

Uxbridge Public Schools

Athletic Department Handbook



Home of the SPARTANS

2019-2020

FORWARD

The Uxbridge Public Schools Athletic Department Handbook is a reference guide for both coaches and student-athletes. The information presented in this handbook has been compiled to better acquaint you with the policies, practices and regulations that govern the interscholastic athletic programs at Uxbridge Public Schools; both the high school and the intermediate school level.

The mission of our athletic department remains fundamental to the structure provided in this handbook. Coaches and student-athletes should view this handbook as a guide; it is not intended to be all-inclusive. Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values must be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are evaluated.

Participation on an athletic team can be a rewarding educational experience. It is important that *SPARTAN* student-athletes realize the time demands, responsibility, dedication and sacrifices required when making this commitment. Please keep this booklet handy and refer to it when questions and/or concerns arise about your, or your child's athletic experience. If you feel that your questions are not answered in this booklet, please contact the coach first. If your concern still has not been adequately addressed, you should contact the Athletic Director. We look forward to your association with the athletic program at Uxbridge Public Schools.

Sincerely,
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Handbook Committee

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Non-Discrimination Clause: The Uxbridge Public Schools Athletic Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

PHILOSOPHY

Uxbridge Public Schools strongly supports the commitment to interscholastic athletic programs as an essential educational opportunity available to student-athletes. For all participants, sports provide the opportunity to develop the skills and abilities essential to becoming a well-rounded individual and finding success in life. Young men and women develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially through voluntary participation in properly conducted interscholastic athletic programs. Specifically, the improvement of character and physical skills, along with the opportunity for achievement and the development of a desire to excel are all advantages associated with athletic participation.

The Uxbridge Public Schools athletic philosophy parallels school goals of academic excellence. The athletic program and its coaches seek to create an environment in which students can develop themselves both as athletes and as individuals. Uxbridge coaches seek to challenge and develop student-athletes within this environment utilizing positive coaching techniques and personalized praise. In return, student-athletes are expected to demonstrate that a pursuit of excellence in athletics is fully compatible with the pursuit of excellence in the classroom, and that a combination of the two endeavors lends itself to a more complete overall educational experience.

Uxbridge Public Schools supports a comprehensive menu of athletic activities and encourages all students to participate regardless of their level of athletic ability. By learning to think critically, withstand pressure, respect ourselves and others, adapt to change, respect authority and hold ourselves and others to high ethical and educational standards, student-athletes and coaches accomplish the more difficult task: discovering in oneself a fundamental worth that transcends athletic performance.

The Athletic Department encourages the active involvement of the greater Uxbridge community. The excitement generated through sport has the ability to create a bond between school and community. We want every community member to be proud of our student-athletes who represent their school and community in other cities and towns throughout our league and throughout the state.

The ultimate goal of the athletic program is to strive for excellence not perfection. We cannot ask our student-athletes to be perfect, but we can ask them to strive to perform to the best of their ability. The true rewards of participation in sports are entirely intrinsic and do not require trophies or accolades to be known. The student-athlete will find this reward within himself or herself.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Uxbridge Public Schools Athletic Department is totally committed to the academic mission of our school(s). The athletic program is an extension of the classroom, not a diversion from it. With this in mind, our athletic program abides by the following guidelines:

The mission of the Uxbridge Public Schools is to provide challenging educational programs and services to meet the diverse needs of all students in a safe and supportive environment; in partnership with the community, we will prepare students to become competent, creative and contributing citizens.

CORE VALUES

Our Athletic Department Core Values are consistent with our district which include:

Shares responsibility for excellence and integrity

Perseveres through challenges and adversity

Accepts new ideas and thoughts

Respects self and others

Teaches effective communication, compassion and balance

Accountable for a high standard of academics, athletics and behavior

Nurtures personal independence and responsibility

GOVERNING BODIES

MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Uxbridge Public Schools is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) whose purpose is to organize, regulate and promote interscholastic athletics for secondary schools in Massachusetts. As a member of this association, we are governed by the rules and regulations set forth by the MIAA.

*Please note “member” schools may enforce stricter standards in some instances.

MIAA MISSION STATEMENT: The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity should permeate all interscholastic athletics in our community. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and concern for others. Our athletic fields should be a laboratory to produce good sports reflecting “fair play” in every aspect of life.

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS’ ASSOCIATION

Some Uxbridge Public Schools student activities that fall under the athletic department, (i.e. cheerleading), may also fall under the Massachusetts School Administrators’ Association (MSAA). Coaches and athletes on such teams must abide by the rules and regulations set by the MSAA.

SOUTH WORCESTER COUNTY LEAGUE

Uxbridge High School & Whitin Intermediate School is very proud to be a member of the twelve-school league known as the South Worcester County League. The League is governed by both the MIAA and its own constitution and bylaws. The league sets Uxbridge’s interleague game schedules for all levels of competition. Members of the South Worcester County League include: Auburn, Bartlett, David Prouty, Grafton, Leicester, Millbury, Northbridge, Oxford, Quaboag, Southbridge, Tantasqua, and Uxbridge.

