

Dear Parents and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to the Half Hollow Hills School District Interscholastic Athletic Program.

Parents and student-athletes are encouraged to carefully read the entire Athletic Handbook. This booklet contains information that will be important throughout each sport season. The handbook is progressive in nature, giving parents and athletes the philosophy and expectations of our interscholastic program, beginning with the modified middle school program, culminating with the varsity level experience.

The guide gives parents and athletes a complete listing of all programs offered at each level, and the season of placement for each sport as it pertains to the middle school – with four athletic seasons, and the high school with three athletic seasons.

For your convenience, please log onto the **SECTION XI WEBSITE**, currently available to the public at [www.sectionxi.org](http://www.sectionxi.org). This website allows the athletic community access to high school and modified (middle school) scheduling information, game times, schedules, and directions to contest sites. In addition, the website posts high school varsity, league, and division standings, tournament brackets, seeding information, and other appropriate athletic information. It is an excellent source of information for all those involved in interscholastic athletics. For game day cancellations and postponements, please refer to the Half Hollow Hills website, [www.hhh.k12.ny.us](http://www.hhh.k12.ny.us).

If you have any questions or concerns about this booklet or interscholastic athletics in general, please contact me at (631) 592-3065.

Sincerely,

Joseph Pennacchio  
Director of Athletics

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**CREED FOR COMPETITORS**

**1. Play Hard**

After the contest is over, you can say “I gave everything I’ve got physically. I fought my heart out”.

**2. PLAY SMART**

Keep your poise. Be intent. Stay focused. Concentrate only on the game.

**3. PLAY FAIR**

Fight clean. Obey both the letter and the spirit of the rules. No hedging, no cheating.

**4. PLAY TO WIN**

Never concede. Never quit. Never give up or give in. Maintain your self-respect and respect your opponents by giving an all-out effort.

**5. HAVE FUN**

Don’t shrink from the fear of defeat or let the bitter taste of defeat destroy your love of the game.

**6. KEEP PERSPECTIVE**

When the game is on, it is important that you win. After it is over, it makes no ethical difference whether you won or lost. Self-worth is not predicated on the vagaries of victory or defeat. What does matter most is that you love the challenge of the game, savor the camaraderie of your teammates, and earn the respect of your opponents; namely, that you have been true to your best self.

.....Wilbur Braithwaite

**GOVERNING BODIES IN ATHLETICS**

Interscholastic Athletics is governed by rules, regulations and guidelines as established by the **New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA)**, which is directly responsible to the **State Education Department (SED)** and the **Commissioner of Education**.

NYSPHSAA is comprised of eleven sections or chapters in the state of New York. Suffolk County, which is referred to as **Section XI (Suffolk County Public High School Athletic Association)**, is a member of NYSPHSAA. It is the purpose of this organization to formulate and adopt policies that will enable public high schools to administer and govern interscholastic athletics in accordance with sound educational practices.

NYSPHSAA and Section XI establish many of the rules, regulations and policies that govern public school interscholastic athletic competition. Season start and end dates, the Selection/Classification program (process for moving up), eligibility, schedules (dates of contests), placement (which opponents are played), contest rules, safety policies, practice mandates, postseason tournament opportunities (league, division, county and state play-offs) are some of the areas governed by these associations. Section XI also is responsible for the scheduling of all officials for all contests played in Suffolk County.

The Half Hollow Hills School District, as a member of the Suffolk County Public High School Athletic Association, is obligated to comply with state and section regulations. Therefore, our district policies must not be in conflict with those policies that govern Suffolk County public school athletic programs.

**SECTION XI SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

Spectators are an important part of the game and shall conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.

Spectators shall, at all times, respect officials, coaches and players and extend all courtesies to them. While wholesome cheering is encouraged, taunting, foul and abusive language, inflammatory remarks and disrespectful signs and behavior are not acceptable. The school expects our adults and parents to set the tone for all spectators and serve as appropriate role models for all of our student-athletes. Please assist the school officials and coaches in providing a healthy educational climate that our school can be proud of, and by maintaining an appropriate competitive perspective throughout the contest.

Spectators shall observe and obey the rules and regulations of the school concerning tobacco, smoking, food and soft drink consumption, use of lavatory facilities and the parking of their vehicles on school grounds.

New York State law prohibits smoking and alcoholic beverages of any kind on school property. The law further prohibits any person under the influence of alcohol to be on school property.

Spectators shall respect and obey all school officials, supervisors, security and police at all athletic contests.

**Spectators who fail to adhere to conduct expectations during a contest should be prepared to accept consequences for their inappropriate behavior. These consequences may include ejection from the contest site.**

#### NYSPHSAA/SECTION XI MISCONDUCT RULE

Any member of a squad removed from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or for a flagrant foul shall not participate in that sport in the next scheduled contest or in NYSPHSAA tournament play. Disqualifications from one season carry over to the next season of participation.

Any member of the squad who strikes, shoves, kicks or makes other physical contact with the intent to do so to 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. Note Member of the squad includes coach, player, manager, scorekeeper, timers, and statisticians.

A player or coach who has been suspended from play may not be present on the school grounds where the contest is played. **There is no appeal to the NYSPHSAA/Section XI Misconduct Rule.** The official's ruling is final and not subject to question.

***Note: The Half Hollow Hills School District reserves the right to impose an additional consequence, which may result in school disciplinary action, a longer period of suspension from practice and contests and/or dismissal from the team by the coach and/or administration.***

## COLLEGE RECRUITMENT AND ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Many of our student-athletes express an interest in continuing their athletic participation at the collegiate level. While there are many opportunities for our athletes to play at the next level, athletic scholarships are limited and are available primarily for the "elite athlete". Athletes who are interested in pursuing opportunities should discuss this matter with their guidance counselor as soon as possible, preferably as a freshman. This is very important since athletic skill is not the only determining factor when deciding who is *eligible* of a sports scholarship. There are academic requirements that are set forth by the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). The NCAA website ([www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)) provides information on how student-athletes can comply with NCAA bylaws in order to compete in intercollegiate athletics. It includes information on what high school students need to do to be eligible to compete their first year in college, as well as guidelines that coaches and prospective student-athletes must follow during the recruiting process. Additionally, students are required to complete the NCAA Clearinghouse eligibility form ([www.NCAAClearinghouse.net](http://www.NCAAClearinghouse.net)). Since the eligibility requirements change from time to time, it is very important that you regularly check this site and discuss any changes with your coach and guidance counselor.

The term "scholarship" very often has been used in an all-inclusive way. It should be noted that the term "scholarship" is referred to in different ways throughout varied sources. It could include any one or combination of other terms, such as financial aid, grants, loans, work study program, and aid from private or government sources. Very often the amount and method of scholarship is dependent on the level or division of play at which a particular college competes. It is important for the student-athlete and parents to understand:

1. The type of financial package (if applicable) being discussed; and,
2. The obligations, terms, conditions and longevity of such arrangements; and,
3. How the financial package compares to the actual cost of attending the institution.

Additional information about the recruiting process, eligibility guidelines, the athletic profile, campus visitations, and planning for the college-bound athlete is available in "The Guide For College-Bound Student-Athletes and Their Parents" which can be obtained from high school guidance counselors.

## Coaches Associations and County Awards

**County and State Championship Awards** are presented to team members at the **Section XI or State Finals or at the Coaches Association Dinner**. They are not purchased or presented by the district.

Most of the sports in Suffolk County have organized Coaches Associations that raise funds for various awards that are presented at county banquets. Such awards may include Honorable Mention, All-League, All-Conference, All-Division, and All-County Awards. Coaches Associations have no affiliation with the school district or Section XI. They are an independent body, governed by their own by-laws and officers. Therefore, these postseason awards, presented by the coaches, may vary from sport to sport and year to year. *The members of the County Coaches Association determine the selection criteria for awards, pay for the awards, and fund the banquet. Neither the school district, nor the Section, has any influence with regard to the selection of those individuals who receive these awards.*

## Special Awards

At the spring sports presentation, special awards are given out to seniors who have made outstanding contributions to our interscholastic athletic program during their high school career. Some of these awards are as follows:

**Section XI Gold Key Award:** Presented to athletes who have participated in our athletic program in eight (8) of nine (9) sport seasons in grades 10-12. This includes JV as well as Varsity program participation.

**Half Hollow Hills Seven Letter Varsity Athlete Award:** Presented to athletes who have earned seven (7) varsity letters during participation in our interscholastic athletic programs in grades 10-12. Please be advised that this award, unlike the Gold Key Award, does not recognize junior varsity and minor varsity award letters.

**Outstanding Senior Athlete Award:** Presented to a male and female athlete who is recognized by coaches and administrators as an individual who has impacted our programs with tremendous skill and leadership ability. This athlete is usually an athlete who has represented the school in more than one sport.

Please note that other awards such as the **Half Hollow Hills Scholar/Athlete Award**, the **United States Army Reserve Scholar/Athlete Award**, the **Town of Huntington Scholar/Athlete Award**, the **United States Marine Corps Distinguished Athlete Award**, the **Channel 12 News/Citibank Scholar/Athlete Award** are also presented to selected seniors at the spring High School East and High School West Academic Awards presentation.

