

DOBBS FERRY SCHOOLS

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

For Athletes, Parents & Coaches



2017

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I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and thank you in advance for all of your support of the many activities and athletic programs at the Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District. Whether you are parents, teachers, staff, coaches, alumni or Dobbs Ferry community supporters, I am certain you share in my pride of our students as they dedicate and commit themselves towards excellence in their chosen endeavors.

In Dobbs Ferry, Interscholastic Athletics are an extension of the educational experience and stand in support of the District's stated mission of developing independent, curious and open-minded learners who think critically, work collaboratively, act ethically and are knowledgeable about the world around them. Participants in Interscholastic Sports are students first and foremost and athletes second.

I am very excited about the positive direction of our athletic programs at Dobbs Ferry. I personally invite each of you to show your support of these programs by attending events throughout the school year. Your continued support is imperative as we build our student athletes to be outstanding representatives of our school and prepare them for a successful future.

This handbook provides the student-athlete and their parents/guardians with the necessary information to make the athletic experience a rewarding one. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the expectations, rules and regulations which govern the Dobbs Ferry athletic program. I encourage you to visit our athletics webpage at: [Dobbs Ferry Athletic Webpage](#) as there is an abundance of information on all aspects of our program as well as a comprehensive section on concussion education.

The athletic department is always seeking ways in which we can improve our programs, teams, facilities and overall student-athlete experience. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Andrew Klaich
Director of Athletics, Physical Education and Health
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Our Vision

Independent Thinkers Prepared to Change the World

Our Mission

The Dobbs Ferry School District strives to develop independent, curious, and open-minded learners who think critically, work collaboratively, act ethically and are knowledgeable about the world around them.

In support of our mission, we are committed to:

- Providing a high-quality and challenging curriculum with the depth, breadth and relevance appropriate to each learner.
- Respecting the unique abilities and learning styles of each student.
- Utilizing the most effective and innovative instructional approaches and technological advances.
- Encouraging students to meet their challenges – whether academic, athletic, or artistic – with openness, enthusiasm, and a willingness to take risks.
- Recruiting, retaining, and developing high quality teachers and staff.
- Celebrating and learning from the diversity of our students and the greater Dobbs Ferry community.

HOW ATHLETICS SUPPORTS THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

Interscholastic athletics offer a variety of obvious fitness and health benefits for student athletes, while developing self-discipline and teamwork. Athletes develop strength and stamina while working as part of a team to meet collective goals. Participants learn teamwork, sacrifice, and resilience. Beyond these benefits, through participation in interscholastic sports, student athletes develop additional life skills that support success in school and life in general.

Dobbs Ferry student athletes are expected to develop, strengthen and demonstrate the traits identified in the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile of being Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Risk Takers, Balanced, and Reflective. Through participation in Interscholastic Sports athletes grow as learners and individuals, expanding their skill sets and growing in confidence, while learning to balance the various components of their lives. Participation in our various sports programs also provides the student athlete with opportunities to interact with and impact the larger community and world around them through various charitable and volunteer activities.

Similar to lessons learned in the classroom, lessons learned on the field or court, through participation in interscholastic sports, remain with students and serve them throughout their lives. Our student athletes benefit not just from the joys associated with wins and losses but from developing the lifelong skills a learner needs to be successful in the 21st century while fulfilling the district vision of truly being “Independent Thinkers Prepared to Change the World”.

HOW ATHLETICS SUPPORTS THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

IB LEARNER TRAIT	EXAMPLES OF HOW ATHLETICS SUPPORTS
Inquirers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes are constantly seeking strategies to improve their personal skills as well as effectively collaborate as a member of a team. • Athletes enthusiastically continue to search for ways to progress and grow as athletes within their respective sport identifying areas of strength and areas for improvement.
Knowledgeable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes are continuously increasing their knowledge base of personal skills, team strategies, leadership, improving team morale, and group dynamics. • Athletes continually explore and are exposed to multiple disciplines to maximize their athletic potential.
Thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and coaches work together to analyze strategies to optimize overall athletic performance. • Students learn to take responsibility for their actions on and off the field/court.
Communicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletics stresses the use of positive and effective communication on a daily basis. • Athletes must listen to teammates and coaches and collaborate effectively to achieve success.
Principled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletics are governed by a code of conduct which fosters integrity and honesty. • Coaches seek to promote justice and fairness by reinforcing positive behavior. This can be observed by the selection of captains and constantly stressing exemplary character of their athletes.

