

Susquehanna Valley Central School District Department of Athletics



Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook

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Susquehanna Valley Central School District

Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook for Athletic Policies and Procedures

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. The Susquehanna Valley Athletic Department

A. Organizational Structure.....	1
B. Philosophy.....	1
C. Goal.....	1
D. Specific Objectives.....	2
E. New York State Public High School Athletic.....	2
F. Southern Tier Athletic Conference (STAC).....	2
G. STAC Sportsmanship Policy.....	2
H. New York State Public High School Athletic Association Misconduct Policy.....	3
I. Transfer.....	3

II. Relationships to Other School Programs

A. Academic Program.....	3
B. Other Extra-Curricular Programs.....	3
C. Physical Education Program.....	3

III. General Policies for Athletics

A. Situations Not Covered in the Handbooks.....	4
---	---

IV. Sports Offered at Susquehanna Valley

Modified, Junior Varsity & Varsity Sports.....	4
--	---

V. Susquehanna Valley Rules and Regulations

A. The Modified Interscholastic Athletic Program.....	4
B. Athletic Placement Process.....	5
C. Eligibility Standards.....	5-6
D. Outside Competition (Travel).....	6
E. School Attendance Policy.....	6
Practice & Game Attendance.....	6
F. Behavioral Expectations.....	7
G. School Rules.....	7
H. Vandalism/Theft.....	8
I. Removal from a Team.....	8
J. Use, Possession, Sale of Drugs.....	8
K. Training Rules.....	8
L. Quitting a Team.....	8
M. Review Board.....	8
N. Appeal.....	9
O. Academic Eligibility.....	9-10
P. Vacation Policy.....	10

VI. Transportation

A. Travel Regulations..... 10-11

VII. Care of Equipment and Uniforms

A. Lost Equipment 11
B. Vandalism and Misuse of Equipment 11

VIII. Physical/Permission/Medical Insurance

A. Requirements 11
B. Consent Forms and Emergency Medical Authorization Forms ... 11
C. Injuries and Accident Reports 11
D. Return to Competition after Injury and/or Extended Absence 12
E. New York State Athletic Protection Plan..... 12
F. Concussion Management Policy 12

IX. Support Groups

A. Susquehanna Valley Athletic Booster Club..... 12
B. Susquehanna Valley Gridiron Club..... 12

X. Appendices

A. Communication Guidelines 13-14
B. Sportsmanship Policy..... 15
C. Concussion Management Policy..... 16
D. Heads Up concussion Fact Sheet for Parents..... 17
E. Concussion: 5 Step Return to Play Protocol 18

I. The Susquehanna Valley Athletic Department

A. Organizational Structure:

The Athletic Program is one of several extra-curricular activities that offered to secondary students (grades 7-12) at Susquehanna Valley. The Superintendent of Schools, with the School Board's direction, is responsible for the organization of the program. The Athletic Program is coordinated by the Director of Athletics who is responsible for all phases of the program.

Sport specific questions should be addressed with the coach of your child's team prior to contacting the Director of Athletics. Coaches will be open to parent and student-athlete feedback regarding the program and make every attempt to resolve problems or conflicts in a professional and timely manner. Concerns or questions should be addressed at an appropriate time. Communication Guidelines can be found in *Appendix A*.

Each year the Board of Education approves the appointment of all coaches. The **Head Coach** has responsibility for the entire program in that particular sport. The Head Coach will structure and provide direction to Modified, Junior Varsity and Varsity teams. He/she will work with the Director of Athletics to promote the growth and development of the program. The Head Coach is responsible for all phases of the program and is responsible to aid assistant coaches at all levels in the coordination of a sequentially, aligned program from Modified through Varsity levels. The coach will work to the best of his/her ability and is the authority in matters between players and the coach.

B. Philosophy:

The nature of competitive sport is such that a primary focus becomes the pursuit of excellence. This creates situations where stress, concentration, self-sacrifice, hard work, joy, sorrow, elation and disappointment, both mentally and physically occur. Athletics is one place where a person cannot hide the results of his/her effort. Competition does reveal the extreme positive and, unfortunately, sometimes negative human attributes of the players. The sports experience contributes to the overall education of each participant through emphasis on the pursuit of excellence

Competitive sport does not always lend itself to complete fairness. The majority of athletes must work, sacrifice and develop their ability in order to compete. All participants do not always get the same amount of playing time. The coach will determine the amount of playing time for each athlete. It is usually a function of the quality of practice time. The coach will communicate with players about playing time and what he/she can do to improve. This is part of the self-sacrifice that is required to be a team member and the team should come first. Winning is important in life and sports is a reflection of life.