## MISSION STATEMENT

of the

## HALF HOLLOW HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The mission of the Half Hollow Hills District Athletic Program is to foster the quest for excellence by creating an educational and competitive experience with an atmosphere of sportsmanship. We strive to develop and realize individual and team potential by promoting high standards of competence, character, civility and citizenship.

The Half Hollow Hills Central School District understands that interscholastic athletics are a significant part of the educational process. The combination of academics and athletics enhances the quality of students' lives and expands their options for learning and personal growth. Athletics provide an educational opportunity in which students can learn essential life lessons beyond those that can be learned in an academic classroom.

The interscholastic competitive environment provides an opportunity for our participants to learn positive life skills, values and ethics in a climate that demands dedication, responsibility, self-discipline, cooperation, positive work ethics and respect for others. This program provides an opportunity for all to share their common interests, to celebrate their differences, and to appreciate physical competitions as a lifelong process.

All involved in the program must show a personal commitment to the goals of the team, and make the personal sacrifices necessary in order to achieve success. Making such a commitment to excellence nurtures a sense of pride, loyalty and leadership qualities in an athlete, enabling the individual to become more resilient and better prepared to face life's challenges. This unique experience allows students to achieve their full potential as students, athletes and citizens.

It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one measure of success. Ultimately, the real challenge is guiding the individual and the team to reach full potential. This is the true measure of achievement. The competitive athletic environment is one that demands respect for a full effort, and applause for those who rise to the challenge and accept the risk of defeat. If one strives towards reaching full potential, with a passion and perseverance, personal victories that last a lifetime are the end reward, even though the win-loss record may not always meet expectations.

**AVAILABLE PROGRAMS AND LENGTH OF SEASONS**

The Half Hollow Hills Interscholastic Athletic Program offers a wide variety of individual and team sports. The experience begins with a modified four season athletic program, provided for middle school seventh and eight grade students, progressing to a three season athletic high school program, which includes opportunities for participation in freshman and junior varsity programs, culminating with a varsity level experience for the elite athlete.

Below you will find the programs available in the Half Hollow Hills School District.

**HIGH SCHOOL – FRESHMAN (JV2), JV, and VARSITY SPORT PROGRAMS**

| <b>Fall</b>         | <b>Varsity</b> | <b>JV</b> | <b>Freshman (JV2)</b> |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Boys Cross Country  | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Cross Country | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Field Hockey  | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Football       | X              | X         |                       |
| Girls Gymnastics    | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Soccer        | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Soccer         | X              | X         |                       |
| Girls Swimming      | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Tennis        | X              | X         |                       |
| Girls Volleyball    | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Volleyball     | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Golf           | X              | X         |                       |

| <b>Winter</b>      | <b>Varsity</b> | <b>JV</b> | <b>Freshman (JV2)</b> |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Boys Basketball    | X              | X         | X                     |
| Girls Basketball   | X              | X         | X                     |
| Boys Fencing       | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Fencing      | X              |           |                       |
| Boys Swimming      | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Indoor Track | X              |           |                       |
| Boys Indoor Track  | X              |           |                       |
| Boys Wrestling     | X              | X         |                       |

| <b>Spring</b>      | <b>Varsity</b> | <b>JV</b> | <b>Freshman (JV2)</b> |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Boys Badminton     | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Badminton    | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Softball     | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Baseball      | X              | X         | X                     |
| Girls Spring Track | X              |           |                       |
| Boys Spring Track  | X              |           |                       |
| Girls Lacrosse     | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Lacrosse      | X              | X         | X                     |
| Girls Golf         | X              | X         |                       |
| Boys Tennis        | X              | X         |                       |

**ATHLETIC AWARDS**

**School Awards**

All student-athletes who participate and complete the Modified (middle school), Freshman, Junior Varsity, or Varsity season shall be eligible for school athletic awards, providing that they have returned all issued uniforms and equipment. Award certificates to middle school athletes are presented to athletes by their coaches, during a team meeting or gathering at the end of their season. High school awards are presented at our evening fall, winter and spring sports award presentation. The requirements for the school awards vary with the nature of each sport and level, and include the following:

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b><u>Modified Program</u></b>       | Certificate of Achievement   |
| <b><u>Freshman Program</u></b>       | Set of Numerals (Graduation Year)  |
| <b><u>Junior Varsity Program</u></b> | 5" JV Letter and Sport Pin   |
| <b><u>Varsity Program</u></b>        | One of the following listed below:<br>6" Minor Varsity Letter and Sport Pin<br>8" Major Varsity Letter and Sport Pin<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , or 6 <sup>th</sup> Year Plaque |

Note: All 9<sup>th</sup> grade athletes who participate in our program receive a set of numerals (their graduation year) regardless of the level of play.

**Coach's Awards and Most Valuable Player Awards** (for varsity players only)  
These awards are presented to those athletes deemed worthy by the Head Varsity Coach. The number of presentations made by the Head Coach with respect to these two awards may vary from year to year. Please be advised that the coach may choose not to present a Coach's Award of Team MVP Award at the end of a given season if he/she feels the team does not have a candidate that fits the criteria for the award.

**Sportsmanship Award**  
The district considers sportsmanship to be an essential component of our athletic educational process. One individual from each team is recognized for demonstrating outstanding sportsmanship among their peers.

The school district will also present, at our sports presentations, championship plaques to members of those varsity teams who win **League or Division Championships**.

Athletes should never give their school issued equipment or uniform to anyone else to return for them. Coaches keep accurate records of school issued inventory, and if there are any items not returned at the end of the season, the athlete will be placed on an indebted list.

**Indebted Policy**

Once a coach has signed off with the Director of Athletics at the end of their season, they can no longer accept the return of equipment or uniforms from an athlete. At this time, to clear indebtedness, an athlete will have to return his/her inventory items to the Athletic Director at Central Office. In order to insure full accountability on the part of all, no one at building level is authorized to take a returned uniform from an indebted athlete, as inventory records must be updated when items are returned or paid for. If an athlete or parent leaves the uniform with someone else at the building level, the student will not be cleared from the indebted list.

Athletes are not permitted to keep their uniforms at the end of a season. In an interscholastic athletic program, "jerseys are never retired." Uniforms are costly to replace in small quantity, and allowing student-athletes to keep their uniforms would be fiscally irresponsible. In addition, many of our uniforms are custom made, and cannot be matched. All parents are asked to support our inventory policies and make every effort to see to it that their child's uniform and protective equipment is returned to the coach immediately following the last game of the season.

Please be advised that it is more beneficial to have the inventory item returned than to pay for the item. Family cooperation is essential. Please make all attempts to locate and return all school issued athletic inventory at the end of the season.

**Athletes who are indebted will not be issued any other school uniform or protective equipment for another sport season until they clear their indebtedness with the Director of Athletics. If the uniform is lost, or ruined, the athlete will be held responsible. Coaches will also be instructed to withhold the presentation of athletic awards until the missing items of inventory have been returned or paid for. Building Administrators may take additional action with regard to the athlete's indebtedness as well.**

**Approximate Start/End Dates for Three Sport Seasons**

- Fall:** Monday before Labor Day to the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in November  
**(Note: Football begins 2 weeks before Labor Day)**
- Winter:** Monday before Thanksgiving to the last week of February  
**(Note: Postseason play includes the February break)**
- Spring:** First Monday after the first Saturday in March to the first week in June  
**(includes the spring break for all teams)**

Note: These dates are subject to change, and are determined by NYSPHSAA and Section XI.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL (MODIFIED) ATHLETIC PROGRAMS**

| <b>Fall</b>              | <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>7<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>8<sup>th</sup></b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Girls Field Hockey       | X                                    |                       |                       |
| Boys Football            |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Girls Soccer             |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Boys Soccer              |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Boys/Girls Cross Country | X                                    |                       |                       |

| <b>Early Winter</b> | <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>7<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>8<sup>th</sup></b> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Boys Basketball     |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Girls Volleyball    |                                      | X                     | X                     |

| <b>Late Winter</b> | <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>7<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>8<sup>th</sup></b> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Girls Basketball   |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Boys Volleyball    | X                                    |                       |                       |
| Wrestling          | X                                    |                       |                       |

| <b>Spring</b>       | <b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>7<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>8<sup>th</sup></b> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Boys Lacrosse       |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Girls Lacrosse      | X                                    |                       |                       |
| Boys Baseball       |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Girls Softball      |                                      | X                     | X                     |
| Girls Spring Track  | X                                    |                       |                       |
| Boys Spring Track   | X                                    |                       |                       |
| Boys/Girls Swimming | X                                    |                       |                       |

**Please note the season placements for middle school volleyball and swimming are different than the high school.**

### Approximate Start/End Dates for Four Sport Seasons

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Fall:</b>         | First day of school through the first week in November |
| <b>Early Winter:</b> | Early November through late January                    |
| <b>Late Winter:</b>  | Late January through late March                        |
| <b>Spring:</b>       | Late March through early June                          |

Note: These dates are subject to change, and are determined by NYSPHSAA and Section XI.

### PROGRAM PHILOSOPHIES

#### Modified Program Philosophy

Middle school “modified” programs, in general, offer an introduction to the world of competitive athletics. The focus is on learning basic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, social and emotional growth, and healthy competition. The emphasis is to provide an opportunity for children, through physical participation in a positive competitive environment, to learn about their capabilities and appreciate their physical potential. In the best interest of the student, the athlete must have enough skill and physical maturity to safely participate in the competitive climate. The “modified” program allows for game rules and requirements of play to be adapted matching the competitive abilities of young, inexperienced, middle school athletes who have not yet reached emotional, social, physiological, or physical maturity. A five period format with an “A” & “B” squad will be used when appropriate.

