



DISTRICT 65 IESA/SPORTS CONFERENCE

Student-Athlete, Family & Local Athletic Director Packet

School Year 2026–2027

Haven Middle School • Chute Middle School • Nichols Middle School • King Arts

Learn • Compete • Grow • Belong

Welcome to District 65 Athletics

Dear Student-Athletes, Parents, Guardians, Families, Coaches, and Local Athletic Directors,

Welcome to the **District 65 IESA/Sports Conference!**

I am excited to welcome you to another year of District 65 Athletics. Our athletic program is about much more than wins, losses, scores, and championships. Athletics are an extension of the educational experience and provide our students with meaningful opportunities to develop **leadership, teamwork, responsibility, perseverance, confidence, sportsmanship, and respect.**

Our goal is to provide every student-athlete with a **safe, positive, inclusive, competitive, and rewarding experience** while helping them grow both on and off the playing field.

As we continue expanding our partnership with the **Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA)**, our students will have additional opportunities to represent their schools and District 65 through regular-season competition and, where applicable, IESA postseason competition.

This packet explains what families and student-athletes can expect from District 65 Athletics and what we ask from everyone who represents our schools.

When our student-athletes put on a District 65 uniform, they represent more than themselves. They represent their **team, school, family, and the entire District 65 community**.

Thank you for partnering with us and supporting our student-athletes. I look forward to another outstanding year of District 65 Athletics.

Louis Jones Jr.

District Athletic Director

District 65 IESA/Sports Conference

1. Our Athletic Mission

The mission of the District 65 IESA/Sports Conference is to provide students with high-quality athletic opportunities that support their academic, social, emotional, and physical development.

We believe athletics should:

- Provide students with a sense of belonging.
- Promote teamwork and positive relationships.
- Develop leadership and personal responsibility.
- Teach perseverance and resilience.
- Encourage healthy and active lifestyles.
- Promote good sportsmanship.
- Provide equitable opportunities for students to participate.
- Build school pride and community.
- Prepare students for future athletic opportunities at the high school level and beyond.

Our students are students first and athletes second.

2. District 65 Athletic Schools

The District 65 IESA/Sports Conference includes:

- **Haven Middle School**
- **Chute Middle School**
- **Nichols Middle School**
- **King Arts**

Our schools work together as one athletic conference while maintaining the traditions, pride, and identity of each individual school.

3. District 65 Athletic Opportunities

District 65 provides multiple pathways for students to become involved in athletics.

Interscholastic Athletics

Students compete as representatives of their schools against other District 65 schools and approved outside opponents.

Athletic opportunities may include:

Fall

- Cross Country
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Basketball

Winter

- Girls Volleyball
- Boys Basketball

Spring

- Girls Soccer
- Boys Volleyball
- Track & Field

Sport offerings, schedules, and IESA postseason participation may vary by season and school.

Intramural Athletics

Intramural sports provide additional opportunities for students to participate in physical activity in a recreational, developmental, and inclusive environment.

Intramurals are an important part of our District 65 athletic model because we want students to have opportunities to participate, even if they are not on an interscholastic team.

IESA Competition

District 65 continues to expand opportunities for students to participate in sports governed by the **Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA)**.

When participating in IESA-sponsored competition, District 65 athletes, coaches, and schools must follow applicable IESA rules regarding eligibility, competition, safety, sportsmanship, and postseason participation.

4. Before Your Student Can Participate

The health and safety of our student-athletes will always come first.

Before participating in District 65 athletics, student-athletes must satisfy all District and applicable IESA participation requirements.

This includes having a **current physical examination on file with the student's school health office/health clerk before participating in school athletic activities.**

Families should not give original medical documentation directly to coaches unless specifically instructed to do so.

Please make sure all required health and registration information is completed before the start of the season.

No current physical on file = No athletic participation until the requirement is completed.

Families needing assistance in obtaining a physical should contact their school health office for information on available community resources, including the ETHS Health Center when applicable.

5. Student-Athlete Expectations

Being a District 65 student-athlete is a privilege and an opportunity.

We expect our athletes to represent themselves, their families, their teams, their schools, and District 65 with pride.

