

***ABINGTON
HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETICS***

***STUDENT-ATHLETE
PARENT
HANDBOOK***

**201 Gliniewicz Way
Abington, Massachusetts 02351**

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Abington Athletics

Abington High School Student athletes display....

TOUGHNESS

The *discipline* to remain *committed* and *focused* in the face of adversity

TEAMWORK

A *cooperative* effort towards a common goal, placing the needs of the *team* above individual needs

PRIDE

A sense of *satisfaction* that comes from achieving something you *worked hard* for as an individual, a team and a community

CHARACTER

The strength to be a *role model* and display *sportsmanship* in all situations, even when no one is watching

SERVICE

Giving back to the community through service that fosters *citizenship* and an *appreciation* for their support

WINNING ON THE FIELD AND IN LIFE

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WELCOME TO ABINGTON HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Welcome to Abington High School Athletics. Participating in Abington High School Athletics is a privilege that will be extremely rewarding for all student athletes. This handbook is presented because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Your interest in this aspect of our school program is very gratifying. Parents of student-athletes have the opportunity to bond with their children in a way that is special. Participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences to assist students in personal growth.

Students who elect to participate in athletics are voluntarily making a choice which involves self-discipline and commitment. Only students who comply with the rules and expectations of their team are assured membership on a team. This concept of self-discipline is tempered by the responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the framework of a team.

We believe that you, the parent, have committed yourself to certain responsibilities and obligations. Please understand that skill improvement and healthy learning experiences are a focus of our athletic program. Parents can be helpful by supporting the team and the coach. Any issues should be addressed directly with the coach. *Avoid setting up a conflict in your child's mind between parents and coaches.* It is important to keep a proper perspective. Develop an understanding of what your child wants from sports, as not all children want the same things; make sure your child wants to be involved and accepts the commitment required.

We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with our athletic philosophy and some of the specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized athletic program. The handbook includes information regarding policies, practices, and regulations that govern our athletic at Abington High School. It is intended to help you understand what you can expect for your student-athlete from our coaches and staff and what is expected of Green Wave student-athletes and parents.

If your questions and concerns are not answered within this handbook, please speak with a member of our coaching staff or feel free to contact me directly. For the most up to date information on schedules and directions to away contests, please visit <http://miaa.net/schools/public/AbinAb>.

For the most up to date information follow us on Twitter @AbingtonAD.

Being a part of a sports team at the high school is a major commitment but is also one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. Best of luck on your journey and please let me know if I can ever be of assistance.

Peter Serino
Director of Athletics

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Philosophy

Athletics are considered by some to be “extra curricular” activities. However, without athletics, many students would not have opportunities to maximize their potential for success. To the students who participate in the school athletic programs, sports provide opportunities to practice behaviors that are commonly associated with successful adulthood. Many students complement their educational programs with the personal growth opportunities represented in a good high school sports program. Such programs provide students with a physical outlet that, when combined with academic accomplishment, relates to the ancient Greek premise that a sound body and mind are essential to a happy and prosperous life. Athletics are also a means to accomplish the socialization goals of education. The interaction among individuals on the “playing field” teaches students the value of teamwork while developing the proper competitive spirit, combined with the sense of fairness. School sports teach sportsmanship and fair play in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Athletics, an American way of life, truly are “the other half of education” and an extension of the classroom.

Abington believes that athletics are valuable components of education and, therefore, attempts to provide avenues for all students who want to take part in them. The entire program is based upon these precepts:

Winning isn't everything, nor is it the only thing. Young athletes cannot possibly learn from winning and losing if they think the only objective is to beat their opponents. However, to play sports without striving to win is to be a dishonest competitor. Every student can experience the true success that comes from trying his or her best to win. The opportunity to strive for success is the right of every young athlete.

Failure is not the same thing as losing. Athletes should not view losing as a sign of failure or as a threat to their personal values. Students can learn to persist in the face of obstacles and support each other even when they do not achieve victory.

That the highest standards of sportsmanship and fair play will be observed by players, coaches, parents, and spectators; that both winning and losing in competition will be placed in their proper perspectives.

Representing one's school may also be a way to learn responsibility and to build a favorable self-image. For many students-athletes, this may be the only arena in which they excel. It provides a feeling of belonging to a special group, a need sometimes fulfilled in far less worthy ways.

In accordance with this philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program at Abington, we will encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without compromising the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport.

A student allowed to cheat on the field might cheat in the classroom. A student taught that getting by on natural ability alone could slide through classes. But when a school's athletic policy mirrors its academic policy, each enhances the other. A student taught that effort in class brings rewards will learn that effort on the field brings rewards. A student taught that booting a ground ball isn't the end of the world will relax and make the play the next time; he or she will also take exams in their proper perspective.

Athletics, then, are not a "frill"; nor an "outside activity." They have an enormous impact upon every student who takes part. Abington High School has an absolute responsibility to try to make sure that effect is a positive one.

Tryouts are open to all students, providing they are in good academic standing and are good school citizens.

Participation is a privilege that may be revoked by administration at any time.

Mission Statement

Our Athletic program is an integral part of the Abington High School educational program. As such, it complements the fundamental goals of Abington High School as an educational institution.

