



Athletic Department Handbook



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Irvington Athletic Department believes that student participation in athletics is an integral part of education. We foster an environment in which student-athletes can cultivate and instill qualities of leadership, player development, collaboration and cooperation. While we aim to build competitive and successful teams, our primary goal is to promote and ensure the value of education and fair play. Our program seeks to enhance positive student behaviors and relationships while providing life lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork and competition.



VARSETY PHILOSOPHY

The varsity level – which is usually comprised of seniors and juniors, in programs that do not offer a junior varsity level – is the culmination of each sports program. Occasionally a sophomore, freshman or an eighth-grader may be included on the team if he or she demonstrates advanced levels of physical development and appropriate skills (see Athletic Placement Process). While it is rare that a middle school athlete is included on a varsity roster, it could occur. In short, the best players make the team regardless of grade level. Coaches select as many athletes as practical for their teams, and it is understood that playing time and, sometimes, practice time may be disproportionate given the competitive nature of varsity athletics. The minimum number of athletes on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. Varsity athletes are expected to demonstrate a higher level of skill and commitment, and they should be prepared for a six-day-a-week commitment throughout the season. In addition, practices and competitions may be scheduled over a holiday, vacation period and, on rare occasions, on Sundays. The varsity coach is considered to be the leader of the program and is responsible for the communication and connection with the junior varsity and modified programs.

JUNIOR VARSITY PHILOSOPHY

The junior varsity level team membership varies by grade. However, freshmen and sophomores usually occupy the majority of the roster. In certain situations, juniors who are expected to make a contribution at the varsity level the following year will be considered for junior varsity participation. When space permits, middle school students who have satisfied the Athletic Placement Process that is required may also participate if there are no cuts to high school student-athletes. The junior varsity program places a strong emphasis on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements, strategies and commitment of team play. It also works toward achieving a balance between continued team and player development while striving for victory. Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate a high level of dedication and commitment and make a six-day-a-week commitment throughout the season, which will prepare them for the varsity team level.

MODIFIED PHILOSOPHY

The program is available to students in seventh and eighth grades. At this level, student-athletes have the opportunity to learn new skills and test them in a competitive environment. Practice sessions are essential for the appropriate development of the adolescent athlete. Coaches will attempt to “play” every student-athlete while maintaining the integrity and competitiveness of each competition, but playing time is at the discretion of each coach. While certain programs have devices that are built into the game play to ensure play time and safety (as in basketball and football), other sports teams are more fluid and will require the coach to manage free substitutions in the games.



TRYOUT AND SELECTION PROCESS

Communication

Dates for the pre-season meetings and practice/tryout period will be communicated through the Athletic Department. High school coaches will hold an interest meeting for all athletes who are considering participation in a particular sport/activity prior to the start of the season. Middle school athletes will have a general meeting for information on modified sports the second day of school for the fall season and at dates to be determined in November and March for the winter and spring seasons.

Athletic Forms and Requirements

The Athletic Department will send out communication about the medical clearance process 30 days prior to the start of each pre-season. All athletes must do the following:

- 1. Parents must register their son/daughter through FamilyID: <https://www.familyid.com/pages/home>*
- 2. Students must have a current physical on file. Any physical completed in the month the sport starts in the previous year will be considered current.*
- 3. A deadline will be set for registration to be completed in order to ensure that the athlete will be cleared for the first day of practice/tryouts.*
- 4. Concussion testing for the high school athletes will be completed during the first week of the practice/tryout period.*

Tryout Process

Members of the Athletic Department believe in including as many participants as each team will allow, which is also determined by the nature of each sport. While the tryout process may not always be needed in each sport, the final determination is based on the number of students trying out and the number of slots available. This is reviewed at the sign-up phase for each individual team. The tryout process is two-fold: the coach makes judgments of (1) skill level and (2) functional role on the team. The word “tryout” is misleading because the first day of practice marks the start of the season. Each coach is expected to use a rubric or assessment form that will also be available to students before tryouts begin. The form is for the coach’s information only. The procedure to follow when trying out for a team is as follows: The coach will explain the standards and expectations that will be used to evaluate the student’s performance. The tryout period will last a minimum of three days. A student who is ill or hurt during this period will be afforded additional time. Once the coach makes the team selection, he or she will contact each student to share how the student performed, express the student’s expected role throughout the season or explain why the student did not make the team and what he or she needs to do in order to try again.

