SOMSD
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE & MAPLEWOOD

# Athletic Communication Protocols

## Contacting Athletics in SOMSD

In the South Orange & Maplewood School District, our athletic communication goal is grounded in clarity and connection, bringing student-athletes, coaches, parents, and the Athletic Department into alignment. Through a consistent, standardized process, questions are guided, concerns are addressed, and communication moves with purpose, building a system rooted in trust, responsiveness, and shared understanding. Athletic Communication Goal: To ensure clear and effective communication between student-athletes, parents, and the Athletic Department, we have established a standardized process for addressing all questions and concerns.

### ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

| ATHLETIC DEPT. TO STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT | ATHLETIC TRAINER TO STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT | COACH TO STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT | STUDENT-ATHLETE TO COACH |
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| - Game schedules (listed on the website)<br>- Provide participation forms and information<br>- Share athletic updates | - Expected to share Training Room Procedures for the student-athlete to provide treatment for minor injuries<br>- Communicate with parent, by a phone call or email if your student-athlete needs the attention of medical care (ie physician)<br>- Provide any recommendations that are appropriate to injury | - Explanation of coach's philosophy<br>- Expectations the coach has for the student-athlete<br>- Explanation of your student-athlete's role on the team<br>- Expected to distribute information: practice schedules, games schedules, and other materials through the student-athlete to the parent.<br>- Share and review the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct and the penalties associated with a code violation. | - When possible, 48 hours notification of any scheduling conflict.<br>- Report any physical illness or injury that would prevent the student-athlete from practicing or playing.<br>- Share with coaches any school and class conflicts that would cause them to miss practice or games.<br>- Coaches should expect and openly embrace feedback from their student-athletes. |

## APPROPRIATE METHODS TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

| ROLE | CONCERN | COMMUNICATION PROCESS |
|---|---|---|
| STUDENT-ATHLETE TO COACH | Playing Time Concerns: Playing time decisions are determined by the coaching staff based on a variety of factors including effort, performance, skill development, team strategy, attendance, and attitude. These decisions are made with the best interest of the team and program in mind. When a student-athlete has questions or concerns about playing time, adhere to the communication protocol.<br><br>***(These concerns listed only serve as examples and are not meant to be exclusive, all questions and concerns should follow the outlined communication process.)*** | - **Step #1.** The student-athlete should first reflect on their own effort, preparation, and performance.<br>- **Step #2**. If questions remain, the student-athlete is encouraged to speak directly with the coach in a respectful and appropriate setting to seek feedback and guidance.<br>- **Step #3.** If the concern is not resolved, a parent or guardian may request a meeting with the coach to discuss the issue in a constructive and respectful manner.<br>**- Step #4.** If the concern remains unresolved after initial communication with the coach, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Athletic Director to further review and discuss the matter.<br>**- Step #5.** If the concern remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the building principal.<br>**- Step #6.** If the concern remains unresolved and all avenues of communication have been exhausted, the next step for addressing concerns is a meeting with the Superintendent or their designee. |
| | "24 Hour Rule," Parents/Guardians shall not confront a coach, team member, or official to discuss any "negative" game or practice situation until at least 24 hours has passed from the completion of the game or practice. 24 hours gives the parents as well | - **Step #1**. After the "24 Hours," the parent should schedule a meeting with the coach to discuss the issue or concern. This meeting shall not be held during an academic period of the school day. In the event that the student-athlete and coach are unable to resolve the issue, the student-athlete, parent, and coach may arrange |

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| PARENT/BOOSTER CLUB TO COACH | as the coaches a "cooling off" period and time to think more rationally.<br><br>***(The concern highlighted here is not meant to be exclusive, all questions or concerns should follow the outlined process.)*** | a meeting to be held during the working hours of the coach.<br>- **Step #2**. If a resolution cannot be reached, families may contact the Athletic Director for further guidance.<br>**- Step #3.** If the concern remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the building principal.<br>**- Step #4.** If the concern remains unresolved and all avenues of communication have been exhausted, the next step for addressing concerns is a meeting with the Superintendent or their designee. |
| PARENT/BOOSTER CLUB/STUDENT-ATHLETE TO ATHLETIC DIRECTOR | In the event that the student-athlete, parent, Booster Club leader and coach are unable to resolve the issue, the student-athlete, parent/booster club, and coach may arrange a meeting to be held during the working hours of the athletic director.<br><br>**(The concern highlighted here is not meant to be exclusive, all unresolved issues and questions should follow the outlined process.)** | - **Step #1**. Request to schedule a meeting with the coach, parent, Booster Club leader, student-athlete and athletic director.<br>- **Step #2**. Request a meeting with the building principal.<br>- **Step #3** - The final level for questions or concerns would involve scheduling a meeting with the Superintendent/Superintendent Designee. |

- Athletic Department Contact Information:
  - Phone: (973) 762-5600 ext. 1025
  - Email - chsathletics@somsd.k12.nj.us (Public)
  - Email - cougarathlete@somsd.k12.nj.us (Current Student-Athletes)
  - Student-Office Hours
    - Days: Mondays and Tuesdays
    - Times: 2:15PM - 3:30PM

***Please note: If a student-athlete, family member, Booster Club leader, or coach has missed a step in the communication protocol, they will be directed to the appropriate person. The Athletic Department will respond to email inquiries within 48 hours.***