

# Moravia Central School Student-Athlete Handbook



## SECTION IV INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

# **Athletic Mission Statement**

The goal of the Moravia Central School athletic program is for athletes, coaches, and parents to work together and strive to:

1. Develop a spirit of healthy competition and respect for coaches, officials, competitors, and oneself
2. Understand the value of sportsmanship
3. Develop a commitment to their team
4. Promote the enjoyment of athletics
5. Promote honesty, integrity, and fair play
6. Create constructive relationships with peers and adults
7. Increase physical fitness
8. Practice leadership, goal-setting, citizenship, organizational skills, and communication
9. Develop individual talents to their fullest potential
10. Develop character, responsibility, and accountability for one's own actions
11. Teach rules, strategies, and appreciation of respective sports

## **Philosophy of Levels**

1. **Varsity** – To compete at the highest level, with sportsmanship, dignity, and school pride. Playing time is dependent on skill level. Practices may be on Saturdays, during holiday breaks, etc.
2. **Junior Varsity** – A competitive developmental program, with competing at a high level a goal but not the only goal, as skill-building and sportsmanship are the integral parts of this level of play. It should be a time where there is a balance between competition and player development, and where at some points during contests game strategy takes precedence over equal playing time. Playing time is encouraged for all, but not guaranteed.
3. **Modified** (grades 7,8, sometimes 9) – All players play; the teaching of sports, skill-building, sportsmanship, athletics as part of a balanced educational experience, and respect for authority is stressed over winning. Playing time may not always be equal, but every player must play in each contest.

# CODE OF BEHAVIOR FOR ATHLETES

Athletes who participate in interscholastic sports should recognize that they have an obligation to themselves, their teammates, and the school community to strive for excellence.

It is hoped that participation in the program will enable the athlete to value competition, instill self-discipline and self-control, and to exercise sportsmanship and mature judgement. Athletes are expected to exemplify good citizenship in both school and community at large.

Athletes are reminded that they must maintain a satisfactory level of effort in their classwork and must follow the attendance requirements of Moravia Central (refer to Student Handbook).

To encourage the development of the above, the athlete is expected to adhere to the following general rules:

1. A member of an athletic team shall not possess or use e-cigarettes, tobacco products, alcohol or other intoxicants or drugs. Any violation of this rule will result in the athlete being suspended from the contests under the following terms:

- First offense during the school year would result in the student/athlete not being allowed to participate in 1/3 of that seasons contests.
- Second offense not being allowed to participate in ½ of that seasons contests.
- Third offense not being allowed to participate in the remainder of that season.

\*\* If the consequence for the offense cannot be completed during the current season, it will be upheld at the start of the next season that the student participates in.

\*\*Student/athletes may still practice or attend game during their suspension of contests.

2. The **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT** will be enforced during participation in all extra-curricular and interscholastic activities (see Student Handbook).
3. Athletes will travel to and from contests with their team and coaches except when extenuating circumstances arise. When this occurs, they may:
  - a. be released directly to their parents, once they have signed off with the coach.
  - b. have written permission from the parent to come home with another adult. Has given sign out privileges on the parent permission card in the space provided. Must be an adult of 21 years or older.
4. The athlete will be required to pay for lost or unreturned equipment or uniforms damaged through misuse. Parents will be billed for lost or damaged equipment or uniforms. The student will not be allowed to participate on any future interscholastic team until restitution has been made.
5. An athlete may be suspended or dismissed from an athletic activity, or otherwise disciplined, by the Athletic Director or a building principal, for violating the **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT** or **CODE OF BEHAVIOR FOR ATHLETES**.
6. Parents and athletes shall be notified of any proposed disciplinary action which involves suspension or dismissal from an athletic activity, by the athletic director/appropriate building principal, prior to the end of the next school day, and given an opportunity to appear before the building principal to discuss the factual situation underlying the disciplinary action.
7. An appeal from a decision of the athletic director/building principal to suspend or dismiss the student from any athletic activity, shall be made to the Superintendent of Schools within five days of sending notice of the decision, by regular mail, to the athlete's parent or to the person in parental relation to the athlete.
8. Nothing contained in this **CODE OF BEHAVIOR FOR ATHLETES** shall prohibit a coach from imposing rules for the proper functioning of a team. However, any such training rules shall not conflict with and shall not supersede the terms and provisions of this code.

\*If an adult reports and alleged violation of a student athlete, the adult must be willing to submit a written statement with the allegations. The appropriate athletic director/building principal will contact the parents or guardian.

