

Schodack Central School District  
Maple Hill Middle and High School

Athletic Department

“Home of the Wildcats”



Interscholastic Athletics Handbook

for

Student-Athletes and Parents/Guardians

<http://www.schodack.k12.ny.us/scs/athletics/index.asp>  
<http://48522.digitalsports.com/>  
[https://twitter.com/MH\\_Athletics](https://twitter.com/MH_Athletics)

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**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**

Dear Parents/Guardians and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to the Maple Hill Interscholastic Athletic program. This handbook has been prepared to be used as a reference by our student-athletes and their parents/guardians in an effort to define responsibilities as they pertain to the rules and regulations, as well as the guidelines for participation in our interscholastic athletic program.

Upon entering secondary school, students are exposed to many new opportunities and challenges. An important part of the educational experience at this level is the extra-curricular programs available to students, in particular the interscholastic athletic program. Nationwide studies have shown that students involved in extra-curricular programs, such as interscholastic sports, achieve better grades, manage their time more effectively, have less discipline problems, and stay in school.

I am very pleased that you have shown an interest in this phase of our school program. It is my belief that participation in athletics is a privilege and honor that provides an opportunity for developing life-long skills not always available in a classroom. Our goal is to provide “a first class” experience that promotes team and individual growth in a safe and healthy environment.

When a student chooses to participate in our athletic program, he/she has committed his/herself to certain responsibilities and obligations. This handbook will acquaint you with some of the specific regulations/rules that are necessary for a well-organized program of interscholastic athletics.

The Maple Hill interscholastic athletic program is governed by the regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education’s basic code for extra-class athletic activities. In addition, Maple Hill is a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), Section II, and competes in the Patroon Conference.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Maple Hill athletic program. I look forward to working with you to ensure that you take advantage of the tremendous opportunities athletics can provide.

Sincerely,

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**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**PHILOSOPHY OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

The Schodack Central School District believes that a dynamic program of student activities is important to the educational development of all students. Therefore, interscholastic athletics is an integral part of the total educational process. Athletics should be a broadening experience in which harmony of mind-body functions is created through striving for physical and mental excellence. A well-coordinated program is vitally important to the morale of the school and our community.

Young people learn a great deal from participation in interscholastic athletics. Athletics serve as a miniature model of life in that they provide opportunities for students with regard to responsibility, fair play, cooperation, concern for others, leadership, respect for authority, good citizenship, loyalty, tolerance, and accountability.

It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one criterion when determining success. Developing the will to win and attaining maximum potential are the ultimate goals. To this end, the coaching staff must teach student-athletes to prepare their minds and bodies in order to reach maximum potential and then to be modest in victory and steadfast in defeat.

*It is important to note, that at no time will our program place the educational academic curriculum secondary in emphasis to interscholastic athletics.*

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

Our Goal:

The experience of participation in interscholastic athletics should reflect the total educational goals of our district.

Our Specific Objectives:

1. To develop an understanding and appreciation of the place which interscholastic sports and activities occupy in the American culture and by developing sound educational attitudes toward them.
2. To educate the school community in the appreciation of sports and activities and the best way to enjoy them from the point of view of good sportsmanship.
3. To serve as a focal point for the morale, spirit, and loyalty of students by providing a common meeting ground and enthusiasm which can be shared by all.
4. To allow for the development of physical growth, mental alertness, and emotional stability for all those who participate in athletics.
5. To provide the opportunity for a student to learn to handle winning and losing and to make decisions that affect themselves and members of their team.
6. To learn to develop, through hard work and dedication, a feeling of self-confidence and self-esteem in all participants.

## **NYSPHSAA CODE OF ETHICS**

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

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

## **PHILOSOPHY BY SPORT LEVEL**

### **Modified (Grades 7 & 8)**

This program is available to all students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade between the ages of 12 and 15. A student reaching the age of 16 during a sport season may complete that season and must play junior varsity or varsity the following season. Sport activities offered are determined by existence of leagues, student interest, and relationship to the high school program and board approval. At this level the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition. At this level there may be limitations on the number of students on one team. This program is designed to offer students the opportunity to engage in a more highly organized competitive experience than what is found in intramural or recreation programs, but not as involved as those found on JV or varsity teams. An attempt will be made to give all team members meaningful contest participation over the course of a season.

