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SOUTHERN COLUMBIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
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ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Updated 03-31-2011

Dear Parent/Guardian & Student Athlete:

Welcome to the Interscholastic Athletic program offered in the Southern Columbia Area School District. This booklet concerns various information and policies associated with your child's participation in the Southern Columbia Area School District athletic program. It is very important information.

PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY AND SAVE FOR LATER REFERENCE.

Be sure that you sign parent permission form found in the physical packet. Return the completed packet to the athletic trainer by the Wednesday before the first day of practice. If ALL completed information is not turned in by the Wednesday before the first day of practice, your son/daughter will be ineligible to practice for two weeks from the day after the information is turned in to athletic trainer.

PHILOSOPHY

The primary purpose of the athletic program of the Southern Columbia Area School District is to promote the physical, mental, social, emotional, and moral well being of the participants. It is hoped that the athletic program in our school will be a positive force in preparing youth for an enriching and vital role in American life.

The athletic program is an important and integral part of the total school program and is open to participation by all students regardless of individual differences. Through voluntary participation, an athlete gives time, energy, and loyalty to the program. He/she also accepts the training rules, regulations, and responsibilities that are unique to an athletic program. In order to contribute to the welfare of the group, the athlete must willingly assume these obligations as the role demands and make sacrifices not required of others.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Games should have as their chief purpose friendly rivalry, new friendships, improved playing skills, good sportsmanship and improved community relations.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Opportunity to learn games and improve playing skills.
2. Development of physical vigor and desirable habits in health, wellness, and safety.
3. Opportunity to make real friendships with squad members and widen circle of friends by acquaintance with members of opposing teams.
4. A chance to observe and exemplify good sportsmanship.
5. Realization that athletic competition is a privilege that carries definite responsibilities with it.
6. A chance to enjoy one of the greatest heritages of youth - the opportunity to play.
7. A chance to learn that violation of a rule of the game brings a penalty and that this same sequence follows in the game of life.

OBJECTIVES FOR SCHOOL AND STUDENT BODY

1. Athletes should be an integral part of the total school system.
2. Athletes should be educated.
3. Athletics should be used to promote school morale.
4. Proper student interest should be created.
5. All visiting schools should be treated as guests.
6. Athletic programs should be broad rather than narrow in their scope. They should include as many activities as possible in order to interest and be of benefit to more students.
7. Sportsmanship, fair play and good school citizenship should be objectives for all athletes.

OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY

1. Community should realize that control of the responsibility for school athletes rests entirely with school authorities.
2. School athletics should furnish a recreational opportunity for the general public insofar as a community is willing to see that the program is conducted solely for benefit of student competition and student spectators.
3. Community should judge success of the season on the number of participants and spectators, new skills acquired, good citizenship and sportsmanship taught, rather than on number of games won or lost.
4. Community constantly should keep in mind the fact that primarily, an athletic contest is part of a school program.

VALUES IN ATHLETICS

1. Athletics are an integral and vital part of the school education program.
2. Athletics are available to any student willing to abide by established rules and standards.
3. Athletics have a three-fold value; for the participants, for the student body and for the community.
4. Athletics are organized in a manner most consistent with needs, interest, maturity and abilities of the students.
5. Constant control and eternal effort on the part of coaches and administrators are necessary in order to assure maximum education benefits from interscholastic athletes.
6. Athletics have no inherent value as an educational activity without professional leadership, established educational objectives, and acceptable standards of behavior.
7. Coaches exert a substantial influence in youngsters and can assist youngsters to set higher achievement goals in other endeavors.
8. Athletics provide an opportunity for the loyalty of parents, patrons, and friends of the school to be constantly renewed, strengthened, and united.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CONCERNS/PROBLEMS

Below is the procedures athletes and parents are to follow if they have a concern or problem with an athletic program.

- Level 1: Make an appointment to discuss your concern with the coach. Do not attempt to discuss concern just before or after a game, do it privately.
- Level 2: If not satisfactorily resolved at Level 1, contact Athletic Director. Set up appointment for Athletic Director, Coach, and you to discuss concern. Do not contact Athletic Director until Level 1 has been completed.
- Level 3: If not resolved at Level 2, contact High School Principal. Set up appointment with Principal, Athletic Director, Coach, and you to discuss concern. Do not contact Principal until Levels 1 and 2 have been completed.
- Level 4: If not resolved at Level 3, contact Superintendent. Set up meeting with Superintendent, Principal, Athletic Director, Coach, and you to discuss concern. Do not contact Superintendent until you have gone through Levels 1, 2 and 3.
- Level 5: If not resolved at Level 4, a meeting with the Activity Committee of the School Board will be set up to discuss the concern. Do not contact the Board until Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been completed.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (P.I.A.A.) Rules will be followed in all cases of eligibility, transfer, physical examinations, insurance coverage, starting dates, use of school equipment, etc. Each coach has the responsibility to know these rules, to inform team members and parents, and to enforce these regulations.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETES

1. If an athlete is involved in school suspensions, the athlete will lose his right to participate (including practice) while under the suspension.
2. To be eligible for interscholastic competition, a pupil must not be failing two full credits. This will stand for one week (Monday through Sunday), at which time, the teacher in the failing subject(s) can declare the athlete academically eligible. Eligibility is reviewed at the end of each school week.
3. The Principal may declare an athlete ineligible to participate in a sport because of poor conduct or discipline behavior unbecoming an athlete.
4. Attendance eligibility - see **Guidelines for Participation in Extra Curricular Activities** (page 6).
5. Vandalism is a criminal action. Any athlete caught with stolen school property will be dealt with accordingly and this may involve criminal prosecution.

6. Any athlete engaging in “conduct unbecoming an athlete” as a first offense, at any time, on or off school premises, during the season of a sport in which the athlete is participating, shall be suspended from, and be ineligible for, participation in any interscholastic sport for a period of ten (10) calendar days. A second offense of “conduct unbecoming an athlete” shall result in the athlete being dismissed from the sport for the remainder of that season. Before dismissal occurs, a conference will be held with the student, coach, parent/guardian, and the high school principal. “Conduct unbecoming an athlete” includes, but is not limited to, consumption of alcohol, use of drugs, and use of tobacco.
7. No athlete may quit one sport and join another after the season has begun without the mutual consent of both coaches.
8. Transportation is provided by the District to all SCA sponsored activities, events, camps, tournaments, etc.
9. All members of a team will travel to and from away games or the team bus unless the parent or guardian presents himself/herself in person to the coach at the game. A team member may ride home with another parent/guardian provided that a written release is presented to the coach signed by the team member parent.
10. Equipment issued to an athlete is the sole responsibility of that athlete. Loss of any part of that equipment issued will result in the athlete paying for replacement thereof. Game uniforms are only to be worn for the contest or during that school day of the contest and not at any other time. An athlete who has an obligation for used athletic equipment may not participate during the next sports season or any future season until all athletic obligations have been cleared.
11. Athletic equipment must be returned within one week after the last game. All equipment should be returned only to the person who issued it. (Example: head coach or equipment manager.)

MEDICAL AND PARENTAL RELEASES FOR SPORTS

- The PIAA requires that every athlete that wants to participate in a school sponsored Junior High or Varsity sport MUST receive a yearly physical before they can practice or compete.
- According to the PIAA, this physical must be dated on or after June 1 of the prior year of competition. (i.e. for the 2011-12 school year the physical must be dated June 1, 2011 or later.)
- The PIAA requires that sections 1 – 3 of the CIPPE (Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participation Exam) be filled out completely by the parent or guardian of the athlete and that section 4 be completed by a licensed health professional (DO, MD, PAC, CRNP, SNP). These forms must be completed before the athlete can participate.
- The Southern Columbia School District requires that the Athletic Training Room Medical Information Sheet be completed by the parent/guardian before participation. This form includes the acknowledgement of the policies in the athletic handbook and permission to participate in athletics for the SCASD.

SCHOOL SPORT PHYSICALS

- A free physical will be provided by the school district once per school year. These physicals are open to any student in grades 7 – 12 that wants to participate in athletics the next school year.
- Sports physicals will be held yearly on the first consecutive Tuesday and Thursday in June. Physicals for Boys will be on Tuesday and Girls on Thursday.
- School Physician, Dr. Karl Luxardo, DO will perform all sports physicals at the school.
- Physicals will start each day at 4:45pm and continue in 5 minute intervals until 7pm. Athletes will need to make an appointment with the athletic trainer for a time slot. Appointments can be made for the 2011-2011 school year starting May 23rd by calling 356-3529 or e-mailing the athletic trainer at kfisher@scasd.us. From 7 until 8 pm the doctor will see walk-ins on a first come first served basis.

PROCEDURE FOR SPORTS PHYSICALS

- Students will need to pick up the packet of paperwork for their parent/guardian to complete. Packets are located in the high school and middle school offices and outside the athletic training room.
- The packet will include the following papers:
 - Southern Columbia Athletic Policy Handbook
 - Sections 1 – 4 of the PIAA CIPPE
 - Athletic Training Room Medical Information Sheet
 - Permission for physical by school physician (Only needed if getting a school physical)
- All papers must be completed and signed prior to receiving a physical. No exceptions will be made.
- If the student athlete misses the set physical dates or wishes to get a private physical they will need to make an appointment with their family doctor. The school district is not responsible to pay for private physicals. Also, it is the responsibility of the student athlete to have ALL completed information turned into their head coach or the athletic trainer before the first day of practices.
- Completed paperwork can only be turned into the head coach or the athletic trainer. The high school, middle school or nurse's office will not accept any sports paperwork. There are bins on the wall outside the athletic training room door to turn in completed paperwork.
- The athletic trainer will keep a complete list of all information turned in and will keep it on file in the athletic training room.

