

Mount Morris Central School

Interscholastic Athletics



**Handbook for
Student-Athletes
& Parents**

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I. Introduction

This handbook is to be used as a reference by our student-athletes and their parents/guardians in an effort to define responsibilities as they pertain to the rules and regulations, as well as the policies and procedures for participation in our interscholastic athletics program. During all extra-curricular activities, home and away, the District Code of Conduct applies.

It is the belief of the Mt. Morris School district that students grow mentally, physically, and socially through their involvement in sport. It is hoped that this growth will result in a healthy lifestyle in the students' future. Being part of the Mt. Morris athletic program is considered a privilege. It is the expectation that each student-athlete will adhere to the guidelines set forth in this handbook to be eligible to participate. If a student violates any of the policies set forth, he/she will be in jeopardy of losing his/her eligibility to participate. The students' coach, the Athletic Director, or any school administrator may impose the loss of the student's athletic eligibility. The rules established in this handbook are applicable from the first time a student signs the athletic handbook acknowledgement through their graduation from high school.

Interscholastic sports available at Mount Morris Central School:

Fall

Soccer – Jr. High, JV, Varsity
Football—Varsity, Modified
Volleyball—Jr. High, JV, Varsity
Cheerleading- Varsity

Winter

Basketball – 7th Grade, 8th Grade, JV, Varsity
Cheerleading – Varsity

Spring

Baseball – Jr. High, JV, Varsity
Softball – Jr. High, JV, Varsity
Track - Varsity, Modified
Golf – Varsity

II. Title IX Regulations

Mt. Morris Central School does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, or handicapping condition in the educational programs or activities it operates and is in full compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The policy on non-discrimination includes the following: recruitment and appointment of employees, employment pay and benefits, counseling service for students, and access by students for athletic sport teams. Mr. Hamilton and Mrs. Greene are the Title IX Compliance Officers at Mt. Morris Central.

III. Philosophy of Athletics/Athletic Expectations

Athletic Expectations

Mount Morris Central School District recognizes the many values and outcomes of participation in interscholastic athletics. It is recognized that priorities of programs can and should shift from junior high to junior varsity and varsity teams.

As students move from Junior High to Junior Varsity and Varsity, Desired Outcomes for all athletic participation are progressive.

Desired Outcomes of Varsity Athletic Participation

The varsity level of athletic participation is the culmination of the high school athletic program. It is the end product of the years of hard work, commitment, and self-sacrifice. At Mount Morris Central we expect our varsity teams to be competitive in performance and attempt to win within the rules and spirit of the game. The team definitely plays to win the contest, and it is recognized that not all participants may play in every contest. The following are expectations of a varsity athlete:

- 1) All varsity athletes will display a high degree of teamwork:
 - a) The student-athlete will demonstrate an understanding and execution of fundamental team skills and strategies.
 - b) The student-athlete will display an understanding of the importance of team success vs. individual success.
- 2) Participation in varsity athletics will contribute to the development of positive self-esteem:
 - a) The student-athlete should project a sense of pride in his/her contributions and accomplishments.
 - b) The student-athlete will appreciate the value and enjoy being a part of the team.
 - c) The student-athlete will perform at a consistent level commensurate with perceived ability. The student-athlete will demonstrate understanding and execution of fundamental individual offensive and defensive skills.
 - d) Through feedback and guidance from the coach, the student-athlete will set appropriate, realistic, and challenging individual and team goals.
- 3) Through varsity participation, the student-athlete will continue to develop a positive work ethic:
 - a) The student-athlete will always give 100% in practice and games.
 - b) The student-athlete will demonstrate an understanding that the only acceptable effort is their best effort.

- c) The student-athlete will work harder when success isn't immediate.
- 4) The varsity student-athlete will be a positive role model:
 - a) The varsity student-athlete understands the responsibility of being a varsity athlete. On and off the field, he/she represents self, family, school, coach, and community. They are looked up to by fellow students and especially by younger students.
 - b) The varsity student-athlete will always display good sportsmanship. Demonstrating self-discipline and self-respect, as well as respect for teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators is a responsibility of varsity student-athletes.
 - c) The varsity student-athlete will demonstrate a cooperative, focused, purposeful attitude.
 - d) The varsity athlete understands that as a role model, he/she cannot expect nor shall receive preferential treatment regarding team or school rules and procedures.
- 5) Varsity student-athletes will demonstrate a "winning" attitude:
 - a) They will demonstrate sufficient individual skills, an appropriate attitude, and self-discipline to achieve at or above their ability level.
 - b) Varsity student-athletes will understand that the purest competition and greatest challenge is within themselves. The challenge is to work harder and improve daily.

