

**Mars Area  
School District  
Parent/Student  
Athletic Manual**

**2014/15**

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Mars Area Athletic Programs. Congratulations on becoming an important part of the wonderful tradition and excellence in athletics at Mars. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people and many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad in the Mars Area School District, you have inherited a tremendous tradition, which you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We strive to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our schools and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. Over many years, our teams have achieved more than their share of league and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and achieved All-American, All-State and All-Conference honors.

It will be a challenge to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of your school, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but also are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. However, the contributions you make will be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family.

1. **Responsibility to Yourself:** The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to derive the greatest benefit from your high school experiences.
2. **Responsibility to Your School:** Once established as a Mars Athlete, you have assumed a responsibility to represent your school in a mature manner at all times on and off the playing field. Mars High School cannot maintain its position as an outstanding school unless you do your best in the activity in which you engage. By participating in athletics to the maximum of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of your school. Make Mars Area School District proud of you, and your community proud of your school, by consistently demonstrating these ideals.
3. **Responsibility to Others:** As a squad member you also bear a heavy responsibility to your family and community. When you know in your heart that you have lived up to all of the training rules, that you have practiced to the best of your ability every day and that you have practiced and played the game "all out", you can keep your self-respect and your family and community can be justly proud of you.

The younger students throughout the Mars Area School District are watching you. As a student athlete, you have a responsibility to be a good role model for the younger students at Mars. Set good examples for them.

# **ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY**

## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

The Mars Athletic Program will ensure meaningful athletic opportunities for all students through the direction of highly qualified, dedicated professionals who utilize appropriately equipped, well maintained facilities to develop successful programs that ultimately promote well rounded student athletes who are prepared for adult life in a democratic society.

## **ATHLETIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1. Our Goal**

The student athlete should become a more effective citizen in a democratic society.

### **2. Our Specific Objectives – The student athlete shall learn:**

- To work with others – In a democratic society a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.
- To be successful – Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to handle defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
- To develop sportsmanship – To accept any defeat like a true sport, knowing we have done our best, we must learn to treat others, as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
- Improve – Continual improvement is an essential component of good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and you must constantly try to achieve that goal. Try to improve in the skills and knowledge required and those personal traits that enhance the success of a team.
- Enjoy athletics – It is necessary for athletes to enjoy participation, to acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from athletics, and to give sufficiently of themselves in order to persevere and improve the program.
- Develop desirable personal health habits – To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits, and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

# GOVERNANCE

1. Board of Education

The Board of Education, responsible to the residents of the District, is the ruling agency for the Mars Area School District. It is responsible for interpreting the needs of the community and requirements. Additional responsibilities include:

- a. Developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates in accordance with the educational needs and wishes of the people
- b. Approving means by which professional staff may make these policies effective
- c. Evaluating the interscholastic athletic program in terms of its value to the community

2. Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent is responsible to administer the schools according to adopted policies of the Board of Education, rules and regulations of the State Department of Education, and in accordance with state school code. It is his/her duty to establish a definite school athletic policy and to have an understanding of the policy. The Superintendent shall represent the school district as its chief executive officer and its foremost professional educator in its dealings with other school systems, social institutions and businesses.

3. Principal

The Principal is the official representative of the school and is directly responsible for the general attitude of the student body and the conduct of the athletic affairs by the Athletic Director and the Coach. By delegation and by established precedent, the school Principal is the official school representative in matters dealing with Mars Area High School Athletics and conference affiliations. The Principal is solely responsible for any official action taken by his/her school.

4. Athletic Director

The Athletic Director is directly responsible to the Principal. The primary responsibility of the Athletic Director is the administration and supervision of the interscholastic athletic program in the Mars Area Schools. The Athletic Director's duties will be those described in his/her job description and any others as designated. He/she will provide the leadership necessary for the day-to-day operation of the athletic department.

5. Head Coaches

All head Coaches shall be responsible to the Athletic Director for the total operation of their respective sports programs. Head Coaches will be responsible for the normal duties required of interscholastic competition, those duties described in the Coaches' job description, and/or any duties delegated by the Athletic Director.

***If you experience a problem or have any concerns regarding your child's athletic experience, you should follow the chain of command, first contacting your child's Coach. If you are not satisfied with the response you get from your Coach, then you should contact the Athletic Director and so on.***

## **THE PENNSYLVANIA INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (P.I.A.A.)**

All schools are voluntary members of the P.I.A.A. As a member school district, Mars agrees to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations promulgated by this association.

