



## **2016-2017 Athletic Handbook**

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Accepted by Regional School Committee 09/2016

**Dover-Sherborn High School**

**Athletic Handbook**

**2016-2017**

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The information presented in this booklet has been compiled to better acquaint you with some of the policies, practices, and regulations that govern the athletic program at Dover Sherborn High School. Please keep this booklet handy and refer to it when questions and/or concerns arise about your son's and/or daughter's athletic experience. If you feel that your questions are not answered in this booklet, contact the Coach first. If your concern has not been adequately addressed, you should contact the Athletic Director.

We look forward to your association with the athletic program at Dover-Sherborn High School and ask for your help and cooperation.

### **Non-Discrimination Clause**

The Dover Sherborn Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

### **Philosophy of the Dover-Sherborn Athletic Program**

The Dover-Sherborn Regional Schools Administration and School Committee believe that the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Statement of Philosophy is a clear articulation of the role and benefits to be derived from a high school interscholastic sports program; therefore, the Administration and School Committee have adopted the MIAA philosophy as their own. Our sports programs are to be guided by this philosophy.

#### **Program Philosophy and Benefits (from the MIAA Coaches' Handbook)**

Within a high school sports program, young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership and organizational skills, participating within rules, physical well-being and healthy lifestyles, striving towards excellence, and many other characteristics that come quickly to the mind of any educator. If interscholastic athletics are to be justified as school activities, then values such as these must be the priorities of every program. Ethics, playing within the spirit of the rules, and good sportsmanship (which is good citizenship) must be woven into the fabric of the high school athletic program.

In the education of 65% of the young people attending MIAA member schools, athletic participation is a critical component. What should drive those responsible for student-athletes and their programs is the educational mission of school activities. For many students, the most stable environment in their lives is that provided by high school activity programs. Often the best opportunities for crisis intervention, drug prevention, "day care" programs, and the like are school activity programs. The cost is minimal, while the worth is maximal.

While winning contests, rather than losing them, is a laudable goal, it should not supersede the primary priorities of high school sports programs. What should be the rationale behind high school activities is

preparing students to succeed rather than merely to win games. Win or lose, students should learn lessons of a lasting and positive nature.

If the success of any high school athletic program is measured by an undefeated season, then 99% of the thousands of high school teams that participate annually in Massachusetts have failed. If a league championship is the measure of success, then 85% of our programs are failures. If success is measured merely by qualification for MIAA end-of-season tournaments, then 50% of our students are "losers."

What should be encouraged is participation in varied activities under different teacher/coach role models. The percentage of student-athletes who complete their formal athletic experiences at the high school level is overwhelming (well in excess of 90%). Schools should focus their attention upon goals other than championships or the development of "blue chip" athletes. Young people need varied activities: time at the beach, time to study and, in fact, time just to be kids.

Young people need to learn, to think, and simply to grow up. Schools should guide them, through athletics, to allow that to happen as comfortably as possibly.

Benefits of an Interscholastic Athletic Program High school activity programs are an integral part of the total educational process. Successful interscholastic athletic programs teach young people values such as:

Accepting success graciously	Participating within rules	Social skills
Accountability	Performing under pressure	Striving towards excellence
Citizenship and sportsmanship	Persistence	Taking instruction
Confidence	Physical well-being and chemical health	Teamwork
Handling disappointment	Responsibility	Value of competition
Leadership skills	Sacrificing for the common good	Work ethic
Organizational skills	Self-discipline	

## Dover-Sherborn Athletic Offerings

<u>Fall Season</u>	<u>Winter Season</u>	<u>Spring Season</u>
Cross Country (Boys and Girls) Varsity Only Unlimited Roster	Basketball (Boys and Girls) Frosh, JV and Varsity 12-15 per level	Baseball JV and Varsity 14-17 per level
Field Hockey JV and Varsity 12-16 per level	Alpine Ski (Coed) Roster limit	Softball JV and Varsity 14-17 per level
Golf (Coed) JV and Varsity 12-14 per level	Nordic Ski (Boys and Girls) Unlimited Roster	Lacrosse (Boys and Girls) JV and Varsity 14-24 per level
Football Frosh, JV and Varsity Unlimited Roster	Ice Hockey (Boys and Girls) Varsity Only 16-22 per team	Tennis (Boys and Girls) Varsity Only 12-18 per team
Soccer (Boys and Girls) Frosh, JV and Varsity 15-22 per level	Swimming and Diving (Coed) Varsity Only Unlimited Roster	Track and Field (Boys and Girls) Varsity Only Unlimited up to 80 per gender
	Gymnastics (thru Medfield) Varsity Only	Sailing (Coed) Roster limit
	Indoor Track (Boys and Girls) Unlimited Roster	

\*roster numbers are guidelines only and may be changed by the Athletic Director

\*freshmen teams are not always guaranteed

## **Student-Athlete/Parent Annual Athletic Meeting and Meet the Coach Nights**

Once per year, the Athletic Director will conduct a required **Student-Athlete/Parent Annual Athletic Meeting**. All students wishing to take part in sport during one or all of the seasons must attend this meeting; which will be held in June or August for the next school year. This one meeting is mandatory for all students and at least one parent/guardian wishing to try out for a team for the next school year.

