



2025-26

ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

South St. Paul
Public Schools



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Activities Department Overview

South St. Paul Public School District offers a comprehensive interscholastic activities program designed to meet the interests of the students. This program is an opportunity and a privilege afforded to students in the South St. Paul School District.

A function of the activities program is to promote lifelong personal growth and development. Student participation in activities can encourage individual development by providing opportunities for leadership, sportsmanship, fellowship, teamwork, commitment to goal achievement, character building, communication skills, and school pride.

Through their involvement in the activities program, students are expected to improve their decision making processes, develop self discipline and self esteem, respect individual differences, and provide a healthy attitude toward addressing challenges.

Opportunities for participation are offered on a seasonal basis, additional activities may become available throughout the school year. Many groups/teams are open to all students; others have try-outs or special requirements.

The activities program will provide a well rounded, professionally directed and supervised program at all levels. The program shall operate primarily for the benefit of the students who participate directly or vicariously in these activities, although the importance of public fan and spectator support is also recognized and appreciated.

Participation in activities is a privilege for those students who meet the standards of eligibility adopted by the school district, conference and state associations.

Mission Statement

The mission of the South St. Paul Activities program is to promote healthy youth development through programs that encourage participation, healthy life styles, development of positive attitudes and skills, and a sense of accomplishment. Consistent with the mission of the activities program, the Board of Education believes that co-curricular activities can be a vital educational experience and can contribute to healthy youth development.

Belief Statements

We believe that....

- Participation in school activities is a privilege and not a right.
- Sportsmanship needs to have a constant presence in all school-based activity programs.
- Students should have an equal opportunity to participate in all activities offered by their school.
- Ethical behavior, dignity and respect are non-negotiable.
- Student participants who choose to be chemically free need to be supported.
- Collaborative relationships with parents enhance a school's opportunity to positively impact student success.
- Academic priorities must come before participation in athletic and fine arts activities.
- The success of the team is more important than individual honors.
- Compliance with school, community and league rules is essential for all activity participants.
- Ethical behavior, fairness, and embracing diversity best serve students and the school communities.
- Programs should develop self concept, self discipline, cooperative spirit, leadership potential, citizenship, and character of the participants.
- Programs should promote and develop the physical, mental and psychological attitudes of the participants.
- Programs should provide the students and the community with the opportunity to develop pride in themselves and their school.
- The programs should provide students with the opportunity to have fun, learn through competition, learn to respect the other participants, and abide by the codes of the activity.

Our Department's Philosophy

We will provide a diverse range of opportunities for young men and women under the competent leadership of well qualified coaches and advisors.

We wish to nurture, together with the community, our valued tradition of success by continually striving for excellence.

We shall make every attempt to give each student who desires to participate an opportunity. In certain activities, participation is limited and tryouts are held. Coaches and advisors are expected to explain their policies at the beginning of the season.

In activities that have levels of competition such as Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, B-Squad (sophomore), Junior Varsity, and Varsity; we will follow these general guidelines:

Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth - All students showing interest are given an opportunity to try out for a team. Emphasis is placed on fundamental skill development.

Ninth, B-Squad or Junior Varsity - Participation is valued; however, development of individual participants for varsity level competition is of **equal importance**.

Varsity - Participation may be limited and is generally reserved for students in grades nine through twelve. Participation in these programs is based on the decisions of the coaching staff or advisor and are made with the competitiveness of the team in mind. On a case by case basis, students in grades seven and eight will receive consideration.

Activities Offered 2025-26 for Grades 6-12

Fall Athletics	Start Date (gr. 9-12)	Start Date (gr. 7-8)	Start Date (gr. 6)
Cross Country (boys/girls)	Monday, August 11, 2025	Monday, August 11, 2025	N/A
Football	Monday, August 11, 2025	N/A	N/A
Soccer (boys)	Monday, August 11, 2025	Tuesday, September 2, 2025	N/A
Soccer (girls)	Monday, August 11, 2025	Tuesday, September 2, 2025	N/A
Swimming & Diving (girls)	Monday, August 11, 2025	Monday, August 11, 2025	N/A
Tennis (girls)	Monday, August 11, 2025	Tuesday, September 2, 2025	Tuesday, September 2, 2025
Volleyball (girls)	Monday, August 11, 2025	Tuesday, September 2, 2025	N/A
Winter Athletics	Start Date (gr. 9-12)	Start Date (gr. 7-8)	Start Date (gr. 6)
Basketball (boys)	Monday, November 17, 2025	Monday, January 5, 2026	N/A
Basketball (girls)	Monday, November 10, 2025	Monday, October 20, 2025	N/A
Dance Team	Monday, October 20, 2025	Monday, October 20, 2025	N/A
Gymnastics (girls)	Monday, November 10, 2025	Monday, November 10, 2025	N/A
Hockey (boys)	Monday, November 10, 2025	N/A	N/A
Hockey (girls)	Monday, October 27, 2025	Monday, October 27, 2025	N/A
Swimming (boys)	Monday, November 24, 2025	Monday, November 24, 2025	N/A
Wrestling (boys & girls)	Monday, November 17, 2025	Monday, October 20, 2025	Monday, October 20, 2025
Spring Athletics	Start Date (gr. 9-12)	Start Date (gr. 7-8)	Start Date (gr. 6)
Baseball (boys)	Monday, March 16, 2026	N/A	N/A
Golf (boys)	Monday, March 16, 2026	Monday, March 16, 2026	N/A
Golf (girls)	Monday, March 16, 2026	Monday, March 16, 2026	N/A
Lacrosse (boys)	Monday, March 30, 2026	N/A	N/A
Softball (girls)	Monday, March 9, 2026	Monday, March 9, 2026	N/A
Tennis (boys)	Monday, March 23, 2026	Monday, March 23, 2026	N/A
Track & Field (boys)	Monday, March 9, 2026	Monday, April 6, 2026	Monday, April 6, 2026
Track & Field (girls)	Monday, March 9, 2026	Monday, April 6, 2026	Monday, April 6, 2026