The primary role of the state association is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the student/athletes and a balance with other educational programs. The association solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modification from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations.

The state association attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number and to ensure that competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

## **THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS (N.F.H.S.)**

The N.F.H.S. consists of the fifty-one individual state high school athletic and/or activities associations. The purposes of the N.F.H.S. are to serve, protect, and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to state associations; to assist in those activities of state associations which can best be operated on a nationwide scale; to sponsor meetings, publications and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations; and to coordinate the work to minimize duplication.

The N.F.H.S. is both a service and regulatory agency. The growth and influence of state associations and the N.F.H.S. ensures some degree of team work on the part of more than 20,000 schools and enables them to formulate policies for the improvement of interscholastic activities.

## **THE ATHLETIC LEAGUE (W.P.I.A.L.)**

Mars High School is a voluntary member of the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (W.P.I.A.L.). This league was established to encourage member schools to improve their co-curricular program in athletics. The conference membership facilitates the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, and conducting league meets and determining league championships. The conference provides Mars High School the opportunity for competition without excessive travel and with schools of similar size and athletic philosophy. Membership implies abiding by conference schedules, rules and regulations.

# **P.I.A.A. ELIGIBILITY**

A student who participates in interscholastic athletics at a school, which is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (P.I.A.A.), must adhere to the P.I.A.A. eligibility rules for student athletes. If you fail to comply with the P.I.A.A. rules, you will lose your eligibility to represent your school in interscholastic athletics. If you participate while ineligible, your school or team will be penalized. It is, therefore, important for you to be aware of the requirements to which you are subject.

The information contained here highlights and summarizes the major eligibility requirements you must meet in order to participate in interscholastic athletics. It does not list every rule or every detail. Unless otherwise indicated, each requirement applies to grades 7 through 12, inclusive.

The Principal of your school is responsible for certifying the eligibility of all students representing your school in interscholastic athletics. If you have any questions concerning your athletic eligibility, either present or future, you should see your school Principal, who has available a complete copy of all the P.I.A.A. eligibility rules. Your Principal may also obtain from the appropriate P.I.A.A. District Committee a formal ruling as to your athletic eligibility.

## **AGE**

You may not have reached your 19<sup>th</sup> birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year (15<sup>th</sup> birthday where interscholastic competition limited to grades 7 and 8; 16<sup>th</sup> birthday where limited to grades 7 through 9).

## **AMATEUR STATUS AND AWARDS**

To be eligible to participate in a sport, you must be an amateur in the sport. You will lose your amateur status in a sport for at least a year if:

1. You, or your school, or an organization which you represent, or your parent or guardian, receives money or property for or related to your athletic ability, performance, participation, or services.
2. You accept compensation for teaching, training or coaching in a sport. You may receive normal and customary compensation for acting as an instructor in or officiating recreational activities, or for serving as a lifeguard at swimming areas.

You may receive awards only from your school, the sponsor of an athletic event, the news media, or a non-profit service organization approved by your school Principal. Permissible awards are a sweater, jacket, blazer, blanket, shirt, shorts, jersey, cap, watch, ring, scroll, photograph, medal, plaque, or similar trophy, which must bear appropriate organizational insignia or comparable identification.

## **ATTENDANCE**

1. You must be regularly enrolled in your school and in full-time attendance there.
2. You are eligible only at the school at which you are enrolled.
3. If you are absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more school days, you will lose your eligibility until you have been in attendance for a total of 60 school days following your 20<sup>th</sup> day of absence.

## **CONSENT OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

You are eligible only if there is on file with the Principal of your school, before you begin practice, an official P.I.A.A. certificate signed by your parent or guardian consenting to your participation in the particular sport involved.

## **PREPARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EVALUATION**

You are eligible only if you have participated in a preparticipation physical evaluation performed by a licensed physician of medicine or osteopathic medicine, a physician assistant certified, a certified registered nurse practitioner, or a school nurse practitioner before your first sports season's first practice day of that school year. Before each subsequent sports season's first practice day of that same school year, you must be certified that your condition is satisfactory before you commence to practice for the sport.

Wrestlers must also obtain from the physician, physician assistant certified, registered nurse practitioner, or school nurse practitioner, prior to the first practice day, a certification of the minimum weight classification at which they may wrestle for the entire season.

In all cases, the medical examiner must have signed the P.I.A.A. Medical Examiner's Certificate.