Alternatives if you do not make the team of your choice – A student-athlete who tries out for a modified, junior varsity or varsity team but does not make the team has an opportunity to join a team that does not make selections after his or her tryout. The opportunity allows students to discover a variety of capabilities, talents and interests.



LIST OF SPORTS – *(Roster Sizes with Caps if Necessary)*

FALL SPORTS

<i>VARSIITY</i>	<i>JUNIOR VARSITY</i>	<i>MODIFIED (7/8)</i>
*Cross-Country	Field Hockey	*Cross-Country
Field Hockey	*Football	Field Hockey (22)
*Football	Boys Soccer	**Football
Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer	Boys Soccer (22-24)
Girls Soccer	Girls Volleyball	Girls Soccer (22-24)
****Girls Swimming		Girls Tennis
Girls Tennis		***Girls Volleyball (16-18)
Girls Volleyball		

**Sports that have no caps.*

***Football on the modified level is no cut and it is 7/8/9th graders.*

****We have two modified volleyball teams so the cap would be at 16-18 per team.*

*****We are merged with Sleepy Hollow, Edgemont and Hastings.*

(#) Pertains to roster cap size.

WINTER SPORTS

<i>VARSIITY</i>	<i>JUNIOR VARSITY</i>	<i>MODIFIED (7/8)</i>
Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball (16)
Girls Basketball	Girls Basketball	Girls Basketball (16)
Bowling		*Winter Track
Fencing		*Wrestling
**Ice Hockey		
*Winter Track		
*Wrestling		

**Sports that have no caps.*

***Ice Hockey is merged with Sleepy Hollow and Ossining.*

(#) Pertains to roster cap size.

SPRING SPORTS

<i>VARSIITY</i>	<i>JUNIOR VARSITY</i>	<i>MODIFIED (7/8)</i>
Baseball	Baseball	Baseball (20-22)
Golf	Boys Lacrosse	Boys Lacrosse (20-22)
Boys Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse (20-22)
Girls Lacrosse	Softball	Softball (20-22)
Softball	Boys Tennis	Boys Tennis
Boys Tennis		*Track and Field
*Track and Field		

**Sports that have no caps.*

(#) Pertains to roster cap size.



COACH AND PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communication you should expect from your child's coach

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for participation and roles within the team.
3. Locations and times of practices and competitions.
4. Team requirements, i.e. special equipment and off-season conditioning.
5. Procedures should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that may result in denial of your child's participation.

• *It is encouraged that your child discusses any issues or concerns with the coach directly. This will provide the student-athlete with an opportunity to learn how to communicate and advocate for themselves.*

Communication expressed directly to the coach

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts, including absences for games or practices, in writing in advance.
2. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
3. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
4. Ways to help your child improve.
5. Concerns about your child's behavior.
6. Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible.

• *It may be difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals, and they make judgments based on what they believe is best for all students involved based on what they see during practices and games. As indicated in the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those described below, must be left to the discretion of the coach.*

Issues not appropriate to discuss with the coach

1. Amount of playing time (varsity only).
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student-athletes.

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, please follow this procedure:

1. Call or email to set up an appointment with the coach.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, contact the Athletic Director.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions.

What to do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution:

1. Parents may call and speak with the Athletic Director to determine appropriate next steps.
2. Parents are encouraged to discuss issues and problems with the Athletic Director. However, if a parent has specific complaints regarding a coach, then the coach will be given the opportunity to be present at the meeting with the parents.



