

# STUDENT-PARENT/GUARDIAN ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

## Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

### Philosophy

The philosophy of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) athletics program is founded in our vision, mission, purpose and R.A.I.S.E. core values:

#### Vision

We promote academic achievement, athletic excellence, positive sportsmanship, and upstanding citizenship by providing the greatest education-based interscholastic athletics program.

#### Mission

Every student will attain the mental, moral, physical, and social-emotional skills to excel in the classroom, community, and the realm of competition.

#### Purpose

To provide an innovative education-based interscholastic athletics program that maximizes diverse participation through a commitment to equity and access.

#### R.A.I.S.E. Core Values

Respect & Sportsmanship

Academic Excellence

Integrity & Character

Spirited & Safe Competition

Equity & Access

### Sportsmanship

An important goal of the interscholastic athletics program is to teach and reinforce values relating to sportsmanship, competition, and fair play. It is expected that team personnel, parents/guardians, and spectators promote the R.A.I.S.E. core values of respect, sportsmanship and spirited competition by exhibiting appropriate behavior at athletic events. Countywide team and school awards are presented annually to schools whose coaches, players, and fans, demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.

### Student Eligibility Requirements

*Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible to participate. Participation of ineligible students will result in individual and team sanctions, including forfeits for the team.*

1. Students must submit a current *MCPS Pre-participation Physical Evaluation Form* (MCPS Form SR-8), a *Medical Card for Athlete* (MCPS Form 560-30), and a *Student/Parent/Guardian Athletics Participation Contract* before being allowed to participate in practices or contests.
2. Students must achieve a minimum 2.0 grade point average for the most recently completed marking period, with no more than one failing grade. Academic eligibility is determined on the date report cards are issued and remains until the next report card is issued.
3. Students must attend all of their scheduled classes in order to participate in a practice or contest on that day. If the principal or designee grants an excused absence in advance for a prescheduled activity or an unforeseen emergency, the student may participate on that day.
4. If during the season a student has an unexcused absence, the student may not compete in the next contest after the violation has been verified.
5. In addition to other infractions, a student may be suspended or removed from a team for unexcused absences or chronic tardiness to classes or team practices.
6. Students who are 19 years old or older as of August 31 of the current school year are ineligible.
7. Students may not participate in more than one interscholastic sport in one season.
8. A student may not participate in practices or contests when serving an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The student becomes eligible to participate on the next school day following the suspension.
9. Students must satisfy school and school system Participation Standards.

10. Students whose legal residence is outside the designated boundary of a particular school may not participate unless they have received a Change of School Assignment (COSA) and athletic waiver.
11. Students should refer to *A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities* for additional guidelines and regulations related to eligibility.

### **Hazing**

Hazing is prohibited at all times. Hazing involves any act that subjects teammates to mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. In some instances, hazing constitutes a criminal act. At a minimum, hazing may lead to immediate dismissal from a team. All stakeholders across the MCPS athletics program are expected to exhibit behaviors that promote a positive culture.

### **Assumption of Risk**

Participation in interscholastic athletic activities often includes intense competition and poses the potential for serious, catastrophic, or life-threatening injury. Participants and parents/guardians are urged to consider that there are inherent risks and hazards associated with athletic participation. Risks vary from sport-to-sport and can occur under direct supervision and with use of proper safety equipment.

### **Health and Safety**

Parents/guardians and students are required to review health and safety related information provided on the MCPS Athletics website <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/athletics>. The website includes information on MRSA, heat acclimatization, hydration, head injuries and concussions, steroids, sudden cardiac arrest, promoting a positive culture, and supervision. If a student or parent/guardian cannot access the MCPS Athletics website, the school will provide the required information.

### **Communication with Coaches**

Parents/guardians should not attempt to address coaches immediately after contests and practices. Coaches have many post contest/practice responsibilities, including supervision of players. Also, the post-contest/practice period is often emotionally charged and not conducive to productive discussion. If a parent/guardian feels a need to communicate a concern, the parent/guardian should contact the coach and/or athletic director to arrange a later meeting.

### **Electronic Communications**

Parents/guardians and students are expected to utilize appropriate, positive use of social media, e-mail messages, blogs, websites, and other electronic communications. Parents/guardians and students shall not make inflammatory or derogatory comments and/or post inappropriate descriptions or pictures regarding students, staff members, coaches, and/or other teams or schools.