**Meet the Coach Night Meetings** will take place before each season. These meetings will be for parents and students who wish to try out for a specific team. They will meet with the individual coaching staff for that sport only and this meeting will last approximately 30 minutes. These meetings will take place one to two weeks prior to the season start date. Students are informed of Meet the Coach Night Meetings through postings and announcements at the high school and via social media. Releases, medical forms, and other paperwork will be distributed at the pre-season Meet the Coach Night meetings.

### **Tryouts and Cuts**

Participation in athletics is a privilege. 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.

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, or with Athletic Director discretion.

### **Playing Time**

Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is playing time during contests. Coaches should privately inform each participant of his/her view of that participant's role, including starting, substituting, and playing time. If a student has questions about his/her role, he/she is encouraged to discuss it with the coach directly. At Dover-Sherborn Regional High School, being a member of a team does not guarantee playing time.

Guidelines for this important issue are listed here:

**Varsity Teams:** The Varsity teams compete against opponents at the highest level of the division in which Dover-Sherborn is placed. In many instances, the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive and the most skilled team members.

**Sub-Varsity Teams:** At the Sub-Varsity level (Junior Varsity and Freshman), members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical.

### **Team Captains: Roles and Duties**

The number of team captains and how and when they will be selected is a coaching decision. Captains may be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis. Team participants wishing to serve as a team captain will apply for the position directly to the coach toward the conclusion of the current season (to be captain for the next season).

It is expected that a team captain be a leader of his/her team and should be ready to assume duties outlined by his/her coach. Captains are expected to be fully aware of team rules, and are expected to communicate with the coach and team members in the event of problems that affect the team. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the program.

Team captaincy may be removed during their tenure by the coach, athletic director, or headmaster. Any team captain who violates an MIAA rule will have their captaincy removed upon confirmation of rule violation.

Captains should set a good example of sportsmanship and demonstrate positive leadership at all times. During athletic contests that they participate in or attend, they should cheer in support of their school's team rather than against the opponent.

Posters and flyers should be affixed to bulletin boards only. They should never be attached to the glass walls near exit doors, or on doors throughout the school. These notices and posters should be removed after the event takes place. All posters and notices should contain appropriate language and graphics and be approved by the headmaster, per school handbook.

### **Banquet Guidelines**

Sports Banquets are a very important and essential part of the athlete's experience. These occasions provide an opportunity to celebrate and recognize team members at the end of the season.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist all persons who are responsible for planning and executing sports banquets. Each high school sports program is encouraged to hold a sports banquet/end of season event. It is expected and encouraged that the members of each sport make the decision on when and how to officially celebrate the season.

Each of the following should be taken into consideration:

- 1) Team gifts should be nominal in value. It is strongly recommended that each athlete be charged no more than \$20 per sport for team gifts. It is hoped that there will be many Tri Valley League, Sectional and State Championships won by Dover-Sherborn teams. These accomplishments should be acknowledged and exceptions to the guideline may be warranted. Requests to exceed this guideline must be submitted for the Athletic Director's approval in advance of purchase.
- 2) The host should invite all Varsity team members, Junior Varsity team members, Freshman team members, team managers, parents, friends, and select guests of the team.
- 3) Appropriate locations should be within 15 miles of Dover-Sherborn High School.
- 4) The cost for the meeting hall, dinner, and decorations should not exceed \$25.00 per attendee.
- 5) The High School Athletic Director must be advised of the proposed time and place of each event as soon as possible and before the event is officially booked to avoid conflict with other school and community activities.
- 6) There should be no alcohol service available for any person attending the event.
- 7) The event should start and end promptly. It is expected that the entire banquet and program not exceed three hours and end before 9:00pm on school nights.

### **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 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, royal blue and white. In the case of an apparel item that is a basic color (gray sweatshirt), the printing should contain royal blue and white. Black is also allowed but with royal blue and white accents.



7) The DS 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.

