

***Dwight Common School
Redbird Family
Student/Parent Athletics & Activities
Handbook
2023-2024***



“One of the greatest ways to ensure good sportsmanship in our children is for the adults who impact their lives to model it.”

PHILOSOPHY

Dwight Common School intends to provide for its students an interscholastic athletic & activities program that will be of benefit to them and will meet the needs and interests of participating students.

The athletic & activities program will follow the general objectives and philosophy of District 232's educational aims and objectives. It should serve as a valuable supplement to the total education program and should function as a part of the whole curriculum. It will constantly strive for the development of a well-rounded individual, capable of taking his or her place in modern society.

Leadership should be of the highest quality providing a better opportunity for our students to compete and providing the potential for students to become better people and citizens. Measurements for success will not be judged on victories and defeats but upon the personal development of the individual in the program.

The Dwight Common School athletic & activities program is administered under the guidelines and jurisdiction of the Illinois Elementary School Association by the Administration of the school and the Board of Education of Dwight Common School District 232.

The guidelines provided in this document are subject to change with administrative approval for the betterment of both team success and the well-being of individual student participants.

OBJECTIVES

Athletics and/or Activities contribute directly to the following educational objectives:

1. Athletics and/or Activities are coordinated with the general instructional program.
2. Participants should gain from athletics and/or activities experience in the following ways:
 - a. Development of stronger competitive spirit.
 - b. Development of emotional self-control.
 - c. Development of improved playing skills.
 - d. Development of leadership skills and responsibility.
 - e. Development of self-confidence.
 - f. Development of the ability to work with others as a team.
 - g. Development of a respect for the value of rules and regulations.
 - h. Development of a respect for authority.
 - i. Development of a respect for a healthy body.
3. The student body should gain from interscholastic contests in the following ways:
 - a. The enjoyment of watching competitive sports and/or activities.
 - b. The enhancement of "school spirit".
 - c. The improvement of morale and loyalty to their school.
 - d. Development of healthy relationships with students from other schools.

THE STUDENT PARTICIPANT

Expectations: Each student participant should be made aware of the expectations set for them. This will include training rules for his or her specific activity. He or she will be responsible for self-conduct and respectful use of locker room, practice/meeting areas, and any event locations. Participants will be expected to have understanding of the rules of the game/activity in which they are participating and will be expected to exercise good sportsmanship and self-control at all times during practices/events. The coach/advisor, as well as the student participant, will be expected to show loyalty and comradery to both individuals and the team in an effort to present each team and our school in a positive and supportive manner. Students are representatives of our school and will be expected to display themselves in the following ways:

In School: Participants are expected to adhere to dress codes while in school. It will also be expected that participants in extra-curricular athletics & activities will give his/her best academic effort in the classroom at all times. The participant will be held to a standard of respect in both words and actions when dealing with teachers and school staff. A participant must display leadership with good decision making and appropriate behavior in and around school property. Participants need to be aware that they are setting an example for students in lower grades, and they must act with integrity at all times.

In the Community: Each student is a representative of the school and should conduct themselves with dignity and honorable behavior in our community and at away events. This includes both in person and on social media. Negative or inappropriate social media comments, content, or pictures may result in consequences to the participant.

THE COACH/ADVISOR

Expectations: Coaches/Advisors will follow the Dwight Common School Athletic & Activities Handbook policies. In addition, coaches/advisors may provide specific expectations and procedures pertaining to each individual sport as a supplement to this handbook with administrative approval. Coaches will provide instruction that increases knowledge and provides learning opportunities in each respective sport for qualifying student-athletes. Negative, condescending, or criticizing language toward other staff or participants will not be tolerated. Negative or inappropriate social media comments, content, or pictures are prohibited. Coaches/advisors are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times.

Communication with Parents: Coaches/Advisors will extend every effort to keep communication with parents/guardians clear and frequent. The preferred method of communication will be given at the parent meeting and/or in the specific expectations and procedures handouts provided for that particular group.

Communication with Participants: A coach/advisor will be available to each participant as he/she sees a need. The coach/advisor will frequently check in on both academic performance and behavior of participants in the classroom. A coach/advisor will maintain a firm and healthy boundary with every participant. As personal needs and concerns may arise, the coach/advisor will seek out additional resources to ensure the participant gets the proper support needed.

