MURDOCK

 

“Home of the Blue Devils”

Revised 2018

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

AND PARENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the athletic program at Murdock High and Middle School! The information contained in this handbook will help to answer many of your questions about interscholastic athletics at Murdock. This handbook contains information regarding the rules and regulations that govern our athletic program.

For student-athletes, this guide will help you understand what you can expect as well as what is expected of you while participating in interscholastic athletics Murdock. For parents, this guide will help you understand the school’s athletic policies. If your questions and concerns are not answered within this handbook, please feel free to contact the athletic director for a more specific answer.

## PHILOSOPHY

Murdock High and Middle School considers participation in athletics to be an integral part of a student’s overall educational experience. Athletics provides opportunities for physical, mental, emotional, and social development. The competition of athletics is viewed as a valuable experience because it challenges each student-athlete to strive for excellence, helps each student-athlete discover their physical limits, and requires each student-athlete to work cooperatively as a member of a team. While winning is a natural goal in the pursuit of excellence, the principles of good sportsmanship and enjoyment of competition take precedence at all times and enhance the educational value of all contests.

## MISSION

The athletic program at Murdock completely supports the academic mission of the school, which states:

*“Murdock Middle/High School is committed to providing a safe, healthy, respectful, and challenging learning environment. We promote the overall growth, development, and wellness of each student as a lifelong learner and responsible citizen in our diverse and dynamic global society.”*

Murdock High and Middle schools sets high expectations for its coaches and student-athletes. The athletic program at Murdock will promote interscholastic athletics that provide lifelong learning experiences to student-athletes while enhancing their achievement of educational goals.

## OBJECTIVES

* To provide each student-athlete with the opportunity to develop their individual skill and potential.
* To encourage the student-athletes to maintain good grades
* To develop time management skills
* To provide the opportunity for each student-athlete to learn how to function as a member of a team.
* To develop the qualities of good sportsmanship, respect, responsibility, and moral integrity within each student-athlete.
* To develop an appreciation of the value of physical fitness and conditioning within each student-athlete.
* To teach the student-athlete to accept victory or defeat in a gracious manner.
* To teach the student-athlete the value of hard work and commitment.
* To provide opportunities for growth and development through athletic competition that will contribute to a successful adult life for each student-athlete.
* To develop school spirit within each student-athlete.

# MURDOCK SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

At Murdock High and Middle Schools, student-athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of academic achievement possible. Academic extra help sessions and make-up work are expected to be completed as soon as possible. Student-athletes arriving late for practice due to extra help sessions or make-up work will not suffer any athletic team penalty. Coaches should be informed by student-athletes, in advance, when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

High School Requirements:

In order to be eligible under MIAA standards, a student-athlete must pass the equivalent of five major classes during the last marking period proceeding the season, with at least one grade of 70 in a core academic class (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies or Foreign Language). A major class is defined as any course that meets daily. For the fall season, a student-athlete must have passed four major classes the previous academic year. This applies to all student-athletes in grades 9-12. A student-athlete may take part in only one competitive sport each season (fall, winter, spring).

Athletes who are failing more than one class at the mid-term progress report will be required to stay for extra help two days per week in order to stay eligible.

Middle School Requirements:

Students grades will be reviewed after each progress report and marking period (generally every five weeks). Students who are failing one class will be ineligible for three weeks with one week reduction if satisfactory progress is made during the ineligibility period. Satisfactory progress will be based on: being prepared for class, effort, and seeking additional academic assistance. Students who are failing two or more classes will be ineligible for the entire three week period. If satisfactory effort is not made during the ineligibility period, students will remain ineligible for the remainder of the marking period. A student must maintain passing academic grades in all classes during the season. Any student referred to the office for a school rule violation that results in a suspension or in-house suspension will not be allowed to participate in practice and/or games during the suspension.

## ADMISSION PRICES FOR HOME GAMES

Admission prices will be determined by the athletic department budget needs. Please see the website or contact the school for admission prices for the current school year.

## ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION FORMS

Prior to participation in athletics for each new season, student-athletes will be required to register each season on line via the new registration web site [www.familyid.com](http://www.familyid.com). The link site will be available on Murdock’s athletic website. Once a student-athlete is registered on this website, all information will be available for each season that he/she participates. All necessary forms, including concussion, are linked to the family id website. *\*\*Must be registered on line to be added to team roster\*\**

## ATHLETIC DRESS

Will be determined by the coach prior to game day

ALL jewelry (including body piercings) must be removed before any practice, game, meet or competitions.