Winning at any cost is not a reflection of life and has no place in our program. Play hard, play smart, play fair, and be satisfied when you have played your best.

C. Goal:

It is the goal of the Susquehanna Valley Athletic Program to support the District Mission Statement:

"The Susquehanna Valley Central School community is committed to provide a caring equitable environment with high expectations for learning. We encourage the development of critical thinking, self-esteem and responsible citizenship."

D. Specific Objectives:

1. To develop an appreciation and sound educational attitude toward interscholastic athletics and their place in American culture.
2. To develop an understanding and appreciation for good sportsmanship.
3. To serve as a focal point for the development of spirit, and school and community pride.
4. To nurture the development of physical and emotional growth, mental alertness and a healthy competitive spirit for all participants while keeping athletics in the proper perspective.
5. To provide the opportunity for participants to learn how to manage winning and losing properly and to make appropriate decisions for themselves and the team.
6. To develop a feeling of self-confidence and self-esteem through commitment, hard work and dedication to true success in all student-athletes.

E. New York State Public High School Athletic Association:

New York State is divided into eleven (11) sections plus New York City. The State Athletic Association has a set of rules to govern each sport offered in New York State. The State organization will be referred to often as we go through this Handbook. Susquehanna Valley is a member of the N.Y.S.P.H.S.A.A. (New York State Public High School Athletic Association) and is in Section IV. Section IV does have tournaments for most varsity sports and the winner of this tournament moves to a State level competition. Copies of the N.Y.S.P.H.S.A.A. Handbook are available online at <http://www.nysphsaa.org>.

F. Southern Tier Athletic Conference (S.T.A.C.):

The Southern Tier Athletic Conference is comprised of seventeen (17) member schools that cooperate together to promote and provide athletic competition in various sports. Individual and team champions are recognized by the league and league schedules are provided within the guidelines of New York State and Section IV. The Southern Tier Athletic Conference is one of the most highly regarded leagues in New York State and has established, as one of its goals, the joining together of student-athletes and fans to emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play. We trust each Susquehanna Valley student-athlete will give 100% in these endeavors.

G. Southern Tier Athletic Conference (S.T.A.C.) Sportsmanship Policy:

Whereas good sportsmanship is a major concern among the member schools of the Southern Tier Athletic Conference, a season commitment with the student-athletes, their coaches and their parents/guardians, is being made for the purpose of promoting good conduct among all players, coaches, cheerleaders and fans of the member schools.

Therefore, we are asking all team members, (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Modified) coaches and parents/guardians to certify and honor the following contest sportsmanship guidelines.

See Appendix B.

H. New York State Public High School Athletic Association Misconduct Policy:

The NYSPHSAA has been vested with the responsibility to ensure that all contests under its jurisdiction are conducted satisfactorily.

1. Any member of a squad ruled out of a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or for a flagrant foul **shall not participate in that sport in the next previously scheduled contest** with a member school or in NYSPHSAA tournament play. Disqualification from one season carries over to the next season of participation.
2. Any member of the squad who strikes, shoves, kicks or makes other physical contact, or with the intent to do so, with an official shall be expelled from the game immediately and **banned from further participation in all sports for one year from the date of the offense**. An official is to be treated with respect at all times (home or away) by players and/or spectators.
3. Hazing and harassment, or any unwanted physical or verbal acts, threats or demeaning commentary directed at any student-athlete is strictly prohibited. Hazing and these initiations are expressly prohibited by any student-athlete on any of our athletic teams at any level. Consequences will be according to the nature of the event, the severity of the event, and the number of previous occurrences.
4. Any spectator who is ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct shall, at a minimum, not attend the next scheduled contest for that sport. The district reserves the right to extend the suspension.

I. Transfer:

A student-athlete who transfers without a corresponding change in residence of his/her parents (or other persons with whom the student has resided for at least six months) is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest in a particular sport for a period of one (1) year if the student-athlete participated in that sport during the one (1) year period immediately preceding his/her transfer. Appeals process forms are available in the Director of Athletics Office.

II. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

A. Academic Program:

The academic program is the primary focus for our student-athletes. Athletics, along with other extra-curricular programs, is secondary. Our Academic Eligibility Policy is on pages 14-16.