School Sponsored Activities	
Instrumental Music	Community Service
Band - Pep/Sports (7-12)	Key Club (9-12)
Band - Jazz/Combo (7-12)	Targeted Services
Academic Competition	Student Government
Debate (7-12)	Student Council (6-8)
Knowledge Bowl (6-8)	Student Council (9-12)
Knowledge Bowl (9-12)	Yearbook
Math Team (6-8)	Yearbook (9-12)
Math Team (9-12)	Vocal Music
Robotics (9-12)	Show Choir (8-12)
Speech (7-12)	Theatrical Arts
	Theatre (6-12)
Clubs / Affinity Groups	Community Sponsored Activities
Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) 9-12	Bowling (6-12)
Black Pride Organization (BPO) 6-12	Dance Team - Fall (6-12)
Comunidad de Latinos Unidos (CDLU) 6-12	Trap Team (6-12)
Sexuality and Gender Alliance (SAGA) 6-12	Drumline (7-12)
Women's Society 9-12	

Department Offerings

Instrumental Music

Band (Pep/Sports)

The Pep Band is a select group of high school band members that play at Packer athletic contests during the fall and winter seasons.

Band (Jazz Ensemble)

Jazz Ensemble is open to students in grades seven through twelve who have experience in the study of jazz and who wish to work on advanced jazz literature. Membership in this group is achieved through the audition process or director appointment. Instrumentation is limited to trumpet, saxophone, trombone, drums, piano, bass guitar, and electric guitar.

Combo Band

The Combo Band is a select group of high school band members that perform along with the Show Choir during the winter season. Styles vary from classical repertoire to jazz. Performance venues will include High School Choral Concerts, Solo and Ensemble Contest, community clubs, meetings, and festivals.

Vocal Music

Show Choir

Show Choir is an auditioned performing group for students in grades eight through twelve. Styles vary from classical repertoire to jazz. Part independence, vocal and accompaniment blending techniques, microphone use and technique, developing musicality, and advanced sight reading are all taught and emphasized during the course of the year. Performance venues will include High School Choral Concerts, Solo and Ensemble Contest, community clubs, meetings, and festivals.

Theatrical Arts

Theatre Department

The Theatre Department produces three performances each school year, and a community production in the summer. Involvement is by audition only and is primarily for students in grades six through twelve. Occasionally elementary students and members of the community at large are auditioned as the production demands.

Academic Competition

Debate

Debate is an activity for students in grades seven through twelve who wish to participate in the art of competitive reasoning. Students research subjects and compete in oral argument against six consecutive opponents to win over opinion of the audience and judges.

Knowledge Bowl (Middle School 6-8 and High School 9-12)

Knowledge Bowl, a competition for students in grades six through twelve, focuses on recall, problem solving, critical thinking and cooperation. In this series of academic contests, five member teams compete by answering questions from secondary curriculum areas. Students compete at a combined 6th, 7th, and 8th grade level, and a Varsity level.

Math Team – Middle School (6-8)

Middle School Math Team is for students in grades six through eight want to improve their mathematics skills and have fun. Practices start in September and the last meet is the first Saturday of February. We like to have participants practice with team members who are in the same grade level. Bring a great attitude, pencil, and a calculator if you have one. We are very flexible with practices to allow for participation in other activities.

Math Team - Senior High (9-12)

Senior High Math Team is for students in grades nine through twelve. The students compete in Math League tournaments in both individual and group events.

Robotics

Robotics is an opportunity for all South Saint Paul students in grades seven through twelve with interests in math, science, engineering, computer programming, marketing and media, to build a team and a robot to compete in the *FIRST* Robotics Competition. The mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting hands on experiences that build science, engineering and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

Speech

Speech is open to students in grades seven through twelve who have an interest in public speaking and wish to develop skills in writing and oral interpretation. Individuals gain poise and confidence by competing in one or more of thirteen categories including: Creative Expression, Discussion, Dramatic Duo, Extemporaneous Reading and Speaking, Great Speeches, Humorous Interpretation, Informative Speaking, Original Oratory, Serious Interpretation of Drama, Poetry, and Prose, and Story Telling.