\*If a student reports an alleged violation of another student athlete, the coach will contact the parent or guardian of the accused athlete and let them know that he or she will be questioning their son or daughter about the accusations. If the accused is questioned by the coach and admits he or she has broken rules, the student shall be considered guilty.

## **Student-Athlete Attendance Policy:**

1. All student-athletes must be in school attendance by the first period bell each day. Each student-athlete is allowed 1 warning during their current sport season if they are tardy to the first period bell, as long as they are in the building prior to 8:30. Any student-athlete that comes in after 8:30 or has received their second tardy without a legal excuse (defined in the handbook) in that season, would not be allowed to participate in practice or contest the same day.
2.
  - a. Exceptions: Appointments which will require a Doctor's signature (parental signature not acceptable), college visits, funerals, field trips, school-to-work, court, court-ordered visitations, other at discretion of the School Nurse/Principal/Athletic Director.
3. If a student is assigned to ISS/OSS for 3 or more periods during the school day, they may not participate in practice or contests on the day they serve the suspension. If a student is given a suspension for the following school day, they may not participate in practice or contests until that suspension has been served. This would include weekend events.
4. If a student practices or plays on a day that they are ineligible, they will be suspended for the next scheduled contest.

### **Practice Attendance Policy:**

1. As it stands, each coach should make it known to athletes and parents in writing of their practice policy.
2. Such policy should include expectations for practice attendance and fair consequences for missing time.
3. Unexcused absences should be treated as if a student cut a class.
4. Three unexcused absences constitute removal from team

## Quitting a Team Philosophy

Most coaches, teachers, athletes, and fans alike would agree that quitting on the field of play, in practice, on your teammates, or on yourself, is one of the least, if not the least desirable action in sports or academics. There are far too many instances where athletes are simply allowed to quit teams simply because they are not getting the playing time they feel they deserve. It is frequently done without the consent or knowledge of coaches or the athletic director. Moravia Athletics strives to promote dedication to teamwork, unity, a commitment to team above self, the act of finishing what is started, and seeing difficult situations through to their conclusion. By allowing athletes to quit without at the very least consent from the coach and athletic director, we are doing these student-athletes a disservice by teaching them that quitting is an acceptable way out of a challenging situation.

### **1. Instances that would be allowable means to quit a team :**

- a. Grades
- b. Health
- c. Family/personal/financial reasons
- d. Others admissible and discussed with coach/Athletic Director.
- e. Quitting during try-outs, before games have started, or due to an athlete trying a new sport (before games have started) can be allowable at the coaches' and Athletic Director's discretion.
- f. This implies coaches will communicate expectations and roles to each player so that there are no misunderstandings regarding those roles.
- g. Try-out for another team that is allowing for additional athletes.

### **2. Consequences for Quitting Without Merit:**

- a. Ineligible for remainder of current sport season (cannot join another sport)
- b. Eligible for next sport season – **MUST APPEAR BEFORE ATHLETIC COUNCIL**
- c. Forfeiture of all awards

## Transportation

All team members shall ride to and from games in vehicles provided by the district. It is recognized that there are occasionally extenuating circumstances which may make it desirable for a parent to pick up an athlete after an away game. The parent must sign a sheet provided by the coach, prior to taking the student athlete. If there are circumstances that call for another adult to transport the student, their name must be provided on the emergency card where indicated by the student/athlete. They must also sign the student/athlete out with their coach. **No other exceptions will be made by the coach.**

AN ATHLETE MAY NEVER BE TRANSPORTED BY ANOTHER STUDENT OR  
NON-FAMILY MEMBER UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE.

## Athletic Placement Process

The Moravia Board of Education has accepted joining the NYS Athletic Placement Process. This program allows an opportunity for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate on a high school team. It is for the exceptional student athlete. There is an involved screening process that the student must go through in order to qualify.

Coaches and physical education staff are to refer names to the Athletic Director of any students they feel are exceptional enough to enter this program. This program should never be a means of simply trying to fill out a high school team roster. The BOE and administration feel that unless the student is indeed exceptional, that competing with their social peers in an age level appropriate program is preferable.

## Uniforms

All equipment issued to an athlete on Moravia's interscholastic athletic teams is to be worn at appropriate times and places. Athletes are not to wear issued equipment in the following situations:

1. On the street
2. In PE class
3. For general attire

Coaches may give special permission on occasions, such as Homecoming Friday.

All student athletes are required to turn in their equipment on time at the end of each season to their coach, or be subject to cover the financial loss of the uniform or equipment.

## **Glasses/Eyewear/Jewelry**

All athletes who wear glasses must wear guards, straps, or have safety lenses for all practice sessions and contests. Any student wearing contact lenses must be responsible for the proper usage and care of the lenses.