## **TRANSFERS**

You are treated as having transferred whenever you change schools, even if you are out of school for a period of time before entering the new school.

Except as provided below, if you transfer from one school district to another you are eligible immediately at the new school:

1. When you live with your natural or adoptive parents in the new school district.
2. When you live with a court-appointed legal guardian in the new school district, upon approval of the P.I.A.A. District Committee.

If you transfer between schools, you will be eligible immediately as to fall sports, provided the transfer is made between the completion of the previous school year at your school and the first practice day for fall sports at your next school, and, as to winter and spring sports, the transfer is made between completion of the previous school year at your school and the beginning of the next school year at your next school.

If you transfer from one school to another in whole or in part for any athletic purpose you will lose your athletic eligibility in each sport in which you participate within a period of 1 year immediately preceding the date on which you transferred. This requirement applies even if you would otherwise be eligible at the school to which you transferred.

Most students who are not eligible immediately will be ineligible for one year from the date of transfer in each sport in which they participated within one year preceding the date of transfer.

### **PERIOD OF TIME AFTER EIGHTH GRADE, PARTICIPATION, AND GRADE REPETITION**

1. You will lose your eligibility when you have reached the end of your fourth consecutive year beyond the eighth grade. If you repeat a grade after eighth, you will be ineligible as a senior.
2. You may participate a maximum of six seasons in each sport during grades seven through twelve, a maximum of four seasons in each sport during grades nine through twelve, and a maximum of three seasons in each sport during grades seven through nine.
3. You may participate only one season in each sport during each school year.

### **OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION**

If you participate as an individual or a member of a team in a non-school athletic program, while enrolled at a school which has a team in that sport, you will be eligible for the playoffs in that sport only if you are in uniform and available to participate as a member of your school team for at least 75 percent of its regular season contests.

### **SCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY**

Only full time students, regardless of age, may participate in scholastic athletics, unless expressly permitted by law or the Board of School Directors.

To be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition, a pupil must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the Principal as a full time curriculum. Where required, this curriculum or its equivalent must be approved by and conform to the regulations of the State Board of Education and the Pennsylvania School Code as well as any local policies established by the local school board. The pupil must maintain an acceptable grade in such approved curriculum as certified by the Principal. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, and shall be reported on a weekly basis.

In order to be eligible for interscholastic athletics, a pupil must pass at least 4 full credit subjects, or the equivalent, during the previous grading period. Back work may be made up, providing it is in accordance with the regular rules of the school. Any athlete declared

ineligible may practice during the period of ineligibility but may not participate in scrimmages/contests with other schools, at any level.

A pupil who has been absent from school during a semester for a total of twenty (20) days shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he or she has been in attendance for a total of sixty (60) days following his twentieth day of absence. Attendance at summer school does not count toward the sixty days.

Ninth grade pupils are eligible to compete on varsity athletic teams provided the decision is made at the beginning of each season and announced by the principal.

Students may not practice or compete while under suspension.

### **ALL-STAR CONTESTS AND NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL/INTERSCHOLASTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS**

You will lose your eligibility in a sport for one year if you participate in an all-star contest in that sport or if you participate in a contest to qualify for and/or determine a single national high school/interscholastic individual champion or championship team in that sport.

### **OUT-OF-SEASON PARTICIPATION**

Almost all P.I.A.A. sports have a defined season. If your team conducts practice and/or plays a contest outside that P.I.A.A. defined season, your school will be penalized.

# **STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS**

When a student becomes a member of a team he/she is committing to all the rules and expectations of that team and Coach.

Full participation in athletics by any student requires skillful time management and prior planning for involvement in multiple events and activities. This is part of the skills and advantages that participants develop and nurture through membership in co-curricular activities.

Acknowledging that students by nature of their youth and inexperience are still developing life skills which include time management and prioritization of responsibilities, the Board of School Directors, Administration, and Coaches shall encourage each participant to strive to achieve the highest academic as well as team standing on both an individual as well as team basis as possible.

All Coaches will reinforce the premise that the student has the responsibility to maintain sound academic standings.

Full participation and attendance at all competitions, practices and events is expected of all participants. In the event of an extreme personal or family emergency and/or a conflict with academic demands, at the request of the parent/guardian and with the approval of the head Coach, participation may be excused or abbreviated. This may only be arranged at the discretion of the head Coach prior to the event.

In the case of an emergency and/or the Coach is not available, the building Principal has the authority to approve the student's participation or excused absence.