No school athletic equipment or clothing should be worn except when participating in a practice of game, unless the student has been directed to do so by the coach.

All current regulations concerning student dress codes found in the student handbook will also be enforced.

Students-athletes failing to comply with these expectations of student appearance will not be given more than one warning at which time if the offense is repeated, they will be unable to participate in the game on the day of the infraction.

Student athletes are reminded that each of you is an ambassador of our school and of our community. Competing teams and fans will assess you as a representative of the town of Winchendon on your appearance as well as on your behavior and athletic skills. It is important that we take pride in our appearance as well as our athletic abilities!

## ATTENDANCE AT ATHLETIC EVENTS

* Students will not be allowed to re-enter the event if they leave for any reason during the event, unless they receive approval from an administrator.
* Students must remain on the side of the arena/court that is designated for their school.
* If a student is ejected before, during, or after an event, that student may not be permitted to attend any future athletic events for the remainder of the season (including post season).
* The MIAA taunting policy will be strictly enforced.

Violation of any section of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

## ATTENDANCE – SCHOOL

Student-athletes will not be allowed to participate in co-curricular activities (practice or game) on the day of an unexcused absence. Students must be in attendance for three periods in order to participate in co-curricular activities (practice or game) unless required documentation is received by the main office or the absence is excused by an administrator.

ATTENDANCE – TEAM

Student-athletes are expected to be present at all team meetings, practices, and games. The coach should be notified in advance if a student-athlete is going to be absent or late for a meeting, practice, or game. Student-athletes are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic help sessions, family emergencies, or religious reasons. Penalty for unexcused absences will be the coaches decision.

## AWARDS

Letter Awards will be granted based on the following criteria:

* The student-athlete must finish the season in good standing
* The student-athlete must have contributed in a positive way to the success of the team.
* The student-athlete must meet any additional criteria established by the coach.

# BEHAVIOR RULES FOR ATHLETES AND MANAGERS

All athletes must abide by all school regulations as contained in the student handbook. Infractions of these rules resulting in suspension or in-school restriction will result in the athlete being ineligible to practice or compete during the time of the suspension or restriction. If the restriction/suspension occurs on a Friday, then the athlete will not be eligible to practice or play in a game until he/she has been reinstated by the administration. The school committee approved new policies on Bullying and Alcohol/Tobacco Use as follows:

File: JICFB

## BULLYING PREVENTION

The School Committee is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

**"Bullying**" is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

* causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
* places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
* creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
* infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
* materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"**Cyber-bullying**" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

* wire
* radio
* electromagnetic
* photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber­ bullying.

**Bullying is prohibited**:

* On school grounds;
* On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
* At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
* At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
* At school bus stops;
* On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
* Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district;
* Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district if the act or acts in question:
* Create a hostile environment at school for the target;
* Infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
* Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

**Investigation Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber­ bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying, shall be prohibited.

Target Assistance

The school district shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the school district website.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended

Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission Title IX of the Education

Amendments of 1972

603 CMR 26:00

M.G.L. 71:370; 265:43, 43A; 268:13B; 269:14A

REFERENCES:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination, ACAB, Sexual Harassment, JIC, Student Discipline,

JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing

SOURCE: MASC August 2013

1st Reading: 7/19/18

Approved: 7/19/18

File: JICH

## ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

SOURCE: MASC February 2018

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 71:97; 272:40A

CROSS REFS.: ADC, Tobacco Products on School Premises Prohibited

GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

GBED, Tobacco use on School Property by Staff Members Prohibited

IHAMB, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

1ST Reading: 7/19/18

Approved: 7/19/18

## Athlete Punishments

School suspensions/In-school restrictions while a member of a sports team will be dealt with as follows:

* An athlete suspended or placed in the in-house restriction for one day will also be suspended from the next athletic contest.
* An athlete suspended or placed in the in-house restriction for two consecutive days will also be suspended from the next two athletic contests.
* An athlete suspended from school for three or more days must appear before an Athletic Disciplinary Board (coach of sport, athletic director and assistant principal of the school). Suspension may range from the amount of days suspended to the rest of that sport season to remainder of the year. Decision will solely be the responsibility of the Athletic Disciplinary Board.
* **Athletes who are assigned after school detention must attend that detention, whether it is teacher detention or office detention, regardless of practice and game schedules.**
* Gambling, Vandalism or Stealing: The consequences for these actions will lead to dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season.
* Physical violence on the part of Murdock High or Middle School student-athletes will not be tolerated. Physical violence, including fighting during a game, on the part of any student athlete toward teachers, coaches, officials, opposing team members, spectators or other school personnel will lead to the immediate suspension from the team for the remainder of the season. Fighting in school will result in a five-game suspension, resulting in the athlete appearing before the athletic disciplinary board.
* Threats or abusive behavior are also considered as serious offenses under this category, which will not be tolerated. The student-athlete must then appear before the Athletic Disciplinary Board.
* Profanity or vulgarity is unacceptable by Murdock High or Middle School student athletes and behavior of this kind will not be tolerated and will be dealt with by the proper authority figure. This will result in suspension and or removal from the sport for the remainder of that sport season.

## BOOSTER CLUB

The organized Murdock Booster Club, which conducts fund raising activities for our athletic program, shall be allowed to allocate their contributions as determined by their Board of Directors and club members. Coaches’ requests of the Booster Club must go through the Athletic Director in writing prior to the next Booster Club meeting. All apparel (jackets, sweatshirts, tee-shirts, etc.) should reflect the athletic department philosophy and appropriate school colors (royal blue, white, and black).

## CAPTAINS

It is expected that team captains will be leaders on their team and they must be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to be fully aware of team rules and student-athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach, team, and Athletic Director in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be elected by their team or appointed by the coach. Captains may be relieved of their position for violation of team, school, or MIAA rules.

## CAPTAIN’S PRACTICES

Captain’s practices are not in any way sanctioned, encouraged, recognized, or condoned in any sport by the MIAA or Murdock.

## CLEATS

At no time should cleats be worn in the building. Injury can occur from slipping on the tiled surface, as well as causing damage to the flooring.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication between coaches, student-athletes, teachers, and parents is critical to the overall success of the athletic program at Murdock High and Middle Schools. The following outline should help to facilitate effective communication between everyone involved with the athletic program at Murdock.

*Communication Student-Athletes and Parents Should Expect from the Coach*

* Philosophy of the coach
* Expectations the coach has for his/her student-athletes
* Locations and times of all practices and contests
* Team requirements, i.e., practices, equipment, conditioning, etc.
* Injury procedures
* Disciplinary decisions

*Communication Coaches Should Expect from Student-Athletes and Parents*

* Concerns expressed directly to the coach
* Warning of any schedule conflicts in advance
* Notification of any injury or illness

*Issues that are Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches*

* The treatment of your child
* Ways to help your child improve
* Concerns about your child’s behavior

*Issues that are NOT Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches*

* Playing time
* Team strategy and play calling
* Other student-athletes

*Communication Coaches and Teachers Should Expect From Each Other*

* Strong concerns regarding academic performance, effort, or conduct
* Help develop strategies to support students’ academic performance

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach, student-athlete, and parent(s). When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the situation.

*Conference Procedure*

* E-mail the coach to schedule an appointment
* If the coach cannot be reached, e-mail or call the Athletic Director for assistance
* Do not call a coach at home
* Do not confront a coach before, during, or after a practice or game

If the conference does not yield a satisfactory resolution, e-mail or call the Athletic Director to schedule an appointment. The Athletic Director will listen to the concerns of both parties and then attempt to mediate a resolution. Student-athletes and parents must be confident that the voicing of a concern, using the proper forum and procedure, is not only free from penalty or retribution, but is strongly encouraged.

## EQUIPMENT/UNIFORM RESPONSIBILITY

Student-athletes have an obligation and responsibility for all athletic equipment issued to them. The student-athlete is responsible for the proper care of equipment from the date of issue to the date of return. If a student-athlete loses school equipment or fails to return the assigned equipment in satisfactory condition, then he/she is responsible to meet the current replacement cost of the equipment. Payment for lost equipment is required at time of the loss, and prior to the next season of athletic participation or graduation, whichever comes first. If a student-athlete leaves a team during the season, for any reason, it is his/her responsibility to return all school equipment immediately. No student-athlete will be allowed to try out for another sport until all outstanding equipment has been returned or payment to replace lost equipment has been made to the athletic department.