CODE OF ETHICS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES, PARENTS, SPECTATORS

The Irvington Athletic Department recognizes the role of interscholastic athletics in defining ethical behavior and developing personal character in our students. Therefore, we ask:

Parents of an Athlete

- Maintain a positive attitude whether your team is winning or losing.
- Refrain from being insulting or showing bad sportsmanship during the competition. Any problems or concerns should be brought to the attention of the coach or the Athletic Director at another time.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Spectators, including parents who, in the judgment of the Principal, Athletic Director and/or the site administrator, behave in ways that are inappropriate and in violation of the Irvington Union Free School District policies, will be spoken to about their behavior and may be asked to leave the competition.
- Respect the judgment of officials and strategy of the coach.
- Do not criticize players, coaches or officials for the loss of a game.
- Do not engage or make comments to visiting teams, coaches or parents.

Student-Athletes

- Remember that academic performance is your primary responsibility.
- Treat advisors, officials, coaches and opponents with respect.
- Exercise self-control at all times, setting an example for others to follow.
- Report any injury to the coach no matter how slight it may appear. If the injury requires a physician's care, the participant must have written permission from the doctor before returning to the activity.
- Return any equipment. Uniforms issued to the participant must be returned in the same condition at the end of the activity. Equipment that is lost, damaged or stolen is the responsibility of the participant, and it is the responsibility of the participant to make restitution to the school.
- Extracurricular activities are not an excuse for being tardy to school on the day following a competition.

Spectators

- Demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.
- Show team support by making only positive comments.
- Show respect for the judgment and strategy of coaches and do not criticize players or coaches for loss of game.
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without gesture or argument.
- Acknowledge fields, courts and equipment as the player's domain during contests.
- Remain within designated areas.
- Monitor the safety of children in bleachers and stands.
- Respect the law: all public schools are smoke-free and substance-free environments.
- Athletic contests on and off campus are an extension of the classroom. Therefore, all school rules are in effect.



CAPTAIN CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS

(For varsity teams only – subvarsity teams will have leadership positions and roles determined by coach)

Position Purpose and Summary

1. Leads by example.
2. One of the hardest workers on the team, displaying a high level of commitment, focus, intensity, passion and effort.
3. A leader with good communication skills. One who will encourage, support and positively hold all teammates accountable.
4. Will positively influence teammates on and off the field, at all extracurricular school and non-school activities and in the local community.

Duties and Responsibilities

The team captain will be expected to:

1. Be on time to all team practices and team functions.
2. Promote a positive attitude and positive team interactions.
3. Provide a positive role model concerning commitment, intensity, confidence, response to conflict/disappointment, composure, hustle and a “team first” focus.
4. Work closely with the head coach and check in on a regular basis.
5. Encourage and support all teammates.
6. Lead the team throughout the season.
7. Support and help relay all communication between coach and team.

Abilities and Skills Needed

1. Passion and enthusiasm.
2. Energy and hard work.
3. Commitment to be the best he or she can be.
4. Good verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
5. Strong character (good decision-making) on and off the field.
6. Assertiveness (to do what is needed).
7. Composure to remain cool and calm under pressure.

Application and Selection of Team Captain

If you are confident that you can consistently fulfill the duties and responsibilities of team captain and have the desire, skills and abilities to do so, please submit a letter in support of your candidacy with examples of these qualities. Your letter should be submitted at the end of the season for review by the head coach. The coach will then make his or her selection based on the review of the previous season(s). The coach will also consult with the high school administration (Principal, Assistant Principal and Athletic Director) before announcing the selection of captains. The number of captains for a varsity team will be left open to each coach’s discretion.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The Irvington Athletic Department allows the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Athletic Placement Process to occur if the following scenarios are present:

- A varsity or JV team has a roster size that allows for eighth-graders to try out for the team.
- A varsity or JV is not making any cuts of high school student-athletes at its level.
- It is determined after the successful completion of the APP process the middle school student-athlete will receive ample playing time on the high school team.

In rare occurrences, there may be a program that only has a varsity team, which will allow a seventh- or eighth-grade student-athlete(s) to try out if he or she has completed the APP process and there is room on the roster and no cuts are being made.

The school district’s Chief Medical Officer will make the final determination on all maturity level ratings in the Athletic Placement Process even if the tanner score has been obtained by the student’s own primary care physician.