B. Other Extra-Curricular Programs:

The interscholastic athletic program is on an equal basis with other extra-curricular programs. Scheduling conflicts should be avoided as much as possible. Should a conflict arise, the conflict will be resolved by the coach and advisor after the student-athlete notifies both parties.

C. Physical Education Program:

Regardless of participation in the athletic program, all students are required to participate in Physical Education class as established in Board of Education policy as required by the Commissioner of Education and the Board of Regents. An athlete will not be permitted to participate in a practice or contest if he/she chooses not to participate in Physical Education class the day of a practice/contest.

III. GENERAL POLICIES FOR ATHLETICS

The Director of Athletics, in consultation with other district administration and coaches, reserves the right to make decisions on any situation(s) regarding athletics not covered in the Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook.

IV. SPORTS OFFERED AT SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY

Sport	Season	Varsity	JV	Modified
Baseball	Spring	X	X	X
Basketball - Boys	Winter	X	X	X
Basketball - Girls	Winter	X	X	X
Bowling – Boys	Winter	X		
Bowling – Girls	Winter	X		
Cheerleading	Fall	X		
Cheerleading	Winter	X		
Cross Country - Boys	Fall	X		X
Cross Country - Girls	Fall	X		X
Football	Fall	X	X	X
Flag Football	Spring	X		
Golf - Boys	Fall	X		
Indoor Track – Boys	Winter	X		
Indoor Track - Girls	Winter	X		
Soccer - Boys	Fall	X	X	X
Soccer - Girls	Fall	X	X	X
Softball	Spring	X	X	X
Swim & Dive - Boys	Winter	X		X
Swim & Dive - Girls	Fall	X		X
Tennis - Boys	Spring	X		X
Tennis - Girls	Fall	X		X
Track & Field - Boys	Spring	X		X
Track & Field - Girls	Spring	X		X
Volleyball	Fall	X	X	X
Wrestling	Winter	X	X	X

V. SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY RULES & REGULATIONS:

When a student-athlete and parent/guardian sign the Athletic Parental Consent Form, they agree to abide by all rules on that form and in the Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook.

A. The Modified Interscholastic Athletic Program:

Interscholastic competition in sports below the 9th grade level, intended for ages 12 to 15 in grades 7-8, have been approved by the N.Y.S.P.H.S.A.A. The Modified Program is designed to develop individual skills, teach sport specific knowledge and strategies, and provide opportunities for students to participate

in competition. The modified program will not always guarantee each team member equal participation in contests, but participation by as many as possible is encouraged.

B. Athletic Placement Program:

Susquehanna Valley participates in the New York State Education Department approved Athletic Placement Program that provides the opportunity for 7th and 8th grade students to participate on Junior Varsity and Varsity teams. This program has been designed for the few in each school that would be served by playing on a higher level team than age and grade might indicate.

The Athletic Placement Process (APP) is a program for evaluating students who want to participate in sports at higher or lower levels, as approved by the Board of Regents as a part of the school eligibility rules in 1980, and is aligned with Learning Standards 1 and 2. Commissioner's Regulation Section 135.4(c)(7)(ii)(a)(4)states:

A Board of Education may permit pupils in grades no lower than seventh to compete on any senior high school team, or permit senior high pupils to compete on any teams in grades no lower than seventh, provided the pupils are placed at levels of competition appropriate to their physiological maturity, physical fitness, and skills in relationship to other pupils on those teams in accordance with standards established by the Commissioner.

Students do not mature at the same rate, and there can be tremendous developmental differences between students of the same age. The APP is not to be used to fill positions on teams, provide additional experience, provide an opportunity for middle school or junior high students when no modified program is offered, or to reward a student. Instead, it is aimed at the few, select students who can benefit from such placement because of their level of readiness.

Every effort must be made to follow our Athletic Placement Process listed below:

- Referral by P.E. staff or coach to Director of Athletics.
- Coach contacts the parent of the student to obtain permission and to communicate the process.
- Maturation and physical exam completed by the Chief Medical Officer, or designee.
- The Coach will complete the Sport Skill Evaluation
- The President's Physical Fitness Test will be administered by Director of Athletics or his/her designee. The coach will notify the athlete and parent about the test date.
- The coach will notify the parents of the test results and any pertinent information.
- The athlete will have a three day try-out to determine whether or not he/she will move to the JV/V level.

