



Dirigo High School Student Athlete Handbook

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Athletic and Student Activities Director

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Letter addressed Student Athletes and Families

We are thrilled to have you as part of our athletic program. This handbook has been created to provide you with important information, guidelines, and expectations for the upcoming season. Please take the time to review it carefully and feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or need further clarification.

Let's work together to make this a successful and memorable season for everyone involved. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to our Dirigo Athletics community!

Best regards,
Dirigo Athletic Coaches and Administrators

Eligibility for Participation

According to RSU 56 policy JJI, all students are encouraged to participate in co/extra curricular activities. These activities offer students the opportunity to learn new skills, to compete in a variety of sports, to experience being part of a team, to develop character, positive attitudes and self-discipline, to demonstrate leadership and to realize personal accomplishments. Participation in co/extra curricular activities is a **privilege** that carries with it responsibilities to self, classmates, school and community. Participation is entirely voluntary. Furthermore, it is the Board's intent to establish eligibility standards that support the wellbeing of students and the integrity of the school's co/extra curricular programs.

Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- In order to participate in co/extra curricular activities, scrimmages, exhibition games, performances, competitions, or tournaments students must be a **full time student, failing no more than one class, and be on track to graduate**. Students not meeting these academic requirements are on probation.
- All students identified by the principal/designee prior to the beginning of the season will be checked for eligibility at the end of each grading period as well as every two weeks throughout the season.
- A student who is on academic probation may regain eligibility if his/her two-week progress report indicates that he/she is meeting the academic minimum.
- A student who becomes academically ineligible two (2) times during a season will be released from the co/extra activity.
- While on academic probation, a student will continue participating in practices and will attend home games.
- All incoming freshmen will be considered eligible at the beginning of the first marking period of the year.
- Eligibility of transfer students will be determined by the Principal and, for interscholastic activities, the Principal and/or Athletic Director on the direction of the MPA.
- The Athletic/Activities Director in conjunction with the Principal can make exceptions as necessary for students with extenuating circumstances.

Sports Physicals and Insurance

It is the policy of the Maine Principals' Association as well as RSU 56 that **all** students participating in interscholastic athletics must have a sports physical examination every two years (minimum) prior to the start of the athletic season. A review of the physical exam form will be completed and will be kept on file and will be accessible in the event of an emergency. All students must demonstrate evidence of health insurance coverage before participating in athletic activities. If the student is not insured by a family insurance policy, school insurance will be available at the student's expense. A student who suffers serious illness or injury must obtain "return to play" clearance from their healthcare provider before further participation in athletics is allowed.

Parent/Athlete/Coach Communication Guide

(All coaching staff have RSU56 email accounts. First initial followed by last name @rsu56.org)

Our Philosophy

- Athletic achievement requires sincere commitment from all athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators. For all of us to be successful, effective communication must occur.
- The school athletic department and administration believe strongly in being accessible to parents and supportive of the coaching staff.
- We are continually attempting to improve communication with the students and parents. For our programs to be truly successful, it is necessary that everyone understand the focus and direction of the program.

Parent Expectations

At Dirigo, we are proud of the passion and support our families bring to every game. As a reminder, we ask all parents and spectators to uphold the values of positivity, respect, and sportsmanship at every athletic event. Please support your child — and their teammates — by:

- Cheering positively for our team and athletes
- Respecting officials, coaches, and opponents, even when emotions run high
- Encouraging effort, teamwork, and growth, not just results

Your example sets the tone. Let's create an environment where every athlete feels supported, and Dirigo Pride shines through in the stands as well as on the field.

Thank you for being a part of our team!

1. **It is reasonable to expect your child's coach to inform you:**
 - a. When and where practices and contests are held.

- b. Coaching philosophy.
 - c. About the expectations he/she has for all athletes on the squad as well as your individual child.
 - d. What is required to be a part of the team, i.e., fees, special equipment, offseason conditioning, lettering requirements. Etc.
 - e. If your child is injured during participation in a practice or contest.
2. **Typical concerns of parents that are appropriate to discuss with a coach are:**
- a. Any unhealthy mental or physical strain you detect in your child at home when it affects his/her academic performance.
 - b. How you can contribute to your child's skill improvement and development.
 - c. Any dramatic changes you detect in your child's behavior.