Open-Minded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through athletics, teammates accept the whole group no matter what their background may be. • Students set aside their differences, learn from each other and view their team as a family.
Caring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dobbs Ferry athletic programs shows a commitment to service by undertaking multiple initiatives that have an impact on the community (ex. Creating and implementing youth sport camps). • Teammates and coaches show compassion and empathy to each other
Risk Takers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes are constantly taking risks. The act of trying out for a team is risk in itself. • Athletes take on leadership roles within the team and play new positions which create opportunities for students to step outside of their comfort zones.
Balanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes are students first and must manage an extremely demanding schedule. • Our athletes understand that participating in a sport is one component of their lives and seek to find balance to promote personal well- being
Reflective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes continuously reflect upon personal and team strengths and weaknesses. • Through reflection, students develop goals aimed to promote personal and team development. This reflection takes place multiple times throughout the season as well as during the offseason.

Sports Offered at Dobbs Ferry School District

Athletic opportunities exist for students in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 on Modified, Junior Varsity and Varsity teams. Interscholastic Athletics are governed by the rules of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association and Section One.

Fall Sports

<i>Varsity</i>	<i>Junior Varsity</i>	<i>Modified (7/8)</i>
Cheerleading	Boys Soccer	Cross Country
Cross Country	Girls Soccer	Football
Football	Girls Volleyball	Boys Soccer
Boys Soccer		Girls Soccer
Girls Soccer		Girls Volleyball
<i>Girls Swim (merged)</i>		
Girls Tennis		
Girls Volleyball		

Winter Sports

<i>Varsity</i>	<i>Junior Varsity</i>	<i>Modified (7/8)</i>
Cheerleading	Boys Basketball	Boys Basketball
Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball	Girls Basketball
Girls Basketball		
<i>Boys Swimming (merged)</i>		
Winter Track		
<i>Wrestling (merged)</i>		

Spring Sports

<i>Varsity</i>	<i>Junior Varsity</i>	<i>Modified (7/8)</i>
Baseball	Baseball	Baseball
Golf	Boys Lacrosse	Boys Lacrosse
Boys Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse	Girls Lacrosse
Girls Lacrosse	Softball	Softball
Softball		Track & Field
Boys Tennis		
Track & Field		

VARSITY MERGED TEAMS WITH ARDSLEY – Girls Swim (Fall), Boys Swim (Winter), Wrestling (Winter)

Tentative Start Dates Through 2021
Varsity/JV

Note: These dates are the State start dates. Individual Sections can move them with a majority vote from all the school districts.

	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
2015	August 17	November 9	March 7
2016	August 22	November 14	March 13
2017	August 14	November 6	March 5
2018	August 13	November 5	March 4
2019	August 19	November 11	March 9
2020	August 17	November 9	March 8
2021	August 16	November 8	March 7

MODIFIED PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:

This program is available to all students in the 7th and 8th 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.

**In some cases, as approved under State Education Law, 8th and 9th graders may comprise a Modified 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.

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 is informed of its importance. 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. 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.

TRYOUT PERIOD:

Selecting or not selecting athletes is the single most stressful and difficult aspect for a coach/coaches to do. Tryouts will last 3-5 days; all students will have the right to “try out” for the various sports that are available in the fall (August-November), winter (November-February), and spring (March-June). As the number of children interested in participating on a team increases, it becomes impossible to keep everyone and still ensure safety, quality instruction, and provide adequate playing time in contests. Therefore, when the numbers reach that threshold, student participation numbers are capped. Coaches will inform any player who is not selected for the team in a caring and positive manner. With input and guidance from the coaches, students should conduct a personal assessment of their skills comparing their ability and skills to other players trying out to determine if they have the ability to make the specific team. This self-evaluation process along with the coach’s evaluation could prevent some of the disappointment of not making the team. Athletes are encouraged to ask for feedback from the coach regarding their progress and skill level during off season workouts and tryouts.