First, our athletic program will provide equal opportunities for students to develop their special interest and skills, representing a means to further develop the physical, mental and social health of our young adults.

Second, the athletic program promotes a sense of unity, cooperation and social cohesion among the athletes and student body. Students who ordinarily are separated by social, ethnic, or financial factors will learn mutual respect, cooperation, and a sense of community and teamwork.

Experiences in athletics will foster leadership, discipline, commitment, and a deep sense of responsibility to the school, peers, and larger community. Athletes will come to understand that on or off the field they represent Abington High School, and to a larger extent, define our school's standards of behavior.

At the varsity level, highly skilled student athletes will compete on an advanced level and will dedicate their effort toward the attainment of success, whether they win or lose. Winning is a natural goal, but never at the expense of healthy attitudes, a positive set of values, or a level headed perspective. Athletes should win with dignity and lose with grace.

The widest participation possible will be cherished and balanced against the desire to win. The number of participants on any team will permit effective learning and reasonable participation for all members of the team.

There will be a balanced and comprehensive program of interscholastic sports that serves the needs of a wide range of students. All programs must operate in a safe and healthy atmosphere. The fields, facilities, equipment, and coaching will be structured to ensure a responsible duty of care.

Such values set the stage for the major objectives of the athletic program at Abington High School. The Abington athletic department dynamically supports the academic mission of the school. Abington attempts to develop student-athletes by:

- Contribute to the development of physical, mental, and social health
- Promote unity, social cohesion and spirit among athletes and student body
- Develop self-discipline, commitment, and a sense of responsibility
- Develop qualities of sportsmanship, honesty, and integrity
- Teach students to win and lose in a gracious fashion
- Teach value of teamwork and cooperation
- Inspire athletes to function as a source of pride for the school community
- Help athletes recognize both on and off the field of play, that they represent their team their school, their family, and their community
- Provide a wide range of opportunities for individuals to develop special athletic talent skills

Sports Program

Sports are an integral part of the curricular activities at Abington High School. Student involvement in athletics is a privilege, which can be a valuable and rewarding experience. Students have the opportunity to participate in athletics during all three seasons.

As a member of Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), Abington High School competes in the South Shore League, offering a comprehensive interscholastic athletics program of 39 teams competing in 23 sports (individual offerings will vary each year as determined by participation and funding).

Sports offered at Abington High School are:

Fall sports - tryouts may start as early as the second Thursday preceding Labor Day.

	Varsity	Junior Varsity	Freshman
Boys' Cross-Country	x		
Girls' Cross-Country	x		
Football	x	x	x
Boys' Soccer	x	x	
Girls' Soccer	x	x	
Football Cheerleading	x		
Golf (Co-ed)	x	x	
Girls Volleyball	x	x	x
Unified Soccer	x		

Winter sports - tryouts start the Monday after Thanksgiving

Boys' Basketball	x	x	x
Girls' Basketball	x	x	
Basketball Cheerleading	x		
Hockey	x		
Wrestling (co-op)	x		
Unified Basketball	x		

Spring sports - tryouts start the third Monday in March for all sports)

Baseball	x	x	
Softball	x	x	
Girls' Lacrosse	x	x	
Boys' Lacrosse	x	x	
Boys' Tennis (co-op)	x		
Girls' Tennis	x		
Boys' Outdoor Track	x	x	
Girls' Outdoor Track	x	x	
Frisbee	x	x	
Unified Kickball	x		

Some sports and levels will be run contingent upon the availability of funds and student- athlete participation.

Parent / Guardian Communication Guide

The following section is designed for parents of athletes participating in the Abington High School athletic program. Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing and understanding each role, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to the student-athlete. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication you should expect from the Coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Location and times of all practices and games
3. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team
4. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation in a practice or a game
5. Procedures followed should your child be injured during participation
6. Team requirements, i.e., practices, special equipment, out-of-season conditioning

Communication Coaches Should Expect from Parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notifications of any scheduling conflict well in advance

As your child becomes involved in the programs of Abington High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you and your child may wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. Remember that the first step is the coach.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Your Coach:

1. Treatment of your child, mentally, and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches take their profession seriously. They make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you can see from the list from above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues *Not* Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach, athlete, and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help provide a resolution to the issue of concern:

- Student-athletes should first discuss concerns directly with the coach.

- If parents/guardians still have concerns, they should contact the coach to make an appointment. *DO NOT* confront a coach before, during or after a practice or game. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
- If the conversation/meeting does not provide a satisfactory resolution, call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
- If not satisfied, the athlete and /or parent may ask to meet with the Principal within two school days of the recommended disciplinary action. The principal will confirm the decision regarding this appeal in writing.
- If not satisfied, the student and/or parent may contact the Superintendent of Schools for further discussion within two school days of the above meeting. The Superintendent will confirm the decision regarding the appeal in writing.

Representing Abington High School in Interscholastic Athletics is a privilege. Athletes (and all students associated with athletic teams) should understand that this privilege carries with it some very personal responsibilities to teammates, coaches, Abington High School and the Town of Abington. Dedication and the willingness to sacrifice, the desire to improve and the practice of self-discipline are all elements of skill development. Equally important, however, is the ability to conduct oneself in a manner, which adheres to team and school regulations. Adherence to those regulations will promote the development of student athletes who will not only demonstrate athletic prowess, but more importantly display the characteristics of responsible school and community citizenship.