SPORTS AT UXBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Uxbridge High School offers 29 varsity and sub-varsity interscholastic teams (grades 8-12)
Whitin Intermediate School offers 10 interscholastic teams (grades 6-7)*

Fall Sports

The fall season may begin for all teams as early as the second (2nd) Thursday preceding Labor Day and ends in late October/early November. Sports such as football and Cheer may begin earlier. High School Varsity teams who qualify for the MIAA postseason tournament may participate well through the month of November. Football concludes its regular season on Thanksgiving Day.

High School

Fall Cheerleading - Varsity
Boys Cross Country - Varsity
Girls Cross Country - Varsity
Field Hockey - Varsity, JV
Football - Varsity, JV, Level III*
Golf - Varsity
Boys Soccer - Varsity, JV
Girls Soccer - Varsity, JV

Intermediate School

Boys Cross Country
Girls Cross Country
Field Hockey
Football- Level III*

**Level III Football team consists of 7th & 8th graders.*

Winter Sports

The winter season begins the Monday after Thanksgiving and ends in late February. High School Varsity teams that qualify for the MIAA post-season tournament may be participating into March.

High School

Boys Basketball- Varsity, JV
Girls Basketball- Varsity, JV
Winter Cheerleading- Varsity
Boys Indoor Track & Field- Varsity
Girls Indoor Track & Field- Varsity
Ice Hockey- Varsity (Co-op with Northbridge, Sutton, Nipmuc)
Wrestling- Varsity (Co-op with Northbridge)

Intermediate School

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball

Spring Sports

The spring season begins the third Monday of March and ends in late May. High School Varsity teams that qualify for the MIAA post-season tournament may be participating into June.

High School

Baseball- Varsity & JV

Softball- Varsity

Boys Outdoor Track & Field- Varsity

Girls Outdoor Track & Field- Varsity

Girls Tennis- Varsity

Boys Tennis- Varsity

Intermediate School

Baseball

Softball

Boys Outdoor Track & Field

Girls Outdoor Track & Field

Qualities of Uxbridge sports teams:

- Sports are to be considered co-ed under MIAA guidelines unless noted as boys/girls OR single gender if similar alternative sport is available (i.e. baseball/softball).
- All sports will run if sufficient participation numbers are supported by registrations along with facility accessibility, budgeted funds and availability of a coach.
- Unlimited rosters are subject to the availability of uniforms within the school budget.
- Uxbridge Athletic Department participates in a number of co-op's with surrounding school districts.

Anticipated dates for Athletic Director and/or Coaches meetings:

- Student/Parent Annual Meeting will be held at the commencement of fall sports in late August.
- Fall meeting with coaches will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting.
- Winter meeting with coaches will be held on or about the first (1st) Monday in November.
- Spring meeting with coaches will be held on or about the first (1st) Monday in March.

CERTIFICATION OF A TEAM MEMBER

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

A student must be eligible according to MIAA Eligibility Rules and those of Uxbridge Public Schools in order to be a candidate for an Intermediate, Junior Varsity or Varsity team. The head coaches of all programs will conduct a preseason meeting with all team candidates to communicate expectations, team rules and responsibilities. The following documents must be on file with the athletic department before participation in any athletics is allowed (including tryouts and practices). The due date for each season will be listed on the Athletic webpage:

Registration

- Registration for athletics is required before the season begins. FamilyID is the online portal used for athletic registration for the Uxbridge Public Schools, Please visit: <https://www.familyid.com/Uxbridge-high-school-athletics> to register for all athletic teams and offerings.

Physical

- Documentation of a current physical exam performed by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner must be on file. While participating on an interscholastic athletic team, a student must maintain a current physical at all times. Once a student's physical exam is older than thirteen months, the physical is considered to be out of date and the student is no longer eligible to participate even if the physical expires during the middle of the season. You may check with the school nurse to see if there is a current physical on file.

User Fee

- The athletic fee of \$150 (Uxbridge High School) and \$100.00 (Whitin Intermediate School) is due to the Athletic Director after teams have been posted and **before the first contest**. Please pay all athletic fees online by accessing the FamilyID Portal on the high school website: <https://www.uxbridgeschools.com>. A bank check is also an acceptable means of payment of athletic fees and may be turned in at the athletic office in an envelope clearly marked "Attn: Athletic Fee."

No student-athlete will be prevented from participating in athletics due to financial hardship (fee waiver if approved form for free/reduced lunch). Families with financial hardship should contact the athletic director at (508) 278-8633 x.1135 for assistance and /or payment options.