### **Captain's Practice**

The term "captain's practice" means a conditioning practice organized and conducted without adult supervision, either during or out-of-season. The MIAA does not sanction, encourage, or condone "captain(s) practices" in any sport. Captain's practices are not permitted at Dover-Sherborn High School. Organizers of captain's practices will be subject to school discipline, including suspension from athletic participation.

### **Awards**

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 must be earned via criteria set forth by the coach and/or athletic director.

### **Guidelines for Parents/Guardians**

When students become involved in the athletic program at Dover-Sherborn High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, a private discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coach:

- Your child's treatment
- Your child's improvement
- Your child's behavior
- Any scheduling conflicts

Issues not appropriate to discuss with the coach:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling

- Other student-athletes

Certain situations may require a conference between the coach and the parents/guardians. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution of the issue or concern:

- Contact the coach first. If needed, then contact the Athletic Director.
- DO NOT CALL THE COACH AT HOME. A coach's time with family is severely limited during the season. The family's privacy should be respected.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest. These can be emotional times for both the parents/guardians and coach. Meetings should be scheduled away from other students and the playing field.

### **Athletic User Fees and Refunds**

Once chosen as a member of a team, payment of an athletic user fee is required. However, payment of the fee does not guarantee playing time. Fees are to be paid before the start of the season. Checks should be made payable to: Dover-Sherborn High School, or receipt from online payments must be printed and submitted at the time of registration. For the 2016–2017 school year, the fee is \$300.00 per student/per sport with a limit of \$1,500.00 per family per year (equivalent to 5 sport teams).

When, and if, fees are changed by the School Committee, parents and students will be notified.

Refunds will be allowed under the following circumstances:

- A full refund will be given if a student is cut from a team.
- A pro-rated refund will be given if a student moves from the district during the season.
- 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.

**No refund will be given if a student quits a team or is removed for disciplinary or academic reasons after the first contest takes place.**

## **The Coach**

### **Role of the Coach**

The MIAA Coaches' Handbook clearly articulates the role of coaches. The Administration and School Committee believe that it is important to share this information with the Dover-Sherborn community.

### **Coaches' Code of Ethics**

A high school coach often plays an influential and important role in the life of a student-athlete. The student athlete is participating within the school's activity program because that young person desires to do so. Consequently, such a student is often more attentive to a coach's lessons than to those offered by teachers in required courses. Coaches must constantly be aware of this opportunity and responsibility. The function of a coach is to properly educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. The interscholastic program is designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. The safety and well-being of each student-athlete must be the top priority for coaches at all times. In recognition of this, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted:

1. The coach must be aware that he/she has a tremendous influence, either good or bad, in the education of the student athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.
2. The coach must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the MIAA, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
3. The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse and under no circumstances should authorize their use.
4. The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of bullying, hazing, and social exclusion of/by student-athletes.
5. The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.
6. The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with the contest rules and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The spirit and letter of the rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. The coach shall not try to seek advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
7. Coaches shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship by their spectators, working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

8. Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not indulge in conduct that will incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

9. Before and after contests, rival coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

10. Coaches may privately collect grades in order to encourage the academic success of our student-athletes. Only coaches will collect grades.

11. A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.

12. It is unethical for coaches to scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or the MIAA .

### **Program Expectations at Dover-Sherborn**

At Dover-Sherborn High School, each individual sport should be developed into a “program.” With direction from the Athletic Director, the Varsity Head Coach will provide consistent structure at all levels of the program.

### **Communication**

Before the start of the season and then during the season, as the situation may warrant, the Varsity Head Coach as Program Director, with approval of the Athletic Director, will communicate in writing to athletes and parents/guardians his/her approach to the following:

- expectations for the team and program as a whole
- team requirements such as pre-season conditioning, special equipment, practice times and locations, and special tournament expectations
- the tryout process: timing, selection criteria, and communication of decisions
- the procedure that athletes and parents/guardians should follow in case of injury during practice or competition.

In addition, the Head Varsity Coach is expected to develop a consistent philosophy across all levels, so that players can move more easily between levels during the season. He/she should be familiar with athletes at all levels. The Head Varsity Coach is also responsible for forming links with town youth programs if they exist in his/her sport.

## **Student-Athlete Responsibilities**

### **After School Help:**

Student-athletes are urged to use opportunity periods. In general, official practices will begin at 3:00. Attending extra help, detention, or other academic activities may take priority over attending practices or contests.

### **Daily Team Attendance**

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or game when the student is not absent from school. Our coaches expect their athletes to be present at all team-related activities and may suspend a team member from contests for unexcused absences. Students may be excused from athletic activities at the discretion of the coach. Students may be restricted from game participation because of missed practice or game time. In some cases, a student-athlete may be removed from a team due to attendance issues.

