

# Somerville High School



## Student-Athlete Handbook 2023-2024

**Superintendent:** Rubén Carmona

**Principal:** Alicia Kersten

**Athletic Director:** Stanley Vieira

**Assistant Athletic Director:** Indira Evora

**Athletic Trainer:** Michelle Kelly

**Assistant Athletic Trainer:** Gabrielle Vieira

**Equipment Manager:** Maura Goodwin

**This handbook is designed to summarize the general rules and regulations. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to adhere to all Somerville High School Handbook policies as well as MIAA Handbook regulations to maintain eligibility.**

**All policies in the SHS Handbook, including hazing and bullying policies, govern student athletes during their participation in any and all athletic programs.**

**No athletic activity may exclude or discriminate against students based on race, sex, color, religion, national origin, disability, homelessness or sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression in regards to anyone in the LGBTQI+ community, in admission to, access to, participation in, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities.**

### **Somerville High School Athletics Mission**

The athletic program intends to provide an opportunity for student-athletes to develop and display their talents through competition. All student-athletes place the highest priority on the quality of education and the successful completion of academic programs. Athletics are conducted as an integral component of the overall educational experience; with the goal of having student-athletes strive to reach their potential and give their best.

Somerville Athletics is fully committed to providing opportunities for student-athletes to develop leadership, sportsmanship, citizenship and accountability while fielding competitive teams.

**Being part of a team not only promotes a healthy lifestyle but also provides multiple opportunities for skill enhancement, competition, collaboration, and cooperation.**

## **Core Values**

Somerville Athletics considers the playing field an extension of the classroom. In conjunction with this belief, we strive to teach and model the ICARE values as practiced at Somerville High School.

**Integrity**  
**Commitment**  
**Accountability**  
**Respect**  
**Excellence**

## **Statement of Philosophy**

- It is the philosophy of the Somerville High School Athletic Program to place the highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of academic goals.
- Athletics are offered and encouraged as a part of the student-athlete's overall educational experience.
- The Department of Athletics will strive to encourage participation by maximizing the number of opportunities in varsity and sub-varsity programs in boys' and girls' sport and co-educational club activities.
- Participants in the athletic program receive the same treatment as the general population. Student-athletes do not receive special privileges in admission, advising or grading.
- The emphasis of our athletic program is placed on the welfare of the participants, and not on the spectators or the entertainment value of sport.
- It is the goal of the Athletic Department to foster the development of sportsmanship, fair play, positive societal values, and physical well-being of all participants.

## Governing Bodies

### **Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)**

The mission of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is to serve member schools and the maximum number of their students by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic athletics, which will enrich the educational experiences of all participants. The MIAA will promote interschool athletics that provide life-long and life-quality experiences to students while enhancing their achievements of educational goals.

### **Greater Boston League (GBL)**

Somerville High School is a member school of the Greater Boston League in District 5 of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

The league consists of eight schools: **Chelsea, Everett, Lynn Classical, Lynn English, Malden, Medford, Revere and Somerville**

## Athletic Offerings

Currently Somerville High School offers the following playing opportunities:

| <b><i>Fall:</i></b>   | <b><i>Winter:</i></b> | <b><i>Spring:</i></b>    |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Cheerleading          | Basketball            | Baseball                 |
| Cross Country (B & G) | Cheerleading          | Lacrosse (B & G)         |
| Football              | Ice Hockey (B & G)    | Softball                 |
| Golf (Coed)           | Indoor Track (B & G)  | Tennis (B & G)           |
| Soccer (B & G)        | Swimming (Coed)       | Track and Field (B & G)  |
| Volleyball (Girls)    |                       | Volleyball (Boys)        |
|                       |                       | Ultimate Frisbee (B & G) |
|                       |                       | Crew (B & G)             |

### Middle Grade Offerings:

| <b><i>Fall:</i></b>   | <b><i>Winter:</i></b> | <b><i>Spring:</i></b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Softball              | Basketball (B & G)    | Track & Field (B & G) |
| Baseball              |                       | Flag Football (Coed)  |
| Cross Country (B & G) |                       |                       |

## EXPECTATIONS/ELIGIBILITY

### **Residence**

The student-athlete must be a bona fide student of Somerville Public Schools and must reside within the Somerville Public School District boundaries and meet the residency requirements of the MIAA. All students should have up-to-date information on file with their community. Students who are home schooled or have an out of district placement must receive permission from the administration

### **Age**

A student-athlete shall be under 19 years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that his/her nineteenth birthday occurs after September 1 of that year. For freshman competition, a student-athlete shall be under 16 years of age but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that the sixteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. Athletes will be required to provide a birth certificate from the town clerk where he or she was born if necessary.