ELIGIBILITY

Any Student is eligible for sports participation for four (4) consecutive years after completion of grade 8 providing:

1. He/she is under 19 years old as of September 1st of the school year.
2. He/she meets all academic eligibility requirements.
3. He/she has not been ejected from a contest by an official more than once during the current season.
4. He/she has not violated athletic rules, including both Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) regulations and individual team rules presented by the coach.
5. He/she has met other school obligations, such as serving detentions.

A student is **NOT** eligible:

1. If he/she is not a student currently enrolled in Uxbridge Public Schools.
2. If he/she does not currently live with his/her legal parent/guardian(s). Exceptions require administration approval.
3. If he/she transferred from one high school to another, he/she is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which you participated at the varsity level or its equivalent during the one year period preceding the transfer (see exemptions listed in Rule 57.7 of the [MIAA Handbook](#) for exceptions, unless the student has changed their legal residence).
4. If he/she was "persuaded" or influenced to transfer to the present school by a coach, athletic director, principal, or other person connected with the school.

5. If he/she was disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., he/she may not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey and soccer, have been completed. See [MIAA Handbook](#), Section 49 for further details.
6. If he/she physically assaults an official, he/she is ineligible in all sports for one year.
7. If he/she willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempt to injure a teammate or opponent, the student will be immediately excluded from participation in that sport for one year.
8. If the Athletic Fee payment or payment arrangements have not been made. Permissible penalties include the denial of participation in extracurricular activities while the student is enrolled in the district.

Waivers of certain MIAA Eligibility Rules may be submitted, allowing a student-athlete to participate. Students who wish to apply for a waiver of an eligibility rule should meet with the Athletic Director several weeks prior to the start of the season in question. Additionally, a student who is home-schooled must reside in Uxbridge and have an approved home-school plan on file with the district central office.

The violation of any eligibility rules may result in forfeiture of a game won or tied. If, in your opinion, there is any doubt concerning your eligibility, consult the Athletic Director. The rules apply to all teams. The Committee on Athletics of the MIAA will resolve all questions on eligibility.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

GRADES

A student is eligible for athletic participation providing he or she must be passing *five* classes at the end of the term. For fall eligibility, the end-of-year grade (not fourth quarter grade) will be used to determine eligibility. If a student receives a report card that does not meet this standard, athletic participation shall cease that day. Students may be allowed to continue to practice if agreed upon by the Athletic Director, Guidance Department, and Coach.

DAILY ATTENDANCE, HOMEROOM, CLASS CUTS

Students are expected to attend all scheduled periods during the school day. Athletes must be in school and report to all periods in order to practice or play on that day. Exceptions such as doctor's appointments and college visits must be cleared by the coach in advance, whenever possible.

ABSENCE AND TARDY

Any student absent from school for any reason may not participate in a practice or a contest on the day of the absence, unless approved in advance by the Principal or Athletic Director. Tardy students must be in school no later than 10:30 AM in order to be eligible for a practice or game the day of the late arrival, but a student who has been excessively tardy or for whom consequences for poor attendance have been imposed may be denied the privilege of participation until said consequences are resolved. Students who are dismissed from school may not return after the end of the school day to participate in athletics, or extracurricular activities, unless they have received prior approval from the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Coaches will make every attempt to check the daily school attendance of their student-athletes. The Principal or Athletic Director determine eligibility and may review absences, dismissals, and tardies for reasons other than medical. Planned absence requests should be submitted at least *twenty-four hours*

in advance to the Athletic Director. Students absent on a Friday will be not be eligible to compete during the weekend unless they have obtained approval in advance from the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will decide the athlete's eligibility for a practice or contest. The Athletic Director's decision may be appealed to the Principal. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive cuts or truancy and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Certain away games will require early dismissal from classes. A list of these dismissal times and bus departure times will be available to all teams in advance. Final permission to leave classes for early dismissal rests with the Principal. It is essential that the teams are prepared to leave on the early buses at the scheduled time(s). Students should have all essential equipment with them and proceed directly from class to the locker room. The Athletic Director will submit a list of players to be dismissed to the office for the daily bulletin. Coaches will update list as necessary.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill his or her disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. This supports **MIAA Good Citizen Rule 63.1:**

"Student-athletes may not represent their school and team if they are on in-house or out-of-house disciplinary suspension. Additionally, a suspended student is ineligible for practice or competition for at least the number of days equal to the number of days of the suspension."

Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The Principal, Assistant Principal, and/or Athletic Director reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems or citizenship issues. The Principal, Assistant Principal, and/or Athletic Director may also, upon sufficient evidence of improvement, may reinstate the student athlete.

A student who is suspended from school on a Friday through Monday from school would be ineligible to participate in all contests on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, including the Monday where the student is out-of-school.

ATHLETIC TEAM TRYOUTS

Tryouts for athletic programs are open to all students providing they have met the standards for participation set by the MIAA and Uxbridge Public Schools. Students try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet the expectations. Additionally, student-athletes be present at all try-out dates (unless excused by coach) to be considered eligible to become a member of a team.