PLAYING TIME:

It is very difficult to accept not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgements based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved on what they see during practices and games. At the varsity level in particular the emphasis will be on developing the most competitive team possible given the talent of the athletes. Younger students (freshmen and sophomores) may play over older students (juniors and seniors). There is no guarantee of playing time particularly at the varsity level. It is possible that students at the varsity level may not play during contests.

ATTENDANCE:

It is the expectation that players to be at all practices, meetings, games, etc. No progress or improvement for an individual player or the team can be made without appropriate attendance. If alerting the coach is not possible, the player is expected to connect with the coach as soon as possible after returning to the school or next team function. Consequences associated with unexcused absences can consist of conditioning to make up time missed, partial/full game suspensions and dismissal from the team.

- When students and parents/guardians choose to take their family vacations during sport seasons it must be understood that the time missed can affect the team and conditioning. Vacations taken will have a large impact on a student’s ability to make the team and/or participate in games.

ATTENDANCE ON THE DAY OF A CONTEST:

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.

TEAM CAPTAINS (*Varsity Sports only*):

Captains are elected by team members and/or appointed by coaches. Some coaches may not have season long captains, but select 1 or 2 prior to the contest. Coaches will inform the team of the selection criteria and obligations of the position prior to the final decision of captaincy. Team captains or officers are considered to display high levels of honor, leadership, responsibility, positive attitude, respect, dependable, and have strong communication skills. Therefore, elected student athletes who are representing the team and school should conduct themselves in exemplary manner both in and outside of the school. Captaincy is not a rite of passage and is not limited to seniors. Any student who is involved in a violation of the Dobbs Ferry High School rules and regulations resulting in a suspension from school will lose the ability to serve as captain or to be appointed or elected to the position of captain of any school sponsored team for the period of one calendar year.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS:

All equipment and uniforms issued to an athlete by the school are property of Dobbs Ferry Schools. They are required to be returned in the same condition as they were issued (excluding normal wear and tear) or the athlete is expected to compensate the Athletic Department for the lost or damaged equipment. Students may not practice or try out for another sport until issued equipment has been returned, bills have been paid and have been cleared by the previous coach.

LOCKERS:

All athletes are entitled to a locker. All lockers should be returned in the same condition in which it was assigned. Any malfunction of the lockers must be reported to the coach immediately. All students are encouraged to lock up all belongings and not store any valuable items in the school locker room. Each student is responsible for keeping locker clean and vacating at the end of the school year.

POSTPONED GAMES:

League rules dictate that contests postponed due to weather or other circumstances must be rescheduled on the NEXT available school day or Saturday.

POST-SEASON PLAY:

Varsity teams will usually enter post-season, Section One Tournaments in the quest for Regional and State championships. These tournaments usually occur for up to two weeks after the last regular season contest and could be held during vacation periods.

RETURN TO ACTION AFTER INJURY OR VACATION:

The NYSPHSAA handbook states how many days of practice are needed before a scrimmage or a game. Those students returning from a prolonged injury or vacation generally need additional practices before having their eligibility restored. All students who are returning from an injury, who have seen a physician, must have a doctor's note stating that they have been cleared before being declared eligible for practice and interscholastic competition.

ATHLETIC TRAINER AND REPORTING INJURIES:

It is the responsibility of the student athlete to report any pain or discomfort they are experiencing immediately to the coach. All incidents or and/or injuries that occur with the team during a practice or contest both home and away are to be reported by the athletic trainer or coach. Coaches/trainer will complete the necessary paperwork following the injury and will submit to the athletic office within 24 hours of the incident. The athletic trainer can provide immediate care, rehabilitation techniques, and/or prevention of injury for a student athlete but the student athlete should see their physician. The athletic trainer will provide the coach with the necessary information for the student athlete to be cleared when he/she can returned to play.