We would like to provide an opportunity for every athlete who expresses interest in a program, unfortunately, this is not always possible. While we will make every attempt to avoid cuts at the middle school level, certain factors exist that must be dealt with by imposing a limitation on the number of students that can be accommodated in a specific program. Ultimately, the number of teams and size of the squad in any sport could be determined by the availability of:

1. Financial resources
2. Safe environment
3. Suitable indoor or outdoor facilities
4. Availability of qualified coaches

In order for the desired development of the adolescent athlete and team to occur, practice sessions are vital. NYSPHSAA and Section XI have established sport specific practice guidelines which govern the number of practices that each individual and team must have in order to be eligible for competition. There are also established guidelines, which govern the number of contests allowed, and in certain sports, mandate days of rest between scheduled contests.

**Coaches expect athletes to regularly attend five (5) practices a week, two hours in duration, in preparation for the six to twelve contests that are scheduled against opponents from other school districts. Occasionally, practices or**

taken, the athlete has not assumed his/her **responsibility to secure them in an appropriate manner.** Despite our best efforts at supervision, thefts sometimes occur

#### Team Uniforms and School Issued Equipment

Athletic equipment becomes more costly each year. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to secure all school issued equipment items and uniforms in a **locker that is locked** during the course of a season. Please do not keep the team uniforms in the locker room facility for long periods of time. They are best laundered and left at home until the day of a game. The expense of a uniform is significant, and if the athlete forgets to lock his or her locker, the athlete will be expected to pay for the school issued athletic equipment and/or uniform.

#### Care and Maintenance of Uniforms and Equipment

All athletes and parents are responsible for the cleaning and maintaining of all uniforms and equipment issued to them during the course of a season. Some of our most costly items may shrink, fade, or bleed color if washed in hot water. In addition, our logos, numbers, and screens may crack and peel off if temperature settings for washing and drying are too hot. Therefore, **do not wash uniforms in hot water and avoid drying on hot temperature settings.** Please wash uniforms in cold water and hang to dry! Be sure to read the tags on the cloth for washing and drying instructions, and when in doubt, speak to the coach before laundering uniforms. If the uniform needs to be replaced, the athlete will be expected to pay for the replacement item.

**Athletes are not permitted to modify their uniforms, warm-ups, practice attire or protective equipment without permission from the coach. If sleeve ends, leg ends, and necklines on uniforms are cut or torn, the athlete will be expected to pay for the uniform.**

**Protective gear issued by the school such as helmets, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves, etc., should not be modified in any way unless permission is given by the coach.**

#### Return of School Issued Uniforms and Equipment

**It is the responsibility of the athlete to personally return all school issued equipment to their coach at the end of their season.** All team uniforms and equipment are to be returned to the coach immediately after the last practice or contest where the item is needed. The athlete is not responsible for the cleaning or washing of uniforms at the end of a season as all items in our inventory are sent out to a professional reconditioning and cleaning service. Turning in equipment and uniforms “on time” insures that all items in the team inventory are available for pick-up by the reconditioning company on the scheduled date set for the end of the season.



protocols. Parents are encouraged to communicate with our nurses, athletic trainers, and coaches, if there is any prior history of triad symptoms.

### **Section XI Heat Alert Policy**

Section XI, in an effort to protect the safety and well being of the athletes, has a Heat Alert Policy in place for those days where the temperature and humidity index warrants special precautions.

On those days when the Heat Index reaches 88 (or the Temperature/Humidity Index reaches 72), ***practice sessions are modified, and contest rules are modified*** to permit additional time outs for rest and forced water breaks.

On those days when the Heat Index reaches 95 (or the Temperature/Humidity Index reaches 78), ***no physical activity is permitted*** (swimming excluded). Team meetings are permitted.

The Section XI Safety Chairperson monitors heat and humidity conditions, and all public high schools are given notification of the alert on a daily basis when weather conditions are hot and/or extremely humid. All Section XI schools are mandated to comply with the Heat Alert Policy.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE CONCERNS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Student-Athlete Possessions**

All athletes are provided with a locker for their personal use located in the physical education locker room or team room facility. Since this area is used by numbers of students throughout the course of an afternoon, and teams dismiss their athletes at varying times, it is impossible to make certain that the locker room facility is secured at all times.

Therefore, it is essential that each athlete purchases their own combination lock and assumes the responsibility for locking up and securing their books, clothing, and personal possessions prior to leaving the facility for practice and contests each day.

**If the athletes leave their personal possessions and belongings unlocked, or out on the team bench in the locker room facility, they are inviting theft. Athletes are to be discouraged from bringing valuable personal items to school, where they will be left in the locker room facility. Excess cash, expensive jewelry and electronics should be left at home!**

Coaches will attempt to provide adequate supervision within the facility, but athletes are expected to do their part as well. More often than not, when personal belongings are

**contests will be scheduled on Saturdays and vacation dates. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each team member *will exist over the course of a season*, providing that the athlete meets program expectations.**

Athletes in all programs, regardless of level, are expected to be committed and give a full effort to practice sessions, maintain a positive and cooperative attitude, and show a willingness to meet the team's needs with respect to position and role. Every athlete is expected to demonstrate respect for others and promote positive sportsmanship.

### **Freshman (JV2) and Junior Varsity Program Philosophy**

The junior varsity and freshman (JV2) programs are intended for those who display the potential for continued development into productive varsity level players. Freshman (JV2) teams are ***normally*** limited to ninth grade athletes. In junior varsity programs, teams are comprised of ***mostly*** ninth and tenth grade athletes. In certain situations, juniors, who may still be viewed as future contributors at the varsity level, may be allowed to participate on a junior varsity squad. This circumstance however, is more the exception to the rule. Middle school athletes who qualify for participation at higher levels of play, through the Selection/Classification Program, are also eligible for a spot on these rosters. Seventh or eighth grade students selected as members of a freshman or junior varsity team are also rare exceptions to the rule.

At this point in the athlete's development, the level of expectation increases substantially. The high school sport season (three seasons per year) is longer than the middle school sport season (four seasons per year). The practice sessions are longer and more intense, and the skill requirements for participation in contests are greater. The atmosphere is more competitive, and in many cases, athletes who were able to meet the demands of play at the modified program will not be able to meet the expectations of participation at the freshman and junior varsity level. Athletes must be prepared for a competitive tryout situation, and should not assume that they will automatically make the team because they were involved in the program at the modified level. Each and every season is treated as a new year and tryouts are conducted accordingly.

Skill, conditioning, work ethic, and reliability are big factors in an athlete's quest to move up. At this level, athletes are expected to have visibly committed themselves to the program and continued self-development. Increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play, and social and emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and the quest for victory. The outcome of the contest does become a consideration at this level. For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season, providing the athlete meets program expectations. A specified amount of playing time, however, is never guaranteed. Athletes are expected to compete for a position in the starting line-up.

The time commitment of a participant involved in a freshman and/or junior varsity program is similar to that at the varsity level. Athletes and parents should be prepared for a six-day-a-week commitment for games and practices. **While practices are not held on certain religious holy days, and rarely on Sundays, the athlete will be expected to make a full commitment to scheduled team practices during vacation periods.** With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.

### **Varsity Program Philosophy**

Varsity competition is the culminating experience for each sport's program. It is an experience provided for the elite athlete and is the most demanding and competitive of all programs. Although junior and senior athletes dominate most varsity team rosters, gifted ninth and tenth grade athletes are eligible for varsity play. Although rare, it is also possible for a middle school student to be included on a varsity roster. Prior participation in the program does not guarantee an athlete a spot on the roster, even if the athlete was a member of the varsity squad the preceding year.

Squad size at the varsity level is limited in many sports, although there are a few sports that will accommodate more numbers in practice and in competitive situations than others. However, even in those sports where cuts are not made in a given year, athletes must still understand that they may be denied an opportunity to participate unless they meet program expectations, especially with respect to start dates, attendance and commitment. Athletes who do not meet program expectations will not be eligible to earn a letter award.

The number of participants on most varsity teams is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each member understands and accepts their role on the team as the number of roster positions is relative to the student's acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of team goals. **While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed, since the outcome of the contest becomes a prime consideration at this level.**

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for varsity play. Athletes will be expected to practice 2 to 3 hours per day, six days per week, with commitment often extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons. **While practices are not held on certain religious holy days, and rarely on Sundays, the athlete will be expected to make a full commitment to scheduled team practices during vacation periods.** The expectation is the same for the starting player as it is for the limited role player, as every athlete involved on the team has a role in preparing the team for a demanding competitive schedule. The achievement of individual and team goals requires a full commitment on the part of every athlete on the roster.

“strict” medical definitions for anorexia or bulimia, a number of these female athletes may still have disordered eating patterns and may be at risk for the **Female Athlete Triad**.

