



# **Athletic Handbook**

## **2025-26**

(Updated 9/18/2025)



## SWALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE SINCE 1844

|                                              |                              |                   |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
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The Swallow School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability ("Protected Classes") in any of its student program and activities. This policy also prohibits discrimination as defined by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race and national origin), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The district encourages informal resolution of complaints under this policy. A formal complaint resolution procedure is available, however, to address allegations of violations of the policy in the Swallow School District. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the following:

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## **Swallow School Mission Statement**

*Maximizing every student's academic and personal potential for lifelong success in our rapidly evolving world.*

### **Athletic Mission Statement**

The mission of the Athletic Department at Swallow School is to support the academic, emotional, physical, and fundamental skill development of our students through the promotion of teamwork, sportsmanship, and athletic competition. The athletic program at Swallow School is believed to be a valuable asset to the total educational process; therefore, the program operates within the same objectives and goals of the overall educational program. Athletics at the middle school level has been shown to help foster team-building skills, problem-solving skills, self-discipline, and self-confidence. Through the development of these skills, it is believed that our student athletes will become confident, contributing members of the school community.

### **Goals of the Athletic Department**

- To develop the positive values of athletics, including sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, and competition.
- To foster academic and athletic achievement in students by emphasizing the importance of self-discipline, sacrifice, and dedication to achieving goals.
- To develop in students emotional control, dependability, and respect for rules, property, and authority.
- To provide students the opportunity to work as a member of a team in order to achieve a goal, and in the process, learn the importance of cooperation, teamwork, and good sportsmanship.
- To develop fundamental sport skills by maximizing participation and focusing on instruction.
- To provide as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in activities they enjoy.
- To provide students with experiences that require problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking skills.
- To provide students the opportunity to pursue physical fitness as a means of mental well-being.
- To develop in students a sense of school loyalty and generate school spirit.

## **Expectations for Student Athletes**

Swallow School holds its athletes to high standards. Student athletes are seen as representatives of both their school and their community. As a representative of Swallow School, student athletes are expected to adhere to all school and athletic department rules. (Reference to Board Policy 2431, Interscholastic Athletics)

All athletes are expected to:

- Remain academically eligible.
- Act in a responsible manner, realizing at all times, athletes represent their school and community.
- Attend and arrive on time for all practices and games.
- Remain alcohol, tobacco, and substance free.
- Refrain from using profanity or obscene language or gestures.
- Show good sportsmanship and respect for officials, coaches, and fellow athletes.
- Care for all athletic equipment issued throughout the season.
- Win with humility and lose with grace.
- Play fair, play hard, and put forth their best effort in practice and in competition.
- Make certain all personal belongings are accounted for before leaving an athletic event.

Athletes who fail to comply with these expectations may face disciplinary actions, including but not limited to dismissal from the team.

## **Expectations for Parents of Student Athletes**

Parents are encouraged to support their children's athletic endeavors and recognize the importance of athletics in their children's lives, regardless of ability level.

All parents are expected to:

- Understand that academics are a priority over athletics and emphasize successful classroom performance.
- Support and be enthusiastic about their child's chosen sport and encourage fair play.
- Be positive, helping their child understand the benefits of athletic participation regardless of contest results or individual performance.
- Insist that their child abide by the expectations of the athletic department and by team rules.
- Avoid "coaching" or "refereeing" from the stands or sidelines during both games and practices.
- Ensure their child attends all practices and contests, and are picked up at designated times.
- **All parents are expected to volunteer 2 hours of their time during a tournament in which their son/daughter is involved.**

## **Expectations for Athletic Coaches**

Coaches have the privilege of working with our student athletes firsthand. Just as the players, coaches are also held to high standards and are required to adhere to the expectations set forth by the Swallow athletic department.

