

**Marion School District  
Athlete / Parent  
Handbook  
2023-2024**



Marion School District  
Athletic Handbook

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**AAA Sports Medicine Fact Sheets for Athletes and Parents**

***FORMS TO BE TURNED IN TO COACH***

**PARENT CHECK LIST:**

- AAA Participant Agreement Form
- Athletic Consent Form
- Insurance / "Consent to Treat" Authorization Form
- Drug Screening Authorization Form
- Parent Signature Acknowledge Facts Forms
- Supplemental Insurance Form
- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation History Form

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is our desire that every student who participates in Marion Athletics has a positive and meaningful experience. The pursuit of excellence is fundamental to athletics and our coaching staffs are encouraged to maintain a high level of expectations for you, the athlete, in your conduct on the field, off the field and in the classroom. This material is presented to you because you have indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics. We are concerned with the educational development of boys and girls through athletics and feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets your need for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and to further each student's educational maturity. A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice to represent Marion Athletics both on and off the playing surface.

### **Mission Statement**

It is our mission to offer students the unique opportunities for learning that arise through athletics and demonstrate through practical experiences that teamwork, dedication to goals, focused effort and practice are pathways to success. We will strive to make our athletic program a safe haven for students to sample life's successes and failures through sport so that they may apply lessons learned to their lives.

### **Philosophy of Athletics**

Athletics is an important part of the overall educational experience and as such must be based on the same sound philosophical principles that guide the academic disciplines. Everything we do is and will be judged against the standard of educational soundness.

It is with this belief in mind that the Marion Athletic Department confirms the Marion School District philosophy that coaches are teachers first and foremost, and that coaching is an assignment which extends sound teaching and human relations principles beyond the classroom into the athletic setting. While this policy and philosophy originates with the Board of Education, it is implemented by the superintendent, school administrators, building principal, athletic director and ultimately the coach.

Athletics is a classroom without walls where leadership, discipline, and teamwork are taught. It is a practical proving ground for improvement through directed hard work and practice. Our program should provide a wide variety of sports meeting the needs and interest of middle through senior high students. The only limitations to students should be those brought about by the nature of competitive sport and the physical assets required of competitive athletics. The Marion athletic program should offer students the opportunity to serve the school, develop fellowship and goodwill, promote self-realizations with physical, mental and emotional growth, and encourage the qualities of good citizenship.

We will make every effort to include as many students as possible within the physical restraints of time, facilities and staff. Participation in the Marion athletic program should be viewed as a privilege afforded to those students who possess the ability, attitude, disposition, cooperative spirit, and desire to represent our school and community.

### **Objectives of the Athletic Department**

- Keep the participation number at the highest level possible for the facilities available.
- Train athletes to become the best competitors on the field/court and the best gentlemen or ladies and citizens off the field.
- Install good habits, sound morals, and a high standard of sportsmanship in the athletes.
- Further instill in youngsters an appreciation for the optimum of proper rest, good eating habits and cleanliness.
- Emphasize to athletes at all levels of competition the realization that athletic competition is a privilege that carries definite responsibilities with it. Some of these responsibilities are training, loyalty, eligibility, improvement, work, courage, and perseverance.
- Develop all programs so that the results will be those of unity, harmony, and success. Mass participation will be emphasized and encouraged below the high school varsity level.
- Instill the courage to face reality and to meet all problems with patience, independence and self-reliance.
- Create in all athletes a greater interest in the value of education.
- Build, maintain and conduct the most successful athletic program in the state.

## **Dress and Grooming**

Participation in athletics is voluntary. To be an athlete there are certain standards, which must be maintained, one of which is acceptable grooming. Specific policies concerning the appearance of athletes are necessary for reason of efficient performance, safety, health, and hygiene. Some basic policies include:

- Hair—Hair should be kept clean and in reasonable style of the times. Excessive length or outlandish styles that are detrimental to the teams' success will be discouraged.
- Jewelry—No jewelry should be worn during games or practice sessions.
- Clothes—Clothes should be fashionable but not outlandish.

In general, all athletes should strive to be members of a team in dress and appearance. While coaches should not condemn individuality, an athlete should stand out because of attitude and performance, not because they look different than their teammates.