*A student may participate in an athletic contest for only one year as a ninth grader. A student may have a maximum of four years of (opportunity for) athletic eligibility after initially entering the ninth grade.*

## THE HIGHLANDER WAY

- **No food or drinks in the gym**
- **Once students leave the athletic event they cannot re-enter the building**
- **If students are in a part of the building they are not supposed to be in, they will be asked to leave the athletic event. They will only be allowed in the gym and cafeteria.**
- **If more than one person is in a bathroom stall, all students in the stall will be asked to leave.**
- **Students must enter and leave through the main entrance. If students enter through any door except the main door, or let anyone in through another door, they will be suspended.**
- **All regular school rules including the ban on vaping and vaping devices will be followed.**

## **SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Somerville Public Schools and the Greater Boston League are committed to promoting good sportsmanship, and developing and maintaining a safe and healthy environment for competition. We believe the opportunity to represent a school is a privilege, which is accompanied by the responsibility to act with dignity, integrity, and respect at all times.

Individuals associated with a (league) member institution are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner that represents the highest level of honor, and to observe the tenets of good sportsmanship: honesty, fairness, dignity, civility, and respect. Somerville leads the way in ensuring sporting events are safe and enthusiastic! Give honor and respect to student-athletes, coaches, officials, families, and fans by:

- Appreciating outstanding plays by all teams and athletes
- Supporting decisions by coaches and officials
- Showing you are a role model on the field and in the stands
- Using only positive language and gestures
- Removing your hat and remaining standing for the entire National Anthem
- Entering and exiting safely
- Not doing YOUR part to ASSURE Somerville athletic events are safe and positive may result in being told to leave or being banned from all sporting events

## Physicals/Safety Requirements

*The Department of Public Health requires all student athletes to have a current physical on file to be eligible to compete. Physicals are valid for 13 months from the date it took place. If the physical expires during the season, students are not permitted to participate until a current physical has been completed and provided to the athletic trainer. Additionally, all athletes must attend preseason medical screening every sport season and complete baseline concussion testing using SWAY in order to be eligible to participate.*

Student athletes are also required to have all proper medication forms on file with the school nurse. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to carry their inhaler, epi pen and any other medical supplies they require.

## Health/Medical Insurance

*A signed proof of insurance coverage and parental permission is required for participation in athletics. Student-athletes should have their own health/accident insurance plan that will cover any injury incurred as a result of their participation in sports at Somerville High School. Student-athletes who don't have their own primary insurance are encouraged to sign up for MassHealth.*

## Secondary Insurance

*Student-Athletes are required to carry a primary insurance policy (either institutional student insurance or the student-athlete may be covered under their parent/guardian insurance plan). All claims will be submitted initially to this plan.*

*The school coverage for student-athletes is a **SECONDARY INSURANCE POLICY FOR ATHLETIC RELATED INJURIES**. This means that after the primary plan has considered any claims, the secondary plan insurance will take over. In the event that the primary policy does not cover the high school athletic related injuries, the school policy becomes the primary policy. Student-athletes are required to provide insurance information in order to participate in interscholastic athletics. For the school to file for benefits under these policies, the student-athlete (or parent/guardian) must provide copies of all bills and primary coverage **explanation of benefits (EOB)**. These copies **must** be submitted to the school athletic trainer in a timely manner to prevent delays resulting in late payment of bills.*

## School Attendance

A student must be in attendance for three periods of school to participate in practice, team meeting, function, or in an interscholastic event that day. Students who are not in school on the Friday before a weekend or vacation are ineligible for the entire weekend or the entire vacation. *Student-athletes who are suspended in or out of school will not be allowed to participate in practice or an interscholastic event until returning back to the regular classroom.* Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing from the Director of Athletics/Vice Principal prior to the student-athlete being allowed to participate.

*All excused absences must be cleared by your Vice Principal for daily participation*

Students who have more than 5 unexcused absences will have their grade lowered to a 59

## Academics:

*Academic Eligibility:* Students must carry and pass 20 credits for the marking period prior to the start of a season. If a new marking period takes place during the season, students must pass 20 credits at that time as well. Students may practice with their team if they are not academically eligible, based on the discretion of the athletic director, the coach and the student's dean.

*If a student-athlete only performed to the minimum s/he would graduate high school with a 1.9 grade point average. This grade point average is less than what the NCAA requires for a student-athlete to get into the eligibility center.*

**Participation in athletics is a privilege.** If students do not fulfill the basic eligibility requirements they may not participate. Additionally, eligibility may be compromised by disciplinary issues or if an athlete misuses school equipment or facilities.



### **Expectations to Remember:**

1. The student athlete is expected to remain academically eligible according to MIAA standards. All student-athletes are expected to participate in his/her physical education classes.
2. The athlete is expected to attend all practices and games.