Desired Outcomes of Junior Varsity Participation

At Mount Morris Central School, we understand the importance of creating an effective learning environment and providing growth experiences for our junior varsity athletes. Junior varsity competition is a transition experience from the learning and improvement focus of junior high athletics to the greater expectations and intensity of varsity competition. The junior varsity level of competition is the program where there is an increased emphasis placed on team play, physical conditioning, and the development of basic fundamental skills. Winning at this level is considered important. However it is not the main emphasis. An attempt to play everyone will be made, but it is recognized that athletes may not have equal playing time. As a significant amount of growth and improvement occurs during competition, Mount Morris Central will strive to provide maximum participation, regarding both team size and game participation, while still being competitive. The junior varsity athlete is expected to demonstrate consistent growth and improvement in:

- a) Attitude toward and understanding of the game.
- b) Individual fundamental skills.
- c) Recognition of the importance of team performance and team goals rather than individual performance or individual goals.

Additionally, the junior varsity athlete is expected to display the following characteristics:

- 1) It is our expectation that junior varsity participation will enhance the self-esteem and sense of achievement of the athlete. Thus, it is expected that the JV athlete will set realistic, individual, and team goals in collaboration with their coach.
- 2) The junior varsity athlete will demonstrate a good work ethic:
 - a) The junior varsity athlete will demonstrate an awareness and appreciation for the benefits of hard work and giving 100% at all times.
 - b) The junior varsity athlete is expected to maintain a positive attitude and character even when tired or frustrated.
- 3) The junior varsity athlete will display good sportsmanship:
 - a) The JV athlete is expected to be supportive of his/her teammates and coaches.
 - b) The JV athlete is expected to be courteous to officials and opposing players and coaches.

- c) The JV athlete is expected to focus on the contest and not interact with spectators. It is expected that the JV athlete will develop the ability to "tune-out" the spectator conduct, noise, and activity.
- d) The JV athlete will demonstrate awareness of the responsibilities that come with being a role model for other students and especially younger athletes.

Desired Outcomes of Junior High Participation

At Mount Morris Central, junior high athletic competition is recognized as being primarily a learning and improvement experience. This program of competitive sports focuses on the fundamentals of the game, team play, training, rules, and basic skills. At this level a large emphasis is placed in academics, team play, sportsmanship, and socio-emotional growth along with commitment and dedication. A smaller emphasis is placed on winning and maximum participation is desired. Playing time will be directly linked to practice time. All team members should participate in all games, unless due to disciplinary actions.

It is expected that junior high athletes will:

- 1) Understand the instructional goals and the philosophy of the program.
- 2) As a very effective learning situation occurs during actual competition, it is our expectation that there will be a maximum participation of athletes during the contest.
- 3) Develop positive sportsmanship. They will learn to be role models by displaying cooperation and being supportive of teammates, coaches, and officials. They will display a willingness to listen at all times and obey team and school rules. They will display self-control and not give in to frustration and anger through inappropriate behaviors.
- 4) Have fun. Athletic competition is still a game. As most fun can be in the competition of games, we expect to participate in the maximum number of contests per sport.

IV. Role of Coaches, Athletes, Parents, and Spectators

To help us achieve our expectations for athletic participation, we have clarified the roles for coaches, athletes, parents, and spectators.

A. The Role of the Coach

- 1) The coach needs to understand the identified outcomes and expectations for our athletes as a result of their athletic participation.
- 2) The coach needs to be an effective communicator.
 - a) The coach needs to guide individuals and the team in establishing realistic goals.
 - b) The coach needs to give accurate feedback and evaluation to the athlete.
 - c) The coach is expected to display a positive attitude, even in difficult times, for he or she is the role model to the athlete.
 - d) The coach must display enthusiasm and demonstrate a strong work ethic.
 - e) The coach is expected to display good sportsmanship.
- 3) The coach is expected to be knowledgeable of all current rules and techniques of their sport.
- 4) The coach must establish a level of respect and be professional at all times.
- 5) The coach must consider safety first when making decisions.
- 6) The coach is expected to make contact with parents of student-athletes on a consistent basis. This is especially important in issues of injury, disciplinary action, and attendance.
- 7) The coach must motivate each team member so that they participate at 100% effort at all times.

B. The Role of the Parent

- 1) Understand the identified expectations for athletes.
- 2) Understand that they are role models:
 - a) Foster open communications through the lines of authority (coach, AD, etc.).
 - b) Demonstrate respect toward all players, coaches, and officials.
 - c) Know and support athletic training rules. Attend pre-season parent-coaches' meetings.
- 3) Understand the difference in priorities. A parent's first priority is in the welfare of his/her individual child. A coach's first priority is often in the welfare of the team. As difficult as it can be, parents are asked to understand and support this natural difference in priorities.
- 4) During competitions/games/meets, be a good spectator. See section directly following for details.

C. The Role of the Spectator (this includes parents, students, and anyone in attendance at an event)

- 1) Understand the identified expectations of athletes.
- 2) To be enthusiastic and supportive of your team in a positive manner. Encourage athletes; do not berate athletes, coaches, or officials.
- 3) Display good sportsmanship at all events. See section VII for details.