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Maintain appropriate academic effort.
- Follow school and District expectations.
- Attend practices and competitions consistently.
- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Communicate with coaches when they will be absent.
- Treat teammates with respect.
- Treat opponents with respect.
- Respect coaches, officials, staff, and spectators.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Take care of uniforms and equipment.
- Follow all safety instructions.
- Accept coaching and constructive feedback.
- Compete hard without disrespecting others.
- Represent District 65 positively at home and away events.

How we compete matters just as much as the final score.

6. Academics Come First

District 65 Athletics supports the educational mission of our schools.

Student-athletes are expected to remain engaged academically and demonstrate appropriate effort and behavior in school.

Coaches, Local Athletic Directors, teachers, administrators, and the District Athletic Director may work together to support student-athletes who are experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties.

Athletics should reinforce the habits that help students succeed in the classroom:

Preparation. Responsibility. Effort. Accountability. Teamwork.

7. Attendance & Commitment

Joining a team means making a commitment to teammates and coaches.

Student-athletes should attend scheduled practices and competitions unless there is an illness, family emergency, school-related conflict, or another approved reason.

Families should communicate conflicts with the coach **as early as possible**.

Repeated unexcused absences may affect a student's role or continued participation with the team.

Coaches should always remember that our athletes are middle school students and may participate in other educational, family, community, and extracurricular activities. Communication and reasonable problem-solving should always come first.

8. Sportsmanship

District 65 expects excellent sportsmanship from everyone involved in our athletic programs.

That includes:

Student-Athletes • Coaches • Parents • Guardians • Families • Spectators • Athletic Directors

We will:

- Cheer positively for our athletes.
- Respect our opponents.
- Respect officials.
- Respect coaches.
- Avoid inappropriate or abusive language.
- Avoid taunting or intimidating opponents.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior whether we win or lose.
- Remember that these are educational athletic events for children.

Officials will make decisions that we may not always agree with. Disagreement does not give anyone permission to disrespect an official.

We want our students to learn how to compete with intensity while still showing character and respect.

9. Family Expectations

Parents and guardians are important partners in creating a positive athletic experience.

We ask District 65 families to:

- Encourage their student-athlete.
- Support the entire team.
- Model appropriate sportsmanship.
- Respect coaches and officials.
- Avoid coaching athletes from the stands.
- Refrain from confronting officials.
- Avoid negative comments toward opposing athletes or families.
- Follow facility and event expectations.
- Communicate concerns appropriately.
- Allow coaches to coach and officials to officiate.
- Remember that middle school athletics are part of the educational experience.

We want our gyms, fields, tracks, and courses to be places where **every child feels safe and supported**.

Inappropriate, threatening, abusive, or disruptive spectator behavior may result in removal from an athletic event and, when appropriate, additional District action.

10. Communication & Resolving Concerns

We understand that questions and concerns will occasionally arise during an athletic season.

When that happens, we ask everyone to communicate respectfully and follow the appropriate process.

Step 1 — Student-Athlete and Coach

Whenever appropriate, encourage the student-athlete to communicate directly with the coach.

Step 2 — Parent/Guardian and Coach

If additional conversation is needed, the parent or guardian should contact the coach.

Step 3 — Local Athletic Director

If the concern remains unresolved, contact the school's Local Athletic Director.

Step 4 — Building Administration

When appropriate, the Local Athletic Director and building leadership can work together to address the concern.

Step 5 — District Athletic Director

District-level athletic concerns may be elevated to the District Athletic Director after the local process has been followed.

Please do not attempt to resolve significant concerns immediately following a game when emotions may be high.

We want conversations to be productive, respectful, and centered on what is best for our students.

11. Transportation & Away Events

Student-athletes participating in away competitions must follow District 65 transportation procedures.

Students traveling with the team are expected to:

- Report to the designated meeting area on time.
- Remain with their team and coaches.
- Follow all bus and transportation expectations.
- Follow the coach's instructions at the event.
- Remain in the designated team area.
- Follow appropriate sign-out procedures before leaving with an approved parent or guardian.

Students who are not properly signed out must return according to the team's established transportation plan.

Families should communicate transportation questions with the coach or Local Athletic Director **before the event whenever possible.**

12. Uniforms & Equipment

District 65 is proud to provide our student-athletes with quality uniforms and athletic equipment. These items are the property of **Evanston/Skokie School District 65** and are issued to student-athletes for use during their athletic season.

Student-athletes and families are responsible for properly caring for all District-issued uniforms and equipment.

Students should:

- Keep uniforms clean and in good condition.
- Use equipment only for its intended purpose.