#### **Exceptions:**

- a. absences from school
  - b. suspension external or internal from school
  - c. excused from coach/ athletic trainer in writing
3. Students absent from school are NOT allowed to go to or participate in practice or games. **Exceptions:**
    - a. letter to the director of athletics explaining the absence (medical, funeral etc...)
  4. The conduct of the participant in any athletic related program is expected to be exemplary on and off the playing field, in and out of season.

### **Athletic Department Policies/Expectations**

The student-athlete is subject to rules pertaining to his/her particular sport as established by the coaches, athletic department, GBL and the MIAA. These rules are provided the first week of practice of each individual sport. The student-athlete must participate in practices and games except when injured or when attending other school related responsibilities (study hall, detention). The athlete's responsibility to their team must take precedence over all other social/recreational events.

Student-athletes are expected to represent their teams and Somerville High School with dignity, class and positive sportsmanship at all times. Student-athletes must obey the decisions of the MIAA, the GBL, their coaches and officials regarding behavior, rules of the sport, and dress codes on and off the playing arena.

Unethical conduct by a student-athlete shall be subject to disciplinary action as set forth by the MIAA and GBL. Student-athletes found in violations may be ineligible for further interscholastic competition as stated by the MIAA manual.

You may obtain more information on unethical conduct and eligibility by clicking on to [www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net).

### **Role of the Coach: Seasonal Positions**

The role of a coach is to facilitate learning opportunities for student-athletes on and off the field. Through athletics, they will guide their athletes to challenge themselves, set goals, work together and overcome adversity. Coaches will help transfer lessons learned on the field to daily life situations. Coaches are responsible for coaching their teams, communicating effectively with all team members, ensuring the supervision and safety of the team and overseeing appropriate sportsmanship, facility use and eligibility of players. Coaches will work with the athletic director and athletic trainer regularly to communicate the needs of individual players. Coaches will implement the philosophy and mission of Somerville Athletics into their respective programs. Coaches will strive to support and work with other teams in the department as well as to support the community through time with youth programs and community service opportunities.

### **Squad Selection/Try-out**

In order to maximize the number of participants in the athletic program at Somerville High School, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as possible without having a negative impact on the integrity and safety of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment and other factors may place limitations on their roster size for some sports.

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they meet the standards of eligibility requirements listed in the handbook. 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 her/his expectations. No student is guaranteed a place on the team simply because of his/her grade level or past participation. Students cut from a team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team and the final cuts have not been made and they have not missed the deadline for participation. Students who are cut from a team will be informed as the reason for the cut if a student so desires. Decisions made by coaches will explain to students at an appropriate time and in an appropriate setting, usually in a personal meeting with the student.

## Levels of Play

Each level of play possesses different objectives with different expectations. Playing time is always determined by the coaching staff with safety and the wellbeing of student athletes at the forefront. Each level has limited number of rostered spots

- **Freshman:** Provide opportunities for participation. Introduce players to the sport, cover fundamental skills, and introduce various strategies and game situations. Everyone receives some game time in order to develop and improve on skills and critical thinking.

- **JV:** Implement strategies and game play reflective of the goals of the varsity programs. Prepare players for varsity experiences and expectations. Playing time is determined by the staff based on skills and development from practices and ability to transition those skills to live competition.

- **Varsity:** Set the tone for the program and all levels of play. This includes setting an example for community service, sportsmanship, pride and dedication. Players strive to improve daily and compete with one another in order to improve the team. Playing time during contests is not guaranteed and will be determined by the coach.

**MIAA 8th Grade Waivers are for programs struggling with numbers. We cannot have an 8th grade waiver in order to accommodate 1 or 2 kids. Student athletes who receive a waiver are only permitted to compete on the lowest level team**

### **Captains: Leaders both on and off the field**

Captains may be selected through a democratic process with oversight from the head coach. Coaches communicate the process and qualifications to student-athletes prior to a team vote. Coaches may appoint an additional captain at the start of the following season. Captaincy is a privilege and in order to maintain captaincy, all captains must represent their school appropriately, demonstrate positive leadership qualities in the school community and attend Captains' Council meetings with the athletic director. Captains are considered liaisons to the athletic director and to their coaches and should strive to communicate the needs of the team while also working with the team to support the goal of the program and department as a whole. Captaincy may be removed if there are MIAA or SHS violations during the period of leadership. In an effort to provide opportunities for all students to develop leadership skills, there will not be captains for sub-varsity sports. However, coaches may appoint weekly or game captains that rotate throughout the season. All team captains will also sit on the Captains Council, which meets once a month.