If the conflict cannot be resolved with the Coach, the appeal may be presented to the appropriate building administrator.

The Board of School Directors and the Administration require the Coach to accommodate reasonable requests of the students and/or their parents without prejudice towards the student.

## **SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

Students who are assigned to out-of-school suspension may not participate or attend any activity or practice on the days of the suspension. If a suspension is assigned over the weekend, (ex. Friday, Monday, Tuesday) the student cannot attend or participate in any activity or practice over the weekend.

## **ANTI-HAZING POLICY MARS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy:

1. The term “hazing” is defined as conduct that:
  - a. recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student as part of the student’s initiation into, participation with, or association with a team, club, squad, group or other student-related organization;
  - b. creates a situation in which one or more students are subject to abuse, harassment, humiliation, ridicule, or demeaning conduct as part of the student’s initiation into, participation with, or association with a team, club, squad, group or other student-related organization;
  - c. results in damage to, the destruction of, or the removal of public or private property as part of the student’s initiation into, participation with, or association with a team, club, squad, group or other student-related organization;
  - d. encourages a student to engage in illegal activities as part of the student’s initiation into, participation with, or association with a team, club, squad, group or other student-related organization; or,
  - e. encourages a student to participate in any activity as part of the student’s initiation into, participation with, or association with a team, club, squad, group or other student-related organization if that activity is not authorized by the coaches, advisors, or supervisors of the team, club, squad, group or other student-related organization.

In determining whether conduct meets the definition of hazing, the alleged or expressed willingness of the student to participate in or be subjected to the conduct-at-issue shall not be considered as a factor in the determination.

2. The term “endangers the physical health” of a student is defined as the attempted, actual or mock infliction of short-term or long-term harm, discomfort or pain to the student’s body including, but not be limited to, the attempted or actual infliction of physical harm, discomfort or pain due to high levels of physical activity; whipping; beating; branding; tattooing; exposure to the elements; consumption of alcoholic beverages, drugs, or controlled substances; or other physical activity which is likely to create harm, discomfort or pain to the student’s body.
3. The term “endangers the mental health” of a student is defined as the infliction of short-term or long-term levels of mental stress, distress or fear including, but not limited to, the mock or staged infliction of harm; the mock or staged consumption of

unpleasant, disgusting or vile items, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact, harassment, embarrassment, or other similar activities likely to adversely affect the student's mental health.

4. The term "endangers the safety" of a student is defined as conduct which could reasonably be expected to increase the risk of harm to the student's physical or mental health.

## PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

This Policy strictly prohibits any form of hazing as defined above whether said hazing occurs on or off of School District property; and, whether said hazing occurs during or outside of the school day or year.

## EXPECTATIONS

Each Administrator, School District employee, coach, advisor, sponsor, volunteer, student and parent/guardian is expected:

1. To refrain from participating in any form of hazing;
2. To help maintain an environment free of hazing;
3. To be familiar with this Anti-Hazing Policy;
4. To immediately report, pursuant to the reported procedures listed below, all actual, alleged or suspected incidents of hazing;
5. To encourage and support students to report incidents of hazing;
6. To set an appropriate example through his or her conduct towards and dealings with the students of the Mars Area School District;
7. To encourage and support students who may have been victims of hazing; and
8. To respect and abide by the School District's policies related to the confidentiality of information regarding alleged incidents of hazing.

## REPORTING PROCEDURE

Any student who believes that he or she has been subject to hazing shall verbally report the incident(s) to his or her parents/guardians and any of his or her coaches, advisors, sponsors, volunteers, building principals or teachers. Upon the receipt of a verbal report of hazing, the coach, advisor, sponsor, volunteer, building principal and/or teacher shall immediately notify the Superintendent, Athletic Director and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). In addition, the coach, advisor, sponsor, volunteer, building principal or teacher shall obtain a detailed written statement from the student summarizing the alleged incident(s) of hazing, including a list of any potential witnesses to the alleged hazing. The coach, advisor, sponsor, volunteer, building principal or teacher shall prepare and submit his or her own detailed written statement summarizing the information provided by the student and the steps taken to report the

information. It is not the coach's, advisor's, sponsor's, volunteer's, building principal's or teacher's responsibility to investigate the allegations or to evaluate the credibility, reliability or veracity of the student or the information provided by the student. The coach, advisor, sponsor, volunteer, building principal or teacher is obligated to report the information to the Superintendent and Athletic Director; to encourage and support the student's efforts to address the alleged incident(s) of hazing; and, to keep the information strictly confidential.

