

East Meadow
Union Free School District

Interscholastic Athletics Handbook
For Parents and Student-Athletes

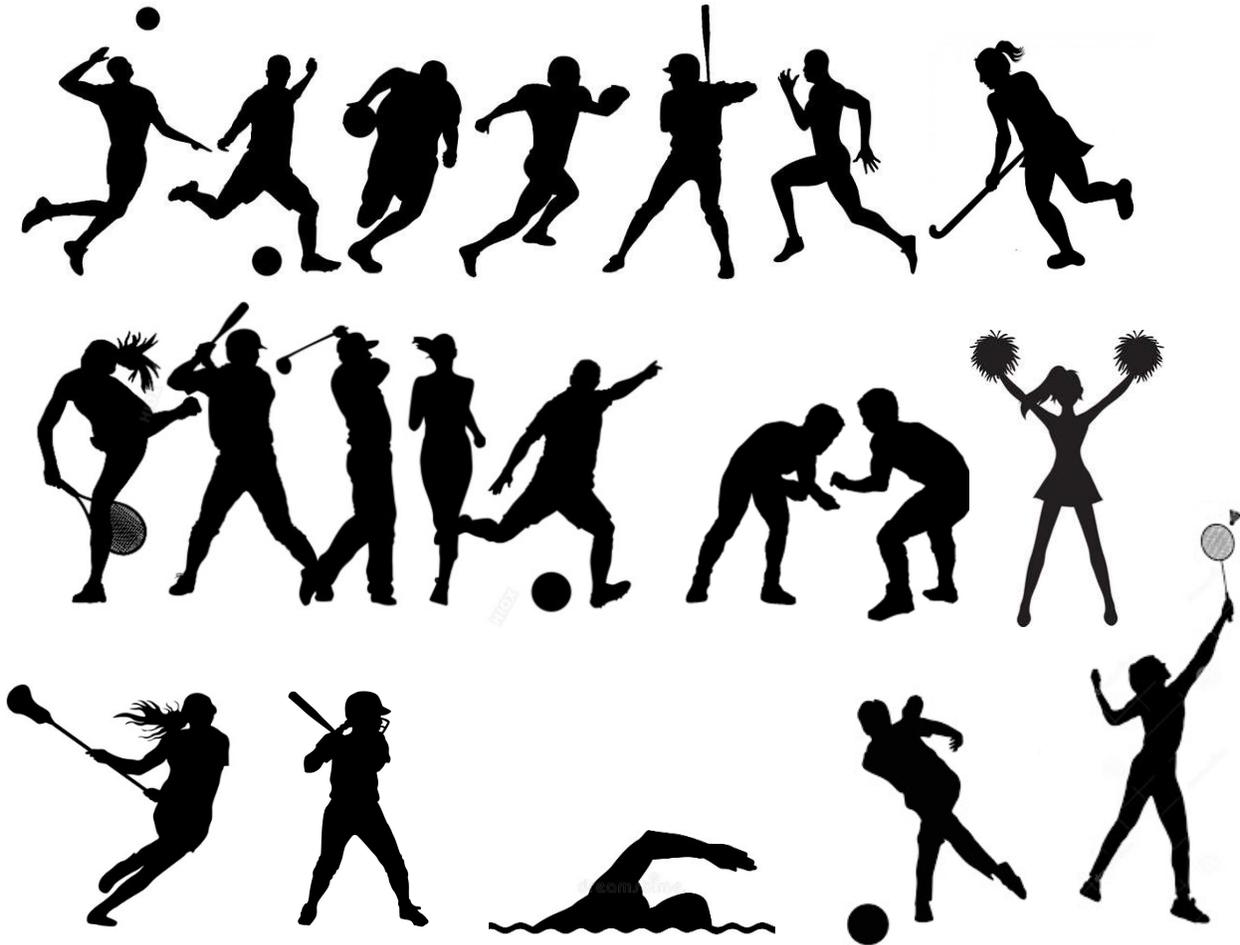


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EAST MEADOW UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS HANDBOOK: for Parents and Student-Athletes

Dear Parents and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to the East Meadow School District Interscholastic Athletic Program.

This handbook is a resource for the student-athletes and their parents/guardians to read through in an effort to define responsibilities as they pertain to the rules and regulations, as well as, the policy and procedures for participation in the interscholastic athletics program.

The East Meadow School District Interscholastic Athletic Program is committed to academic success and athletic excellence. The expectation of each of our athletes is to have a strong work ethic, demonstrate positive sportsmanship on and off the field, and be ambassadors in our schools and communities.

Interscholastic athletics are an integral portion of many students' lives as well as the school community around them. On an individual level, they are a means by which a student can be active and add enjoyment to his/her overall educational experience. They also create avenues for students to expand their college opportunities and enlighten their perspectives on life. On a more global level, athletics contribute to the sense of spirit and pride of the school as well as the community. Therefore, a student that wears the colors of the East Meadow Union Free School District as part of an athletic team represents themselves, the school, their family, and the entire community. As such, the behavior and integrity of a student-athlete is of paramount importance.

The East Meadow School District Interscholastic Athletic Program is governed by the New York State Commissioner of Education and the East Meadow Board of Education. In addition, East Meadow is a member of the New York Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) in Section VIII (Nassau County). Specific guidelines are established for High school and Middle School Students as a part of the NYSPHSAA Interscholastic Sports Program, which will be outlined in the handbook.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the East Meadow District Interscholastic Athletic Programs, please contact me at (516) 876-7426.

Sincerely,

Jason Supple
District Director of Physical Education, Health, and Athletics

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the East Meadow Union Free School District Athletics Department (as consistent with the New York State High School Athletics Association) is to foster the quest for excellence by creating an educational and competitive experience within an atmosphere of sportsmanship. Successful programs develop individual and team potential by promoting high standards of competence, character, civility, and citizenship. A student athlete demonstrates character, citizenship and civility through actions showing evidence of respect, responsibility, accountability, dedication, trustworthiness, fair play/fairness, caring, teamwork, positive role modeling, and self-control. Competence is demonstrated in skill development, knowledge/ strategy of the game/activity, fitness/conditioning, and healthy behaviors.