THE PARENT/GUARDIAN

Expectations: Parents/guardians should understand the purpose of educational athletics & activities is about learning and having fun. Be a positive role model through your own actions by remaining calm and composed during games. High emotions create unneeded stress for your children and can take away the enjoyment of participating. Negative, condescending, or criticizing language toward staff or participants will not be tolerated. Avoid criticizing officials, coaches, and student athletes. Negative or inappropriate social media comments, content, or pictures are prohibited. Parents/guardians should display good sportsmanship at all times by showing respect for the opposing players, coaches, and spectators.

✓ **Communication with Coaches:** Encourage your child to talk to the coach/advisor with regard to what they can do to improve their performance. Parents wishing to discuss issues with a coach or advisor should abide by the “24-Hour Rule.” Coaches/advisors will not discuss issues immediately following a game/event. Please schedule a time to meet with the coach/advisor after a 24-hour wait period.

✓ **Communication with Participants:** Remember that interscholastic activities are an extension of the classroom and a learning experience for students. Mistakes are sometimes made; praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

- ✓ **Players:** A player who is ejected from a contest will now be required to miss the next two contests at the level at which the ejection occurred and all contests in the interim and complete the National Federation of State High School Associations Sportsmanship course. A second ejection by the same player in any sport will result in a five-game suspension and a \$100 fine. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for the fines.
- ✓ **Coaches/Advisors:** A coach/advisor that is ejected, will receive a two game suspension for the first offense and five game suspension for the second offense. Coaches who are ejected will still serve a two game suspension at the level at which the ejection occurred and all other contests in the interim but will now be required to complete the NFHS Sportsmanship course and pay a \$100 fine. A second offense will result in a five-game suspension and a \$250 fine. Coaches/Advisors will be responsible for the fines.
- ✓ **Fans:** A fan/parent/guardian who is ejected will be required to watch the NFHS Sportsmanship course before he/she can return to watch contests.

These expectations and consequences have been taken from guidance and language provided by the IESA and are subject to change as the IESA reviews and updates policies. We encourage all families to view the Sportsmanship Expectations Video together on the IESA website, www.iesa.org.

ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATION CODE

A. Physical Examinations (Athletics only)

No student shall be permitted to compete in a tryout, practice, or contest unless he/she has filed with the Athletic Director a certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed physician within thirteen months preceding such tryout, practice, or contest in any athletic activity (I.E.S.A. 3.070). *No student shall be allowed to participate following a disabling illness or injury without a physician's written release.*

B. Insurance

Any student participating in any activity at Dwight Common School must have his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) sign an Accident Insurance Waiver form. No student will be permitted to practice or participate in a contest until a signed insurance waiver form is on file with the Athletic & Activities Director. This is done digitally during registration on 8 to 18.

C. Permission Slips

Each participant will be required to have on file with the Athletic & Activities Director a permission slip signed by the participant and their parent(s) or guardian(s) stating they may participate in extra-curricular at Dwight Common School and that the participant and the parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to follow the policies of the district as stated in the athletic & activities handbook. No athlete will be allowed to practice until this is done. This is done digitally during registration on 8 to 18.

D. Academic Eligibility

1. Eligibility will be checked on the first day of attendance for each week.
2. Dwight Common School will follow the IESA rules on eligibility:
 - a. Students must be passing all subjects each week.
 - b. Grades shall be accumulative for each term.
 - c. Students start fresh at the beginning of each term.
 - d. The period of ineligibility lasts Monday through the next Monday at noon.
3. Ineligible students may practice but may not participate in any interscholastic contest. We encourage our extra-curricular participants to focus on academic improvement and any missed practices during a week of ineligibility may be excused by the coach with proper communication between the coach and student. Ineligible students are prohibited from attending any contest/event during the period in which they are ineligible.
4. Students who are ineligible to participate in interscholastic contests during the week will be notified by the teacher, coach, and/or Athletic & Activities Director. Students will make contact with parents, and a letter will be sent home to parents from the Athletic & Activities Director.

5. For fall sports (baseball and softball), the first eligibility reports will begin the second week of school. For all other sports and/or activities, eligibility reports will begin with the second week of each new marking period. Eligibility begins with the first week of practice for each sport.

6. For all athletics and activities, participants will be removed from the team if they are declared ineligible FOUR (4) weeks cumulative during the season.

