

**Rotterdam-Mohonasen
Central School District**



**Athletic
Handbook**

Dear Student Athletes and their Parent/Guardians:

Welcome to Mohonasen Interscholastic Athletics!

The National Federation of High School Associations refers to co-curricular activities as the “other half of education”. Interscholastic athletics is one of the most visible and important of the co-curricular activities a school offers. Participation in athletics can and should be a significant contributor to the physical, psychological, and emotional development of our young people. It is expected that the district will provide our student athletes with a well-organized, well-administered program in order that they are able to grow, mature and develop while engaging in wholesome, competitive athletic programs. A student should be able to achieve individually while working as part of and for the good of the team.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Therefore, while the District has the responsibility to provide a program of excellence; our student-athletes have the responsibility to represent themselves, their families, school, and community in a manner reflective of the standards of the community and the expectations of the Board of Education, the administration, and the coaching staff. This Handbook is designed to spell out the expectations of all members of our Athletic Community.

The Mohonasen High School athletic program is governed by the rules and regulations of the New York State Department of Education, the New York State Scholastic Public High School Athletic Association, Section II, and the Suburban Council. This Handbook is a reflection of the rules of these organizations, as well as the Mohonasen philosophy of athletic competition.

Please review the Handbook, including the Code of Conduct and Training Rules, very carefully. Please sign and return the attached awareness form upon reviewing the information. All student-athletes will be held under the code of conduct during their entire season/and off-season. Please keep the Handbook as a reference for future use. If you have any questions or comments on this Handbook or on any aspect of our athletic program, please free to call Joseph Scalise, Director of Athletics at 356-8270.

Yours truly,

Joseph Scalise
Director of Athletics

Rotterdam-Mohonasen School District Mission Statement

The Mission of the Mohonasen Central School District is clear: **To prepare all students to succeed as responsible citizens in post-secondary education, the workplace, or the military.**

The principles of **Mohonasen Proud** - respect for, understanding of and sensitivity towards self and others - will inspire all students to achieve their potentials.

Principals of the Interscholastic Athletic Program

It is our belief that interscholastic athletics provide students with a model of life itself: opportunities exist for lessons in responsibility, fair play, cooperation, concerns for others, leadership, respect for authority, good citizenship, loyalty, continuous learning experiences, health and wellness, and acceptance of the differences among individuals. While we believe that the desire to win is admirable, and that winning is an integral part of development of each student, winning is not itself the sole measure of success. Of considerably greater importance is the development of each person who participates in interscholastic athletics; the opportunities for individuals to reach their potential and experience the lessons previously mentioned should be the focal point of our athletic program. Sacrificing individual goals for team goals is indeed paramount to this concept. Thus, the athletic program should be focused on the welfare of the student and the potential for growth as a result of participation on a team.

The interscholastic athletic program:

- Is conducted in accordance with the letter and spirit of the rules and regulations of the national, state and league athletic associations.
- Is supplemental to rather than a substitute for physical education programs.
- Is conducted by persons with appropriate training through either physical education or coaching certification programs.
- Is conducted so that physical welfare and safety of participants are protected and fostered.
- Is regarded integral part of the total educational program and conducted so that it is worthy of such regard.
- Is subject to the same administrative supervision as the total educational program and its code of conduct.

Section II Sportsmanship Program

Responsibilities:

- Learn and understand the rules of your sport. Play hard; play to win, but play fairly within the rules.
- Maintain self-control. Do not allow your temper to distract you from the fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
- Respect your opponent. Never taunt. Congratulate him/her at games end. Acknowledge good play.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials. Never question the decision of an official.
- Be an example for your school, teammates, and opponents.

Penalties:

- A player who is disqualified from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior by an official is prohibited from playing in the next regularly scheduled contest.
- A player who strikes or otherwise physically assaults an official will be subject to an extended suspension from athletic competition. A physical confrontation with an official is any incident in which a player either strikes, bumps, or otherwise physically intimidates an official prior to, during, or after a contest or game.
- A spectator that enters the playing field, or strikes/physically assaults an official/coach/or athlete will be subject to an extended suspension from the athletic director.