### **Junior Varsity (JV)**

This program is intended for those who display the potential of continued development into productive varsity level performers. Team membership varies according to the structure of each sport, but sophomores and freshman occupy the majority of the roster positions. Juniors may be eligible for the junior varsity program in certain instances. Also, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have satisfied all of the selection classification requirements may be included. At this level there may be limitations as to the number of students on the team. At this level increased emphasis is placed upon elements and strategies of team play, physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, and socio-emotional development. The JV program works towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and success. The outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level. An *attempt* will be made to play all participants, however equal playing time is neither required nor expected. 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

The varsity level of interscholastic athletics is the culmination of the high school athletic program. Normally, seniors and juniors make up the majority of the roster; however, gifted sophomores and freshmen may be considered. It is also possible for a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader who has met the selection requirements to be included on a varsity roster. At this level there may be limitations as to the number of students on the team. Team play, sportsmanship, individual physical ability, motivation, and mental attitude are all very important aspects of competition at this level. While contest participation over the course of the season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time is not guaranteed. It is vital that each team member has a role and knows its importance. Preparing to win and striving for victory in each contest are worthy goals of a varsity level team. The varsity coach is the leader of his/her sport program and is responsible for communication and system development among each level.

## RISK FACTOR IN SPORTS

Participation by a student in an interscholastic sport involves a certain degree of risk of physical injury. Such physical injury can occur in any type of activity, be it a “contact” or “non-contact” sport. Furthermore, many injuries are truly accidental in nature and by volunteering to participate in a school-sponsored athletic activity, a student and his/her parents/guardians assume the risks for injuries to occur.

## SELECTION CLASSIFICATION

The Selection Classification program is a process for screening student-athletes in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades to determine readiness to compete at a higher level of competition (junior varsity or varsity) than their current grade level. It is based on readiness, rather than grade level. This program has been designed to assess a student-athlete’s physical maturation, physical fitness, and skill. This program is intended for the **exceptional** few in each school who would be better served playing on a higher level than age or grade might indicate. Parents who wish for their child to be considered for this program should contact the Athletic Director and Middle School Nurse during sports sign-ups. Information must be collected and evaluated by the Director of Athletics/Physical Education before a student may try out for a team. Considerations that must be met include:

1. Recommendation for inclusion in this process will come from coaches, Athletic Director, principals, and physical education teachers.
2. Parental permission.
3. Medical examination and approval by the school physician with the development or maturity level determined by the school physician in accordance with established guidelines for the level of a particular sport.
4. The six-item athletic performance test must be administered by a physical education teacher or by the Director of Athletics/Physical Education. The athlete must meet or exceed the criteria established for the level of participation desired.
5. The individual’s prior experience and skill level is judged on the demands of the sport at the level of play at which the student is seeking to qualify.

**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

The purpose of these rules is to help an interscholastic athletic participant become a better citizen by seeking to demonstrate proper behavior and good attitude at all times. The following rules and regulations have been established by the athletic department and are supported by our administration and Board of Education. These rules are designed to instill pride, discipline, and team spirit to enable the individual to achieve maximum physical and/or mental performance in athletics. The individual is required to make a commitment to the community, school, team, coach and him/herself by adhering to the established rules and regulations, a condition that must be fulfilled for satisfactory participation in any sport. Obeying the rules is a matter of honor to each individual who makes this commitment. Enforcement of the rules and adjudication of any violations is the responsibility of the coach, athletic director, and administration.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MAPLE HILL STUDENT-ATHLETE**

Being a member of a Maple Hill athletic team is a privilege and honor. To many athletes, it is the fulfillment of an early ambition. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be attained. A solid athletic tradition has been developed by the hard work of many people over the years. As a member of an athletic team at Maple Hill you have inherited this great tradition. Your actions will reflect not only on those you are associated with now, but those who have contributed so much to our school in the past.

Some of our student-athletes have gone on to participate at the collegiate level. Also, some have achieved league, section, and state honors. Because of this fine tradition, a challenge is set for you to work hard and to make sure that your actions reflect the standards that have been established by the athletic department. **For the privilege of participating in athletics, all student-athletes must realize that more is expected of them than other students in our school.** In today's society, you will be expected to make sacrifices. As an athlete at Maple Hill, these sacrifices will benefit yourself, your team, and your school. Never before has the pressure of peer groups been so strong. In the long run, by saying "No" to these pressures, you and your family will be proud of the sacrifices and dedication that you have put forth to be a member of our athletic teams. If you take this opportunity to make yourself a better individual, it will be a truly gratifying educational experience. The highs and lows of athletic competition are achieved through hard work, dedication, and discipline and are rewarded with the development of fond memories, personal achievements, and friendships.

