

# **Edmeston Central School Athletic Handbook**

# I. Philosophy of Interscholastic Athletics

Interscholastic athletics in the Edmeston Central School District are viewed as an extension of the classroom and therefore are an integral part of the district's total educational program. This athletic experience should be offered to as many students as possible. A well-coordinated program is vitally important to the morale of our school and our community.

Everyone involved in the delivery of athletics possesses a unique opportunity to teach positive life skills and values; therefore, this educational experience demands highly qualified coaches. Desire, dedication and self-discipline need to be developed in order to ensure the commitment and personal sacrifice required by student-athletes. Making such commitment helps to nurture integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character. The final outcome is a better citizen carrying these values throughout their life.

It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one criteria when determining a season's success. Guiding the team to attain maximum potential is the ultimate goal. 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.

## Modified Program Philosophy

This program is available to all students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. At this level the focus is on learning athletic skills, game rules, fundamentals of team play, social and emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body and healthy competition.

In order for the desired development of an adolescent and the team to occur, practice sessions are vital. The NYSPHSAA publishes regulations by which practice sessions are governed. Keep in mind that practices and games are often scheduled for Saturdays. Learning the "team" concept is crucial, and a commitment to attend practices and games is expected. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each team member will exist over the course of a season.

Exceptional seventh and eighth graders may be permitted to try out for a Junior Varsity or Varsity team under the State Education Department Program called Selection Classification. Criteria must be met in order to play at an advanced level including parental approval, medical approval, appropriate developmental rating, passing athletic performance test scores and the coach's skill evaluation. Additionally, students must display an advanced degree of social and emotional maturity before team membership is granted.

## Junior Varsity

The Junior Varsity level is intended for those who display the potential of continued development into productive varsity level performers. Although team membership varies according to the structure of each program, freshmen and sophomores occupy the majority of roster positions. In certain situations, juniors who are expected to make contributions at the varsity level will be considered for junior varsity participation. Also, middle school students who have satisfied all selection classification requirements may hold roster spots on JV teams.

At this level, athletes are expected to have visibly committed themselves to the program, team, and continued self-development. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, and elements and strategies of team play in addition to social and emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. Although *the main goal at this level is preparation for skills and strategies that will be needed at the varsity level*, the outcome of the contest also becomes a consideration.

The realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that is vital to successful junior varsity team and player. For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season. However, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for a six-day a week commitment that is expected at the varsity level. While contests and practices are not often held on holidays and Sundays, practice sessions are sometimes scheduled during school vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a varsity student-athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.

## Varsity

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sports program. Normally, seniors and juniors make up the majority of the roster with sophomores and occasional freshmen that have shown evidence of advanced levels of physical

development, athletic skill and appropriate social and emotional development. It is possible, but rare, for a Middle School level student to be included on a varsity roster.

Squad size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each team member has a role and understands its importance. The number of roster positions is relative to the students' acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the team's goals. While contest preparation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity spot requires a six-day a week commitment. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons. The dedication and commitment needed to conduct a successful varsity program needs to be taken seriously.

The varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program at all levels. The communication among the modified, junior varsity, and varsity programs is the responsibility of the varsity coach. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest and working to reach the group's and individual's maximum potential are worthy goals of a varsity level team.

## II. Athletic Policies and Procedures

### Participation

To be a member of a team, potential student-athletes are selected from general eligibility requirements established by the NYSPHSAA. For all athletic teams the coach/advisor of that sport shall explain all aspects of the rules to members of those activities. Members must, in addition to NYSPHSAA rules, abide by additional rules as described by Edmeston Central School, Section IV and The Tri-Valley league.

All student-athletes and the person(s) in parental relation must read the following guidelines and sign the statement of agreement and emergency permission form, as well as all medical certification paperwork. Before a student-athlete may participate they must be medically certified and academically eligible.

### Changing Sports

The deadline for participation in a sport is five days after the start of the first day of practice. Students may change from one sport to another sport provided that they have received permission from the coaches involved and the athletic director. If a student-athlete has been cut from one team, it is legitimate to try out for another as long as final cuts have not been made for the second sport. It must be understood that practices are sport specific and cannot count from one sport to another.

### Practices and Games

A schedule for practices and games will be established and distributed by the coach to the athletes. Every effort will be made to adhere to this schedule. All students who are members of a team are expected to attend all practice sessions. On days you are in school you must attend practice unless you report to the coach and are excused prior to the practice or game. Excuses for absences due to medical reasons or family emergencies will be acceptable. Sunday and Holiday practices are not allowed without permission from the administration and must be voluntary. NYSPHSAA guidelines are to be adhered to regarding practices of each respective sport.