Section II Code of Conduct for Spectators

- Spectators are an important part of the games and are encouraged to conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.
- Spectators should at all times respect officials, visiting coaches, players and cheerleaders as guests in the community and extend all courtesies to them.
- Enthusiastic cheering for one's own team is encouraged.
- Booning, whistling, stamping of the feet, and disrespectful remarks shall be avoided.
- There will be no ringing of bells, sounding of horns or other noisemakers at indoor contests during play. Anyone who does not abide by this rule will be asked to leave the premises.
- Pep bands or school bands, under the supervision of school personnel, may play during time outs, between periods, or half time. Bands must coordinate play as not to interfere with a cheerleading squad on the floor or field.
- The throwing of debris, confetti, or other objects from the stands is prohibited. Offending individuals will be asked to leave the premises.
- During free throw in basketball, all courtesies should be extended.
- Spectators should encourage each other to observe courteous behavior. Improper behavior should be reported to the school authorities.
- Spectators will observe the rules of the local school concerning smoking and drinking consumption, littering, and parking procedures.
- Spectators will respect and obey all school officials and supervisors at athletic contests.

Student Eligibility for interscholastic Athletics

According to NYSPHAA regulations, a student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition provided he/she is a bona fide student in good standing of the represented school, taking four subjects including physical education. A student shall be eligible for only four years in one sport, in consecutive years, upon entering the ninth grade, unless advanced by selective classification.

Minimum requirements for attendance at practice are set forth in the NYSPHAA handbook. Additional policies for attendance which pertain to Mohonasen athletics are located in the section entitled "Attendance" found later in this booklet. A student who reaches the age of 19 before July 1 may not participate in interscholastic athletics. For modified programs, the student is eligible upon entering 7th grade.

Transportation

Students will be transported to and from away contests by school district vehicles. Parents may request approval to transport their children by completed an alternative transportation form available from the coach.

Sports Physicals

Sports physicals are provided by the school district at no cost to our students-athletes. A student may choose to have a sports physical through a private physician; however, school district forms must be completed by the physician and all costs incurred are the responsibility of the student-athlete. A sports physical is in effect for one school year. A current Health History Update form must be completed by the parent/guardian for any physical over 30 days old. A sports physical is required before participation in an interscholastic school sport is permitted.

Important: A sports physical is not necessarily the same as a routine physical examination. If a student is examined by a private physician for participation in sports, it is essential that a school sports physical form be completed by the physician.

Injuries and Insurance

A student athlete must report any injuries immediately, no matter how slight the injury may appear to be. Medical expenses resulting from any injury must first be submitted to the athlete's parent/guardians own insurance carrier, and any remaining balance can be submitted to the school's accident insurance carrier who will determine what, if any, further payment or reimbursement will be made. If a coach is not available, the injury should be reported to the school nurse, the athletic trainer, or an administrator, or supervisor as soon as possible after the injury has occurred. Coaches will complete an injury report and submit it to the school nurse.

Risk Factor in Sports

Participation in interscholastic sports is a very rewarding experience. However, as with any sport competition, there is a certain risk of injury. Each sport has its own activities which can lead to injury, and the danger involved can vary from sport to sport. The nature of athletic injury can run from minor injuries, such as bruises and scrapes, to more serious injuries, such as fractures, dislocations, and concussions.

Mohonasen High School is committed to providing as safe an environment for participation as possible. Our fields, gymnasiums and equipment are kept in excellent condition. Coaches will point out areas to avoid injury. Parents/guardians should notify the coach of illness or injury and make the Athletic Director aware if they feel the student is using unsafe equipment.

The district employs a certified athletic trainer to provide quality care for our student-athletes.

Athletic Awards

The Mohonasen athletic program uses a point system for the purpose of presenting awards to athletes. The system works as follows:

- 1 point: Successful completion of a season on a modified or freshman team.
- 2 points: Successful completion of a season on a junior varsity team.
- 3 points: Successful completion of a season on a varsity team

Awards are presented as follows:

- 1-9 accumulated points: certificate
- 10 accumulated points, or successful completion of varsity season: varsity letter
- 11-19 accumulated points: gold athletic pin
- 20 or more accumulated points: Plaque (given in their senior year)

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT AND TRAINING RULES

General Statement on Participation:

Participation in interscholastic athletics at Mohonasen is a privilege. This participation should elicit great pride among all school and community members. Part of the responsibility that goes with the participation in school sports is the need to maintain appropriate standards of behavior. Therefore, the following are standards of behavior which must be maintained in order to remain eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics at Mohonasen. The signatures of both the student athlete and a parent/guardian indicate that each is aware of the expectations. Before a student athlete is permitted to participate on an athletic team, both the student athlete and the parent/guardian **must** sign an athletic code of conduct form and return it to either a coach or the athletic director. (This form can be found at the back of this handbook, or may be obtained from a coach or athletic director.)