7. On the first day of practice, the coaches must clarify the previously listed eligibility requirements with their team members.

8. Participants receiving disciplinary consequences during the school day or during an extra-curricular event may be removed from the team. Removal from the team will be at the discretion of the coaches and administration.

E. Participation Limitations

DWIGHT COMMON SCHOOL ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES GUIDELINES

FALL SEASON

Softball (July-September)

● “A” & “B”

- “A” Team competes in the IESA State Series (6th-8th graders hold priority)
- “B” Team is instructional
- Max total of twenty-four (24) in the program; try-outs will take place for twelve (12) members to be placed on each team (A & B)
- We understand vacations may already be planned, but please make every attempt to be in attendance for tryouts. If you know you are going to be absent from tryouts, please contact the appropriate coaches and the Athletic Director prior to your absence.
- 5th grade girls; if necessary, may be eligible, if needed directions will be posted on the website

Baseball (August-September)

● “A” & “B” (7th & 8th Grade Boys)

- “A” Team competes in the IESA State Series (6th-8th graders hold priority)
- “B” Team is instructional
- Max total of twenty-four (24) in the program; try-outs will take place for twelve (12) members to be placed on each team (A & B)
- We understand vacations may already be planned, but please make every attempt to be in attendance for tryouts. If you know you are going to be absent from tryouts, please contact the appropriate coaches and the Athletic Director prior to your absence.
- 5th grade boys; if necessary, may be eligible, if needed directions will be posted on the website.

Cross Country (August-October)

- **5th-8th Grade Boys and Girls**

6th Grade Girls’ Basketball (August-November)

- **“A” & “B” (6th grade girls; if necessary, 5th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than ten (10) players at any one time, 5th graders may be eligible to fulfill ten (10) spots on the roster. Try-outs would take place amongst 5th graders for vacant spots.

7th Grade Girls' Basketball (August-December)

- **7th grade girls (if necessary, 6th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than ten (10) players at any one time, they may pull up players from the team below to fulfill ten (10) spots on the roster.

8th Grade Girls' Basketball (August-December)

- **8th grade girls (if necessary, 7th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than ten (10) players at any one time, they may pull up players from the team below to fulfill ten (10) spots on the roster.

WINTER SEASON

Cheerleading (September-February)

- **6th-8th grade students (5th graders may be eligible)**
- **Sideline Cheerleading**
 - Tryouts take place in the spring for the following school year
 - Sideline cheerleaders may dually participate in other winter season sports
 - Up to twelve (12) members may be placed on the team, with an additional four (4) alternates
- **Competitive Cheerleading**
 - Must be on Sideline Team; cannot dually participate in other sports during the winter season
 - Tryouts take place in the fall; number of competitive cheerleaders will vary each year.

6th Grade Boys' Basketball (October-January)

- **"A" & "B" 6th Grade boys (if necessary, 5th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than ten (10) players at any one time, 5th graders may be eligible to fulfill a minimum of (10) spots on the roster. Try-outs would take place amongst 5th graders for vacant spots.

7th Grade Boys' Basketball (October-February)

- **7th grade boys (if necessary, 6th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than ten (10) players at any one time, they may pull up players from the team below to fulfill ten (10) spots on the roster.

8th Grade Boys' Basketball (October-February)

- **8th grade boys (if necessary, 7th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than ten (10) players at any one time, they may pull up players from the team below to fulfill ten (10) spots on the roster.

Speech (October/November)

- **6th-8th grade students (5th graders may be eligible)**

6th Grade Volleyball (November-February)

- **6th grade girls (if necessary, 5th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than twelve (12) players at any one time, 5th graders may be eligible to fulfill a minimum of twelve (12) spots on the roster. Try-outs would take place amongst 5th graders for vacant spots.

7th Grade Volleyball (November-March)

- **7th grade girls (if necessary, 6th graders may be eligible)**
- If the team has less than twelve (12) players at any one time, they may pull up players from the team below to fulfill twelve (12) spots on the roster.

8th Grade Volleyball (November-March)

- 8th grade girls (if necessary, 7th graders may be eligible)
- If the team has less than twelve (12) players at any one time, they may pull up players from the team below to fulfill twelve (12) spots on the roster.