#### The "if" list:

1. If you are illegally absent for all or part of the day you may not participate that day. Athletes must be in class by 8:03am on the day of the respective contest/practice in order to be eligible to participate that day. Also, if you miss practice the day before a game due to an unexcused absence you are not eligible to play in the game the following day.
2. If you have a verified medical, dental, court, driver test or educational/career appointment you are legally absent and eligible to participate that day provided you have provided the nurse with proof (i.e. Parent or Doctor's note) upon checking into school.
3. If you are truant or absent on Friday without a legal excuse, you will not be eligible to participate in any event on Saturday or Sunday.
4. If you are excused from physical education classes for medical reasons you are also excused from participating in practices and games for the same duration as the written excuse. If however, the excuse was written for a reason

that does not affect participation in a specific sport that is specified on your doctor's note you may be eligible to participate.

*The Superintendent or building Principal has the right to review any absence and issue a decision regarding the student-athletes eligibility to participate on the day in question.*

## **SCHOOL SANCTIONED PROGRAMS/TRIPS/FAMILY VACATIONS**

There are numerous educational opportunities for students at our school. The athletic department supports school-sanctioned programs, trips and vacations but also realizes that student-athletes may miss substantial amounts of practice time. This affects personal conditioning and team chemistry. Student-athletes who miss practices or competitions for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted. Coaches, parents, and athletes have a responsibility to each other to plan, and should communicate far in advance of each sport season when considering school sanctioned programs or trips.

An individual student who attempts to participate in too many activities will undoubtedly be in a position of conflicting obligations. 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 times schedules cannot be changed because of league and 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. Also, it must be realized that the above exceptions pertain to school sanctioned events. ***Practice and game schedules will at no time be changed or scheduled around programs that are not school-sanctioned.***

## **Issuing of School Clothing and Equipment**

It is the responsibility of the athlete to take care and return to the coach all the clothing and equipment issued during the season. If equipment is lost you must pay the replacement cost. If you fail to return all equipment you will be ineligible to compete in any sport until the equipment is turned in or paid for. In addition, the athlete will not be entitled to receive any athletic award for that sport.

## **Physical Education Class**

The NYSPHSAA regulations state that a student must be enrolled in physical education to participate in athletics. If a student-athlete is not prepared or does not participate in their physical education class except as herein provided, they will not be allowed to participate in any practice or game that day. Also, students are prohibited from wearing athletic equipment/uniforms issued to them for sports during physical education classes. The equipment is for athletic use only.

# **III. Code of Conduct / Behavior and Suspension**

At the beginning of each sports season each athlete and their parents or guardians will be required to sign the statement of agreement for participation and acknowledgement of the Interscholastic Athletic Handbook/Code of Conduct. The commitment of parents and guardians is essential in this process. This handbook outlines the rules and regulations by which each athlete must abide by while participating on an Edmeston Central School sports team. The code of conduct addresses student's behavior in the school, community and athletic arena, sportsmanship, and academics.

The athletic code of conduct commits the athlete to many responsibilities and the statement of agreement must be signed and turned in to the coaching staff prior to the first practice. If the statement of agreement is not turned in on time, the athlete will not be allowed to participate.

## **Conduct of Athletes**

As an athlete you represent the school in a special way. Therefore, you must maintain a high standard of conduct, both in and out of school, on or off the playing field, as a host or guest of an opponent, and in all of your activities in the community.

Team cooperation and self-discipline are essential ingredients for a successful team effort. The athletic review committee may temporarily or permanently suspend or dismiss from the team; a team member whenever the committee determines the student is not contributing to a high standard of conduct.

## **Suspension**

Suspensions may vary from one athletic contest up to the entire season including not finishing the season in good standing depending on the severity of the offense and the athlete's prior record. Procedures for enforcement are outlined below.

## **Code of Behavior**

Conduct on a trip or during an event: Students are expected to be on their best behavior wherever they may be attending an activity. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action.

Student-athletes are not to use, possess, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or tobacco. These are considered health hazards detrimental to a student's physical and mental well-being. Students are not to attend a function where illegal consumption or illegal possession of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is taking place. (Examples: bar, house party, field party)

### **Penalties:**

*First offense:* The student will be suspended for thirty calendar days from the activity. The student may not participate in any extracurricular activity during the 30-day time period. A student who agrees to attend a substance abuse evaluation and follow the recommendations of the evaluator may return to practice during the last 14 days of the suspension period, and must provide proof of that counseling prior to his/her return to participation. If the discipline is caused by conduct other than substance abuse, a qualified counselor for that behavior may be agreed upon. The parents/guardians will be required to sign a release so that the counselor may share information with the school.