### **Varsity Letters and Pins:**

In the first season an athlete makes varsity, he or she will receive a varsity letter with a pin for their sport. For subsequent varsity seasons, athletes will receive a pin for their specific sport and a bar to represent varsity seasons. Additionally, captains will receive a captain's pin. To be eligible for a letter or pin, an athlete must participate in 50% of varsity contests. To be eligible for a captain's pin, captains must attend Captains' Council meetings and maintain their captaincy title for the entire season.

*Varsity jackets are determined by the coaching staff and fundraising committee.  
These are not paid for by the SHS Athletics Department*

## Commitment

Student-athletes should expect to practice every week day. Weekend practices vary by sport and should be expected, although in general, coaches will make every effort to avoid a Sunday practice, however, Sunday is a practice day for boys and girls basketball.

Interscholastic athletics demands more of a commitment than most other club or recreational activities. Students should be aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for the team. During tryouts and after team selections, the head coach will distribute and explain expectations related to practice times, locations and game schedules. Students are expected to make all practices, two-hour daily commitment to the team.

At the freshman and junior varsity levels, most teams do not practice or play on the weekends. At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace, and students should expect regular involvement during these times. Because our teams share facilities and teams use facilities off campus, practice and game hours may vary considerably. **At all levels in all sports, students are expected to provide their own transportation to and from practice and most home competitions.**

## Playing Time

There are many factors that determine playing time, such as practice, attendance, attitude, commitment, effort and athletic ability. Playing time are decisions made on a regular basis by the coaching staff and it is the coach's responsibility to decide which athletes should start a contest, who should play what role on the team (position), and how long each athlete should play. These decisions are approached seriously from our staff. It is requested that if a student-athlete has a question regarding playing time that s/he approaches the coach and requests a meeting to discuss the student-athletes strength and weaknesses.

It is the Athletic Department policy, however, that all student-athletes at the freshman and junior varsity level receive playing time during competition as long as they have met the coaches expectations during practices, attendance, attitude, commitment and effort.

### **MIAA Bona Fide Team Rule**

It is expected that student-athletes have loyalty to their high school team. A bona fide member of the school team is a student-athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with out of school teams. Any student-athlete who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two contests or two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately upon confirmation of the violation. A student-athlete in conflict with the bona fide team rule is also ineligible for the MIAA state tournament for that season (MIAA).

## **SHS Highlander Team Rules**

Each head coach reserves the right to make individual team rules that are specific to the sport. Coaches will develop team rules with the guidelines of the athletic department and all athletes are expected to adhere to all the athletic department policies and team policies.

1. Practice as you play. Work hard in every situation.
2. Please ask questions if you do not understand something.
3. No hazing or harassing. All team members must abide by MIAA regulations on Hazing.
4. Zero tolerance of disrespect for all teammates and coaches.
5. Must have a positive attitude with the team and with coaches.
6. Captains are an extension of the coaching staff, please listen when they speak.
7. Come prepared for games/practices both physically and mentally.
8. Be accountable for your actions on and off the playing field/surface.
9. Arrive to practice and school on time (attendance checked daily). No tolerance for unexcused absences.
10. Players must contact the coach if they are going to be late or absent from school.
11. Student-athletes need to be academically eligible to participate in sports.
12. Playing time is earned, not given. It is a privilege to play sports, not a right.
13. Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate good citizenship at all times. Detentions and/or suspensions will result in additional consequences for your sport.
14. No consumption of alcohol or drugs.
15. No tobacco products. This includes JUULs/Elf/Hyde or other vaping paraphernalia
16. All parents/guardians have a 24 hour rule when upset with a coach. Please do not contact the coach until the next day.

17. There is a chain of command, please contact the head coach with any issues.  
If a problem cannot be solved, then the athletic director can become involved.
18. Rules and expectations are subject to change.

***Any rule violation will result in a meeting with the Head Coach and could lead to a team probation or dismissal from the team.***

### **Vacation and Attendance Policies**

Student-athletes making a commitment to their team and program are expected to participate in all contests and practices throughout the season. This may include time for preseason tryouts and registration, and over school vacations and on weekends. Coaches will communicate the season schedule and expectations at the beginning of the season. Players may compromise their participation and membership if there are unexcused absences or a large number of times they are not present.

**Please report to your coach when you cannot attend! Each team has its own rules/consequences on school tardiness/absent**

### **Sportsmanship**

The MIAA and the Greater Boston League promote good sportsmanship by the student-athletes, coaches and spectators at all times. Your cooperation by supporting the participants and officials in a positive manner is expected. Profanity, racial or sexist comments, or other intimidating actions directed at officials, student-athletes, coaches, spectators or team representatives will not be tolerated and are grounds for dismissal from the program and suspension from participation in athletics for up to one calendar year (MIAA).