Any School District employee, coach, advisor, sponsor, or volunteer who believes that a student may have been subject to hazing shall verbally report the incident(s) to the Superintendent, Athletic Director and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Once notified, it is the Superintendent's responsibility to notify the Board and initiate, oversee and complete the School District's investigation of the alleged incidents of hazing. The Superintendent may delegate portions of the investigation to the Athletic Director and/or Solicitor's office; however, it remains the Superintendent's responsibility to complete a thorough investigation of the allegations. All alleged incidents of hazing shall be reported to the Solicitor's office. Every allegation of hazing shall be thoroughly investigated in a confidential and impartial manner. All stages of the investigation shall be documented and each potential witness should be asked to provide a written statement summarizing the information provided by him or her.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Superintendent with the assistance of the Athletic Director and/or Solicitor's office shall report the results of the investigation to the Board of School Directors. Further, the Superintendent shall initiate, if warranted, disciplinary action against any student, employee, coach, advisor or volunteer who has engaged in hazing; or, who has failed to comply with his or her obligations under this policy. Further, the Superintendent shall report any potential criminal conduct to the appropriate law enforcement agency and fully cooperate with said law enforcement agency's efforts to investigate the incident(s).

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any student found to have engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the ineligibility to participate in any and all co-curricular and/or extracurricular activities, along with potential expulsion from the Mars Area School District.

Any student who fails to report alleged or suspected incidents of hazing shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the ineligibility to participate in any and all co-curricular and/or extracurricular activities.

Any School District employee, coach, advisor, sponsor or volunteer who is found to have violated the provisions of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the ineligibility to serve as a coach, advisor, sponsor or volunteer for the School District; and, if applicable, termination of employment with the Mars Area School District.

## **CONDUCT/SPORTSMANSHIP**

Student-athletes who are good sports are positive role models within our school and the community at large. A good sport knows that athletic competition builds character and shapes lifetime attitudes. You, in turn, experience additional educational and leadership benefits that come from participation in sports.

Integrity, fairness and respect – these are the principles of good sportsmanship. With them, the spirit of competition thrives, fueled by honest rivalry, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of the results.

Working to that end, we join with the PIAA to support a program called “Sportsmanship: The only missing piece is you!” This is a program designed to positively change behavior in our schools and reinforce and reward the need for sportsmanship as one of the values taught through educational athletics.

As an athlete at our school, your sportsmanship goals should include:

Developing a sense of dignity under all circumstances

- Respecting the rules of the game, the officials who administer the rules and their decisions
- Respecting opponents as fellow students and acknowledging them for striving to do their best while you seek to do your best at the same time
- Looking at athletic participation as a potentially beneficial learning experience, whether you win or lose
- Educating other students and fans to understand the rules of the contest, and the value of sportsmanship
- Accepting the personal responsibility that comes with your actions during competition. You are the spokesperson for our school when you represent us in athletic competition. Family and friends, opposing fans, the local community and the media, view your actions. Your display of good sportsmanship will show the most positive things about you and our school and will remind us all that in the end, sports are meant to be fun.

Disruptive or violent behavior may result in removal from the team. Suspension or removal from the team and/or referral to the appropriate building administrator may be the result of the student’s inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior during practices/games.

## **DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY**

The foundation of the District’s Drug and Alcohol Policy is the belief that students and the entire school community benefit educationally, socially and personally when the entire student body is free of all types of chemical dependence. Violation of Mars Area School District’s Drug and Alcohol Policy will result in the suspension or expulsion of the student violator from school.

A student shall not manufacture, knowingly or intentionally possess, use, consume, be under the influence of, offer for sale, possess with the intent to sell or distribute, transport, assist in the concealment of, dispose of, or dispense any drug, contraband, controlled substance and/or any paraphernalia related to the following:

- On district property before, during, and after school hours
- On district property during a school-and/or district–sponsored approved activity, function or event
- Away from district property during a school-and/or district–sponsored approved activity, function or event
- On a school bus traveling to/from a school-and/or district–sponsored approved activity, function or event
- The use of a drug/contraband/controlled substance authorized by a licensed physician must be registered with the school nurse, or it will be considered a violation of this policy

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT-ATHLETES**

1. Athletes will not be permitted in any area of the building after school except those areas designated by the Coaches or Athletic Director.
2. Athletes should report immediately to the locker rooms or designated area after the dismissal bell in the afternoon.
3. No practice arrangements, formal or informal, are permitted without the presence of supervisory coaching personnel.
4. Students are not to remain after school unless Coaches are present.
5. Athletic shoes with spikes are not to be worn in the building.
6. Athletes are to leave their automobiles in the designated student parking areas.
7. You may not practice without all properly signed physical forms returned to the school nurse.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION**

Effective with the fall 2013 season, we began offering the convenience of online registration for our sports programs through FamilyID ([www.familyid.com](http://www.familyid.com)).