All coaches are expected to:

- Act in a responsible manner, realizing that at all times, coaches represent their school and community.
- Attend and arrive on time for all practices and games.
- Refrain from using profanity or obscene language or gestures.
- Show good sportsmanship and respect for officials, fellow coaches, and all players.
- Coach athletes with respect to what good sportsmanship means and looks like.
- Provide all players with the fundamental skills necessary to be successful and confident when in a practice or game situation.
- Create a fun and safe environment for all players.
- Win with humility and lose with grace.
- Make certain all equipment is picked up and all gyms are cleaned after each event or practice.
- Attend all AMSAC coaches' meetings for their specific sport, every other year.
- Direct all questions or concerns to the athletic director.
- Abide by all the team selection and participant playing time expectations.

## **Expectations for Fans\***

Fans play an integral part in the athletic environment of each contest, whether at home or on the road. All fans are asked to show sportsmanship and understand that they are also a representative of Swallow School.

All fans are expected to:

- Keep their comments positive at all times.
- Leave the refereeing to the referees.
- Leave the coaching to the coaches.
- Leave the playing to the players.
- Clean up their belongings and garbage following the events.

### **5-8th Grade Athletic Programs Offered at Swallow**

| <b>Fall: September-December</b> | <b>Winter: January-March</b> | <b>Spring: March-June</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Girls Basketball                | Boys Basketball              | Boys/Girls Track          |

### **6-8th Grade Athletic Programs Offered at Swallow**

| <b>Fall: September-December</b> | <b>Winter: January-March</b> | <b>Spring: March-June</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                 |                              | Boys/Girls Volleyball     |

### **Criteria for Team Selection\***

Swallow School operates under a no-cut policy. All players interested in participating will be given the opportunity to play. In grades 5th-7th, all teams will be evenly split, meaning all players will be put through an evaluation period, after which the teams will be decided. At the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, the teams will be split into “A” –“B” teams which is based on their performance during the evaluation period.

- Teams will be split based on the following number of players
  - o 6-13 players (1 team)
  - o 14-24 players (2 teams)
  - o 25+ players (3 teams)
- Two evaluation periods can be scheduled and held prior to the beginning of the sports season.
- The coaches and athletic director will create all even split teams except for 8th 8th-grade A and B Teams.
- Teams will be final the first day of practice. No student may join the sport after the first day of practice.

## **Playing Time**

Swallow School believes that all participants should be given the opportunity to play in all sporting events. Coaches are expected to adhere to the following playing time criteria.

### **Basketball: Regular Season**

- All players must play a minimum of 7 minutes each game.

### **Basketball: Tournaments**

- When in tournament play, the goal is to keep the season going or have the opportunity to play as many games as possible. Because of this, some players may receive reduced playing time compared to the regular season.
- Every player must play in every game, but there are no restrictions on time.

### **Volleyball: Regular Season**

- All players must play a minimum of 1 game per match. (1 game consists of 20 points/ team.)

### **Volleyball: Tournaments**

- When in tournament play, the goal is to keep the season going or have the opportunity to play as many games as possible. Because of this, some players may receive reduced playing time compared to the regular season.
- All players must play in every match.

### **A-Teams**

- Playing time will be based on the coach's discretion, with the understanding that every student will play.

## **Conference Affiliation**

Swallow School is a member of the Arrowhead Middle School Athletic Conference (AMSAC). The conference consists of the following teams: Erin, Lake Country, Merton, North Lake, North Shore, Richmond, Swallow, and Stone Bank.

## **Transportation**

Parents are responsible for all transportation to and from all athletic events. Swallow School does not offer a transportation service for athletic events.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

In order to participate in the athletic programs offered at Swallow School, students must meet the following criteria. Students may come to the Athletic Director prior to the beginning of the sports season to verify their eligibility to participate in athletics. The specific requirements are as follows:

Students are not allowed to practice or participate in games unless the following criteria are met:

- Have a read, signed, and turned in the concussion/athletic handbook form
- Have paid all financial obligations to the school\*
- Attend at least the last 50% of the school day (11:40 a.m.-3:15 p.m.)
- Have a signed parent permission slip turned in
- Have an athletic health form turned in

Students are allowed to practice but not allowed to participate in games unless the following criteria are met:

- The above criteria.
- Have a GPA of more than 2.0
- Have paid the \$75 Athletic Fee per sport\*

\*Exceptions will be made regarding fees for families on free or reduced lunch.