**Responsibilities to Yourself**

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden one self and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to strive for the greatest possible good from your high school experiences. Your studies and your participation in other school activities, as well as in athletics, prepare you for life as an adult.

**Responsibilities to Your School**

Another responsibility you assume as a team member is to your school. Maple Hill cannot maintain its position as an outstanding school unless you do your best in whatever activity you wish to engage. By participating in athletics to the maximum of your ability and displaying good sportsmanship, you are contributing to the reputation of the school.

### **Responsibilities to Others**

You have a responsibility to your parents/guardians to always do the best you can. When participating in athletics, we sometimes feel that we have failed if we have not won. By trying the best that you can and following all the rules set up by your team, you can feel justifiably proud of yourself no matter what the win/loss record dictates. Younger students look up to you and it is your responsibility to set a good example for them. They will copy a lot of things that you do just to be a member of your group. They need attention and guidance, so always take a few minutes to encourage them in whatever way possible.

**-“Character Counts”-**



**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**GUIDELINES FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

**MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION**

Each student-athlete will participate under the eligibility requirements, rules, and regulations set forth by the New York State Commissioner of Education and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, as well as the Schodack Central School District Board of Education. Each student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian will be required to sign and submit to the respective coach a “Guideline for Athletic Participation Authorization Form”. This form is good for the entire school year. The coach will then forward this form on to the athletic office. **A student-athlete will not be permitted to participate in scrimmages and games until this requirement is completed.**

**HEALTH AND MEDICAL**

1. **WARNING:** Participation in athletics does involve some risk. Physical injury can occur in any type of sports activity. By volunteering to participate in a school sponsored athletic activity, a student and his/her parents/guardians acknowledge the potential risk for physical injury to occur.
2. Sports physicals are scheduled prior to each sport season during the school year. Every student-athlete must pass a physical exam and **be approved by the school district or family physician** prior to practice or participation in any interscholastic sport. The student is responsible to report to or schedule their physical examinations. Physicals are good for one calendar year.
3. The athlete is to report all injuries, no matter how minor, to the coach. If warranted, the coach will complete an incident report to be filed with the school nurse.
4. If a student-athlete has a physician-attended injury or is absent from attendance in school or at practice sessions due to illness for five or more consecutive days, he/she must have the approval of the school physician or a medical release from the attending physician before participating in practice, scrimmage, or a game. This release must be filed with our school nurse. If a student-athlete goes to an emergency room, he/she must obtain a written release statement from the attending physician before leaving the hospital.
5. Medical expense resulting from any athletic injury must first be submitted to the parents/guardians insurance carrier. Any remaining balance may then be submitted to the school district’s insurance carrier by processing a claim form that can be obtained from the school district office. The school district’s insurance provides only supplemental coverage according to a schedule of benefits.
6. A health history update and health eligibility card is required for each sport season of participation and should be given to the school nurse. These forms can be found on the district website.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETES

The Board of Education encourages participation in interscholastic athletics, but also affirms that attaining acceptable academic standards is a student's primary responsibility. The regulation states that academic achievement will be given consideration in determining interscholastic athletic participation eligibility.

The principal of the Middle School and the principal of the High School shall annually develop process and procedures to implement eligibility policies in a manner appropriate to the age of the affected students and consistent with the intent of this regulation. The principals of the schools will meet annually before the beginning of the school year to review process and procedures to ensure acceptable consistency between the schools. An eligibility calendar will be developed annually for each building by the athletic director and building principal.

**A student must be in good academic standing in order to be eligible for full participation in interscholastic athletics.**

**Students in grades 7–12 who are in jeopardy of failing two or more courses as indicated on the interim report:**

- May continue to fully participate with a team if the student accepts a remedial plan of weekly supervised study.
- Students who do not accept or follow the remedial plan are deemed ineligible and may not participate until the next report that indicates they are failing less than two classes.

**Students who fail two courses as indicated on the report card:**

- May continue to fully participate with a team if the student accepts a remedial plan of weekly supervised study.
- If the student is still failing two courses on the next report card, that student is then deemed ineligible to participate. The student will remain ineligible until the next report that indicates they are failing less than two classes.
- Students who do not accept or follow the remedial plan are deemed ineligible and may not participate until the next report that indicates they are failing less than two classes.

**Students who fail three or more courses as indicated on the report card:**

- Are deemed ineligible to participate.
- The student will remain ineligible until the next report that indicates they are failing less than two classes.

Eligibility for fall sports is contingent upon academic standing from the previous school year.