C. Eligibility Standards:

Interscholastic athletics play an important role in our educational system. Students who participate have an opportunity to gain recognition and sometimes educational opportunities. Therefore, we believe that student-athletes should live up to a set of standards which make them a credit to their school, team, and fellow teammates.

Our league and our school operate under the rules of the **New York State Public High School Athletic Association.**

The rules are as follows:

1. A participant **must be a bona fide student** enrolled in at least four (4) subjects, including Physical

Education.

2. A student-athlete shall be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition during eight (8) consecutive semesters upon entry into the 9th grade. A student-athlete shall be eligible for only **four (4) years** in any one interschool sport unless promoted by the Advanced Placement Program.
3. A student-athlete who attains **the age of 19 prior to July 1st** will not be eligible to participate in the Interscholastic Athletics Program.
4. Seventh and eighth grade students between the ages of 12 -15 may participate in the “Modified Program”. A student reaching the age of sixteen during a sports season may complete that season and must play Varsity or Junior Varsity the next sport season.

D. Outside Competition (Travel):

N.Y.S.P.H.S.A.A. allows outside competition. Susquehanna Valley student-athletes are expected to be committed to the school team first and outside competition second. Participation in outside competition should not be detrimental to an individual or to a Susquehanna Valley team.

E. Attendance Rules/Procedures

Student-athletes (Grades 7-12) will adhere to the established attendance/tardy policies for his/her building level.

All student-athletes should be in school from the beginning of the day until the end of the day. Athletes who are not in attendance prior to 9:00am will not be eligible for practice/play on that day without providing a legal excuse upon their entrance. A legal excuse will be accepted in the form of a note from a Doctor/Dentist/Medical Provider.

If a student-athlete leaves prior to the end of the day due to illness/sickness, he/she may not be eligible to practice or play that evening.

Student-athletes will attend all scheduled classes/activities during the academic day. Any student-athlete skipping a class, or not participating in physical education, will not be eligible to practice or play that day.

The Director of Athletics will make the final decisions on all issues of attendance involving student athletes.

School Attendance -

- Coaches & the athletic department will be reviewing student attendance each day to see if student-athletes qualify to participate or practice that day.

Practice & Game Attendance

- Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and competitions during the sport season unless legally absent. Student-athletes will follow the training rules provided by the coaching staff.
- If a student-athlete cannot make a practice or competition it is the student-athlete's responsibility to personally notify the coach.
- Student-athletes will sit with their own team during the entire athletic event. Failure to do so can result in future game suspension(s).
- No student-athlete will leave a game site without permission from the coach. Failure to follow this rule can result in immediate dismissal from the team.

- Postponed athletic contests are rescheduled and played the next day when possible.

F. Behavioral Expectations

Behavioral Expectations and Consequences –

- Students who participate in interscholastic athletics represent themselves, their teams, and Susquehanna Valley Central School during and out of their season. Athletes must demonstrate sportsmanship, character, competence, civility and citizenship at all times. Athletes will follow the established rules of their school building, district, athletic department, and community.
- Violations of schools rules that result in detentions or suspensions will impact an athlete's participation in athletics in the following ways:
 - A student-athlete placed in the Alternative Study Center (ASC) for improper conduct will have the following consequences:
 - First Offense:** The student-athlete will not be allowed to practice the day of suspension. In cases where suspension occurs on a contest day, the penalty will be served the first available practice day after the contest.
 - Second Offense:** The student-athlete will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled contest. The athlete must attend the next scheduled contest in uniform, they will warm up with team but will not be permitted to participate in the contest itself.
 - A student-athlete placed on Out of School Suspension **will not be allowed on school grounds to practice or participate in contests during the suspension.** In cases where athletic contests are not scheduled during the suspension period, the student-athlete will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled contest.
- Any student-athlete who is proven to have become a **chronic behavior problem** on his/her team may be subject to suspension if the coach has followed a progression of disciplinary steps:
 1. Player warning & Player/Coach conference (notify the Director of Athletics)
 2. Parent/Coach conference
 3. Player/Parent/Coach/Director of Athletics conference.
- A student-athlete who uses "practice" as an excuse for failure to do school work or attend required remediation will be subject to the school Code of Conduct. Student-athletes may be required to attend remediation as needed. Coaches should be informed of this need as soon as possible.