Community Service

Key Club

The main goal of the Key Club is to encourage students in grades nine through twelve to volunteer their time to help people in need. This volunteering ranges from raising money for an organization to helping out at a soup kitchen. Our club feels that it is important that students learn the importance of helping others and helping the community in which they live.

Student Government

Student Council - Middle School (6-8)

The Middle School Student Council is combined of students in grades six through eight. The council creates activities to encourage school and community pride. This organization plans community service projects. Students are elected by and serve as representatives of the student body.

Student Council - Senior High

The Senior High Student Council creates activities to encourage school and community pride. This organization plans community service projects. Students are elected by and serve as representatives of the student body.

Yearbook

Kaposia Yearbook - Senior High

The Kaposia Yearbook is a publication for students in grades nine through twelve. Yearbook staff put together the yearbook from cover to cover. Each staffer is given a section and is responsible for finding pictures and writing the story. Staff also edit and create page layouts and graphics.

Athletics (Fall)

Cross Country (Boys & Girls)

Boys and girls in grades seven through twelve practice as one team with a shared coaching staff and compete by gender in groups according to their ability. Other than footwear, competition uniforms are supplied.

Football (Boys)

7th and 8th grade students will be divided by ability into an "A" team and a "B" team at each grade levels – 8th and 7th grade. Weight limits shall be 170 lbs. for 8th grade and 140 lbs. for 7th grade. Anyone over those weights must be an interior lineman (center, guards and tackles) and not be the intended ball carrier, including special teams. Tight ends are not considered interior linemen.

Other squads offered are Freshman, B-Squad, Junior Varsity, and Varsity, each determined by the player's ability. Equipment other than mouth guards and cleats is supplied by the school.

Soccer (Boys)

7th and 8th grade students compete in mixed squads of grades seven and eight grouped by ability. Other squads offered are Freshman, B-Squad, and Varsity, each determined by the player's ability. Equipment other than mouth guards and footwear is supplied by the school.

Soccer (Girls)

7th and 8th grade school students compete in mixed squads of grades seven and eight grouped by ability. Other squads offered are Freshman, B-Squad and Varsity, each determined by the player's ability. Equipment other than mouth guards and footwear is supplied by the school.

Swimming and Diving (Girls)

South St. Paul co-ops with Minnehaha Academy and Christo Rey for Girls' Swimming & Diving. Girls in grades seven through twelve are grouped by ability and may compete at Junior Varsity or Varsity levels. Girls supply their own suit (preferably the coach approved team suit), towels, caps, and goggles. Team warm-up uniforms are supplied.

Tennis (Girls)

Girls may compete at a combined 6th through 8th grade level, Junior Varsity, or Varsity levels according to ability. Girls supply their own racquet and footwear. Team uniforms and tennis balls are supplied by the school.

Volleyball (Girls)

Girls may compete at Seventh Grade, Eighth Grade, Ninth Grade, Junior Varsity, and Varsity levels according to ability. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Athletics (Winter)

Basketball (Boys)

Boys may compete at Grade Seven, Grade Eight, Grade Nine, B-Squad, Junior Varsity and Varsity levels according to ability. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Basketball (Girls)

Girls may compete at Grade Seven, Grade Eight, Grade Nine, B-Squad, Junior Varsity and Varsity levels according to ability. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Dance Team

Girls in grades seven through twelve participate on a tryout basis. Participants choreograph and learn dance routines and formations to compete at conference meets, school invites, and section/state tournaments. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Gymnastics

Girls in grades seven through twelve participate at the Junior Varsity and Varsity level with competition position placement by ability. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Hockey (Boys)

Boys in grades nine through twelve are eligible to participate at Junior Varsity and Varsity levels on a tryout basis. Eighth graders may be eligible to compete based on case-by-case basis. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Hockey (Girls)

Girls in grades seven through twelve are eligible to participate at Junior Varsity and Varsity levels on a tryout basis. Team uniforms other than footwear are supplied.

Swimming and Diving (Boys)

Boys in grades seven through twelve are grouped by ability and may compete at Junior Varsity or Varsity levels. Boys supply their own suit (preferably the coach approved team suit), towels, caps, and goggles. Team warm-up uniforms are supplied.

Wrestling (Boys & Girls)

Boys compete according to weight and ability. Wrestlers may compete at the Middle School (6-8), Junior Varsity (7-12) and Varsity (7-12) levels. Team uniforms other than footwear and mouth guards are supplied.

Athletics (Spring)

Baseball (Boys)

Boys compete at Seventh Grade, Eighth Grade, Ninth Grade, B-Squad, Junior Varsity and Varsity levels according to ability. 7th and 8th grade teams are split evenly by ability. Team uniforms other than footwear and glove are provided.