If the ineligible period falls during a tryout time for a sport season where cuts must be made, a student will be allowed to participate in tryout practices up to a maximum of five if the student follows a remedial plan of supervised study.

Failing grades on report cards are grades that are below 65%. Students are considered “in jeopardy of failing”, based on interim reports if comments on the interim report indicate that the student currently has a failing average.

**Remedial Plan**

- Student will report to a structured after school study period and/or meet with his/her teachers during the after school period for a minimum of three days per week.
- Teacher or after school study period monitor must sign the remedial plan form to indicate that the student did stay for extra help or to work on assignments.
- It is the responsibility of the student to bring the remedial plan form to the athletic director/principal.
- The athletic director/principal will review the remedial plan forms at the end of each week.
- Any student who has not completed the remedial plan for that week, unless absent, shall immediately be removed from the sports team by the athletic director.

## **CONDUCT OF AN ATHLETE**

The conduct of an athlete is closely observed in many areas of life, in particular, on the field, in the classroom, and in the community. Take pride in yourself, your team, and your school. You should always project a positive image. Winning or losing is not as important as your conduct in victory or defeat. Your reaction is what people will remember, not the score.

Unsatisfactory citizenship on the part of a student-athlete (in or out of season) could result in the student-athlete being dismissed from a team or being deemed ineligible for participation in all interscholastic athletic competition for school. Good sportsmanship and citizenship are required of all student-athletes. A student-athlete's conduct is to be guided by the following principles:

- To have respect for the rights and feelings of others.
- To behave in a manner that reflects positively on yourself, your family, your team, your school, and your community.

### **On the Field/Court**

In the area of athletic competition, a "class" student-athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics. A student-athlete learns fast that losing is part of the game and that you should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well-played game after the contest whether in victory or defeat. Game officials will always be treated with respect and a sense of understanding.

**- "Win or Lose – Do it with Class" -**

### **Off the Field/Court**

Student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will reflect positively on their team, our school, and themselves. Any inappropriate behavior (including accusation, involvement with police, and/or arrests) will result in a disciplinary review and be subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.

**- "Character is who you are when no one is watching" -**

### **In the Classroom**

In the academic area, a good athlete becomes a good student. A person cannot be a classroom laggard and think he/she can be an outstanding athlete. If you are lazy in class, you will be lazy on the practice field or court and never reach your full potential. As an athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies to insure acceptable grades. Plan ahead and be organized. In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectable attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty/staff at all times. Horseplay and disrespect are not approved habits or behavior.

**- "Academics + Athletics = Success" -**

## **TRAINING RULES**

As an athlete selected for participation in the interscholastic athletic program of the Maple Hill Middle and High Schools, it is our hope that you will be a solid member of our athletic program. It is very important that the student-athletes and the parent/guardians understand, agrees to, abide by, and reinforce the essential policies in regard to athletic training rules. The regulations have been established for the benefit of those who participate as players, students, and representatives of our school and community.

It is the overwhelming opinion of health educators and teachers/coaches that athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules, which include abstinence from tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that the use of tobacco, alcohol, and any mood modifying substances produce harmful effects on the human body. Additionally, significant findings along with publicity surrounding deaths and arrests of professional, college, and high school athletes have most certainly pointed out the undesirability of using chemicals (tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, steroids, any performance enhancing food supplement – e.g. Creatine and any other controlled substance), especially at a teenage level. Our athletic program and staff as well as the National Federation of State High School Associations wholeheartedly endorse these findings. Unfortunately, education and reasoning alone are not always sufficient to deter the use or experimentation of these chemicals and controlled substances. Therefore, the Maple Hill Athletic Department will require all of its participants to agree to and abide by the student-athlete training code.

It is Schodack Central School District and the Athletic Department policy to prevent and prohibit the possession of and/or use of any amounts of alcoholic beverage, tobacco products, or unauthorized use of drugs (including synthetic cannabinoids) by all student-athletes.

The chemical health policy at Maple Hill Middle and High School is in effect year round, in and out of season, on and off the field, in and out of uniform. There is a reason for this; we care about the welfare of our student-athletes. We also demand a commitment from you if you want to be involved in the athletic program at Maple Hill Middle and High School.

The Code of Conduct found in the Maple Hill Middle and High School student-parent handbook is in effect all year and any suspensions resulting from this policy will take precedence over Athletic Department policy.

## **Cyber Image Policy**

What will you do when someone brings forward photo images of Maple Hill athletes in the presence of alcohol, marijuana or other drugs, or involvement in out of character behaviors, which reflect strongly on our athletic program, our school, or our community?