### **Chemical Health/Substance abuse – alcohol, drugs tobacco and other drugs**

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, VAPE pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer,” ***inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering***



*one's mental state.* 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.

If a violation is brought to our attention, the administration will evaluate the incident. If the incident after being clearly proven is deemed to have brought discredit upon the team/school, disciplinary action will occur. Any student-athlete whose name has been reported to a high school administrator by any law enforcement agency regarding substance abuse will be considered a violation of the MIAA's Chemical Abuse rule effective on the date of confirmation by the Principal

*This rule represents a minimum standard upon which Somerville High School could enforce more stringent requirements.*

**This MIAA regulation includes consumption, possession, purchasing or selling on or off campus and during after-school hours and weekends.**

**First violation:** When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and his/her attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

**Second and subsequent violations:** When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts 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 provided

the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that the student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If a student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season

### **Electronic Devices/Social Media**

**For the privacy and safety of all, the use or appearance of use (showing the device in such a way that could lead an individual to believe they are being photographed or recorded)of any electronic device is not permitted in any locker room or bathroom in the SPS or in any locker room or bathroom at any school sponsored event. Photographing or recording is prohibited in the SPS unless authorized for educational or school purposes.**

## CODE of CONDUCT

### **Dignity and Respect:**

A student should not be subject to ridicule, harassment or degrading treatment that would diminish his/her self-esteem or exclude the student from his/her peer group. Such behavior, either by another child, parent or a school official represents a clear and unacceptable violation of the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

If a parent or student believes the student's right to be treated with dignity and respect has been disregarded, the parent or student should speak either to the coach, Athletic Director or Principal. In the event the parent or student is dissatisfied with the manner in which their concerns have been addressed, recourse is available through Support Services.

All student-athletes must complete the Hazing policy review with their coach prior to the start of their season. Additionally, all coaches will complete an online Bullying training annually. Somerville Athletics seeks to foster an environment that builds confidence, collaboration and communication. Hazing, bullying or any other means of violating dignity and respect will not be tolerated.

- As student-athletes, you have become leaders representing your school and community. The student-athletes role requires that you as a team member serve as an exemplar of high moral character and demonstrate appropriate academic commitment. Student-athletes are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior on and off the field.
- All equipment issued to the student-athlete is property of Somerville High School. Once issued, it is the athlete's responsibility to take care of equipment and to return it within one week of the end of the season. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. The loss of equipment is the financial responsibility of athletes. equipment used for any other purpose is subject to disciplinary action
- Somerville High School and the MIAA have a "no tolerance" policy regarding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and the possession and use of non-prescribed drugs. See MIAA Rule 62 agreement
- It is not the policy of Somerville High School to police non-school activities, but if a violation is brought to our attention, the administration will evaluate the incident. If the incident, after being clearly proven, is deemed to have

brought discredit upon the team/school, disciplinary action will occur. See MIAA Rule 62 agreement

- Student-athletes not in attendance at school may not participate or play on the day unless approval is given by the Community Vice Principal. Student-athletes suspended from school will not be allowed to attend, practice or play while on suspension, whether it is out of school or in-house.
- Hazing is prohibited at Somerville High School. Any athletes involved with hazing in any capacity will be disciplined in accordance with the law, school code of conduct and will no longer be allowed to participate in interscholastic sport for at least the remainder of the sport season the incident took place. Refer to school handbook for further details
- Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs. Refer to school handbook for further details
- Harassment prohibited by the District includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or disability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. Refer to school handbook for further details
- Good sportsmanship is the only type of sportsmanship tolerated at Somerville High School. There will be no deviation in the position of the

athletic department regarding sportsmanship. Unsportsmanlike acts will be dealt with in the most severe manner.

- Each coach has the prerogative to establish additional rules pertinent to his or her sport. These may include but are not limited to attendance at practice, tutorial assistance, proper dress and general conduct during practice, games and in school.
- It is expected that student-athletes have loyalty to their high school team. A bona-fide member of the school team is a student-athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with out of school teams. Any student-athlete who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two contests or two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately up on confirmation of the violations. A student athlete in conflict with the bona fide team rule is also ineligible for the MIAA state tournament for that season.
- In accordance with banned substance policies, as well as our athletic department commitment to fostering the health and welfare of our student athletes, we have agreed to limit beverage consumption during competitive events and practices to water and/or hydrating sports drinks only, except where another beverage is medically necessary. (Please note, WATER ONLY allowed at Dilboy Stadium). Furthermore, no cans or glass containers are allowed on the bench or in the locker room and other participating areas throughout the city.
- For the privacy and safety of all, the use or appearance of use (showing the device in such a way that could lead an individual to believe they are being photographed or recorded)of any electronic device is not permitted in any locker room or bathroom in the SPS or in any locker room or bathroom at any school sponsored event. Photographing or recording is prohibited in the SPS unless authorized for educational or school purposes.
- The Director of Athletics will be notified of all violations of the Code of Conduct and consequences of the infractions. If deemed necessary further disciplinary actions may occur.