Cutting students from athletic teams is one of the most difficult tasks that a coach faces. However, at times, there are reasons why a student does not make a team. Some of the factors that a coach has to consider when determining his/her final roster are: skill level, safety (how many athletes can be safely supervised), playing time, attitude, positional needs of team and commitment. When cuts are necessary, the coach will communicate privately with the player, who will be informed of the reasons

by the coach. Once tryouts begin for a particular team, an athlete may be allowed to leave that sport to try out for a different sport with the consent of both coaches involved and the Athletic Director. Students cut from one team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team; otherwise, they may sign up for one of the unlimited roster sports. No changes or additions to team rosters can take place after the first regular season game takes place during that season, unless with Athletic Director's discretion.

TRYOUT DATES

- **Fall:** The Thursday eleven days prior to Labor Day. Football is allowed five non contact conditioning sessions beginning Friday, sixteen days prior to Labor Day.
- **Winter:** The first Monday after Thanksgiving
- **Spring:** The third Monday in March

*Try-out dates/times are at the discretion of the coach.

VARSITY/ JUNIOR VARSITY ATHLETIC TEAM MEMBERSHIP

It is reasonable to expect that varsity teams will be comprised of the "best" players. It is also important to recognize that high school student-athletes who work hard and can contribute to a team's success should also be given the opportunity to be on a varsity team. The athletic department must, therefore, work to balance desire and talent through a sincere effort to include as many student-athletes as possible within the varsity experience.

Players who have participated as members of junior varsity teams should be given every consideration to be on varsity the following season. However, a coach must evaluate that player's attitude and effort against all other candidates for the team. Varsity team membership is an *earned privilege not a guaranteed entitlement* for senior student-athletes. Coaches are discouraged from playing seniors on their junior varsity teams.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL TEAM MEMBERSHIP

The athletic department is committed to providing all intermediate school students interested in competitive athletics the opportunity to participate in athletics. Failure to attend tryouts or abusing their privilege of participation, can lead to disqualification of being on the team. We recognize that intermediate school athletics provides the introduction to competitive sports. Because it is important to have players learn the fundamentals correctly from the beginning, the emphasis of the intermediate school program will be developing skills and habits. The level of success achieved in high school athletics is directly related to the skills developed through the intermediate level program.

DROPPING/CHANGING SPORTS

According to MIAA rule, student-athletes may participate in only one MIAA sanctioned sport in any season (Fall, Winter, or Spring), including tournaments and/or championships in that season. A student-athlete officially becomes a member of his/her team for the sport season on the date of the first regular season contest in that sport. If a student-athlete violates this rule, he/she will be declared ineligible for that season and all contests in which he/she participated in any sport during that season must be forfeited. Once a student-athlete has voluntarily chosen to leave an athletic team during the season, it is at the discretion of the coach whether or not that student-athlete is allowed to rejoin the team should they choose to. A student-athlete may pursue an alternate sport if cut from a team before the first contest as long as the coach of the alternate sport is willing to accept a new competitor.

REFUNDS

Any student who voluntarily leaves a team or is dropped from its roster for eligibility or disciplinary reasons after the start of the regular season will not be granted a refund. In special instances upon a request from a student's parent/guardian, a refund may be granted. Refunds will be allowed under the following circumstances:

- A full refund will be given if a student is cut from a team
- A full refund will be given if a student is injured or ill, necessitating his/her removal from the team *prior* to the first game.

*After the first contest, no refunds will be granted by the athletic department.

*Refunds are in the form of a check and must be requested through the Athletic Director.

THE STUDENT-ATHLETE COMMITMENT

LOYALTY TO THE 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 (i.e. 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. This rule is waived on weekends (pending there are no contests scheduled), however athletes must seek the permission of their coach in advance of missing a weekend function. Please see MIAA Handbook, rule 45, for further information.

Minimum Penalties for violation of this rule:

First Offense: Student athlete is suspended for 25% of the season.

Second Offense: Student athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation.

On occasion, a student might find himself/herself in potential conflict with this rule. This can happen when a student-athlete has an association with an out-of-school team or has an opportunity to participate in some special tournament or on a special team. A waiver of the bona fide team rule excusing the student from the school activity that day and allowing the student to participate in such a non-school event is possible under the guidelines set forth by the MIAA. Please reach out to the athletic director for details.

DAILY/WEEKLY COMMITMENT

During tryouts and after team selection, the head coach will explain expectations related to practice times and locations and game schedules. Student-athletes are expected to make *at least* a five-day, two- to three-hour daily commitment to the team each week. Attendance may have an impact on playing time and membership on the team. At the intermediate and junior varsity levels, most of our teams do not practice or play on weekends, but student-athletes may expect practices or games each school day. Normally, daily practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day taking place sometime between 2:00PM through 8:00PM. The preparation times before and after practices or games bring the usual total time to three hours per day.