It is essential that a prospective athlete clearly understand all standards of performance to which all Abington High School athletes are to adhere.

THE ATHLETES ATTENDANCE AT THE FIRST PRACTICE / TRYOUT IS AN EXPRESSION OF ACCEPTANCE OF THESE REGULATIONS. STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT THESE REGULATIONS SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE.

Team Commitment

Tryouts / Team Selection:

Students should understand that participation in athletics is a privilege. Students try out voluntarily and for some programs, there is a risk of not making the team. It is the judgment of the coaches which dictates the selection and number of participants for teams. That number is based on several factors:

- If the number of students trying out for a team exceeds the number of roster limitations allowed by league or state standards.
- The prospective athlete's ability to play is, in the opinion of the coach, at a level far below the level of any of the other members of the team and to the point that such play could endanger the player or other players.

Cutting students is a difficult process and all coaches realize that sensitivity and communication are essential. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his or her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet their expectations. Students are encouraged to try out for another team if final cuts have not yet been made. *After tryouts begin, no athlete may voluntarily leave one team and try out for another without the consent of both coaches and the Athletic Director.* It is important to note that before holding tryouts, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates trying out for the team:

- Extent of the try-out period
- Criteria used to select the team
- Practice commitment if they make the team
- Game commitments

The emphasis at each level of competition is:

- VARSITY - **VERY COMPETITIVE / INSTRUCTIONAL**
- JUNIOR VARSITY - **COMPETITIVE / INSTRUCTIONAL**
- FRESHMAN - **INSTRUCTIONAL**
Seniors are not permitted to play on a Junior Varsity or Freshman team.

Specific Goals of Freshman Teams:

1. Introduce and develop the skills and rules of the sport
2. Present an opportunity for an athlete to experience a specific sport
3. Introduce young athletes to interscholastic competition
4. Give all participants playing time in all games, assuming that the students-athletes have attended practice, worked to their potential, have the proper attitude, and have committed to the team

Please note: When 9th graders have demonstrated an advanced level of ability, they may be placed on a junior varsity or varsity team after agreement among the athlete, his / her parents, and the coach. However, it is always better for a freshman to “play” at the sub-varsity level than to “sit” at the varsity level. Freshman should never be placed on a varsity team as simply “practice players.”

Specific Goals of Junior Varsity Teams:

1. Further develop skills and knowledge of the sport
2. Increase the intensity of the competition
3. Prepare for the varsity level in that sport
4. Give all participants playing time based upon practice attendance, work ethic, attitude, commitment to the team and athletic skill
5. Playing time is not equal nor is it guaranteed.

Specific Goals of Varsity Teams:

1. Develop skills and knowledge to their highest level
2. Allow talented athletes the chance to excel and prepare them for future competitions
3. Compete for the South Shore League, Sectional, and State Championships
expect all members to be role models and mentors for younger students

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by members of our coaching staff. These include: which athletes should start a contest, which should play what position & the amount of playing time. These very difficult decisions are made only by members of our coaching staff after weighing a considerable number of factors. The most competitive, skilled team members will play the major portion of contests. However, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes. These athletes push the starters, & help make the team more competitive. They must also strive to do their best.

Daily/Weekend Commitments:

Members of a team at Abington High School are expected to make at least five-day, two to three hour daily commitment to the team each week.

At the sub-varsity level, most teams do not play or practice on weekends; however, some games may occur on weekends, and students must be willing to make a commitment to attend those games. Students may expect most practices and games to occur during the week. Normally, practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day. The preparation times before and after practices or games will often bring the usual time to three hours.

At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace, and participants should expect regular involvement during these times. Because many of our teams share facilities, practices and game hours may vary considerably. Contact the coach or the athletic office for more specific information concerning practice and game times.

Parents and students are reminded that teams often practice during vacations and weekends. A student's absence from a practice or game may come with consequences to playing time. It is also important to remember that games will be rescheduled, sometimes on weekends or during vacations, students who miss these games may also be subject to consequences.

Daily Team Attendance:

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or game if the student is *not* absent from school. Our coaches expect their athletes to be present at all team-related activities; accordingly, a coach may suspend a team member from a contest for absence. Students are excused from team activities for academics, illness, injury, family, or religious reasons. However, prior notification will be expected.

School/Family Vacations and/or Extended Absences:

Every team member is expected to be present at all team practices and games. Because of scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and play during scheduled school vacations. Students who are planning to be absent for an extended period of time due to vacation or planned extended absence from school must make this known to the coach as soon as plans are made. Upon the student's return, the student *may* be suspended from play for a number of contests not to exceed the number of contests missed due to the absence. In most cases family obligations and commitments will be taken into consideration. However, at the varsity level there are no guarantees about playing time and starting status. It is not fair to the team, if a team member has left for whatever reason, and the rest of the team practices. Abington Athletics operates on the team principle.

Change of Sport:

Any student who desires to drop off his/her team and tryout for another team may do so only under the following conditions: He/she must do so within the first two weeks of the practice season and receive permission from the athletic director. No student who has been suspended or dismissed from a team may transfer to another during that same season. Also no athlete can switch/change teams after the first game is played in the sport that he/she tried out for. (MIAA rule)

Bona Fide Team Member:

Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members

A bona fide 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. ***Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs.***

First Offense: Student athlete is suspended for 25% of the season (see chart on Rule 62).
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.

