

Swan Valley Middle School Athletic Handbook

Approved July 20, 2023



Valued
Investment
Knowledge
Influence
Noble
Growth
Success

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NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Swan Valley School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, religion, creed, age, physical handicap, ancestry, national origin, height, weight, military status, marital or family status, or any other legally protected category. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Mr. Mat McRae
Superintendent of Schools
Swan Valley School District
8380 O'Hern Road
Saginaw, MI 48609
(989) 921-3701

Mrs. Nicole Rethman
Special Education Supervisor
Swan Valley School District
8380 O'Hern Road
Saginaw, MI 48609
(989) 921-3701

Dear Parents or Guardians and Student/Athletes:

Becoming a member of an athletic team provides an individual with many positive experiences and opportunities. It gives an individual the opportunity to gain knowledge, to learn the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship, to develop a sense of loyalty, to promote school spirit and develop a sense of self-accomplishment.

As in all aspects of life, rules and regulations are necessary to provide a fair and orderly opportunity for all participants. This handbook attempts to provide you with the basic rules and regulations set by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Swan Valley Board of Education and Athletic Department.

Please read this handbook carefully with your son or daughter. It contains information regarding the general operation and regulations of the Swan Valley Athletic Department. After reading the information, the Parent and Student Athletic Agreement Form that is included must be signed and returned to the office. I also recommend that you keep this information in a safe place for possible future reference.

Please note that the following must be completed and on file in the Principal/Athletic Director's office before a student is allowed to practice with any athletic team:

1. *Parent and Student Athletic Agreement Form*
2. *MHSAA form which includes the student's medical history, physical exam / sports health questionnaire, and other information.*

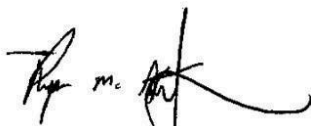
If, at any time, a member of our staff or myself can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Craig Blower
Middle School Principal

&



Ryan Stephens
Athletic Director / Student Activities Coordinator

PHILOSOPHY

The interscholastic athletic program of the Swan Valley School District is a vital and integral part of the total education program. Its purpose is to make positive contributions to the development of the participants, spectators, school, and community.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

It is the goal of the interscholastic athletic program of the Swan valley School District to foster the development of each student-athlete academically, emotionally, socially, and physically. Every Swan Valley Coach will do this by investing in relationships, fully committing to all Viking Programs, and extending the classroom to the field of play.

VISION

- Provide year round opportunities for student-athletes to develop mentally and physically.
- Communicate effectively among all coaches to increase participation in every sport.
- Support all sports in the Athletic Program.
- Build relationships by investing in the “person” as a whole, not just the student-athlete.
- Provide and promote opportunities to give back to the Community.
- Compete for and win Conference Championships and MHSAA Tournaments.
- Achieve Academic All State.

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE (CORE VALUES)

Valued Equal value not equal roles
Investment All in, all levels, all sports
Knowledge Knowledge is power
Influence Everyone leads
Noble Do the right thing
Growth 1% better every day
Success The Standard!

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS OFFERED

Fall Sports - Girls Basketball, Boys / Girls Cross Country

Winter Sports - Wrestling, Volleyball, Boys Basketball

Spring Sports - Boys / Girls Track and Field

*Except for wrestling, 6th grade participation is to be determined by the total number of 7th and 8th grade students playing that particular sport. If 6th grade participation is needed to fill a team, 6th graders may only play on the B Team, if applicable. Please see TVC 6th Grade Participation Philosophy below.

TVC 6TH GRADE PARTICIPATION PHILOSOPHY

All 6th grade students will follow MHSAA guidelines and will not participate on any other teams of the same sport during their middle school season.

A school that has both A and B teams in a sport shall not add 6th grade students unless they get approval from $\frac{2}{3}$ of the schools in their division of the TVC. If 6th grade participation is needed to fill a team, 6th graders may only play on the B Team, if applicable. If a 7th grade student is pulled up to fill an 8th grade team, they shall only play on the 8th grade B team. The following are baseline numbers for a combined team to have two teams, which could include 6th grade students on the 7th grade team or 7th grade students on the 8th grade team.

- Basketball – 16
- Volleyball – 16
- Track – 25 (both boys and girls), 50 total
- Wrestling – unlimited
- Cross Country – 25 (both boys and girls), 50 total

MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The following is a summary of some of the more common MHSAA regulations directly involving student eligibility. This list is by no means complete or all-inclusive. Specific questions regarding athletic department rules and regulations should be directed to either the Principal or Athletic Director.