Any identifiable image, photo, or video which implicates a student-athlete to have been in possession or presence of drugs and/or alcohol, portrays actual use, out of character behavior, or a crime, shall constitute a violation of the code. It must also be noted that there may be persons, who would attempt to implicate an athlete, by taking such images, to place them in a situation where they might be in violation of this code standard. Since there is no way to establish a timeframe for when or location of where the image was taken, it shall be a responsibility that the student-athlete must assume. This is our rationale for demanding that our athletes not place themselves in such unacceptable environments.

More and more educational institutions are dealing with images depicting student-athletes using or in the presence of alcohol/drugs. This simple clause in our code of conduct puts the responsibility on every individual to make proper choices.

## Violation Reports

Reports of alleged student-athlete violations of the above mentioned training rule policy must be personally witnessed and submitted in writing to the school administration and/or Athletic Director within five school days of the violation in question. Violation reports will be accepted from any coaching staff member, faculty/staff member, and/or law enforcement agency.

### Guidelines for the Imposition of Penalties

Upon report and after investigation of an alleged violation, the Athletic Director shall provide verbal notice, followed by written notice, to the student-athlete and his/her parents/guardians regarding the necessary disciplinary action to be administered. The respective coach will be informed as well. If requested, a conference will be held between the student-athlete, his/her parents/guardians, the coach, the Athletic Director, and possibly a school administrator.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – The student shall be removed from all athletic teams for the remainder of that sport season or 30 consecutive school days, whichever is longer. If this behavior takes place in school or at any school related activity, the student will be subject to all other penalties that apply in addition to the removal from a team or activity.

- A coach, faculty or staff member, administrator, or Board of Education member has a responsibility to report a student observed violating this rule at any time.
- Parents also have a responsibility to notify the coach or advisor when they are aware that their child has violated this rule.
- Any student who violates this rule has a responsibility to remove themselves from participation on a team.
- If a student finds himself or herself in a situation where tobacco, alcohol, or controlled substances are being illegally used, they must immediately remove themselves from that situation. A student's failure to do so will result in a meeting between the student, coach, and athletic director or student, advisor, and principal to determine whether or not any disciplinary action is warranted.
- Students may reduce up to 50% the length of duration of any penalty by participating in counseling, assessment, a cessation program or community service recommended by the athletic director, principal, and guidance counselor and approved by the superintendent. The decision may be appealed to the Board of Education.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** – Student will be removed from all athletic programs for one calendar year from date of infraction. (Example: infraction occurs on Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of said year, they may not return until after Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of the next year.)

Suspension begins from the date a determination of guilt is made and inclusive of all days beginning with the first day of practice of fall season through the official end of the school year (graduation). Student-athletes whose suspension carries over into a subsequent sport season may **not** try out until their suspension period is complete, at which time a tryout will be permitted, if requested. Summer weeks do **not** count in the suspension should there be a carry over in the event the school year ends before the suspension is complete.

### RIGHT OF DUE PROCESS

All appeals regarding a student-athlete violation must be made in writing to the athletic director within three school days after the violation decision has been rendered. The appeal committee will consist of the athletic director, principal, a school counselor, a coach, and one faculty member selected by the committee. The appeal committee will conduct a private hearing, allowing attendance only by those directly involved in a case. A majority vote of the committee will render a decision within three school days of the hearing. The committee's decision is **final**. The athletic director will send a written notice of the committee's decision to the student-athlete and his/her parents/guardians.

Individual coaches may establish additional rules and regulations for their respective sport. It is the responsibility of the coach to clearly inform team members and parents/guardians of these rules. The coach will administer penalties for violation of these established team rules

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT**

Athletics is an outgrowth of the Physical Education Program. Those students demonstrating outstanding skills, attitude, and effort are those encouraged to participate in athletics. The wide range of activities in physical education gives the students an excellent background in physical fitness, lifetime sports, and team sports. Because of the importance of physical education, all athletes will be required to change for and participate in physical education throughout the school year. Athletes who are illegally absent from or do not participate in physical education classes will not be permitted to attend practices of games on the day of absence. **The NYSPHSAA regulations state that a student must be enrolled in physical education to participate in athletics.**

### **ATTENDANCE**

A student-athlete shall be in attendance within the **first 30 minutes** of the beginning of the school day in order to practice or participate in an athletic contest. Students who have a written legal excuse are exempt from this policy. (Examples: doctors/physicians visits, sickness/death in the family, educational visits, religious observance, or any others listed in the student handbook.) Habitual absences and/or tardiness will affect eligibility as determined by the coach and/or athletic director. If you are healthy, get to school on time! If you are to be excused, be sure the excuse is for a valid and acceptable reason. Communication with your coach and the attendance office is imperative. Attendance on the day before, the day of, and day after contests is considered to be especially important.