### **Absences, Tardiness, and Dismissals**

When a student is absent due to injury or illness, he/she will not be allowed to practice or represent Dover-Sherborn in a school-sponsored sports event. To be considered present for participation purposes, a student must arrive by 11:00 am and remain for the rest of the day. At no time will an athlete be allowed to participate in school athletics if he/she is dismissed at any time during the school day because of illness. If a student has been absent on Friday due to illness, he/she cannot represent Dover-Sherborn on Saturday or Sunday without the written permission of a doctor, the Headmaster, or the Assistant Headmaster.

## **Bona-Fide Team Member Rule**

### **Loyalty to your High School Team**

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g. practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs.

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

Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation. See MIAA Rule 98 for additional tournament restriction and Rule 88 for waiver guidelines.

## **Spectator Rules and Regulations**

### **Sportsmanship & Spectator Behavior**

Dover-Sherborn High School expects all parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators are to treat teammates, opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect.

Dover-Sherborn High School and the Tri-Valley League (TVL) are committed to the highest ideals of sportsmanship, as well as to establishing a healthy environment for 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. The TVL has a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY. Offenders will be ejected, and school disciplinary codes are also in effect.

The Principals and Athletic Directors of the Tri-Valley League stand committed to hosting events which support the highest ideals of sportsmanship.

The MIAA reserves the right to “warn, censure, place on probation or suspend for 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.” Dover-Sherborn High School also reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, home or away.

### **Resolution of Incomplete Grades**

All incompletes must be resolved by the student and the grade submitted by the teacher within two weeks after issuance of grades at the end of the first three terms. A fourth term or final exam incomplete must be resolved within two weeks of the opening of the following school year. Any exceptions must be approved by the Headmaster.

### **Eligibility for Extra-Curricular Activities**

To be academically eligible to participate in athletics, clubs, and drama/musical performances during the second, third, and fourth terms, a student cannot have failed more than one course and must have passed a minimum of 30 credits for the term immediately preceding. Academic eligibility for second, third, and fourth terms is determined at the end of first, second, and third quarters, respectively, when report cards are distributed.

To be academically eligible to participate for the first term, a student is required to have passed 30 credits (the equivalent of five traditional yearlong courses) in the previous academic year, and to have not failed more than one course. Eligibility for the first quarter is determined by a student’s final grades from the previous school year.

Student-athletes may not participate in games or scrimmages until they have met these eligibility requirements and been granted clearance by the Athletic Director.

A student entering Grade 9 from a middle or junior high school is eligible at the start of the ninth grade school year.

### **Chemical Health Policy**

In addition to the enforcement of the school policy, the following MIAA penalties will be enforced by the Athletic Department.

From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product(including e-cigarettes, VAP pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); 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.

This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements.

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.

The MINIMUM penalties are:

First violation: When, and if, the Headmaster 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. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season in which the violation occurs. 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. Decimals will be truncated, i.e., all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Headmaster 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. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season in which the violation occurs. Decimals will be truncated, i.e., all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

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. Decimals will be truncated, i.e. all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic 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.

No student, who has a current suspension for violating the Chemical Health Policy, will be allowed to join a team after the first day of organized team activities.

Any student who has incurred a Chemical Health Violation will be ineligible to become a captain for a period of 1 calendar year of the date of incident. Any student who is serving as a team captain and receives a Chemical Health Violation will have their captaincy removed. Individual team rules from a coach and be more strict as long as the rule has been disseminated to all participants and parents/guardians during Meet the Coach Night and the Athletic Director and Headmaster have approved the rule in advance.

### **Bullying – A Statement of Propose**

The Dover Sherborn Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan meets the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, S370 and is modeled after the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Plan for dealing with bullying behaviors in our schools. The Plan includes strategies for identifying, reporting, and responding to bullying behaviors. This Plan is a key part of our schools' mission "to inspire, challenge, and support all students as they discover and pursue their full potential" and it complements our schools' student wellness and discipline policies. Please note the use of the words "target" instead of "victim" and "aggressor" instead of "perpetrator" are used throughout this document to be consistent with language used by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

#### **Definitions essential to the Dover Sherborn Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan:**

**Aggressor** is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

**Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property



- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property; • creates a hostile environment at school for the target
- infringes on the rights of the target at school or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Cyber bullying**: is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

See M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 for the legal definition of cyber bullying.

**Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

### **Hazing - Massachusetts State Law**

Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

#### **CH. 269, S.18 Duty to Report Hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable.

Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665. CH. 269, S.19.