V. New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Code of Ethics

It is the duty of all concerned with high school athletics:

- 1) To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play
- 2) To eliminate all possibilities which tend to destroy the best values of the game
- 3) To stress the values derived from playing the game fairly
- 4) To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials
- 5) To establish a positive relationship between visitors and hosts
- 6) To respect the integrity and judgment of the sports officials
- 7) To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility
- 8) To encourage leadership, use initiative and good judgment by players on the team
- 9) To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional and well-being of the individual players
- 10) To remember that an athletic contest is only a game, not a matter of life or death for a player, coach, school, fan, community, state or nation.

VI. Participation Regulations

Students who wish to participate in interscholastic athletics must be:

- 1) Academically eligible:
 - a) Registered as a full-time student (taking at least 250 minutes of instruction per day).
 - b) Demonstrating satisfactory academic performance (see section XII.).
- 2) In attendance in school by the beginning of first period (8:02 AM) to participate that day (unless a verified doctor's note is provided to the attendance officer to verify the tardiness). Any student who is not in attendance at school at all, is not eligible to participate that day unless they were in attendance at a school-related function (i.e. field trip).

- 3) Student-Athletes are required to participate in PE when scheduled in order to participate in athletics.
- 4) Physically eligible. Each student must have a valid sports physical on file with the school nurse and all required paperwork turned in (see section XXI).
- 5) Behaviorally in good standing. Any student suspended from school for one half day or more (ISS or OSS) is ineligible from attending any extra-curricular activities on that particular day. If a student is serving a suspension that continues into the following week, they will not be allowed to participate in any athletic events during that weekend.
- 6) Any student that is serving a suspension over holiday breaks are not allowed to participate in athletic contests. They may practice during this time.
- 7) Eighteen years of age or younger prior to July 1st. Anyone who attains the age of 19 prior to July 1st is not eligible for athletic competition in the upcoming school year. Additionally each student has only four years of eligibility once he/she enters 9th grade.

The only way to build a successful program and team environment is with 100% participation at all events. When a student-athlete earns membership on a team, he/she accepts the commitment and responsibility that membership carries. Student-athletes are expected to be on time and attend all team meetings, practices, scrimmages, and games. Student-athletes are encouraged to schedule appointments and work schedules to maximize their participation at all practices and events. In the event an athlete needs to miss an entire or portion of a practice, meeting, scrimmage, or contest, the student or the student's parent/guardian must personally inform the coach with as much advance notice as possible. At this time, the coach will inform the student and/or parent/guardian whether it is an acceptable excuse or not and whether consequences will result. Not all excuses will be considered acceptable. Any absence (acceptable or not) can result in loss of playing time and/or other disciplinary action by a team coach. Additionally, students and parents should be aware and understand that upon returning to the team after an absence, the athlete will have to earn playing time back. The coach will determine the manner in which this will be done. Below is a list of potential acceptable and unacceptable reasons for missing a practice, meeting, scrimmage, or contest:

Acceptable

- Documented Illness which the coach was notified about in advance
- Documented and approved college visitation
- Funeral, death, or wedding of a family member
- School related field trip in a credit bearing course
- Documented Doctor or Dentist appointment that could not be scheduled another time
- Regents, AP, or any other review class or test.
- A student getting extra academic help from a teacher.
- SAT or ACT test

Unacceptable

The coach will use his or her discretion on excuses. The following is a list of some examples that do not qualify as acceptable reasons to miss a practice or a game:

- Work
- Oversleeping
- No form of transportation
- Babysitting
- Haircut

In the event an athlete misses a meeting, practice, scrimmage, or contest without notifying the coach, or for any unapproved reason (as determined by the coach), the following procedures will be in effect:

<u>Days/Times Missed</u>	<u>Consequence</u>
1 day	Coaches' prerogative
2 days	Suspension for 1 contest
3 days	Long-term suspension (at least 2 contests) - possible removal from the team
4 or more days	The coach will interpret this as a statement the athlete has elected to quit the team. When an athlete misses 4 or more days (especially if these days are consecutive), the same penalties will apply as when an athlete verbally quits a team (suspension from athletic participation for the following year in that sport – see section on quitting at the end of Section VI).

Student-athletes who establish chronic attendance, tardiness, or behavior problems in school may be subject to suspension from extra-curricular/interscholastic participation as a normal progression of school consequences. Appropriate standards of behavior will be in effect for student-athletes both on and off the playing surface. It is expected that athletes display sportsmanship and courtesy towards teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials, as well as abide by all rules and guidelines established in the sport, by the coach, and by the school. Violations of behavioral expectations may result in a conference with the coach, Athletic Director/ , at which time appropriate consequences will be determined.

The following behaviors during practice or contests are unacceptable and may result in consequences ranging from short to long-term suspensions from the team: inappropriate language or actions, taunting, hazing, disrespect to officials, teammates, opposing team members and all coaches, throwing of equipment, fighting or overly aggressive behavior, absences from team activities, and lack of effort.