## **Discipline Policy**

- Coaches should be fair and consistent.
- Our general philosophy will be that we will attempt to help someone who makes a mistake. However, if this is repeated, the welfare of the team must take priority. This violation might mean breaking training rules, missing practice, poor attitude, etc.
- Coaches have the right to discipline athletes on their individual teams, but should exercise sound judgment in administering specific penalties, keeping in mind the welfare of the team as well as the individual.
- No coach should dismiss an athlete from a team before discussing it with the head coach, and athletic director, allowing a 24-hour evaluation period except in extenuating circumstances. Sometimes things look differently from another point of view or a cooling off period. Remember that the easiest thing to do is remove a problem; it takes wisdom and courage to try to save a student and keep them in your program.
- Coaches should regularly encourage students to attend practice and classes. Any athlete who does not practice should not play. Medical reason, however, should be considered when holding athletes out of contests for missing practice.

- Athlete's assigned in-school suspension cannot be taken out of ISS for practice or to go on team trips. However, they can go with the team on a trip after school is out or play at home. Athletes suspended from school cannot attend practice or contest while they are suspended. Athletes must be in school in order to practice or play that day.
- Coaches should remind athletes that it is against state law for hazing another student.

## **Drug Testing**

'Testing' as referred to throughout this policy, encompasses all scientifically valid analysis procedures used by certified medical facilities, which test for the presence of drugs. Such tests include, but are not limited to, urinalysis testing. All testing will be performed in compliance with the National Institute on Drug Abuse and College of American Pathologists criteria.

**NOTE: ANY MEDICATION OR PRESCRIBED DRUGS SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE TESTING AGENT.**

### **RANDOM CHEMICAL SCREEN POLICY**

Marion School District recognizes that drug abuse is a significant health problem for students, detrimentally affecting overall health, learning ability, reflexes, and the total development of each individual. The Marion Board of Education is determined to help students by providing another option for them to say "NO." Drug abuse includes but is not limited to the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and the misuse of legal drugs and medications. School Year: The school year for this policy shall comprise the time from the first day of classes in the fall, unless the activity begins prior to the first day of classes, in which event from the first day of practice through the last day of classes in the spring shall apply.

Policy Statement: Marion School District ("the district") is conducting a *mandatory* drug-screening program for specified groups of students. The program's purpose is threefold: 1. to provide for the health and safety of students in all Arkansas Activity Association regulated programs grades 7-12 and for all student drivers who obtain a parking pass to park on a school campus; 2. to undermine the effects of peer pressure by providing a legitimate reason for students to refuse to use illegal drugs; and, 3. to encourage students who use drugs to participate in drug treatment programs.

Drug: Any substance considered illegal by Arkansas Statutes or which is controlled by the Food & Drug Administration unless prescribed by a licensed physician.

Whom this policy affects: Students in grades 9-12 who park in school district parking are required to be in the random pool for drug screening. Also, students who wish to participate in Arkansas Activities Association regulated programs for grades 7-12 are required to be in the drug screen pool. These activities are as follows: Football 7-12; Baseball 7-12; Basketball 7-12; Golf 7-12; Track 7-12; Tennis 7-12; Cross Country 7-12; Volleyball 7-12; Softball 7-12; Soccer 7-12; Band 7-12; Choral Music 7-12; Student Council 7-12; Speech/Debate 7-12; FBLA 7-12; FCCLA 7-12; National Honor Society 7-12; Skills USA 7-12; HOSA 7-12; Theater 7-12; Cheerleading 7-12; Art 7-12; Quiz Bowl 7-12; and any other organization formed that is regulated by the Arkansas Activities Association.

## **Procedures for Students**

Consent: Prior to participation in the above activities and prior to being issued a student parking pass, both the student and the student's parent or guardian shall consent in writing to the district's random drug testing program. No student shall be allowed to participate or park without completion of the permission form. Students not involved in activities may be allowed to voluntarily participate in the testing pool with a consent form signed by the parent.

Student selection: Random drug testing will be conducted periodically during the school year. Selection for random testing will be by random numbers representing each participant. The licensed third-party administrator is responsible for maintaining the computer program. All steps will be taken assuring that the person drawing names has no way of knowingly choosing or failing to choose particular students for the testing, assuring that the identity of students drawn for testing is not known to those involved in the selection process, and assuming direct observation of the process by the least intrusive means possible while assuring brevity and privacy.