The female athlete can experience **menstrual irregularities**. These include primary amenorrhea (the absence of menstruation by age 16 in a girl with secondary sex characteristics), secondary amenorrhea (the absence of three or more consecutive menstrual cycles after menarche) or oligomenorrhea (3-6 menstrual cycles per year at intervals greater than 36 days). By age 20, a woman has acquired 60-70% of her peak bone mass. The loss of estrogen resulting from amenorrhea or oligomenorrhea will affect the body's ability to absorb and utilize calcium. This may lead to premature bone loss, which can be irreversible and result in osteoporosis.

The American College of Sports Medicine believes the **Female Athlete Triad** exists not only in elite athletes, but also in physically active girls and women who participate in a wide range of sports and other physical activities. An important risk factor known to trigger disordered eating is dieting at a young age, sometimes as a result of a comment or suggestion made by a parent, coach, teammate or peer, about body image and/or weight. Other risk factors include frequent weight fluctuations, a sudden increase in training volume, and emotional circumstances such as injury or loss of a coach. Females who are found to have one component of the triad should be screened for the other two. For example, if an irregular menstrual cycle is present, the athlete should be questioned about her eating patterns, weight loss history, and stress fractures. On the other hand, if this athlete has repeated stress fractures, she should be questioned about irregularities in her eating pattern and menstrual cycle. Although the **Female Athlete Triad** may begin with a pattern of disordered eating, this may be difficult to identify initially. If this pattern of eating is allowed to progress, it may result in hormonal imbalances and may lead to cessation of regular menstrual periods and loss of bone density. Amenorrhea is not a natural consequence of athletic training. When symptoms of the triad exist, a multidisciplinary approach to treatment is necessary. In addition to the female athlete, parents, coaches, physicians, nutritionists, athletic trainers, school nurses, and mental health professionals are all potential participants in the treatment process.

Please be advised that Half Hollow Hills takes the **Female Athlete Triad** issue seriously. Our school physicians, nurses, athletic trainers, and coaches of female athletes participate in on-going training. The district has a comprehensive awareness and prevention program. Our pre-participation physical examination questionnaire, interval health history form, and required physical examination do address this issue. Staff members involved in the training of our female athletes are trained and prepared to guide athletes appropriately when it comes to the impact of nutrition on peak performance.

If, during the physical examination process or during the course of the season, our physicians, nurses, or coaches have cause for concern with respect to any one of the triad symptoms, our staff members have instructions to follow established as district

supplements such as amino acids, protein and high doses of vitamins and minerals may actually be harmful.

### **Hydration and Heat Illness**

Heat illness is a serious potential danger to all athletes. Stay hydrated, especially in hot weather. Studies clearly show that performance suffers in a dehydrated athlete. Drink before, during and after exercise. Plain cold water is usually the best. However, sports drinks may provide an edge if you exercise continuously over one hour. Thirst is not a good measure of when to drink fluids. A thirsty athlete is already in early stages of dehydration. The following points will help an athlete avoid heat illness:

- During hot weather, gradually acclimate to higher temperatures.
- Be sure to hydrate early, before activity.
- Drink unlimited quantities of water during practices and contests. By the time you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated.
- Be sure to hydrate after practices. Within 2 hours, drink enough to replace any weight loss from exercise. Dehydration usually occurs with a weight loss of 2% of body weight or more.
- Salt should never be added to drinks, and salt tablets should be avoided.
- Cool beverages at temperatures between 50-59 degrees Fahrenheit are recommended.

### **Female Athlete Triad**

The level of participation by women of all ages in competitive and recreational sport has increased dramatically over the past 20 years. In most cases these athletes have experienced significant health benefits and enhanced their state of mental and physical well-being. Under certain circumstances, some active female athletes experience the detrimental effects of a condition known as the **Female Athlete Triad**. The triad acknowledges the interrelated nature of **disorder eating, amenorrhea, and osteoporosis**, which is being increasingly recognized by the medical community. Although the prevalence of the triad is uncertain, various studies have found amenorrhea in athletes to be as high as 40%, and most clinical reviews cite the prevalence of disordered eating among female athletes to be between 15% and 62%. Decreased estrogen appears to cause skeletal demineralization in amenorrheic athletes. We need to give serious consideration to the triad, for it can lead to a number of illnesses, from minor problems to life threatening medical conditions.

**Disordered eating** refers to the spectrum of abnormal patterns of eating, including bingeing, and/or purging; food restriction; prolonged fasting; misuse of diet pills, diuretics, or laxatives; and other abnormal eating behaviors. Preoccupation with food, dissatisfaction with one's body, fear of becoming fat, and a distorted body image play an important role in these conditions. At the extreme end of the spectrum are the eating disorders, including anorexia or bulimia. While many athletes do not meet the

A primary goal of a varsity team is to win a league or division title, and/or qualify for post-season play in sectional, regional or state competition. In the individual sports (cross country, tennis, wrestling, golf, gymnastics, swimming and track), opportunities are presented to dedicated team members to represent the district in individual championship competitions at the league, division, county, and state levels. **These opportunities are only provided, however, to those individuals who show a complete (total season) and on-going commitment to the team.**

## **CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES**

### **Parent-Coach Relationship**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of others and provide greater benefit to the students. As parents, when your children become involved in a school's sport program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication between coach, parent and student-athlete.

**Parents should be advised that the Half Hollow Hills school policy does not permit spectators to watch team practices or scrimmages, as distractions can upset the concentration of the athletes. The gymnasium or field is considered to be part of the classroom environment. Scrimmages are considered to be an extension of the practice session, and therefore, are closed to spectators. Therefore, parents who pick up their child after practice should wait until the conclusion of the practice before entering the training facility.**

### **Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach**

- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as the players on the squad.
- Location and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning responsibilities, etc.
- Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
- Team rules, guidelines, and lettering requirements.

### **Communication Coaches Expect From Athletes**

- Notification of any scheduled conflicts in advance.
- Special concerns in regard to the coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

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

### Appropriate Concerns To Discuss With The Coach

- The treatment of your child – mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you desire. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interests of the team and for all students involved. Certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach.

### Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss With the Coach

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- 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 should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern:

- Call the coach to set up an appointment
- If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director to ask for assistance setting up the meeting.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
- Please take into consideration the coach's responsibilities at this time, as the coach is responsible for the supervision and safety of all athletes involved in the program, before, during and after activity.

**If meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution to your concerns, call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director or building administrator to discuss the situation.**

### General Rules for Parents

The following is a suggested "code of conduct" for parents:

- Remain seated in spectator areas during competition.
- Do not yell instructions or criticisms to the children.
- Do not interfere with your child's coach.

### Nutrition

In order to approach peak performance in athletics, student-athletes, parents, and coaches need accurate information on how to properly fuel and nourish the body. Karen Sossin, M.S., a prominent certified nutritionist who specializes in sports nutrition, recommends the following dietary guidelines which are emphasized by the coaching staff and trainers on an on-going basis:

- Eat **more** complex carbohydrates. By ingesting carbohydrates, athletes maximize glycogen storage. Glycogen is the primary source of energy for muscles. Recommended sources of carbohydrates are grains, cereal, breads, potatoes, pasta, vegetables, and fruits. As an added bonus, most carbohydrate sources are also high in vitamins and minerals.
- Eat **moderate** amounts of protein. Athletes must understand that eating excess protein is not beneficial. While athletes have a slightly increased protein requirement, the normal athletic diet is composed of more than adequate amounts of protein. Eat more complex carbohydrates, not more protein!
- Eat **less** high-fat foods. Foods high in fat include fried foods, cookies, cakes, luncheon meats and whole milk dairy products. This **does not** mean avoid these foods totally. However, we must learn to choose **low fat** versions such as skim milk, lean beef, chicken (minus the skin), fish and **low fat** snacks, such as pretzels.

Maintain a **healthy body composition**. Avoid quick weight loss. Within reasonable guidelines, a leaner athlete is a more efficient athlete. A normal range of percent body fat for males is 7-18% while a healthy rate for females is 15-25%. Your body fat is determined by heredity and, of course, diet and exercise.

**Replace carbohydrates used for energy during training and competition.** In order to refuel your body to prepare for the next practice or game, carbohydrate rich foods need to be ingested soon after exercise. Eating 200-400 carbohydrate calories within 1-2 hours of exercise is best.

Eat an **appropriate pre-competition meal**. Three to four hours before practicing or playing a game, athletes need to "fuel" their bodies with high carbohydrate, medium sized meal composed of familiar food. However, within an hour of exercise, always avoid foods high in sugar such as candy bars.

**Don't be tempted by nutritional supplements or other supposed 'performance enhancers'.** Athletes should be able to properly fuel their bodies through a normal well balanced diet that is especially rich in complex carbohydrates. Nutritional

force. A mild brain injury may produce various signs and symptoms, which include dizziness, headache, nausea, and blurry vision. A more serious trauma to the head may result in loss of memory and/or brain function. Other types of head injuries can cause small tears and result in bleeding in the brain, a subdural hematoma. If a player returns to competition too soon, he or she may also be in danger of second impact syndrome, in which a mild head injury can become potentially fatal.