## **Prohibited**

(see student-athlete Code of Conduct for consequences and Hazing Law)

**Hazing** – practices that involve harassment, abuse, bullying and can be construed as degrading, embarrassing, could cause mental or physical harm. Hazing is prohibited at Somerville High School. See the language of Chapter 269 of Massachusetts's General Law of the Somerville High School Student Handbook. Any athletes involved with hazing in any shape or form will be disciplined in accordance with the law, school code of conduct and will no longer be allowed to participate in interscholastic sport for at least the remainder of the sports season the incident took place. The Director of Athletics and Principal will have final determination of the length of suspension from all athletics at Somerville High School.

**Taunting** – Taunting includes any action or comments by coaches, players or spectators which are intended to bait anger, embarrass, ridicule or demand others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters.

In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from the contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing MIAA expulsion rules. A warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to the contest.

At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, appropriate management may give spectators warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials or other spectators are subject to ejection.

## Equipment and Uniforms:

**Rostered student athletes will be provided game day uniforms.... All equipment is property of SHS. SHS is not responsible for any injury or lost time resulting from improper use of equipment and/or not wearing all protective equipment properly.**

Items will be distributed and collected at a time specified by the coach and the equipment manager. Athletes must be present at equipment distribution and collection meetings. Students are responsible for and expected to maintain proper care of all equipment and uniforms issued. Students are responsible for payment of any lost, stolen or damaged items. Each item not returned will be assessed at a rate comparable to the current replacement cost. Student-athletes will not be allowed to participate in another sport if they have outstanding equipment obligations. Seniors will not receive their diplomas until all equipment obligations are fulfilled. Uniforms worn to represent Somerville High School must be approved by the athletic director. **All uniforms will be collected at the last game of the season and coordinated by the head coach and equipment manager.**

- **Student athletes are responsible to provide proper footwear, practice attire, water bottles and any other necessary personal equipment including medical supplies.**
- **Any equipment used for other than intended purposes will face disciplinary action. No SHS equipment should be used for sporting events outside the jurisdiction of SHS.**

## Transportation

Students are required to ride transportation provided to and from contests. It is in the best interest of team unity that everyone travels together and shares the game experience. Additionally, athletic staff must be able to account for all student-athletes and managers. It is expected that our student-athletes will conduct themselves appropriately while on bus transportation. Any misconduct will result in a penalty including and up to dismissal if warranted. Student-athletes will be responsible for any damages to bus property and subsequent costs to repair or replace damages.

**Student athletes are not allowed to drive themselves or teammates to games.**

\*\*\* see transportation release form **Addendum A**\*\*\*

## **Bench Beverage Guidelines**

Somerville administrators, coaches and sports medicine personnel routinely advise student-athletes about the health risk of stimulant/supplement fortified sports drinks and strongly discourage their consumption at any time. Notably numerous sports drinks new to the market not only combine various forms of stimulants but also contain ingredients listed on the NCAA banned substance list due primarily to their inherent health risk rather than any potential performance enhancement. All beverages containing stimulants increase risk of dehydration and may be contraindicated for individuals with asthma and/or taking any medications.

In accordance with banned substance policies as well as our athletic department commitment to fostering the health and welfare of our student-athletes, we have agreed to limit beverage consumption during competitive events and practices to water and/or hydrating sport drinks only, except where another beverage is medically necessary (Please note, **WATER ONLY** allowed at **DILBOY STADIUM**). Furthermore, no cans or glass containers are to be allowed in the bench/locker room/participation areas throughout competition. This guideline will be monitored and enforced by all coaches on staff.



## **LOCKER ROOM POLICIES**

### ***ONLY TEAM MEMBERS ARE ALLOWED***

**USE:** Changing, showering and use of bathrooms facilities before and after practices/games. Locker rooms are available for use 30 minutes before the start of your practice.

**CELL PHONES:** Cell phones and/or other devices that contain photo/video taking technology are strictly prohibited from use in locker rooms.

**HAZING/HARASSMENT:** SHS strictly prohibits hazing, harassment and other types of inappropriate behavior. Report such behavior to staff members immediately.

**SECURITY:** SHS is not responsible for students' personal and school items in the locker rooms. Items should be stored and locked in lockers.

**PROPERTY:** Respect personal and school property. Be sure to keep the space clean after use. Do not touch or take any item not belonging to you. Vandalism of any kind will result in disciplinary action that may include suspension, expulsion and referral to law enforcement.