Golf (Boys)

Boys in grades seven through twelve compete at the Varsity and JV levels through tryouts.

Golf (Girls)

Girls in grades seven through twelve compete at the Varsity and JV levels through tryouts.

Lacrosse (Boys)

South St. Paul co-ops with Minnehaha Academy for Boys' Lacrosse. Boys compete at a combined 9th through 12th grade Varsity/JV level according to age and ability.

Lacrosse (Girls)

South St. Paul co-ops with St. Croix Preparatory Academy for Girls' Lacrosse. Girls compete at a combined 9th through 12th grade Varsity/JV level according to age and ability.

Softball (Girls)

Girls compete at Seventh Grade, Eighth Grade, Ninth Grade, B-Squad, Junior Varsity and Varsity levels according to ability. 7th and 8th grade teams are split evenly by ability. Team uniforms other than footwear and glove are provided.

Tennis (Boys)

Boys may compete at a combined 7-12 grade (Junior Varsity or Varsity) according to ability. Boys supply their own racquet and footwear. Team uniforms and tennis balls are supplied by the school.

Track & Field (Boys)

Boys compete at a combined 6th through 8th grade level or Varsity levels according to age and ability. Team uniforms other than footwear are provided.

Track & Field (Girls)

Girls compete at a combined 6th through 8th grade level or Varsity levels according to age and ability. Team uniforms other than footwear are provided.

Participation/Eligibility Requirements

Activity Fee Information 2025-26

To provide the best possible staff, facilities and equipment while making an effort to reduce any financial impact on the classroom, a fee is charged for participation in all extracurricular activities. Payment of the fee is required before equipment can be issued and practice begins.

If a student participant is cut or dropped, or if an injury or illness prevents continuation in an activity from a high school team or group, a refund will be made up until the time of the first contest or performance of the team or group of which he or she is a member.

Any student participant quitting an extracurricular activity will not receive a refund. The Administrator in Charge of Activities will determine special eligibility for refunds.

<i>Sport/Activity</i>		<i>2025-26 Fees</i>	<i>Reduced Lunch</i>	<i>Free Lunch</i>
Band - Jazz / Combo Band (7-12)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Band - Pep (7-12)		\$45.00	\$35.00	\$25.00
Baseball (7-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Baseball (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Basketball (7-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Basketball (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Cross Country (7-12)		\$175.00	\$95.00	\$40.00
Dance Team - Winter (7-12)		\$175.00	\$95.00	\$40.00
Debate Team (7-12)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Football (7-8)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$30.00
Football (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Golf (7-12)		\$175.00	\$95.00	\$40.00
Gymnastics (7-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Hockey (7-12)		\$220.00	\$110.00	\$40.00
Knowledge Bowl (6-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Knowledge Bowl (9-12)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Lacrosse (9-12)		\$220.00	\$110.00	\$40.00
Math Team (6-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Math Team (9-12)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Robotics (9-12)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Soccer (7-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Soccer (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Softball (7-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Softball (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Speech Team (7-12)		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Swimming & Diving (7-12)		\$175.00	\$95.00	\$40.00
Tennis (6-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Tennis (9-12)		\$175.00	\$95.00	\$40.00
Theatre (6-12) <i>per production</i>		\$75.00	\$45.00	\$35.00
Track & Field (6-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Track & Field (9-12)		\$175.00	\$95.00	\$40.00
Vocal Music - Show Choir		\$130.00	\$70.00	\$40.00
Volleyball (7-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Volleyball (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Wrestling (6-8)		\$110.00	\$60.00	\$30.00
Wrestling (9-12)		\$195.00	\$105.00	\$40.00
Individual Cap		\$390.00	\$210.00	\$80.00
Family Cap		\$555.00	\$285.00	\$105.00

Forms Required for Participation

Parental Permit and MSHSL Form

These signed documents must be completed and turned in prior to participation and will be kept on file in the Activities Office.

Transportation Agreement Form

This signed document must be completed and turned in prior to participation and will be kept on file in the Activities Office.

Physical Examination (where applicable)

A physical exam is required the first year of participation and every three (3) years thereafter. The physical form must be completed by the physician and submitted to the Activities Office prior to participation. The form will be kept on file in the Activities Office.

Emergency Medical Authorization

Each participant's parents or legal guardians shall complete an emergency medical authorization card giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parents or guardians are not available. The card must be completed and turned in prior to participation and will be kept in the team medical kit for availability at all practices and contests.

Insurance Waiver

The school district **does not** carry insurance to cover student athletic and co-curricular injuries.

If a participant's parents or legal guardians feel they have adequate insurance coverage in the event of an injury, and therefore will not hold Special School District #6 liable for any costs, a waiver must be signed and returned with all other activity registration information.

As a service to the students and their families, the school district makes available a student accident insurance plan for participants in both athletic and co-curricular activities at a very nominal cost. For more information, please contact the Activities Office.