FamilyID is a secure registration platform that provides you with an easy, user-friendly way to register for our programs, and helps us to be more administratively efficient and environmentally responsible. When you register through FamilyID, you enter your information once for multiple uses, multiple kids and multiple programs.

Before any student can participate in tryouts or practice, all of the following requirements must be met. The registration is made up of three parts. All three must be completed before you will be cleared for participation:

1. Online forms @ [www.familyid.com](http://www.familyid.com)
2. Physical and Health History – Sections 5 and 6 (*Physicals must be dated AFTER June 1 of the current year and turned in with a physician verification written on script or physician/office stamp on form Section 6. Turn in to nurse/guidance office.*)
3. Paid Athletic Fee of \$100.

**CONCUSSION TESTING:** State law requires that student athletes complete the concussion course. Testing will be administered by team, by our athletic trainers. A schedule will be posted online when it is available.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students who are participating in a particular activity must be in attendance at school no later than 11:30am on the day the activity is taking place. Students who do not meet these criteria on the day of the activity will not be allowed to participate. If a student attempts to or does participate, the respective building administrator will take appropriate disciplinary action.

All athletes are to be in attendance at school the day of the game. If the game is played on Saturday, the athlete must attend school on Friday. Students who are absent from school or tardy after 11:30am will not participate in any activities or practices on that day without the written approval of the appropriate building Principal.

## **ATHLETIC INSURANCE**

All students who participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities are required, as a condition for such participation, to be covered by accident insurance that would cover hospital and medical costs in the event of accidental injury while so participating. The parents should provide an insurance waiver attesting to such coverage. Student accident insurance made available annually by the school district (24-hour coverage) is sufficient for students participating in all activities except football. Information regarding purchase of student accident insurance is available by contacting the business office.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is provided by the school district to away competitions. A bus will take the team from the middle or high school to the host school. When the game is completed, the team will be returned to the school where they were picked up. It is the parent's responsibility to pick their child up when they return. Please be prompt when picking your child up after a game or practice.

It is the intention of the school that all teams travel to and from an event together. In the event of a true emergency, a parent should write a note to be given to the coach releasing the school from responsibility.

The conduct of students riding buses shall be above reproach. Any breach of proper conduct will be enforced by suspension of his/her transportation privileges.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATION FOR ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT**

The Mars Area School District issues athletic equipment/uniforms to each athlete at the beginning of the season. You are financially responsible for the safe return of all equipment/uniforms at the end of the season.

## **CANCELLATION OF PRACTICE/COMPETITIONS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If a game must be cancelled due to inclement weather, it is the responsibility of the host school to make that decision and inform the visiting school. However, if school is cancelled by the Mars School District, all competitions, practices and extra-curricular activities are also cancelled. (Unless administrative approval is given.) Make-up games are scheduled depending on the current schedules of both schools.

## **ATHLETIC TRAINER**

When an injury of consequence occurs that might require medical attention please notify the Coach and/or the Athletic Trainer. The Athletic Trainer is available in the high school training room after school, daily from 2:30pm – 3:15pm. They are in attendance at all home varsity competitions and junior high competitions, schedule permitting.

Any time a student is seen by a doctor or has been recommended to be seen by a doctor as a result of a possible injury, a medical release **MUST** be provided by the doctor to the Coach and/or the Athletic Trainer before the student may resume participation.

## **STUDENT-COACH RELATIONSHIP**

It is the Policy of the District that intimate or sexual relations between any and all District employees and students is strictly prohibited. Such strict prohibition includes intimate or sexual relations between a head coach, assistant coach or any volunteer coach and a student. Any violation of this Policy by a District employee will result in termination of employment.