### **SUSPENSIONS/DETENTIONS**

The following are cause for a student-athlete to be removed from a team for the duration of the season:

1. A student-athlete is suspended out of school on more than one occasion during the season. The principal will notify the athletic director, who will notify the coach of suspension.
2. A second time an official ejects a player from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior in one season. The definition of unsportsmanlike behavior is stated in the Section II Sportsmanship Policy included with these rules.
3. Harassment, profanity, intimidation, taunting, or other acts of misconduct, written, verbal, or electronic communication directed towards anyone. This statement is reflective of the school district policy.

### **PRACTICES AND CONTESTS**

Each athlete is required to attend all practices and/or contests unless excused by the coach. An athlete who is injured or ill but still able to attend school is also required to attend practice even though they will not be actively participating. Any student-athlete failing to abide by this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action could range from a warning, to suspension, to dismissal from the team. **Remember that once you have been placed on a team roster, you are making a commitment to that team for the full season.** Any student-athlete who considers quitting a team must first talk with the respective coach and/or athletic director and communicate his/her concerns and reasons for leaving the team. Quitting a team may jeopardize your ability to tryout for a team in the next sport season.

## **TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM AWAY CONTEST**

All players and team personnel will ride to and from all athletic contests on transportation approved and provided by the school district. It is highly recommended that all student-athletes travel to and from away contests with their team; however there are certain circumstances where a student-athlete will need to travel with their parent/guardian. In order to be transported by a parent/guardian from an away contest the Transportation Acknowledgment and Authorization Form must be given to the athletic director at least 24 hours in advance. This form can be found on the district website. The parent/guardian must sign the transportation release form provided by the coach before taking their son/daughter from the contest. Permission for a student-athlete to leave with any other individual will not be given.

## **CHANGING SPORTS**

It is important that the student-athlete try to go out for the right sport, particularly at the varsity and JV levels. A student-athlete may not change from one sport to another once a team has been selected, without permission from the athletic director. If he/she has been cut from one team, it is legitimate to try out for another sport, provided that team's roster is not finalized.

## **CONFLICTS**

An individual student who attempts to participate in too many activities will undoubtedly be in a position of a conflict of obligation. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in school activities and, to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflict. The athletes and parents/guardians must realize that many time schedules cannot be changed because of league or section regulations or facility usage. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the coaches involved immediately when a conflict arises, not the day of the conflict.

## **SPECIALIZATION/RECRUITMENT**

The Schodack Central School District encourages students to participate in a variety of sports. As such, the athletic department does not endorse in principle or practice the concepts of specialization or recruitment. Specialization occurs when a student-athlete involves him/herself in one athletic activity over an extended period of time, forsaking other athletic endeavors of interest. Recruitment occurs when a student-athlete who is involved in more than one sport is encouraged by a coach that it is in his/her best interest to compete in only one sport.

## **EQUIPMENT/UNIFORMS**

All athletic equipment must be returned at the end of the sport season to the coach. This includes uniforms, medical braces, and/or other equipment, which was given to you by the coach. A student-athlete will not be given a uniform for another sport until all equipment is returned. The student-athlete will be financially responsible for any unreturned equipment. Each in-season athlete is assigned a lock and long locker in the locker room by the Physical Education Department where all valuable possessions should be secured.

## **CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION**

From time to time during the course of an athletic career parents/guardians and student-athletes may have questions or concerns that need to be addressed. The team coach is the best source of information. The student-athlete should address concerns directly with his/her team coach. If, after speaking with the coach you are not satisfied, the parent/guardian should speak to the coach. The next step would be for the parent/guardian and/or student-athlete to communicate with the athletic director. The final step would be to meet with the school principal.



### **FAMILY VACATIONS**

When parents/guardians and student-athletes choose to take their family vacation during sport seasons, it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry and personal conditioning. Student-athletes who miss practices or competition for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted. Coaches shall make every effort to inform parents/guardians and student athletes of the season's schedule as far in advance as possible.

### **OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION**

The NYSPHSAA allows outside participation (AAU, travel, club, etc). Maple Hill athletes must understand that commitment to the school team comes first, and outside participation should not be detrimental to an individual or to a Maple Hill team. There will be many circumstances where a student should not participate in an outside activity due to the possible effect on the team. Always check with your coach and/or athletic director.