Risk of Participation

All participants and parents must realize the risk of serious injury which may result through participation in an activity. South St. Paul High School will use the following safeguards to make every effort to prevent injury:

1. Conduct parent and participant meetings prior to the start of the season to fully explain the activity policies and to advise, caution, and warn of the potential for injury.
2. Maintain a continuing education program for coaches and advisors to learn the most up-to-date techniques and skills to be taught in their activity.
3. Instruct all participants about the dangers of participation in their particular activity.
4. Encourage students to train year round to be in proper condition to avoid injury.
5. Provide and maintain safe equipment and facility conditions.

Scholastic Eligibility

In order to participate in a South St. Paul Secondary co-curricular activity, each participant must make satisfactory academic progress.

To be eligible for participation a student must meet a 1.70 GPA criterion the previous marking period. A student who has failed to meet the 1.70 GPA criterion will be placed on academic probation and will be ineligible to participate in co-curricular contests and/or performances, according to the following conditions:

- 1) The student is permitted to practice or rehearse, but may not compete or perform in a contest or performance during the period of academic probation.
- 2) The student is ineligible for whichever is greater: two consecutive interscholastic contests or two weeks (fourteen calendar days) of the new marking period.*

Following the period of ineligibility, if a review of the student's academic performance indicates that the student is performing at a satisfactory level, eligibility may be regained. If the review indicates the student is failing to meet the 1.70 GPA criterion, he or she cannot regain eligibility until the end of the grading period.

Scholastic Eligibility Calendar for 2025-26

First Trimester Date (for winter eligibility)

- Monday, December 15, 2025

Second Trimester Date (for spring eligibility)

- Monday, March 23, 2026

Third Trimester Date (for fall eligibility)

- Monday, June 22, 2026

Standard Rules and Practices of the Activities Department

The Activities Department operates under the policies and governance of three organizations. The role of each of these organizations is articulated below:

The Board of Education – Special School District #6

The Board of Education is the governing agency for South St. Paul Public Schools. The Board of Education is responsible for the following areas: (1) interpreting the needs of the community, (2) developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates and in accordance with the educational needs and wishes of people of Special School District 6, (3) approving means by which professional staff may make these policies effective, (4) evaluating the activities program in terms of its value to the community.

All of the South St. Paul Public Schools policies can be found on the District's website at <http://www.sspps.org>, under the tab for "District." Students should pay particular attention to the policies in Section 500 which specifically pertains to students. Questions regarding policies can be directed to the building administrator.

The Minnesota State High School League

All schools are voluntary members of the Minnesota State High School League and compete only with member schools. As a member school district, South St. Paul agrees to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations endorsed by this League. The primary role of the state association is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competitions for the student participants and a balance with other educational programs. The association solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modification from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations. The state association attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number and to ensure that competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

Metro East Conference

South St. Paul High School is a voluntary member of this conference. This conference was established for the primary purpose of promoting selected interscholastic activities among member schools and the assurance of such advantages as may be gained by a union of effort. The conference membership facilitates the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, conducting league meets, and determining league championships. Membership implies abiding by conference schedules, rules, and regulations. Other Metro East Conference members include Hastings, Henry Sibley, Hill Murray, Mahtomedi, North St. Paul, Tartan, St. Thomas, and Simley.

Minnesota State High School League & South St. Paul Schools Policies

Minnesota State High School League rules govern all eligibility for participation and are available in the Activities Office. These rules apply to all activities for boys and girls.

These training rules and rules related to student code of conduct shall be read and explained to each group prior to or on the first day of organized practice.

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the Activities Department. The community, school administrators, and staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct, behavior and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of activities. The member schools of the Minnesota State High School League believe that participation in interscholastic activities is a privilege which is accompanied by responsibility.

MSHSL Chemical Health and Code of Conduct Policies

Student Code of Responsibilities

Participation in interscholastic activities is a privilege which is accompanied by responsibility. As a student participating in League sponsored activities, I understand and accept the following responsibilities:

1. I will respect the rights and beliefs of others and will treat others with courtesy and consideration.
2. I will be fully responsible for my own actions and the consequences of my actions.
3. I will respect the rights and property of others.
4. I will respect and obey the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country.
5. I will show respect to those who are responsible for enforcing the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country.

Chemical Health

At any time during the calendar year, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity:

1. use or consume, have in possession a beverage containing alcohol;
2. use or consume, have in possession tobacco; or,
3. use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any other controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.
4. use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away products containing or products used to deliver nicotine, tobacco products and other chemicals. "Tobacco products" means: any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumption, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, or any component, part or accessory of a tobacco product.
5. use or consume, have in possession, buy sell or give away any substance or product where the intent of such use of the substance or product is to induce intoxication, excitement, or stupefaction of the central nervous system, except under the direction and supervision of a medical doctor. Such substances or products shall include, but are not limited to, synthetic drugs, gasoline, glue, aerosol devices, bath salts, and any substances addressed by Minnesota or Federal Law.

