

Nashoba Valley Technical High School

(Ayer, Chelmsford, Groton, Littleton, Pepperell, Shirley, Townsend & Westford)

100 Littleton Road, Westford, Massachusetts 01886

Phone: (978) 692-4711

Athletic Director: Extension 11214



Athletic Handbook

2020 - 2021

For Parents and Students

WELCOME TO THE NASHOBA VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

We are excited to have you become a part of the Nashoba Valley Technical High School Interscholastic Athletics Program. Nashoba Tech Athletics is rich in pride and tradition. For years, Nashoba Valley High School student-athletes have performed with dedication, skill, intensity and desire. High school athletics can be a wonderful and exciting educational opportunity. It is our hope that your student athlete will seize that opportunity and make the most of it.

The handbook includes information regarding policies, practices and regulations that govern the athletic program and should help to answer many of your questions about interscholastic athletics at Nashoba Tech. It is intended to help you understand what you can expect and what is expected of you as a Viking student-athlete and parent.

Our interscholastic athletic program is an extension of the academic day and it is an important part of the educational process. Our athletic department staff is committed to providing everything needed to help student-athletes achieve their fullest potential, both academically and athletically. We are here to help make your experience as a student-athlete enjoyable and successful. If your questions and concerns are not answered within this handbook, please speak with a member of our coaching staff or feel free to contact me directly. Being a part of a sports team at the high school is a major commitment, but can also be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

Best of luck and please let me know if I can ever be of assistance.

Sincerely,

James Creed
Athletic Director

Email jcreed@nashobatech.net
Phone 978 692 4711 ext 11214

Introduction

Welcome to the Nashoba Valley Technical High School (NVTHS) Athletic Program. The material presented in this booklet has been compiled to better acquaint you and your family with some of the policies, practices and regulations that govern the athletic program at Nashoba Valley Technical High School. Please keep this booklet handy and refer to it when questions and/or concerns about your student's athletic experience at the school arise. If your questions or concerns are not answered within this booklet, we encourage you to call the Athletic Director's office (978) 692-4711 ext. 11214.

Philosophy

The Interscholastic Athletic Program at NVTHS is committed to the Mission Statement of NVTHS. Our goals are to help all of our students to achieve academic excellence to the level of their ability; to foster a community of lifelong learners; to equip students to meet the challenges of a changing world; and to encourage our students to develop responsibility for themselves and their community. Research indicates that a student involved in extracurricular activities has a great chance for success during adulthood. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope that the information provided within this website makes both your child's and your experience with the NVTHS athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable

Governing Bodies

The NVTHS Athletic Department is a member of the ***Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)*** and is therefore governed by association rules and regulations. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are also allowed to set their own policies, rules and/or regulations as long as they are more restrictive than stipulated by the MIAA. Additional policies, regulations and rules are set by the NVTHS Administration and Board of Trustees. Rules governing individual sports vary depending on the sport. Copies of the complete set of MIAA Rules and Regulations are available online at www.miaa.net or in the Athletic Director's Office. One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to sponsor and conduct postseason tournaments leading to the determination of geographical district and state champions. When our varsity teams qualify for and enter such tournaments, we are completely subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament, as set by the MIAA. The MIAA is a member of the National Federation of State High School Associations and is bound by their set of rules, policies and regulations.

Documentation Required for Participation in Student Athletics

At or before the start of each sports season, students/parents/guardians shall provide the following information before they will be allowed to participate in any try-outs, practices, scrimmages or games.

1. Documentation of an **annual in person physical examination** is required of each student participating in extracurricular athletic activities (**conducted within the last 13 months prior to the start date of the season**)
2. A completed ***Online Registration Form***. <https://forms.gle/E6PtbWPkzZnTyQkz6>
3. **Health Insurance:** Parents must provide evidence of medical insurance, which must be submitted prior to a student's participation. In order to protect the parents of

participants not covered by medical insurance from unusual expenses due to injury, the school department has arranged to make available to athletes a supplementary insurance policy for a small yearly fee. This policy covers the cost of all treatment for injuries sustained for all school activities and includes interscholastic sports. It is the family's responsibility to file all claims under its own plan, or supplemental policy, within the deadline set by the insurance carrier.