## FACILITIES

Student-athletes are expected to respect the locker rooms, gyms, weight room, and other general areas of the athletic wing. We expect all student-athletes to take pride in the athletic facilities by using trash receptacles and keeping the facilities in good condition.

## HAZING

Any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization or team, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person, is not allowed. Such conduct is a crime under Chapter 536 of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and will not be tolerated. Student-athletes and/or coaches found in violation will be dismissed from participation in athletics at Murdock. It is the responsibility of all coaches to inform team members of the hazing law.

## INDIVIDUAL RULES

Players and their parents should understand that injuries could happen during the season. Both in games and in practice it is not uncommon for a player to experience some sort of injury. We try to limit these occurrences as much as possible through pre-season and pre-game stretching exercises and teaching fundamentals properly.

Any player who is insubordinate to a coach or assistant coach will be disciplined by the proper authority figure. This will result in suspension and/or removal from the sport for the remainder of the sport season.

Any player who is disqualified before, during, or after a game at the junior varsity or varsity level, for exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic athletic event, including MIAA Tournament contest. A coach disqualified for exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct shall not participate in the next two (2) scheduled interscholastic athletic events, including MIAA tournaments.

If any player or coach receives a second disqualification during the season, that individual will be required to forfeit any participation in that interscholastic sport at any level for the balance of the season.

If the game disqualification is administered in the final contest of the season (including tournament play), the penalty shall be carried over in the sport and invoked at the first regular season game the following academic year.

Age of Contestants-MIAA guidelines regarding the maximum age of student participants will be adhered to.

Amateur Status-A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and pleasure benefits derived there from. An athlete forfeits amateur status in a sport by:

* Competing for money or other monetary compensation (allowable travel, meals, and lodging expenses may be accepted).
* Capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of monetary value (scholarship to institutions of higher learning are specifically exempted).
* Signing a professional playing contract in that sport.

Semester Rules-A student is eligible for competition, whether he/she competes in interscholastic athletics for no more than eight (8) consecutive semesters beyond the eighth grade. Participation by seventh and eighth graders does not count toward the eight allowable semesters. If a student terminates at one school, he/she may not transfer to another school to increase eligibility.

If a student athlete intends on attending a Division I or Division II College and plans on participating in a sport at that college, he/she must be certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse.

## INJURIES

All injuries must be reported to the student-athlete’s coach. After an injury, an injury report form must be completed by the coach and placed on file with school personnel within 24 hours. The student-athlete may resume practice/play after being evaluated and cleared to return by a qualified health care professional. Please see the MIAA website regarding sports injuries and protective gear: [www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net). Please note: an athlete who is injured during the season and unable to play for the rest of the season will not be eligible for a refund of their user fees. The Athletic Program at Murdock feels that the student should remain on the team, attend practice, and be present at home and away games. The educational process within athletics goes beyond just participating in games and it is important for injured student-athletes to remain a part of their respective teams.

## PLAYING TIME

It is the responsibility of the coach to decide starting line-ups, position assignments, and playing time distribution. These coaching decisions are made only by the coach and are approached very seriously after having observed the student-athletes in practice sessions, scrimmages, and games.

## PRACTICE TIME

On school days, total practice time will average two hours in length. Weekend and vacation practice sessions vary by sport and should be expected at the varsity level. Interscholastic athletics demands much more commitment than a club or recreational activity. Student-athletes should be fully aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for a team.

## REGISTERING FOR ATHLETICS AT MURDOCK

\*STUDENT-ATHLETES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN TRYOUTS, PRACTICES, OR GAMES UNTIL PHYSICALS ARE UP TO DATE, REGISTRATION ON LINE IS COMPLETED, AND THE USER FEE REQUIREMENT IS MET.\*

In order to sign up to play a sport at Murdock Middle/High School, a student must have the following:

* Met academic eligibility criteria
* Updated physical examination report within the past 13 months turned in to nurse’s office (must be good for the entire sports season).
* Has registered on the registration website www.familyid.com
* Has paid user fee or received Athletic Fee Agreement from Athletic Director or Athletic Secretary
* Has returned all uniforms and equipment from previous sport season
* Has met all financial obligations with the school

There will be three on line registration dates prior to the fall, winter, and spring season where parents may go on line to register their student. User fees will be paid after registration directly to the athletic department. If unable to access a computer for on line registration, please contact the athletic director or her secretary for an appointment to set up computer access.