All Athletic Placement Process information and forms can be obtained on the NYSPHSAA website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/pe/documents/AthleticPlacementProcess2-11-15Revised.pdf>



CONCUSSION POLICY RETURN TO PLAY PROGRESSION

Policy

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Although the Irvington Union Free School District Board of Education takes reasonable care to prevent student injuries, the District recognizes that concussions and head injuries are the most commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in interscholastic athletic activities. Parents and students are reminded that participation in any interscholastic athletic activity, extracurricular or school-sponsored activity is a privilege granted to those students who comply with and maintain necessary eligibility criteria, as provided in Board Policies 7410 and 7420. In addition, parents and students must be aware that no helmet can guarantee the prevention of a serious injury to the head or neck. To this end, the District has adopted the following policy and guidelines to aid in the proper management of concussions and head injuries.

The District will assemble a concussion management team (the CMT), which will consist of the school physician, school nurse, Athletic Director and athletic trainer. The CMT will oversee concussion management education and ensure that appropriate District staff members are provided with training relative to head injuries.

Any student who demonstrates signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in a school-sponsored class, extracurricular activity or interscholastic athletic activity shall be immediately removed from the game or activity and be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. The District will take steps to notify the student's parents and/or guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring. The CMT will act as a liaison for any student returning to school and/or play following a concussion. If there is any doubt whether a student has sustained a head injury, it should be treated as a concussion until proven otherwise. If a student sustains a concussion at a time other than when engaged in a school-sponsored activity, the District expects the parent/legal guardian to report the condition to the school nurse so that the District can support the appropriate management of the condition.

Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing

The District will use ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) to assist in determining a student's ability to return to play after suffering a concussion. ImPACT is a computerized exam that is taken by student-athletes prior to the season to get a baseline reading on brain functions such as memory, reaction time, processing speed and concentration. If a student-athlete is believed to have suffered a concussion, he or she must re-take the exam to help determine if there is any change in the baseline data. This helps the CMT determine if it is safe for the student to return to play after an injury to the head, as per applicable rules and regulations.

The testing information is confidential and kept securely in a database by ImPACT, which can only be accessed with a secured password.

Return to Play

Pursuant to established guidelines of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, no student shall return to play while experiencing symptoms consistent with those of a head injury. The student shall not return to school or interscholastic activity until evaluated and released by an appropriate health care professional. Regardless,



CONCUSSION POLICY RETURN TO PLAY PROGRESSION

the District's school physician shall make the ultimate decision regarding whether the student may return to participate in school and/or interscholastic or extracurricular activities. Any student who continues to exhibit signs or symptoms of a head injury after being returned to the aforementioned activities shall be immediately removed and re-evaluated by his or her personal health care professional. Once the student is symptom-free for 24 hours thereafter, he or she will be required to present a physician's note stating that he or she has been cleared to resume activities. The District's school physician shall review the new documentation provided by the student in order to determine if it is safe for the student to return to his or her regular school activities. Depending on the severity of the head injury and individual circumstances of the student, appropriate modifications may be made to the student's participation in school in an effort to reduce the risk of re-injury and promote recovery. Collaboration and communication by the CMT, private health care professionals and parents of the student will help ensure the development of an appropriate concussion management plan for the student. Parents and/or students are expected to accurately and promptly report injuries so that the student's health can be protected.

Return to Play Progression

This progression should be followed by all coaches, health care providers and parents and at the basic steps below. To go to the next step the student-athlete must be symptom-free. If the athlete has signs or symptoms, the progression must be stopped and the concussion management team, coach and therapist/trainer notified. The number of days on each step may vary and duration questions referred to the therapist/trainer and concussion management team. Typically, each stage is 24 hours and is a seven-day progression to full game play.