*Second offense and further offenses:* The student will be suspended from all practices and activities for one full calendar year. However, a student who agrees to attend a substance abuse evaluation and follows the recommendations of the evaluator may return to active participation after six (6) months. If the discipline is caused by conduct other than substance abuse, a qualified counselor for that behavior may be agreed upon. The parents/guardians will be required to sign a release so that the counselor may share information with the school.

### **Appeal Process**

Students and their parents may appeal a suspension to the Athletic Review Committee. The committee may consider extenuating circumstances during the appeal. The review committee shall rule on any situations not described heretofore. The Athletic Review Committee may include the following: The Athletic Director, the Coach/Advisor, the Principal, and the Director of Guidance.

The review committee also has the responsibility to evaluate behaviors that may be construed as conduct unbecoming a student who represents our school.

### **Season In Good Standing**

Any student-athlete who is suspended from a team for rule violations and is not reinstated before the end of the season shall not receive any athletic awards for that sport and may be ineligible to participate in the next season.

A student-athlete failing to finish a season in good standing must discuss the problem with the coach of the sport in question, and the Athletic Director before being allowed to participate on another team.

### **Quitting a Team**

Prior to the final cut date, or the first game where cuts are not made, a player may withdraw from a team without penalty provided he/she discusses the matter with the coach and the Athletic Director before leaving. If a student/athlete quits after the final cut date or after the first game where cuts are not made they will not be able to participate in the following sports season unless they appeal to the Athletic Review Committee. If the committee decides that the student-athletes reasons for quitting are legitimate then participation in the following sports season may be granted. Any student quitting a team will not receive any athletic awards for that sport.

## IV. Transportation

All student-athletes must utilize school transportation when traveling to all interscholastic contests. In special circumstances athletes can be transported to contests by parent/guardian if approved **in advance** by administration. At the conclusion of a contest parents may take custody of the student-athlete with the full knowledge and approval of the coach. Written permission from the student-athlete's parents must be given to the coach by "signing them out" at the conclusion of the game. It is understood that their parent or guardian only may transport the athlete. No other family members, friends, etc. may transport a student-athlete unless approved by administration **in advance**.

Team members are responsible to their coach or supervisor for their behavior on buses. Members are expected to abide by the regulations posted in each bus and to act respectfully at all times.

Common courtesy requires that team members remove any refuse accumulated on a bus trip. The school assumes no liability for any personal items left in the aisles or on the bus when unattended.

All participants are expected to remain on the host school grounds at away events in the fall and spring, and to remain in the host schools building during the winter.

A late bus for students is provided Monday through Wednesday throughout the school year. The bus leaves at 4:30 from outside the cafeteria.

## V. Medical Information

### Risk Factor in Sports

Participation by a student in athletic activities 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. Further, many injuries are truly accidental in nature and by volunteering to participate in a school-sponsored athletic activity, a student and his/her parents/guardian assume the risk for injuries to occur.

### Becoming Medically Certified

Athletes must be medically cleared **BEFORE** beginning practice each season. The following information summarizes requirements for medical certification.

Physical examinations, whether completed by your family physician or the school physician, are considered current for 12 continuous months. Athletes are required to obtain a completely new physical if the previous physical date expires before or during the upcoming sport season. Also, if the athlete's physical did not occur in the 30 days prior to the first day of practice they are required to fill out a health update **BEFORE** they begin practicing for that sport.

### Sports Physicals

A student who participates in interscholastic athletic competition must receive an adequate health examination. Medical examinations can conveniently be scheduled throughout the school year at the school Health Zone. Athletes should see the school nurse to schedule an appointment.

### Injuries

It is extremely important to report any injury a student-athlete suffers during a practice or athletic contest immediately to his/her coach. An accident form must be filled out with the coach for all injuries that occur during practices or games. The school nurse will receive this report from the coach. Medical expenses resulting from any injury must first be submitted to your own insurance carrier. Any remaining balance can be submitted to the school's accident insurance carrier by processing a claim form, which can be obtained from the school nurse.

*Note: The schools accident insurance provides only excess coverage according to a schedule of benefits at reasonable and customary rates.*

### Returning to an Athletic Team after an Injury or Illness

Any student-athlete who is seen by a doctor must be released (signed note) by the doctor who treated the injury or illness in order to resume participation with their team. If you have to go to an emergency room for care, please obtain the release (written) before leaving the hospital. *This release must be filed with the school nurse.* It is the athlete's responsibility to get the release to the school nurse; do not leave this responsibility to another person (coach, teacher, friend, etc.).

Any athlete missing five consecutive days of school due to injury or illness must have a release form signed by the doctor before returning to the practice field.