Wrestling (November-March)

- 6th-8th grade students (5th graders may be eligible)

SPRING SEASON

Scholastic Bowl (January-April)

- 6th-8th grade students (5th graders may be eligible)
- Up to fifteen (15) members may be placed on the team.

Spelling Bee (February-March)

- 6th-8th grade students

Band/Choir Solo and Ensemble (March-May)

- 6th-8th grade band and choir members

7th Grade Track (March-May)

- 6th & 7th grade students (5th graders may be eligible)

8th Grade Track (March-May)

- 6th-8th grade students (5th graders may be eligible)

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES

Student Council (School Year)

- 6th-8th grade students

Yearbook (School Year)

- 6th-8th grade students

F. Age Requirements

Age requirements will be those stated by the IESA.

**IESA Policy - No Student shall be a member of an interscholastic team using 9th grade or high school. Athletic activities designated as 7th grade shall consist of students in grades 5-7. Athletic activities designated as 8th grade shall consist of students in grades 5-8.*

*** At any time a coach requests a player(s) to be moved up to a different team, it must be for a specific need on that team and with the approval of the administration.*

G. Attendance

Students must be in school on the afternoon (11:30AM arrival) preceding a scheduled contest unless a pre-arranged, excused absence has already been obtained from the office.

A student that is absent from school on a Friday may participate in an event on the following Saturday.

A student who has been suspended from school is also suspended from participation in all extracurricular and athletic activities for the duration of the suspension.

H. Conduct

1. All student-participants will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, their parents, their school and their community. Any student-participant suspended for a ½ day of school or more will be suspended from the event or contest(s) or practice(s) on that/those day(s).
2. In the event a participant is to serve a detention for the afternoon in which an athletics and/or activities contest and/or practice is scheduled, he/she will serve the detention before reporting to that event. The timeframe of the detention will be considered unexcused practice time. If the detention prevents the participant from making the team bus, they will not attend that event. Parents may not transport students to team events on these occasions.
3. If a practice is to be held or an event is to be played on a Saturday morning and the student-participant has been issued a Saturday detention for that day, the student must serve the detention and will be considered unexcused for missing any practice or game/event that falls within the detention timeframe. (See penalties for unexcused absences). The student-participant may not attend a team event, but may attend a school sponsored event (i.e. dance, PTO or PBIS event) on a day in which they are serving a Saturday detention.
4. Any student-participant caught stealing or vandalizing our school or the opponents' school property or an individual's property will be suspended for a minimum of 5 athletic and/or activities contests and will be required to make restitution. (This regulation deals with athletic and/or activities related incidents only).
5. Disciplinary problems in practice, on the bus, or at a game/event will result in disciplinary action (possible removal from team) by the coach/advisor, and notification of parents. Removal from the team will be left up to the discretion of the coaches/advisors and administration.
6. Coaches/Advisors will distribute to the participants an administration approved list of rules that apply specifically to their team. These rules indicate the expected behavior necessary from the student-participant. If an infraction of a rule is made, the coach/advisor will issue appropriate disciplinary measure.
7. It is recommended that the 8th grade players sit together in the cheering section during 7th grade games and the 7th grade players desiring to stay for the 8th grade game sit together with the other 7th grade players and cheer during the 8th grade game.

I. Practice and Games/Events

Once practices begin, it is the obligation of the athlete to attend all practices and games. Not having updated physicals, insurance waivers, and/or permission slips turned in will not be excuses to miss practice.

1. The following will be excused:
 - a. illness
 - b. illness or death in the family
 - c. **pre-approved** doctor/dentist appointments
 - d. other reasons **pre-arranged** with the coach and/or administration

Participants who regularly miss practices should not expect to participate in games/events.

2. Penalties for unexcused absence from practice:
 - a. 1st Offense - Disciplinary action by coach
 - b. 2nd Offense - One game suspension
 - c. 3rd Offense - Removal from the team
3. Penalties for unexcused absence from game:
 - a. 1st Offense - Two game suspension
 - b. 2nd Offense - Removal from team
4. Any student that repeatedly does not dress appropriately for physical education class (i.e. school issued uniform) and/or participate in physical education class may be subject to consequences involving the loss of playing time. Coaches/Advisors will be notified if repeated offenses occur. Consequences will be left up to the discretion of the teacher and administration.
5. Practices will be held before or after school. Coaches may also offer OPTIONAL/NON-MANDATORY practices on Saturdays and vacation days.