To be eligible, a middle school student must comply with the following rules:

Enrollment: Must be enrolled in a junior high/middle school not later than the first official Count Day (First Semester) or the second official Count Day (Second Semester). A student must be enrolled in the school for which he or she competes.

Age: A sixth, seventh, or eighth grade student who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under thirteen (13), fourteen (14), or fifteen (15) years of age respectively, except that a student who reaches that birthday on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for interscholastic athletic contests for the balance of that school year.

Physical Examination and Sports Registration: For the 2023-24 school year, an MHSAA pre-participation sports physical is required for all students who participate in sports. A physical examination must be completed on or after April 15, 2023 to be considered a valid physical for 2023-24. A STUDENT SHALL NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY PRACTICE SESSION OR CONTEST UNTIL A VALID PHYSICAL HAS BEEN TURNED INTO THE ATHLETIC OFFICE AND THE FAMILYID SPORTS REGISTRATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED (ONLY ONE TIME FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR). If the student does not have an up-to-date physical (one on or after April 15, 2023), they will be required to have one turned into the Middle School Office before participating.

Previous Semester Record: Students must have passed not less than 50% of the total periods of work carried in order to participate in a sport. Students may compete without reference to their 6th grade record.

Current Semester Record: Not failing in two or more subjects within seven (7) calendar days of the first athletic contest of the season.

Transfers: Students transferring into the 6th, 7th, or 8th grade are eligible to participate immediately provided all other eligibility requirements have been met.

Awards: Students can not receive money or other valuable consideration for participating in MHSAA sponsored sports, except as allowed by the MHSAA handbook. Students may not accept any award or merchandise exceeding \$40.00 in value for athletic performance. Athletes accepting memberships, privileges, services, negotiable certificates or money are in violation.

Prizes or awards to team members who raise the most money through team fundraising efforts, which involve athletes or their parents only, are subject to award limits: No cash or negotiable certificates are allowed; maximum value of \$40. Fundraising that involves all students in the school are not subject to this restriction.

A student may accept in kind of up to \$200 per sport per year (September through August) from approved school fundraisers to participate out-of-season in specialized team or individual athletic camps, clinics, competitions or leagues (but not to tryouts or combines).

Funds must be in the form of checks made out to the camp, clinic, exchange coordinator or competition sponsor, or to the school or tax-exempt organization for which the student is fundraising. If cash is donated on behalf of a student, it must be paid directly to the organization. Neither cash nor checks payable to the student may be accepted by the student unless the student has been employed and performed labor or service for which the payment is reasonable compensation.

Amateur Practices: Not have accepted money, merchandise, memberships, privileges, services, or other valuable consideration of participating in any form of athletics, sports, or games, or for officiating interscholastic athletic contests, or have signed a professional contract. (Reinstatement will not be considered for one (1) year.)

Limited Team Membership: A student who participates in an interscholastic scrimmage or contest as a member of a junior high/middle school athletic team and then participates in any athletic competition not sponsored by his or her school in the same sport during the same season, shall become ineligible for a minimum of the next two (2) days of competition and a maximum of the remainder of that season in that school year.

In all sports except football, during the junior high/middle school season (from a student's first participation in a contest or scrimmage until the last day of competition for that student), a member of the school team in that sport may participate in a maximum of two (2) events not sponsored by his or her school in that sport while not representing his or her school. An event held on not more than three (3) consecutive calendar days is considered a single event (for the purposes of this section only).

All Star Competition: Students shall not compete at any time in any sport under MHSAA jurisdiction in all-star contests or national championships, regardless of the method of selection. Participation in such a contest shall cause those students to become ineligible for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment.

Undue Influence: The use of undue influence by any person directly or indirectly associated with a school to secure or encourage the attendance of a student for athletic purposes will cause the student to become ineligible for interscholastic scrimmages and contests for a minimum of 90 scheduled school days and a maximum of one year.

REGULATION V

Sportsmanship: Under Regulation V in the MHSAA Handbook, when a student is ejected from a contest for flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct, that student shall be withheld by the coach for the remainder of that day of competition and for at least the next day of competition for that team (two or more dates for ice hockey). Athletes ejected from competition are also required to complete an online sportsmanship course from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) before returning to competition.