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.

COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR ATHLETIC CONCERNS:

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the 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 YOUR CHILD'S COACH

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations your coach has for your child as well as player's on the squad
- Clear defined role on the team
- Location and times of practices and contests
- Team requirements (special equipment, off season conditioning)
- Procedures should your child be injured during participation

It is encouraged that your child should discuss any issues or concerns with the coach directly. It is a goal that children learn how to advocate and communicate for themselves.

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- Amount of playing time
- Team Strategy
- Play calling
- Other students/athletes

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH, PLEASE FOLLOW THIS PROCEDURE

1. Call/email to set up an appointment with the coach
2. PLEASE do not attempt to confront the coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive relationships.

THE NEXT STEP: WHAT CAN A PARENT DO IF A MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

1. Call and speak with the Athletic Director
2. At this meeting, further appropriate steps can be determined.
3. Parents are encouraged to discuss issues with the Athletic Director. However, if a parent has specific complaints regarding a coach, then the coach must have the opportunity to be present to meet with a parent.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR CO CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Any student who is planning on participating in a co-curricular activity and is currently failing or is in danger of failing one or more classes (as indicated on the Progress Report or Report Card) will begin that activity on probation.

Students who are participating in a co-curricular activity who are currently failing or are in danger of failing one or more subjects (as indicated on the Progress Report or Report Card) are put on academic probation for two weeks. During this initial probationary period, he/she can remain on the roster and may participate in any and all practices and games/competitions. It is required that the probationary student attend T-periods with the teacher of the class he/she is failing, attend all classes, and complete all assignments.

At the end of the two-week probationary period, the student will be responsible for submitting a blank Probationary Progress Report (PPR) to his/her teachers for all subjects. Each teacher will fill out the progress report and the student will promptly deliver the completed report to the Assistant Principal's Office. PPR forms are available at the High School Office.

The student's progress during the probationary period will be reviewed by the Assistant Principal/Athletic Director. If the PPR indicates the student is passing, the academic probation will end. If the student is not passing but demonstrates significant effort to raise his/her grades, the academic probation will be extended for an additional two weeks. The student will be able to fully participate on his/her team when the determination is made by the Assistant Principal/Athletic Director. If the student is failing and also not showing any effort to raise his/her grade, he/she will remain on the roster but may not play in any games or participate in any practices. Attendance at T-period is still required.

At the end of the second two-week probationary period, the student is responsible for submitting another blank PPR to his/her teachers and then promptly delivering the completed PPR to the Assistant Principal/Athletic Director.

If the student is failing one or more subjects after the second two-week probationary period, he/she will be removed from all co-curricular activities. Any student who is removed from an activity due to academic failures may not tryout or participate in an activity until the progress report or report card demonstrates he/she is passing all subjects. Any student who has brought his/her grades up to passing after the co-curricular activity has started will be considered for participation in the activity.

Any student who fails one or more classes for the year will be ineligible for the fall co curricular activity unless the class is taken during summer school and the student receives a passing grade.

Athletic Code of Conduct:

Students who participate in athletics are bound by the expectations set forth in the Dobbs Ferry Student Code of Conduct. The rules and expectations outlined in the school code of conduct apply at all athletic events including but not limited to: practices, games, and other team functions. In addition to the school's student code of conduct, student athletes shall also abide by the expectations listed below.

Behavior for a Dobbs Ferry student athlete is expected to be at an even higher level than that of the Dobbs Ferry High School student body. Players should show respect at all times to not only their coaches and teammates, but to other faculty members, adults, and students within our school environment. Because players represent Dobbs Ferry High School on and off the court/field, they are expected to maintain a high behavioral standard. Players may be suspended or dismissed by the Coach, Athletic Director, and Principal's discretion for citizenship reasons including violations of the Dobbs Ferry Student Code of Conduct (ex. bullying, hazing, cyberbullying, etc.).