Head injuries in school interscholastic athletic programs have increased in numbers as the level of competition has risen. Therefore, Half Hollow Hills has taken special precautions to insure the safety of all athletes:

1. The pre-participation examination health questionnaire screens all athletes for a history of their head injuries. Please give as much information as possible about any head injury that may have occurred in the past.
2. The high school athletic trainers address each coach and team about the dangers of head injuries and monitor all athletes who sustain any head injuries during the season.
3. All coaches make certain that an athlete who has experienced a head injury is immediately brought to the attention of the athletic trainer. Head injury instructional guidelines are followed, with appropriate parental notification.
4. Any athlete, at any level who suffers a head injury, is required to see a primary care physician and obtain medical clearance before returning to play. The school physician reserves the right to determine the capability of an athlete to return to a sport, and may, in certain instances, require clearance from a specialist (neurologist, etc.).

### **Safety Concerns for Male Athletes**

Although not required by the rules of all specific sports, it is recommended that all athletes consider wearing an athletic supporter and protective cup for all sports defined by the State Education Department as Contact/Collision (football, lacrosse, soccer and wrestling), and for those sports defined as Limited Contact/Impact (basketball, baseball, diving, gymnastics, and volleyball).

While coaches will advise their players to wear an athletic supporter and protective cup, they will not physically check to see that the athlete is, in fact, wearing one. Since there is potential for serious injury without wearing this protection, ***it is imperative that all parents reinforce this safety concern***, and make certain that the athlete has these personal items of protection with him and wears them at all practices and contests.

- Be willing to let the coach be responsible for your child during the duration of the contest.
- Make no derogatory comments to players, other parents or fans, officials or administrators.
- If necessary, remind those around you of the rules.
- Provide unconditional love, acceptance and emotional support, regardless of the game's outcome.

## **CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT ATHLETES**

### **Athlete's Code of Behavior**

To be a member of a Half Hollow Hills interscholastic athletic team is considered a privilege and each student-athlete should strive to perform to the best of his/her athletic and academic abilities. All members of the team should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon their school and promotes good health.

Schools afford athletes special programs and rewards not given to the general population. Therefore, athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and legal manner. Because the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco prevent the normal development of a healthy mind and body, the following tenets must be accepted by those who participate in our interscholastic athletic programs:

- The school has a right to expect athletes to lead healthy lifestyles that exclude the use of illegal drugs and alcohol.
- Athletes must abide by our school policies, which support a drug and alcohol free environment.
- In accordance with school policy, no person may manufacture, use, possess, sell or distribute alcohol or any other drug on school grounds or at school sponsored events.
- Additionally, any person exhibiting behavior, conduct, personal or physical characteristics that are indicative of having used or consumed alcohol or any other drug, is prohibited from school grounds or school sponsored events.

In accordance with school policy, smoking, or the use of tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds and at school sponsored events. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, cigarette smoking is a major coronary risk factor. Also, current research shows a dramatic increase in oral cancer for individuals who chew tobacco. Nicotine, the major drug in tobacco, is a widely known stimulant that is highly addictive. Therefore, for obvious health, safety and conditioning reasons, athletes should not use tobacco. The use of tobacco in any form is in direct conflict with an athlete's goal of excellence, which, in turn, can adversely impact the potential success of a team.

The inappropriate use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs shall also be prohibited. Student-athletes are expected to use prescription drugs only with the

consent of a physician and/or parent during the sport season. Parents are expected to notify coaches when their child is taking prescription medication.

To promote a healthy lifestyle, it is recommended that student-athletes adhere to the tenets listed above. All students should be prepared to accept serious consequences if school officials, teachers, and/or coaches find that school district policies pertaining to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco have been violated. Furthermore, since alcohol, illegal drugs, and tobacco interfere with effective learning, the health and well being of the athlete and the goals of the individual and team, the athlete who is involved with the use of such substances must understand that they are seriously jeopardizing their status as a member of the team!

### ANTI-HAZING POLICY FOR ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Hazing, as defined by the NYSPHSAA, occurs when an act is committed against a student or a student is coerced into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to the student or to any third party in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with any school group, club, athletic team, grade level, activity or organization. Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

- Any activity involving an unreasonable risk of physical harm, including paddling, beating, whipping, branding, electric shock, sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, placement of harmful substances in the body, and participation in physically dangerous activities.
- Any activity involving the consumption of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products or any other food, liquid, or other substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of physical harm.
- Any activity involving actions of a sexual nature or the simulation of actions of a sexual nature.
- Any activity that subjects a student to an extreme and unreasonable level of embarrassment, shame or humiliation, or which creates a hostile, abusive and intimidating environment for the student.
- Any activity involving any violation of federal, state or local law or any violation of school district policies and regulations.

Hazing has no place in interscholastic athletic programs, and concerns that parents and/or athletes have about hazing should be brought immediately to the attention of the coach and/or school administrators. Students who have been identified as being involved in any type of hazing behavior are subject to school discipline and/or removal from the team.

The coach shall notify the school nurse and an accident report will be initiated within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.

*When an emergency occurs at an away contest, and there is only one coach, the decision made must protect the interest of all the athletes involved. In these circumstances, if the parent or guardian is not present, it is appropriate to send the parent of another athlete, or other adult supervisor with the injured player to the hospital, if available. In this case, the head coach should remain with the team. Parents should not expect coaches to leave their team unsupervised. Therefore, it is critical that coaches have emergency contact numbers where a parent, family member, or designee can be reached during practices and contest.*

### Student-Athlete Accident/Insurance Claims

The Half Hollow Hills School District provides **reasonable and customary coverage for claims in excess of parent's underlying health insurance coverage.**

Coaches will direct athletes and parents to use their family HMO, PPO, etc. program as required, in order to be eligible for reimbursement of benefits payable under our excess coverage medical plan. In some cases, total costs for medical expenses will not be reimbursed, as the plan is based upon reasonable and customary coverage.

Parents and athletes should communicate with the school nurse to insure full compliance with district procedures.

### Return to Play After Injury

Any student-athlete under treatment by a private physician must have written permission from his/her physician in order to return to active status in the sports program. *If an athlete misses five (5) days of practice due to illness or injury, he or she must be given clearance by both their private physician and the school physician before returning to play.* The school physician has the final authority to determine the physical capability of a student to participate in a sport.

### Head Injuries

It is well known that participating in sports can be a highly rewarding experience. However, there are certain risks an athlete must face while involved in competitive athletic situations. One of these risks is the potential for injury. While most injuries are minor and heal over time, one cannot overlook the seriousness of head injuries.

Head injuries may occur in a number of ways: contact with another player, contact with the ground or other equipment, or a sudden movement or rotation of the head without a

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 25% to 30% of the population is colonized in the nose with Staphylococcus aureus, often referred to as “staph” and approximately 1% of the population is colonized with MRSA.<sup>1</sup>

Cases have developed from person-to-person contact, shared towels, soaps, improperly treated whirlpools, and equipment (mats, pads, surfaces, etc.). Staph or CA-MRSA infections usually manifest as skin infections, such as pimples, pustules and boils, which present red, swollen, painful, or have pus or other drainage. Without proper referral and care, more serious infections may cause pneumonia, bloodstream infections, or surgical wound infections.

Maintaining good hygiene and avoiding contact with drainage from skin lesions are the best methods for prevention.

**Proper prevention and management recommendations may include, but are not limited to:**

- Keep hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and warm water or using an alcohol-based sanitizer routinely.
- Encourage immediate showering following activity.
- Avoid whirlpools or common tubs with open wounds, scrapes or scratches.
- Avoid sharing towels, razors, and daily athletic gear.
- Properly wash athletic gear and towels after each use.
- Maintain clean facilities and equipment.
- Inform or refer to appropriate health care personnel for all active skin lesions and lesions that do not respond to initial therapy.
- Administer or seek proper first aid.
- Encourage health care personnel to seek bacterial cultures to establish a diagnosis.
- Care and cover skin lesions appropriately before participation.

<sup>1</sup> CA-MRSA Information for the Public. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Available on-line at:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar\\_mrsa\\_ca\\_public.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/ar_mrsa_ca_public.html)

### **Emergency Plan**

Please be advised that the Half Hollow Hills School District has a comprehensive emergency medical plan in place, in the event of an accident or injury that occurs during practices or games. **If the injury or illness requires a high level of care, the EMS system will be activated and emergency services called. If the athlete is injured in a practice or game on the home site and transported to a medical facility, the athletic trainer, a member of the coaching staff, or school personnel will accompany the athlete in the ambulance, whenever possible.** The coach is expected to follow up with the parent/athlete after the practice and/or game ends.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY**

Visiting team members, students and adult spectators are guests to be accorded all the courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well-mannered and well-intentioned host would normally give.

The visitors, in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school’s facilities with care, while respecting the rules and customs of the home school.

Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their interpretation; these decisions should be accepted.

Spectators, student-athletes and coaches must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of their school and that their actions can relate directly to the success of their team.

## **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

### **Academic Expectations**

The Athletic Department recognized that the primary responsibility of student-athletes is their education. Therefore, the Athletic Department supports the concept that student-athletes should work to their potential in the classroom and be committed to achieving maximum academic success. *While the district does not impose an academic eligibility requirement, coaches and administrators reserve the right to determine a student’s eligibility to participate in an athletic event.* Therefore, athletes are expected to cooperate with guidelines established for those individuals who need to focus on greater academic responsibility and achievement. Extra help is strongly supported by the coaching staff and administration. Students are encouraged to attend extra help as needed.