Prior to the start of every school year a meeting will be held with athletes and parents to review philosophies and expectations, as well as the rules outlined in this handbook. It is mandatory that each student-athlete and at least one parent/guardian attends this meeting. All athletes and parents must sign a form stating they have received and understand the rules of the athletic program. A student-athlete will not be allowed to participate in competitions if he/she and at least one parent/guardian did not attend this pre-season meeting. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Athletic Director prior to this meeting and request an alternate meeting if a conflict arises.

Joining an Athletic Team

Ideally, students who are officially enrolled at the beginning of an athletic season should express interest in joining a team to the coach prior to the season actually beginning. Unless a student moves into the district from another school, a student cannot join a team **after the first week of the season** has been completed. There may be exceptions to this rule based upon the following situations:

1. If a student is on a family vacation, school-sponsored activity, or has other obligations, which causes them to miss the beginning of the season, the student must submit a letter of intent to the coach requesting permission to join a team late. The coach must receive final approval from the Athletic Director before that student will be allowed to participate. Special consideration will be given to situations that affect the fall season where students have obligations or other events scheduled during summer vacation.

2. If a team is low in participants, the team will be re-opened to all students for a specified time period. During this time period, new students will be allowed to join. Teams will run only if participation is high enough to establish the team.
3. If a student is participating on a team which extends into another team's season, those students will be allowed to join/try out for another team late. For example, if the Jr. High swimming season extends into the spring season, that student may join another team in the spring upon ending the swimming season.
4. With all other extenuating circumstances, the student athlete should set up a meeting with the Athletic Director.

Permission from the team coach and Athletic Director must be granted in all of the above scenarios prior to a student be allowed to participate after the first week of the season.

Leaving an Athletic Team

A student is fully considered a team member after the first scrimmage or contest takes place. Prior to this time, a student can leave a team for any reason without consequences. Once the first scrimmage or game is held, each student is expected to remain with the team for the remainder of that season. The following rules will be in effect for those students who leave a team after this time period:

1. **Quitting – Missing 4 or more practices, or 2 contests, without an acceptable reason, or leaving practice or competition without prior approval from the coach, is considered quitting.** That student cannot participate in, manage, or even compete exhibition in another sport during that same season. Students who quit a team are not eligible to participate in that sport the following season. **Students that quit a team, but wish to participate on that specific team in the following school year have the right to meet with the Athletic Director in order to explain the extenuating circumstances that led to their quitting of the team. The Athletic Director will notify the student-athlete if they are allowed to participate on that team within 24 hours of the meeting.** Student athletes are expected to finish the season. Practices and competitions during the final weeks of a season are mandatory. Missing practices and competitions in the final weeks of a season will be considered quitting. This includes, but is not limited to, last competitions of the season and sectional competitions in which the athlete simply fails to show up and/or does not have a bona fide reason to miss. It will not constitute quitting a team if a team is abolished and/or consolidated due to low participation numbers. If a consolidated team is an option, students will have the option of joining this team or not.
2. **Excused** – An athlete can request to be excused from a team. Possible reasons may include academic problems, health or family issues. If a student wishes to be excused from a team, they must provide a written request to the coach prior to actually leaving the team. The request must state the exact reasons why the student wishes to be excused. This request must be approved by the coach and then submitted to the Athletic Director for final approval. Until such final approval is granted, the student is expected to attend all team functions. If approval is granted, this student will not be eligible to participate in, be a manager of, or even compete exhibition in another sport during that same season. However, they will be eligible to participate in that sport the following school year.
3. **Dismissal/Removal** – A student may be dismissed from a team at any time by the coach,

Athletic Director/ . If a student is dismissed/removed from a team for any reason, this student will not be eligible to participate in, be a manager of, or even compete exhibition in another sport during that same season. Additionally, if that student wishes to participate again in that sport anytime during their high school athletic career, they must petition for reinstatement. A formal letter must be written and addressed to the team coach and Athletic Director requesting that they be allowed to be reinstated. This letter must be presented prior to the new season beginning and must state reasons as to why they feel they should be reinstated. Before the student can return to that sport in any capacity, a meeting must be held with the student, a parent/guardian, the coach, and the Athletic Director. It is in that meeting that final approval will be granted or denied.

VII. Sportsmanship Policy

The Mount Morris Central School Athletic program is committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all sports activities. In order to ensure the well-being of all individual players, we will oppose instances and activities which run counter to the best values of athletic competition. We will expect acceptable standards of good citizenship and with proper regard for the rights of others.

We are further committed to the belief that schools participating in interscholastic athletic activities should be held responsible for the conduct of their players, coaches, faculty members, and spectators. Conduct which is detrimental to the educational value of athletic activities may be deemed just cause for school district officials to reprimand, issue probation, suspension from a particular sport, or suspension from interscholastic athletic activities. This applies to students, coaches, personnel, and spectators.