The cornerstone of proper concussion management is rest until all symptoms resolve and then a graded program of exertion before return to sport. The program is broken down into six steps in which only one step is covered a day. The six steps involve the following:

Symptom-Free Return to Play Progression

1. No exertion activity until asymptomatic and clearance from treating physician, good ImPACT test and trainer/therapist (as outlined in protocol).
2. Light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary bike, etc. No resistance training.
3. Sport-specific exercise such as running, drills, etc. Progressive addition of resistance training may begin.
4. Non-contact training and skill drills.
5. Full contact training in practice setting.
6. Return to competition scrimmage/game approval.

If any concussion symptoms recur, the athlete should drop back to the previous level and try to progress after 24 hours of rest. The student-athlete should also be monitored for recurrence of symptoms due to mental exertion, such as reading, working on a computer or taking a test.



CONCUSSION CHECKLIST (NYSPHSAA, Inc.)

Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____ Sport: _____

Date of Injury: _____ Time of Injury: _____

On Site Evaluation

Description of Injury: _____

Has the athlete ever had a concussion?	Yes	No	
Was there a loss of consciousness?	Yes	No	Unclear
Does he/she remember the injury?	Yes	No	Unclear
Does he/she have confusion after the injury?	Yes	No	Unclear

Symptoms observed at time of injury:

Dizziness	Yes	No
Headache	Yes	No
Ringing in Ears	Yes	No
Nausea/Vomiting	Yes	No
Drowsy/Sleepy	Yes	No
Fatigue/Low Energy	Yes	No
“Don’t Feel Right”	Yes	No
Feeling “Dazed”	Yes	No
Seizure	Yes	No
Poor Balance/Coordination	Yes	No
Memory Problems	Yes	No
Loss of Orientation	Yes	No
Blurred Vision	Yes	No
Sensitivity to Light	Yes	No
Vacant Stare	Yes	No
Sensitivity to Noise	Yes	No
Glassy Eyed	Yes	No

* Please circle yes or no for each symptom listed above.

Other Findings/Comments: _____

Final Action Taken: Parents Notified _____ Sent to Hospital _____

Evaluator’s Signature: _____ Title: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____ Phone No.: _____



PHYSICIAN EVALUATION

Date of First Evaluation: _____ **Time of Evaluation:** _____

Date of Second Evaluation: _____ **Time of Evaluation:** _____

<i>Symptoms Observed:</i>	<i>First Doctor Visit</i>		<i>Second Doctor Visit</i>	
Dizziness	Yes	No	Yes	No
Headache	Yes	No	Yes	No
Tinnitus	Yes	No	Yes	No
Nausea	Yes	No	Yes	No
Fatigue	Yes	No	Yes	No
Drowsy/Sleepy	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sensitivity to Light	Yes	No	Yes	No
Sensitivity to Noise	Yes	No	Yes	No
Anterograde Amnesia (after impact)	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Retrograde Amnesia (backwards in time from impact)	Yes	No	N/A	N/A

First Doctor Visit: Did the athlete sustain a concussion? (Yes or No) (one or the other must be circled). **
Post-dated releases will not be accepted. The athlete must be seen and released on the same day.

Please note that if there is a history of previous concussion, then referral for professional management by a specialist or concussion clinic should be strongly considered.

Additional Findings/Comments: _____

Recommendations/Limitations: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print or stamp name: _____ Phone number: _____

Second Doctor Visit: *** Athlete must be completely symptom-free in order to begin the return to play progression. If athlete still has symptoms more than seven days after injury, referral to a concussion specialist/clinic should be strongly considered.

Please check one of the following:

Athlete is asymptomatic and is ready to begin the return to play progression.

Athlete is still symptomatic more than seven days after injury.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print or stamp name: _____ Phone number: _____



SUPPORT STAFF

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LINKS TO INFORMATION

Concussion Signs and Symptoms

https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/schools/tbi_factsheets_parents-508-a.pdf

Irvington Schedules

Daily Hotline - 914-591-8673 Option 1
<http://irvingtonunionfree.tandem.co>

Family ID Medical Clearance Site for Sports

<https://www.familyid.com/pages/home>

Section 1 Athletics

<http://athletics.swboces.org>

New York State Public High School Athletic Association

<http://www.nysphsaa.org>





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