45.1 A student-athlete must be a Team Member for 50% of the regular season schedule for that sport to participate in any MIAA Tournament competition (team member: any student athlete who attends practices or games for his/her sport teams – e.g. Freshman basketball player moved to JV and then Varsity).

A coach does not have the right or authority to excuse a team member from practice or a contest so that he/she may practice or complete with a non-school team. The Principal may request a waiver of this rule in special circumstances.

Playing Time:

Perhaps the most emotional part of a student athlete's involvement in high school athletics centers around playing time. Factors such as practice attendance, attitude, commitment, and athletic skill enter into the playing time decisions of the coach. *It is the coach's responsibility to decide which athlete should start a contest, which should play what position, and how long an athlete should play.* These coaching decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff and are approached very seriously after having observed the athletes in practice sessions, game like situations, scrimmages, and actual game competitions.

General Rules and Information

REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY FOR PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS AT ABINGTON

Pre-Tryout Requirements:

A student must be declared eligible by the Athletic Director according to the standards listed in this section before he/she will be allowed to try out for a team.

There will be mandatory pre-season meetings for student-athletes and parents of student-athletes prior to each season. Parents are required to attend the August Athletics First night presentation.

Any Abington High School student-athlete participating voluntarily in interscholastic athletics, and understanding that such participation is a privilege, must agree to abide by the following policies:

1. Parental Permission/Family ID Registration:

A student must submit a complete, signed parent's permission form prior to his/her first practice session. This form must be completed for each athletic season of involvement. Forms may be completed online at <https://www.familyid.com/abington-high-school-athletics>. Parents also need to complete the online concussion course offered through NFHS at NFHSlern.com

2. Physical Exams:

All students must pass a physical examination within 13 months. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner. A copy of the examination results must be on file in the office of the school nurse prior to an athlete's participation in any school scheduled physical practice session or game. It is the responsibility of the athlete/parent to know the date of the expiration of the physical. A doctor's note indicating good health with a future exam date will not be acceptable. *Students who are medically excused from physical education/health classes may not participate in the interscholastic athletic programs for the duration of the excuse.*

3. **Academic Eligibility:**

The first priority for students, their parents, and the school must be on the achievement of appropriate academic goals for each student. While those goals will differ for each student, there shall be a minimum standard that all students must achieve in order to be eligible to participate in athletics at Abington High School. Participation in athletics at Abington High School is a privilege earned by students in academic and behavioral good standing. (See page on athletic eligibility)

4. **Locker Rooms / Security:**

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all athletic equipment issued to them as well as personal belongings. The athlete is responsible for the proper care of this equipment from the date of issue, to the date of return. Equipment and uniforms should be stored in a locked locker at all times when not in use. Experience has shown that most losses are due to carelessness in securing or locking lockers. Abington High School cannot be responsible for the personal belongings of student-athletes. If a student loses school equipment or fails to return the assigned equipment in satisfactory condition, they are responsible to meet the current replacement cost of the equipment.

5. **Equipment:**

Payment of lost equipment is required at the time of the loss, and prior to the next season of athletic involvement or graduation, whichever comes first. No student will be allowed to tryout for another sport until all outstanding equipment has been returned or payment to replace lost equipment has been made to the athletic department. If a student-athlete leaves the team during the season due to injury, academics, discipline or their own volition, it is their responsibility to return all school equipment immediately.

6. **Release from Class:**

It is the responsibility of the athlete to see his/her teacher before the classes that will be missed because of an away athletic contest. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher. Distance and transportation limitations are the primary reasons for early dismissals. The Athletic Department will make every effort possible to schedule contests so that classes will not be missed.

7. **Game Transportation:**

All team members must travel to and from away games by means of transportation provided by Abington High School. Athletes may not travel to a contest in their own vehicles without special permission from the Athletic Director and Principal. Athletes are strongly urged to return from all events with their team on a bus provided and not with their parents.

8. Code of Conduct/Behavior:

Each Abington High School student-athlete must:

- Abide by the Abington High School Code of Conduct, the Student Handbook, and Team Rules set by the coach and the MIAA/ SSL rules governing sports participation.
- Conduct oneself in an exemplary manner at all times both on and off the field, court or rink.
- Understand that the coach may establish additional rules and regulations for his/her sport.
- Understand that one must avoid physical or verbal confrontations with fellow teammates, members of the opposing team, and/or spectators, as well as officials.
- Understand that one is responsible controlling one's emotions, and accordingly, shall refrain from making any display of unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Understand that a violation of the Abington High School Code of Conduct is grounds for a game or team suspension or permanent expulsion from the program. Determination of such shall be made by the Coach involved, the Athletic Director, and the principal in accordance with the nature and/or degree of the infraction.

GOOD CITIZEN/SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE CLAUSE: As a member of a team you have become part of an entity. You are no longer just an individual; you are a representative of your team, your school and your town. Anything that you do to disgrace, embarrass or demean your team can be grounds for dismissal or suspension from the team as determined by the Athletic Director or school administration. Behavior that is acceptable by school policy is expected of student- athletes both inside and outside of the school day and building.