At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace, and student-athletes should expect regular involvement during these times. Because many of our teams share facilities, practice and game hours may vary considerably. Coaches will provide a schedule at all levels,

in all sports, of practices and games. Go to: www.southworcestcountyleague.org game schedules. Student-athletes are expected to provide their own transportation to and from practices.

PLAYING TIME

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Young individuals learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, coping, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence.

Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is "playing time" during contests. If a student has questions as to his/her "playing time" he/she is encouraged to discuss them with the coach (See also the section on Conflict Resolution).

VARSITY TEAMS

While coaches at the varsity level will make an effort to play all team members, the emphasis at the varsity level shifts towards fielding competitive teams with the goal of winning as many games as possible. This emphasis may result in uneven playing time among the student-athletes, with some not playing in every game. The coach makes the often-difficult decisions of who starts, who plays and for how long.

INTERMEDIATE AND JUNIOR VARSITY TEAMS

At the intermediate level the emphasis is on participation. The emphasis on the junior varsity team is balanced between participation and winning. Coaches will make a conscious effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time but perhaps the most important are practice attendance, quality of effort, attitude, commitment and athletic ability. Coaches will continue to expand skill level and knowledge to help promote the advancement of the athlete to the next level of the program.

SCHOOL/FAMILY VACATIONS, EXTENDED ABSENCES, CONFLICT WITH SCHOOL EVENTS

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Due to scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations and/or holidays. Although extended absences are discouraged, the athletic department recognizes that certain circumstances do require them.

Student-athletes who anticipate being absent from team activities for an extended period of time due to family vacation plans, religious obligations, school sanctioned activities, or college visitations are *expected* to contact their coaches to discuss absences before making plans. It is the **sole discretion of the coach** whether or not the status of the student-athlete, with respect to playing time, changes as a result of the absence. If disagreement arises over this or any situation, see Conflict Resolution for guidance.

Although practices may be conducted on religious or school holidays, athletic practices are not mandatory on religious holidays. There will be *no penalty* for missing practice on a religious holiday. Coaches should be notified in advance if a student-athlete will not be at a practice or game.

Sometimes student-athletes are involved in many school-sanctioned activities and sometimes these activities conflict with their athletic commitment. Student-athletes who recognize that such a conflict may exist should also notify their coach well in advance of any absence. If the student-athlete, parent and coach cannot reach a satisfactory agreement concerning extended absences due to school-sanctioned activities in advance of the absence, please refer to the section on Conflict Resolution.

COMMUNICATION

For our Athletic Department to be successful, communication between all parties is vital. This requires involvement, dedication, sacrifice and commitment from parents, student athletes and coaches.

COMMUNICATION PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COACH

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team.
- Locations and times of practices and contests.
- Team requirements including special equipment needed, user fees, consent forms, team rules, practice organization and out-of-season conditioning.
- Procedure followed should your child be injured during practice or games.
- Any discipline that may result in denial of your child's participation.

COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM PARENTS

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach (see Conflict Resolution below).
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

As student-athletes become involved in the Athletic Program at Uxbridge Public Schools, 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 parents and athletes wish.

Issues concerning team selection, playing time and award recognition can become highly emotional. It is important to address these issues as soon as possible. All parties mentioned above are present and have a clear understanding of the others' positions and identify an appropriate time to open a discussion.

THE FIRST COURSE OF ACTION

If a student-athlete has a conflict or concern, he/she should request a meeting between himself/herself and their coach. This promotes advocacy, independence and self reliance.

THE NEXT STEP

If the meeting between the coach and student-athlete does not result in a satisfactory resolution to the problem, a conference between the coach and the parent is encouraged. The following procedure should be followed to promote resolution:

1. The parent must contact the coach via email first. Email addresses for all coaches can be found on the UPS Athletic Site. If the coach cannot be reached, speak to the Athletic Director and he will arrange a return call from the coach or set up a meeting for you.
2. Do not call a coach at home unless he/she has clearly made his telephone number available to parents.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings under these circumstances do not promote resolution.

THE FINAL STEP

If a situation still feels unresolved, parents are asked to schedule a meeting with the Athletic Director and the coach. The Athletic Director will sit in to help mediate a resolution.

1. Please call the Athletic Department at (508) 278-8633 x.1135 to set up an appointment.
2. Email the Athletic Director directly at ccarbone@uxbridge.k12.ma.us

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve to earn more playing time.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

ISSUES INAPPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you may have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those in the following section, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

STUDENT-ATHLETE BEHAVIOR

Participation in athletics is a privilege. At Uxbridge Public Schools, it is *expected* that our student-athletes are model citizens both in and out of school; they are held to high standards and should set a positive example for all students.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The community, school administrators, and coaching staff feel strongly that *high standards of conduct and citizenship* are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. Student-Athletes will be representing Uxbridge Public Schools are *expected* to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively upon our program and our schools. They are *expected* to be respectful and exhibit good behavior in class, in practice, in games and in the community.

