

THE DOBBS FERRY SCHOOLS  
Dobbs Ferry, New York

INTERSCHOLASTIC  
ATHLETIC  
HANDBOOK

*FOR ATHLETES & PARENTS*



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION

&

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Dear Parents and Student Athletes,

Congratulations on making the decision to participate in the Dobbs Ferry Interscholastic Athletic Program. Your involvement in our sports program will give you the opportunity to meet and work with our diverse, talented student body and our outstanding, dedicated coaching staff.

Our coaching staff cares about our athletes. They encourage academic achievement and character development. They believe that a truly educated individual is intellectually knowledgeable as well as physically educated. Our fine coaches serve as excellent, positive role models for our students and we are very proud of them and their achievements.

The mission of the Dobbs Ferry Interscholastic Athletic Program is to provide students with the opportunity to positively represent their school and community in a wide range of quality interscholastic programs. We hope that all students will participate in some phase of our program. These will be memorable high school experiences that will last a lifetime.

When students choose to participate in one of our sports programs, we feel that they have committed themselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. This handbook will acquaint you with some specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of interscholastic athletics. The program is governed by the regulations established by the Commissioner of Education's basic code for extra-class athletic activities, as well as by the Board of Education and school policies.

Dobbs Ferry is a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, competing in Section One, Conference 2.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the Dobbs Ferry athletic program and/or this booklet, please do not hesitate to call the Athletic Director, Jim Lindsay, at 693-1500 extension 3109, or the Athletic Secretary, Christina Leddy, at 693-1500 extension 3110. Please make certain to read the Handbook carefully and sign the acknowledgement provided by your coach. Make certain to get the BOCES directions to cheer on our athletes.

For up to the minute information about games, cancellations, site direction et al you may visit the BOCES website, [www.swboces.org/athletics](http://www.swboces.org/athletics) or by logging onto the Dobbs Ferry School District's website, [www.dfsd.org](http://www.dfsd.org), click on Departments, Athletics, and scroll down to the BOCES link.

**We look forward to your support of the EAGLES and LADY EAGLES!**

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## PHILOSOPHY OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Interscholastic athletics at the Dobbs Ferry High School is a component of the health and physical education program and therefore is an integral part of the district's total educational program. Athletics should be a broadening experience in which harmony of mind-body functions is created through striving for physical and mental excellence. This value-building experience should be offered to as many students as possible. A well coordinated program is vitally important to the morale of the school and our community.

Everyone involved in the delivery of athletics possesses a unique opportunity to teach positive life skills and values. Therefore, this educational experience demands highly qualified coaches. Desire, dedication, and self-discipline need to be developed in order to ensure the commitment and personal sacrifice required by athletes. Making such a commitment helps to nurture integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character. The final outcome is a better citizenry carrying these values throughout their life.

*"Athletes First, Winning Second"* focuses first on those decisions that are best for the student/athletes and second on what may improve the athlete's or teams chance of winning. We do not mean that winning is unimportant. The immediate short-term objective of any contest is to win. Striving to win within the rules of the game should be the objective of every athlete and coach.

**VISION** - We are committed to growth of the Dobbs Ferry student/athlete by facilitating excellence in sportsmanship, citizenship, leadership, academics and sports skills.

**MISSION** - To provide the Dobbs Ferry student/athlete with the opportunity to positively represent their school and community in a wide range of quality programs.

## VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

**Varsity** competition is the culmination of each sport's program.

Squad size at the Varsity level may be limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. Therefore, it might be necessary for some teams to hold try-outs. It is vital that each team member has a role and it informed of its importance. The number of roster positions is relative to the student's acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the team's goals.

While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on a Varsity team, as is the realization that a Varsity sport requires a six day a week commitment. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons. The dedication and commitment needed to conduct a successful Varsity program should be taken seriously.

The Varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. The communication among the Modified, Junior Varsity and Varsity programs is the responsibility of the Varsity coach. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest and working to reach the group's and individual's maximum potential are worthy goals of a Varsity level team.

