

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Athletic Department at Griswold Middle School is to aid in the academic, emotional, and physical development of our students through the promotion of teamwork, sportsmanship and athletic competition. The athletic program at Griswold Middle School is believed to be a valuable asset to the total education process; therefore, the program operates within the same objectives and goals of the overall educational program. Research has shown that athletics at the middle school level help to foster team building skills, problem solving skills, self-discipline, and self-confidence. Through the development of these skills it is believed that our student-athletes will become confident, contributing members of the school community.

GOALS OF THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

- To develop sport skills by maximizing participation and focusing on instruction.
- To develop the positive values of athletics, including sportsmanship, teamwork, cooperation, and competition.
- To provide as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in activities they enjoy.
- To foster academic and athletic achievement in students by emphasizing the importance of self-discipline, sacrifice and dedication to achieving goals.
- To develop in students emotional control, dependability, and respect for rules, property and authority.
- To provide students the opportunity to work as a member of a team in order to achieve a goal, and in the process, learn the importance of cooperation, teamwork and good sportsmanship.
- To provide students with experiences which require problem solving, decision-making, and critical thinking skills.
- To provide students the opportunity to pursue physical fitness as a means of mental well-being.
- To develop in students a sense of school loyalty, and generate school spirit.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

Griswold Middle School holds its athletes to high standards. Student athletes are seen as representatives of both our school and our town. As a representative of Rocky Hill, student athletes are expected to adhere to all school and athletic department rules.

All athletes are expected to:

- Remain academically eligible.
- Act in a responsible manner, realizing at all times, athletes represent their school and community.
- Attend and arrive on time for all practices and games.
- Remain alcohol and drug free.
- Refrain from using profanity or obscene language or gestures.
- Show good sportsmanship and respect for officials, coaches and fellow athletes.
- Care for all athletic equipment issued throughout the season.
- Win with dignity and lose with grace.
- Play fair, play hard and put forth their best effort in practice and in competition.
- Abstain from any form of alcohol/substance abuse.
- Leave situations where there is underage drinking or the illegal use of drugs.

Athletes who fail to comply with these expectations may face disciplinary actions, including but not limited to dismissal from the team.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS OF STUDENT ATHLETES

Parents are encouraged to support their children's athletic endeavors and recognize the importance of athletics in their children's lives.

All parents are expected to:

- Understand that academics are a priority over athletics and emphasize successful classroom performance.
- Support and be enthusiastic about their child's chosen sport
- Be positive, helping their child understand the benefits of athletic participation regardless of contest results or individual performance.
- Insist their child abide by expectations of the athletic department and by team rules.
- Encourage fair play.
- Respect the actions of coaches regarding contest strategy, their child's play status and playing time.
- Avoid "coaching" from the stands or sidelines during both games and practices.
- Ensure their child attends all practices and contests, and are picked up at designated times.

CRITERIA FOR TEAM SELECTION

The number of students permitted on some teams may be limited due to allowable roster sizes. For these teams a tryout will be conducted. At the tryout, all athletes will be afforded an opportunity to showcase their talents and earn a spot on the roster. Basis for team selection will be at the sole discretion of the coach. Coaches will have in place clear and consistent criteria for the tryout period. Criteria may include, but is not limited to, the following indicators:

- Demonstration of positive behavior and attitude
- Demonstration of good sportsmanship and teamwork
- Demonstration of physical fitness
- Demonstration of required skills (skills testing)

At this time, athletics are available to seventh and eighth grade students only. Students must tryout for teams each year; team selection will be based on selection criteria rather than grade level. It should also be noted that JV and Varsity teams will be determined by ability rather than grade level.

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS OFFERED

FALL September-October

Boy's & Girl's Cross Country
Boy's & Girl's JV and Varsity Soccer *

WINTER November-February

Cheerleading *
Boy's & Girl's JV and Varsity Basketball *
Boy's & Girl's JV and Varsity Volleyball **February-March**

SPRING April-May

Boy's Baseball *
Girl's Softball *
Boy's & Girl's Track and Field

*** These teams have limited roster spots and typically require a "tryout"**

ACADEMIC RESTRICTION

Students are placed on academic restriction for each marking period in which they receive a grade of one F or two D's. Restricted students are not allowed to participate in athletics; this includes both games and practices.

CONFERENCE AFFILIATION

Griswold Middle School is a member of the Mid-State Middle School Athletic Conference. The conference consists of the following teams: Berlin, Colchester, Cromwell, Durham, East Hampton, Portland, RHAM and Rocky Hill.

DETENTIONS/SUSPENSIONS

Students suspended from school, (in-school or out of school) are not permitted to participate in or attend any athletic event during the period of their suspension. This includes team practices. Students assigned classroom detentions affecting participation in practices and games will be dealt with at the discretion of the coach.

INSURANCE

Athletes are covered by the school insurance only during the time they are engaged in a sport, but not during other times of the day or school year. The school insurance is a secondary policy, which will assist in the payment for an injury sustained during practice or a game. Such payments are at the discretion of the insurance carrier and are paid for costs not covered under the family's primary insurer.

PARENTAL PERMISSION AND SPORTS CANDIDATE HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE CARDS

Students who try out for an athletic team must have a signed parental permission form and a completed sports candidate health questionnaire card prior to trying out. The health questionnaire card provides us with accurate information in the event of an injury. Permission forms and health questionnaire cards are available in the main office and nurse's office.

PHYSICAL EXAM REQUIREMENTS

Students participating in athletics at Griswold Middle School are required to have a current physical examination. A sport physical is valid for one year, but must include the entire season for the sport in which the student will participate. The completed physical form needs to be in to the school **prior** to the first tryout. Sport physical forms are available in the main office and nurse's office. All questions regarding physicals should be directed to the school nurse.

TRANSPORTATION

Travel to all away athletic contests must be by team bus. Athletes being transported by parents/guardians must provide the coach with written permission **prior** to the athletic event. Athletes traveling by bus are expected to follow all school policies noted in school handbook.

UNIFORMS

All uniforms issued to athletes are the property of the school and must be properly cared for by the student. All uniforms must be returned, properly cleaned, at the conclusion of the season. Lost or damaged uniforms will become the financial obligation of the student. Game uniforms may be worn only on the day of a scheduled contest.

OUT OF SCHOOL CONDUCT

Student-athletes at Griswold Middle School are expected to act in a legal and responsible manner, realizing that at all times, they are representing their school and team. Conduct out of school which discredits or embarrasses Griswold Middle School, the Athletic Department or any sport may result in athletic department disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from a team. Further disciplinary action may also be taken if deemed appropriate by the school administration. Please see "Expectations for student athletes" and the section of this handbook entitled "Substance abuse".

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The use of smoking materials or any other tobacco product, any type of alcoholic product, or any narcotic or drug is absolutely forbidden. The possession of alcoholic beverages, any narcotics, or any drugs (except as noted in the student handbook as “Medication”) is also forbidden. All school rules and regulations regarding substance abuse are outlined in the student handbook and apply to athletes and at athletic events. In addition, athletes are not to be in the presence of and are expected to remove themselves from any situations of underage alcohol consumption or illegal use of drugs, whether occurring on or off school grounds. Failure to comply with this requirement shall result in discipline up to and including removal from the team. Any violation of school rules involving drugs or alcohol will result in dismissal from an athletic team. Any violation of a school rules involving smoking or other tobacco products will result in a two game suspension from athletic competition on the first offense, and dismissal from the team on the second offense.

Any student who, after the first offense for smoking, volunteers to participate in a smoking cessation program will not face team disciplinary action while abiding by the conditions of the cessation program. Team penalties may be invoked if the program is violated.