Student-Athlete Code of Behavior/Ethics

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to:

- 1) Demonstrate self-control and respect for others at all times including officials, other spectators, or other athletes.
- 2) Remember that participation in athletics is a privilege that is not to be abused by unsportsmanlike conduct.
- 3) Deal with opponents with respect. Shake hands with opponents after the competition and congratulate them on their performance.
- 4) Respect the integrity and judgment of officials.
- 5) Remember that improper behavior by an athlete reflects poorly upon yourself, your family, your school, and your community.
- 6) Understand and abide by the rules and regulations of the game.
- 7) Accept victory with grace and defeat with dignity.

Coaches Code of Behavior/Ethics

It is the responsibility of the coach to:

- 1) Promote good sportsmanship by setting a positive example while coaching our athletes.
- 2) Respect the integrity and judgment of the sports officials.
- 3) Approach competition as a healthy and constructive exercise, not as a life and death struggle that requires victory at any price.

- 4) Recognize that the participants in individual or team sports are young men and women who are capable of learning through constructive feedback.
- 5) Instruct the players in the elements of good sportsmanship, and remove players from competition who demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior.
- 6) Avoid behaviors that will incite players, opponents, or spectators.
- 7) Represent Mount Morris Central School District well to radio, TV, and newspaper reporters.

Parents/Spectators Code of Behavior/Ethics

It is the responsibility of the parent and all spectators at events to:

- 1) Understand that in every contest there will be calls that you may disagree with and accept that as an inherent part of the game. Please refrain from booing or berating officials, players or coaches. Spectators who display poor sportsmanship may be asked to leave the contest site.
- 1) Keep cheering positive. There should be no profanity or degrading language/gestures.
- 2) Avoid actions which offend visiting teams or individual players.
 - 4) Show appreciation of good play by both teams.
- 5) Learn the rules of the game in order to be a better-informed spectator.
 - 6) Treat all visiting teams in a manner in which you would expect to be treated.
 - 7) Accept the judgment of coaches and officials.
- 8) Encourage other spectators to participate in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
- 9) Allow the coaches to do all coaching. There should be no communication with any contest participant except for positive cheering.
- 10) Respect the playing/singing of the National Anthem by allowing others to listen or sing without being disturbed.
- 11) Avoid the use of noisemakers.
- 12) Avoid throwing any objects onto the playing surface.

Mt. Morris Central School District Disqualification Policy

Sportsmanship is an integral and vital part of any interscholastic athletic program. The National Federation of High School Athletics, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Section V, and the Livingston County Athletic Association have targeted the area of Sportsmanship for major emphasis. The following have been implemented to ensure the development of and understanding of the importance of proper sportsmanship and fair play.

Any student-athlete or coach who is ejected or disqualified from a contest by an athletic official (home or away), will automatically be suspended for a minimum of one additional contest. The contest is to be the next one played and may be carried over to the players, coaches, or spectators next sport season. During this suspension, the suspended party may not be in attendance or anywhere on the property where the contest is held. A conference between the player, coach, or spectator and the Athletic Director will take place before eligibility is restored. An apology letter(s) written to whoever the Athletic Director and coach requests will be required of an athlete before returning to participation in competitions.

Any student-athlete or coach who is ejected from two contests in the same sport in the same season shall not participate or be in attendance at a minimum of the next two regularly scheduled contests. Again, the contests will be the next ones played and will be carried over to the next sport season if necessary.

Any student-athlete or coach who is from a third contest in the same sport in the same season shall not be allowed to participate or be in attendance at any athletic events for the remainder of that season as a minimum consequence. Additional consequence may take place as well.

Any spectator who is asked to leave an athletic contest will receive a suspension from attending any and all athletic events (home or away) for a minimum of 10 school days within an athletic season. Any remaining days on the suspension will be carried over to the next athletic season and will start on the date of the first athletic contest. Any spectator who is asked to leave an athletic contest for a second time within two calendar years will receive a suspension from attending any and all athletic events (home or away) for a minimum of 100 school days. Any spectator who is asked to leave an athletic contest a third time within three calendar years will receive a suspension from attending any and all athletic events (home or away) for a minimum of two calendar years.

Egregious spectator behavior may result in additional action/consequences from law enforcement or the Superintendent of Schools.

VIII. Athletic Placement Process

The Athletic Placement Process will take the place of Selective Classification. The new process will use the following steps:

- 1) Parent/Guardian Permission
- 2) Administrative Approval
- 3) Medical Clearance

Once these required steps have been completed, the student-athlete will take the Presidential Fitness Test to determine whether or not they are physically prepared for selective classification.