### JUNIOR VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The **Junior Varsity** level is intended for those who display the potential of continued development into productive Varsity level performers. Team membership varies according to the structure of each program.

At this level, athletes are expected to have committed themselves to the program, team and continued self development. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play in addition to socio-emotional development. Junior Varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory.

The realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that is vital to a successful Junior Varsity team and player. For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist over the course of a season; however, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the six day a week commitment that is expected at the Varsity level. Some contests and practices may be held on holidays and Sundays, as well as scheduled during school vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a Varsity athlete clearly in sight, students participating at this level are expected to demonstrate a high degree of dedication and commitment.

## MODIFIED PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

This program is available to all students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade\*. Sport activities offered are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, and the relationship to the high school program. At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition. Every effort will be made to provide meaningful playing time for all participants. There are no cuts at the Modified level, no cuts does not mean equal playing time.

*\*In some cases, as approved under State Education Law, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders may compromise a Modified team.*

## SELECTIVE CLASSIFICATION

The program of Selective Classification allows the most talented 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders the opportunity to qualify to try out for a High School program.

The steps listed below must be followed:

1. Parent contacts Head Coach to discuss student's ability level.
2. The Head Coach can then choose to evaluate the player's skill level.
3. As an evaluation tool, the Head Coach must create a skill rubric and test the child's ability in their individual sport.
4. The Head coach must then submit the rubric, along with a paragraph, citing the exceptional skill level of the athlete and recommending the athlete for Selective Classification to the Athletic Director.
5. Once the student is officially recommended to the Athletic Director, the Athletic Director will submit the name of that student so they can take the Selective Classification Fitness Test. If they pass all components of the Fitness Test, then they will be allowed to try out for the team.

**Please note:** All recommendations must be into the Athletic Office a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the season, with the exception of the fall season, which must be received before the end of the school year prior to that fall season.

## BEHAVIOR OF AN ATHLETE OFF THE FIELD

In the belief that good sportsmanship on the part of spectators at high school athletic contests is as important as good sportsmanship on the part of athletes, the following guides for conduct are suggested as a means of continuing and strengthening the ties that exist between competing schools.

**BASIC PHILOSOPHY**- Visiting team members, students and adult spectators are guests to be accorded all the courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well mannered and well intentioned host would normally give. The visitors, in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school's facilities with care and respecting the rules and customs of the home school.

1. Athletic opponents and officials are guests and should be treated as such.
2. Spectators should watch the game from those areas designated by each school as spectator areas.
3. Verbal abuse of opposing athletes or officials by team members' spectators shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and the perpetrator(s) will be warned, then removed if the behavior continues.
4. It shall be the responsibility of authorized school personnel attending games, either home or away, to make sure students from their school conduct themselves appropriately.
5. Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their Interpretation; these decisions should be accepted.
6. Cheering should be in support of either team and should not be directed toward creating unfriendly rivalries among athletes or fans.
7. Any spectator who displays poor sportsmanship will be requested to leave and may be denied admission to future contests.
8. Spectators, athletes and coaches must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of their schools and that their positive actions can relate directly to the success of their teams.

The conduct of an athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that your behavior be above reproach. The academic life of an athlete is paramount. As an athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies to ensure academic success. In addition to maintaining good academics, an athlete should give attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

No contest shall be scheduled on designated religious holidays. On certain holidays designated by the Board of Education, neither practices nor contests will be held.

## STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES OTHER THAN ATHLETICS

Since there is no club time allocation presently made during the normal school day, all such clubs must meet after school. This, in turn, conflicts (in certain instances) with the practice sessions of the various athletic teams representing Dobbs Ferry. From a coaching point of view, it isn't desirable to have various squad members frequently absent. The administration has been assured that the members of our staff will cooperate fully with all parties concerned to resolve this problem.