## Parent Night

On the Thursday prior to the first day of fall sports practices starting for JV and Varsity teams a Parent Night will be held. At this time the coach of each fall sport will distribute important information that must be completed prior to the first practice session. Also, important updates and review of policies will be discussed. This is the only parent night of the year so it is important that all parents attend the meeting. This meeting is for all Modified, JV, and Varsity athletes. Although you can only fill out paperwork for fall sports the information pertains to all three seasons. For the winter and spring sports seasons the athletes are responsible for getting paperwork from the coach or AD before the first day of practice. The following documents will be distributed to all potential athletes prior to each season:

1. Athletic Handbook
2. Statement of Agreement for Extracurricular Activities
3. Emergency Permission Form
4. Medical Update (to be completed only if athlete did not have physical 30 days prior to first day of practice)
5. Informed Consent (only needs to be filled out once during athletes career at ECS)

### Turn In All Paperwork Prior To Each Season!!!

The medical update or a signed Doctor's note from a physical examination must be turned into the nurse as soon as possible after being completed, but no later than the first day of practice. The statement of agreement and the emergency permission form must be returned to your coach prior to the first practice.

***Students will not be allowed to practice if all paperwork is not turned in.***

## VI. Chain of Communication

If you have any question or comments in relation to the athletic department, the following is the appropriate chain of communication:

1<sup>st</sup> –Student-Athlete to Coach to Athletic Director

2<sup>nd</sup> - Parent and Student-Athlete to Coach to Athletic Director

3<sup>rd</sup> – Parent to Athletic Director to Superintendent

4<sup>th</sup> –Athletic Director to Superintendent to Board of Education

\*If the proper chain of command is not followed student-athletes and/or parents will be referred back to the appropriate individual in the chain.

***If a parent would like to talk to a coach a meeting should be arranged. Before or after a game is not the appropriate time to approach a coach.***

### Academic Improvement Monitoring (AIM) revised in 2006

The number one priority for all students is academic achievement. The AIM process is meant to monitor grades and encourage students to continue to focus on their academic performance and responsibilities as well as to enjoy the extracurricular activities of their choice. Extracurricular activities specifically include participation in all interscholastic athletics, the musical, the senior play, the debate club, and the senior trip. On the dates listed below, the AIM list will be compiled of students in grades 5-11 who are failing two or more subjects and any senior failing one or more subjects required for graduation. The AIM list for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students is for parent notification only. Students in grades 7-12 on the AIM list will be subject to the following:

**A.** Students in grades 7-11 who are failing two or more subjects and any senior who is failing one or more subjects required for graduation will be placed on the AIM list. If the student is no longer failing after the two-week period, his or her name will be removed from the AIM list.

Grades

will be cumulative and reflect how a student is progressing for an entire 10 week marking period-not just how a student did during the prior two weeks. In January, at the end of the first semester, all students begin a new probationary period.

**B.** Students who appear on the AIM list during any ten-week period will be required to meet with the teachers whose classes they are failing to receive guidance regarding the reason for failure and how to make improvements in order to pass. The student's effort (assignments turned in on time, improved scores on quizzes, tests, etc.) will then be reported on the AIM list. Teachers will indicate this by marking a Y (yes-making improvement) or N (no-not showing adequate effort to improve). Subsequent N's will be noted as 2N, 3N, etc. Students who are making adequate effort and receive a Y will remain eligible.

**Procedure:**

1. AIM grade/effort reports will be e-mailed to the office by the teachers at approximately two-week intervals. The compiled AIM list will be sent to all of the staff via e-mail.
2. Students will be notified if affected, no later than Monday morning following the compilation of the list based on the dates listed below. Letters will be sent to parents of students who are on the AIM list.
3. If a student is failing and is thus on the AIM list, that student will be required to immediately meet with the teachers and make a greater effort. If the student shows improvement as indicated by the teacher marking a Y for acceptable effort, he or she will remain eligible even if he/she appears on the next AIM list as failing. If a student does not show an improvement in effort and receives N's on the next two AIM lists, he or she becomes ineligible.

**Example:** Student A is failing two classes on September 25<sup>th</sup>. He is reported as *not* showing adequate effort in those two subjects on Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> (N) and again on Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> (2N). The student is then put on the **Ineligible** list and may not participate.4. Advisors and coaches are responsible for enforcing a suspension from activities.  
AIM List dates for 2007-2008

**First Semester:**

Sept. 25	Nov. 6	Jan. 2	Mar. 3	Apr. 28
Oct. 10	Nov. 20	Second Semester	Mar. 17	May 12
Oct. 23	Dec. 11	Feb. 11	Apr. 7	May 27
				Jun. 9