G. School Rules:

- All student-athletes must abide by their school building rules and the district Code of Conduct.
- Student-athletes may be denied participation in practice or competition if found in violation of these rules.
- Behaviors such as: consistent tardiness, acts of dishonesty, intimidation, fighting, disrespect, possession of a weapon, insubordination, profanity, or possession of obscene material can lead to a suspension from athletic participation.
- The Principal and the Director of Athletics shall determine the consequence appropriate for the seriousness of the offense.

H. Vandalism/Theft:

Any student-athlete who is proven to have **intentionally committed an act of vandalism, theft, or any other acts that are deemed to be in violation of our Code of Conduct**, either at a Susquehanna Valley School or at an opponent school while representing a Susquehanna Valley team, will be subject to immediate disciplinary action. This will include due process steps with the athlete and parent/guardian and could include a suspension from that team for the remainder of that sport season.

I. Removal from a Team:

When a coach removes a student-athlete from a sport team for disciplinary reasons, he/she will notify the Director of Athletics **immediately**. Student-athletes are entitled to a **Review Board hearing**, if so desired.

J. Use, Possession, Sale of Drugs:

Use, possession, sale or possession with intent to use an alcohol beverage, tobacco (including electronic cigarettes), drug, narcotic or hallucinating agent or any chemicals purported to be drugs, by a student-athlete is prohibited. Any violation during the sport season, either on or off school grounds, which is reported by a coach, teacher, administrator, law enforcement agency or other reliable source, will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

- A. *The student-athlete will be **suspended from the team** for the remainder of the sport season.*
- B. *If a student-athlete seeks **professional help for substance abuse**, an appeal may be made to the **Review Board**. The **Review Board** will conduct a hearing within 14 days of the violation to confirm or amend the consequences of letter "A" above.*

K. Training Rules:

A coach of a sport team may set forth rules in writing which may be more stringent than those set forth in the Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook. These must be approved and on file with the Director of Athletics.

L. Quitting a Team:

If a student-athlete quits a team he/she should **first notify the coach**. He/she will not be allowed to participate in another sport during the same sport season unless authorized to do so by the Director of Athletics who will communicate with both coaches.

M. Review Board:

- A student-athlete who violates any of the above rules will be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or Director of Athletics. This action may be appealed to the **Review Board**.
- The **Review Board** has the right to rule on any infraction not covered within the Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook. The **Review Board** consists of the Director of Athletics, Principal of the building (in which the student-athlete attends), and one other administrator or faculty member selected by the Director of Athletics.

N. Appeal Procedure:

- A written appeal prepared and signed by the student-athlete **MUST** be submitted to the Director of Athletics within seven (7) days of notification of disciplinary action. The **Review Board** will consider all written material and may ask that the parties involved appear in person. A final decision will be rendered within seven (7) days after submittal of all information requested by the Review Board.
- The appeal could result in the following:
 - a. Upholding the consequence
 - b. Reduction in the consequence
- Further appeals may be submitted accordingly to the following:
 - A. Superintendent of Schools
 - B. Board of Education
 - C. Commissioner of Education

O. Academic Eligibility:

Participation in athletic activities offers the opportunity to learn self-discipline, recognition of capabilities, dealing with failure and adversity, teamwork and cooperation, hard work, group problem solving, competitive spirit, self-esteem, self-confidence and pride in accomplishment.

Student-athletes must accept responsibility for their academic endeavors. Every student-athlete will receive equitable and fair treatment. High academic standards for student-athletes are an achievable goal. Parents, coaches, administrators, teachers, counselors, and staff must provide student-athletes with a realistic view of the future and support a solid academic foundation.

THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR WILL SUPERVISE THE FOLLOWING:

Academic Eligibility Checks will be conducted by the Athletic Department at 5 week intervals throughout the school year as indicated below. The **Fall Review** will be based upon the previous June's report card. Summer school success will remove failing grades. Final determination of success will be decided by **Building Principals**.

FALL: Progress report on or about week #5 and week # 10: 1st quarter report card.

WINTER: Progress report on or about week #15 and week # 20: 2nd quarter report card.

SPRING: Progress report on or about week #25 and week #30: 3rd quarter report card.

At **Academic Eligibility Check** time, the Director of Athletics will issue an Athletic Roster to the Principal. Grade information will be gathered by the Principal and Building Guidance Office and returned to the Director of Athletics. The Athletic Department will identify those student-athletes failing more than one course.

All "**Notifications of Probation**" and "**Notifications of Ineligibility**" will be issued to players, parents, principals and coaches. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to contact the teacher in order to improve grades to a passing/satisfactory level.