Acts of unacceptable conduct that tarnish the integrity of everyone associated with the athletic programs and will **NOT** be tolerated. If a student-athlete fails to conduct himself/herself in a manner that will bring honor and respect to our teams and school, he/she will be subject to penalties which may include game suspensions, ineligibility, or dismissal from the team based on the severity of the infraction.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Uxbridge Public Schools is committed to the highest ideals of sportsmanship, as well as to establishing a healthy environment for competition. We expect that student-athletes, coaches, parents and spectators should treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect during the heart of competition. We will not tolerate negative statements or actions towards competitors, coaches, game officials, or fans in attendance at our events. This includes taunting, trash talking, baiting, berating players, coaches, or officials, or actions which ridicule or embarrass. Our athletic department, as well as the South Worcester County League has a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY. Offenders will be ejected, and

school disciplinary codes are also in effect.

The MIAA reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship." Uxbridge Public Schools, in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, home and away.

HAZING

Hazing is prohibited by Massachusetts state law and is forbidden at Uxbridge Public Schools. The term "hazing" 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 the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or 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 person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

The Uxbridge Public Schools forbid hazing in any form. Should an alleged instance of hazing occur, the provision of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 shall be adhered to. In addition, the Principal, Athletic Director and the Police Department shall immediately be notified of the circumstances of the complaint and the action taken. Any student who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to the disciplinary actions. Any employee who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

CHEMICAL HEALTH

MIAA Rule 62.1 states that: *"From the earliest fall practice date, through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including "e-cigarettes"); marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer". It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor."* A student who is found to be in the presence of illegal substance use is also subjected to this rule.

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

Minimum Penalties for violation of this rule:

First Offense: When the Principal/Assistant 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 the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal/Assistant 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 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport.

All decimal part of an event will be truncated. (i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.)

Additional violations: 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. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification.

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

*For further details click on [MIAA Handbook](#) section 62

STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP

TEAM CAPTAINS

Coaches, with the support the athletic director, decide how team captains are selected. However, there is no requirement that teams have captains. If teams choose to have captains, they are elected either by their team or appointed by the coach, with final approval from the athletic director. Captains may be chosen at the end of a season, or sometime prior to the first contest of the following season. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis. The coach will inform the team as to how captains will be selected.

It is expected that team captains be leaders and role-models of their team. Additionally, team captains must be ready to assume duties their coaches outline and the Captain's Code of Conduct from the athletic department (signed by the student, parent and coach). They are expected to be well aware of the team rules and student-athlete responsibilities.

Please note:

- Out of season "captain's practices" are a violation of MIAA Rules and not sanctioned by Uxbridge Public Schools.
- Captains of teams may be relieved from their position anytime by the coach and/or athletic director for violation of team, department or school rules.
- The role of Captain does not determine a starting position or playing time.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Students who participate in athletics at Uxbridge Public Schools may qualify for a variety of awards such as certificates, plaques, and trophies. To receive an athletic award, a student must be a member in good standing of an athletic team at the close of the season. Being a member of a team does not guarantee an award. Awards are sport specific and must be earned via criteria set forth by the coach and/or athletic director.

TYPES OF AWARDS

Each Varsity team has two awards (trophy/plaque) that may be given to individuals at the conclusion

of each season. The Sportsmanship and Coach's Award are honored for each varsity team. Awards are given out at the conclusion of each season. The coach of each team is responsible for designating which student-athlete receives each award. Certificates, Varsity Letters and Pins are also given out to student-athletes in their sport at the commencement of their season.

The Athletic Department (High School only) also presents End of the Year Awards to our senior student-athletes. These include; the Spartan/Spartanette, District "E" Athletic Director's Award and the presentation of Senior Plaques.

SWCL ALL-STARS

Honors such as LEAGUE ALL-STAR (SWCL) selections are awarded to Uxbridge High School students for each sport. It must be understood that while coaches may nominate students for some of these awards, they have no control over the final selection. Any student-athlete that had committed a chemical health or code of conduct violation will not be nominated or selected for all-star awards.

SUPPORT SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM CONTESTS

Our school(s) provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most away contests. For safety and accountability reasons, all team members are expected to travel to and from these contests using the school-provided transportation. We believe that it is in the best interest of team unity that everyone travel together and share the game experience. Exceptions to this policy must be requested **24 hours** in advance in writing to the *coach* and *Athletic Director* by a student-athlete's parent or guardian prior to the contest. All reasonable requests may be honored.

It is expected that our student-athletes will conduct themselves appropriately while on bus transportation. Any misconduct will result in a penalty including and up to dismissal if warranted. Student-athletes will be responsible for any damages to bus property and subsequent costs to repair.

ADDRESSES TO AWAY CONTESTS

Directions to away contests can be retrieved on the MIAA website. Click on [Public Access School Lookup](#) and search for the school. When prompted, search for the school. A list of Facility/Site locations should be listed on their "homepage."