### **Participation Expectations and Standards**

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Accordingly, students must meet certain standards in order to earn the privilege of participation. At a minimum, the following standards are required of all student-athletes:

1. Demonstrate behavior that promotes and reflects the R.A.I.S.E. core values of MCPS athletics.
2. Exhibit public behavior that will reflect positively on the team, school, and community.
3. Exhibit responsible, respectful, and trustworthy behavior to teammates and coaches.
4. Exert efforts to maintain a high level of academic achievement.
5. Comply with all team, school, and school system rules, regulations, and policies.
6. Exhibit appropriate behavior at all team and school-related activities.
7. Attend all team functions unless ill or given prior permission to be absent by the coach.
8. Respect and comply with decisions made by the coach, athletic department, and contest officials.
9. Report to the coach any issues or developments that may affect eligibility status.
10. Comply with safety and health precautions distributed and emphasized by the school system.

**Residency**

Montgomery County Board of Education Policy JEE, *Student Transfers*, and MCPS Regulation JEE-RA, *Transfer of Students* require that students attend specific schools within the established attendance area in which they reside or are assigned in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). When a student participates in an interscholastic athletics program at a school to which the student is not assigned, or the home address provided is not the student's legal residence, the student is not eligible to participate unless the student has received a Change of School Assignment (COSA), based on accurate information, and has received an athletic waiver from the director of systemwide athletics. A COSA and an athletic waiver also are required when a student moves out of a school's boundary area and desires to continue to attend and participate at that school.

**Illegal Substances/Alcohol/Tobacco/Steroids/Controlled Substances**

MCPS athletic regulations state that any student-athlete with verified use, distribution, or possession of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, illegal drugs, and/or controlled substances on school property or at a school-sanctioned event is prohibited from participating in athletic activities for a minimum of 10 consecutive school days (including any intervening non-school days). The student-athlete will be eligible for athletic activities on the eleventh school day. Individual schools may create a more stringent penalty than that stated above consistent with the philosophy of its administration and community.



**Permission to Participate**

I/We hereby authorize and consent to our child’s participation in interscholastic athletics and sports. We understand that the sport in which our child will be participating is potentially dangerous, and that physical injuries may occur to our child requiring emergency medical care and treatment. I/We assume the risk of injury to our child that may occur in an athletic activity.

In consideration of the acceptance of our child by MCPS in its athletics program, and the benefits derived by our child from participation, I/we agree to release and hold harmless the Montgomery County Board of Education, its members, the superintendent of schools, the principal, all coaches, and any and all other of their agents, servants, and/or employees, as well as entities that provide training to MCPS coaches and/or athletes as part of the school system’s athletic program, and agree to indemnify each of them from any claims, costs, suits, actions, judgment, and expenses arising from our child’s participation in interscholastic athletics.

I/We hereby give our consent and authorize the Montgomery County Board of Education and its agents, servants, and/or employees to consent on our behalf and on behalf of our child, to administer emergency medical care and treatment in the event we are unable to be notified by reasonable attempts of the need for such emergency medical care and treatment.

Each year, MCPS makes available a student accident insurance policy at a nominal premium. This insurance is secondary to the family's own insurance. Because accidents will inevitably occur despite our best efforts to maintain a high level of safety in all student activities, this insurance coverage is recommended unless the family deems that other insurance coverage (in force) will meet the needs of the student. The student accident insurance policy is available at the beginning and throughout the school year. The coverage may be obtained from the insurance carrier. Forms are available at the school.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, and I, \_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's name) (student's name)

have carefully reviewed the *Student- Parent/Guardian Athletic Participation Information* and the *Student/Parent/Guardian Athletic Participation Contract and Parent/Guardian Permission Form*. I/We understand the conditions for participation in the MCPS interscholastic athletic program, and I/we understand that there are inherent risks associated with participation.

I/We agree as follows:

- My child has my/our permission to participate in \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of sport)  
at \_\_\_\_\_ High School.
- I/We understand and conform to all of the statements in the Stipulations portion of the Contract.
- I/We I have responded truthfully and accurately to the questions in the Residency portion of the Contract.

Please affix signatures below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian      Date      \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student      Date

*\*In the event that both parents retain legal guardianship of the student, the signatures of both parents are required.*