## **LETTER AWARDS**

Basic rules that apply to all prospective athletic letter award candidates:

1. An athlete must display sportsmanship and conduct which exemplifies the school to his opponents, teammates and officials.
2. An athlete must conform to all the training rules established by the Coach for that given sport.
3. An athlete must have conformed to practices and game regulations as established by the Coach and/or Athletic Director.
4. The athlete must have returned all the equipment issued to him to the satisfaction of the Coach and/or Athletic Director.
5. In the event of injury or any other legitimate extenuating circumstances, letter awards will be made on the recommendation of the Coach to the Athletic Director.
6. If the person has earned and been awarded a letter and his conduct and behavior has been unbecoming, the award letter can be taken away from him.
7. Varsity - Only one 6-inch letter will be awarded to any given player in attendance at Mars High School. Letter awards in more than one sport will be designated by a suitable representative pin of that sport to be attached to the Mars letter. Each student shall also receive a year pin. Players who have earned a letter for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year will receive a service bar and a second year certificate. Players who have earned a letter in a sport for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year shall receive a service bar and a white plaque. Players who have earned a letter for the 4<sup>th</sup> year shall receive a service bar and a gold plaque.
8. Junior High – Will be awarded a 4-inch letter for each sport for the 1st year lettered and a bar for the 2nd year lettered. They will also receive a 2nd year certificate.
9. Special Considerations – Seniors, who have not met award requirements, but who have participated in their junior and senior years in a given sport may receive a varsity award in that sport. The head Coach may recommend awards in special cases to students who have not met the requirements. All awards are subject to the approval of the Athletic Director.
10. The Coach should use as a general rule that the athlete should compete in at least ½ of the varsity games.

# Parent Coach Relations

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 others and provide greater benefit to the student. As parents, when your children become involved in our programs, 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. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
2. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
3. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
4. Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
5. Team rules and guidelines, and lettering requirements.

## **Communication coaches expect from athletes**

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance.
2. Special concerns in regards to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your children become involved in the athletic programs 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 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. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as the following must be left to the discretion of the coach.

## **Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches**

1. Playing time; 2. Team strategy; 3. Play calling; 4. 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 other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures are suggested to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

## **If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, the suggested procedure is listed below:**

1. Call to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic director. He will set up the meeting for you.
3. Please do NOT attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and 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 and set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Since research indicates a student involved in co curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope the information provided here makes both your child's and your experience with Athletic programs less stressful and more enjoyable.

# rSchoolToday User Guide for Parents

We now use the rSchoolToday™ Activity Scheduler as our School Calendar as it provides significant advantages to our school community. Because it is Web-based, we can provide you instant access to the most up-to-date information at all times. All changes are instantly reflected to you as soon as they are made.

## Here are some of the key features:

Primarily, the Calendar provides an instant view of all activities on today's date.

Other Features:

1. Click on any date within the month and see the activities for that day.
2. Jump to any month in one click.
3. Here, you only need one click to view the whole week.
4. Locations can be links that open to printable maps and directions to that specific location.
5. Notify Me! You can set yourself up for automatic email reminders or text messages to your cell phone before any activity or with any changes to any schedules.
6. The latest rosters and scores can be available right from these calendar tabs.
7. You can subscribe to schedules using RSS. This lets you push every day's events to your smart phone or personal calendar.
8. You can get detailed reports by location, by gender, by level, etc., from the Advanced View.
9. You can get the latest complete schedules for any activity. Click on the schedule you want and then click **View**.

## Notes about **View Schedules** (Item No. 9):

You can also hold down the 'control' key on your computer keyboard and click all the schedules you want to see, and then click the **View** button. For Mac users it is the open-Apple key.

If you have a pop-up blocker on your computer, the first time you try to view a schedule, it may not open up. You will need to allow pop-ups from this site. With most blockers, closing the window that says "loading..." generally shows you a light yellow bar across the top of the screen that notifies you of the pop-up being blocked. If there is no immediate choice in that bar to "always allow pop-ups from this site," you can usually right-click on that yellow bar and then choose "always allow pop-ups from this site." This is a one-time set-up. If you still can't view schedules, please consult with someone who knows how to use the specific pop-up blocker you have.

## When viewing Schedules:

After you click on View Schedule, you have many options:

10. You can print schedules.
11. Email schedules to a relative. This sends a link with the latest version of the schedule. You can also attach a file of the schedule, but it is best not to include attachments since the link in these emails is ALWAYS the MOST up-to-date information and the recipient can choose to print, download, export, etc. the report.
12. Subscribe to schedules. This will let you get real time updates of any schedule changes pushed to your iPhone, iPod Touch, Droid, iPad, Outlook, etc.
13. Download a file of schedules to various file formats.
14. You can use this dropdown to choose multiple ways to view the schedules, including the classic Month view.

