

Merton School Athletic Handbook

Merton School Mission Statement

The mission of Merton Schools is to provide an educational environment that develops a life-long love of learning. We will accomplish our mission through the development of educational opportunities in which the skills and abilities of each student are maximized, the self-esteem of each student is enhanced and supported, and the social development of each student is strengthened. Merton's staff will incorporate an academically and artistically challenging curriculum through the use of quality materials, taking advantage of continuing educational opportunities to establish this environment. Learning will take place in a safe and comfortable physical setting. Students, parents, staff, and the community will share the responsibility of promoting positive student growth by communicating openly and working together cooperatively. The result will be the development of responsible citizens who will experience success in a changing society and who will contribute positively to their communities.

Athletic Mission Statement

The mission of the Athletic Department at Merton School is to aid in the academic, emotional, physical, and fundamental skill development of our students through the promotion of teamwork, sportsmanship and athletic competition. The athletic program at Merton School is believed to be a valuable asset to the total educational process; therefore, the program operates within the same objectives and goals of the overall educational program. Athletics at the middle school level has been shown, to help foster team building skills, problem solving skills, self-discipline, and self-confidence. Through the development of these skills it is believed that our student athletes will become confident, contributing members of the school community.

Goals of the Athletic Department

- To develop the positive values of athletics, including sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, and competition.
- To foster academic and athletic achievement in students by emphasizing the importance of self-discipline, sacrifice, and dedication to achieving goals.
- To develop in students emotional control, dependability, and respect for rules, property and authority.
- To provide students the opportunity to work as a member of a team in order to achieve a goal, and in the process, learn the importance of cooperation, teamwork and good sportsmanship.
- To develop fundamental sport skills by maximizing participation and focusing on instruction.
- To provide as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in activities they enjoy.
- To provide students with experiences which require problem solving, decision making, and critical thinking skills.
- To provide students the opportunity to pursue physical fitness as a means of mental well-being.
- To develop in students a sense of school loyalty, and generate school spirit.

Expectations for Student Athletes

Merton School holds its athletes to high standards. Student athletes are seen as representatives of both their school and their community. As a representative of Merton School student athletes are expected to adhere to all school and athletic department rules.

All athletes are expected to:

- Remain academically eligible.
- Act in a responsible manner, realizing at all times, athletes represent their school and community.
- Attend and arrive on time for all practices and games.
- Remain alcohol, tobacco and substance free.
- Refrain from using profanity or obscene language or gestures.
- Show good sportsmanship and respect for officials, coaches and fellow athletes.
- Care for all athletic equipment issued throughout the season.
- Win with humility and lose with grace.
- Play fair, play hard and put forth their best effort in practice and in competition.
- Make certain all personal belongings are accounted for before leaving an athletic event.

Athletes who fail to comply with these expectations may face disciplinary actions, including but not limited to dismissal from the team.

Expectations for Parents of Student Athletes

Parents are encouraged to support their children's athletic endeavors and recognize the importance of athletics in their children's lives regardless of ability level.

All parents are expected to:

- Understand that academics are a priority over athletics and emphasize successful classroom performance.
- Support and be enthusiastic about their child's chosen sport and encourage fair play.
- Be positive, helping their child understand the benefits of athletic participation regardless of contest results or individual performance.
- Insist their child abide by expectations of the athletic department and by team rules.
- Avoid "coaching" or "refereeing" from the stands or sidelines during both games and practices.
- Ensure their child attends all practices and contests, and are picked up at designated times.
- All parents are expected to volunteer 2 hours of their time during a tournament in which their son/daughter is involved in.

Expectations for Athletic Coaches

Coaches have the privilege of working with our student athletes first hand. Just as the players, coaches are also held to high standards and are required to adhere to the expectations set forth by the Merton athletic department.