9. Attendance in School:

A student may not participate in any athletic practice or event on a day when he/she was absent from school unless exception is made by the Principal of designee. A student must be recorded as present before **7:45 a.m. (8:10 for 8th grade students)** and he/she must remain in school for the day in order to participate in an athletic event unless excused by the Principal or designee. Students must be marked as present and on time for delayed opening Wave Week Wednesday's in order to participate in practices or events. A student who is dismissed from school may not participate in any athletic practice or event unless excused by the Principal or designee.

**A Doctors note does not excuse the student from the entire day of school for Athletic Participation – students may only miss the time necessary for the appointment to be eligible to participate*

***If a student accumulates 15 tardies in a term, the student will be placed on Social Probation for a period of 4 weeks. This can limit their ability to participate in athletic practices and/or games.*

10. **Suspension from School:**

An athlete suspended from school (in school or out of school) will not be allowed to practice or play. This includes the afternoon or the evening of the suspension and the weekend, if the suspension occurs on or includes a Friday. *The administration may also place students on social probation which will limit a student's ability to participate in games and practices.*

11. **Late Reporting:**

No student-athlete may try out for a team after final cuts have been made unless there is prior approval or there are extenuating circumstances (e.g. injury, post season tournament ending late or academic eligibility). In such cases no displacement from the team of any squad member may occur.

12. **Athletic Injuries:**

An athlete who is injured while participating in a school sport must make the coach aware of the injury so that an accident report can be filed with the school and the injury appropriately dealt with. In the case of a game or practice accident, the coach should be prepared to:

- If ***no medical or trainer personnel*** are available, immediately apply first aid (stem flow of blood, apply ice pack, etc.). Contact the parent/guardian to come to the area and assume responsibility. If it is evident that an emergency exists, contact the emergency number (911) and request ambulance transportation to the hospital. Notify the parent/guardian that the student has been taken to the hospital. If the parent is not available, arrange for a member of the school personnel to remain with the student until a parent can be reached.
- ***Do not transport the student by private car without expressed consent of a parent or school administrator.***
- If the accident required hospital treatment, contact your athletic director at the first opportunity.
- Submit a properly completed accident form to the school nurse by the first day of school following the accident. Forms may be obtained from the nurse or athletic director.
- ***Under no circumstances*** is an injured student be left alone or transported without a competent adult accompanying him/her. ***IF NECESSARY, THE COACH AND THE TEAM WILL ACCOMPANY THE INJURED STUDENT FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, AND THE CONTEST WILL BE FORFEITED.***
- Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behavior consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems)

shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional. (MIAA 56.4)

- In cases where an injury required medical attention, a statement from the athlete's physician certifying eligibility to return to sports must be filed in the nurse's office.

13. **Hazing:**

(Chapter 269, Section 18 of the General Laws) of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts states: The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or any other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other persons to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Anyone who is aware of hazing and/or is at the scene where hazing takes place is required to report the crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practical. Failure to report such crime is punishable by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

14. **Taunting:**

(MIAA 48) includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean another, 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 matters. Examples of taunting include, but are not limited to, the following: "trash talk," defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including "in the face" confrontation by one player to another and standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player.

15. **Contact Sports Limitation:**

(MIAA 60) A student athlete shall participate in only one (1) sport in any defined MIAA sport season (fall, winter, or spring). Penalties, any student who violates this rule will be declared ineligible for that season, and all games he/she participates in for both sports must be forfeited.

16. **Insurance:**

The Abington Public School System provides insurance coverage for those participating in high school interscholastic athletics. This policy covers the expenses incurred for each injury or accident that are not covered by any family plan. The Abington Athletic Department makes every effort to provide a safe environment at all practices and games. However, because of the nature of athletics, injuries may occur.

17. **Student Discipline Obligation:**

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is required to fulfill that obligation before reporting to an athletic practice or game.

18. **Team Rules and Regulations:**

At the start of each season, a coach with the approval of the Director of Athletics may issue a set of team rules and regulations. It is recommended that these be in written form and distributed to all team members. These standards should reflect the program philosophy, the nature of the sport, and the practice/game schedule. Violations of these rules may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the team.

19. **Physical Education / Wellness:**

All athletes are required to participate in regularly scheduled Physical Education/Wellness classes. Students being medically excused from Physical Education will not be allowed to participate in team practices or games on that day. All class attendance rules apply to Physical Education classes.

20. **Team Captains:**

Coaches decide how team captains are selected. Captains may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on, a game-by-game basis. The team will be informed by the coach as to how captains will be selected.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and ready to assume the duties that their coaches outline. They are expected to be well aware of the team rules and student-athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach, team, and the Athletic Director in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program.

CAPTAINS CODE

Being a CAPTAIN is the highest honor an athlete can receive. Therefore, there is a great responsibility that goes along with being a CAPTAIN. The position may not always be fun but it will always be gratifying. A CAPTAIN must be a leader and role model on and off the field/court. A CAPTAIN represents the team, coach, school, and community. A CAPTAIN must take pride in the program by setting an example as a team motivator and being the hardest worker. CAPTAINS must help build and maintain team morale and school spirit.