As an Athlete -- I will represent my school with pride, handle adversity and success with dignity and grace. I will be a role model committed to the highest standard of sportsmanship, leadership, and personal conduct. I will honor at all times this commitment to our sport, my team, my coaches, and my school. I will give my full effort in the classroom, in practice, in games, and in all aspects of my life. I will demonstrate respect for family, my team, my coaches, my teachers, my opponents, and officials. I will practice good citizenship, pursue academic success and integrity, and live a healthy lifestyle.

As a Coach -- I will act in the best interests of all student athletes within our program and promote the development of the whole student-athlete and person. I will create an atmosphere of pride and respect for our sport, our players, officials, opponents, and coaches. I will be a positive role model and set high standards for our players, demonstrate fair play and sportsmanship to all, never place winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character. I will be committed, knowledgeable, and prepare our players to compete to the best of their abilities. Finally I will promote good citizenship, academic achievement, and a healthy lifestyle.

As a Spectator/Parent -- I will always represent the school with pride handle adversity and success with dignity and grace. I will demonstrate sportsmanship through positive support and encouragement of all players, coaches, and officials. I will create an atmosphere of respect for the sport, players, officials, coaches, and fellow spectators/parent. I recognize that high school athletics is a learning experience for the student athletes and mistakes are going to be made. I will praise them in their attempt to improve themselves as students, athletes, and as people.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS:

About Athletic Placement Process (APP)

The APP is only used when an individual athlete's athletic skills warrant moving to the commencement or intermediate sport competition level, and therefore, will be initiated by the coach, athletic director or physical education staff, who recognizes the student's skills. The APP will be used either prior to the beginning of the season, so that the student athlete can participate in the tryout period, or within the timeline specified by the NYSPHSAA Promotion rule.

Implementation Steps:

1. District Policy
2. Coach Recommendation (not parent or athlete). If the coach does not feel the student athlete will benefit from playing at an accelerated level the evaluation process will not go any further.
3. Parent/Guardian Permission
4. Administrative Approval
5. Medical Clearance: If the medical director does not clear the student to participate in the desired sport and level, he or she may not proceed any further in the evaluation process. The medical director will determine:
 - a. The physical maturity level of the student in relation to the sport and level in which they wish to participate using the Tanner Scale
6. Sport Skill Evaluation
7. Physical Fitness Testing: test cannot be administered by coach of sport student is trying out for.
8. Qualification Determination
9. Try Outs
10. Notifications: A notification list of the scores of all athletes who have successfully completed the process and have been approved through the APP after the try-out period has been completed must be sent to:
 - a. The athletic director of competitor schools
 - b. Athletic Governing board or section office

For all information on the APP including Tanner scores, fitness testing etc., please visit the following link:

[Athletic Placement Process for Athletics](#)

This link can also be found at www.dfsd.org > Athletics > Resources > Athletic Placement Process for Inter-school athletic program

ATHLETIC OPTION

Students in grades 10-12 who are members of an interscholastic team, have a grade of "B" or better in physical education, and have a full academic schedule, may request Athletic Option for the purpose of using the time to study or complete written work at the discretion of the Principal and Athletic Director. Athletic Option may not be used to provide a student with a double lunch period.

Students who are on Athletic Option will receive a grade for their physical education class from their coach. Students must get a passing grade in order to fulfill the New York State Physical Education requirement. Students who do not receive a passing grade from their coaches will not be permitted this option for the next sport season.

The purpose of Athletic Option is to provide students with additional study time during the school day. Students with Athletic Option will report to a designated "Academic Study" room. The student's name will be added to the Academic Study attendance roster during the Athletic Option period. Athletic Option is a privilege, not a right. The administration holds the right to revoke the Athletic Option privilege. Students must return to their regular physical education class the day after the sport season ends. If students drop or are dropped from an athletic team, they must return to their regular physical education class on the day of their next scheduled physical education class. If a student has Athletic Option period 1 or 9 they must report to Athletic Option.

- *Full schedule is defined as no more than one free period per day (academic study, double lunch, late arrival etc)*