- Never intentionally alter or damage a District-issued uniform or piece of equipment.
- Return all issued uniforms and equipment at the end of the season.
- Immediately report lost or damaged items to their coach.

Uniform Damage & Replacement Fee

Families should understand that District 65 athletic uniforms represent a significant investment in our student-athletes and athletic programs.

If a District-issued athletic uniform is damaged beyond normal wear and tear, a \$100.00 replacement fee must be paid to Evanston/Skokie School District 65.

Families may also be financially responsible for uniforms that are lost, not returned, or damaged due to misuse. Any concerns regarding the condition of a uniform should be communicated to the student's coach or Local Athletic Director as soon as possible.

Normal wear resulting from appropriate participation in practices and athletic competition will be handled in accordance with District procedures.

By accepting a District 65 athletic uniform, the student-athlete and parent/guardian acknowledge their responsibility to properly care for and return the uniform.

Our goal is not simply to protect equipment—it is to teach our student-athletes **responsibility, accountability, and pride in representing their school and District 65.**

Take care of your uniform. Wear it with pride. Return it with pride.

13. Health, Safety & Injuries

The safety of our student-athletes is our highest priority.

Athletes should immediately tell a coach or responsible adult if they:

- Are injured.
- Feel dizzy or lightheaded.
- Experience unusual pain.
- Have difficulty breathing.
- Experience symptoms associated with a possible concussion.
- Feel unable to safely continue participating.

Student-athletes should never hide an injury out of fear of losing playing time.

Coaches must follow District and applicable IESA safety requirements, including the required concussion and emergency response procedures.

When an athlete's health is in question, **safety comes before competition.**

14. Playing Time & Team Roles

Middle school athletics provide opportunities for development and competition.

Playing time may be influenced by several factors, including:

- Attendance
- Effort
- Skill development
- Team needs
- Practice performance
- Sportsmanship
- Safety
- Coachability
- Game situations

Participation on a team does not necessarily guarantee equal playing time in every competition.

However, coaches are expected to create a positive developmental environment and treat student-athletes fairly and respectfully.

15. Coach Expectations

Our coaches are educators and role models.

District 65 coaches are expected to:

- Put student safety first.
- Treat athletes with dignity and respect.
- Teach skills and fundamentals.
- Promote teamwork.
- Communicate expectations clearly.
- Model good sportsmanship.
- Follow District and IESA rules.
- Maintain appropriate supervision.
- Maintain required certifications.
- Communicate with families professionally.
- Create an inclusive team environment.
- Support the academic responsibilities of student-athletes.

Winning is important because competition matters, but **student development will always be bigger than a scoreboard.**

16. What We Want Our Athletes to Remember

Years from now, our students may not remember every score.

They may not remember every win or loss.

But they will remember:

How their coaches treated them.

How their teammates supported them.

How it felt to represent their school.

How they responded when something was difficult.

How they learned to be part of something bigger than themselves.

That is why District 65 Athletics matters.

17. Student-Athlete Commitment

As a District 65 student-athlete, I understand that representing my school is a privilege.

I agree to:

- Give my best effort.
- Treat others with respect.
- Attend practices and competitions.
- Communicate with my coaches.
- Take care of my uniform and equipment.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Follow school, District, team, and applicable IESA expectations.
- Represent my family, school, team, and District 65 with pride.

Student-Athlete Name: _____

Student-Athlete Signature: _____

Date: _____

18. Parent/Guardian Commitment

As the parent or guardian of a District 65 student-athlete, I understand that my behavior contributes to the athletic experience of my child and other students.

I agree to:

- Support my student-athlete positively.
- Demonstrate appropriate sportsmanship.
- Respect coaches, officials, athletes, and other families.
- Follow District athletic and facility expectations.
- Communicate concerns through the appropriate process.
- Support the educational purpose of middle school athletics.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

One District. Four Schools. One Athletic Community.

District 65 Athletics is committed to providing students with opportunities to **participate, compete, belong, lead, and grow.**

Whether a student is participating in an intramural activity, playing their first middle school game, representing their school in conference competition, or competing for an opportunity to advance in the IESA State Series, we want every athlete to know:

You belong here.

You represent something bigger than yourself.

Compete hard. Support your teammates. Respect the game. Be proud to represent District 65.

Louis Jones Jr.

District Athletic Director

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