Penalties for Category I Activities

Definition: Those League-sponsored activities in which a member school has a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League-sponsored tournaments.

- Athletic Activities
- Fine Arts Activities
 - 1) Debate
 - 2) Speech Activities including One Act Play - when a school schedules a season of interscholastic contests.

First Violation Penalty

The student shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive interscholastic contests or two weeks, 14 calendar days, whichever is greater, of a season in which the student is a participant.

Second Violation Penalty

The student shall lose eligibility for the next six consecutive interscholastic contests or three weeks, 21 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

Third or Subsequent Violation Penalty

The student shall lose eligibility for the next 12 consecutive interscholastic contests or four weeks, 28 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

A student who chooses to become a participant in a treatment program may become eligible for participation after a minimum period of six weeks after entering treatment if all of the following conditions are met:

- The student is assessed as chemically dependent,
- enters treatment voluntarily, and
- the director of the treatment center certifies that the student has successfully completed the treatment program.
- The treatment option cannot be used for the first or second violation. Successful completion of a chemical dependency treatment program will satisfy only the most recent violation. Any other violations for which the penalty has not been satisfied must still be served in full.

Applying the Penalty

1) Penalties shall be progressive beginning with the student's first violation and continuing throughout the student's high school career. Penalties shall be served consecutively.

2) Violation Confirmation Definition: The violation shall be confirmed when the administrator responsible for the athletics/activities program has informed the student that the student has violated a bylaw and is now under the penalty. The notification shall be verbal and also in writing.

3) Counting Weeks:

- a) The weeks shall begin on the date that the violation is confirmed by the school administrator and extend for the required number of calendar days.
- b) For the purpose of this bylaw, a week is seven calendar days. The week starts the date the violation is confirmed and the student/student's parents or guardians are notified.
- c) At the beginning of the season, practice and conditioning weeks are counted.
- d) The student must participate in and complete the entire season in which the penalty has been applied for the penalty to count. As examples: a student cannot begin participation in a program at the start of the season, serve the penalty and then quit after the suspension has been served; nor can a student join a program after the season has begun, and serve the penalty.

4) A student who is under penalty for a violation of a League bylaw may not join a second sport in the same season in order to fulfill a penalty.

- 5) Practices, jamborees, inter-school scrimmages and previews are not interscholastic contests and may not be counted, however, the student is eligible to participate.
- 6) A student who participates in both Category I and Category II activities shall serve the penalty prescribed for that violation in both Category I and Category II activities in which the student participates.
- 7) Denial Disqualification: A student shall be disqualified from all inter-scholastic athletics for nine additional weeks beyond the student's original period of ineligibility when the student denies violation of the rule is allowed to participate and then is subsequently found guilty of the violation.

Penalties for Category II Activities

Definition - Category II Activities: Those League-sponsored activities in which a member school does not have a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League-sponsored tournaments.

Fine Arts Activities

- 1) Speech activities including One Act Play when a school schedules no interscholastic contests and participates only in the League-sponsored tournament series.
- 2) Music Activities.
- 3) Visual Arts Activities.

Each member school shall develop penalties which will apply to the participants in these activities. A copy of the member school's policy shall be filed in the activities office.

Additional Consequences

Any South St Paul student who violates the policies for Chemical Health or Code of Conduct will be ineligible to earn the VFW honor Awards at the end of their senior year. A student who has a chemical violation or a student who have a Code of Conduct violation will not be eligible to serve in any leadership capacity such as captain for one full calendar year from the date of the violation.

Any student who is found to be in violation of the MSHSL by-law will lose their captaincy and will not be eligible to be a captain for one full calendar year.

Parents will be asked to sign the athletic or activities code of responsibilities form, along with the student, to indicate an understanding and willingness to abide by the rules and regulations of South St. Paul High School and the Minnesota State High School League.

All of the South St. Paul Public Schools policies can be found on the District's website at <http://www.sspps.org>, under the tab for "District Policies." Students should pay particular attention to the policies in Section 500 which specifically pertains to students. Questions regarding policies can be directed to the building administrator.

In addition to the policies and rules established by the Activities Department governing organizations, the department has established a set of standard operating policies. These rules and policies are articulated below.

MSHSL SEXUAL/RACIAL/RELIGIOUS HARASSMENT / VIOLENCE AND HAZING

A. Reference Bylaw 209.00

A student shall not engage in the sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing during the school year or any portion of an activity season that occurs prior to the start of the school year or after the close of the school year.

B. Reporting Procedures

1. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute hazing, shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.
2. The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to a school district human rights officer or to the superintendent.
3. Teachers, administrators, officials, volunteers, and employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events which might include sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or had other knowledge or belief of conduct, which may constitute sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing, shall inform the building principal immediately.
4. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

C. Reprisal

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, coach, official contractor or employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

D. Penalties for Category I Activities

1. First Violation: the student shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or two (2) weeks, 14 calendar days, of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater.