GOVERNING BODIES IN ATHLETICS

Interscholastic Athletics is governed by rules, regulations and guidelines as established by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), which is directly responsible to the State Education Department (SED) and the Commissioner of Education.

NYSPHSAA is comprised of eleven sections or chapters in the state of New York. Nassau County, which is referred to as Section 8 (Nassau County Public High School Athletic Association), is a member of NYSPHSAA. It is the purpose of this organization to formulate and adopt policies that will enable public high schools to administer and govern interscholastic athletics in accordance with sound educational practices.

NYSPHSAA and Section 8 establish many of the rules, regulations and policies that govern public school interscholastic athletic competitions. Season start and end dates, the Athletic Placement Process (process for moving up), eligibility, schedules (dates of contests), placement (which opponents are played), contest rules, safety policies, practice mandates, and postseason tournament opportunities (league, division, county and state play-offs) are some of the areas governed by these associations. Section 8 also is responsible for the scheduling of all officials for all contests played in Nassau County.

The East Meadow School District, as a member of the Nassau County Public High School Athletic Association, is obligated to comply with state and section regulations. Therefore, our district policies must comply with the policies that govern Nassau County public school athletic programs.



SECTION 8 AND EAST MEADOW SCHOOLS SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Spectators shall observe and obey the rules and regulations of the school concerning tobacco, smoking, food and soft drink consumption, use of lavatory facilities, pets, and the parking of their vehicles on school grounds.

New York State law prohibits smoking and alcoholic beverages of any kind on school property. The law further prohibits any person under the influence of alcohol to be on school property.

Spectators shall respect and obey all school officials, supervisors, security, and police at all athletic contests.

Spectators who fail to adhere to conduct expectations during a contest should be prepared to accept consequences for their inappropriate behavior. These consequences may include ejection from the contest site, and/or any other school activities or events for a period of time.

NYSPHSAA/SECTION 8 MISCONDUCT RULE

Any member of a squad removed from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct, or a flagrant foul shall not participate in that sport in the next scheduled contest or in NYSPHSAA tournament play. Disqualifications from one season carry over to the next season of participation.

Any member of the squad who strikes, shoves, kicks, or makes other physical contact with the intent to do so to an official shall be expelled from the game immediately and banned from further participation in all sports for one year from the date of the offense. Note: Member of the squad includes coach, player, manager, scorekeeper, timers, and statisticians.

A player or coach who has been suspended from play may not be present on the school grounds where the contest is played. There is no appeal to the NYSPHSAA/Section 8 Misconduct Rule. The official's ruling is final and not subject to question.

Note: The East Meadow School District reserves the right to impose an additional consequence, which may result in school disciplinary action, for a longer period of suspension from practice and contests, and/or dismissal from the team by the coach and/or administration.

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

The East Meadow Interscholastic Athletic Program offers a wide variety of individual and team sports. The experience begins with a modified four-season athletic program, provided for middle school seventh and eighth grade students, progressing to a three-season athletic high school program, which includes opportunities for participation in junior varsity programs, culminating with a varsity level experience for the elite athlete.

HIGH SCHOOL - VARSITY and JUNIOR VARSITY SPORT PROGRAMS
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Fall	Varsity	Junior Varsity
Cheerleading	X	X
Boys Cross Country	X	
Girls Cross Country	X	
Field Hockey	X	X
Football	X	X
Golf	X	
Boys Soccer	X	X
Girls Soccer	X	X
Girls Swimming	X	
Girls Tennis	X	X
Boys Volleyball	X	X
Girls Volleyball	X	X

Winter	Varsity	Junior Varsity
Boys Basketball	X	X
Girls Basketball	X	X
Girls Bowling	X	
Boys Bowling	X	
Cheerleading	X	X
Boys Swimming	X	
Girls Winter Track	X	
Boys Winter Track	X	
Wrestling	X	X

Spring	Varsity	Junior Varsity
Girls Badminton	X	
Boys Baseball	X	X
Boys Lacrosse	X	X
Girls Lacrosse	X	X
Girls Softball	X	X

Boys Spring Track	X	
Girls Spring Track	X	
Boys Tennis	X	X

MIDDLE SCHOOL (MODIFIED) ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Fall	7th/8th
Cheerleading	X
Boys/Girls Cross Country	X
Field Hockey	X
Football	X
Boys Soccer	X
Girls Soccer	X
Tennis	X

Winter I	7th/8th
Boys Basketball	X
Cheerleading	X
Girls Volleyball	X

Winter II	7th/8th
Girls Basketball	X
Boys Volleyball	X
Wrestling	X

Spring	7th/8th
Boys Baseball	X
Boys Lacrosse	X
Girls Lacrosse	X
Girls Softball	X
Boys Spring Track	X
Girls Spring Track	X
Tennis	X

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHIES

Modified Program Philosophy

Middle school “modified” programs, in general, offer an introduction to the world of competitive athletics. The focus is on learning basic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, social and emotional growth, and healthy competition. The emphasis is to provide an opportunity for children, through physical participation in a positive competitive environment, to learn about their capabilities and appreciate their physical potential. In the best interest of the student, the athlete must have enough skill and physical maturity to safely participate in the competitive climate. The “modified” program allows for game rules and requirements of play to be adapted to match the competitive abilities of young, inexperienced, middle school athletes who have not yet reached emotional, social, physiological, or physical maturity. A five-period format with an “A” & “B” squad will be used when appropriate.

We would like to provide an opportunity for every athlete who expresses interest in a program, unfortunately, this is not always possible. While we will make every attempt to avoid cuts at the middle school level, certain factors exist that must be dealt with by imposing a limitation on the number of students that can be accommodated in a specific program. Ultimately, the make-up of a team is necessarily limited by the availability of supplies, equipment, and coaching staff.

In order for the desired development of the adolescent athlete and team to occur, practice sessions are vital. NYSPHSAA and Section 8 have established sport specific practice guidelines which govern the number of practices that each individual and team must have in order to be eligible for competition. There are also established guidelines, which govern the number of contests allowed, and in certain sports, mandate days of rest between scheduled contests.

