equipment and uniforms within **3 weeks of the final contest**. (Students may be billed for missing gear.)
- Return all **medical kits, supplies, and coolers** to the Athletic Trainer or Athletic Department.
- Hold a **meeting with returning players** to discuss offseason expectations and upcoming plans.
- Begin planning for next season:
    - Submit **preliminary schedules** for Athletic Department approval
    - Schedule a **postseason meeting** with the Athletic Director to review your season and finalize any outstanding tasks

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Team Gatherings and Banquet Guidelines

- All **banquets or team gatherings must be approved** by the Athletic Director.
- Banquet expenses are the **responsibility of coaches and parents**.
- Acceptable banquet formats include:
    - Catered or potluck meals in the Buttery or another on-campus location
    - Gatherings at public restaurants or private homes *(Note: Private clubs are not permitted)*
    - Picnics or carry-in meals at local parks, weather permitting
- Banquet plans should **consider affordability and accessibility** to ensure that all athletes can attend.
- Teams may also choose to gather and honor athletes **without serving a meal**, if preferred.

Athletic Department and Team Policies

Open Participation Policy

Sayre School encourages participation in interscholastic athletics regardless of experience or skill level. We believe the team experience fosters character development, teamwork, and growth. As such:

- **Tryouts and Cuts**: Tryouts or cuts are only used when participation exceeds safe or manageable numbers. Coaches must discuss these concerns with the Athletic Director before making roster decisions.
- **Commitment Expectations**: Coaches must clearly communicate the commitment required of athletes. Participation entails responsibility, discipline, and sacrifice.

Lines of Communication for Concerns

1. Players should first speak directly with their coach.
2. If the concern continues, a meeting with parents, player, and coach may be requested.
3. If unresolved, the family may meet with the Athletic Director.

Playing Time Policy

- All players will receive opportunities in practice to develop.
- Game playing time is **not guaranteed** and is left to the **sole discretion of the coaching staff**, especially the head coach.
- Players with questions should speak directly with their coach.

Practice & Game Expectations

- **Attendance**: Athletes are expected at all practices and games.
- **Excused Absences**: Must be communicated to coaches as early as possible. Final discretion rests with the coach.
- **Unexcused Absences**: May result in conditioning consequences or reduced playing time. Repeated offenses may lead to dismissal (with Athletic Director consultation).

Attitude, Behavior, & Sportsmanship

Athletes should:

- Exhibit positive attitudes and effort.
- Contribute to team culture both on and off the field.
- Represent themselves, teammates, coaches, and Sayre School with dignity and sportsmanship.
- Treat opponents, officials, coaches, and fans with respect. This applies to **athletes, coaches, parents, and spectators**.

Academic Eligibility

- Academic performance is the top priority.
- Coaches must support students struggling academically in collaboration with faculty and administrators.
- Students may be suspended or dismissed from a team due to poor academic performance, as determined by division leadership.
- See the Middle School or Upper School Handbook for specific eligibility rules.

Game Day Attendance Eligibility

- Students must be present by **10:30 AM** to be eligible to participate that day.
- Students arriving at **8:15 AM and staying until at least 12:30 PM** are also eligible.
- Students missing school **the day before a weekend or holiday** remain eligible.

Social Media Use

- Coaches must maintain professional boundaries with student-athletes.
- Use only **approved platforms** for team communications (TeamSnap, email, etc.).
- Do not “friend” or communicate with athletes via personal social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc.).

Drug & Alcohol Policy

- **Zero Tolerance** for use, sale, or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol at any school-sponsored event.
    - **1st Offense**: 7-day suspension, at least one missed game, and probation for the remainder of the year.
    - **2nd Offense**: Suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the academic year.
    - Additional consequences will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Coaches are encouraged to:

- Engage parents in open conversations.
- Remind athletes of their responsibilities to the team and themselves.
- Discourage late-night social activities before games. Athletes should be home by **midnight** on nights before competition.

JV/Freshman Designation

When rosters allow:

- Coaches determine Varsity, JV, or Freshman placement based on evaluations.
- Athletes may compete across multiple levels depending on readiness and team needs.

Season Length & Out-of-Season Policies

- KHSAA governs start and end dates of each sport season.
- **Mandatory practices outside of season are prohibited** during the school year.
- **Optional offseason conditioning** is allowed, but:
    - Must be open to all Sayre students of like gender.
    - Must be non-mandatory.
    - Must be announced school-wide (not “team-only”).