Academic Eligibility Check Process:

Student-athletes trying out/participating on athletic teams who are failing more than one course at the Academic Eligibility Check will be placed on “probation.” The “probation period” will be 14 calendar days in length as indicated in the notification letter sent by the athletic department. During the “probation period” the student-athlete remains eligible for practices and competitions.

- If the student athlete is not cleared within the 14 calendar day probation period the student-athlete will be deemed ineligible for competitions. At any time, when the student-athlete is passing or showing adequate effort, the teacher will sign the “Notification of Probation” form and the Athletic Department will confirm re-eligibility by signing the notification. Notification will go to the coach and principal to indicate that the student-athlete is again eligible.
- Once a student-athlete has been placed on probation the athlete’s grades will continue to be monitored every 5 weeks. If the student-athlete is failing more than one subject at any academic eligibility check, the student-athlete would immediately be deemed ineligible for competition. They may not dress for competitions, but should attend competitions and support their team.

Exceptions (I.E.P.): Student-athletes for whom an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is on file at the time he/she would be declared ineligible under the above standards, shall automatically be afforded a review of their case. The review shall be conducted by the Principal, Director of Health, PE & Athletics, Guidance Counselor, Director of CSE and Special Education Teacher. This review committee shall have the right to waive the eligibility requirement if, in their professional judgment, the student-athlete has made every effort possible to meet the academic standards.

P. Vacation Policy:

- A. In the event of an absence, due to a vacation, a student-athlete must:
1. Notify the head coach prior to the season (if possible) or at least two weeks prior to the vacation.
 2. Be willing to assume consequences related to their status on that squad. Head Coaches will clearly outline vacation expectations for their specific program at the beginning of the season.
- B. Student-athletes not adhering to this policy may be suspended or dismissed from a team pending a meeting with the coach and Director of Athletics.

VI. TRANSPORTATION

A. Travel Regulations:

1. Student-athletes will not engage in misconduct while on a school bus or school provided transportation. It is crucial for student-athletes to behave appropriately while riding on district buses to ensure their safety and the safety of other passengers.
2. All bus rules will be enforced by the coach and the bus driver.
3. Food is not allowed to be eaten on a bus while it is in motion unless the bus driver gives permission.
4. When district approved transportation is provided for the team it is expected that all team members travel to the event with the team.
5. Under extraordinary circumstances (SAT Exams, medical reasons, etc.) parents may obtain permission from the Director of Athletics to drive their son/daughter to an event where transportation is provided by the district. A written request, signed by the parent, must be presented to the Director of Athletics or designee for approval at least 24 hours in advance of the event. Other than in the case of extraordinary circumstances it will be expected that all athletes must ride the school provided transportation to all athletic contests.

6. Student-athletes may leave with ONLY their parent or guardian following an away contest after conferring with his/her coach and signing off on the authorization form. In the event that a parent needs their son/daughter to be transported home by another family this request should be made to the Director of Athletics in writing 24 hours in advance of the contest. The written document should name the individual who will be transporting and should also include phone numbers for both the parent making the request as well as the individual who will be doing the transporting.

VII. CARE OF EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

A. Lost Equipment:

All equipment issued by the school will be the responsibility of the individual student-athlete. Any equipment not returned at the end of the season must be paid for or replaced by the student-athlete. A student-athlete may not try out for another sport until all equipment has been returned or paid for.

B. Vandalism and Misuse of Equipment:

All equipment should be cared for as if it were the student-athlete's personal property. The cost of replacement is quite high and we want our teams to have the best possible equipment. A student-athlete who vandalizes or damages athletic equipment intentionally may not try out for another sport until restitution is made.

VIII. PHYSICAL/PERMISSION/MEDICAL INSURANCE

A. Requirements:

1. All student-athletes who desire to participate in athletics must show proof of a valid physical exam, or be examined by the Susquehanna Valley Nurse Practitioner.
2. **NO** student-athlete may practice or participate in athletics without the Susquehanna Valley School Physician or designee's approval.

B. Athletic/Parental Consent Form and Emergency Medical Authorization Form:

1. Forms are available in the Director of Health, PE & Athletics Office and Health Office's at the Middle and Senior High Schools.
2. The student-athlete & parent will completely fill out, sign and return all forms to the Susquehanna Valley School Nurse at the time of the physical examination.