### **Commitment to Practices/Games/Team**

**An athlete’s first commitment must be to the school program. Coaches are not expected to excuse athletes from school practices and/or contests due to conflicts or commitments with outside, community club or travel team practices, contests and/or tournaments. Parents and athletes should not expect coaches to compromise their commitment expectations.** We understand that opportunities exist for Half Hollow Hills’ student-athletes, especially at the high school level, to participate on non-school sponsored teams, while participating on school-sponsored teams. However when these situations occur, sound communication between the student-athlete, parent or guardian, coach and athletic administrator is mandatory. **With this in mind, each situation involving outside school competition must be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis prior to tryouts.**

**Athletes are expected to attend every practice and contest, unless excused by their coach.** If an athlete is in school, he or she is expected at practice. Excused absences are permitted for death in the family or family illness, family emergencies, medical reasons, and religious observances. Timely communication between the coach, parent and/or athlete in this situation is essential.

**Athletes are encouraged to attend extra-help; but this should not result in an absence from practice.** The athlete is asked to tell the coach of their intentions to attend extra-help before practice time and to get a pass from the extra-help teacher and present it to the coach when arriving at practice.

**Once selected for a team, an athlete is expected to finish the season.** As a general rule, an individual who drops out once selections have been made may not try out for another team that season. If the coaches of both teams involved make an appeal to the Athletic Director and are both in agreement that a change would be beneficial, the appeal can be considered. **A student dismissed from a team for disciplinary reasons may not try out for another team that season.**

#### Classroom and School Attendance

**No student-athlete may participate in a practice, scrimmage or contest on a day when the student was absent from school, unless a school administrator grants special permission for the absence.**

**Students who are suspended “out of school” may not practice or compete during the suspension period.** Students will not be permitted to play in their next regularly scheduled contest without adequate practice before the contest. The suspension period is not over until the athlete attends his/her next full day of school. Coaches and administrators reserve the right to deal with those students who have been disciplined with “in school supervision” on an individual basis with respect to practice and/or contest eligibility.

**No student-athlete excused for medical reasons from a physical education class may participate in a practice, scrimmage, or contest on the same day.** Note that Commissioner’s Regulations dictate that a student-athlete is ineligible if he or she is medically excused from participation in a physical education class. ***Any contest that an ineligible athlete participates in is deemed forfeit.***

**If late to school, students must sign in at the attendance office and present a legal note by the beginning of third period in order to be eligible for activity on that day.**

Students who demonstrate problems with school absences, tardiness, either excused or unexcused, are subject to suspension and/or dismissal from the team. Athletes are expected to get to school on time, and make a commitment to classroom attendance.

## WELLNESS AND SAFETY

### Coaching Certification

In accordance with state mandates, Half Hollow Hills will always look to find qualified, certified educators to fill coaching assignments. If such a qualified educator is not available, the district may appoint a non-certified teacher as a coach.

All Half Hollow Hills coaching personnel are certified in accordance with NYSPHSAA standards. As per state mandates, all coaches employed in our district are certified in CPR and First Aid. All coaches have access and are trained to use the Automated External Defibrillators on site at all of our district facilities.

Each coach is responsible for guiding their student-athletes through practices, scrimmages, and games appropriate for their age and level of play. These activities are conducted so that the physical welfare, health, and safety of the participants are protected and fostered. The coach is responsible for teaching physical skills, moral values, sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play, in accordance with school philosophy. All activity should always be conducted in an appropriate educational environment.

### The Role of the High School Trainer

Athletes and parents must recognize the risk of injury that may occur during physical activity. Our staff is prepared to address injury needs and is trained to provide appropriate first aid in an emergency.

Half Hollow Hills provides a certified Athletic Trainer at the high school level, to provide emergency medical services for injured and rehabilitating athletes. This professional is qualified to develop prevention strategies through appropriate training methods and physical conditioning programs. The Athletic Trainer insures proper follow-up care after an injury, consults with the parents, school nurse, coach and the school district physician when such communication is beneficial to the well being of the athlete. It is vital for our athletes and/or parents to bring illness, medical problems or injuries to the attention of the athletic trainer, school nurse and coach as soon as possible.

### Official Statement from the National Athletic Trainer’s Association on Community-Acquired MRSA Infections (CA-MRSA)

In an effort to educate the public about the potential risks of the emergence of community-acquired methicillin-resistant staphylococcus infection (CA-MRSA), the National Athletic Trainers’ Association (NATA) recommends that health care personnel and physically active participants take appropriate precautions with suspicious lesions and talk with a physician.



### Timeline for Completion of Selection/Classification Testing

Since the Selection/Classification process takes a considerable amount of time, evaluation must begin early enough for the athlete to complete all testing before the first day of scheduled high school tryouts. **Be advised that student-athletes interested in trying out for high school tennis, golf, or gymnastics do not need to get special permission or authorization to initiate the selection/classification for those sports.** Communication with the school nurse and the middle school physical education designee who completes the testing is all that is required. Communication with the high school varsity coach is also essential in helping to determine program demands and requirements before such a decision is made. However, be advised that **any student-athlete expressing an interest in trying out for a sport which bypasses one of our district modified programs must bring his/her request to the District Director of Athletics, well in advance of the season. Approval must be given before the selection/classification process is initiated.**

The high school fall sports season begins before school starts, and it is critical that the Selection/Classification process be completed **before** the second week in June. The student-athlete must make certain to see the school nurse at the end of May to find out when the school physical examination will be scheduled. The athlete and parent must make certain that the school nurse and the school doctor are advised of the intent to participate in the Selection/Classification program. The school doctor must give the athlete medical clearance before any athletic performance tests can be conducted.

Parents and students should make certain to ask the nurse for the name of the physical education teacher who is authorized to conduct the performance tests. An appointment must be made in advance with this individual to arrange to complete these fitness tests. Since this individual may have teaching and/or coaching responsibilities, it is critical that this communication occurs early enough to complete the tests before the middle of June for participation in a fall sport.

**It is the responsibility of the athlete and parent to make certain that the physical examination and maturity evaluation by the school physician and the athletic performance test by the authorized physical education teacher is completed by the middle of June for fall sports participation eligibility. Authorized staff members will not be available for the administration of performance tests during summer vacation. Therefore, an athlete who does not complete this process as defined above will not be eligible to participate in tryouts for a high school sport beginning in August.**

### School Sanctioned Activities and Field Trips

There are numerous educational opportunities for students in our school system. The athletic department supports school-sanctioned programs and trips, but also realizes that student-athletes who choose to participate in school trips or school exchange programs may miss substantial amounts of practice time, which affects personal athletic goals and team goals. *Student-athletes who miss practice or competitions for any reason can expect to have their playing time or playing role adjusted. The same can be said for the planning of college visitations or family vacations.*

***Coaches, parents and student-athletes have a responsibility to each other, and parents are expected to plan and communicate well in advance of each sport season when considering participation in school sanctioned programs and/or trips. All attempts should be made to consider the practice and/or game schedule and seek the advice of the coach before making commitments to plans. If an athlete's personal commitments compromise team goals or present a conflict with respect to the standards and expectations defined for all involved in the program, the athlete should be prepared to make a choice between his/her continued commitment to other personal goals.***

### Family Vacations

**Student-athletes are expected to make a full commitment to the season and notify the coach of any potential commitment conflicts at the start of the season when tryouts begin.** In some sports, a problem with commitment may impact the selection process. In other sports programs, depending upon the circumstances, the coach may adjust the player's position and/or playing time, to best meet the needs of the program. If an athlete does not inform the coach during the tryout period of potential conflicts in commitment, the athlete will be subject to dismissal from the team.

When parents and student-athletes choose to take their family vacation during a sport season, it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry, personal conditioning, the performance level of the individual, and the overall performance of the team. Each and every individual on the team has a role, not just in the game, but in the practice climate as well, regardless of how much playing time the athlete is experiencing. Commitment during the vacation periods involves self-sacrifice, not only on the part of the athlete, but the family as well.

Parents who ask for the exception to our practice policy present the coach with an uncomfortable dilemma. Coaches need to set the same standards of expectations for all participants, and asking them to make exceptions for some, and not for others, is unfair to the team. Furthermore, making such exceptions, without consequence, sets the tone for others in the future. Commitment is a critical component for success. Keep in mind that the school district has a commitment to the contest schedule, and to our opponents, who are also committed to playing a particular contest during the vacation

period. A forfeiture of a contest scheduled over vacation impacts the opponent, who is expecting to be provided with a quality competitive experience as well.

**All athletes should be expected to plan ahead and attend these practices and/or competitions, if they wish to remain on the team, maintain playing eligibility, and earn an award letter.**

During the fall season, high school athletes are expected to be at tryouts during the summer vacation period. For football, this means at least two weeks prior to Labor Day, and for all other high school sports, the start date begins at least one week prior to Labor Day. Fall athletes should be prepared to practice twice a day (morning session and evening session) prior to the start of school.

In the winter, high school athletes should be prepared to give up time during the Thanksgiving recess, Christmas vacation, and again, for post season play at the varsity level during the February winter break.

During the spring season, high school athletes should be prepared to practice and compete during the spring vacation period.