IX. Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy

If our athletic program is going to be successful, all athletes must refrain from the **use of and the association with tobacco, drugs, and alcohol**. Once a student joins any athletic team, he/she is held accountable to this policy for the remainder of their years at Mt. Morris Central School. All rules set forth in this policy are in effect both during an athlete's season and during the off-season, which includes vacation/breaks during the school year. The use or possession of tobacco products, illegal or look-alike drugs or chemical substances (including vapes and e-cigarettes), or alcoholic beverages is prohibited. This includes use on and off school property. The posting of any words or pictures on the Internet that resemble or provide an admission to tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drug use by a student-athlete may be constituted as a violation of this policy as well. This includes, but is not limited to, postings on social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter and others. Additionally, athletes must not attend any functions where tobacco or alcohol is being openly used by minors (those under age 21 for alcohol and 18 for tobacco) or where controlled substances or illegal drugs of any kind are being unlawfully used by anyone. The student-athlete must make a reasonable attempt to leave the site immediately upon the knowledge of tobacco or alcohol use by minors or unlawful use of controlled substances or drugs by anyone. Simply attending and remaining at a party or any situation in which tobacco or alcohol are being openly used by minors (those under age 21 for alcohol and 18 for tobacco) or where controlled substances

or illegal drugs of any kind are being unlawfully used by anyone is grounds for imposition of the penalties that are listed below.

Any alleged violations reported by students or adults will be investigated **within 3 school days** of the receipt of such information. Upon report of an alleged violation, the /Athletic Director, or Coach will provide **verbal notice** to the student and to his/her parent/guardian that an investigation of the alleged incident is taking place. The reasons for the investigation and the possibility of suspension or removal from the sport will be included in the notice. The coach and/or the Athletic Director will meet with the student as soon as possible to determine the outcome or if further investigation is necessary.

If a student-athlete is found to be in violation of this policy, the following consequences will result:

First violation of these rules will result in:

- 1) Suspension for 30% of all interscholastic competitions for the current or upcoming season. For example, if the violation occurred in a sport with 20 competitions scheduled, the suspension would be for 6 games. If the violation occurred in a season with an odd number of games, resulting in a suspension with a fraction of a game (ex. 16 games resulting in suspension for 4.8 games) the length of the suspension will be rounded off to complete games. If the suspension mathematically worked out to a half game (.5 or higher), the suspension would apply for the entire game. If the suspension worked out to less than half a game (lower than .5), the suspension would be for the fewer number of complete games.
- 2) The suspended student-athlete is required to attend and participate in all team practices and meetings. The suspended athlete will attend all games and sit on the bench in uniform with his/her team. Only contests where the athlete actually sits the bench in which they could have played will count towards completing the suspension.
- 3) The Athletic Director and coach will assign a project for the athlete to complete prior to returning to eligible status. The project may be an essay or school service as it relates to the infraction.
- 3) A mandatory conference will occur between the Athletic Director, coach, student-athlete, and parents before the student can return to participation in a game/competition. Dependent upon the outcome of the conference, additional counseling, evaluation, or treatment may be required before return to active participation.

Should a season end before completion of the 30% suspension, the remaining time of the suspension will be applied to interscholastic competitions during the next season the athlete competes in. Example: An athlete begins serving a suspension during a 20 game season with only two games remaining. The remaining four games of the suspension would apply to the next season of participation.

Honesty Provision

Any student-athlete who freely admits to a first-time violation or admits to a violation upon the first time questioned by the Athletic Director, Administrator, or Coach will have their suspension reduced to 15% of their current or upcoming season's games. All other provisions for a first time offense will apply.

A second and third violation of athletic training rules in or out of season will result in:

- 1) Immediate removal from the current team and/or suspension for one calendar year (365 days from the day found guilty) from all athletic participation. The athlete may try-out for a team during the sport season in which the calendar year terminates.
- 2) A mandatory conference will occur between Athletic Director, Coach, athlete, and parents prior to re-entry into MMCS D athletic programs.
- 3) A project, essay, and/or school service, will be assigned by the Athletic Director and Coach. Additional counseling, evaluation, or treatment may be required before return to competition.

Self-Referral

A second violation of the training rules within the same season will result in automatic removal from that athletic team. However, a student-athlete who voluntarily brings their own second offense violation of their career to the attention of the Coach, Athletic Director, or Administrator and requests assistance, agrees to and completes a treatment or awareness program, will have their suspension reduced to a period of 50% of all interscholastic competitions scheduled for that season. This suspension will also extend into the next sports season if necessary. All other provisions for a second offense will apply.

Additional Provisions of this policy

Violations are cumulative in effect throughout an athlete's career both in and out of season. The Athletic Director shall be responsible for documentation of all violations, suspensions, and counseling sessions. If an athlete experiences an injury that prevents playing or participating for a period of time, but an anticipated return is a reasonable expectation, that athlete is still considered as a member of that team and required to adhere to all training rules. Furthermore, the time an athlete is injured cannot count towards any type of suspension. The suspension will take effect only on days that the student was physically eligible to participate as noted by a doctor.

Should an athlete be suspended from school for an infraction of school policy, the athletic suspension will not be concurrent. An athletic suspension will be put into effect when the school suspension terminates. If a school suspension occurs while an athlete is on an athletic suspension, the length of the school suspension will automatically increase the athletic suspension. Any absences from contests due to suspension from school, illness, vacations, or any other reason will not count towards serving the number of games suspended.