ANNUAL SPORTS PARTICIPATION FEE

The Swan Valley School District has implemented a Board of Education approved annual sports registration fee at the following rates:

High School Sports: \$100.00

Middle School Sports: \$50.00

Family Cap of \$250.00

All fees must be paid before the first contest. Fees can be paid in the High School Athletic Office or Middle School Office, or on the FamilyID Sports Registration platform using the PayPal option. If an athlete qualifies for free or reduced lunch, fees will be reduced by 50%. The fees are required for Board of Education sponsored sports only. Club sports are excluded as follows: High School Ice Hockey and Boys Lacrosse.

All fees are non-refundable.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES ELIGIBILITY/DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Discipline of athletes shall be in accordance with general school policies for all students. Specific additions to these policies relating to athletes shall be the responsibility of each individual coach, the Athletic Director and/or building principal.

It is important that athletes understand that training rules are enforced during the complete calendar year. Consequently, they shall not be solely limited to the actual school calendar year. Specifically, athletes guilty of infractions during the "off season", will be treated the same as violators during the "in season". Penalties will begin with the 1st athletic contest in which the student participates. Rules apply at all times throughout the student's middle school career, including all vacation periods. These guidelines are not limited to school sponsored activities or school property.

Violations will be recognized by the following:
Coaching Staff, Faculty, Building and District Administration,
Law Enforcement Agencies

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Student athletes who have been suspended from school by the school administration shall receive the following athletic discipline from the athletic staff.

1. The student shall not be allowed to practice for the term of suspension.
2. The student shall not be allowed to participate in any athletic contest during the term of suspension. The length of time of disciplinary action shall be measured from the time of being sent from school until thirty (30) minutes before the school day begins on the day the student is to return to the classroom. Any further disciplinary action toward the student shall rest in the hands of the coach involved.

In a case involving a serious infraction of school rules or local laws, the athlete may be placed on probation by the Principal and Athletic Director at their sole discretion.

SCHOLARSHIP/CITIZENSHIP

1. A student wishing to participate in athletics may not be failing in more than one of his or her assigned classes seven (7) days prior to the first athletic contest of the season.
1. **No student shall compete in any athletic contest who accumulates 6 or more points on the following scholarship/citizenship scale at the time of the weekly eligibility:**

E = 3 pts.	5 = 2 pts.
D = 2 pts.	4 = 1 pt.

The weekly eligibility grades for all subjects will be the accumulated average grade calculated from the beginning of the current marking period to the date seven calendar days prior to the contest.

3. All incomplete grades must be made up and are considered an 'E' until made up. Consideration may be given to each incomplete due to extenuating circumstances.
4. **The period of ineligibility will be for one week (7 calendar days), and will commence the Monday after the student is noted as ineligible.**

CITIZENSHIP

1. Athletes must maintain a wholesome attitude, which consists of interest and cooperation with teachers and coaches at all times.
2. An athlete must conduct himself as a gentleman or lady at all times, in the classroom, the school building, or in going to and from school.
3. An athlete must show good sportsmanship and proper respect toward his teammates, coaches, opponent teams and their coaches and the officials.
4. An athlete is considered a leader and standard-bearer among his/her peers. The athlete must, therefore, have no involvement/association with drugs, alcohol, and /or tobacco products. **Any athlete found to be in violation of this standard of citizenship shall lose eligibility for the next (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or the next (2) weeks of contests, in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater.**

BULLYING

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe educational environment for all students. Bullying of a student at school is strictly prohibited. This policy shall be interpreted and enforced to protect all students and to equally prohibit bullying without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

HAZING

The act of “hazing” is a crime in the State of Michigan and will not be tolerated by the District. The District will fully comply with Michigan law regarding any “hazing” incidents.

Students engaging in any hazing or hazing-type behavior will be subject to the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct as would apply to any other student violation of State Law.

LOCKER ROOMS AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

1. There will be no horseplay of any kind in the locker room.
2. Clothes or equipment that are left on the floor at the end of the day will be put in the Lost and Found.
3. The use of cell phones and other ECDs in locker rooms and restrooms is strictly prohibited and punishable both by the school and law enforcement. Possession of a cellular phone or other ECD by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege. The student who possesses a cellular phone or ECD shall assume responsibility for its care. At no time shall the district be responsible for preventing theft, loss or damage to cell phones or ECDs brought onto its property.