Attendance

Absence

Absence from school is not acceptable. Normally no attendance on a school day indicates the student cannot participate in either practice or games on that day. Exceptions are made for the following:

- a. Funeral
- b. Medical/dental appointments with absence for part of the day
- c. Religious observance
- d. Required court appearances
- e. Approved college visits
- f. Acceptable excuses which are reviewed by the Director of Athletics

Upon reaching six absences during the fall or spring season, or eight absences during the winter season, the athlete will have his/her eligibility to participate reviewed by the Athletic Director and Principal. Circumstances surrounding an extended period of absence will also be reviewed. Any athlete absent for five or more consecutive days must have his/her physical re-certified by the school physician.

Tardiness

Student-athletes **must** be in school by the start of Period 5 to be eligible to participate in a contest that day. When a student-athlete accumulates four illegal tardies to school, he/she becomes ineligible for the next scheduled competition. Each succeeding tardy thereafter causes the student-athlete to become ineligible for the next schedule competition. A tardy to school is only considered legal as indicated in examples a-f under "Absence".

Physical Education Class Participation

Student-athletes are required to participate in regularly scheduled physical education class. Failure to do so will result in a suspension from a game or practice for that day.

Academic Eligibility

Generally speaking, participation in Interscholastic Athletics has a positive affect on academics performance. It is the belief of the Mohonasen Central School District that parents, coaches, teachers and student-athletes form a partnership in development of the whole child. Therefore, all parties will work together to ensure the athletic and academic success of the student-athlete.

High School Policy

- Coaches/teachers will proactively monitor student progress to the official 5-week interim period in order to provide early support and intervention if necessary.
- A student athlete failing two or more courses at the five-week interim reporting period, or at the end of the marking period, will be put on the Pass Program.
- Students on the Pass Program will meet with the Director of Athletics to review the expectations and requirements to continue participation in athletics. Students must stay after school every day and fill out a daily progress report that they submit to their coaches. This form will indicate what the student worked on after school. A teacher's signature indicating that the student completed work is necessary for the form to be complete. These forms must be turned into their coaches each day in order to remain eligible for their sport.
- At the completion of each week teachers will submit a weekly progress report to the Director of Athletics outlining the students progress in the classes that they are currently failing. If reports indicated no progress is made then the student athlete will be ineligible the following week. Eligibility runs week by week for the entire 5 weeks. If progress is made then students will remain eligible in their sport for the week. A student's progress is reviewed each week they are in the program. Criteria for progress includes, but is not limited to, the following: student effort, make up of back work, resubmission of papers, projects, completing homework, etc.
- At the end of the next five-week block (I.e., the report card or interim progress report period), the student-athlete is no longer failing two classes; he/she is excused from the Pass Program.
- It is highly recommended that a conference be held as early in the Pass Program as possible. The conference should include the parent/guardian, the student athlete, the teachers involved, the guidance counselor, and the coach.
- A student may be dropped from participation at any time at the discretion of his/her parent/guardian or for failure to meet the requirements enumerated in his/her Pass Program.
- A student will be permitted to participate in athletics as long as he/she continues to meet Pass Program commitments.

Middle School Policy "Success is Required"

Student-athletes on academic probation are not eligible to participate in competitions until they are in good academic standing.

Student-Athlete Behavior

A student-athlete represents the school community, and the privilege of being a member of a school team must be earned and maintained. Therefore, the following rules are established so that student-athletes understand the value of participation in interscholastic athletics and as a reminder that inappropriate behavior is punishable by suspension or removal from a team at the discretion of the principal and athletic director.

Suspension from Participation in Athletics

The following are examples but not limited to, reasons that may result in the suspension of a student-athlete. The length of suspension is at the discretion of the Director of Athletics and Administrative Team upon investigation.

- A. Excessive tardiness as outlined in section entitled “Attendance” in this handbook.
- B. Ejection from a contest by an official, coach, or athletic director for unsportsmanlike or other inappropriate behavior.
- C. Internal or external suspension from school by the school administration in violation of the “Code of Conduct,” (a student athlete may not participate in practice or a game on the day of suspension if the suspension begins on the day prior to a weekend or vacation and the suspension continues upon return to school. The student is ineligible for any competition when school is out of session.)
- D. Actions punishable by the school administration which occurs outside the normal school day but while the student-athlete is involved in his/her sports season.
- E. Use or possession of tobacco either on or off school grounds
- F. Student-athlete is suspended from school (internally or externally) on more than one occasion during that season for less than five (5) days.
- G. External suspension from school that results in a Superintendent’s Hearing, with the suspension exceeding more than five (5) days.