The NYS Safety Committee has outlawed the wearing of any kind of jewelry during interscholastic athletic contests.

## **Physicals**

All athletes at all levels of interscholastic competition must pass a physical examination prior to each school year. We recommend that each athlete participates in the school sponsored physicals held during the summer at the HS nurses office. The school physician must conduct this examination. If you have your own physician complete the physical examination, it must be sent to the school physician for approval. Students may not take part in any form of practice until the school physician has approved them. One athletic physical is good for one full year from the date of the physical, unless injured to the extent that the player is under a physician's care. The physical update sheet must be filled out and signed by a parent or guardian 30 days or less to the start of the season.

Any students requiring a physical for a summer sport camp should contact the school nurse to make arrangements to have their sport physical taken to fulfill both requirements.

## **Eligibility**

1. We must conform to the rules set forth in the current NYSPHSAA handbook.
2. Athletes must understand that any serious infraction of training rules and regulations (or code of conduct violations) is cause for dismissal from the squad.
3. Local eligibility is dependent on individual school policy.
4. Students are not to use "practice" as an excuse or failure to do work or attend a required after-school session. On the other hand, a student should not be penalized for attending such sessions or review classes.
5. In cases of Saturday or holiday games, each student must have been in attendance on the last day of school before the game. Exception: Students not

in attendance the day before may be certified as eligible if they present written permission from the school principal/athletic director.

6. Students without a legal excuse for an absence the day after a contest are declared ineligible for the next scheduled contest.
7. Student must change and participate in Physical Education or may not participate in an athletic contest on that day.
8. Academic eligibility (High School sports):
  - a. At the end of each 6-week marking period an academic ineligibility list will be issued from the school, consisting of students failing two classes or more. These students are ineligible to participate in any interscholastic contest, but may practice for the following 6-week marking period.
  - b. A student who is failing only one subject will be offered Option A or Option B. She/He will sign a letter showing which option has been chosen with the High School Principal.
  - c. Option A – student chooses to be ineligible to participate in contests, but is eligible to practice.
  - d. Option B – student agrees to do the following throughout the marking period:
    - i. Attend the after school program once a week from 3 – 4 pm in the high school library and have the after school attendant sign the sheet upon completion of the hour. After getting the sheet signed, the student will show it to their coach and have coach sign off on it.
    - ii. Hand in all assignments on time and make sure they are complete
    - iii. Participate in all classes
    - iv. Behave appropriately in all classes
    - v. Have the teacher sign the Option B form in which he/she is failing showing that ii., iii., and iv. have been completed and then hand it in to the high school secretary before Friday at 3:00 PM.
  - e. If the student fails to meet these conditions at any time during the marking period, the student will become ineligible for the remainder of that marking period.
  - f. If a student is ineligible during a team tryout period and cuts have to be made to finalize a roster, that student may try out. If no cuts are made to form the team, a student may join the team at the end of the 6-week period if they have become eligible. Progress checks should be completed for all athletes the 4<sup>th</sup> week of each marking period.
  - g. Students who become ineligible during the season, but have enough participation prior to that time to earn their team awards, may receive

their awards even though they are not eligible to come to the athletic awards night program.

## 9. Academic Eligibility (Middle School)

\*\*\*All coaches must turn in rosters by Name and Grade to Athletic Director by 1st Contest.

Academically Ineligible - currently failing 2 or more classes - no contest for 1 week - can practice

Academic Probation - currently failing 1 class - can fully participate

Academically in Danger - about to fail 1 or more classes - can fully participate

- a. By end of school day Wednesday of each week, the 7th and 8th grade teacher teams will provide a list of student athletes who are academic ineligible, academic probation or academically in danger to the coach of each sport.
- b. Students who are ineligible cannot participate in contest for one week. The student is allowed to participate in practice and be on the sideline for the game. This will start on Friday and end on Thursday evenings sports contest.
- c. Students on Academic Probation must show improvement in the class in which they are failing or coaches' discretion on playing time will be in effect with clear reasons for not participating. Example: student cannot continue failing same class over a long period of time.
- d. Students Academically in Danger must show improvement in the class in which they are in danger of falling.
- e. Students who need extra help from teachers, need to inform coaches and get to practice as soon as possible after help. Teachers of these students should inform coaches of the need to work with student and times that would work with both. Communication from all three parties involved is critical in order for this to work. Teacher, Coach, Student.
- f. Middle School students on high school teams must be satisfactory in all classes throughout the marking period or deemed ineligible and unable to participate in contest until the end of the marking period or next sport season. The student is still allowed to participate in practices.