C. Injuries and Accident Reports:

Athletic participation carries with it an increased possibility for injury, some of which could be serious. Coaches will utilize the most current, medically sound, conditioning methods and teach safe, competitive techniques in preparing athletes. However, student-athletes have responsibility to exercise safe playing techniques in practices and games. Student-athletes face a risk of serious injury.

All injuries should be reported to the coach immediately. Early care and treatment can minimize the physical restrictions from an injury and return student-athletes to competition sooner. Student-athletes should report all information to coaches so they can file an accident report.

D. Return to Competition After Injury and/or Extended Absence:

Any student-athlete whose safe participation is in question as a result of injury or prolonged absence due to illness must be released by a medical provider. Student-athletes **WILL NOT** practice before they have received clearance and will be expected to demonstrate sport specific skills and a proper fitness level prior to competing again.

E. Concussion Management Policy:

The Concussion Management and Awareness Act, specifically Chapter 496 of the Laws of 2011, requires the Commissioner of Education, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Health, to promulgate rules and regulations related to students who sustain a concussion, also known as a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI), at school and at any district-sponsored event or related activity. These guidelines for return to school and certain school activities apply to all public school students who have sustained a concussion regardless of where the concussion occurred. See Appendix C for the District Policy. See Appendix D for Concussion Parent Fact Sheet. See Appendix E for Return to Play Protocol.

Susquehanna Valley Athletic Communication Guidelines

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT/COACH

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide great benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH

1. Philosophy of the coach and program.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child, as well as the entire team.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e. special equipment, off-season expectations, etc.
5. Procedures should your child be injured during participation.
6. Disciplinary action(s) that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS

1. Concerns should be expressed directly to the coach and only after the student-athlete has talked with the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

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

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.

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

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

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

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others' position.

When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW TO DISCUSS A CONCERN WITH A COACH

1. The student-athlete meets with the coach first to resolve the problem.
2. If resolution is not reached, the parent/guardian will contact the coach to set up a meeting with the coach, the student-athlete and the parent.
3. If the coach cannot be reached call the Athletic Office to assist in arranging a meeting.
4. **Please do not attempt to meet with a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.**

WHAT CAN A PARENT DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

1. Call the Athletic Office to set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics. The parent/guardian, student-athlete, coach and Director of Athletics will meet to discuss the problem.
2. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
3. Parents are encouraged to discuss issues and problems with the Director of Athletics. However, if a parent has specific complaints regarding a coach, then the coach must have the opportunity to be present to meet with the parent.

We hope the information provided will assist parents and student-athletes, by making their athletic experience less stressful, more enjoyable, and positive here at Susquehanna Valley Central School.



The Susquehanna Valley Central School District community is committed to providing a caring, equitable environment with high expectations for learning. We encourage the development of critical thinking, self-esteem and responsible citizenship.

Susquehanna Valley Central School District
Department of Health, Physical Education & Athletics



STAC Sportsmanship Policy

Whereas good sportsmanship is a major concern among the member schools of the Southern Tier Athletic Conference, a season commitment with the student athletes, their coaches, and their parents/guardians, is being made for the purpose of promoting good conduct among all players, coaches, cheerleaders, and fans of the member schools.

Therefore, we are asking all team members, (Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Modified) coaches, and parents/guardians, to certify and honor the following contest sportsmanship guidelines.

All Concerned Agree:

1. To live up to a high standard of good sportsmanship at all times.
 2. To be a good host – treat visitors as guests.
 3. To treat opponents with respect.
 4. To respect the judgment of the contest officials.
 5. To avoid profane and abusive language, and obnoxious behavior.
 6. To always set a good example for others to follow.
 7. To accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion, never being boastful, or bitter.
 8. To remember that an athletic contest is only a game, not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, official, fan, community, state or nation.
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9. Spectators who choose not to follow the aforementioned expectations will be subject to removal from the athletic event. Additional consequences for poor behavior will be at the discretion of District Administration.

POLICY

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1 of 1

Students

SUBJECT: CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

The Board of Education of the Susquehanna Valley Central School District ("District") recognizes that concussions and head injuries are injuries that occur in children and adolescents who participate in athletics and recreational activities. Therefore, the District adopts the following policy to support the proper recognition, evaluation, and management of head injuries.

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI), which most commonly is caused by a blow or jolt to the head or body. Recovery from concussions varies, and avoiding injury or over-exertion until the student is fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management.

While district staff will exercise reasonable care to protect students, head injuries may still occur. Physical education teachers, coaches, nurses, athletic trainers and other appropriate staff will receive training to recognize the signs, symptoms and behaviors consistent with a concussion.