Hazing

Hazing is defined as any conduct or behavior that is any act, whether physical, mental, emotional or psychological, which subjects another individual voluntarily or involuntarily to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass, or intimidate him/her. In addition, any requirement by a team that compels another individual to participate in any activity which is against the Mohonasen Central School District “Code of Conduct” and “Athletic Handbook” will be considered to be hazing. Individuals involved in incidents of hazing will be subjected to disciplinary action with the subsequent based discipline on the severity of the circumstances surrounding the hazing incident (s). Incidents may also result in the suspension of a student athlete from the team for up to one calendar year.

- Examples of hazing include, but are not limited to, any type of initiation or other event and/or activity where there is an expectation of individuals joining a particular team to participate in behavior designed to humiliate, degrade, or abuse them regardless of the individual’s willingness to participate.
- Forcing, requiring or pressuring any individual to participate in any activity, which is illegal, perverse, or publicly indecent, which includes, but is not limited to public profanity, indecent or lewd conduct or sexual gesture in public.

The prohibition on hazing shown above is adapted from the University at Albany’s student-athlete agreement.

Student Arrests

In an event that police arrest a student-athlete, the Director of Athletics will do an exhaustive investigation to determine the consequences of the student-athlete's actions. At the completion of the investigation the Director of Athletics will meet with the student-athlete and guardian to discuss the penalties/consequences that will be enforced. The process will remain the same for any student-athlete that is arrested by police. Each case will be individually handled specifically for that student athlete. Further consequences may be handed down if the student-athlete is found guilty in a court of law. The following are guides in helping determine the length of a suspension for a student:

Violation: 10% to entire Season
Misdemeanor: 20% to entire School Year
Felony: 20% to High School Athletic Career

Drugs/Alcohol Substance Abuse Policy

*The director of athletics will conduct an extensive investigation to determine the consequences of the student athlete's actions. Disciplinary consequences for all infractions listed below will be enforced in and out of season throughout the 12-month calendar year. Penalties for actions occurring out of season will be enforced during/beginning with the next season in which the athlete wants to participate. An athlete out of season may have the option to participate in a Community Service Project in place of the penalty during the season. The Community Service project can only be done for first time offenders and only if the infraction occurs in the off-season. **Students will remain on probation for one calendar year from the date of the infraction/violation. If a second infraction/ violation occurs in the same calendar year, the student-athletes consequences will occur at the next highest level.** *

Suspension/Dismissal from Team:

- 1.) The following are examples of, but not limited to reasons that will result in a student-athlete suspension from **20% of a team's scheduled contests:**
 - A. Use or possession of drugs, or alcohol products either on or off school grounds
 - B. Attending a party where pupils are consuming or are in possession of alcohol and/or drugs.
 - C. Providing a venue, facility, or place (hosting) where a student-athlete or person other than the host provides alcohol and/or drugs that is being consumed.
 - D. Posting of pictures (knowingly or unknowing) on the Internet insinuating use of drugs/Alcohol.
- 2) The following are examples of, but not limited to reasons that will result in a student-athlete being removed from **sports for the duration of an athletic season:**
 - A. Providing a venue, facility, or place (hosting) where drugs and/or alcohol are provided by the host and are being consumed by students (under aged pupils).

3) The following are examples of, but not limited to reasons that will result in a student-athlete being removed from **ALL sports for the remainder of the school year or one complete sports season, whichever is longer** and forfeit any opportunity for athletic awards for that season. Points already earned for previously completed seasons that year will be maintained:

A. Selling drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substance on or off school grounds.

Appealing a Suspension/Dismissal

If a student-athlete chooses to appeal a suspension or dismissal, a request for appeal must be made in writing to the athletic director. The athletic director will inform the principal of the desire for appeal and call a meeting with the student-athlete, and his/her parents. Also attending this meeting will be the principal or his/her designee, athletic director, Student Assistance Counselor, and the coach of the student-athlete who has requested the appeal. After the appeal is heard, the members of the MCSD will render a consensus decision within five (5) school days.

Quitting a Team

A student-athlete is considered to have quit a team when (1) he/she either verbally or in writing expresses to the coach that he/she has quit, or (2) he/she misses three consecutive unexcused days of practices or games. Once the student-athlete has quit a team, he/she may not participate on another athletic team **during that season** without first receiving permission from the athletic director. Once a student-athlete quits a team, all opportunities for awards for that sport in that season are forfeited.

Individual Team Standards

Often a coach will develop standards for a specific team. These standards may come in the form of responsibilities, requirements, expectations, and penalties for violations. They will reflect the standards of this handbook and the coach's expectations for his/her team. They may also address such issues as attendance at practices and games, expected behavior at practices and games, and other issues not specifically covered in this handbook. These specific team standards will be approved by the athletic director and a copy will be kept on file in the athletic director's office. Once approved by the athletic director, these standards will act as an extension of the district Athletic Code of Conduct. Student athletes and their parent/guardian should become familiar with the standards and expectations for a specific team. The coach will present all team standards to athletes and their parents/guardians in writing at an appropriate time. It is expected that the athlete and his/her parents/guardian will sign this form as well to indicate their having been informed of them.