Sample collection: Urinalysis will be the method utilized to test for the presence of chemicals in the body. All students selected must report to the designated testing site and must complete the necessary forms. All urine specimens will be taken at a designated restroom. Privacy will be honored. The use of another person's sample to substitute is both detectable and punishable.

Testing agency: The district will use a qualified and licensed agency that strictly follows the chain-of-custody requirements for taking samples, labeling samples, testing and retaining samples, and maintaining confidentiality with respect to test results and related matters.

Prescription medication: If a student tests positive and he/she reports that he/she is on prescription medication, documentation will be requested by the principal, and the information will be forwarded to the testing lab for verification. Students who refuse to provide documentation and have a positive screen will be subject to the same penalties allowed in policy.

Limited access to results: The specific results will be reported only to the superintendent, the school principal, or his/her designee.

Procedures in the event of a positive screen result: Whenever a student's test result indicates the presence of illegal drugs ("positive screen"), the student and the parent or legal guardian will be notified and will be given a copy of the results. Since approximately half of the sample remains untested and in possession of the testing company, if requested immediately and upon payment of \$175 fee, the vendor will send the remaining testing student sample to another licensed and approved testing company. The re-test results shall be considered final. Upon a positive initial screen, the sponsor or parking pass monitors will simply be instructed that "the student cannot participate or park until further notice."

## **Penalties**

Positive screening results are cumulative and will follow the student for the duration of enrollment in the Marion School District.

Penalty: 1st positive screen

For a positive screen, the student will be suspended from participation in school activities and/or will lose parking privileges for a minimum of ten (10) school days from the date of notification to the student, parent, and sponsor. A "negative confirmation test" at the end of 10 days and after the re-test results are known will immediately return all privileges. Students *must* re-test (at their own expense--at the school's usual rate) and be 'clean' before privileges are returned. The vendor will work with the school to establish a time and place for such re-tests. Only the school's approved vendor may administer the re-test. If the test results are negative, the student will again become eligible for competitions, presentations, and activities relating to Marion schools.

The school may waive five (5) of the suspension days for students who present evidence to the principal of attendance in a school-approved drug abuse/counseling program.

Penalty: 2<sup>nd</sup> positive screen

For a second positive screen, the student will not be allowed to attend or participate in any extracurricular activities or to park on campus for one calendar year from the date of notification. After the calendar year, the student may retest (at his/her own expense) at a time and place specified by the school. Should the results be found to be negative, all privileges will resume.

Penalty: 3<sup>rd</sup> positive screen

For a third positive screen, the student will be suspended from both attending and participating in any school activity or parking on campus for the remainder of the student's enrollment in MSD. This third positive screen could come from a random pool selection or be the result of a re-screen following a probationary period.

## **Athletic Physicals**

Student athletes will not be allowed to participate in practice, games or try-outs without a documented physical examination by a licensed physician on file.

## **Athletic Injuries**

- Any injury, large or small, should be reported to the coach or trainer immediately.
- Any injury requiring a doctor's care should be noted and a doctor's release required before the athlete is allowed to play or practice.
- Any injury not requiring a doctor's care will be assessed by the coach in charge and/or athletic trainer in order to determine the athlete's ability to play or practice. The trainer will assess an injury and make recommendations to the athlete and/or their parents/guardians.

## **Insurance**

The school provides a supplemental insurance policy, which will supplement the athlete's family policy. The Arkansas Activities Association provides catastrophic insurance coverage. The school policy alone may not cover all expenses incurred from a severe injury. **The parent is responsible to file claim forms provided by the school.** The supplemental accident claim form may be picked up in the Athletic Director's office or may be provided by the coach.

## **Travel / Travel Expenses**

All athletes are encouraged to travel and return with the team. If a parent wishes their student to return home from an event with them, parent/guardian must sign the sign-out sheet. Only parent/guardian can sign the student out. Other unique transportation needs must be pre-approved thru Athletic Director and Principal.

The Marion Athletic Department will provide meals for players and coaches traveling to contest outside a 100 mile radius.

## **Care of Equipment**

Equipment should be turned in immediately following the end of the season. An athlete is financially responsible for all equipment checked out to him/her. The cost of destroyed /lost equipment will be at the athlete's expense. An athlete must treat school equipment as though it were his/her personal property. It should never be abused. If an athlete is involved in the theft of school equipment, he/she could be dismissed from the team.