ATTENDANCE

1. An athlete must be present in all classes the day of a game in order to participate in any athletic contests that day. Funerals and other such unexpected emergencies may be the exception as determined by the Principal/Athletic Director.

2. An athlete must be in regular attendance at all practice sessions called by the coach.
3. Athletes must obtain advance permission from the coach to be absent from practice.
4. Athletes who are absent from school during the day may not attend practice sessions. Funerals and other such unexpected emergencies may be the exception as determined by the Principal/Athletic Director.
5. Ineligible athletes may accompany the team to away games and may further join the team at the players' bench during home games.
6. All ineligible athletes must participate in all practice sessions during the period of ineligibility, if they are to be allowed to return to the team.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS (SNOW DAYS)

In the event that school is cancelled due to inclement weather for Swan Valley School District; the following procedures will be adhered to:

Contests:

1. Every effort will be made to compete in MHSAA scheduled events.
2. In the event that cancellations impact the schedule, all scheduled conference events will take priority in being rescheduled over non-conference events.

Practices:

1. Any practice that does take place must be voluntary.
2. All Middle School practices are cancelled.
3. No practice may be scheduled prior to 11:00 a.m. on snow days.

The Superintendent has final say in all cancellations of contests and practices. Bus drivers have discretion to return a bus home if he/she concludes the roads are too dangerous to travel.

GENERAL

1. Any athlete ineligible for four consecutive weeks will be dropped from the team.
2. All athletes are expected to uphold the traditions of good sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
3. The use of profanity or vulgar gestures will never be acceptable.
4. Each athlete will be responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all equipment checked out. If damage or loss occurs, each athlete will be held financially responsible for this equipment. He/she will not be permitted to try out for another sport unless all equipment is returned or paid for.
5. The dress and grooming of athletes will always be in accordance with each coach/team policy. As an athlete you need to always remember that you are representing Swan Valley Middle School.
6. Other routine team rules regarding missing practice, arriving late for practice, not carrying out assignments, etc., may be established and enforced by respective coaches.

7. Dropping out of a sport without a valid reason is always considered a serious matter. If an athlete wants to quit any sport, he/she should notify the coach and return all equipment. If an athlete does quit a sport, he/she will not be permitted to try out for another sport until the conclusion of that sport season. (Extenuating circumstances may be considered.)

CONFLICTS WITH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Since the athletic and academic departments recognize that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of co-curricular activities, every attempt will be made to schedule events in a manner that minimizes conflicts. 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 instructors and coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

If a conflict occurs between a practice and contest or performance on the same day but different times, all coaches and instructors involved will devise a plan to solve the conflict so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If the conflict cannot be resolved, the athletic director and building principal will be notified so a solution can be arranged and will make the decision based on the following:

1. The relative importance of each event.
2. The importance of each event to the student.
3. The relative contribution the student can make.
4. How long the event has been scheduled.
5. Talk with parents.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he /she will not be penalized in any way by either instructor/coach.

TRANSPORTATION

Swan Valley Schools will provide for some weekday transportation to away contests. There are trips where athletes are required to provide their own transportation to and from the event sites. This includes but is not limited to Saturday events. Some weekday events may provide a drop off but no return transportation.

1. All transportation will be arranged for athletic teams through the athletic office. Bus transportation will be used in most cases. Other modes must be approved by the administration in advance.
2. Departure times will be assigned that keep any classroom absence to a minimum.
3. When possible, parents/guardians will be allowed to drive their OWN child to and from games.
4. If the child is to ride home with a parent/guardian, a note is to be presented to the coach. Athletes will not be excused with siblings or friends.
5. At no time can an athlete drive himself/herself to and from an away athletic contest (when a team bus is provided). If an athlete is to drive themselves from the school to the away contest and home, a Private Auto Travel Permission Form must be signed by a legal parent or guardian and turned in to the Athletic Office by the morning of the
6. The coach will accompany the team to all contests and be responsible for the team's safe and proper behavior.
7. The coach should know the location and directions to the facilities.
8. Prearrange any requests for stopping to eat or requiring the bus to stay on site.
9. Someone other than the team coach may supervise the bus ride only with the permission of the A.D.
10. Unless there is an emergency or when a team bus is not provided, no coach or volunteer should transport a student-athlete in their own vehicle. If transporting a student-athlete, written permission must be given by the parent/guardian and approved by the A.D. prior.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

Research indicates that students involved in co-curricular activities have a greater chance for success during adulthood. We believe the Swan Valley Athletic program helps develop the character traits that promote a successful life after high school. Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of each other, providing greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program. If a situation arises which requires a conference between the coach and the parent, this is encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.

Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or immediately 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 and never go well, as many things that are said remain long after the issues are resolved.

A lack of cooperation may result in Administration Action.

Communication you should expect from your son's/daughter's coach:

Philosophy of the coach,

Expectations the coach has for your child and other players on the squad,

Locations and times of all practices, contests, scrimmages, bus departures, meetings, banquets, and possible awards,

Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning,

Procedure should your child be injured during participation, and

Discipline that resulted in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents

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

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concerns regarding a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

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

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

Many parent concerns regarding their child's coaches arise from the issue of "Playing Time." Generally it is not appropriate to discuss with the coach as their judgment should be respected by both players and parents. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for the team and all students involved.

1. Playing time
2. Strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

Procedure for speaking with your child's coach

When parent-coach conferences are necessary or you have a concern to discuss with the coach the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

1. The student-athlete should speak with the coach to bring the concern to the coach.
2. If the player-coach meeting does not resolve the issue, call the High School to set up an appointment with the coach. The Swan Valley High School Athletic Office telephone number is 921-2471. *The student-athlete is required to attend the parent-coach meeting.*

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

Call and set up an appointment with the Middle School Principal and Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

At this meeting the appropriate next step will be determined.

USE OF MOOD-ALTERING CHEMICALS STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. To elevate standards of sportsmanship and to encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the students.
2. To emphasize the school's concerns for the health of students in areas of safety while participating in activities and the long-term physical and emotional effects of chemical use on their health.
3. To promote equity and a sense of order and discipline among students.

4. To confirm and support existing state laws which restrict the use of such mood-altering chemicals.
5. To establish standards of conduct for those students who are leaders and standard-bearers among their peers.
6. To assist students who desire to resist peer pressure, which directs them toward the use of mood-altering chemicals.
7. To assist students who should be referred for assistance or evaluation regarding their use of mood-altering chemicals.

RULES

During the **entire calendar year**, the school year as well as the season of practice or play, a student shall not use, posses, consume, buy, sell or give away:

- intoxicating beverages.
- marijuana, or any "controlled substance" pursuant to federal and/or State statute.
- Steroids, human growth hormones, or other performance enhancing drugs.
- Substances purported to be illegal, abusive, or performance enhancing, i.e., "look-alike" drugs.
- **DRUG PARAPHERNALIA.**
- All forms of VAPE/VAPOR pens, electronic cigarettes, and the products used in them.
- Tobacco or tobacco products of any form.

It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for a student's own use by his or her doctor.

PENALTIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **FIRST VIOLATION**
 - a. **Penalty:** After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive interscholastic contests or the next two (2) weeks of a contest in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
 - b. **Recommendation:**
 1. The school will have a local education program through which the student would receive information about the effects or misuse of mood-altering chemicals.
 2. It is recommended that, when appropriate, the school refer a student to a community agency or a professional individual outside the school for assessment of potential chemical abuse or misuse.
2. **SECOND VIOLATION**
 - a. **Penalty:** After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next six (6) consecutive interscholastic contests in which the student is a participant. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.
 - b. **Recommendation:**
 1. It is recommended that before being re-admitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the student shall show evidence in writing that she/he has sought or has received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.
 2. It is recommended that, when appropriate, the school refer a student to a community agency or a professional individual outside the school for assessment of potential chemical abuse or misuse.

3. THIRD VIOLATION

- a. Penalty: After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations the student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic contests in which the student is a participant. If, after the third or subsequent violations, the student on her/his own choice becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in the athletic program after a minimum of six (6) weeks. Such certification must be issued by the director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center.

Penalties shall be accumulative beginning with and throughout the student's participation:

1. Interscholastic athletics during grades 6-8
2. Interscholastic athletics during grades 9-12

Violations will be recognized by the following: Coaching Staff, Faculty, District Administrators, and Law Enforcement Agencies.

ATTENTION PARENTS: The Athletic Agreement and Concussion Pledge Information Form must be signed or the athlete may not be allowed to participate in contests.