Dirigo Coaches & Administration Expectations

1. **It is INAPPROPRIATE to discuss with a coach:**
 - a. Playing time
 - b. Team strategy or play calling.
 - c. Other student athletes unless there is a safety concern
2. **Coaches often need parents to tell them:**
 - a. Any specific health concerns about your son/daughter expressed directly and informally to the head coach at a mutually convenient time.
 - b. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
 - c. Your commitment to the program, and how you plan to make a contribution to the program's success. For example, one way is to be sure your youngster is at practice each day on time and to ensure that your child gets enough rest and nutrition at home.
 - d. Strategies that have worked for you in dealing with your son/daughter being successful in the past
3. **If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, what procedure should you follow?**
 - a. Make an appointment with the coach. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or following a contest or practice. Please wait 24 hours before discussing the concern. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach, and these occasions do not promote objective analysis of the situation.
 - b. If the coach cannot be reached, or does not respond to you after that 24 hour wait period, call the Athletic Director to set up a meeting.
4. **What should you do if the meeting with the coach does not result in a resolution to the problem?**
 - a. 1. Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
 - b. 2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Behavior Expectations

Participants in athletics and activities at Dirigo are expected to show proper respect for all individuals and facilities at all times. Athletes will be removed temporarily or permanently from a team or club if they do not represent Dirigo or its supporting communities at the highest standard. Participation is a **privilege**, not a right. Student-athlete behaviors during the school day do have an impact on after school activity participation.

Absence Policy

In order to participate in after-school activities students are expected to be in attendance for the entire school day. Any student who misses all or part of a day due to illness or unexcused tardiness will NOT be allowed to participate in a game, practice, or any after-school function.

Students who miss part of the day for a scheduled appointment will be allowed to participate as long as they bring a note from a doctor, dentist, etc. To avoid any misunderstanding, please attempt to have this prepared prior to returning to school on the day of a scheduled appointment.

Students are allowed **ONE** unexcused tardy per sports season. The student **MUST** notify the office of this decision to use their pass before noon so that it can be communicated with the coach in an appropriate manner.

The Athletic Director or school Principal will make the participation decision regarding any unique circumstances which might cause a student to miss all or part of a school day. Any student who violates this policy will miss the next countable game.

Dual Sport Athlete

Historically, Dirigo High School has allowed students to participate in more than one sport per season. In order to be considered for this a student must contact the Athletic Director to discuss the possibility of becoming a dual sport athlete. If following the discussion the student athlete wants to pursue approval, the Athletic Director will meet with the coaching staff of both athletic programs as well as the building Principal/designee. If all parties agree with moving forward, a Dual Sport Athlete agreement will be completed by the Athletic Director to be signed by the student athlete, their parent/guardian, coaching staff, Athletic Director, Principal, and Superintendent.

If it is felt for any reason (academic, behavioral, maturity, etc.) that it is in the best interest of the student not to participate in two sports, then the student will need to choose one of the sports to participate in. Also, if a student is allowed to participate in more than one sport, the student will need to designate which sport is going to be their **priority sport**. That sport will take precedence over the other sport if there are conflicts.

Transportation

Following away activities, students may be transported by their parents/legal guardians or other designated party if the following procedures are followed:

- Parent/Guardian wishing to take their own child from an away game must sign their student athlete out with a coach following the activity/event.
- Parent/Guardian wishing to have their child ride home with another party must send in a note 24 hours prior to the away event and this must be approved by a building administrator before a student will be dismissed with the other party. Building administrator will give written permission to the coach prior to departing for the competition.
- Students will NOT be allowed to transport themselves to or from away events unless given permission by a school administrator. This includes a pick up point along the travel route.

*If students live along the route that the bus is taking from an away event to Dirigo High School, the bus driver will stop and let the student out. Students, however, have to let their coach and driver know upon getting on the bus. This is only for return drop offs, students must be on the bus departing from Dirigo High School (or Region 9) to participate in the away competition.

Substance Abuse for Co/Extra Curricular Participants

According to [RSU 56 policy IGDA](#) regarding the use/possession of substances the following outlines the process resulting in a violation of attached policy. In the instance of a first offense, the policy indicates the following:

- Student and parent(s)/guardian will be required to meet with the Building administrator and/or athletic director.
- Student and parent(s)/guardian will be required to meet with the school counselor. The school counselor will provide an approved list of contacts for assessment services. Additional drug/alcohol information and support will be provided.
- After meeting with the school counselor the student will write a statement (one page minimum) using the provided RSU 56 Drug/Alcohol Reflection Guidelines regarding the changes in their behavior to prevent any recurrence of the abuse to the Assistant Principal/Athletic Director.
- Students, (extracurricular athletics participants), will be **suspended from participating in twenty five percent (25%) of regularly scheduled games and will attend practices and games but will not be in uniform for games**. The student will be expected to continue to practice with their respective team during this time. The coach will be made aware of this situation.