Playing Up Policy

In certain cases, younger athletes may be allowed to “play up”:

- **High-contact sports** (e.g., soccer, lacrosse): 8th graders cannot compete with juniors/seniors.
- **Individual/non-contact sports**: May allow Middle School participation at Varsity level.

- Decisions rest with the coach and Athletic Director and should include conversations with parents about physical and emotional readiness.
- **No Middle School athlete may play High School football**.

Transportation Policies

- Sayre provides transportation **to and from** all away contests **outside Fayette County**.
- Students are required to **ride the team bus both ways** unless permission is granted in advance.
- Students may not drive themselves to out-of-town games.

Coaches are expected to:

- Communicate weekly transportation needs with the Athletic Department.
- Clean out vans after use and return keys to the drop box behind the gym.
- Ride with the team on all buses and vans.

Athletic Transportation Guidelines for Students (Grades 5–12)

Bus Rules:

- Obey the driver or monitor at all times.
- Remain seated and respectful.
- No profanity, food, or drink.
- No bullying, violence, or destruction of property.
- Do not distract the driver.

Disciplinary Procedures:

1. **First Violation**: Verbal warning and email documentation to AD and AAD.
2. **Second Violation**: Parent conference; bus suspension for several days.
3. **Third Violation**: Parent conference; longer suspension or removal for season/year.

Hazing

- Hazing is **strictly prohibited**.
- Defined as any action intended to embarrass, harm, or demean others—especially as initiation.
- Violations will result in serious disciplinary consequences.

Locker Rooms

- The use of cell phones or recording devices (audio, visual) is prohibited.
- Players should **never be left unattended** in locker rooms for extended periods.
- Be considerate of each other's stuff.
- No hanging out in the locker room during the school day.
- Locker rooms are for changing clothes and team activities.
- Music should not contain inappropriate language.

Student Charges

- Athletes keep apparel/equipment they order; they will be **billed through student accounts**.
- **HS students** may sign their own purchase orders.
- **MS students** must have parent or guardian signatures.
- Coaches must ensure all costs are pre-approved and covered by the student or their family.
- If an athlete quits after ordering gear, they are still responsible for paying for it.

Assumed Risk & Pre-Participation Physicals

- All sports involve some level of risk.
- **KHSAA physical form** (Form GE04 Part 1) is required annually and is valid for **13 months**.
- Physicals must be **complete and submitted before participation**.
- Coaches must ensure compliance before allowing athletes to practice or compete.

Physicals should be submitted to:

Mail:
Sayre School – Attn: Athletic Director
194 N. Limestone Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Email:
ceason@sayreschool.org
lasiatico@sayreschool.org
rlittle@sayreschool.org
rgoodman@sayreschool.org

Parent/Player Agreement Form

- Must be signed and submitted before participation.
- Confirms parent/guardian and athlete have read and accepted handbook policies.

Transfer Student Eligibility

- Any student transferring **after the start of 9th grade** must be cleared by the KHSAA.
- Do not allow them to practice or compete until **eligibility is confirmed**.
- Notify the Admissions Office and Athletic Department of transfer students expressing interest in athletics.

Varsity Letters and Awards

- **Varsity Athletes**: Receive a varsity "S" for first-time participation; subsequent years earn sport-specific bars.
- **Middle School Athletes**: Receive a certificate of participation.
- Coaches determine letter requirements for each sport.
- Submit requests for letters, bars, or certificates to the Athletic Director.

Athletic Training Services

- Sayre partners with the **University of Kentucky** for athletic training at select contests.
- Injured athletes should contact **Langston Asiatico** to schedule an evaluation.
- All **injuries must be reported** to the Athletic Director and parents.
- EMS or hospitalizations must be reported **immediately**.

Inclement Weather Policy

- Coaches must communicate promptly with players and families.
- The Athletic Director may cancel events and will notify coaches by **2:30 PM (1:30 PM on Tuesdays)**.
- Coaches are responsible for player safety during practices.

Senior Nights

- **Confirm the date** with the Athletic Director.
- Athletic Department will provide:
  - Flowers for each senior
  - Emcee (if needed)
- Coach responsibilities:
  - Distribute and collect senior questionnaires
  - Notify administration well in advance
  - Submit final itinerary 1 day before the event
- Booster Club provides senior gifts.
- Additional plans outside these guidelines are the responsibility of coaches and parents.