HEADS UP CONCUSSION

A Fact Sheet for ATHLETES

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

It's Better to miss one game than the whole season

A concussion is a brain injury that:
Is caused by a bump or blow to the head
Can change the way your brain normally works
Can occur during practices or games in any sport
Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out
Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged"

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Headache or "pressure" in head
Nausea or vomiting
Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision
Bothered by light
Bothered by noise
Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Difficulty paying attention
Memory problems ° Confusion ° Does not "feel right"

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

- Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

Get a medical checkup. A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.

Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:

The right equipment for the game, position, or activity

Worn correctly and fit well > Used every time you play

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:

www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports and/or www.cdc.gov/injury

A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

Appears dazed or stunned	Is confused about assignment or position
Forgets an instruction	Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
Moves clumsily	Answers questions slowly
Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Shows behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Can't recall events after hit or fall
Symptoms Reported by Athlete	Headache or "pressure" in head
Nausea or vomiting	Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision	Sensitivity to light
Sensitivity to noise	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Concentration or memory problems	Confusion
Does not "feel right"	

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion. Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

Dear Parents,

CONCUSSION PLEDGE INFORMATION FORM

STUDENT/ATHLETE

I, _____, understand that concussions are serious injuries. I understand that if not handled properly, concussions may lead to permanent brain injury or death.

I have read the fact sheet for athletes in the handbook.

I pledge that if I RECOGNIZE symptoms of concussion in myself, or a teammate, that I must REPORT it immediately to a coach, athletic trainer, or parent.

I pledge to not play my sport again until I'm cleared by a doctor and complete a graduated process (BRAIN protocol). This will help ensure that I RECOVER completely before returning to play.

Athlete's Signature _____ Date _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, _____, understand that concussions can be serious injuries. I understand that if not handled properly, concussions may lead to permanent brain injury or death.

I have read the Fact Sheet for parents in the handbook.

I pledge that if I RECOGNIZE symptoms of concussion in my child, that I will REPORT it to the Coach or athletic trainer immediately.

I pledge to not allow my child to play again until they are cleared by a doctor and complete a graduated process (BRAIN protocol). This will help ensure that my child RECOVER completely before returning to play.

Signature _____ Date _____

www.cdc.gov/concussion

Concussion Resources / online concussion education

Your son/daughter is a candidate for one of the athletic teams sponsored by Swan Valley School District.

Participation in all athletic activities is voluntary, and therefore we would like to have your approval for your son/daughter to participate. If a student does not have a valid physical completed on or after April 15, 2023, they will be required to have an updated physical exam. This must be signed by the student and parent/guardian. The student-athlete will not be permitted to practice or play until a satisfactory report has been filed with their coach or the Athletic Department. Be aware that a sports physical form provided by Swan Valley High School is merely a screening procedure and is not meant to replace routine health physicals by your child's primary physician. If your child has an underlying medical problem, complaints of syncope with exercise, or a family history of cardiac disease and /or sudden death, understand that he/she should have a more extensive work-up before participating in athletics.

Even though the school district provides the best available equipment and trained supervision, the nature of athletic activities make some injuries possible. A note from parents which allows return to activity from injury ***is not*** adequate protection for the coach and school. ***An athlete must have a physician's written permission to return to practice or competition if he/she has sustained any injury or illness which requires a visit to a physician.*** The Swan Valley School District is ***not*** liable for bills incurred for physical examinations, ambulance, emergency or other care that result from athletic injury. Such bills are the responsibility of the parents.

If you are interested in additional coverage or a basic athletic insurance plan (these plans are sponsored by independent companies), contact the Athletic Department for information on insurance policies that you may purchase.

NOTICE * NOTICE * NOTICE * NOTICE * NOTICE *

*** MEDICAL INSURANCE IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS ***

Sincerely,

Craig Blower
Middle School Principal

&

Ryan Stephens
Athletic Director / Student Activities Coordinator

**SWAN VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
ATHLETIC AGREEMENT**

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the policies of the Swan Valley Athletic Department contained in the Athletic Handbook (found at website www.swanvalleyschools.com).

Student Athlete _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

This agreement must be signed and returned to the respective coach prior to the first contest. Students lacking a signed Swan Valley Middle School Athletic Agreement will not be allowed to participate in interscholastic contests. This agreement will be kept on file in the office for the duration of the academic year.