All coaches are expected to:

- Act in a responsible manner, realizing that at all times, coaches represent their school and community.
- Attend and arrive on time for all practices and games.
- Refrain from using profanity or obscene language or gestures.
- Show good sportsmanship and respect for officials, fellow coaches and all players.
- Coach athletes with respect to what good sportsmanship means and looks like.
- Provide all players with the fundamental skills necessary to be successful and confident when in a practice or game situation.
- Create a fun and safe environment for all players.
- Win with humility and lose with grace.
- Make certain all equipment is picked up and all gyms are cleaned after each event or practice.
- Attend all AMSAC coaches meetings for their specific sport, every other year.
- Direct all questions or concerns to the athletic director.
- Abide by all the team selection and participant playing time expectations.

Expectations for Fans

Fans play an integral part in the athletic environment of each contest whether at home or on the road. All fans are asked to show sportsmanship and understand that they are also a representative of Merton School.

All fans are expected to:

- Keep their comments positive at all times.
- Leave the refereeing to the referees.
- Leave the coaching to the coaches.
- Leave the playing to the players.
- Clean up their belongings and garbage following events.

Athletic Programs Offered at Merton

Fall: September-December

- Girls Basketball

Winter: January-March

- Boys Basketball

Spring: March-June

- Boys/Girls Volleyball
- Boys/Girls Track and Field
- Boys/Girls Intramural Golf

Criteria for Team Selection

Merton School operates under a no cut policy. All players interested in participating will be given the opportunity to play. In grades 6th-7th all teams will be even split, meaning all players will be put through an evaluation period after which, the teams will be decided. At the 8th grade level the teams will be split into “A” – “B” teams which is based on their performance during the evaluation period.

The following criteria will be used when splitting teams:

- Teams will be split based on the following number of players
 - 6-15 players (1 team)
 - 16-23 players (2 teams)
 - 24+ players (3 teams)
- Two evaluation periods will be scheduled and held prior to the beginning of the sports season.
- The coaches and athletic director will create all even split teams.
- Teams will be final the first day of practice. No student may join the sport after the first day of practice.

Playing Time

Merton School believes that all participants should be given the opportunity to play in all sporting events. Coaches are expected to adhere to the following playing time criteria.

Basketball: Regular Season

- All players must play a minimum of 6 minutes each game with no player playing over 20 minutes.

Basketball: Tournaments

- When in tournament play the goal is to keep the season going or have the opportunity to play as many games as possible, because of this some players may receive reduced playing time compared to the regular season.
- Every player must play in every game but there are no restrictions on time.

Volleyball: Regular Season

- All players must play a minimum of 1 game per match. (1 game consists of 20 points/ team.)

Volleyball: Tournaments

- When in tournament play the goal is to keep the season going or have the opportunity to play as many games as possible, because of this some players may receive reduced playing time compared to the regular season.
- All players must play in every match.

A-Teams

- Playing time will be based on the coach’s discretion with the understanding that every student will play.

Conference Affiliation

Merton School is a member of the Arrowhead Middle School Athletic Conference (AMSAC). The conference consists of the following teams: Erin, Friess Lake, Lake Country, North Lake, North Shore, Richmond, Stone Bank, and Swallow.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for all transportation to and from all athletic events. Merton School does not offer a transportation service for athletic events.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to participate in the athletic programs offered at Merton School, students must meet the following criteria. Students may come to the Athletic Director prior to the beginning of the sport season to verify their eligibility to participate in athletics. The specific requirements are as follows:

Students are not allowed to practice or participate in games unless the following criteria are met:

- Have a read, signed, and turned in concussion/athletic handbook form
- Have paid all financial obligations to the school*
- Attend at least the last 50% of the school day
- Have a signed parent permission slip turned in

Students are allowed to practice but not allowed to participate in games unless the following criteria are met:

- Have no more than (1) F or a GPA of less than 2.0
- Have a signed code of conduct form turned in
- Have paid the \$65 Athletic Fee per sport*

*Exceptions will be made on fees for families on free or reduced lunch

Detentions/Suspensions

Students suspended from school, in-school or out of school, are not permitted to participate in or attend any athletic events during the period of their suspension. This includes team practices. Students assigned classroom detentions affecting participation in practices or games will be dealt with at the discretion of the athletic director and administration.