*** If the student/parent fails to provide any of the above information, the student will not be permitted to participate in any try-outs, practices, scrimmages or games.**

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

MIAA Athletic Eligibility Rules: MIAA student eligibility requirements for participation in high school athletics are quite involved. The MIAA regulations have been condensed **considerably** here in an attempt to highlight the most important rules and regulations. If the following information does not answer specific questions, or there is a concern, please contact the NVTHS Athletic Director's office.

- **Academic Eligibility:** Students must meet the eligibility requirements set forth in the NVTHS Student Handbook with regards to athletic eligibility. Failures and incompletes can adversely affect a student's ability to qualify to participate.
- **Age:** A student must be less than 19 years of age prior to September 1 of the current school year.
- **Time Allowed for Participation:** A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than twelve consecutive athletic seasons beyond the eighth grade.
- **Membership in School:** A student shall be enrolled in the MIAA member secondary school for a minimum of two months (exclusive of summer vacation) and have been issued a report card preceding the contest.
- **Transfer Students:** The rules governing transfer students entering NVTHS from another high school are governed by the MIAA. Information regarding the athletic eligibility of all students transferring to NVTHS should be requested from the Athletic Director's Office.
- **Leadership/Achievement:** At NVTHS student-athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement possible. They are also expected to maintain the highest level of citizenship. The Principal reserves the right to remove a student from a team for poor academic performance or inappropriate behavior and may reinstate the student at his/her discretion.
- **School Discipline Obligations:** A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any reason. The athletic department reserves the right to

remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they should set an example for all students. Students should review the NVTHS Student Handbook for demerit totals that prevent participation.

- **Sportsmanship for Student-Athletes:** Respect for the sport in which the NVTHS student-athlete participates also demands respect for the opponents. Student-athletes participating in MIAA sponsored events are expected to treat opponents with respect. There can be absolutely no tolerance for trash-talking, taunting, or baiting of opponents. NVTHS students-athletes must appreciate and understand that they are perhaps the most visible representatives of their school. In addition, their behavior is observed and emulated by many who are younger. NVTHS student athletes must honor the responsibility which accompanies the privilege of representing their school by behaving with dignity and class on and off the field. **If any student in any sport, willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent, he/she shall not participate in any sport season for one year from the date of the incident.** The MIAA reserves the right to “warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game official, school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship”. NVTHS in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests.
- **School/Family Vacations, Extended Absences:** Student athletes who take school sponsored or family vacations during the scheduled season will not be penalized. However it must be understood that time away from practice and games will impact one's ability to return to competition.
- **Physical Education:** All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled Physical Education classes. Students being medically excused from Physical Education may not participate in their team practice or game for that day.

SELECTED RULES, REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND PRACTICE

Coaching Expectations

At NVTHS, relationships are built on mutual respect. The coaches are professionals who are aware of and committed to upholding the responsibilities, policies and regulations of the MIAA, the Commonwealth Athletic League and NVTHS. Each student must be treated as an individual, yet as a part of the team. Rules and regulations must be uniformly and fairly enforced at all

times. In most instances, during the season of play a student athlete spends more time daily under the direct supervision and guidance of his/her coach than any other adult. This time spent should be enjoyable, educational, positive and worthwhile; the influence that a coach may have with each individual team member is enormous. As recommended by the MIAA, we encourage participation in varied activities under different teacher/coach role models. Athletes and their families can expect the following from members of the NVTHS coaching staff:

- **Time Commitment:** Practice and game schedules and other time commitments, consistent with the guidelines mentioned previously in this handbook, will be made known to all team members.
- **Team Rules:** Team rules and regulations, in addition to the ones stated in this handbook, will be well defined, discussed and enforced with all team members. Self-discipline of all student-athletes will be encouraged. Penalties for rule violations will also be well defined and applied fairly and consistently.
- **Individual Success:** The coach will provide an opportunity for each athlete to succeed to the best of his/her abilities.
- **Social and Emotional Growth:** The coach will attempt to assist each athlete to grow socially and emotionally.
- **Team Spirit:** The coach will attempt to instill and promote team spirit and cohesiveness.
- **Athletic Performance:** Individual performance by an athlete will be critiqued by a coach at the appropriate time. Each athlete will be encouraged to work towards his/her full potential and to develop a positive self-image.
- **Skill Development:** Each athlete will be taught the rules and the skills of the game with the goal of developing maximum proficiency in the specific sport area.
- **Approachability:** The coach will be available to all of his/her athletes. Team members are encouraged to approach the coach about any topic that they wish. Students should make every attempt, if a matter is of a personal nature, to approach the coach privately and when there is sufficient time for worthwhile discussion.
- **Competitiveness:** According to the MIAA philosophy, “winning contests, rather than losing them, is a laudable goal”, but “it should not supersede the primary priorities of high school sports programs”. NVTHS coaches do and should play to win, as all involved enjoy winning rather than losing, but they also know that “preparing students to succeed rather than merely to win games” is more important. “Win or lose, students should learn lessons of a lasting and positive nature”.

Athletic Calendar – Duration of Season

Fall Season: September 18th through November 29th

Winter Season: November 30th through February 21st

Fall 2: February 22nd through April 25th

Spring Season: April 26th through July 3rd

Sub-Varsity Teams

At the sub-varsity level (junior varsity and freshman), members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time but perhaps the most important are: practice, attendance, effort, attitude, and commitment. Another factor that must always be considered is athletic skill. If these factors are present at the sub-varsity levels, students may expect to enjoy their share of "playing time".

Varsity Teams

At the varsity level, the guidelines for the coaching staff are similar with one other additional major factor. The varsity teams want to compete against opponents at the highest possible level. Players, coaches, parents and staff members all want the NVTHS varsity teams to be successful on the field, court, etc. To reach that goal, teams must compete to win as many contests as possible. In order to do this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive, and most skilled team members; however, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes. These athletes have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden when needed. They have to practice as hard as they can to help make the teams as competitive as they can be. They also have to constantly strive to move up to a "starting" role.

As stated before, athletic involvement is highly emotional and very time consuming. Because of this, conflicts and issues between a student and his/her coach may arise. It is imperative that any conflict and/or issue be addressed immediately, and as directly as possible with the coach so that it can be resolved promptly. The Director of Athletics or the Principal may be contacted at any time should any issues or concerns arise.

Should a parent wish to speak with a coach, selecting the right opportunity that affords enough time is important. Please do not attempt to discuss important issues with a coach either prior to or immediately following a contest, during an active practice session or during a time when other students are present. Make a phone call or send an email to schedule an appointment to meet with your student's coach and to find out when the best time to talk would be.

Team Captains

It is a coaching decision as to how many team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by game basis. It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to be more aware of team rules and student responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Director of Athletics during the school year to discuss the athletic program. Captains of teams may also be relieved of their position for a violation of team, Athletic Department or school rules.

“Playing Time”

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is “playing time” during contests. If a student has questions as to his/her “playing time” he/she is encouraged to privately discuss it with the coach. At NVTHS, being a member of a team does not guarantee an equitable amount of “playing time”.

School Athletic Equipment and Uniforms

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment issued to them for its proper care and retention from the date of issue to the date of return. Students failing to turn in all issued equipment, uniforms, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment or uniforms. Payment is required at the time of the loss, prior to the next season of athletic involvement, or graduation, whichever comes first. In the event that the equipment or uniform is found and/or returned after payment, a refund will be made.

Uniforms will be handed out prior to each game. Following the game each team will collect uniforms to be sanitized and cleaned.

All equipment will be sanitized before and after each practice or game.

Student Lockers

Students will not be given any lockers this year.

Building and Facility Access

At the conclusion of each school day, student-athletes should bring all items that they need until the next school day to the locker room area. For safety reasons students are not allowed access to other areas of the building after practice, games, or on non-school days. No students will be allowed access to any of our athletic facilities without proper supervision by a school staff member.