### PROCEDURES FOR SPORTS "TRY-OUTS"

Every effort will be made to provide an athletic opportunity for any Dobbs Ferry student wishing to participate. In those sports when cutting may be necessary, every opportunity will be made to give students a fair chance to demonstrate their talent.

Final decision will be based on the coach's experience and best judgment and shall rest in the hands of the coach. He or she will assess the candidate's skill, fitness, knowledge and attitude as well as the overall needs of the squad.

#### *It shall be the responsibility of the student to:*

1. Submit his/her pre-participation form and medical information within the time scheduled [prior to each season](#).
2. Make certain their physical is up to date and current to qualify for the upcoming season.
3. Prepare for each season through off-season conditioning and skill work, participation in summer leagues or camps, or participation in another sport season.

#### *Guidelines and Procedures:*

1. Dates of first practices are determined by the NYSPHSAA.
2. Sign-up days will be held at least one week prior to the start of the season to provide adequate time for medical approval.
3. Dates of school physicals will be posted.
4. The try-out process shall be stated on or prior to the first day of practice.
5. No student shall be cut until half the minimum number of practices, required by the NYSPHSAA to play a scrimmage, have been completed.
6. An athlete must attend practice from the first day and may not try out for a team after the period described in #5 above unless he/she is medically excused or involved in an overlapping season.
7. If a player who was in the program last year must be cut, it should be done face-to face and in private.
8. A candidate may request one additional try-out day if he/she wishes a final opportunity.



## TRAINING RULES AND REGULATIONS

Athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules. Medical research clearly shows the use of tobacco, alcohol and/or controlled substances is detrimental to the health and performance of student athletes. Each coach will establish a set of training rules and guidelines. These will be clearly explained prior to the beginning of each sports season.

## ISSUING OF SCHOOL CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

It is the responsibility of the athlete to return to the coach all clothing and equipment issued. Failure to do this will result in the athlete reimbursing the school district for the missing articles. Athletes not paying for the missing articles will forfeit their right to participate in the next sport season.

## TRANSPORTATION

Student athletes will be transported to away contests by school authorized vehicles only. The district recommends that students return to school with their team. A student must submit a written parental authorization form to the coach if he/she chooses to be transported home by another adult, parent or a guardian after an away contest and must sign out with the coach prior to leaving the field.

## ATTENDANCE ON THE DAY OF A CONTEST - HS/MS ATHLETES

In order to participate, a player must be in school on the day of the contest and in attendance in classes. If a student is not in school the day before a contest, it is at the discretion of his/her coach whether or not he/she will be allowed to participate in an athletic contest.

If a student is in school by 11:00 A.M., he or she will be considered in attendance.

## COMMISSIONER' S REGULATIONS

According to the Commissioner's Regulations, a pupil shall be eligible for inter-school competition in a sport during a semester; provided that he/she is a bona fide pupil, enrolled during the first 15 days of that semester, is registered in the equivalent of three regular courses, is meeting the physical education requirement, and has been in regular attendance. Bona fide absences caused by personal illness are accepted.

Each individual team has its own additional regulations concerning daily attendance at practices and the minimum number of practices before being eligible for competition. Your coach will inform you of these rules.

An extra-curricular activity participant involved in any serious infraction of school rules (including, but not limited to, use of illegal drugs and alcohol, theft, vandalism, etc.) may be dropped from all activities for the remainder of the year.

## DURATION OF COMPETITION

A pupil shall be eligible for senior high school athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sport commencing with the pupil's entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation. A pupil reaching the age of 19 on or before July 1<sup>st</sup> may not participate during the school year.

## RISK OF INJURY AND INJURY PROCEDURES

By the very nature of athletic activity, participants are at risk of physical injury. No matter how careful the athlete and the coach are, no matter how many precautions are taken, the risk can be reduced but never eliminated. The risk of injury includes minor injuries such as broken bones, dislocations and muscle strains. The risk also includes catastrophic injuries such as permanent paralysis or even death. It is important everyone understands these risks, and that athletes follow all safety directions from their coaches because they are established to reduce the risk injury.