### **Hazing Statutes to be Provided; Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required**

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issues copies of this section and section seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the

institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

Penalty: One to three days out-of school suspension; police notification.

### **Team Transportation**

When school transportation is provided, all team members are expected to travel with their team. There is value in teams traveling to and from contests with regard to camaraderie and overall team culture. A parent may transport their son/daughter home from an athletic event, provided they have turned in written notice to the coach, in person, stating they are taking their son/daughter from the contest. The contest must be completed in order to leave with a parent/guardian, as required under the MIAA Bona Fide Team Member rule. If a parent/guardian is to drive another child home, a note must be signed by that child's parent stating they have permission to do so.

### **Security of Personal Belongings**

All personal belongings should be locked in a locker or team room while the student-athlete is trying out, practicing, or playing. Each student should have a school-issued lock for his/her gym locker and should never leave the locker unlocked or open. If you can't lock it up, take it with you. *Dover-Sherborn High School cannot be responsible for loss of personal belongings.*

### **Athletic Trainer and Training Room**

Dover-Sherborn High School has emergency personnel trained in sports-related injuries on school grounds to evaluate and treat high school athletic injuries as they may occur. Coverage is provided for athletic contests and practices. Coverage is not provided on non-school days, except as scheduled by the Athletic Director.

In case of an injury, the athlete will be evaluated and recommendations for care will be provided to the parent/guardian. If a visit to the hospital or physician is necessary, a written medical note releasing the athlete to return to participation (either practice or contests) is mandatory. High school athletes may report to the training room any time after school for treatment or evaluation.

Training room courtesy is expected of all athletes. The room is an emergency facility, and will be treated as such.

### **Locker Rooms and School Facilities**

Student-athletes are expected to respect the locker facilities, showers, and general areas of the athletic/school facilities, both home and away. We expect the student-athletes to take pride in their facilities, and to leave them in good condition. No type of vandalism will be tolerated, and equipment,

clothing, towels, and other items should not be left behind in the locker room after games or practices. In the spirit of the Dover-Sherborn High School Mission Statement, it is the student-athlete's responsibility to demonstrate respect for others and for the facility.

### **School Athletic Equipment and Uniforms**

Students have an obligation and responsibility for the proper care and retention of all equipment issued to them from the date of issue to the date of return. Students failing to turn in all issued equipment and uniforms, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment or uniforms. Payment is required at the time of the loss, or prior to either the next season of athletic involvement, or graduation, whichever comes first. In the event that the equipment or uniform is found and/or returned after payment, a refund will be made. School athletic equipment should only be worn for team activity, i.e., practice, games, spirit events.

Athletes are required to supply and carry their own water bottles. The school will provide the water.

### **Season Limits**

Fall practice may begin for all teams as early as the second Thursday preceding Labor Day. Football teams must precede their initial contact practice day with an additional three days of single non-contact sessions. *These rules pertaining to football are currently changing and updates will be given.*

The winter season begins the Monday after Thanksgiving. This season usually affects the winter vacation break and could affect the February vacation if a team or individual qualifies for post-season tournament play.

The spring season begins the third Monday in March. The April vacation may be affected if games are scheduled. Parents/guardians and players should check this issue with the individual coach.

All seasons: fall, winter, spring must end with the completion of the regular varsity season or, for qualified varsity teams or individuals, upon completion of their participation in MIAA tournaments.

### **Varsity Games Missed During School Vacations**

No student will be prohibited from trying out for a varsity sport because of family or community service commitments during scheduled school vacations.

The Dover-Sherborn School Community is committed to providing students with a competitive athletic program, while encouraging an educational atmosphere that respects family commitments and community responsibilities. While it is not possible to avoid scheduling varsity games during school vacations, every effort will be made to schedule games to maximize the vacation time available for family and community service activities. Coaches should be notified as soon as possible if a student plans to miss games or practices over vacations. If a player misses a game that is scheduled during a school vacation, that player may be benched for up to one game for every game missed, not to exceed

two games in total. No additional penalty will be imposed for missed practices under these circumstances.

Forty hours of Service Learning is a requirement for graduation, and the spring vacation has customarily been utilized for experiences that fulfill this requirement. Therefore, no penalty for games or practices missed during spring break will be imposed on students who have engaged in a service-learning project, if verification is provided to the coach. Spring Vacation is also a common time for juniors to visit colleges with their families-please let the coach know in advance if you will be absent during spring vacation. Due to spring scheduling constraints, athletic contests most likely will be scheduled during the April vacation.