Return from Injury

Any time a student athlete visits the emergency room or a doctor due to potential injury, that student will not be allowed to return to participation in practice or a game unless the doctor which they visited or their primary care physician provides documentation stating they are safe to return to said sport or activity.

Transportation To and From Contests

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most “away” contests. All team members are expected to travel to these contests using the school provided transportation for student safety reasons. All Students will use assigned seating and wear a mask on the bus/van. Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing, to the Director of Athletics, by a

student's parent prior to the contest. Reasonable requests will be honored. A coach may allow students to ride home from a contest with their parents provided permission has been granted at the game site. The use of transportation is a privilege. Inappropriate behavior on busses will result in disciplinary action including team suspension and possible dismissal from the team. All school policies, procedures, rules and regulations are in effect any time a student is on a NVTHS school bus.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. When your children become involved in our programs, your coach will clarify the team expectations for your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's team.

Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach

- ◆ Philosophy of the coach.
- ◆ Expectations the coach has for your child as well as other players on the squad.
- ◆ Locations and times of all practices and contests.
- ◆ Team requirements (fundraising, community service, equipment, conditioning, etc)
- ◆ Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
- ◆ Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation

COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM PARENTS

- ◆ Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- ◆ Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- ◆ Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- ◆ The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- ◆ Ways to help your child improve.
- ◆ Concerns about your child's behavior.

Sometimes it can be difficult to accept that your child's not playing as much as you may have hoped. Coaches are professionals. They make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain concerns can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other matters listed below are not appropriate.

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- ◆ Playing time / Team strategy. Play calling. / Other student-athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others' position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

WHEN YOU HAVE A CONFLICT OR CONCERN WITH A COACH

- ♦ Call the athletic director to set up an appointment for a meeting. The athletic office telephone number is: 978-692-4711 ext 11214
- ♦ Please do not attempt to confront the coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. We encourage the “24-Hour Rule.” Wait until the day after a contest to set up a meeting with the coach. It eliminates the “heat of the moment” confrontation.

MIAA RULES AND REGULATIONS

All NVTHS athletic teams will follow the rules set forth in the current MIAA handbook, which is available on the MIAA website at www.miaa.net. The entire handbook is also available in the athletic director's office. Student-athletes, coaches, and parents are responsible for adhering to all MIAA rules and regulations. Below are some key rules:

SELECT MIAA RULES

MIAA RULE #45 – Loyalty to the High School Team: “BONA FIDE TEAM MEMBER RULE”

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bona Fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. Any student who violates this standard would be ineligible for 25% of the scheduled season contests. If a second offense should occur the student would be suspended for an additional 25% of the scheduled season contests, and would be ineligible for MIAA post-season tournament play.

MIAA RULE #62 - Student Eligibility: CHEMICAL HEALTH/ALCOHOL/DRUGS/TOBACCO

62. Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

62.1 From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by his/her doctor. This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g. many student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements. If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

MINIMUM PENALTIES:

First violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

Participation in our athletic program, is a privilege extended to our students, not a right.
NVTHS Athletic Department and the MIAA wishes to inform both athletes and parents that during the season of practice or play, a student shall not, regardless of quantity, location or time, use or consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol, marijuana, steroids, or any controlled substance. Any report by an outside agency will be dealt with appropriately.

HAZING

Massachusetts State Law - Chapter 269, Sections 17-18, Chapter 269, Section 17

Crime of Hazing, Definition, Penalty

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term *hazing* as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other

provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

Chapter 269, Section 18 *Duty to Report Hazing*

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665.

NVTHS Concussion Policy

Introduction

NVTHS is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our students. The following concussion policy utilizes the latest in medical research to prevent and treat head injuries. It is in compliance with MIAA policy and with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111: Section 222 regarding Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. This policy also incorporates additional elements from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the National Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (NSMAC.)

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training, management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities at NVTHS in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. Policies and procedures must address sports-related head injuries occurring in extracurricular athletic activities, but may be applied to all head injuries in students. Review and revision of such policies and procedures shall occur as needed but at least every two years.