X. Legal Violations

All student-athletes who represent Mt. Morris Central School are expected to be students of good moral character. Student-athletes who commit illegal acts either on or off school property, will be in jeopardy of losing their athletic eligibility. Depending upon the severity of the situation, the minimum consequence for any athlete who is found guilty of a misdemeanor or felony will be a suspension for 50% of the games scheduled in the current season. This suspension will extend into the student-athlete's next season if necessary. If the violation takes place during an athlete's off-season, the minimum consequence will be a suspension of 50% of the next season they participate in during that school year or during the next 6 months, whichever is scheduled to take place first. During the first half of this suspension (25%), the athlete is not allowed to attend team practices, meetings, or sit on the bench during athletic competitions. They may only show up to try-outs in an attempt to make a team if the suspension falls during this time

period. During the second half of this suspension (25%), the athlete is expected to attend all team practices, meetings, and contests and must sit on the bench in uniform with the team at all times. The Athletic Director and coach will also assign a project for the athlete to complete prior to returning to eligible status. The project may be an essay or school service as it relates to the infraction. Any violation of the law will subject the student to a possible athletic suspension of some kind. In all situations of legal violations, the Athletic Director and the team coach will determine the percentage of suspension. Individuals who violate this policy for a second time in their athletic career will be subject to a 365-day suspension from all sports beginning on the date found guilty.

XI. Hazing

Hazing is defined as any initiation activity that is designed to humiliate, threaten or harm members of a team or program. Typically, hazing is directed at underclassmen or “new” participants in a program. Any acts of hazing are strictly prohibited and could result in dismissal from a team or in some circumstances subject the perpetrator to arrest. It could also result in dismissal of a coach. Any reported or suspected form of hazing will be investigated.

XII. Academic Ineligibility

Beginning with the first week of school, a student will be placed on the academic probation or ineligibility list if they are not achieving a passing grade of 65 or higher in any course.

The policies will be as follows:

- 1) A student who is determined to be failing a course either for the first time during any marking period or is failing a course for the year as of 3:15 pm on Thursday of any week will be placed on academic probation effective on Monday the following week. If a student is determined to be failing two or more courses as of 3:15 pm on Thursday of a week, that student will be placed on academic ineligibility effective the following Monday. While on probation, the student is eligible to attend extra-curricular activities, but their participation will be restricted. The restrictions placed on the student-athlete will be in effect for the entire week. Student-athletes will meet with the Athletic Director on Friday. The restrictions will be imposed. Copies of the signed probation letter will be sent to the coach and a copy will be mailed home. Probation will not be lifted until the Final Average for the course has reached passing.
- 2) Once a student is ineligible, he/she cannot participate in any competition until the student-athlete increases the average of the course(s) to a 65 or higher. Student-athletes will move fluently between ineligibility and probation as their course work and grade point average fluctuates.
- 3) All student-athletes are expected to put their academics first.
- 4) A student placed on academic probation or ineligibility will be removed from the list immediately following the report of passing grades.
- 5) During any time school is not in session for an entire week (Monday through Friday) due to vacation periods, ineligibility will not take effect that particular week if it is a student’s first week of ineligibility. However, anything that takes place prior to that week will still be in effect. Thus, if a student was already ineligible or on probation prior to that vacation week, all variables of this policy will apply. If the vacation week ends up being the time period the student becomes ineligible for the first time

then they will be granted a grace period until school resumes. The winter and spring recess periods are the only present time periods where this would apply.

Notification of Students and Parents/Guardians

The Athletic Director will meet with each student-athlete who requires probation or ineligibility restrictions on Friday of each week. The student-athlete and the Athletic Director will sign the agreement that outlines expectations and restrictions. A copy of the signed agreement will be mailed home to parents.

Continuous Ineligibility

Any student-athlete who misses the first two weeks of a season due to academic ineligibility or accumulates a total of 15 consecutive or non-consecutive days of academic ineligibility during a season will not be allowed to continue participating in that sport during that season. This will not be construed as quitting and the student will be allowed to try out in that sport during the next school year. Student-athletes must be committed to academics and the health of their team.

XIII. Individual Team Regulations

Each coach shall create specific team rules within the guidelines of the school handbook. The specific team rules must be approved by the Athletic Director, and shared with both parents and athletes within the first two weeks of the season. Coaches are encouraged to work with their teams in creating the team rules/standards. These rules may not go against any school policy. Enforcement of these guidelines will be the responsibility of the coach. Any violations and consequences will be reported, in writing, to the Athletic Director. Parents will also be contacted by the coach when any disciplinary or attendance issues arise.

XIV. Awards Descriptions and Requirements

At the end of each season, an awards ceremony will be held. All participants, at all levels, who complete a season in good standing, will receive a certificate of participation. Varsity coaches will issue three additional awards: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, and Service. Varsity athletes will also receive a Varsity letter once during their career and a sport-specific pin each season. Additional awards may be made by each individual coach and/or the Athletic Director.