## **Awards & Lettering Policy**

Coaches will determine athletic awards based on the following:

- A player must be in good standing relative to Marion School District Policy and specific Sport Criteria.
- Junior Varsity/ "B" Games are not considered when calculating "letterman" Awards.
- A player who quits or does not finish the season because of discipline, academics or failure to adhere to District Policy is not eligible for Athletic Awards.
- A player who, in the Coaches judgment is bound to letter but does not meet the criteria because of injury may receive a letter if he remains in good standing in all other regards.
- Students who transfer into the Marion School District having lettered in their previous schools are eligible for Marion Athletic Awards.

## Patriot Awards

- 1<sup>st</sup> year award – A Marion “M” letter patch. Students receive one “M” during their high school career. As they letter in additional sports, bars and sport symbols will be provided. Students will be allowed to purchase a jacket selected by the school administration.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year award –Additional bar
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year (senior) award – Plaque. Players who participated in their sport for three (3) consecutive years will receive a plaque as a senior award.
- Conference Champion and State Champion patches will be provided by the District.

### Sports Criteria for letterman awards

- Volleyball – participate in 1/5 total games, not matches.
- Football – participate in ½ of total in season quarters.
- Golf – qualify for state tournament
- Tennis – win three conferences matches or qualify or the district tournament
- Cross Country – place in conference meet.
- Basketball – participate in ½ of the total in season quarters.
- Track – average one point per meet.
- Baseball – participate in 1/5 of the total innings played in season.
- Softball – participate in 1/5 of the total innings played in season.
- Soccer – participate in 1/3 of the in season

## Eligibility Guidelines and S.I.P. Information

The athletic department encourages the academic excellence of all athletes. The eligibility requirements are those set forth by the Arkansas Activities Association, and the State Department of Education. No student will be allowed to try-out, participate or be a manager unless they meet all eligibility requirements. Rules are as follows:

- There are no grade requirements for 7th and 8th grade students: however, 9th grade eligibility is based on 8th grade second semester grades.

A student, upon entering the 9th grade and thereafter, must pass (4) courses and have to a 2.0 GPA. (A Physical Education grade may be figured into the student's GPA the first time he/she takes the course). In other words, if an athlete participates in sports in 9th grade, that is the only year he/she can count Physical Education toward his/her

- GPA for eligibility purposes. If an athlete passes (4) courses, but does not have a 2.0 GPA, he/she may attend the Supplemental Instruction Program (S.I.P)
- The Supplemental Instruction Program meets for 100 minutes per week. The student and parent will be notified by the coach and given instructions about the dates, time, etc. of the program. If a student has an unexcused absence, he/she will automatically become ineligible.

## Summary

We hope that the parents and athletes understand and appreciate the rules and regulations covered in this handbook. If a rule or regulation is broken and dismissal from a team is necessary, the parent will be notified why the dismissal took place. It should be understood that the coach has the final say and is the final authority regarding dismissal from a team.

Any athlete or family member of an athlete that is kicked-out of an athletic event by an official, police or administrator is subject to suspension from all athletic events for the remainder of that season or that year. Any fan that disrupts an athletic event is subject to suspension from all athletic events for the remainder of that season or that year.

We strive and have committed ourselves to providing: (1) equipment and facilities; (2) trained coaches; (3) trained officials; (4) transportation and some meals; and (5) supplemental insurance. We will also have athletic award ceremonies to better recognize your son or daughter. We are pleased to share this educational experience with you. It is our goal that every student will develop the skills necessary to become an independent problem-solving adult.

We understand that if we are to have a successful athletic program at Marion, we must have your continued support. We hope you will always show good sportsmanship at all events. While it may be difficult to withhold negative comments about coaches, players and officials, we should put the interest of our athletes first. Our athletes look up to us, as adults and will mimic our behavior.

We have tried and will continue to try and treat all sports and athletes fairly, and hire the best available coaches. It is our sincere desire that we maintain an open line of communication regarding any concerns you may have. Please call me any time at 870-739-5100.

Once again, we hope you, as parents, understand and realize how important you are for us to have a successful athletic program. We would not have a first class program without you - you are very MUCH appreciated.

Thank you,  
Derek Harrell  
Athletics Director