A student can expect to lose his or her position as captain at any time for ***90 school calendar days*** for the following reason:

- Violation of the Chemical Health Rule

- Violation of Category C or D of the Code of Conduct
- ***Not living up to the standards of the Captains Code or for other reasons deemed suitable by the Principal or Athletic Director.***

Captains are expected to meet with the Athletic Director regularly during their season. Failure to schedule and attend these meetings can result in loss of captaincy.

21. **Booster Club:**

The Abington High School All-Sports Booster Club is a support group for all athletic teams. This is a great opportunity for students to engage in civic activity within their community and learn the benefit of service while giving back to the community.

22. **Athletic Fees:**

The Abington School Committee has authorized the Department of Athletics to collect an Athletic User Fee from each student-athlete. All athletic fees, as established by the school committee will be \$175 per season with an individual cap of \$500 per school year. Each student will be required to pay the fee for each season. Checks or money orders should be made payable to: Abington High School and should be submitted prior to the first practice. ***CASH WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.***

All checks must include the name, address, and telephone number of parents or guardian; names(s) of the students(s); and the name(s) of the sport(s) in which the student(s) is paying to participate. Students may also pay online using www.myschoolbucks.com.

Athletic User Fees may be waived or reduced by submitting a Free and Reduced Lunch Application to the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance. This application is a once-a-school-year-application and does not carry over year to year. The form as well as documentation of all income supporting your child(ren) is required. It is the goal of the Athletic Department to include all students in the Athletic Program regardless of their financial wherewithal. Every effort will be made to avoid placing the student or their family in an embarrassing position over the user fee.

Fees are due at the conclusion of the tryout season. Students will not be allowed to play in any scrimmages or games until the fee is paid or financial assistance has been approved.

Refunds: Requests for refunds must be made directly to the Athletic Director. Guidelines for refunds will be:

1. If an athlete is cut from the team following the tryout period.
2. If an athlete suffers a season ending injury prior to or during the first regular season contest.
3. If an athlete quits, at any time, there will be **no** refund.
4. If an athlete is removed from the team for any school or MIAA rule violation, there will be **no** refund.

Playing Time and Fees: The payment of the user fee will not influence the amount of playing time an individual athlete receives. It will be up to each coach to determine the amount of playing time an athlete receives.

23. Guidelines to Selection of All-Star Team and All Scholastic Nominations:

Any athlete considered for membership on the South Shore League All-Star Team must finish the league season in good standing. Any athlete suspended during the season for violation of the MIAA chemical health policy **will not** receive a SSL All-Star Award or be nominated for all scholastic recognition.

24. Athlete Contest Disqualifications:

MIAA Rule #49. If a player at any level is ejected from a game, he/she will be ineligible to compete until the athlete completes the NFHS Sportsmanship course. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and his/her attendance at the competition site is determined by the High School Principal. Most sports also require a 1 game suspension; note that baseball, ice hockey and soccer require a 2 game suspension. *This also applies to parents and spectators including student spectators.*

Athletic Eligibility Rules

To maintain eligibility for participation in Abington High School's Athletic Program, a student must meet all MIAA requirements and conform to the following rules:

1. Academic Eligibility:

An athlete must meet the following criteria during the last marking period preceding an athletic season:

- A. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade in the equivalent of five subjects.
- B. Fall eligibility is determined by final grades (must have earned 25 credits) of the previous school years **as well as** fourth quarter grades.
- C. Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined only on the date when the report card has been issued to the parents of all students within a particular class. (MIAA 58.4)
- D. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility. (MIAA 58.5)
- E. A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility. (MIAA 58.6)
- F. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the

summer vacation, unless that subject has previously been pursued and failed. (MIAA 58.7)

- G. A student receiving services under Chapter 766 who's individualized Education Plan is a 502.4 or a more restrictive prototype, may be declared academically eligible by the principal provided all other eligibility requirements are met. (MIAA 58.8)

2. **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 after September 1st of that year. (MIAA 62)

3. **Time:**

A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than 12 consecutive athletic seasons beyond the 8th grade. (MIAA 59.1)

- A. In special cases where a student has been absent because of an accident or illness, which prevented school attendance, eligibility can be extended by the MIAA Executive Director through the waiver process. (MIAA 59.2)

Athletic Department Award Policy

Types of Awards:

1. Certificate of Participation: Awarded to all members of sub-varsity teams who meet the general requirements for an athletic award as listed below and to member of varsity teams who do not meet the requirements of a varsity letter.
2. Varsity Certificate and Letter: Awarded to all members of a varsity team who meet the requirements for an athletic award listed below. Coaches' discretion will be used to determine who are varsity and who are sub-varsity players. Only one varsity chenille letter will be awarded to a student during his/her high school career.
3. Sports Pin: Awarded to all members of a varsity team each time they earn a varsity letter.
4. Varsity Jacket: Awarded in conjunction with the Green Wave Boosters to students who meet the following requirements:
 - A. Awarded two varsity letters in the same sport or a varsity letter in three different sports.
 - B. May be awarded to a senior for loyal service upon recommendation of the head coach and approval of the Athletic Director and Administration.

- C. Boosters will fund a portion of the jacket contingent upon students' voluntary participation in fundraising events.