**LOITERING:** Loitering and hanging out in locker rooms is strictly prohibited. Locker rooms are to be used immediately before and after practices/games. Be sure to vacate locker rooms immediately after use.

**PRIVACY:** Respect the privacy of all students in the locker room facilities at all times. The use of recording devices is strictly prohibited

**FRAGRANCES:** No fragrances/scented products should be used at anytime in or around the locker rooms

### **Fundraising:**

Any fundraising by student athletes will adhere to the SHS Student Handbook and to the policies of the Somerville Public Schools. All fundraisers must be approved by the administration

### **Athletics Night**

Somerville High School will host an Athletics Night annually to inform parents, athletes and coaches of the goals, philosophies and policies of the department. Important information for the expectations and procedures for all involved parties will be reviewed. Any athlete aspiring to participate in athletics must attend with one parent/guardian. Coaches employed by Somerville High School are required to attend.

### **Senior Night**

Senior night will be held at a home game at the end of each season. The game will be decided by the head coach in order to honor all of the graduating seniors of that team. **This game/event is only to recognize our seniors and does not guarantee any student-athletes of playing time for that particular game.**

### **End of Season Wrap Up**

Coaches will organize a post season team gathering that will take place at SHS Lower Cafe. Each Coach/Team will decide how and when this event takes place.

### **Communication**

**All teams will communicate using the Remind app - coaches and staff can also be reached via email or google voice phone numbers.**

**All game/practice schedules can be found on Arbiter Live and updates are found on social media**

Somerville Athletics strives to develop life skills in athletes through experiences on and off the field. SHS Athletics places a strong emphasis on effective communication. It is the expectation that coaches will communicate team standards prior to the start of the season. If a player has concerns, the first step is

for the player to contact the coach. If further assistance is needed, a player may set up a time to meet with the coach and parent. If the issue is still not resolved, a meeting with all parties should be arranged with the athletic director. It is important for student-athletes to advocate for their needs, handle feedback and communicate effectively to maximize their personal satisfaction in their sport. Parents are not permitted to contact coaches regarding playing time or positions. A 24-hour period is required after a game for a parent to contact a coach with questions.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Athletic involvement is highly emotional and time consuming. Sometimes conflicts arise between students, coaches and occasionally parents/guardians. When conflicts or issues arise, it is important that they be addressed immediately and as directly possible so they can be resolved promptly. Students and their parents should pursue the following process as a guideline when seeking resolution to conflicts or issues between athletes and coach:

#### **First step: Contacting the Coach**

The athlete should present the conflict/issue to the coach as soon as possible. If personal contact is not practical, a student may ask his/her team captain to approach the coach. If the personal or captain route is not possible, contact may be made by the athlete's parent/guardian at an appropriate time. In order for the contact to be as productive as possible, times that should be avoided are:

*Prior to, during or immediately following a contest \During an active practice session \When other students or parents are present when it would be readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place \When it is apparent that there is not sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion; this includes the time immediately before leaving for any away contest*

#### **Second step: Contacting the Director of Athletics**

If a satisfactory solution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the student and/or parent/guardian should contact the Athletic Director. The coach should be informed that this contact is going to be made. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all

concerned parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. Since athletic seasons are relatively short, there should be no delay in airing any and all concerns. Issues presented to the Athletic Director will be addressed and communicated to the coach. Parents/guardians and student-athletes may also expect to hear from the Athletic Director as to the disposition of their concerns.

**Although there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understanding in the future.**

### **Third step: Contacting the Principal**

If there is still not a satisfactory resolution, the student-athlete and/or parent/guardian may contact the High School Principal. The Director of Athletics should be informed that this contact is going to be made.

*The best solution is to:*

Ask the coach, either over the phone or in person for an appointment to meet

A parent or student may also leave a note for the coach in the athletic office sport specific mailbox or send an email to the coach

### **Sports Medicine/Athletic Trainer:**

The Athletic Trainer is a healthcare professional specifically educated and trained in the total health care of the student-athlete. Along with a college degree, the AT must pass a national certification examination, as well as maintain continuing education units. Somerville High School's Athletic Trainer is Nationally Certified and State Licensed.

*The six major domains of the athletic training profession are:*

- 1. Prevention**
- 2. Clinical Evaluation and Diagnosis**
- 3. Immediate Care**
- 4. Treatment, Rehabilitation, and Reconditioning**
- 5. Organization and Administration**
- 6. Professional Responsibility**

### **Injuries/Illness**

Student-athletes accept the "assumption of risk" when participating in MIAA-sanctioned athletic events. As a result, the school is not responsible for such sport related injuries. It is an athlete's responsibility to report all injuries and illnesses to the athletic trainer. Athletes are expected to work with the athletic trainer to safely participate and may only return to play when cleared to do so. Athletes should manage their time to ensure they receive proper care and schedule appointments with the athletic trainer before and after sessions as needed. Any student athlete that seeks outside medical treatment must bring a note to the athletic trainer with clearance status. Final clearance for functional preparedness will come from the athletic trainer.