Educational Requirements- Staff

As specified in the law, the Nashoba Valley Technical High School Athletic Department shall require annual training in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related head injury, including second impact syndrome, and keep documentation of said training on file for the following persons:

- a. Coaches;
- b. Trainers;
- c. Volunteers;
- d. School and team physicians;
- e. School nurses;
- f. Athletic Directors;

The Athletic Director of NVTHS, working with the Principal, shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of these policies and procedures. In addition, coaches, trainers, and

volunteers will be given instruction to teach form, techniques, and skills that minimize sports-related head injuries.

Educational Requirements- Student Participants and Parents/Guardians

All students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities and their parents must complete school-approved training regarding head injuries and concussions in extracurricular athletic activities in advance of their participation in any practice, scrimmage or game. The school will annually require students to participate in a school-sponsored training at which attendance is recorded and/or provide the school with a *Signed Acknowledgement Form* in your registration.

In the Event of a Concussion, Suspected Concussion or Head Injury

Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.

FOR PARENTS

- 1) If a student sustains a head injury or concussion **during the sports season, but outside of school related extracurricular athletic activities**, the parent must notify the athletic office and send into the school a doctor's note within 24 hours.

FOR COACHES

- 1) If a student sustains a head injury or concussion during the sports season, the coach must complete an ***Incident report*** and submit it to the Athletic Director and School Nurse within 24 hours. The form must be reviewed by the Athletic Director and the student must complete the *Return to Play Protocol* listed below prior to their continued participation in any try-outs, practices, scrimmages or games.
- 2) The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone immediately after the practice or competition in which a student has been removed from play for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness. The coach also must provide this information to the parent in writing (filling out the incident report), whether on paper or in an electronic format, by the end of the next business day.
- 3) The coach or his or her designee shall communicate, by the end of the next business day, with the Athletic Director and school nurse that the student has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness.

Completing the Return to Play Protocol

Each student who is removed from try-outs, practice, scrimmages or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion or head injury shall have a written, graduated *Return to Play Protocol* for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

The *Return to Play Protocol* is developed by the student's teachers, guidance counselors, and school nurse in consultation with the student's medical provider, the physician who made the diagnosis, or the individual managing the student's recovery.

The written plan shall include instructions for students, parents and school personnel, addressing:

- a. Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate;
- b. Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed

The graduated *Return to Play Protocol* cannot begin until the player has been cleared by a physician and should be turned in to the School Nurse.

Returning to Play

Once successfully completing the *Return to Play Protocol*, the student must obtain a medical clearance by their medical provider. The athlete must provide a note from their medical provider, approving them to return to play. The only individuals approved to complete this form are:

- A duly licensed physician;
- A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
- A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or
- A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.

Responsibilities

Athletic Director

The NVTHS Athletic Director will work directly with coaches and School Nurse to ensure that the following are completed and on file before participation is permitted.

1. ***Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extra-Curricular Activities***
2. ***Concussion Education*** by coaches has been completed and recorded.
3. Directly communicate with parents and students who have not turned in the required forms. Ensuring that no student participates in try-outs, scrimmages, practices and competitions until all documentation is complete and turned in.
4. During participation if a Head Injury is reported the Athletic Director will ensure the following are complete:
 - a) ***Incident Report*** is completed by the coach
 - b) ***Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form by the players Doctor.***

Coach

1. Coaches will possess a yearly NFHS Concussion Certification.
2. Coaches will also be aware of the school concussion policy and protocol.

School Nurses

1. Communicate with parents after having been notified by coaches that their child has been removed from play for a head injury or suspected concussion sustained during an extracurricular athletic activity.
2. The School Nurse will review forms and reports (with school physicians when necessary) and follow up with parents as needed.
3. The NVTHS Health Office will make these records available to the Department of Health and the MADESE, upon request.
4. The health office will act as a resource and have available ongoing educational materials on head injury and concussion to teachers, staff, and students.