Coaches expect athletes to regularly attend five (5) practices a week, approximately two hours in duration, in preparation for the six to twelve contests that are scheduled against opponents from other school districts. Occasionally, practices or contests will be scheduled on Saturdays and vacation dates. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each team member will exist over the course of a season, providing that the athlete meets program expectations.

Athletes, regardless of level, are expected to be committed and give a full effort to practice sessions, maintain a positive and cooperative attitude, and show a willingness to meet the team’s needs with respect to position and role. Every athlete is expected to demonstrate respect for others and promote positive sportsmanship. Students who have a religious commitment will be excused from a practice or game, without penalty, providing it is discussed with the coach prior to the date.

Junior Varsity Program Philosophy

The Junior Varsity Programs are intended for those who display the potential for continued development into productive varsity level players. In junior varsity programs, teams are comprised of mostly ninth and tenth grade athletes. In certain situations, juniors, who may still be viewed as future contributors at the varsity level, may participate on a junior varsity squad.

At this point in the athlete's development, the level of expectation increases substantially. The high school sport season (three seasons per year) is longer than the middle school sport season (four seasons per year). The practice sessions are longer and more intense, and the skill requirements for participation in contests are greater. The atmosphere is more competitive, and in many cases, athletes who were able to meet the demands of play at the modified program will not be able to meet the expectations of participation at the junior varsity level. Athletes must be prepared for a competitive tryout situation and should not assume that they will automatically make the team because they were involved in the program at the modified level or at the junior varsity level in the previous season. Each and every season is treated as a new year and tryouts are conducted accordingly.

Skill, conditioning, work ethic, and reliability are big factors in an athlete's potential to move up. At this level, athletes are expected to have visibly committed themselves to the program and continued self-development. Increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play, and social and emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and the quest for victory. The outcome of the contest does become a consideration at this level. For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season, providing the athlete meets program expectations. A specified amount of playing time, however, is never guaranteed. Athletes are expected to compete for a position in the starting lineup.

The time commitment of a participant involved in the junior varsity program is similar to that at the varsity level. Athletes and parents should be prepared for a six-day-a-week commitment for games and practices. While practices are not held on certain religious holy days, and rarely on Sundays, the athlete will be expected to make a full commitment to scheduled team practices during vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.

Varsity Program Philosophy

Varsity competition is the culminating experience for each sport's program. It is an experience provided for the elite athlete and is the most demanding and competitive of all programs. Although junior and senior athletes dominate most varsity team rosters, gifted underclassman are also eligible for varsity play. Prior participation in the program does not guarantee an athlete a spot on the roster, even if the athlete was a member of the varsity squad the preceding year.

Squad size at the varsity level is limited in many sports, although there are a few sports that will accommodate more numbers in practice and in competitive situations than others. However, even in those sports where cuts are not made in a given year, athletes must still understand that they may be denied an opportunity to participate unless they meet program expectations, especially with respect to start dates, attendance, and commitment.

The number of participants on most varsity teams is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each member understands and accepts their role on the team as the number of roster positions is relative to the student's acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of team goals. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed, since the outcome of the contest becomes a prime consideration at this level.

Athletes will be expected to practice 2 to 3 hours per day, six days per week, with commitment often extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons. While practices are not held on certain religious holy days, and rarely on Sundays, the athlete will be expected to make a full commitment to scheduled team practices during vacation periods. The expectation is the same for the starting player as it is for the limited role player, as every athlete involved on the team has a role in preparing the team for a demanding competitive schedule. The achievement of individual and team goals requires a full commitment on the part of every athlete on the roster.

A primary goal of a varsity team is to win a league or division title, and/or qualify for post season play in sectional, regional or state competition. In the individual sports (cross country, tennis, wrestling, golf, swimming and track), opportunities are presented to dedicated team members to represent the district in individual championship competitions at the league, division, county, and state levels. These opportunities are only provided, however, to those individuals who show a complete (total season) and on-going commitment to the team.

CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

Parent and Coach Roles

Both parents and coaches play a significant piece in supporting and developing student athletes. It is essential to outline each role in order to promote a positive environment for our student-athletes to compete in.

As parents, when your children become involved in a school's sport program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication between coach, parent, and student-athlete.

The parent's first opportunity to meet the coach at the High School level will be at the Meet the Coaches Night. This is a meeting that allows you to become acquainted with your child's coach and the coaches' philosophy and expectations for the season.

Parents should be advised that the East Meadow School athletic program does not support spectators watching tryouts or team practices, as the distractions can interrupt the concentration of the athletes. The gymnasium or field is considered to be part of the classroom environment. Therefore, parents who pick up their child after practice should wait until the conclusion of the practice before entering the training facility.

Communication You Should Expect from Your Child's Coach

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations and goals the coach has for the athletes.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements and special equipment.
5. Procedure if your child is injured during participation.
6. Team rules, guidelines, and consequences for infractions.
7. Team selection process.
8. Eligibility requirements including attendance.
9. Proper care and responsibility for equipment issued by the school.

Communication Coaches Expect From Athletes

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance.
3. Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible.

As your children become involved in an athletic program, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, the procedure you should follow is:

1. Call or e-mail the coach to schedule an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the School Athletic Director; he/she will arrange a meeting for you.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions.

Appropriate/Inappropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches

The following topics are appropriate for discussion:

- Your child's well-being.
- Ways to help your child improve his/her skills.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.
- Safety concerns about your child participating on an athletic team.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you had hoped. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach.

Coaches are not expected to respond to questions involving the following topics:

1. Amount of playing time, positioning, and event entry.
2. Team strategies, game tactics, play calling.
3. Any discussion about other student athletes.

Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct

- Be a Cheerleader for your student-athlete and other student athletes on the team.
- Be willing to let the coach be responsible for your child during the duration of the contest.
- Make no derogatory comments to players, other parents or fans, officials or administrators.
- If necessary, remind those around you of the rules.
- Provide unconditional love, acceptance, and emotional support, regardless of the game's outcome.
- Be a Positive Role Model.
- Be sensible, responsible, and keep your priorities in order. There is a lot more at stake than a win or loss record.

CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes

- Understand and abide by the rules and regulations of the game and respect the integrity and judgment of the officials
- Understand and abide by the rules and regulations of the East Meadow School District
- Act as mature young adults at all times
- Use appropriate language and refrain from crude or abusive language or gesture in dealing with coaches, teammates, opponents, officials and/or spectators
- Accept victory with grace and defeat with dignity while exercising good sportsmanship.
- Set example of good character in word and deed, both on and off the playing field
- Observe training regulations and requirements of physical fitness for better personal performance and greater contribution to the team effort
- Place athletic competition in its perspective; it represents only one part of the learning process and should not be pursued to the exclusion of everything else
- Understand that participation in athletics is a privilege and should be valued.
- Understand that violations such as possession of or the use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or drugs, gambling, sexual misconduct, and damaging school property are unacceptable behaviors and will not be tolerated
- Refrain from any form of hazing or rights of initiation in school activities, including interscholastic athletics. Students agree not to haze or be hazed. Students who have knowledge of hazing incidents must report them to a coach, athletic administrator, or any other responsible school official

All student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and to be responsible for the care of the school facilities as well as equipment. Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from the school, or may be held financially responsible, for any damages caused by their actions when they:

A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly, disruptive, insubordinate, or violent. Examples of disorderly or insubordinate conduct include but are not limited to:

1. Engaging in any willful act which disrupts the operation of the school or athletic community
2. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, abusive, or threatening
3. Defacing school property, East Meadow or otherwise, including fields, courts, gymnasiums, locker rooms, bathrooms, buses, etc.
4. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, coaches, school administrators or other school personnel
5. Committing an act of violence (hitting, kicking, punching, etc.) or attempting to, upon a student, teacher, coach, school administrator, school employee, or any other person lawfully on school property
6. Possessing a weapon or displaying anything that appears to be a weapon

7. Threatening to use a weapon
8. Intentionally destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, coach, school administrator or other district employee
9. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property, including graffiti

B. Engaging in any conduct that endangers or interferes with the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include but are not limited to:

1. Lying to school personnel
2. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function
3. Defamation which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals which is harmful to the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them
4. Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner
5. Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements, sexual or otherwise, directed at an individual or group which are unwanted and are intended to be or which a reasonable person would perceive as threatening, ridiculing, or demeaning
6. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm
7. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team
8. Selling, using or possessing obscene material
9. Using tobacco of any kind on school property or at any time
10. Possessing, consuming, or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either
11. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter medications
12. Gambling of any kind
13. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to the sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner
14. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher, or AED
15. Participating in sexual activity

C. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Plagiarism or cheating
2. Copying
3. Altering records
4. Assisting another student in any of the above actions

MINIMUM PENALTY (for code violations):

The athlete may be suspended from the next scheduled contest(s) but may attend all practices and will do any extra work assigned by the coach.

MAXIMUM PENALTY (for code violations):

Violations considered to be of a flagrant nature may result in dismissal from the team and/or further disciplinary action as necessary.

SOCIAL MEDIA: As a representative of the Department of Athletics and the East Meadow School District, you are always in the public eye. Please keep the following in mind as you participate on social networking web sites:

- Understand that anything posted online is available to anyone in the world. Any text or photo placed online is out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site.
- You should not post any information, photos, or other items online that could embarrass you, your family, your team, the Athletic Department, or the East Meadow School District This includes information, photos and items that may be posted by others on your site.
- Behavioral expectations in the online world are the same as in the real world. Student-athletes could face discipline or sanctions for conduct committed or evident online that violates this code in the Student Code of Conduct.

IMPORTANT

This is an extremely important and educationally sound Code of Conduct that recognizes the importance of good citizenship, sportsmanship, self-respect, mature judgment, as well as mutual respect that should serve as a corner stone for the character and fabric for athletes and athletic programs at the middle school and high school levels.

We ask that you keep the Code of Conduct for Athletes visible in your home as a continual reminder that participation in athletics is a privilege and that the experience should be valued.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Requirements for Tryouts

Athletes are expected to participate on the first day and all other dates of tryouts. Athletes who miss the official start date and express a late interest in tryouts may be denied the opportunity to participate in the program. In those programs where eliminations are made, coaches are expected to make their final selections from those in attendance at tryouts. Consideration for extenuating circumstances will only be given to those that notify the coach or Director of Athletics in advance of the tryouts.

As mentioned previously in this guide, commitment is vital to the success of all involved. There is undoubtedly a sacrifice to be made here, not only on the part of the athlete, but on the family as well. Athletes and parents are expected to make certain that personal plans, work schedules, and/or vacation plans are adjusted so as not to conflict with tryout dates, practices, and contests.

With respect to tryouts, past participation has no bearing on current school year team selections. The tryout is open to all. Athletes who were involved with the program the year before are not "guaranteed" a place on the team roster in the next season. All athletes should be prepared to "compete" for membership every year. Some students mature from one year to the next and may be included on the team after having been cut the year before. Cuts will be made, when necessary, on the basis of skill development, readiness for competition, and observance of the rules. As the program progresses to the varsity level, the size of a team becomes more a function of those needed to conduct effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest.

Note for Seniors: One of the most difficult situations coaches face is the dilemma of the senior who has been in the program for years and now is viewed as a limited role player. Seniors will not be accommodated with junior varsity experience, as this is considered a developmental program. At the varsity level, the best will play, regardless of age, as long as program expectations are met. Coaches are encouraged to be honest with seniors, and if it is clear to the coach during tryouts that the role of the senior will be limited, that information needs to be communicated. The senior presented with the opportunity to remain in the program with a limited role must be prepared to accept this role, and still meet all the expectations of the program with respect to attendance and work ethic, while still showing support for the team. This is a difficult challenge, and the senior must be willing to meet this challenge with a positive attitude if he or she wishes to remain a part of the team.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

The Athletic Department recognizes that the primary responsibility of student-athletes is their education. Therefore, the Athletic Department supports the concept that student athletes should work to their potential in the classroom and be committed to achieving maximum academic success. Athletes are expected to cooperate with guidelines established for those individuals who need to focus on greater academic responsibility and achievement. Refer to the school's student handbook for the Interscholastic Academic Eligibility Rules and Regulations.

