

ATHLETE HANDBOOK KENTWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOLS

MISSION/BELIEF STATEMENT

Middle school athletics in Kentwood Public Schools provides opportunities for all participating students to learn life-long values in a safe environment. These values include: cooperation, sportsmanship, respect, pride, and leadership skills.

The Kentwood Middle School athletic department believes:

- In developing physical fitness.
- In teaching and developing athletic skills.
- That student athletes will develop leadership characteristics that carry into the future.
- In developing positive personal, social, and psychological skills (e.g. self worth, effective communication, teamwork, self-discipline, goal-setting, and self-control).
- In developing a realistic and positive self-image.
- That athletics should be fun as well as character building.

MESSAGE TO PARENT

The athletic handbook is provided because your student, with your support, has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics.

A properly controlled, well-organized sports program supports your student's need for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical development, as well as enhancing his/her educational development. Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege which must be sustained by the student by continuously adhering to the standards of conduct as defined in the Athletic Handbook and Code as well as the Student Code of Conduct.

A student who chooses to join a team is making a choice to commit to a sport which encourages self-discipline and healthy training habits. In addition, a commitment is being made to understand and adhere to the structure of the Middle School Athletic Code. The student is not only responsible for his/her choices, but must realize that his/her choices affect the entire team.

Parents of student athletes also commit themselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. Parents of the student athletes are asked to become familiar with the Athletic Handbook and cooperate with the school in enforcing the Athletic Code.

MESSAGE TO THE STUDENT ATHLETE

Being a member of the middle school athletic program in Kentwood brings with it certain responsibilities. As a representative of your school, you will be responsible for adhering to the standards of the Kentwood Athletic Code. In addition, student athletes are committed to:

- Meeting academic responsibilities in the classroom.
- Regular school attendance.
- Using appropriate care with all school property, including athletic uniforms, equipment and facilities. Athletic uniforms and equipment issued to the student are solely for team participation only, and are not to be used for any other purpose. Upon completion of the season, the student is responsible to return equipment and uniform cleaned and in good repair. A financial obligation may be assigned for replacement or needed repair.
- Exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior during practices and competitions. This includes use of appropriate language and tactics, as well as being gracious in defeat and modest in victory.

GENERAL INFORMATION

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS OFFERED

Kentwood Public Schools offers the following interscholastic sports to students in grades 7 and 8.

Girls Sports

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Basketball | Winter |
| Cheerleading | Fall/Winter |
| Swimming | Fall/Winter |
| Volleyball | Fall |
| Track | Spring |
| Tennis | Spring |

Boys Sports

| | |
|------------|-------------|
| Basketball | Fall/Winter |
| Swimming | Fall/Winter |
| Wrestling | Winter |
| Track | Spring |
| Tennis | Spring |

POTENTIAL DANGERS IN ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Parents and student athletes should fully understand and appreciate the risk of serious personal injury associated with participation in the educational sports program provided by Kentwood Public Schools. Participation in school athletics may involve unavoidable collisions with other athletes and/or game equipment.

Athletic activities are hazardous and could include serious injuries such as paralysis, head injuries, or possible death. Taking part in such activities is calculated risk-taking on the part of the student athlete and his/her parents/guardians. To most, the potential benefits of participation exceed the potential hazards. Reducing injuries to a minimum is an on-going goal of the coaching and administrative staff.

REQUIRED FORMS AND FEES

As an athlete you will NOT be allowed to participate in tryouts, practice, or competition in any sport UNTIL the following items have been completed and are on file with the athletic director.

1. A physical examination card needs to be obtained from the school office and filled out by a registered physician. Any physical given after April 15th of the current school year is good for the following school year. This form also requires parent/guardian signatures for Athletic Code and Financial Responsibility, Eligibility Requirements, and Injury Consent Waiver.
2. Insurance waiver or proof of premium paid needs to be recorded on the form available in school offices. A brief window to purchase insurance coverage through First Agency will be explained at the organizational meeting for each sport.
NOTE: Kentwood Public Schools does not assume responsibility for medical, hospital, or ambulance expenses incurred because of athletic injuries. Athletics is a voluntary program in which students chose to participate.
3. Participation fee is for all student athletes. The fee is paid once annually after the team has been posted or by the end of the first week of the season. Note: The fee must be paid before any athlete can participate in any scheduled competition or event. The fee is \$60.00 and will be submitted to the office. Scholarship applications based on Free and Reduced lunch applications will be made available to families.