It is extremely important to report any injury an athlete suffers immediately to his or her Coach and the school Nurse. If you have health insurance that covers your child, you must submit claims to your insurance first.

In the event of medical expenses as a result of an injury sustained in a school activity, the initial expenses must be assumed by the student's family. Any expenses in excess of their personal insurance can then be submitted to the School District's insurance company for review. Refer any questions regarding insurance to the school Business Office.

## NCAA ELIGIBILITY

All student athletes must register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse to participate at the Division 12 Levels. Applications and information may be obtained online at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

## GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS OF STUDENT/ATHLETES

1. Make sure your children know that win or lose, you love them. Let them know that you appreciate their effort and that you will not be disappointed in them if they fail. Be the person in their life they can always look to for support.
2. Try to be completely honest with yourself about your children's athletic capability, their competitive attitude, their sportsmanship, their level of skill.
3. be helpful, but do not coach your children on the way to the game or at the breakfast table. Think how tough it must be on them to be continually inundated with advice, pep talks and criticism.
4. Teach your children to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying" to constantly work on improving their skills, to take the physical bumps and come back for more. Do not tell them that winning doesn't count, because it does and they know it. Instead, help them to develop a healthy competitive attitude, a "feel" for competing, for trying hard, for having a good time.
5. Try not to live your life through your children. You've lost as well as won, you've been frightened, you've backed off at times, and you've been the villain. Don't expect any better of them. Sure they are an extension of you, but do not assume they feel the same way you did, want the same things or have the same attitudes. Do not push them in the direction that will give you the most satisfaction.
6. Do not compete with your child's coach. A coach may become a hero to them for awhile, someone who can do no wrong, and you may find that hard to take. Or your children may become disenchanted with the coach. Do not side with them against the coach. Talk to them about the importance of learning how to handle problems and how to react to criticism. Try to help them understand the necessity for discipline, rules and regulations.
8. Get to know your child's coach. Make sure that you approve of the coach's attitudes and ethics. A coach can be very influential, and you should know what his/her values are so that you can decide whether or not you want them passed on to your children.
9. Remember that children tend to exaggerate, when they are praised and when they are criticized. Remember your reactions to the stories your children bring home from the gym. Don't criticize them for exaggerating, but don't overreact to the stories they tell you.
10. Teach your child the meaning of courage. Some of us can climb mountains but are frightened to get into a fight. Some of us can fight without fear but turn to jelly at the sight of a bee. Everyone is frightened of something. Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is learning to perform in spite of fear. Courage is not getting rid of fear, it is overcoming it.

## DOBBS FERRY INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

### FALL

Cheerleading	Varsity	DFHS
Cross Country- Boys& Girls	Varsity	DFHS
Football	Varsity, Modified	Gould Park
Soccer-Boys	Varsity, JV Modified	Springhurst Gould Park
Soccer-Girls	Varsity, JV Modified	Springhurst Gould Park
Tennis -Girls	Varsity	Mercy College
Volleyball	Varsity, JV Modified	DFHS Gym DFMS Gym

### WINTER

Basketball -Boys	Varsity, JV Modified	DFHS Gym DFMS gym
Basketball- Girls	Varsity, JV Modified	DFHS Gym DFMS Gym
Indoor Track-Boys&Girls	Varsity	DFHS
Wrestling	Varsity	DFHS

### SPRING

Baseball	Varsity, JV, Modified	Gould Park
Golf	Varsity	Ardsley C.C.
Lacrosse-Boys	Varsity, Modified	Springhurst
Lacrosse-Girls	Varsity, Modified	South Field,
Softball	Varsity, JV Modified	Springhurst North Field
Tennis-Boys	Varsity	Mercy College
Track& Field-Boys & Girls	Varsity, Modified	DFHS