Bullying/Cyber-bullying

NVTHS is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve their full potential. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying. (See School Committee Policy JICFB). Athletes found responsible for bullying or cyber-bullying; for failing to report such bullying or cyberbullying; or for retaliating in any way against any other student who reports such bullying or cyberbullying, are subject to removal from participation on their team for a period up to and including the duration of their time at NVTHS. This penalty is in addition to any and all student discipline, which is imposed in accordance with the bullying/cyber-bullying policy and applies regardless of whether the bullying/cyber-bullying occurred in connection with athletic programs or, instead, in any other context regulated by the bullying/cyber-bullying policy.

Anti-Discrimination Information - NVTHS will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, or physical and intellectual differences. To accomplish this, NVTHS and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law (known as Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971), which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. This

will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities. M.G.L c.76 s. 5, Title IX Policy, and Chapter 622: Anti-Discrimination Law It is the policy of NVTHS not to discriminate on the basis of gender identity, race, color, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or handicapping condition in educational programs, activities, or employment..

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION It is the goal of the District to promote schools and workplaces that are free of unlawful discrimination and harassment of any type, that is based upon a characteristic protected by law, such as gender identity, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetics, military status, sexual orientation, or participation in discrimination complaint-related activities (retaliation). NVTHS will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects employment conditions or that interferes unreasonably with an individual's performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

COVID-19

PURPOSE

The purpose of this training manual is to provide the coaches and athletics staff with the guidelines and procedures that will be implemented and followed for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the ever changing nature of the pandemic and recommendations from national and state governing bodies, these guidelines may change at the discretion of the athletics administration staff. Training of student-athletes and staff will take place prior to check-in dates. All student-athletes and staff must acknowledge training through a signed statement at the conclusion of the training.

INTRODUCTION

What is Covid-19?

Covid-19, also known as Coronavirus or SARS-COV-2, is a respiratory illness caused by a novel coronavirus. Symptoms of Covid-19 range from mild to severe illness and include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Tiredness
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Muscle aches
- Chills

- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Less common symptoms include rash, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Coronavirus is highly contagious and is spread through person to person contact, contact with an infected person's respiratory droplets, or by touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes, mouth, or nose. Symptoms of Covid-19 usually present between 5-14 days after infection. The virus may also be spread by asymptomatic persons. Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against Coronavirus.

*Courtesy of the World Health Organization, Mayo Clinic, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

PRECAUTIONS

Currently, there is no vaccine to protect against Coronavirus, however, there are steps that one may take to prevent the spread and protect themselves and others:

1. Stay home as much as possible and avoid close contact with others
2. Wear a cloth face covering that covers your nose and mouth in public settings
3. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
4. Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
5. Practice social distancing if you must go out
6. Stay home if you are sick and avoid crowded areas and contact with people

*Courtesy of Mayo Clinic & the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

WATER BOTTLES

Each student-athlete will provide their own water bottle. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to make sure that their water bottle is appropriately sanitized. It is also the responsibility of the student-athlete to make sure that the student-athlete brings their water bottle to each training session.

SPITTING

- Please refrain from spitting in traveled areas or in areas that others may come into contact with (i.e.-parking lots, locker rooms, training rooms, weight rooms, dugouts, team benches, hallways)
- The consumption and spitting of sunflower seeds are prohibited in any team or spectator area.

FACEMASKS

Facemasks will be required in all areas of campus, including athletic buildings.
Facemasks will be required to be worn during athletic training treatments, athletic team travel on buses, vans, and face-to-face meetings where social distancing is not permitted. Social distancing is defined as a minimum of 6 feet, or two arm lengths from another person. Facemasks will be provided or student athletes can bring their own. All student-athletes and must be worn according to the school's facemask policy. Student-athletes will be responsible for sanitizing their own facemasks. Coaches and administrators will check with student-athletes to ensure that facemask sanitation guidelines are being followed.

Individual Sports

- **Each Sport team will have its own modifications and procedures for the upcoming season in terms of practice and games that must be followed to participate. They will become available on the MIAA Covid Task Force page http://miaa.net/contentm/easy_pages/view.php?sid=38&page_id=317**