**Policies Governing Contests and Practice on Religious Holidays**

According to the Holy Day Observance Committee Report approved by Section XI Athletic Council, a Section XI member school may not schedule a contest or scrimmage on the following dates:

|               |                       |             |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Rosh Hashanah | Christmas Day         | Good Friday |
| Yom Kippur    | First Day of Passover | Easter      |
| Christmas Eve | Holy Thursday         |             |

Note: Individual schools may compete on these dates outside of Suffolk County (Section XI). For example, if the district approves such participation, athletes may compete at the Penn Relays on Holy Thursday.

The Half Hollow Hills' school district policy dictates that no practices may be conducted on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Thanksgiving Day, the first day of Passover, Christmas Day, and Easter Sunday. Teams may, with rare exception, be given special permission to practice on the second day of Rosh Hashanah (late afternoon or early evening), Holy Thursday and Good Friday, if special circumstances warrant such practice.

When teams do practice on the eve of a religious holiday, or those dates mentioned above with special permission, coaches and team members are expected to respect the religious commitments and personal obligations of the family. Athletes and parents in these circumstances will be informed that the practice is optional, with no implication of any penalty for missing the practice.

**Moving Up When A Modified Program Opportunity is Not Provided**

In those sports where an athlete is not presented with the opportunity to participate in a modified program (i.e. gymnastics, tennis, or golf); athletes are given more latitude with respect to qualification for participation in these high school programs. If the athlete has had extensive training and an appropriate competitive background in the sport and demonstrates the academic, social and emotional maturity for play at the high school level, the student will be recommended for selection/classification testing. In those programs where the sport does not provide a junior varsity opportunity (i.e. cross country, gymnastics, swimming, spring track) students must meet selection/classification standards for the varsity level of play. In tennis, students can become eligible for play at the junior varsity or varsity level.

**Standards of Performance and SED Fitness Testing**

If the youngster is approved to participate in the Selection/Classification program, the following procedures apply:

- a) The **school physician** must administer a physical examination and determine athlete's physical health and readiness through a state-mandated examination and a physical maturity evaluation.
- b) An authorized physical education teacher, appointed by the Director of Athletics, must administer an Athletic Performance Test, as required by the State Education Department. The specific tests mandated and qualifying scores are sport specific. No one else, other than the designated district staff member, may administer the required tests.
- c) If the school physician gives an athlete medical clearance and the physical performance standards are met, the athlete will be permitted to participate in tryouts for a three-day period (possibly longer for those trying out for golf or tennis). At the end of the tryout period, the high school head coach must give a final evaluation to the Director of Athletics.
- d) The athlete will be contacted with the final decision immediately after the tryout period. If the athlete is denied the opportunity to participate in the high school program, he or she will still be eligible to participate in that sport, if offered at the modified level. (Note: There is an exception with boys' basketball due to the conflict in start dates for the modified program and the high school program). **Once an athlete is selected on the high school team, that individual is no longer eligible to participate in that sport at the modified level.** In addition, once the athlete becomes involved with the high school program, he/she cannot reverse the process, change his/her mind, and return to the modified program in that sport once the tryout period (three days) has elapsed, and the selection has been made.

In football, a high contact sport, all boys will compete on level, for reasons of safety and physical maturity. A huge difference in physical maturity exists between a seventh or eighth grade middle school athlete and the boys that participate at the junior varsity level. This mismatch in size, speed and strength could potentially endanger the safety and well being of the athlete.

### **Moving Up and Bypassing a Modified Program**

For those sports where a seventh or eighth grader is presented with an opportunity to participate in a modified program at the middle school level (swimming, basketball, soccer, cross country, field hockey, baseball, softball, track, volleyball, wrestling and lacrosse), the **Selection/Classification program applies to only those students who are considered to be “elite” athletes.** In order to bypass a middle school experience, the particular athlete must be a very gifted individual, someone who would be viewed by our coaching staff to be a “blue chip” athlete. In most cases, this evaluation would be based upon the athlete’s performance level in our middle school program as a seventh grader. Please be advised that it is rare that an athlete is approved to skip the eighth grade middle school experience to play in a high school program.

The head coach in each sport, in consultation with the athlete’s middle school coach and physical education teacher, recommends those individuals to be selectively classified. **In addition to the criteria mentioned above, the social and emotional maturity of each athlete is carefully assessed, along with the student’s academic profile.** The competitive demands of a high school program are greater than those at the middle school level, and participation at a higher level will present a challenge with respect to time management skills and a student’s commitment to academic achievement. Most practice sessions at the high school level begin at 2:15 pm, presenting an immediate dilemma with respect to the later dismissal time of the middle school student, and the required daily travel time from the middle school to the high school. Furthermore, the travel schedule at the JV and Varsity level presents additional concerns as many of the bus departure times for contests are scheduled before the end of the middle school academic day.

Exceptional seventh or eighth grade athletes may be permitted to try out for a high school sport under the State Department of Education program called Selection/Classification.

**Note: An athlete who has already been selected for a middle school team MAY, on occasion, be considered for participation in a high school sport if that season overlaps the current middle school playing season. The parent of such an athlete must contact the athletic director BEFORE considering trying out for the high school program to discuss all of the possible ramifications for the middle school and high school programs. A decision will be reached that is in the best interest of the student. Requests will be reviewed by the superintendent of schools.**

### **School Sanctioned Activities and Field Trips**

There are numerous educational opportunities for students in our school system. The athletic department supports school-sanctioned programs and trips, but also realizes that student-athletes who choose to participate in school trips or school exchange programs may miss substantial amounts of practice time, which affects personal athletic goals and team goals. As stated in the **Family Vacations** section, student-athletes who miss practice or competitions for any reason can expect to have their playing time or playing role adjusted. The same can be said for the planning of college visitations.

***Coaches, parents and student-athletes have a responsibility to each other, and parents are expected to plan and communicate well in advance of each sport season when considering participation in school sanctioned programs and/or trips. All attempts should be made to consider the practice and/or game schedule and seek the advice of the coaches before making commitments to plans. If an athlete’s personal commitments compromise team goals or present a conflict with respect to the standards and expectations defined for all involved in the program, the athlete should be prepared to make a choice between his/her continued commitment to other personal goals.***

### **Transportation**

Athletes are expected to use transportation provided by the school “to” and “from” all athletic contests. Student-athletes are expected to arrive for bus departures on time and may not drive to the site. If a student does not make the bus and arrives at the site without administrative approval in advance, the athlete should not expect to participate.

**In special cases, a parent may need permission to transport their child to a game site on a given date. In such cases, the request must be made to a building administrator, in writing, in advance of the contest. These shall be considered only as the “rare exception” and should be reserved for emergency situations.**

Athletes at away contests are expected to remain “on site” and **under the direct supervision of the coach** at all times. All students will be expected to conduct themselves appropriately when traveling with the team. All athletes are expected to return to school **with the team** after contests as a continuation of the team experience. Parents should not expect to take their athlete home from the game site unless it is the exception. In any case, the coach can only approve such a request if the parent personally approaches the coach at the game site. This is the only way we have of making certain that the athlete is, in fact, leaving with their parent. **Under no circumstance will a parent be allowed to take any other child home but their own, nor will a child be permitted to leave an away site with anyone other than his or her parent.** Failing to comply with our transportation and supervision policies at away contests may jeopardize an athlete’s team eligibility.

Transportation will not be provided for athletes after contests. Parents are expected to pick up athletes in a timely fashion after home games or when the athlete returns from an away contest. Athletes should check with the coach for the estimated time of pick up.

In almost all cases at the middle school level, athletes will be finished with practice in time to use school district transportation to return home at the end of the school day. At the high school level, most freshman, junior varsity and varsity teams will finish practice in time to use district transportation as well. However, in some sports, such as volleyball and basketball, the boys and girls share facilities which may require practice at later times. The district will not be able to accommodate these athletes with district transportation. Transportation arrangements need to be made for travel home after late practices.

**Transportation Schedule for Extracurricular Activity**

| <u>School</u>    | <u>Early Run</u> | <u>Late Run</u> |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| High School West | 3:35 PM          | 5:15 PM         |
| High School East | 3:35 PM          | 5:20 PM         |
| Candlewood MS    | 3:45 PM          | 4:45 PM         |
| West Hollow MS   | 3:45 PM          | 4:45 PM         |

**Transportation to Postseason Contests**

Any athlete participating in a Regional, Intersectional, or State Championship Event **must travel to the event on the transportation provided by Section XI.** Parents cannot transport their child to any postseason contest at the regional level or beyond. There is no appeal to this Section XI regulation.

An athlete may travel home with their parents provided a written request is presented, **in advance of the departure date,** to the Section XI Sports Chair Coordinator. If approval has not been given in advance, the athlete will be expected to return home from the contest with the Section XI team.

**Postseason Eligibility**

To be eligible for postseason play (sectional, regional, intersectional or state competition), a team must have competed in six (6) school-scheduled contests, which occurred on six (6) different dates, during the season. An individual is eligible to compete for the team if he or she has been an **eligible participant** on a team in that sport for a minimum of six (6) scheduled contests during the regular season.

For football, a student must be an eligible participant for a minimum of three contests. Contestants in individual sports (cross country, golf, gymnastics, swimming and diving, tennis, track and wrestling) **must have represented their school** in six (6) scheduled

senior will be limited, that information needs to be communicated. The senior presented with the opportunity to remain in the program with a limited role must be prepared to accept this role, and still meet all the expectations of the program with respect to attendance and work ethic, while still showing support for the team. This is a difficult challenge, and the senior must be willing to meet this challenge with a positive attitude if he or she wishes to remain a part of the team.