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice or game. Student-athletes cannot expect nor request, disciplinary action to be postponed or cancelled for any athletic related reason. Murdock reserves the right to remove a student-athlete from a team for excessive disciplinary issues and may reinstate the student-athlete upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

## SCHEDULES

Schedules may be obtained from the athletic website, Coach or Athletic Director. We strongly urge obtaining or checking schedules on a regular basis from the athletic website or go directly to www.mwlma.org as schedules are updated frequently when games are postponed or cancelled due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

## SCHOOL VACATIONS

Due to scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and play during school vacation periods. Any planned extended absences should be discussed with the coach prior to tryouts.

## SECURITY OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All personal belongings should be locked in a locker during athletic participation. Murdock High and Middle School is not responsible for the personal belongings of student-athletes.

## SPORTS AND LEVELS

Murdock Middle/High School’s Athletic Program offers the following sports (more levels will be added if the numbers proved beneficial):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FALL | LEVEL | WINTER | LEVEL | SPRING | LEVEL |
| Football | JV  Varsity | Basketball  (Boys and Girls) | MS  JV  Varsity | Baseball | MS  JV  Varsity |
| Field Hockey | JV  Varsity | Ice Hockey  (co-op) | Varsity | Softball | MS  JV  Varsity |
| Soccer  (Boys and Girls) | Varsity  MS | Indoor Track  (Boys and Girls) | Varsity  MS | Outdoor Track  (Boys and Girls) | Varsity  MS |
| Cross Country  (Boys and Girls) | Varsity  MS | Cheering | MS  JV  Varsity |  |  |
| Cheering | JV  Varsity | Swimming  (co-op) | Varsity |  |  |

At the middle school and junior varsity level, the coach will make a strong effort to provide all team members a fair amount of playing time. At this level, the coach is teaching the offensive and defensive philosophy of the program along with the skills necessary to progress to the varsity level.

At the varsity level, our teams are competing against opponents at the highest possible level of competition. In order to be successful, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most highly skilled players.

New sports will be added as enrollment, student interest, and budget figures allow.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

Murdock High and Middle Schools expects all parties at a contest to display an exemplary level of sportsmanship before, during, and after a competition. Coaches, student-athletes, and spectators are expected to treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with total respect. Murdock reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend any coach, student-athlete, or spectator determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship.

## SUSPENSION FROM TEAM

Any student-athlete who violates athletic (MIAA/school/team) rules and regulations is subject to suspension from the team. The coach shall determine if a violation of the athletic rules and regulations has occurred. In all cases, infractions should be reported to the Athletic Director. The length of suspension, unless specified by the MIAA, will be left to the discretion of the coach, with the approval of the Athletic Director and the Principal.

If disciplinary action is taken, a student-athlete has the right to have his/her case reviewed upon request.

## TEAM RULES AND REGULATIONS

At the start of each season, coaches may issue a set of team rules and regulations to their team. It is required that these rules and regulations be in written form and distributed to all team members prior to the start of the season.

TEAM MANAGER

Team managers and student trainers are considered team members and must abide by the same rules and regulations.

## TRAVEL

All student-athletes are required to travel to and from all events in school provided transportation. Any exceptions must be approved in writing by the Athletic Director and the coach before the event.

## TRYOUTS

Student-athletes should understand that participation in interscholastic athletics at Murdock is a privilege. Student-athletes tryout voluntarily and may risk being cut in order to maintain a high level of safety, coaching effectiveness, and playing time. It is the judgment of the coach that dictates the selection process. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student-athletes responsibility to demonstrate that he/she can meet those expectations. Cutting student-athletes from teams is a difficult process and all coaches realize that sensitivity and communication are essential. Student-athletes that are cut from a team will be informed as to the reasons by the coach.

## USER FEE

User fees are determined by the Winchendon School Committee. User fees for current school year are posted on the athletic tab of the Murdock website [www.bluedevilathletics.org](http://www.bluedevilathletics.org). Paying a user fee does not guarantee playing time. Any student who has difficulty paying a user fee should contact the principal or athletic director.