Commitment to Practices/Games/Team

An athlete's first commitment must be to the school program. Coaches are not expected to excuse athletes from school practices and/or contests due to conflicts or commitments with outside, community club or travel team practices, contests and/or tournaments. Parents and athletes should not expect coaches to compromise their commitment expectations. We understand that opportunities exist for East Meadow's student-athletes, especially at the high school level, to participate on non-school sponsored teams, while participating on school-sponsored teams. However, when these situations occur, sound communication between the student-athlete, parent or guardian, coach, and athletic director is mandatory. With this in mind, each situation involving outside school competition must be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis prior to tryouts.

Holiday Practices: Students will not be penalized for missing practice on a day of religious observance. Such days are delineated in the school calendar.

Athletes are expected to attend every practice and contest, unless excused by their coach. If an athlete is in school, he or she is expected at practice. Excused absences are permitted for extenuating circumstances. Timely communication between the coach, parent and/or athlete in this situation is essential.

Athletes are encouraged to attend extra help; but this should not result in an absence from practice. The athlete is asked to tell the coach of their intentions to attend extra-help before practice time and to get a pass from the extra-help teacher and present it to the coach when arriving at practice.

Once selected for a team, an athlete is expected to finish the season. As a general rule, an individual who drops out once selections have been made may not try out for another team that season. If the coaches of both teams involved make an appeal to the Athletic Director and are both in agreement that a change would be beneficial, the appeal can be considered. A student dismissed from a team for disciplinary reasons may not try out for another team that season.

Family Vacations

Student-athletes are expected to make a full commitment to the season and notify the coach of any potential commitment conflicts at the start of the season when tryouts begin. In some sports, a problem with commitment may impact the selection process.

When parents and student-athletes choose to take their family vacation during a sport season, it

must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry, personal conditioning, the performance level of the individual, and the overall performance of the team. Each and every individual on the team has a role, not just in the game, but in the practice climate as well, regardless of how much playing time the athlete is experiencing. Commitment during the vacation periods involves self-sacrifice, not only on the part of the athlete, but the family as well.

Parents/Student-athletes who ask for the exception to our practice policy present the coach with an uncomfortable dilemma. Coaches need to set the same standards of expectations for all participants, and asking them to make exceptions for some, and not for others, is unfair to the team. Furthermore, making such exceptions, without consequence, sets the tone for others in the future. Commitment is a critical component for success. Keep in mind that the school district has a commitment to the contest schedule, and to our opponents, who are also committed to playing a particular contest during the vacation period. A forfeiture of a contest scheduled over vacation impacts the opponent, who is expecting to be provided with quality competitive experience as well.

All athletes should be expected to plan ahead and attend these practices and/or competitions, if they wish to remain on the team, maintain playing eligibility, and earn a participation certificate.

During the fall season, high school athletes are expected to be at tryouts during the summer vacation period. For football, this means at least two weeks prior to the start of school, and for all other high school sports, the start date begins at least one week prior to the start of school. Fall athletes should be prepared to practice twice a day (morning session and evening session) prior to the start of school.

In high school, athletes should be prepared to give up time during the vacations if there are scheduled practices or games.

Classroom and School Attendance

No student-athlete may participate in a practice, scrimmage or contest on a day when the student was absent from school, unless a school administrator grants special permission for the absence. A student-athlete must arrive in school before 9:30 a.m. for high school and 10:30 a.m. for middle school to be eligible for participation.

Students who are suspended “out of school” may not practice or compete during the suspension period. Coaches and administrators reserve the right to deal with those students who have been disciplined in the school day on an individual basis with respect to practice and/or contest eligibility.

No student-athlete excused for medical reasons from a physical education class may participate in a practice, scrimmage, or contest on the same day. Note that Commissioner’s Regulations

dictate that a student-athlete is ineligible if he or she is medically excused from participation in a physical education class.

Students who demonstrate problems with school absences, tardiness, either excused or unexcused, are subject to suspension and/or dismissal from the team. Athletes are expected to get to school on time and make a commitment to classroom attendance.

Transportation

Athletes are expected to use transportation provided by the school “to” and “from” all athletic contests. Student-athletes are expected to arrive for bus departures on time and may not drive to the site. If a student does not make the bus and arrives at the site without administrative approval in advance, the athlete should not expect to participate.

In special cases, a parent may need permission to transport their child to a game site on a given date. In such cases, the request must be made to a building administrator, by filling out the “Parent/Guardian Pick-Up Consent Form,” in advance of the contest. These shall be considered only as the “rare exception” and should be reserved for emergency situations.

Athletes at away contests are expected to remain “on site” and under the direct supervision of the coach at all times. All students will be expected to conduct themselves appropriately when traveling with the team. All athletes are expected to return to school with the team after contests as a continuation of the team experience. Parents should not expect to take their athlete home from the game site unless it is the exception. In any case, the coach can only approve such a request if the parent personally approaches the coach at the game site. This is the only way we have of making certain that the athlete is, in fact, leaving with their parent. Parents may only take their child home. No child will be permitted to leave an away site with anyone other than his or her parent. Failing to comply with our transportation and supervision policies at away contests may jeopardize an athlete’s team eligibility. Parents are expected to pick up athletes in a timely fashion after home games or when the athlete returns from an away contest. Athletes should check with the coach for the estimated time of pick up.

In almost all cases at the middle school level, athletes will be finished with practice in time to use school district transportation to return home at the end of the practice day. At the high school level, junior varsity and varsity teams will finish practice in time to use district transportation as well. However, in some sports, such as volleyball and basketball, the boys and girls share facilities which may require practice at later times. The district will not be able to accommodate these athletes with district transportation. Transportation arrangements need to be made for travel home after late practices.