## **Detentions/Suspensions (Conduct At School)**

Students suspended from school, in-school or out of school, are not permitted to participate in or attend any athletic events during the period of their suspension. This includes team practices. Students assigned classroom detentions will not be able to attend practices or games at the discretion of the athletic director and administration. (Reference: Board Policy 5500, Student Code of Classroom Conduct)

## **Concussions**

In accordance with Board Policy 5340, Student Accidents/Illness/Concussion and current law, all youth athletic organizations are required to educate coaches, athletes, and parents on the risks of concussions and head injuries and prohibits participation in a youth activity until the athlete and parent or guardian have returned a signed agreement indicating they have reviewed the concussion and head injury information materials. The law requires immediate removal of an individual from a youth athletic activity if symptoms indicate a possible concussion has been sustained. A person who has been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a determined or suspected concussion or head injury may not participate again until he or she is evaluated by a healthcare provider and receives written clearance from the health care provider to return to the activity. Coaches must also return a signed concussion information agreement.

## **Uniforms**

All uniforms issued to athletes are the property of the school and must be properly cared for by the student and parents. All uniforms must be returned, properly cleaned, at the conclusion of the season. Lost or damaged uniforms will become the financial obligation of the student. Game uniforms may be worn only on the day of a scheduled contest.

## **Out-of-School Conduct**

Student-athletes at Swallow School are expected to act in a legal and responsible manner, realizing that at all times, they are representing their school and team. Conduct out of school that discredits or embarrasses Swallow School, the athletic department, or any sport may result in athletic department disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the team. Further disciplinary action may also be taken if deemed appropriate by the school administration.

## **Lines of Communication**

Swallow School views communication as a key component in all activities. If you feel there is a concern that needs to be addressed, we ask that you follow the following lines of communication. We also ask that you please allow **24 hours** between the occurrence/incident and the initiation of communication. Lines of communication are as follows:

Athlete → Parent

Athlete → Coach

Parent → Coach

Coach → Athletic Director

Athletic Director → Administration

If there is a concern regarding another school or official, or if you feel that the communication you have had with a coach was not successful, please contact the Athletic Director.

## **Concussion, Head Injury & Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information**

Please click on the attached [LINK](#) to view the Information Sheet

## **PARENT & ATHLETE**

### **ATHLETIC HANDBOOK: CONCUSSION, HEAD INJURY & SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST INFORMATION AGREEMENT**

**As a Parent and as an Athlete, it is important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussions, head injuries, and sudden cardiac arrest.** By signing this form, you are stating that you have read the athletic handbook and understand the importance of recognizing and responding to the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion, a head injury, and a sudden cardiac arrest event. *This form must be completed for every sports season and every youth athletic organization the athlete is involved with.*

Confirmation of your receipt of this information will be acknowledged via the Infinite Campus survey.

### **COACHES ATHLETIC HANDBOOK/CONCUSSION AGREEMENT**

**As a Coach, it is important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussions and possible sudden cardiac events.** By signing this form, you are stating that you understand the importance of recognizing and responding to concussions, head injuries, and sudden cardiac events per the guidelines set forth by the Department of Public Instruction and Statutes 118.293 and 118.2935.

#### **Coaches Agreement:**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read the Coaches Concussion, Head Injury and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information and understand what they are and how they may be caused. I also understand what the signs, symptoms, and behaviors are and agree to remove the athlete from practice/play if exhibited and/or a concussion is suspected.

I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the parents/guardian if I suspect a concussion or if a suspected concussion is reported to me, and that the athlete cannot return to practice or play before providing me with written clearance from an appropriate health care provider.

I understand the possible consequences of the athlete returning to practice/play too soon.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the mission, requirements, and responsibilities for participation in athletics at Swallow School.

Coach Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Sport \_\_\_\_\_

School/District \_\_\_\_\_

Team/League \_\_\_\_\_