Directions to Suburban Council Schools

Note: All games are not necessarily played at the high schools. In the event you are unsure where a game is to be played, especially at the modified level, feel free to call the athletic director's office at **356-8270** to get directions. All directions are from Mohonasen.

Averill Park High School - 146 Gettle Road, Averill Park 12018 **674-7000**

Take I-90 East to exit 7 (Rensselaer) and go left on Washington Avenue Extension. Go through Rensselaer and cross Rt.4; now you are on Rt. 43. Go 7-8 miles to West Sand Lake and look for Miller's Supermarket; about 1 1/2 miles past Miller's, turn left at high school.

Ballston Spa High School /Middle School- 220 Ballston Ave, 12020 **884-7150**

From the South via Rte. 50. Go North on Rte. 50, about 5 miles North of Burnt Hills. At the intersection of Rte. 67, go left onto Ballston Avenue. The school is on the left, about 1 mile.

Bethlehem High School - 700 Delaware Ave., Delmar 12054 **439-4921**

NYS Thruway, get off Exit 23, and turn right onto Rte. (W South. Follow 9W one mile to the Delmar by-pass (Rte. 32) exit. Follow Delmar by-pass for 1/2 mile, and turn right onto Kenwood Avenue. Follow Kenwood about 2 1/4 miles to Delaware Avenue (four corners intersection). Turn left onto Delaware Avenue, and continue about 1 1/2 miles. The high School is on the left. **Bethlehem Middle School** - 332 Kenwood Avenue, Delmar 12054

Burnt Hills High School - 88 Lake Hill Road, Burnt Hills 12027 **399-3141**

Take I-890 West; take Exit 6 (Scotia); at traffic light take a left on Route 5; cross bridge and take a right onto Rte. 50 continue on Rte. 50 into Burnt Hills; take a right on Lake Hill Road; school is on the left, about 1/4 mile. **O'Rourke Middle School** - take left on Lake Hill Road; cross Rte. 50 and the school is on the left. **Steven's Elementary** - is on the left before the high school.

Colonie High School - 1 Raider Blvd, Albany, NY 12205 **459-1220**

Take the Thruway to Exit 24; take Exit 1N; get on Northway (87 N); shortly after that, take exit 2E; Keep right at the fork in the ramp; proceed about 1/3 mile on Central Avenue; turn left onto Hackett Avenue; high school is at the end of Hackett Avenue.

Columbia High School - 962 Luther Road, East Greenbush 12061 **207-2080**

Take I-90 East; pass through Exit 24 exchange; continue d on I-90; take Exit 9; right on Rte. 4/40; at traffic light take, take a left (Luther Rd.); school is on the left 1/2 mile.

Guilderland High School - 8 School Road, Guilderland Center 12085 **861-8591**

Curry Road (Rte. 146) to Western Avenue (Rte. 20); take a left onto Western Avenue .6 miles east; at the intersection Western Avenue and Rte. 146 (Stewart's at corner) turn right on Rte. 146; left at first traffic light in Guilderland; school is just past the fire station on the left.

Niskayuna High School - 1626 Balltown Road, Niskayuna 12309 **382-2531**

Take I-90 West to Exit 7 (Rte. 7 East); stay on Rte 7 until Balltown Road; school is on the right 3 miles.

Saratoga High School - 1 Blue Streak Blvd., Saratoga Springs 12866 **587-6690**

Take I-90 East to Exit 24 exchange; take Rte. 87 North to Exit 13N; take Rte. 9N to entrance to Avenue of the Pines (entrance road to Gideon Putnam Hotel); pass through park to Rte. 50, take a right, take a left on West Avenue; school is on the right, about 1/2 mile.

Shaker High School - 445 Watervliet Shaker Road, Latham 12110 **785-4740**

Take Rte. 7 East to Latham Circle; right on Rte. 9 South; Left on Rte. 155; high school and middle school are on the left 1/2 mile down the road. (Both schools are on the same campus.)

Shenendehowa - 5 Chelsea Place, Clifton Park 12065 **881-0390**

Take Balltown Road North to Rte. 146; turn right on Rte. 146 East; Go a few miles and school complex is on the right. Can enter school off Rte. 146 or continue to Moe Road; turn right; continue to school entrance on right.