Transportation to Postseason Contests

Any athlete participating in a Regional, Intersectional, or State Championship Event must travel to the event on the transportation provided by Section 8. Parents cannot transport their child to any postseason contest at the regional level or beyond. There is no appeal to this Section 8 regulation.

An athlete may travel home with their parents provided a written request is presented, in advance of the departure date, to the Section 8 Sports Chair Coordinator. If approval has not been given in advance, the athlete will be expected to return home from the contest with the Section 8 team.

Postseason Eligibility

As per NYSPHSAA and Section 8, to be eligible for postseason play (sectional, regional, intersectional or state competition), a team must have competed in six (6) school scheduled contests, which occurred on six (6) different dates, during the season. An individual is eligible to compete for the team if he or she has been an eligible participant on a team in that sport for a minimum of six (6) scheduled contests during the regular season.

For football, a student must be an eligible participant for a minimum of three contests. Contestants in individual sports (cross country, golf, swimming and diving, tennis, track, and wrestling) must have represented their school in six (6) scheduled contests during the season to be eligible. These required contests must occur on six (6) different dates and must be completed prior to the conclusion of the team's regular schedule.

An athlete who comes out late and/or misses part of the season due to injury cannot come back and participate in post-season play without a medical waiver.

Note: In all cases, the number of contests referred to above must be officiated contests.

STUDENT-ATHLETES' MEDICALS/RETURNING AFTER INJURIES

Because it is imperative that student-athletes wishing to participate in interscholastic athletics be given proper medical examinations, and because student-athletes who have been injured or suffer an extended illness need to be given proper medical clearance before returning to their sport, the following policy and regulations shall be in effect in the East Meadow School District:

PRE-SEASON MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

No student shall participate in an interscholastic sport without first having received medical clearance by a licensed medical doctor.

If the physical examination is to be done by the district's medical doctor, the following procedures must be adhered to:

- The student-athlete must obtain a pre-examination screening, including height, weight, blood pressure, urine analysis, and a mini-stress test from the school medical official.
- The student-athlete must complete the Athletic Health History, signed by a parent or guardian, prior to the physical examination being given.
- The school medical official will then indicate whether each individual student athlete is medically cleared for participation.
- The student-athlete must complete an Update Form at the start of each sport season and turn it into the school medical official in order to gain clearance for that specific season.

If the physical examination is to be done by the student-athlete's family medical doctor, the proceeding guidelines must be followed:

- The student-athlete must obtain a Health Examination Form from the school medical official;
- The family medical doctor must complete the Health Examination Form, and the student-athlete must return it to the school medical official;
- At the start of any new season, in order to gain clearance, the student-athlete must return an Update Form to the school medical official;
- The school medical official will review both forms and, if there is a problem, he/she will contact the family medical doctor to discuss the matter;
- Only after the school medical official has reviewed the two forms will the student athlete be able to receive clearance to participate in a sport.

STUDENT-ATHLETES WHO HAVE SUFFERED PROLONGED

ILLNESS OR HAVE BEEN INJURED

If a student-athlete has been injured for any reason or if he/she suffers an illness causing more than five consecutive days of absenteeism from school, the following procedures must be observed:

- Maintain effective communication amongst the coach, athletic trainer, building athletic director, and school medical official regarding the nature of the illness or injury as well as the ongoing status of the student-athlete;
- In order to resume participation after an injury or an illness resulting in absenteeism from school lasting more than five consecutive days, the student athlete must receive medical clearance;
- If clearance is to be obtained from the family medical doctor, it must be placed into writing and approved by the school medical official before the student-athlete can return to the team;
- The family medical doctor's note must clearly state that the student-athlete may return to competition at a specific point in time; statements such as "until further notice" will not be considered acceptable as official clearance.

Although the district will take reasonable care to protect student athletes, students may still sustain injuries. In order to most effectively ensure student safety, open communication between students, parents and coaches about the child's medical condition is critical. Coaches, and other appropriate staff, will receive guidance and training regarding recognition of injury and removal of the student athlete from play in the event of injury. Parents and/or students are expected to report injuries so that student health can be protected.

NYSPHSAA Athletic Placement Process (APP)

The Athletic Placement Process (APP) designed by NYSPHSAA is a process for screening student-athletes to determine their readiness to compete in interscholastic athletic competition by evaluating their physical maturity, fitness and skill. The intent of this program is to provide athletes in grades 7-12 an opportunity to safely participate at an appropriate level of competition based upon readiness, rather than age and grade.

The Athletic Placement Process was designed for mature and exceptionally skilled students to advance to a more challenging level of play. It is aimed at the few select student-athletes who can benefit from such a placement because of their level of readiness.

Criteria have been formulated by the New York State Education Department, which gives an accurate measurement for eligibility and highlights the inherent differences in the various individual and team sports. The Commissioner of Education (Section 135.4) governs rules, regulations, and guidelines for this program.

Normally, a student is eligible for high school athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons, commencing with the youngster's entry into the ninth grade. However, by satisfying the requirements of the Athletic Placement Process, a student may receive extended eligibility to permit:

1. Participation during five consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the eighth grade; or
2. Participation during six consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the seventh grade.

Athletic Placement Process

If the youngster is approved to participate in the Athletic Placement Process, the following procedures apply:

- Parent/Guardian Permission:** All students who are to be evaluated must first obtain written parent/guardian permission before any evaluation may begin.
- Administrative Approval:** The athletic administrator will confirm that the student is suitable for consideration. Additionally, because of the increased time demands of participation at the high school level, the student's academic performance (as determined at the local level) should be at or above grade level. Furthermore, administration will assess the student's emotional readiness to socialize with high school-aged students. If the student is not academically or socially ready, the student should not proceed through the APP.
- Medical Clearance:** (Must be completed BEFORE the physical fitness portion of the process)
The district medical director will determine a student's physical maturity level and compare the physical size of the student in relation to that of the students against whom the student wishes to compete. If the student is determined to have attained the appropriate physical maturity level and comparable physical size for the desired sport and level, the student may

proceed. If the student is determined not to have attained an appropriate physical maturity level for the desired sport and level, the process stops.