Recommendations:

- a) It is recommended that the school develop a local education program through which the student would receive information about sexual, racial, religious harassment, violence or hazing.
- b) 2) It is recommended that, when appropriate, the school refer a student to a community agency or a professional individual outside the school for counseling.

2. Second Violation: the student shall lose eligibility for the next six (6) consecutive interscholastic contests or three (3) weeks, 21 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

Recommendation: It is recommended that before being re-admitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the student shall show evidence in writing that the student has received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist.

3. Third or Subsequent Violations: the student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests or four (4) weeks, 28 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

4. Penalties are progressive and consecutive.

E. Penalties for Category II Activities

Each member school shall develop penalties that it will apply to the participants in these activities. A current copy of the member school's policy shall be kept on file in the member school.

Activities Department Policies

Participation

A student may participate in more than one activity per season. Participation in more than one activity per season requires the approval of the all coaches or advisors involved.

Lettering

Special School District #6 and South Saint Paul Secondary School value student accomplishments. Students will be recognized in our community for outstanding effort, positive contributions, and exemplary achievement. Students at South Saint Paul have the opportunity to earn a varsity letter in the arts, academics, service, and athletics. Earning a letter is a significant accomplishment! South Saint Paul Secondary School reserves the right for Head Coaches and Advisors to determine specific lettering policies for their activity. Coaches and Advisors will develop and communicate baseline expectations that incorporate, but are not limited to, the following components: academics, behavior, participation, and citizenship/community service. These requirements must be given in writing to all team members and their parents and explained fully at the start of the season. Athletics, Arts, and Activities programs can award varsity letters if they are sanctioned and recognized competitions by the MSHSL, Metro East Conference, or similar governing body with regulatory, governing control over competition of individuals or teams representing South Saint Paul (i.e. MN Adapted Athletics Association, MN High School Bowling League). Any other South Saint Paul club or activity that wishes to award letters must request a review by the Activities Director two weeks prior to the start of their season.

Dropping or Transferring Activities

On occasion, a participant may find it necessary to drop an activity for good reason. In this case, the following procedure shall be followed: (1) Consult with your immediate coach or advisor, (2) Report your situation to the Activities Office, (3) Check in all equipment issued to you. If a participant wishes to change activities during a season, or after having won an award in one activity and he or she wishes to change activities, he or she shall consult with the coach or advisor concerned and the Activities Office. This procedure assures a smooth transfer which is in the best interest of the student.

Attendance

Students who miss part of the school day due to illness must be in attendance by 9:57am in order to participate in a contest or practice on that day. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence in order to participate. A parent or guardian signed note from home (due to illness) is not an excused absence.

Any student that is marked with an unexcused absence is not be able to practice or play in a game once the unexcused absence is verified. Students that also have multiple tardies in a day will be withheld from participation as well.

Students that have earned a detention for an unexcused absence or multiple tardies will need to fulfill their detention obligations before they are able to participate in their after-school activity.

Students who are in attendance at the start of the school day will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities if the student leaves school due to personal illness.

Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the overseeing administration. Examples of excused absences: doctor excused, family emergency, death in family, school authorized absences (i.e. field trips, college visits, etc...), religious release and family vacations.

Equipment

School equipment checked out by the student participant is his or her responsibility. He or she is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss of any equipment is the participant's and/or the participant's parent or legal guardian's financial obligation.

Missing Practice

A participant should always consult his or her coach or advisor before missing a practice or contest. Missing a practice or contest without good reason will be dealt with severely. Missing practice for academic reasons is an excused absence as long as the student notifies the coach or advisor in advance. At the discretion of the coach or advisor, excused absences may affect participation if the safety of the student or other participants is compromised.

Travel

All participants must complete and sign the School District's Transportation Agreement Form prior to participation. Participants must travel to and from out-of-town contests in transportation provided by the school unless prior arrangements are made by the parents or legal guardians for exceptional situations. Participants will only be permitted to leave out-of-town contest or events with their parents or legal guardians if a signed parent or guardian note is turned in to the Activities Office by noon of the day of the event. If the event is on a Saturday, the deadline will be Friday at noon. A duplicate copy will be forwarded to the coach or advisor.

Participants will remain with their squad and under the supervision of the coach or advisor when attending away contests. Participants who do not ride on the team bus will not be allowed to participate in the contest unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the overseeing administration. All regular school bus rules will be followed.

Early Dismissal

In situations that require a team that needs to be excused from school, the coach or advisor will work with the school administration on setting a release time that has the least negative impact on academic class time and provides adequate warm-up preparation for competition.

Release from Class

While we do not encourage students to be excused from class for student activities, situations do arise where it is unavoidable. It is the responsibility of the participant to see their teacher the day before they miss class because of a contest. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher.

Grooming and Dress Policy

A member of a team is expected to be well-groomed as established and defined by the coach or advisor of the individual activity.