ImPACT TESTING (Grades 9 – 12)

- The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), the PIAA and the Pennsylvania state legislature have all recently made statements about the importance of recognizing and properly treating the signs and symptoms of head injuries in youth sports. The Southern Columbia School District has implemented mandatory ImPACT testing in grades 9 – 12 in collision sports to help healthcare professionals better diagnose and treat concussions.
- An ImPACT baseline test will aid medical professionals in determining when an athlete is fit to return after a head injury. A baseline test will need to be taken before an athlete can participate in their Freshman and Junior seasons.
- Athletes cannot practice until a baseline test is taken.
- The test can be taken online from the school's webpage:
 - Go to www.scasd.us
 - Click on the "Athletic Trainer Information" link next to the Upcoming Events Calendar
 - Click on the "Take the Baseline Test" link at the bottom of the webpage.
 - Follow the directions to take the test.
- Athletes in grades 7 and 8 should not take the baseline test. The ImPACT team is currently developing a test for middle school aged athletes that will be available sometime in the future.

MEDICAL EXCUSES

- If during the course of the sports season a student athlete becomes ill or injured and they need to see a physician, it is athletic department procedure that a note must be provided to the athletic trainer from that physician before they can return to play.
- The partnership between Geisinger Sports Medicine and Southern Columbia allows your athlete quick access to the orthopaedic doctors at Geisinger Sports Medicine. In most cases your athlete can be seen in 24 hours or less for non-emergency medical care. The athletic trainer, Katie Fisher, can assist you in scheduling an appointment and can be reached at 356-3529 or 336-7929.

AWARDS

The qualifications for earning a letter in each of the several interscholastic sports are as follows:

1. Football
 - a. Regular starters on offense or defense for 2/3 of season.
 - b. Starters on 2 or more special teams for 2/3 of season.
2. Field Hockey - 50% of games.
3. Golf - 50% of matches.
4. Cross Country - take part in all meets and practices.
5. Soccer - 50% of games.
6. Bowling - 50% of games.
7. Basketball (boys & girls) - 30% of quarters.
8. Wrestling - wins 3 varsity matches.
9. Baseball - must appear in 50% of total games.
10. Softball - must appear in 50% of total games.
11. Track (boys & girls) - 21 points in track meets and 75% of practices.
12. Managers - 2 years.

The coach in all the above sports has the final determination and discretion whether or not a boy or girl has qualified for a letter. If a boy or girl makes a squad, all three years, even though he or she does not participate in the required amount of quarters or has not earned enough points in the sport, he or she can be awarded a letter.

Each athlete will receive one Varsity letter and sports pin their first year and a bar for second, third, etc., letter won.

Each varsity athlete who does not earn a letter will be awarded a service certificate.

Managers and statisticians awards will be decided on by the Head Coach.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students arriving after 8:45 a.m. are marked ½ day absent. Students leaving before 2:00 p.m. are marked ½ day absent. Any student absent for ½ day because he/she was not feeling well will receive an excused ½ day absence but will be unable to participate that day in any extra-curricular event, including practice. In the event of the absence being on a Friday, it would preclude participating in a competition or performance on Saturday.

A student can have an excused absence and be permitted to participate in extra-curricular events for the following reasons:

- Doctor or dentist appointment (generally expected to be in school ½ day)
(Note from the doctor or dentist is required.)
- Learner's permit or driver's test (generally expected to be in school ½ day)
- Funeral or death in family
- College visit (Written verification required)
- Principal's discretion (by prior approval)

Any student who has a half or full day unexcused absence is ineligible for any extra-curricular events that day, including practice. If this unexcused absence is on Friday, the student is also ineligible to participate on Saturday.

If a student is absent 15 or more days, or has 4 illegal absences, the student will not be able to participate in extracurricular activities. Exceptions may be granted by the principal.

PARTICIPATION IN ALL SPORTS REQUIRES AN ACCEPTANCE OF RISK OF POSSIBLE INJURY. YOUR CHILD AS A PLAYER CAN HELP MAKE THE GAME SAFER BY NOT INTENTIONALLY USING TECHNIQUES WHICH ARE ILLEGAL AND WHICH CAN CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Athletic Office if we can help you or your child in any way during his/her athletic career in our School District.

Thank you for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Roth".

James Roth
Director of Athletics
570-356-3455