J. Away Games/Events

1. Participants are expected to ride the bus to and from all events. An exception to this rule may be an illness or injury brought during a game.
2. Participants may ride home with their parents or guardian provided the request is made in writing to the coach/sponsor or Athletic Director prior to leaving the game. For a valid and justifiable reason, parents may request that their child be allowed to ride home with parents of another participant provided a written request by that child's parent/guardian is presented to the office or to the coach. **Failure to abide by this rule will result in a one-game/event suspension.**
3. Coaches should set a definite pattern of behavior for trips. Bus conduct rules as outlined in the student handbook shall apply during all extra-curricular trips. Participants should clearly understand what acceptable behavior is. Infractions should be dealt with immediately. Cell phone use on buses will be left up to the discretion of each coach. Any

inappropriate use of cell phones during a team activity will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

K. Training Regulations

1. All student participants are expected to abstain from the use or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco both during and outside the season.

Possession is defined as having illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco on his/her person; being in a vehicle which contains illegal drugs; being in a vehicle, occupied solely by minors, which contains alcohol; being present at a party where alcohol and/or drugs are being used by minors.

2. All infractions on or off school grounds will be handled in the following manner:

The first offense during one's elementary school career is a minimum suspension of one athletic contest date for sports with 15 or less regular season dates and two athletic contest dates for sports with more than 15 regular season dates. The contest must be the next contest in which the school is scheduled to participate and in which the offender participates.

The second offense during one's elementary school career will result in a suspension from athletics for a period of 90 days from the date of the second offense.

The third offense and any subsequent offenses during one's elementary school career will result in a suspension from athletics for a period of one year from the date of the third or subsequent offense.

3. Training Hours

All students engaged in athletics shall observe the state and local curfew laws as well as the hours set up by the coach of the sport in which he/she is engaged. Any violation of training hours will be handled by the coach of the sport in question in consultation with the Athletic Director.

L. Uniforms

Student participants are responsible for the proper care of uniforms issued to them. Students will be charged for lost or damaged uniforms. *If a student fails to return his/her uniform or fails to pay for a damaged uniform, he/she will not be able to participate in the next desired extra-curricular season until the uniform is either paid for or returned.* Uniforms are to be worn for school sponsored contests only, unless provided permission from the coach. At the end of any indoor athletic event, participants must change out of their uniform in a designated locker area. Under **no** circumstances should an athlete wear his/her uniform home.

M. Amateurism

Any awards or donations made to an individual participant, team, or school must be approved by the Athletic & Activities Director.

N. Dual Participation

Dual participation in athletics may be approved on an as needed, yearly basis by administration. For example, an athlete may play basketball, and at the end of the basketball season, join wrestling; or a sideline cheerleader may also be eligible to play volleyball. In all instances, once approved by administration, the athletes will follow the cooperating coaches' guidelines for participation within each sport/activity. An individual who is a member of a squad and quits or is dismissed cannot join another sport that is conducting off-season workouts. An exception to this would be if the head coach of the sport in which the athlete formerly participated grants permission. Students are encouraged to participate in both athletics and activities. When conflicts arise, a compromise will be made by the coach/advisor and administration.

O. Awards Policy

In order for a participant to receive an award and/or attend the end of season awards banquet, he/she must fully complete each season and be in good standing at the conclusion of the season. Each season of participation the student will earn a certificate.

P. Sportsmanship

It is the clear obligation of students, parents, coaches, school staff, boards of education, and other official representatives of member schools to practice and promote the highest principles of sportsmanship and the ethics of competition. Dwight Common School has the right to remove any parent/student/fan from an athletic and/or academic contest due to unsportsmanlike conduct. Consequences will also be applied according to the IESA by-laws. Furthermore, if they are removed from a game they may not be allowed to return to the school for any athletic contests for up to one calendar year.

Q. Concussions – Student Athletes and Head Injuries

Student athletes must comply with Illinois' Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act and all protocols, policies and by-laws of the IESA and IHSA before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity, including practice or competition.

Concussion information and protocols will be required to be read by athletes and parents during registration for each sport. This is also available on the school website.

A student who was removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites are completed, including without limitation, the School District's return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.