## **Athletic Awards**

The varsity emblem shall be a 7-inch chenille “M”, and the junior varsity emblem a 4-inch chenille “M”. An athlete can earn one letter during their high school career. Metal insignias and certificates are granted for sports awards that follow.

All members of a team and managers will receive a certificate of participation. All teams competing at a varsity level shall receive 2 or 3 awards (depending on team size and AD approval) to award to individual players. The title of the plaque/trophy is at the discretion of the coach. All teams competing on the JV level shall receive a pin for the most improved player. A boy or girl earning 9 varsity letters will be entitled to a varsity letter jacket their senior year. All team trophies won in competition will be given formally to the school. No awards will be granted for middle school competition.

All members of a league championship team or sectional team member will earn a letter. Athletes must be a contributing member to the varsity team and be a team member in good standing to earn the letter. Each varsity coach will discuss their team’s expectation for earning a varsity letter with their student/athletes. An injured player unable to play can receive a letter if in the head coach’s estimation the injury created the hardship, but the player continued as a member of the team.

\*Coaches must adhere to all policies and statements contained in the student-athlete handbook, but may have additional expectations for their particular team or program. These additional expectations will be communicated with the student/athletes.

## **Moravia School District Concussion Information for Parents and Students**

### **Dear Parent:**

Your son/daughter is electing to participate in a school sport. As a result, we are providing you with information about concussion (head or brain injury) symptoms and district protocols. It is our primary responsibility to make certain that your child is safe. Such injuries vary greatly in severity. Though most severe concussions can be recognized at the time of the incident, the signs and symptoms of others may be delayed. It is therefore extremely important that and student/athlete who has sustained a symptom bearing concussive blow to the head or body be observed closely for at least **twenty four hours**. Call your family physician or take your child to the emergency room if any of the following occur so that a proper diagnosis can be established:

- Headache continues to worsen
- Impaired memory
- Unusual drowsiness, difficult to arouse from sleep or other sleep disturbance
- Changes in level of consciousness, alertness or personality including anxiousness or irritability
- Blood or fluids draining from ears or nose
- Convulsions or seizures
- Dizziness, loss of coordination or balance
- Disturbances in vision, hearing or speech
- Nausea or vomiting
- Confusion or inability to concentrate
- Fever or stiff neck
- Pupils dilated or of uneven size or shape
- Weakness or numbness of arms, legs, or trouble walking

**Please remind your child to report to the school nurse the day immediately following the incident.**

## **“Return to Play” Protocol Following a Concussion**

The following protocol was established in accordance with the National Federation of State High School Association and International Conference on Concussion in Sport Guidelines. School districts are required to follow this protocol as of July 1, 2012 due to the implementation of new legislation passed for the protection of students and student athletes. It is imperative to remember that the safety of the student/student athlete is the primary concern of the Moravia School District and its medical and coaching personnel. The steps below are to be implemented following a concussion event. When a student/student athlete shows signs or symptoms of a concussion or is suspected to have a concussion after an evaluation by coaching staff:

1. The student **will not** be allowed to return to play/activity in the current game or practice.
2. The student should not be left alone, and regular monitoring for deterioration is essential over the next 24 hours following the injury
3. Following the initial injury, the student **must follow up** with his/her primary care physician or by an emergency room department within the first 24 hours
4. The student **must have** the student “Initial Concussion Checklist by Athletic Trainer, coach, or nurse, and the Physician “Concussion Checklist” signed and dated within 24 hours. Forms **must** be returned to the coach or school nurse.
5. Return to play protocol will begin only after a medical clearance by a physician. The school physician has final determination in the event that a difference of opinion arises.
6. Student’s return to full participation will occur only after successful completion of the 6 step return to play protocol

The cornerstone of proper concussion management is rest until all symptoms resolve and then a graded program or exertion before return to sports/activities. The program is broken down into six steps with each step covered per 24 hour period (six days minimum to return to play). The six step “Return to Play” protocol are as follows:

1. No exertion activity until asymptomatic (no longer exhibiting symptoms)
2. Light aerobic exercise such as brisk walking or stationary bike etc. No resistance training.
3. Sport/activity specific exercise such as skating, running, etc. Progressive addition of light resistance training.
4. Non-contact training/skill drills
5. Full contact training in practice setting (if contact/collision sport)
6. Return to competition.

In the event that symptoms recur at any step in the process, students will be required to drop back to the previous level after waiting a period of 24 hours of additional rest.

If you have additional questions, please consult with your child’s coach or the athletic director.

Sincerely,

The Moravia School District Athletic Department