Award Requirements:

To receive an athletic award a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Student-athlete must be eligible to participate for the entire season. (Student who is not academically eligible will not receive a letter)
2. All equipment issued to the athlete must be returned in good condition.
3. Athlete must attend all games, scrimmages, practices, meets, and matches unless excused by the coach or athletic director.
4. Indicate a high standard of citizenship through conduct and attitude.
5. Managers: the first year in a sport a certificate is awarded and the second year in the same sport a letter is awarded.

General Rules:

1. Each coach is responsible for informing players of the award requirements.
2. Each coach shall submit a list of recommended award recipients to the Athletic Director at the end of the season.
3. A varsity award is the highest possible award. Each varsity coach will use his/her best discretion in determining who are varsity and who are sub-varsity players.
4. The coach may waive the attendance requirements in case of an emergency or injury.
5. Sportsmanship in games and at practice must be considered in all awards.

Chemical Health Rule Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs

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 policy includes products such as "NA or near beer." A drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use (in school) by his/her physician must be kept and administered by the school nurse. 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. (MIAA 62.1)

At Abington High School, this rule is in effect from the first scheduled practice date for any sport in the fall until the completion of the final sport team in the spring or the end of the year, whichever comes last.

The chemical health rule includes the possession and use of e-cigarettes or vaporizers.

Minimum Penalties are:

First Violation: When the principal confirms, (following an opportunity for the student to be heard) that a violation occurred; the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that a student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season in which the student will participate.

Minimum penalty / 25% loss of eligibility: (examples)

1-7 Game season	=	1 Game suspension
8-11 Game season	=	2 Game suspension
12-15 Game season	=	3 Game suspension
16-19 Game season	=	4 Game suspension
20+ Game season	=	5 Game suspension

After serving the suspension, the athlete must also complete the season as a member in good standing of that team.

Second and Subsequent Violation: The student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school Assistant Principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If the student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season.

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. *(e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty during the fall season of the next academic year).*

Out of Season Sports Involvement

Participation in out-of-season clinics, camps, leagues, or other related sports activities is strictly up to the discretion of the student athlete and his/her parents. While such participation will undoubtedly improve ones knowledge and skills, it is the individual decision as whether or not they wish to become involved in such activities. Participation or

non-participation in such activities will have no bearing on student athlete's participation on an Abington High School athletic team.

A coach may not directly or indirectly require a student-athlete to participate in a sport or a training program outside of the MIAA defined sports season. "Captains Practices" are not in any way sanctioned, encourage, recognized, or condoned in any sport by the MIAA or Abington High School.

Governing Bodies

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA):

Abington High School is a member in good standing of the MIAA. With membership, the Principal agrees to abide by all rules and regulations of the MIAA. All schools are voluntary members of the MIAA and compete only with member schools. As a member, Abington agrees to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations of the association.

The primary role of the state association is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equality in competition of the student-athlete and a balance with other educational programs. The association solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modification from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations. The state association attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number and to ensure that competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to sponsor and conduct post-season tournaments leading to the determination of geographical district and state champions. When our varsity teams qualify for and enter such tournaments, we are completely subject to the specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament as set by the MIAA. Tournament qualification, divisional placement and geographical district criteria are sport specific. Some of our teams may qualify for regional tournaments beyond the MIAA tournaments that are sponsored and conducted by the combined state associations that make up the region of competition.

The South Shore League:

Abington is a member of the South Shore League. The South Shore League is governed by the MIAA and the Principal of each member school agrees that his/her school will abide by all league rules and regulations. The conference membership facilitates the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, conducting league meets, and determining league championships. The South Shore League provides the opportunity for competition with schools of similar athletic philosophy. League membership implies abiding by conference schedules, rules, and regulations. In addition to Abington, member schools are Carver, Cohasset, East Bridgewater, Hull, Mashpee, Middleboro, Norwell, Randolph and Rockland.

Abington High School:

Any coach who wishes to have additional rules and regulations for his/her sport must submit the rules to the Athletic Director for approval. These rules will be in concert with the Student Handbook and approved by the Athletic Director. They must be reviewed with the athletes and parent before they can be implemented. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are

allowed to set additional policies, rules, and regulations so long as they are more restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA.

What to Expect from an Abington High School Interscholastic Coaches

Athletes and their families can expect the following from members of the Abington coaching staff:

Time Commitment

Practice and game schedules and other time commitments, consistent with the guidelines mentioned previously in this booklet, will be made known to all team members.

Team Standards

Coaches have the option of establishing expectations for their team members with the Athletic Director's prior approval. The coach will present these expectations to all team members in writing as soon as possible prior to the first contest of the season.

Individual Success

The coach will provide an opportunity for each athlete to grow socially and emotionally.

Team Spirit

The coach will attempt to instill and promote team spirit and cohesiveness.

Athletic Performance

Individual performance by an athlete will be critiqued by a coach at the appropriate time. Each athlete will be encouraged to work towards his / her potential and to develop a positive self-image.

Skill Development

Each athlete will be taught the rules and skills of the game with the goal of developing maximum proficiency in the specific sport area.

Approachability

The coach will be available to all of his/her athletes. Team members are encouraged to approach the coach about any topic that they wish. If a matter is of a personal nature, students should make every effort to approach the coach privately and when there is sufficient time for worthwhile discussion.