- Sport Skill Evaluation: The sport coach will rely on past personal observations and may consider input from the student's former coaches to complete the evaluation. If the coach is unfamiliar with the student, the sport coach may go observe the student in a physical education class.
- Physical Fitness Testing: A certified physical education teacher who is not a coach of the sport for which the student will be trying out performs the Physical Fitness Test. The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process, and the student must meet the 85th percentile level for their age in 4 out of 5 test E components. Students trying out for swimming may choose to either do the 1-mile walk/ run or the 500-yard swim.

Exception to the physical fitness test requirement: Students who desire to try out for bowling or golf teams are not required to complete the physical fitness testing.

- Qualification Determination: The results of the three evaluations will be sent to the director of physical education/athletics. Only students who pass all parts of the APP are permitted to try out.
- Try Outs: The student is allowed to try out for the sport and level requested or the student must return to the modified level of competition.

Timeline for Completion of the Athletic Placement Process Testing

Since the athletics Placement Process takes a considerable amount of time, evaluation must begin early enough for the athlete to complete all testing before the first day of scheduled high school tryouts.

WELLNESS AND SAFETY

Coaching Certification

In accordance with state mandates, East Meadow will always look to find qualified, certified educators to fill coaching assignments. If such a qualified educator is not available, the district may appoint a non-certified teacher as a coach.

All East Meadow coaching personnel are certified in accordance with NYSPHSAA standards. As per state mandates, all coaches employed in our district are certified in CPR, First Aid and Concussions. All coaches have access and are trained to use the Automated External Defibrillators on site at all of our district facilities.

Each coach is responsible for guiding their student-athletes through practices, scrimmages, and games appropriate for their age and level of play. These activities are conducted so that the physical welfare, health, and safety of the participants are protected and fostered. The coach is responsible for teaching physical skills, moral values, sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play, in accordance with school philosophy. All activity should always be conducted in an appropriate educational environment.

The Role of the High School Athletic Trainer

Athletes and parents must recognize the risk of injury that may occur during physical activity. Our staff is prepared to address injury needs and is trained to provide appropriate first aid in an emergency.

East Meadow provides a certified Athletic Trainer at the high school level to provide emergency medical services for injured and rehabilitating athletes. This professional is qualified to develop prevention strategies through appropriate training methods and physical conditioning programs. The Athletic Trainer ensures proper follow-up care after an injury, consults with the parents, school nurse, coach, and the school district physician when such communication is beneficial to the well-being of the athlete. It is vital for our athletes and/or parents to bring illness, medical problems, or injuries to the attention of the athletic trainer, school nurse, and coach as soon as possible.

Emergency Plan

Please be advised that the East Meadow School District has a comprehensive emergency medical plan in place in the event of an accident or injury that occurs during practices or games. If the injury or illness requires a high level of care, the EMS system will be activated, and emergency services called. If the athlete is injured in a practice or game on the home site and transported to a medical facility, the athletic trainer, a member of the coaching staff, or school personnel will accompany the athlete in the ambulance, whenever possible. The coach is expected to follow up with the parent/athlete after

the practice and/or game ends. The coach shall notify the school nurse and an accident report will be initiated within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

SCHOOL INSURANCE: PUPIL BENEFIT PLAN

The East Meadow School District maintains a program of accident insurance for ALL students participating in the interscholastic program. The basic philosophy of the Pupil Benefits Plan. is to ASSIST the parents with medical expenses. This policy is ONLY in excess of those benefits payable under the family and/or employer policy. Listed below are the necessary procedures that must be followed if an athlete is injured:

1. Report the injury to the coach IMMEDIATELY to initiate the ACCIDENT REPORT.
2. Report the injury to the nurse's office.
3. File all medical and hospital claims with your own insurance carrier promptly.
4. Notify the Pupil Benefits Plan., if necessary, for any charges in EXCESS of all final payments under other policy(s). Notification must include a copy of all benefits paid, or a copy of rejection of benefits.

PLEASE NOTE: Claims are subject to a \$100 deductible.

Return to Play After Injury

Any student-athlete under treatment by a private physician must have written permission from his/her physician in order to return to active status in the sports program. If an athlete misses five (5) days of practice due to illness or injury, he or she must be given clearance by both their private physician and the school physician before returning to play. The school physician has the final authority to determine the physical capability of a student to participate in a sport.

NYSPHAA Heat Alert Policy

In an effort to protect the safety and well-being of the athletes, has a Heat Alert Policy in place for those days where the temperature and humidity index warrant special precautions. On those days when the Heat Index reaches 86 - 90 (or the Temperature/Humidity Index reaches 72), practice sessions are modified, and contest rules are modified to permit additional time outs for rest and forced water breaks. On those days when the Heat Index reaches 96 (or the Temperature/Humidity Index reaches 78), no physical activity is permitted (swimming excluded). Team meetings are permitted. Section 8 requires all athletic offices to monitor heat and humidity conditions, and all coaches are given notification of the alert on a daily basis when weather conditions are hot and/or extremely humid. All Section 8 schools are mandated to comply with the Heat Alert Policy.

NYSPHAA Wind Chill Procedures

Administration of Wind Chill Procedures:

- Wind chill will be checked 1 hour before the contest/practice by a certified athletic trainer, athletic director, or school designee when the air temperature is 39 degrees (Fahrenheit) or lower.
- The athletic trainer, athletic director, or school designee will use the Weatherbug APP to determine the heat index for the area of the contest/practice. Once a person is on the Weatherbug APP, they will put in the zip code for the location of the contest/practice and the website will give them air temperature as well as the RealFeel temperature (wind chill).
- If the RealFeel temperature (wind chill) is 10 degrees or below, the athletic trainer, athletic director, or school designee must re-check the RealFeel (wind chill) at halftime or midway point of the contest. If the RealFeel (wind chill) temperature is - 11 degrees (Fahrenheit) or lower, the contest will be suspended.