### **DRESS AND GROOMING**

A member of an athletic team is expected to be well groomed. "You look good – You feel good – You play good." Appearance, expression and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Maple Hill team members are expected to dress presentable at all times. Sloppy dress and sloppy grooming leads to sloppy attitudes, which leads to sloppy play. Only uniforms approved by the athletic department should be worn for contests.

### **TEAM SELECTION**

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students participate in the athletic program as possible, we encourage coaches to keep as many athletes as they can without compromising the integrity of their sport. Therefore "cutting" of students is a possibility on all levels. The final decision on team size will be left up to the coaches.

**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY**

**SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDE**

The Maple Hill Middle and High Schools Interscholastic Athletic program is committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all sport activities. Good sportsmanship must be taught, modeled, expected, and reinforced in the classroom and during all competitive activities. Sportsmanship is good citizenship in action; perhaps a quote from Knute Rockne says it best; "One man practicing good sportsmanship is better than fifty others preaching it."

We are further committed to the belief that schools participating in interscholastic athletic activities should be held responsible for the conduct of their players, coaches, staff members, and spectators. Conduct, which is detrimental to the educational value of athletic activities, could result in appropriate disciplinary action by the school.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN/SPECTATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOR/ETHICS**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian/spectator to:

1. Keep cheering positive. No profanity or degrading language/gestures.
2. Avoid actions which offend visiting teams or individual players.
3. Show appreciation of good play by both teams.
4. Learn the rules of the game in order to be a better-informed spectator.
5. Treat all visiting teams and spectators as guests and show respect.
6. Accept the judgment of all coaches and officials.
7. Encourage all spectators to participate in the spirit of good sportsmanship.

**STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF BEHAVIOR/ETHICS**

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to:

1. Demonstrate self-control and respect for others at all times, be they officials, spectators or other athletes.
2. Remember that participation is a privilege that is not to be abused by unsportsmanlike conduct.
3. Deal with opponents with respect. Shake hands after the competition and congratulate them on their performance.
4. Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials.
5. Remember that improper behavior while in school or in the community reflects poorly on yourself, your family, and your school.
6. Understand and abide by the rules and regulations of the game.
7. Accept victory with grace, and defeat with class.
8. Remember that the use, abuse, and influence of drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, and steroids is detrimental to the game and its participants.

**COACHES' CODE OF BEHAVIOR/ETHICS**

It is the responsibility of the coach to:

1. Promote good sportsmanship by setting positive examples while coaching.
2. Respect the integrity and judgment of the sports officials.
3. Approach competition as a healthy and constructive exercise, not as a life or death struggle that requires victory at any price.
4. Recognize that the participants in individual or team sports are young men and women with human frailties and limitations, who are capable of making mistakes.

5. Refrain from the use of crude or abusive language with players, opponents, officials, or spectators.
6. Instruct the players in the elements of good sportsmanship, and remove players from competition who demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior.
7. Avoid behavior that will incite players, opponents, or spectators.
8. Avoid and eliminate negative comments to radio, TV, and newspaper reporters.
9. Remember that the use, abuse, and resulting negative influence of drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, and performance-enhancing supplements are detrimental to the game and its participants.

### **SECTION II & MAPLE HILL DISQUALIFICATION POLICY**

Sportsmanship is an integral and vital ingredient of any interscholastic athletic program. The National Federation of High School Athletics, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Section II, and the Patroon Conference have targeted the area of sportsmanship for a major emphasis. Section II and the Schodack Central School District have instituted the following policy to ensure the development of and the understanding of the importance of proper sportsmanship and fair play.

Any Maple Hill student-athlete, coach, or spectator who is ejected/disqualified from a contest will be automatically suspended for a minimum of one game. The game(s) is to be the next regularly scheduled contest(s) and may be carried over to the next sport season. Ejection/disqualification incident reports must be submitted to the athletic director, the Section II office, and the League Sportsmanship Chairperson. A conference between the player or coach and the athletic director will take place before the student-athlete or coach is eligible to return.

### **SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO SMOKING POLICY**

To comply with Federal and State law and to acknowledge the health hazards associated with smoking, particularly in an environment where children are present, the Schodack Board of Education prohibits the use of tobacco products, including but not limited to smoking and chewing tobacco in all school facilities, on all school grounds, and in any vehicle used to transport children or school personnel.