Competitiveness

According to the MIAA philosophy, winning contests is a laudable goal, but it should not supersede the primary priorities of high school sports. Abington coaches do and should play to win, as all involved enjoy winning, but they also know that preparing students to succeed rather than merely to win games is more important. Win or lose, students should learn lessons of a lasting and positive nature.

Evaluation of Coaches

Each coach employed by Abington is evaluated at the end of each season. The evaluations are performed by the head coach for each of his/her sub-varsity and assistant coaches and by the Athletic Director for each head coach in conjunction with the Administration.

College / Career Guidance

One of the most important decisions facing the high school athlete is what to do with their lives after high school. The members of the Abington High School athletic staff are willing to assist all of their students with this extremely difficult decision. Staff members fully understand the importance of this assistance. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools or coaches, and write letters of recommendation. If a student's goal is to complete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA regulations. The Athletic Director and High School Guidance Department has a wealth of information on the NCAA regulations. They also have copies of the NCAA Clearinghouse registration forms which must be completed by all students planning to participate at the college level.

Cheerleading / Nationals

The cheerleading team will not be eligible to travel to out of state national competitions in consecutive years unless they are both the league champion and the state champion.

The school will not financially support any trip and receiving a qualifying score does not guarantee the team will travel to nationals; the trip must be approved by the Athletic Director, Principal and School Committee. There are numerous factors that go into deciding if the school will support the trip including the timing of the competitions and conflicts with the academic calendar. Team discipline issues and conduct throughout the year will impact the support of the trip.

SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS

Students attending a school sponsored trip such as International travel or music trips may not be suspended for participating. However, it is important to note that students playing time may change at the coaches discretion (including not playing at all) upon their return for a variety of reasons (conditioning, safety, change in line ups, other players earning more time, new game plans, etc). It is important to note that the February International trip is generally the week preceding the winter tournament.

Fan Busses

At certain times opportunities to attend certain away games with a fan bus may arrive. When there are times a fan bus may work the following steps must be met in order.

1. Multiple students request a fan bus for the event to the Athletic Director
2. Funding will be secured for the fan bus

3. A school employee must agree to chaperone the bus
4. Students will be given an opportunity to sign up – 20 students must sign up to run the bus

Concussion Responsibilities

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

1. Complete and return concussion history form to the athletic department.
2. Inform school if student sustains a concussion outside of school hours. Complete new concussion history form following new injury.
3. If student suffers a concussion outside of school, complete head injury form and return it to the school nurse.
4. Complete a training provided by the school on concussions and return certificate of completion to the athletic department.
5. Watch for changes in your child that may indicate that your child does have a concussion or that your child's concussion may be worsening. Report to a physician:
 - A. Loss of consciousness
 - B. Headache
 - C. Dizziness
 - D. Lethargy
 - E. Difficulty concentrating
 - F. Balance problems
 - G. Answering questions slowly
 - H. Difficulty recalling events
 - I. Repeating questions
 - J. Irritability
 - K. Sadness
 - L. Emotionality
 - M. Nervousness
 - N. Difficulty with sleeping
6. Encourage your child to follow concussion protocol.
7. Enforce restrictions on rest, electronics and screen time.
8. Reinforce recovery plan.
9. Request a contact person from the school with whom you may communicate about your child's progress and academic needs.
10. Observe and monitor your child for any physical or emotional changes.
11. Request to extend make up time for work if necessary.
12. Recognize that your child will be excluded from participation in any extracurricular athletic event if all forms are not completed and on file with the athletic department.

Student and Student Athlete Responsibilities:

1. Complete Baseline Test prior to participation in athletics.
2. Return required concussion history form prior to participation in athletics.
3. Participate in all concussion training and education and return certificate of completion to the athletic department prior to participation in athletics.
4. Report all symptoms to athletic trainer and/ or school nurse.
5. Follow recovery plan.
6. **REST.**
7. **NO ATHLETICS.**
8. **BE HONEST!**
9. Keep strict limits on screen time and electronics.
10. Don't carry books or backpacks that are too heavy.
11. Tell your teachers if you are having difficulty with your classwork.
12. See the athletic trainer and/or school nurse for pain management.
13. Return to sports only when cleared by physician and the athletic trainer.
14. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
15. Report any symptoms to the athletic trainer and/or school nurse and parent(s)/guardian(s) if any occur after return to play.
16. Return medical clearance form to athletic trainer prior to return to play.
17. Students who do not complete and return all required trainings, testing and forms will not be allowed to participate in sports.

Diagnosed COVID-19 Infection

All cases of diagnosed COVID-19 will be immediately reported to the school nurse and the Abington Department of Public Health. Student athletes and coaches who are diagnosed with COVID-19 infection may return to school according to DPH guidelines. In addition, persons with COVID-19 infection need to receive written clearance from their health care provider clearing them to return to sport. Once the student athlete is cleared by their physician the athletic trainer will work with the athlete to facilitate their graduated return to play protocol.

1. The COVID-19 return to play protocol that AHS is following is published in the BJSM and is recommended by the MIAA
<https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/54/19/1174>
2. Must have physician clearance for return to sport prior to starting protocol.
3. The return to play protocol is a minimum of 7 days long, with return to competition on day 8. The athletic trainer can extend the protocol for any reason, and send a student for a cardiology clearance if necessary.