ALL Head Injuries Adhere to the EMUFSD Concussion Policy

It is well known that participating in sports can be a highly rewarding experience. However, there are certain risks an athlete must face while involved in competitive athletic situations. One of these risks is the potential for injury. While most injuries are minor and heal over time, one cannot overlook the seriousness of head injuries.

Head injuries may occur in a number of ways: contact with another player, contact with the ground or other equipment, or a sudden movement or rotation of the head without a force. A mild brain injury may produce various signs and symptoms, which include dizziness, headache, nausea, and blurry vision. A more serious trauma to the head may result in loss of memory and/or brain function. Other types of head injuries can cause small tears and result in bleeding in the brain, a subdural hematoma. If a player returns to competition too soon, he or she may also be in danger of second impact syndrome, in which a mild head injury can become potentially fatal.

Head injuries in school interscholastic athletic programs have increased in numbers as the level of competition has risen. Therefore, East Meadow has taken special precautions to ensure the safety of all athletes:

1. The pre-participation examination health questionnaire screens all athletes for a history of their head injuries. Please give as much information as possible about any head injury that may have occurred in the past.
2. The high school athletic trainers address each coach and team about the dangers of head injuries and monitor all athletes who sustain any head injuries during the season.
3. All coaches make certain that an athlete who has experienced a head injury is immediately brought to the attention of the athletic trainer. Head injury instructional guidelines are followed, with appropriate parental notification.
4. Any athlete, at any level who suffers a head injury, is required to see a primary care

physician, and obtain medical clearance before returning to play. The school physician reserves the right to determine the capability of an athlete to return to a sport, and may, in certain instances, require clearance from a specialist (neurologist, etc.).

STUDENT-ATHLETE CONCERNS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student-Athlete Possessions

All student-athletes are provided with a locker for their personal use located in the physical education locker room or team room facility. Since this area is used by numbers of students throughout the course of an afternoon, and teams dismiss their athletes at varying times, it is impossible to make certain that the locker room facility is secured at all times.

All student-athletes will receive a lock. The athlete is to assume the responsibility for locking up and securing their books, clothing, and personal possessions prior to leaving the facility for practice and contests each day.

Team Uniforms and School Issued Equipment

This is to certify that your son/daughter is responsible for all uniforms issued to him/her during the season of Interscholastic Participation. If any property is lost or unnecessarily damaged, the athlete's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are held responsible for financial reimbursement to the East Meadow School District. Failure to reimburse the District for lost or damaged athletic equipment may result in the athlete NOT being permitted to participate further in the Interscholastic Program.

NOTE: IMPORTANT- ALL UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT ISSUED BY THE EAST MEADOW SCHOOL DISTRICT MUST BE RETURNED NO LATER THAN 7 DAYS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF YOUR LAST ATHLETIC CONTEST.

Failure to meet this requirement may result in the athlete losing the privilege to participate in any portion of the Interscholastic Athletic program.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Coaches Associations and County Awards

County and State Championship Awards are presented to team members at the Section 8 or State Finals or at the Coaches Association Dinner. They are not purchased or presented by the district.

Most of the sports in Nassau County have organized Coaches Associations that raise funds for various awards that are presented at county banquets. Such awards may include Honorable Mention, All-League, All-Conference, All-Division, and All-County Awards. Coaches Associations have no affiliation with the school district or Section 8. They are an independent body, governed by their own by-laws and officers. Therefore, these postseason awards, presented by the coaches, may vary from sport to sport and year to year. The members of the County Coaches Association determine the selection criteria for awards, pay for the awards, and fund the banquet. Neither the school district, nor the Section, has any influence with regard to the selection of those individuals who receive these awards.

COLLEGE RECRUITMENT AND ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Many of our student-athletes express an interest in continuing their athletic participation at the collegiate level. While there are many opportunities for our athletes to play at the next level, athletic scholarships are limited and are available primarily for the “elite athlete”. Athletes who are interested in pursuing opportunities should discuss this matter with their guidance counselor as soon as possible, preferably as a freshman. This is very important since athletic skill is not the only determining factor when deciding who is eligible for a sports scholarship. There are academic requirements that are set forth by the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). The NCAA website (www.ncaa.org) provides information on how student-athletes can comply with NCAA bylaws in order to compete in intercollegiate athletics. It includes information on what high school students need to do to be eligible to compete in their first year in college, as well as guidelines that coaches and prospective student-athletes must follow during the recruiting process. Additionally, students are required to complete the NCAA Clearinghouse eligibility form (www.NCAAClearinghouse.net). Since the eligibility requirements change from time to time, it is very important that you regularly check this site and discuss any changes with your coach and guidance counselor.

Remember PRIOR to trying out you must register through Family ID

FamilyID is a secure registration platform that provides you with an easy, user-friendly way to register for our programs, and helps us to be more efficient and environmentally responsible. When you register through FamilyID, the system keeps track of your information in your FamilyID profile. You enter your information only once for each family member for multiple uses and multiple programs.

BEFORE YOU REGISTER:

Prior to registration, you will need to have a valid physical examination recorded on a health form and dated within one calendar year of the first day of tryouts. The form can be uploaded to your FamilyID account, mailed, or given to the school nurse.

INFORMATION NEEDED TO REGISTER:

It will be helpful to have the following information handy to allow for accurate completion of your online registration.

- Student Athlete's Physician Information
- Emergency Contacts Information

REGISTRATION PROCESS:

A parent/guardian should register by clicking on the FamilyID link below or go to your student-athletes school website under athletics and click on the FamilyID link.

<https://hello.familyid.com/>

Athletic Administration

Jason Supple
Director of Physical Education, Health, and Athletics
(516) 478-5557 * jsupple@emufsd.us

Joshua Friedman, Athletic Director
W.T. Clarke High & Middle Schools
(516) 876-7424 * jfriedman@emufsd.us

Kevin Regan, Athletic Director
East Meadow High School
(516) 228-5224 * kregan@emufsd.us

Janine Heilbronn, Athletic Director
Woodland Middle School
(516) 564-6541 * jheilbronn@emufsd.us