## PARENTS AND SPORTS

### *Encouraging Your Child In Sports*

#### **DO...**

*...treat your child the same whether they win or lose.*

*...try to have fun and enjoy the games. Your unhappiness can breed a child's guilt.*

*...remain relaxed, calm, positive, and energized on the sidelines. Your attitude will help your child play better.*

*...make friends with the other parents at the games. Socializing can make the event more fun.*

*...get involved after the competition if the child's behavior is unacceptable during the game.*

*...let the coach do the coaching. Too much input can confuse the child.*

*...understand the child needs an occasional break from the sport they play. It doesn't mean they are quitting or burning out.*

*...be there when your child loses or gets discouraged. Be an understanding listener - not a fixer.*

*...give the child some space when they lose or don't perform well. Your youngster will want to be alone for a while, then they will be okay.*

*...keep your sense of humor. When you laugh and have fun, your child's stress level takes a big drop.*

## **DON'T...**

*... say, "We're playing today." Instead say, "You're playing today." This is your child's game. Help them to learn to be responsible for preparing for the game.*

*... live out your own dreams through your child's sport. The sport should not become your life.*

*... get too pushy.*

*... ignore your child's behavior if it is unsportsmanlike, but don't correct your child's behavior from the sideline. Talk to them privately.*

*... tell the child what they did wrong after a tough game and don't expect your child to want to talk immediately after a game loss.*

*... make enemies with your child's opponent's parents.*

*... make your child feel guilty for all the time, money and sacrifices made for their sport. Don't think of the sport as an investment for a return.*

*... badger, harass or use sarcasm to motivate your child. Comparing your child's progress to others, threatening or using fear, will not improve your child's performance.*

*... talk about the coaches or staff in a negative manner. If you have comments or suggestions, talk to them directly.*

*... try to take the coach's job away. Be the parent.*

# **THE EAGLES ARE A CLASS ACT!**

## **GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP.....**

...is a top priority for the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District. Displaying proper conduct is a concern that includes all participants, coaches, parents/guardians and spectators. The guidelines listed below are expectations for appropriate behavior at all athletic contests:

TO BE A GOOD HOST BY TREATING VISITORS AS GUESTS.

TO TREAT OPPONENTS WITH RESPECT.

TO RESPECT THE JUDGEMENT OF THE CONTEST OFFICIALS AND COACHES.

TO AVOID PROFANE AND ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.

TO AVOID OBNOXIOUS BEHAVIOR.

Any individual who chooses to ignore these guidelines will be subject to removal from the contest. Please remember that these contests are only games and not a matter of life or death for anyone involved.

**THANK YOU!**

## **CONTEST INFORMATION**

### **AND**

## **DIRECTIONS TO ATHLETIC SITES**

The section I BOCES website will provide you with up to date information. Follow the links below and you will be able to obtain schedules, contests sites and directions to those sites.

Log onto the Dobbs Ferry site at:	<a href="http://www.dfsd.org">www.dfsd.org</a>
Click on :	Departments
Then click onto:	Athletics
Scroll down to:	Resources
Click onto:	the BOCES Web site
Go to:	Games
Then:	Game Schedules

**USE THE DROPDOWN MENU TO CHOOSE THE SPORT,  
LEVEL AND DATES YOU NEED!**

You may also call our Dobbs Ferry Sports Hotline for a listing of the day's events and/or cancellations at: 693-1500 x3111



***Please complete, sign, detach and return to your  
COACH.***

**DOBBS FERRY HIGH SCHOOL  
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

**Training Rules, Regulations  
and  
Code of Conduct  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I have read, understood and acknowledge receiving the training rules, regulations and code of conduct contained in the Interscholastic Athletics Handbook for Athletes and Parents. As a scholastic athlete, I accept my personal responsibility for these guidelines and rules. As a parent or guardian, I accept my responsibility to help my daughter/son meet their obligations as outlined.

ATHLETES NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ATHLETES SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent/guardian email address* \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**This form must be signed by both the participant and the parent or guardian and returned to the coach BEFORE an athlete may participate.**