*The above items must be completed prior to the return of the student to any activity that they may participate within.

**Subsequent Offenses will result in the student being suspended from participating in any/all extracurricular activities for the remainder of the season. The student will be required to have a formal substance abuse assessment by a school approved professional (at no expense to the RSU).

***If a co/extracurricular participant self refers asking for help or is referred and there is no evidence of a violation of this policy, there will be no disciplinary action taken, however they will be required to follow JICH - Drug and Alcohol Use by Students policy.

Detentions/Discipline & Games/Practices

If a student receives a detention, they are required to serve the detention prior to participating in an after-school activity. Students may be allowed to move one (1) detention per semester if approved by the Principal. The Principal will make the decision regarding any unique circumstance regarding a conflict with a detention and game/practice.

Off-Site Practice Information

There will be times when practices will be held away from Dirigo High School. In most cases, transportation will be provided. In the event that transportation can not be provided, or with administrative permission, students may drive **themselves** to these practices. Students wishing to ride with another student must have specific written permission from their parents to do so. Coaches may not transport students unless it is with a RSU56 vehicle, or appropriate paperwork has been completed.

Below is a list of off-site practice facilities:

- Soccer - Dirigo Elementary School

- Golf - Oakdale Country Club
- Cheering - TWK Dirigo Middle School
- Nordic Skiing- Thurston Family Farm, Dickvale Road Peru

*Students who drive to another school (Dirigo Elementary School or TWK Dirigo Middle School) must park away from the school to prevent traffic congestion at the end of the school day.

Equipment/Uniforms

It is expected that all uniforms and equipment that are borrowed from RSU 56 are returned within 1 week of the end of the season. Students who have missing items will not be issued the next season's equipment or uniform until prior season's equipment and uniform have fully been returned. If a student fails to return their sports equipment and/or uniform no later than one week after the end of the season, they will be billed for the cost of the missing item(s) plus 20% for shipping costs. Seniors with missing equipment and/or uniform items will not be allowed to march at graduation until items have been returned, or student bill has been paid.

Students wishing to use school issued uniforms for special occasions (like senior photos) may contact the Athletic Director to sign out a uniform out of season. Please give a minimum of 1 weeks notice before needing the uniform. All uniforms must be returned within the allotted time indicated on the sign out form.

Dirigo High School Athletic Sport Offerings

The following sports are offered at Dirigo High School:

<u>Fall Sports</u>	<u>Winter Sports</u>	<u>Spring Sports</u>
Cross Country Field Hockey Football Golf Boys Soccer Girls Soccer	Girls Basketball Boys Basketball Cheering Nordic Skiing Wrestling Unified Basketball	Baseball Softball Girls Tennis Boys Tennis Track & Field

All sports offering are contingent on proper staffing and student interest

Varsity Letter Criteria

To earn a varsity letter at Dirigo High School, a student athlete or manager must complete all of the general **and** sport-specific criteria listed below:

General Requirements:

- Recommendation of the Coach(es).
- Returns all equipment/uniform in proper shape.
- Completes the following obligations to the team:
 - Attends practices and events;
 - Helps Coach(es) and Athletic Director;

- Demonstrates positive behavior and respect at all times.

Sport-Specific Requirements:

Each team has it's own specific requirements for earning a varsity letter. Coaches will include this information in their pre-season meeting and information sheet/team contract

Required Documentation for Participation

The following documents are needed for participation in co/extracurricular activities at Dirigo High School:

- Annual Student Participation-Parental Approval Form ([PDF Link](#))
 - Acknowledgement of Substance Abuse Policy for Co/Extra Curricular Participants ([Policy IGDA](#))
 - Acknowledgement of Management of Concussion and Other Head Injuries ([Policy JJIF](#))
 - Acknowledgement of Concussion and Other Head Injuries Information Sheet ([Policy JJIF-E](#))
- Student Athlete & Parent Support Contract ([PDF Link](#))
- Physical Examination of Students ([Policy JLCA](#))
- Medical Form Update ([PDF Link](#))
- Proof of Insurance Submission ([Policy IGDA-E1](#))

Note that the policies referenced are also included within the appendix following this section. The RSU 56 School Board of Directors and the Administrative Team have developed a comprehensive menu of policies which guide the operation of our organization and schools. In an effort to make these policies available for all parents and community members, they have been published on our district website. If you would prefer to have a paper copy of a particular policy, we would be more than happy to accommodate this request. Please contact Dirigo High School or the RSU 56 central office, and we will provide a copy for you.