POSTPONED CONTESTS

Some contests throughout the school year are postponed due to factors such as inclement weather. In most instances it is the "home" school that calls for a postponement. By South Worcester County League rule, games are to be made up on the next available open date in common. School schedules may require play on weekends or holidays.

Decisions on postponements are made as late in the day as is practical for proper notification of all interested parties. On school days, the most common time is about 1:00 PM for afternoon contests. Postponed contests will be immediately updated on [South Worcester County League Website](#). On non-school days and for evening contests, postponements are made approximately two to three hours prior to the contest. Please check [South Worcester County League Website](#) for the most up to date scheduling information. Additionally, the athletic department will send out notifications via our Twitter account.

ADMISSION TO GAMES

It is the practice at Uxbridge Public Schools to charge admission to home contests in varsity football and varsity basketball (boys & girls) and may also charge for any other sports in certain circumstances. The admissions collected at our contests help offset the costs of the overall athletic program. All sports benefit from admissions revenues. MIAA tournament fees are in effect for certain tournament games; prices are determined by the MIAA. Only MIAA issued passes are valid at tournament games.

COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE

One of the most important decisions facing high school student-athletes is what to do with their lives after they graduate high school. The Athletic Director is able to assist all student-athletes with this extremely important decision. He may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videotapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. If a student-athlete's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulations. Copies of the latest NCAA regulations are available online at www.ncaa.org. The guidance department also has a wealth of information and experience on this topic. Please be familiar with these regulations and seek assistance if needed.

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

The NCAA Clearinghouse is a central repository for information on high school curricula. The NCAA maintains this information to conduct evaluations of incoming college freshmen. The NCAA evaluates high school graduates' academic records in light of current NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. A prospective collegiate athlete needs to apply and receive a final certification by the Clearinghouse in order to participate in college athletics at the Division I or II levels. A student athlete does not need to apply if he or she will attend a junior college, NAIA or NCAA Division III institution. Students may get valuable information and forms at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

ISSUANCE

The coach of the sport is responsible for the proper issuance of equipment to the team members.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT

Coaches will instruct their team members on the proper storage and care of all issued equipment with great emphasis on cleanliness. Equipment that is washable is to be taken home by the student to be laundered at least once a week. Coaches are to strongly enforce the rule that issued equipment is to be worn by students only at practices and games; not as an article of clothing for personal use. Uxbridge Public Schools has invested a great deal of money in athletic equipment and care.

PLAYERS LEAVING TEAM

If a player leaves the team during the season (injury, dropped from the team, quits the team, etc.), the player must return any equipment or uniform issued by the athletic department to the coach within 24 hours of the players' departure.

LOST/MISSING EQUIPMENT

Student-athletes have an obligation and responsibility to properly care for and return all equipment issued to them. Student-athletes failing to turn in all issued equipment, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible for the current replacement cost for such equipment. Payment is required at the time of the loss. Payment must be received prior to the next season of

athletic involvement or graduation; whichever comes first. Student-athletes may not be allowed to try out for a team if they have an equipment obligation. The cost of lost items will be the sum of money to replace them (face value). Only a check will be accepted in payment of lost equipment. Checks are to be made out to Uxbridge High School Athletic Department and provided to the Athletic Director.

END OF SEASON / END OF YEAR OBLIGATIONS

The coach is responsible for seeing that all items of equipment issued are turned in when appropriate. The Athletic Director will direct and assist the coach in the administrative procedures necessary to insure proper issuance and collection of the equipment, cleaning of equipment, inventory and budgeting. Student-athletes will NOT be issued uniforms for another sport until they turn everything in from their previous sport.

Students are required to be **responsible** for all uniforms, equipment, etc. provided to them by Uxbridge High School and return them to their coaches and/or the athletic department by the conclusion of the academic year. Should a student not return all obligations, he/she may be denied the privilege of participating in graduation, and his/her cap and gown will be withheld.

ATHLETIC FACILITIES

LOCKER ROOMS

Once team rosters are set, if not before, each team member may be issued an athletic locker. Students are expected to lock all personal items and team equipment in their own athletic lockers at all times. Students should never give their locker combination to anyone else. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers left open or unlocked. On road trips, when lockers are not available, it is highly recommended that students leave valuables at home or give them to parents for safekeeping at the game site. Students should neither bring large amounts of cash or other valuable personal items to school, nor should they leave them at school.

CARE OF FACILITIES

Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Uxbridge Public Schools prides itself in the quality facilities that have been provided for use by area athletes. Only proper care and respect will keep them this way. Vandalism is cause for dismissal from a team and further disciplinary action by the school administration. Teams are responsible for cleaning up the area around their bench and the locker room before leaving the premises after practice and games. Be especially vigilant about picking up water bottles from gyms and fields. Please do not leave food items anywhere other than a trash receptacle. If locker rooms or facilities are consistently kept in disarray, the team will forfeit the privilege of using school facilities.