ATHLETIC FEE AGREEMENT

Athletes who are unable to pay the user fee must fill out an Athletic Fee Agreement form before the first practice of the season. These forms will NOT eliminate the fee completely as the athletic department runs solely on user fees. Instead, adjustments will be considered based on the situation at hand. We encourage as many participants as possible and will do our best to accommodate specific needs. The fee may either be lowered and/or a payment plan will be put in place. Athletic Fee Agreement forms are available by request from the Athletic Director or the Athletic Secretary and are available on the athletic website.

## USER FEE REFUND

No refund will be granted after the first scheduled contest has taken place regardless of whether the student-athlete participated in the contest. In the event a student-athlete is cut from a team during tryouts, they will receive a full refund. Student-athletes who are injured during the season are not eligible for a refund. Please see “INJURIES” on page 10 for further information.

## GOVERNING BODIES

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)

Murdock High and Middle Schools are members in good standing of the MIAA. With membership the Principals agrees that his/her school will abide by all rules and regulations of the MIAA.

Midland-Wachusett Interscholastic League (Mid-Wach League)

Murdock High and Middle Schools are also a members of the Mid-Wach League. The Mid-Wach League is governed by the MIAA as well as its own constitution. The Principals of each member school agrees that his/her school will abide by all league rules and regulations.

Murdock High and Middle School

Additional rules and regulations are set by the Murdock School Committee and the Principals. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set additional rules and regulations provided they are more restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA.

## MIAA RULES AND REGULATIONS

*All Murdock School athletic teams must follow the rules and regulations as printed in the current MIAA handbook. The complete handbook is available on the MIAA website. The following is a condensed version of some of the more common rules and regulations affecting student-athletes and parents.*

Rule 45: Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members

A bona fide team member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g. practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. First Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for 25% of the season. Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation. See Rule 96 for additional tournament restriction and Rule 86 for waiver guidelines. Note: A coach cannot excuse a team member from practice or a contest so that he/she may compete with a non-school team.

Rule 48: Sportsmanship: Taunting

48.1 Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin, or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal characteristics.

* 1. Athletic participants may wear sun glare black only under the eyes.
  2. In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike offense that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to all existing MIAA Disqualification Rules. A review of the MIAA taunting policy and a warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to each contest.
  3. At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest managers may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators should be ejected.

Rule 51: Student Eligibility: Baseline Eligibility

For a student to practice with, or to represent a MIAA member school in athletic competition, the student must be duly enrolled in that school. Additionally, the student must be a candidate for that school’s diploma, subject to the jurisdiction of that school’s Principal (i.e. the Principal must have the authority to suspend the student from classes), and under the supervision of that school Principal (i.e. the Principal must have must have control and knowledge of the student’s daily attendance and achievement).

Rule 56: Student Eligibility: Physical Examination/Medical Coverage

56.1 All students must pass a physical examination every thirteen months to the day of the exam. A physical must be good for the entire season; otherwise, the athlete will be ineligible at the time it runs out. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Physician, Physician’s Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner. A student in violation shall be suspended for the number of contests in which he/she participated without a proper physical.

Rule 58: Student Eligibility: Academic Requirements

58.4 Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.

* 1. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility until they are made up following school policy.
  2. A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
  3. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.

Rule 59: Student Eligibility: Time Allowed for Participation after First Entering Grade Nine

59.1 A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than four consecutive years after initially entering grade nine. This limitation shall apply without regard to actual participation or attempt to practice or participate.

Rule 60: Student Eligibility: Age

A student shall be under 19 years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year, provided that his/her 19th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. For freshman competition, a student shall be under 16 years of age but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that the 16th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year.

Rule 62: Student Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

62.1 From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance.

This MIAA statewide minimum is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

Penalty for First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.

Penalty for Second and Subsequent Violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student’s next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility

status of the student during the next academic year.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1st Offense | |
| # of Events - Season | # of Events - Penalty |
| 1-7 | 1 |
| 8-11 | 2 |
| 12-15 | 3 |
| 16-19 | 4 |
| 20 or over | 5 |
| 2nd Offense | |
| # of Events - Season | # of Events - Penalty |
| 1-3 | 1 |
| 4 | 2 |
| 5-6 | 3 |
| 7-8 | 4 |
| 9 | 5 |
| 10-11 | 6 |
| 12-13 | 7 |
| 14 | 8 |
| 15-16 | 9 |
| 17-18 | 10 |
| 19 | 11 |
| 20 or over | 12 |