### **Out-Of-Season Sports Participation**

Participation in out-of-season clinics, leagues, or other related sport activities is strictly up to the discretion of the student-athlete and his/her parents. While such participation may improve a student's knowledge and skill, it is the student's decision whether or not he/she wishes to become involved in such activities. Participation in such activities will have no bearing on a student-athlete's participation on a Dover-Sherborn High School athletic team. The Athletic Department encourages all students to take full advantage of the activities offered and become involved in more than one sport.

According to MIAA rules, "Neither a coach nor any other representative of the school may require an athlete to participate in a sport or training program outside of the MIAA defined sport season." Voluntary conditioning seasons open equally to all students in the school, and which are entirely devoid of sports-specific activity, may be conducted between sessions, provided no candidate is either required to participate or penalized for not doing so. A "candidate" is defined as a varsity or sub-varsity athlete who participated in the high school program at some interscholastic level in part of the previous season.

### **Physical Education Class**

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled Physical Education classes. Any student who is medically excused from Physical Education may not participate in his/her practice or game for that day.

### **Concussion Management**

The Schools are committed to ensuring the health and safety of our student athletes. The Athletic Director of Dover Sherborn High School shall be the person responsible for compliance of these policies and protocols.

#### **Definition of a Concussion**

A concussion is a type of head injury that changes the way the brain normally works. Concussions are caused by either a direct blow to the head, neck or body or whiplash injury when the head is snapped back and then forward. Concussions involve a rapid onset of short-lived complex disturbance in brain function that resolves spontaneously and may result in long-term neuropathological impairment. Injury

occurs when the brain slams into the skull and then “bounces” off the opposite side of the skull. The brain may also rotate inside the skull, causing further damage. A concussion usually does not show structural injury when the brain is imaged. It instead involves damage at the cellular level and causes change in both cellular chemicals and activity that lead to decreased cerebral blood flow.

### **Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion in Sports**

Symptoms reported by student athlete: Headache or “pressure” in head, nausea, balance problems and dizziness, double vision, sensitivity to light, sensitivity to noise, feeling sluggish or slowed down, feeling foggy or groggy, does not “feel right”.

Signs of deteriorating neurological function: A student athlete should be taken to the emergency room if any of the following signs/symptoms are present: Headache worsens, seizures, can’t focus, looks very drowsy or can’t be awakened, repeated vomiting, slurred speech, can’t recognize people or places, increased confusion or irritability, weakness or numbness in arms or legs, neck pain, unusual behavior, significant irritability, any loss of consciousness greater than 30 seconds.

### **Protocol for Concussion Management**

Dover Sherborn Athletic Department requires annual training in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related head injury, including second impact syndrome, and keep documentation of said training on file for the following persons:

- Extracurricular Athletic Activities Supervisors
- Coaches
- Certified Athletic Trainers
- Volunteers
- School Physicians
- School Nurses
- Athletic Directors
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity by way of the parent(s)/guardian(s) signature on Permission and Consent Forms.
- Students who participate in an extracurricular athletic activity by way of the student’s signature on Permission and Consent Forms.

Pre-season baseline imPACT tests are scheduled for all student athletes on contact sports teams. Student athletes are tested in their freshmen and junior years.

Dover Sherborn coaches, athletic trainers, and volunteers will be given instruction to teach form, techniques, and skills that minimize sports-related head injury.

Documentation of a student’s history of head injuries, including concussions, is collected with pre-season participation forms and kept on file with the school nurse.

Documentation of an annual physical examination of students participating in extracurricular athletic activities consistent with 105 CMR 200.000 is kept in the student's health record, which is on file in the school nurse's office.

Student athletes without preseason participation forms on files will not be able to participate.

### **Evaluation Guidelines**

Any time a concussion is suspected during practice or game, the student-athlete will be removed from participation and will not be allowed to participate that same day.

Parents/guardians will be notified of a head injury by the coach and/or athletic trainer so the parent/guardian may take the student to a medical provider for appropriate medical evaluation and treatment. All head injuries and suspected concussions will be reported to the school nurse, and the athletic trainer.

Evaluation and clearance by the family's medical provider will be required.

The student-athlete will not return to play without the note from the medical provider and only after completion of the Return to Play Protocol followed by the Athletic Trainer.

The school nurse and guidance counselors will notify academic teachers of the affected student-athlete and provide guidelines for concussion accommodation plans.