Athletic Shoes: At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building. Serious injury can occur from slipping on cement or tiled surfaces. Additionally, no street shoes can be worn on the basketball court during the season

Weight Room/Exercise Room: The weight room is available to student-athletes with the supervision of their coach. All students must be supervised and treat the facilities with care.

ATHLETIC TRAINING SERVICES

Uxbridge Public Schools will take steps to ensure the services of a Massachusetts licensed and NATABOC Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC). The Athletic Trainer is responsible for the prevention, recognition, management and reconditioning of injured athletes. The Athletic Trainer works under the direction of the athlete's physician regarding care and return to play status. The ATC also acts as a liaison between athletes, coaches, parents, the athletic director, the school nurse and any other medical professionals involved in the athletes' care. The hours vary seasonally, but are usually from 1:00pm until the end of the last home practice session or home contest. During weekends or on days when school is not in session, the ATC is required to be on site only for scheduled contests and for some scheduled scrimmages. Occasionally, the Athletic Trainer will be on site for non-school day practice sessions.

Note: we will be updating our website soon. In the meantime, for a comprehensive review of Concussion Protocol, Injury Management and Treatments, please consult the Athletic Trainer on staff if you have any questions

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

In spite of protective equipment, supervision and sound instruction by coaches, there is a potential for serious, catastrophic or life-threatening injury. Participants and parents are urged to consider that there are inherent risks and hazards associated with athletic participation. Risks vary from sport to sport and can occur under direct supervision with the proper use of safety equipment. All student accidents/injuries should be reported immediately to the coach/trainer/nurse. It is also important that athletes wear all required protective equipment during every practice and game to ensure their safety. Broken protective equipment must be reported to the coach immediately and should not be used until repaired or replaced.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Uxbridge Public Schools Athletic Department recognize and support the student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of social networks. In this context, however, each student-athlete must remember that playing and competing for the Uxbridge Public Schools is a privilege. As a student-athlete, you represent the Uxbridge Public Schools and you are expected to portray yourself, your team, and the School District in a positive manner at all times.

Attached you will find "*general*" and "*considered*" social networking guidelines which provide the following guidelines for social networking site usage:

- Everything you post is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online. Information (including pictures, videos, and comments) may be accessible even after you remove it.
- What you post may affect your future. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information.
- Similar to comments made in person, the Uxbridge Public Schools Athletic Department will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as, but not limited to:
 - Derogatory language or remarks that may harm teammates, coaches; other students, teachers or representatives of other schools, including comments that may disrespect my opponents.
 - Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; full

or partial nudity; inappropriate gestures; vandalism, stalking; underage drinking, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.

- Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
- Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation— regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.

In short, do not have a false sense of security about your rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. The online social network sites are NOT a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. The information you post on a social networking site is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image of which you can be proud of for years to come.

TEAM UNIFORMS & APPAREL

UNIFORM RULE

- Athletes must wear their school-issued uniform throughout the entire athletic contest.
- Orange, White & Black; are the **only** colors allowed under team uniforms. Should athletes wear another color he/she may be asked not to participate in the athletic contest.
- All uniforms ordered by teams must be approved by the Athletic Director.
- Anything that would draw individual attention is strictly prohibited.
- Stricter rules may apply in compliance with MIAA/MSAA guidelines.

TEAM APPAREL

Team Apparel Team apparel is important for school spirit and to recognize team members for their accomplishments and commitment to the school community. The Athletic Department feels these guidelines will help ease the frustration with team orders:

1. All team orders must be approved by the Coach and/or Athletic Director before orders are placed.
2. Team apparel is defined as those purchases not considered part of the equipment list needed to participate on a team.
3. Apparel orders should be available to all members of the team, but are not mandatory for participation.
4. Team orders *should* be placed before the first contest of the sport.
5. Each team is responsible for taking orders and collecting money before the orders are placed.
6. Apparel should be predominantly school colors; orange, black, white and occasionally, grey.
7. The *Spartan* logo is available in the athletic office. Teams may also use sport specific prints with stock formats. All other language and graphics must be appropriate and approved by the Athletic Director.
8. All apparel items costing over \$25.00 must be available to be ordered in subsequent years for future team members. Ideally, these items should be available for the team for at least four years. As stated above, all team items/orders must be approved by the Athletic Director.

UXBRIDGE SPARTANS ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB

USABC Mission: To support and unite our student-athletes and the community at large. The Uxbridge High School Booster Club is dedicated to the support of all student-athletes at Uxbridge High School and Whitin Intermediate School. The Club helps provide financial and material support to the athletes, coaches, and staff to enhance the high school athletic experience. All parents, student-athletes, friends, and community members of Uxbridge High athletics are welcome to become members. Booster Club meetings occur on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm in the High School. All are welcome to attend.

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