*If a coach feels that the senior has reached the limits of his or her potential, and the athlete is incapable of adjusting to limited role expectations with a positive attitude, the coach may not provide the senior with the option of staying on the team.*

**NYSPHSAA SELECTION/CLASSIFICATION PROGRAM**

The Selection/Classification program designed by NYSPHSAA is a process for screening student-athletes to determine their readiness to compete in interscholastic athletic competition by evaluating their physical maturity, fitness and skill. The intent of this program is to provide athletes in grades 7-12 an opportunity to safely participate at an appropriate level of competition based upon readiness, rather than age and grade.

The Selection/Classification program was designed for mature and exceptionally skilled students to advance to a more challenging level of play and to provide an opportunity for less developed students to participate at an appropriate lower level that is suited to their development and ability. It is aimed at the few select student-athletes who can benefit from such a placement because of their level of readiness.

Criteria have been formulated by the State Education Department, which gives an accurate measurement for eligibility and highlights the inherent differences in the various individual and team sports. The Commissioner of Education (Section 135.4) governs rules, regulations and guidelines for this program.

Normally, a student is eligible for high school athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons, commencing with the youngster's entry into the ninth grade. However, by satisfying the requirements of the Selection/Classification program, a student may receive extended eligibility to permit:

- a) Participation during five consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the eighth grade; or
- b) Participation during six consecutive seasons in the approved sport after entry into the seventh grade.

**Implementation of the Selection/Classification Program**

The Half Hollow Hills School District participates in the Selection/Classification program and provides an opportunity for middle school athletes to move up in all sports, ***with the exception of Football.***

This eligibility policy governs transfers between High School West and High School East (public school to public school). The rule is sport specific. A written request for appeal can be submitted to the Section XI Eligibility Committee for a student-athlete who transfers due to circumstances of undue hardship. Supporting documentation must be provided upon request.

**Section XI deems any contest that has been played by a team with an ineligible player a forfeit. There is no appeal to the forfeiture.**

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR TRYOUTS**

**Athletes are expected to participate on the first day and all other dates of tryouts. Athletes who miss the official start date, and express a late interest in tryouts may be denied the opportunity to participate in the program. In those programs where cuts are made, coaches are expected to make their final selections from those who are in attendance at tryouts. Exception to this policy can be considered for those athletes that have a documented medical illness or an injury. Consideration will only be given to those that notify the coach or Director of Athletics in advance of the tryouts.**

As mentioned previously in this guide, commitment is vital to the success of all involved. There is undoubtedly a sacrifice to be made here, not only on the part of the athlete, but on the family as well. Athletes and parents are expected to make certain that personal plans, work schedules, and/or vacation plans are adjusted so as not to conflict with tryout dates, practices, and contests.

With respect to tryouts, past participation has no bearing on current school year team selections. The tryout is open to all. Athletes who were involved with the program the year before are not “guaranteed” a place on the team roster in the next season. All athletes should be prepared to “compete” for membership every year. Some students mature from one year to the next, and may be included on the team after having been cut the year before. Athletes can gain a potential advantage when they make more of a visible commitment to the program and improve significantly after having been involved in summer camps, summer league play, or community and organized club programs out of season. As the program progresses to the varsity level, the size of a team becomes more a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest.

**Note for Seniors:** One of the most difficult situations coaches face is the dilemma of the senior who has been in the program for years and now is viewed as a limited role player. Seniors will not be accommodated with a junior varsity experience, as this is considered a developmental program. At the varsity level, the best will play, regardless of age, as long as program expectations are met. Coaches are encouraged to be honest with seniors, and if it is clear to the coach during tryouts that the role of the

contests during the season to be eligible. These required contests must occur on six (6) different dates and must be completed prior to the conclusion of the team’s regular schedule.

**An athlete, who comes out late and/or misses part of the season due to injury, cannot come back and participate in post-season play without a medical waiver.**

Note: In all cases, the number of contests referred to above must be officiated contests.

### **MEDICAL CLEARANCE MANDATES**

The Commissioner’s Regulations mandate that all athletes must be given a physical examination prior to their participation in interscholastic athletics. **Students will not be permitted to participate in any practice or contest unless the coach has appropriate medical clearance from the school nurse. There is no exception to this policy.**

Although the Half Hollow Hills School District does allow this physical examination to be completed by a primary care physician, **our school district physician, in compliance with state regulations, must review the results of this examination and give final approval for participation in our interscholastic athletic program.**

Students should take advantage of the district’s physical examination, which is administered in the school’s nurse’s office. Parents are not inconvenienced with cost factors or scheduled time. Furthermore, when the athlete is examined “in school” by the district physician the medical clearance process is simplified and timely. In order for an athlete to be scheduled for a school exam, appropriate forms must be picked up, in advance, from the school nurse, completed, and returned to the health office in a timely manner. Student-athletes are advised of this examination, in advance of the season, through school public address announcements, posted signs, and announcements in physical education classes. Coaches also hold preseason meetings, where student-athletes are notified of scheduled physical examinations. The scheduled examination dates for fall exams, given in June, are also addressed in the school district newsletter.

**Note:** All attempts are made to have our female athletes examined by a female physician and our male athletes examined by a male physician

The school nurse in each building will arrange for physical examinations to be given, free of charge, by a school physician three times a year. Exams for fall sports are given at the end of May or beginning of June and approximately two to three weeks prior to the start of the winter and spring season. \*Summer dates are available. Please visit the Half Hollow Hills website for dates and information.

If the athlete misses the scheduled exam dates, there are only two ways to gain required clearance:

- 1) The athlete will have to schedule an appointment at the school physician's office. A fee will be assessed for the examination, or
- 2) The athlete can schedule an appointment with his or her own primary care physician to have the examination. The school district will assume no responsibility for fees that may be charged by the primary care physician.

**MANDATES FOR PRIVATE PHYSICIAN CLEARANCE**

- 1) The private physician must use only Half Hollow Hills' school district forms for the examination process. A complete packet of forms with written instructions for the process must be picked up from the school nurse.
- 2) The private physician must conduct the examination and evaluate the athlete according to the criteria as indicated on the Half Hollow Hills examination yellow card.
- 3) The parent must answer each and every question on the pre-participation health questionnaire and explain all "yes" answers. The physician must address all items listed on the exam and initial each finding. The form must be filled out in its entirety!
- 4) The private physician must sign and stamp the examination card.
- 5) All forms must be brought back to the school nurse, who will review the forms, and if complete, send the forms to our school district physician for final review and signed approval. No faxed copies of exams will be accepted. Forms should not be dropped off or mailed, under any circumstances, to the Athletic Office.

**Physical Exam Mandates from the State**

Medical examinations may be scheduled at any time during the school year. The results of the examination shall be valid for qualifying a student's participation for a period of 12 months.

1. This examination is valid through the last day of the month in which the examination was conducted rather than 365 days from the last examination.
2. If the 12 month period for the physical examination expires at the start or during a sport season, participants may conclude the season, as long as a health history update was completed prior to the sports season.

The best time to schedule the exam with a private physician is a couple of days prior to the date set for our scheduled school exams. If this is done, the forms can be given to the nurse in time for the school physician to review the private physician's forms when the doctor is present at school. This avoids putting the forms in the mail to our school physician for review.

Note: During the summer months, forms will only be available from the covering school nurse during specific posted hours. Upon completion of the exam, the district forms must be returned to the covering nurse, which will then be sent, by mail, to the school district physician for final review and approval. This process requires time and

the athlete runs the risk of missing tryout dates when the medical clearance process is not completed in a timely manner.

**If the athlete wants to insure participation in tryouts, business must be taken care of in a timely fashion. There will be no exception to this state mandated policy, and no exception made for a student who does not meet the deadline for tryout dates.**

**Updated Interval Health History Form**

An athlete is required to have one physical exam for athletic participation in the school calendar year. If the date of the physical examination is not within thirty (30) days of the start of a given sport season, the state requires that an updated Interval Health History Form be completed and on file in the school health office.

**Note:** An answer of "yes" to any question on the Interval Health History Form does not mean automatic disqualification from an interscholastic athletic activity. However, it will require a review and approval by the school physician before the student can report to practice and tryout.

**NYSPPHSAA TRANSFER RULES**

In accordance with the NYSPPHSAA Transfer Rule, the eligibility of a high school athlete is impacted if the athlete transfers from one high school to another without a corresponding change of address of the parent. The rule states the following:

**If a student transfers after attendance begins in his/her 9<sup>th</sup> year from one high school to another without a corresponding change of address of the parents, the athlete is ineligible to participate for a period of one year in any sport that he or she participated in within the last year.**

Waiver of NYSPPHSAA Transfer Rule (NYSPPHSAA approved August 5, 2004):

Upon receipt of the appropriate request, a waiver of the transfer rule for any student athlete returning to his/her district of residency from a non-public school will be granted. The waiver will be granted only one time per athlete.

NOTE: We stress to all concerned that the transfer rule is still in effect and that without a waiver, an athlete for which the rule applied remains ineligible. Schools using ineligible athletes are subject to the forfeit penalty which cannot be made retroactive. Therefore, athletic directors are urged to establish leak proof tracking systems.