### **Return to Play Protocol**

In order to safely return to sport participation, the following progression will be followed with the Athletic Trainer:

- 1) Student athletes show no signs of symptoms of a concussion for a minimum of 24 hours including normal eating habits, sleeping habits, school work productivity without pain relief medication.
- 2) Student athletes will be retested using the ImPACT software to assure normal neurological function.
- 3) After successful results at retest, student-athletes will be ImPACT tested after exertion tests.
- 4) After successful exertion ImPACT tests are complete, non-contact sport specific exertion ImPACT testing is performed.
- 5) Student athletes who have been cleared by a physician, and have successfully completed the ImPACT progression may return to full practice and game participation.
- 6) Student athlete's parent/guardian will be notified.

## **College and the Recruiting Process**

One of the most important decisions facing high school students is what to do with their lives after high school. The athletic director and members of the coaching staff are willing and eager to assist all students with this extremely important decision. The Athletic Department may be able to answer questions, contact coaches or schools, send videotapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. If a student's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level, it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA regulations. The Dover-Sherborn High School Guidance Department and the Athletic Director have information on and experience in dealing with NCAA regulations and the recruiting process.

## **Medical and Insurance Requirements**

### **Physicals & Release Forms**

All students who plan to participate in athletics must have written proof of a current physical exam signed by a physician. In order for the exam to be current, it must be dated within 13 months of any athletic involvement. It is strongly recommended that an annual exam be scheduled between June and August preceding each school year. Such an exam will cover a student for the entire school year.

Parents/guardians permission forms, which contain important emergency and insurance information, must be completed and signed by the athlete and a parent/guardian. These forms are online at [www.familyld.com](http://www.familyld.com). The information provided will be disseminated to authorized personnel and coaches, as part of our emergency protocol.

Athletes will not be allowed to participate in practices or games in any season without having a current medical form, parental/guardian permission on file, and payment of the athletic fee for that season.

### **Insurance Coverage**

The Dover-Sherborn School District provides insurance coverage only for those students participating in interscholastic athletic activities. This plan does not cover expenses that are covered through the student's parent's insurance company. However, expenses not covered by personal insurance may be covered by the district's insurance plan.

When an injury occurs, an insurance form may be picked up in the Athletic Office. The school's insurance form must be submitted to the insurance company within thirty days.



## **Athletic Advisory Committee**

Mission Statement: The Athletic Advisory Committee is an advisory group for the Athletic Director. Responsibilities include providing input on the following topics:

- Addition and deletion of teams
- Changes in athletic policies and procedures
- Athletic facility planning
- Guidance to School Committee on athletic matters
- Other pertinent athletic issues

The Athletic Advisory Committee will be comprised of the following individuals:

- The Headmaster
- The Athletic Director
- A member of the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee (appointed annually by School Committee)
- Four Dover-Sherborn student-athletes, two male and two female (appointed for two years by Athletic Director)
- Two members of the coaching staff, representing male and female teams (reviewed annually by Athletic Director)
- Two parents/guardian, representing Dover and Sherborn (parents may submit a letter of interest to the PTO when positions have been posted), election process by PTO if necessary, appointment for two years)
- An officer from the Dover-Sherborn Boosters Club (appointed by Boosters)

The Athletic Advisory Committee will meet three times a year (fall, winter, spring) or as requested by the Athletic Director.

## **Dover-Sherborn Realities**

At Dover-Sherborn High School, we are guided by certain realities: the relatively small size of the school population, the facilities, the budget, availability of quality coaching, and tradition. These “realities” must be considered when deciding what programs to start, expand, or discontinue. Programs must be added and expanded cautiously: experience has taught us that it is easier to add a program than to eliminate one.

The Dover-Sherborn Athletic Program strives to offer athletic and competitive opportunities to as many participants as possible. While we are not able to offer each student-athlete the program of his/her choice, we are committed to providing at least one sport per season that is open to all students who demonstrate their willingness to take the program seriously.

To this end, we differentiate between Limited-Roster and Unlimited-Roster teams.

- Limited-Roster Athletic Teams (Cut Teams)

Varsity teams compete against opponents at the highest possible level; the commitment is to field the best team. Coaches have the ability to use their judgment in picking the team. Junior Varsity & Freshmen teams are competitive programs designed to meet the developmental needs of participants. The purpose of these programs is to develop skills, sportsmanship, and behaviors necessary to compete at the varsity level. Depending on the number of student-athletes who try out for one of these teams, cuts may be made based off of the needs of the coach.

- Unlimited-Roster Athletic Teams (Non-Cut Teams)

The high school provides at least one “no cut” sport per season. These are interscholastic athletic teams, sometimes with varsity and junior varsity levels. Currently, football, cross country running, cross country skiing, and track and field are examples of unlimited-roster sports at Dover-Sherborn. Just because these teams are non-cut does not mean that they are any less thought of within our athletic program.