Concussions

The law requires all youth athletic organizations to educate coaches, athletes, and parents on the risks of concussions and head injuries and prohibits participation in a youth activity until the athlete and parent or guardian have returned a signed agreement indicating they have reviewed the concussion and head injury information materials. The law requires immediate removal of an individual from a youth athletic activity if symptoms indicate a possible concussion has been sustained. A person who has been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a determined or suspected concussion or head injury may not participate again until he or she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives written clearance from the health care provider to return to the activity. Coaches must also return a signed concussion information agreement.

Uniforms

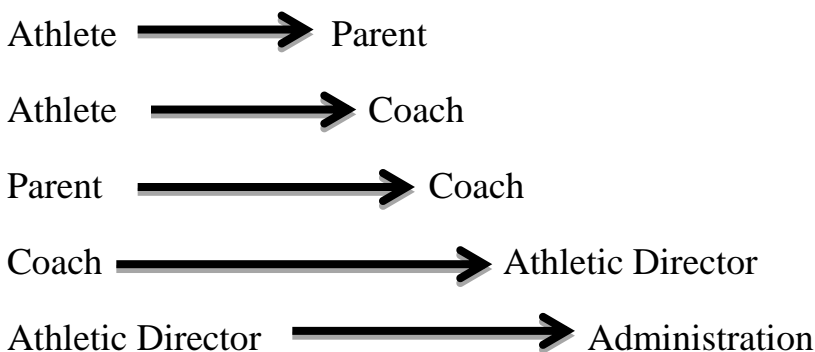
All uniforms issued to athletes are the property of the school and must be properly cared for by the student and parents. All uniforms must be returned, properly cleaned, at the conclusion of the season. Lost or damaged uniforms will become the financial obligation of the student. Game uniforms may be worn only on the day of a scheduled contest.

Out of School Conduct

Student-athletes at Merton School are expected to act in a legal and responsible manner, realizing that at all times, they are representing their school and team. Conduct out of school which discredits or embarrasses Merton School, the athletic department or any sport may result in athletic department disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the team. Further disciplinary action may also be taken if deemed appropriate by the school administration.

Lines of Communication

Merton School views communication as a key component in all activities. If you feel there is a concern that needs to be addressed we ask that you follow the following lines of communication. We also ask that you please allow **24 hours** between the occurrence/incident and the initiation of communication. Lines of communication are as follows:



If there is a concern regarding another school or official or if you feel that the communication you have had with a coach was not successful please contact the Athletic Director.

PARENT & ATHLETE ATHLETIC HANDBOOK/CONCUSSION AGREEMENT

As a Parent and as an Athlete it is important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussions. By signing this form you are stating that you understand the importance of recognizing and responding to the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion or head injury. *This form must be completed for every sports season and every youth athletic organization the athlete is involved with.*

Parent Agreement:

I _____ have **read** the Parent Concussion and Head Injury Information and **understand** what a concussion is and how it may be caused. I also understand the common signs, symptoms, and behaviors. I agree that my child must be removed from practice/play if a concussion is suspected.

I understand that it is my responsibility to seek medical treatment if a suspected concussion is reported to me.

I understand that my child cannot return to practice/play until providing written clearance from an appropriate health care provider to his/her coach.

I understand the possible consequences of my child returning to practice/play too soon.

I have read the Merton School Athletic Handbook, understand, and agree to abide by the mission, requirements, and responsibilities for participation in athletics at Merton School.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Athlete Agreement:

I _____ have **read** the Athlete Concussion and Head Injury Information and **understand** what a concussion is and how it may be caused.

I understand the importance of reporting a suspected concussion to my coaches and my parents/guardian.

I understand that I must be removed from practice/play if a concussion is suspected. I understand that I must provide written clearance from an appropriate health care provider to my coach before returning to practice/play.

I understand the possible consequence of returning to practice/play too soon and that my brain needs time to heal.

I have read the Merton School Athletic Handbook, understand, and agree to abide by the mission, requirements, and responsibilities for participation in athletics at Merton School.

Athlete Signature _____ Date _____