### **NCAA INFORMATION**

If a student-athlete is planning to enroll in college as a freshman and wants to participate in intercollegiate athletics at the Division I or Division II level, the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse must certify him/her. Applications may be obtained in the high school guidance office. For more information, contact the athletic director or call the NCAA Hotline at 1-800-638-3731 or visit their website at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT/COACH**

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 great benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our programs, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

**Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach**

1. Philosophy of the coach and program.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child, as well as the entire team.
3. Locations and times of all practices and games.
4. Team requirements, i.e. special equipment, off-season expectations.
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation

**Communication Coaches Expect From Parents**

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach only after the student-athlete has talked with the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance if at all possible.
3. Specific concerns in regards to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your child becomes involved in programs at Maple Hill Middle and High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you and your child wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

**Concerns to Discuss With Coaches**

**Appropriate**

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

**Inappropriate**

1. Playing time.
2. Team strategy and/or play calling.
3. Other students/athletes.

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals and they make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all the student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other issues, such as those listed, must be left to discretion of the coach.

### COACH/ATHLETE/PARENT CONFERENCES

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

1. Student-athlete should contact the coach first in attempt to resolve the situation. Call or stop in and set up an appointment with the coach.
2. If a resolution is not reached the parent/guardian is to contact the coach to set up an appointment with the coach.
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic director to assist in arranging a meeting.
4. **Please do not attempt to meet with 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 do not promote resolution.**

What can a parent/guardian do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call the athletic office to set up an appointment with the athletic director. The parent/guardian, student-athlete, coach, and the athletic director will meet to discuss the problem.
2. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.

**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC OFFERINGS**

**Fall**

Boys Soccer	Varsity, Junior Varsity, Modified
Girls Soccer	Varsity, Junior Varsity, Modified
Boys Cross Country	Varsity, Modified
Girls Cross Country	Varsity, Modified
Girls Volleyball	Varsity, Junior Varsity
Girls Tennis	Varsity

**Winter**

Boys Basketball	Varsity, Junior Varsity, Modified
Girls Basketball	Varsity, Junior Varsity, Modified
Boys Bowling	Varsity
Girls Bowling	Varsity
Wrestling	Varsity, Modified

**Spring**

Baseball	Varsity, Junior Varsity, Modified
Softball	Varsity, Junior Varsity, Modified
Boys Track & Field	Varsity, Modified
Girls Track & Field	Varsity, Modified
Boys Tennis	Varsity
Boys Lacrosse	Varsity

**PRESEASON SIGN-UPS**

The athletic director will provide adequate notice and opportunity for potential athletes to sign up for the next sports season. Sign ups for high school sports are posted in the high school gymnasium (see your physical education teacher). Sign ups for middle school sports are posted in the nurse's office (see the school nurse in the Middle School). Parents and coaches should encourage prospective participants to sign up and complete necessary paperwork and athletic physicals on time so that they will be ready for the first practice session. Section II and Patroon Conference representatives determine sports seasons and follow the guidelines below:

**Fall Season** – mid August to late November (sign up in May of previous school year)

**Winter Season** – early November to late March (sign up in September of current school year)

**Spring Season** – early March to mid June (sign up in January of current school year)

**POSTSEASON INFORMATION**

In the past and hopefully into the future, our teams here at Maple Hill have had their seasons extended into the postseason. Postseason being sectionals, state qualifiers, and state competition. We ask that parents and students take this into account when planning vacations and trips. Postseason extends beyond the regular season. These contest and games can go weeks and perhaps a month beyond the end of the regular season. We ask the studen-athlete and their families to plan accordingly.

We hope the information provided will help make you and your child's experience with the Maple Hill Middle and High School's Athletic Program more enjoyable, as well as rewarding.

**MAPLE HILL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL**  
**GUIDELINES FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**  
**AUTHORIZATION FORM**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student-Athlete Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athletic Team(s) (Please Print)

**Parent/Guardian Authorization**

By signing below, you indicate that you have read the Interscholastic Athletic Handbook for student-athletes and parents/guardians and that you have been provided with concussion management information. You are aware of the risk factor in sports and the guidelines for athletic participation in the athletic program in the Schodack Central School District. Also, you agree to conduct yourself in accordance with them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

H                      Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student-Athlete Authorization**

By signing below, you indicate that you have read the Interscholastic Athletic Handbook for student-athletes and parents/guardians and that you have been provided with concussion management information. You are aware of the risk factor in sports and the guidelines for athletic participation in the athletic program in the Schodack Central School District. Also, you agree to conduct yourself in accordance with them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student-Athlete Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

H                      Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

***This form must be signed and returned to the respective coach and then to the athletic director within the first three days of practice in order to continue participating.***