## **NOTIFY ME! Automatic notifications and reminders**

One of the most helpful features of the Calendar is the "Notify Me" function. If you click "Notify Me" from the main calendar screen (see Item No. 5 above), you can get text messages to your cell phone or email notifications for both reminders before events and any schedule changes.

First, choose which competitive activities you want by checking them off on the list on the screen below, then clicking **Continue >>** to move to a list of all other "non-competitive" school activities published on the calendar. Then, click **Continue** to choose if and when to get reminders before each of your chosen activities (optional). MOST importantly, check off the box for each that says "**Also Notify Me with all Schedule Changes.**" Then click **Continue**. The last step is to add your name, and if you would like email notifications, add your email address (and you can add a 2nd email if you like). If you also like text messages to your cell phone, add in your cell phone number and mobile carrier from the dropdown menu.

You can also set up a password so you can login in the future and change these settings. When completed, click **Save Settings** and you are finished!

## **We hope you find the Calendar beneficial and look forward to your feedback!**

If you have questions, please contact rSchoolToday directly and they will assist you. They can be reached through support@rschooldtoday.com or **Toll-Free Number: 1-(800)-893-0914** from 7am-8pm M-F Central time.

# **ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECRUITING**

All student athletes who are very interested in participating in college athletics should have a meeting with their high school coaches at the end of their junior season to discuss your potential as a NCAA Division I, II or III player. Do not be afraid to ask for their help. Your coach will help you, but there are limitations as to how much he can do. There are over 3000 colleges and universities that offer athletic programs. Contacting each and every one of them is impossible for your coach. The levels of play are described below

## National Collegiate Athletic Association

<u>NCAA Division I</u>	This is the highest level of play and they offer the most scholarships. These are the large schools with large student populations.
<u>NCAA Division II</u>	Smaller specialty schools that provide scholarships, as well as financial aid and grants.
<u>NCAA Division III</u>	No athletic scholarships, but many high school graduates receive academic scholarships, financial aid, grants, and jobs on campus, also known as work-study.

## National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

The NAIA can give athletic scholarships as well as other benefits to enable a player to attend school.

## National Junior College Athletic Association

**NJCAA** Financial aid is provided for the cost of tuition and books. If you are not ready physically or mentally to attend a four-year college then a junior college that offers athletic programs may be the answer.

Are you good enough to participate at the college level? Build a support group that can give you good sound advice that would consist of your parents, coaches, principals, athletic director and community members that have participated in college athletics that have seen you play. There is no substitute for the college playing experience. These people know what it takes to play at the next level.

Once you have set your goals for college athletics begin to market yourself. You can only be offered a college scholarship if a college coach or scout has an opportunity to see you play. This is where you need to begin to market yourself to the colleges of your choice.

1. Go to the guidance office, athletic office or the Internet and obtain addresses of the colleges that you would be interested in attending.
2. Prepare a letter to be sent to the college coaches.

3. Prepare a resume` of your career.
4. Prepare a highlight tape and game tape to send with the resume`.

The NCAA Brochure "Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete" is available in the athletic office and in the guidance office and online at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).

Send the information before your senior season. The best advice would be to send it immediately after the signing of the last recruiting season ahead of you.

The majority of the colleges will send you a questionnaire; complete it and return it to the colleges immediately.

If you are an outstanding student you will have opportunities to obtain athletic and academic scholarships. Many of the top academic universities have stringent minimum academic entrance requirements where many athletes cannot qualify. Talk with your guidance counselor/coach to obtain the names of academic universities in which you may obtain an athletic scholarship. This is a great opportunity for you if you are an outstanding student.

It is suggested that you attend a summer camp to increase the chances of your being noticed. You will have the opportunity to perform in front of the college coaching staff for four or five days. Your high school coach can help you obtain information for summer camps.

If all else fails you have the opportunity to walk on at the college of your choice and have the chance to earn a college scholarship later. It is very feasible to walk on a team and earn a partial or full scholarship for your remaining years if you become a starter.

College coaches are looking for all around athletic ability first. They look for coordination, speed and jumping ability, size and strength. College coaches recognize that superior all around athletes are usually good at a variety of sports. Just by participating in different sports, you are showing scouts that you have some unique gifts, unique because most young athletes can barely excel at one sport, much less two or three. If you are a standout at two or three sports, then you are a special talent.