Any student exhibiting signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in a school-sponsored class, extracurricular activity, or interscholastic athletic activities will be immediately removed from that game or activity and be evaluated by an appropriate health care provider. The nurse/coach/athletic trainer/administrator/or supervising staff member will notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring. Notification will also be made to appropriate school staff.

If a student sustains a concussion at a time, other than when engaged in a school-sponsored activity, the district expects the parent/legal guardian to report the condition to school staff so that the district can support the appropriate management of the condition.

Once a student diagnosed with a concussion has been symptom free at rest for at least twenty-four (24) hours, an appropriate medical provider may choose to clear the student to begin the District's graduated return to play/activities program. If the District has concerns or questions about the medical provider's orders, the District Medical Director, with parental permission, may contact that provider to discuss and clarify those orders. Additionally, the District Medical Director has the final authority to clear students to participate in or return to extra-class athletic activities in accordance with Commissioner's Regulations [8NYCRR 135.4(c)(7)(i)].

The Superintendent, in consultation with appropriate district staff, including the District Medical Director, will develop regulations and protocols to guide the return to activities. The protocols will cover all students returning to school after suffering a concussion regardless if the accident occurred outside of school or while participating in a school activity. This policy will be periodically reviewed.

Adopted: 5/22/13

HEADS×UP

CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

What is a concussion?

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

What are the signs and symptoms?

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 after the injury. If your teen reports **one or more** symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your teen out of play and seek medical attention right away.

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 mood, behavior, or personality changes • Can't recall events <i>prior</i> to hit or fall • Can't recall events <i>after</i> hit or fall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache or “pressure” in head • Nausea or vomiting • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or blurry vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion • Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

How can you help your teen prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your teens can take to protect themselves from concussion and other injuries.

- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. It should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

- Ensure that they follow their coaches' rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

What should you do if you think your teen has a concussion?

1. **Keep your teen out of play.** If your teen has a concussion, her/his brain needs time to heal. Don't let your teen return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says your teen is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.
2. **Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your teen to return to sports.
3. **Teach your teen that it's not smart to play with a concussion.** Rest is key after a concussion. Sometimes athletes wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let your teen convince you that s/he's “just fine.”
4. **Tell all of your teen's coaches and the student's school nurse about ANY concussion.** Coaches, school nurses, and other school staff should know if your teen has ever had a concussion. Your teen may need to limit activities while s/he is recovering from a concussion. Things such as studying, driving, working on a computer, playing video games, or exercising may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Talk to your health care professional, as well as your teen's coaches, school nurse, and teachers. If needed, they can help adjust your teen's school activities during her/his recovery.

If you think your teen has a concussion:

Don't assess it yourself. Take him/her out of play. Seek the advice of a health care professional.

It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information and to order additional materials *free-of-charge*, visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



Return to School/Play Procedures

Once a student diagnosed with a concussion has been symptom free at rest for at least 24 hours, a private medical provider may choose to clear the student to begin a graduated return to activities. If a district has concerns or questions about the private medical provider's orders, the district medical director should contact that provider to discuss and clarify. Additionally, the medical director has the final authority to clear students to participate in or return to extra-class physical activities in accordance with 8NYCRR 135.4(c)(7)(i).

Students should be monitored by district staff daily following each progressive challenge, physical or cognitive, for any return of signs and symptoms of concussion. Staff members should report any observed return of signs and symptoms to the school nurse, certified athletic trainer, or administration in accordance with district policy. A student should only move to the next level of activity if they remain symptom free at the current level. Return to activity should occur with the introduction of one new activity each 24 hours. If any post-concussion symptoms return, the student should drop back to the previous level of activity, then re-attempt the new activity after another 24 hours have passed. A more gradual progression should be considered based on individual circumstances and a private medical provider's or other specialist's orders and recommendations.

The following is a recommended sample return to physical activity protocol:

Phase 1- low impact, non-strenuous, light aerobic activity, such as walking or riding a stationary bike. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a 24 hour period proceed to;

Phase 2- higher impact, higher exertion, and moderate aerobic activity such as running or jumping rope. No resistance training. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a 24 hour period proceed to;

Phase 3- Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance, weight training with a spotter. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a 24 hour period proceed to;

Phase 4- Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a 24 hour period proceed to;

Phase 5- Full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a 24 hour period proceed to;

Phase 6- Return to full activities without restrictions.