Multiple Activities

An individual student who attempts to participate in several activities will undoubtedly experience a conflict of obligations. The Activities Department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of activities, and to this end will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the coaches or advisors involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

When a conflict arises, the coaches or advisors will work out a solution so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, the overseeing administration will make the decision based on the following: (1) the relative importance of each event, (2) the importance of each event to the student, (3) the relative contribution the student can make, (4) how long each event has been scheduled, (5) talk with parents.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he or she will not be penalized by any coach and/or advisor. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, he or she should withdraw from the activity.

Vacation Policy

Vacations by the participants during an activity season are discouraged. Parents or guardians and participants wishing to do so may wish to reassess their commitment to being a participant. In the event of an absence due to a vacation is unavoidable, a participant must: (1) be accompanied by his or her parents or guardians while on vacation, (2) contact the coach or advisor prior to the vacation, (3) be willing to assume the consequences related to their status in that activity.

Communication

Communication is an essential part of any successful co-curricular program. To facilitate quality communication, each program will host a pre-season parent meeting. During this meeting, the following information will be shared with those in attendance:

1. Introduction of staff
2. Explanation of policies and rules for the given activity, by the coach or advisor. This is done with a handout and will include the programs specific information related to lettering, attendance, etc.
3. A calendar of the upcoming season including games, practices, and special events.
4. A review of the MSHSL forms and the rules relating to the participation in the program.

The pre-season parent meeting also provides an opportunity for all participants and their parents to have any questions answered relative to the administration of a program.

Conflict Resolution

Due to the nature of the programs we facilitate through our department, there are times when conflict will take place between the individuals involved. We encourage an open line of communication between the school, students, parents, coaches, and advisors. All coaches and advisors are required to have a pre-season meeting to explain rules and policies to the participants and their parents. If questions arise, we ask that the student or parent first contact the coach or advisor.

In order to resolve expressions of difference that often occur in activities, an orderly communication procedure has been developed.

Conflicts should not be addressed during or immediately following an event. The contest site, practice site, school lobby, or locker rooms are not appropriate places to resolve conflict. Most conflicts are better resolved after an appropriate cooling down period. If you have a concern, please call or arrange for a meeting on the following work day.

The following steps will be taken in order for the conflict to be resolved:

First Action:

The student-athlete should talk directly to the coach or coaches themselves- this is a valuable part of the learning, development, and maturing process. This step may not apply in all situations depending on the nature of the conflict.

If the problem is not resolved...

Second Action

A meeting between the participant, the coach or advisor, and/or the parents should be called. This meeting can be initiated by the participant, the parents, the coach or advisor, but does not have to involve all of these parties.

Third Action:

If any party still feels that the conflict is unresolved, a meeting between the parents, the coach or advisor, and the Activities Director may be called. The participant need not be present. An individual meeting to gain the perspective of the participant may be solicited. Notes of the meeting will be kept by the Activities Director. The Activities Director will send out a list of findings and recommendations to those involved no later than one week after the meeting. A copy of all communications will be given to the High School or Middle School Principal.

Fourth Action:

The matter can be referred to the High School or Middle School Principal if a conflict still exists.

NCAA Collegiate Eligibility Standards

Many high school student athletes aspire to play sports beyond the high school level. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has established academic and amateur credentials for all students who want to play sports at an NCAA Division I or II institution as a freshman. **YOU MUST START TO PLAN EARLY - FRESHMAN GRADES COUNT.**

What are the academic initial-eligibility requirements?

The following requirements must be met in order for a student to be able to practice, play and receive a scholarship at an NCAA Division I or II college or university.

Division I:

1. Graduate from High School
2. Complete a minimum of 16 core cores
3. Present the required grade point average (GPA)
4. Present a qualifying test score on either the ACT or SAT
5. Complete an amateurism questionnaire and request final amateur certification

Core Academic Course Breakdown *(All courses must appear on the South St Paul list of Approved Core Courses)*

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2 years of natural or physical science (including one year of lab science)
- 1 extra year of English, math, or natural or physical science
- 2 years of social science
- 4 years of extra core courses from any category above, or foreign language, non-doctrinal/comparative religion/philosophy.

Academic eligibility is determined by using a sliding scale that matches Grade Point Averages for the Core Courses with ACT or SAT scores. A student/athlete must have a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) for the 16 courses of 2.00. With a 2.0 GPA a student then must have a minimum SAT score of 1010 or ACT score of 86. (A student with a 3.0 GPA would need test scores of 620 or 52).

More information is available in the Activities Office.

Activities/Athletics Handbook Signature Sheet 2025-26 School Year

Advisor/Coaches Name: _____ (print)

Students Name: _____ (print)

Grade: _____

Date: _____

*I have received the 2025-26 student handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read it. I understand that is also my responsibility to abide by all of the District's policies, as they are presented on the District's website at www.sspps.org under the "Our District" **tab** and then click on the "School Board" link and then "District Policy" link. I must ask questions if I do not understand current policies or a portion of the handbook. I understand that I will be held accountable according to the District's policies.*

Student Signature: _____