

**Philosophy - Athletic Program**

- Provides Upper School Students (\*5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade) the opportunity to enhance their experiences in a variety of interscholastic sports.
- \*Please note that 4<sup>th</sup> grade students are invited to participate in cross country practices and run for the team.
- Teams are co-ed unless otherwise stated.
- Students may choose whichever sport they wish to pursue. However, if they wish to change to a different sport, they must do so by the end of the first week of practice. After this week, students may switch sports only under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Athletic Director.
- Students must only make a commitment to an after school sport if they are certain that they can attend practices and games on a regular basis. Dividing their after school time between a school sport and an out of school activity is not acceptable. Exceptions may be made for an established commitment, such as religious classes, which result in the loss of practice for no more than one afternoon each week.
- There are no cuts from teams and everyone is given the opportunity to play
- For team sports, the varsity team will be comprised of 8<sup>th</sup> graders along with 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders according to their ability. The JV team will be comprised of all 5<sup>th</sup> graders plus the remaining 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders who did not make the varsity team. In tennis, the team will be comprised of match players and instructional level players according to ability.
- Playing time is often determined by the individual's level of commitment to the team and to practices. It may also be dictated to some extent by the strengths of the teams we play, how the game is going, and the need to keep certain players on the court/field. In the main, players should enjoy equal playing time.
- Tuesdays in the past have been designated as a 'no practice' day with the understanding that this is the day to schedule appointments and/or to work on projects. This has been done to alleviate the need for players to miss practice. **However** a coach may ask the players to practice on Tuesdays with the explicit understanding that the practice is optional and players will not be penalized in any way for not turning up.
- If students miss the practice before a game, they should not expect to start in the game (unless everyone is needed to play). Again, coach discretion is expected here!
- Good sportsmanship is always the number one priority. Our school has a good reputation for this with other teams we play, and we want it to remain that way. If students cannot demonstrate good sportsmanship, then they should not be allowed to play. Coaches and parents are also expected to act in accordance with this policy. Making derogatory remarks or harassing other

teams, coaches or referees will not be tolerated. We must all set a good example for our students to follow.

## **Spectators**

- Spectators are welcome at all athletic events. At all games they must watch from the opposite side of the field from where the team is sitting.
- Upper school students may attend home games if the office is notified that they are planning to stay.
- Lower school students must be accompanied by an adult.
- Students are not allowed to accompany a friend to practice because this distracts both players and coaches.
- The team bus is available to players only.

## **Pick Up**

- Unless they are participating in cross country (4-5 p.m.), students are finished with practice at 4:55 pm. Pick-up is at 5:00 p.m. Please be there to pick up your child on time.
- It is sometimes hard to predict the exact return time for away games, but every effort is made to list accurate times on the schedule. In the event that a coach realizes that there will be a significant delay (more than 20 minutes) he/she will call a parent who will be waiting at the school. This parent will be asked to inform the other waiting parents of the new expected arrival time.
- If a parent is late for pick up, the coach may accompany the student to study hall where the student must wait for the parent to arrive. If, after a late away game study hall is finished, for every fifteen minutes that the parent is late, the coach is entitled to claim \$10. This will be added to the parent's bill.
- Parents should make every effort to arrange their own back-up plans if they are unable to pick up by the designated time.

## **Bad Weather**

- If the weather becomes bad during the day, practices and/or games may be cancelled.
- Students will be informed as soon as possible, so that they may call home. The decision is usually made by noon, unless the weather changes very suddenly during the afternoon.
- Safety of students is always the top priority.
- If a game has been cancelled due to inclement weather, a practice may be organized inside using one of our two gymnasiums. Students will be allowed to notify parents by telephone, well in advance.

## **Schedule Changes**

- Any schedule changes will be sent to parents usually by e-mail. If a postponed game gets re-scheduled, the new date and time will be sent to parents by e-mail and necessary changes will be made to the schedules on the school web-site and sports blog (there is a link to this available in *The Fencepost*). Players on the team will also be told by their coach.

## **Practice**

- Students must attend all practices, unless special arrangements have been made with the Athletic Director.
- Students must come prepared to practice with the correct equipment e.g. cleats, shin guards, mouthpieces etc.
- If there is an emergency or a student absolutely cannot stay, it is courtesy to inform the coach as soon as possible with a written note of explanation. This does not mean right before a practice or a game.
- In the event of cold weather, it is important that students bring a warm-up suit (plus hat in the case of very cold weather). to practice and games
- Homework, projects or tests should not be a reason to miss practices.

## **Equipment:**

Soccer	:	Shin guards and cleats
Field Hockey	:	Shin guards, cleats, mouth guard, eye protector and field hockey stick
Volleyball	:	Knee pads
Basketball	:	Sneakers
Girls Lacrosse	:	Cleats, mouth guard, lacrosse stick, goggles, light gloves
Boys Lacrosse	:	Cleats, mouth guard, lacrosse stick, rib/chest pads, arm & shoulder pads, Athletic cup, gloves, helmet (provided)
Tennis	:	Tennis shoes, whites
Cross Country	:	Running shoes
Squash	:	Sturdy tennis/squash/cross-training sneakers, whites, squash racquet, protective glasses.
Golf	:	Golf clubs, sneakers (or golf shoes on golf course), appropriate dress on golf course (coach will advise)

## **Snacks**

Given that students have an early lunch and that travel away can sometimes mean returning to school in the evening, it is important that the students have access to some form of nourishment, and that this should be something light, convenient and simple. For each team, we ask that one parent take on the

task of snacks coordinator. This involves contacting parents of participating students and arranging a “snack providing” schedule for away and home games. All snacks prepared must take into account current school policy on snacks brought in to school. This is particularly important with regards to our current status as a “nut free” school. The recommendations for providing snacks are as follows: For outdoor team sports, at half-time it is nice to have a segment of orange or two (when playing at home, we also like to provide the opposition with oranges too, as a sign of hospitality and good sportsmanship). Following the game, for away games only, we recommend that individual cartons of drink such as fruit juice or water (definitely not soda) are provided along with relatively healthy individual snack packs such as pretzels or crackers.

### **End of Season Party**

It is always nice to finish off the season with an end of season get together with players, coaches and parents involved. This could involve a trip to the local Four Brothers pizza restaurant or a party in the Bontecou Gym meeting room with pizza ordered in. With tennis last year, we had strawberries and ice cream at the Golf & Tennis Club! It usually involves collecting around \$5 per player to pay for the food and drink. If any team parent wishes to help in organizing this event, please let me know as soon as possible.

### **Behavior on Buses**

It goes without saying really, that we expect high standards of behavior from our students at all times when representing the school at sports. Traveling on the bus is no exception. Safety is a big issue here and any tomfoolery will be dealt with severely.

**Finally.....** I want to assure you that our coaches, within the framework of Dutchess Day School philosophy, are all dedicated and committed to providing enjoyable and successful sporting experiences for your child(ren). Each coach will have their own way of doing things, depending on their experiences, personality and coaching style. It does not always mesh with those ideas and personal experiences of parents. If, as a parent, you are unhappy with something the coach is, or is not doing, please express your concern to the coach directly. It may well be that there is simply a misunderstanding and all can be resolved quite quickly. If you feel uncomfortable about approaching the coach directly, please talk to the Athletic Director as soon as possible.

[parentinfo]