At Dover-Sherborn High School, being a member of a team does not guarantee playing time.

## **Program Management**

### **Season Review and Projection**

At the conclusion of each sports season (Fall, Winter, Spring), the Athletic Director (AD) and the Athletic Advisory Committee (AAC) will meet to review the season just completed. At the AAC Season Review, the AD will present a roster analysis by sport, which will include:

1. Historical data by sport
2. Current sport participation numbers
3. Projection participation number for next season.
  - Projected participation numbers will represent the AD and Varsity Coaches’ best estimate at the time and will be based on the number of participants expected to return to the sport, less any expected attrition, plus any new participants expected to join. The AD will make reasonable efforts to obtain projection data through surveys, meetings,

and/or discussions with the current coach, captains, and youth clubs/programs, where applicable.

### **Changing the Status of a Program**

Discussion at the AAC Season Review may indicate the potential need to change the status of a current program from Cut to Non-Cut. The AD may bring a recommendation to this meeting or indicate the need to seek additional information prior to the next meeting. When ready, the AAC will vote by simple majority on this recommendation.

There may be times in which changing the status from Non-Cut to Cut needs to be reviewed. The AD or the varsity coach may bring a recommendation to this meeting. At that time, the AD and AAC will review the merits of this recommendation. If additional information is needed, it should be made available for the next meeting. When ready, the AAC will vote by simple majority on this recommendation.

### **Expanding a Current Program**

The Athletic Director will report to the AAC on the potential for a team meeting the criteria for program expansion, for example, a Freshman Team. The information regarding a potential expansion of a program may be ascertained at the AAC season review or brought forward from the community. Community members interested in researching the potential for program expansion may contact the Varsity Coach and the AD to discuss the potential for program expansion.

The Varsity Coach and the AD will explore the potential for a new level based on the following criteria:

- Additional data on student-athlete interest/ability
- Support of the Varsity coach for expanding the program
- Availability of competitive opponents through a comprehensive review of programs within the Tri Valley League and outside the league (if necessary)
- Availability of qualified coaches
- Appropriate facilities
- Cost and funding options
- Negative effects on other programs
- Estimated length of time the team might exist (sustainability)

The AD will present the findings at an AAC meeting. At any point during this analysis, the AD and Headmaster, together, can decide to end the process.

After sufficient discussion at its next meeting, the AAC will vote by simple majority to

- 1) recommend to the Regional School Committee the addition of the new team,
- 2) deny the new team, or
- 3) request additional information.

After reviewing the overall athletic budget in conjunction with the Headmaster, the AD will determine what, if any, additional cost a participant on the expanded team will pay above and beyond the standard athletic fee. This will be included in the proposal forwarded to the school committee. Any additional funds beyond the athletic fee must be collected prior to the start of the team's season, or a promissory note provided by a club or organization. Unfunded teams are expected to pay the direct costs of the program in addition to participants paying the Athletic Fee.

### **Deleting a Current Team/Program**

Discussion at the AAC Season Review may indicate the *potential* need to delete a current team/program. Prior to the next AAC meeting, the AD will determine the following for the proposed team/program:

- Additional data on student-athlete interest/ability and program sustainability (next 2+ years)
- Program options (8th grade waivers, cooperative teams, etc.)
- Availability of competitive opponents through a comprehensive review of programs within the Tri-Valley League and outside the league (if necessary)
- Availability of qualified coaches
- Appropriate facilities
- Cost and funding options
- Negative effects on other programs
- Title IX and balance of programs
- Historical significance

At any point during this analysis, the AD and Headmaster together can decide to end the process.

After sufficient discussion at its next meeting, the AAC will vote by simple majority to 1) recommend to the Regional School Committee the deletion of the team/program or 2) request additional information.

### **Adding a New Program**

All requests to establish a new sports program will be brought to the AD at least one year in advance of the proposed participation. The AD will work with the student groups to 1) help them gather information needed to determine if adding a new program is merited and 2) present these findings to the AAC.

The information will include:

- Interest and availability of student athletes
- Availability of opponents
- Availability of qualified coaches
- Availability of appropriate facilities
- Cost and funding options
- Negative effects on other programs
- Sustainability/future projections
- Title IX and balance of programs
- “Varsity” vs. “Club” status

At any point during this analysis, the AD and Headmaster together can decide to end the process.

The information above will be brought to the AAC for review. After sufficient discussion, the AAC will vote by simple majority to 1) recommend to the Regional School Committee the addition of the new program, 2) deny the new program, or 3) request additional information.