Definitions of the awards listed above are as follows:

Most Valuable Player: This is the player that the team could not do without during practice and competitions. Always give 100% effort and performed at a high level throughout the entire season.

Most Improved Player: The athlete who improved the most from day 1 until the last day. This could be in skill, effort, and/or attitude.

Service Award: This athlete put the team above themselves to the greatest degree at all times.

Any student-athlete who receives an athletic suspension due to a violation of the tobacco, drug and alcohol, or legal violation sections of this handbook and is forced to leave a team for any period of time will forfeit their right to receiving any of the local individual athletic awards listed above for that season.

XV. Transportation Procedures

A student-athlete may ride to and from an event with his/her own parent/guardian only if the parent/guardian has provided written notification and has signed the coach's sign out sheet prior to taking any student home with them. In the beginning of each season, all athletes will sign and return the Transportation Approval form (See Appendix A).

XVI. Chain of Communication and Appeals Process

From time to time during the course of an athletic career, parents/guardians and student-athletes may have questions and/or concerns. Emotions often run high after sporting events and disagreements should not take place immediately following a sporting event. To ensure a productive conversation, Mount Morris Central School District will adhere to a 24 hour-rule. After any practice or competition where a student-athlete, parent, or coach believes a conversation is warranted, all parties will wait 24 hours before making contact. Once the 24 hour window has expired, communication between parents and coaches may take place in regards to the athlete's role on the team. The student-athlete and his/her parents should address all questions and concerns directly with the team coach first. If, after speaking with the coach, questions, concerns, or disagreements still exist, the next step would be for the student-athlete and/or parent/guardian to communicate with the Athletic Director. If, after speaking with the Athletic Director/, questions, concerns, or disagreements still exist, the student-athlete and/or parent/guardian should address these issues to the Superintendent. If, after speaking with the Superintendent, questions, concerns, or disagreements still exist, the student-athlete and/or parent/guardian has the opportunity to bring these issues to the Board of Education.

XVII. Scheduling of Practices

Coaches will provide student-athletes with practice schedules. Arrangements should be made so that the student arrives and leaves on time. No student-athletes will be allowed to loiter on school property before or after the scheduled practice time.

XVIII. Injuries

All student-athletes are required to notify the coach of an injury immediately. If an athlete has been removed from a practice or contest because of an injury requiring a physician's attention, the athlete cannot return to practice or compete until he/she is given a medical release from a physician and that release is handed in to the school nurse. No student will be allowed to practice or compete if there is a question as to whether he/she is in adequate physical condition.

XIX. Uniforms, Equipment, and Personal Belongings

All student-athletes will be issued uniforms and possibly pieces of equipment. All uniforms and equipment are the property of Mt. Morris Central School. Any student who loses or damages a uniform or equipment in any way will be responsible to pay for replacement of these items. All uniforms and equipment must be returned immediately to the coach upon completion of a season. A student will not be

allowed to participate on any other athletic teams if they owe school uniforms or equipment from another season. Any student-athlete that owes athletic uniforms will not be allowed to attend class trips, as well as the sports banquet. In addition, seniors will not be allowed to graduation ceremonies unless the cost of a replacement uniform is paid or the uniform is returned.

Students are responsible for locking up their equipment and uniforms in their team locker. Students must be aware that equipment or personal items left on the floor, benches, or in an unlocked locker is not secure. Leaving any item in any place other than in a locked locker is at your own risk. This is especially true when students travel to other schools. **Do NOT bring highly valuable items** to athletic events and leave them unlocked at any time. The school is not responsible for any items that are lost or stolen.

XX. Forms Required for Athletic Participation

Attached to this document are two forms that must be completed prior to participation in athletics at Mt. Morris Central School: Appendix B – Sports physical evaluation and Appendix C – Copy of Parent Consent Acknowledgement.

- **Sports Physical** (Appendix B) – A student is required by New York State law to have a sports physical performed by a physician prior to participating in an interscholastic athletic team. This physical will remain valid for one calendar year and is valid for any sport unless restrictions are noted. Physicals will be offered free of charge at MMCS at least once per school year. These are arranged through the school nurse. Those who do not take advantage of the free physical will have to receive one through their family doctor at their own expense. The attached physical form is our recommended form that must be filled out and turned in to the school nurse. A doctor can use his/her own form as long as all the necessary information is included. A student may not participate in any athletic activities (practices or games/meets) if they do not have an updated physical on file with the school nurse.
- **Copy of Parent Consent Acknowledgement** (Appendix C) – Triplicate hard copies of the Parent Consent Acknowledgement form needs to be picked up from the s' office. The student's parent/guardian should complete and sign the document before submitting it.

APPENDIX

- A Transportation Approval Form
- B Sports Physical
- C Parent Consent Acknowledgement
- D Probation Restriction Form
- E Academic Accountability Form