AGE ELIGIBILITY

A seventh grade student who has not reached his/her fourteenth birthday by September 1 of the current school year may participate as a seventh grader. If fourteen before September 1, he/she is eligible to tryout for an eighth grade sport.

An eighth grade student who has not reached his/her fifteenth birthday by September 1 of the current school year may participate as an eighth grader. If fifteen before September 1, he/she is eligible to tryout in the high school athletic program.

No student who is enrolled in the sixth grade or below may compete on the same team with or against seventh and/or eighth graders.

Please contact the building athletic director if you have any questions regarding age eligibility.

AMATEUR STATUS

A student shall not be eligible if he/she has accepted any money or merchandise for participation in athletics. If you have questions about any award, please contact your building athletic director.

LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP

During a given season, including tryouts, a Kentwood team member may NOT be a participant on any other team of the same sport (i.e. church, recreation, Macker teams, etc.). A member of a Kentwood individual sport (swimming, wrestling, track, tennis) may participate in an outside competition as an individual (not part of a team or as representing Kentwood) for up to two separate competition dates. Please clarify any questions or concerns with your building athletic director as violation may result in removal from the Kentwood team.

AWARDS

The philosophy of the Kentwood Middle Schools is based on physical, social, and emotional growth through participation in extra-curricular activities. All awards presented are for participation only. No special awards will be provided, for example: most valuable, most improved, etc. No records are kept for year-end champions.

TRANSPORTATION

Athletes will travel as a team to and from events. The school provides transportation for school sponsored activities. In certain situations, the athletic director may determine it necessary to use personal vehicles for transportation. Transportation for activities held within Kentwood Public Schools will be provided to the event only. Athletes must arrange with parents/guardians for transportation home immediately upon completion of the Kentwood event.

When transportation is provided, the following rules are to be observed:

- A coach will travel with the team.
- All participants will travel to an event in the team vehicle and return the same way. Personal transportation privileges may be granted by the coach when the player is going to be transported by parent/guardian. The request for this privilege must be made in writing to the coach. The parent/guardian must meet with the coach before the student will be allowed to leave a sporting event.

ATTENDANCE

Students must be in attendance at school for the entire day in order to practice or participate in an event unless he/she has been excused by the director of athletics.

PRACTICE OBLIGATIONS

Each coach will hold an organizational meeting prior to the start of a given season. During this meeting, the actual start date for practice or the dates for tryouts will be announced. No practice/tryout will begin sooner than fifteen school days prior to team's first scheduled contest. Actual start date will be determined by the athletic director and the coach(es).

It is the student's responsibility to have all necessary paperwork completed and on file at school in order to participate in the designated tryout sessions for a cut sport (basketball, cheerleading, and volleyball). Injuries and sickness which precludes participation in the tryout sessions will be addressed by the coach and athletic director on an as-needed basis. It is the student/parent's responsibility to notify the coach of such concerns prior to completion of the tryout. Final determination of team membership for cut sports is made at the end of the designated tryout sessions.

A student may join a non-cut athletic team anytime before the mid-point of the season providing arrangements are made with the coach and approved by the athletic director. The student must attend at least four practices before participating in a contest.

CONFLICTS IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Despite all scheduling efforts by the administration, conflicts may develop between extra-curricular activities. The following guidelines shall apply for students who experience conflicts between school related activities:

1. When a conflict occurs between a competition/performance and a scheduled practice, students are expected to attend the competition/performance without loss of group membership or standing in the other activity.
2. When a conflict occurs between scheduled practices, the student may choose either activity without loss of group membership in the other; however, frequently missing practice sessions may jeopardize a student's standing within his/her group.
3. When a conflict occurs between competitions/performances, the student may choose either activity without loss of group membership or standing in the other activity. There may be times when students may participate in one activity and part of the other by special approval of the sponsors.

It is strongly recommended that any athlete participating on an interscholastic team shall refrain from participating on any recreation or non-school sponsored team in another sport during their season. The first obligation and responsibility of student athletes is to Kentwood Public Schools middle school academic and athletic programs.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Athletic competitions are canceled if inclement weather forces either of the participating schools to cancel school for the day. There will be no practice on days that Kentwood cancels school due to inclement weather. If there is a tornado watch as of 2:00 pm, Kentwood will not host a contest nor will practice be held. A tornado watch in the district of the opposing team as of 2:00 pm will also result in the cancellation of the athletic event.