### **Allergies**

Please note that our Head Athletic Trainer has very serious fragrance and chemical allergies, so please make note of this when you are in her presence, particularly when it comes to perfumes, body spray and things of that nature.

All student athletes with diagnosed allergies must have proper paperwork on file with the school nurse and carry their epi pen with them for all practices/games

## **Weather**

When weather or other conditions impose a hazard to the health and/or safety of the participants, athletic contests will be postponed or canceled. Whenever school is closed due to inclement weather, all athletic events will be postponed

In accordance with MIAA procedures and current national guidelines SHS athletics adheres to both a heat and cold weather policy which dictates activity levels based on national standards.

All contests will be delayed at least 30 minutes following Lightning

## **Concussions**

**The Somerville Public Schools is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all its students.** Due to the severe nature and complexity of concussions SPS in conjunction with state law have developed policies and procedures that include concussion education and both return to school and return to physical activity plans for all K-12 students.

**All suspected concussions or head injuries whether they occurred during sport or not should be reported to the school.**

### **Concussion Policy for K-12 Somerville Public School Students**

1. Immediate **Removal of student from all physical activity** including recess and PE
2. Ensure student is **evaluated** by an appropriate Health care professional - this may include immediate attention at the emergency room and/or seeing your **primary care physician**
3. Follow up with the District Coordinator for Concussion Management who will **provide a recovery plan** that includes both academic accommodations and gradual return to physical activity.
4. Once written clearance is provided by the primary care physician the student will be provided a **gradual return to physical/sport activity**. Full return to activity without restriction takes at least 1 week, some cases longer.

**RECOVERY = Return To Learn + Return to Play**

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A Concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a hit or blow to the head or body.

**This causes temporary changes in how you act, think, and feel.**

Think of an injured brain as a smart phone running on low battery or trying to ride your bike with a flat tire

### RED FLAGS: Immediate Transportation - Activate EMS

|                                      |  |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Loss of consciousness /how long      | Vomiting   | Deteriorating mental status            |
| Headaches that worsen                | Increased drowsiness, can't be awakened              | Severe behavior change                 |
| Seizures                             | Increased confusion/can't recognize people or places | Increased irritability                 |
| Weakness or numbness in arms or legs | Severe Neck pain                                     | Unequal pupils (black circles in eyes) |
| Slurred speech                       |  |  |

### Symptoms

|                  |                             |                     |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Headache         | Sensitive to Light or Noise | Off balance         |
| Pressure in Head | Feeling slowed down         | Emotional           |
| Neck Pain        | Feel like in a fog          | Irritable or cranky |

|                               |                          |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Nausea/Vomiting/upset stomach | “Don’t feel right”       | Confused           |
| Dizzy                         | Difficulty concentrating | Nervous or Anxious |
| Blurred or Double Vision      | Difficulty remembering   |                    |

**YOU SHOULD**

1. **STOP** playing
2. **TELL** Someone – Parent, Coach, School Nurse, Teacher
3. Follow the recovery plan provided
4. Be Honest

The sooner you REPORT your injury the sooner we can help you RECOVER

**YOU SHOULD NOT**

1. **Keep playing**
2. **Hide** your injury
3. **Be dishonest** or lie about how you feel



## **MIAA Policies**

The following are the most commonly questioned MIAA athletic policies. The entire MIAA Handbook can be downloaded online at: [www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net). It is important to check for frequent updates and for sport-specific rules and regulations.

***MIAA Rule #45. Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members*** A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (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.

### ***MIAA Rule #40. Out of Season Coach-Athlete Contact Limitations***

40.1 Unless otherwise permitted in this rule, between seasons a coach may conduct a meeting(s) with team candidates only to elect captains, collect equipment, issue equipment, to provide for physical examinations, to conduct legitimate fundraising events, or to offer wellness workshops or activities.

40.4 A coach may not directly or indirectly require an athlete to participate in a sport or a training program outside of the MIAA-defined sport season.

Voluntary conditioning sessions open equally to all students in a school and which are entirely devoid of sports-specific activity may be conducted between seasons provided no candidate is either required to participate or penalized for not doing so.

40.5 A high school coach may be employed by a park or recreation department or other organization or may volunteer for such a group to teach his/her sport out-of-season provided the following conditions exist:

- *40.5.1* No candidate may either be required to attend or be penalized for not attending.
- *40.5.2.1* School funds are not used.
- *40.5.3* A coach's high school candidates must constitute the minority of those taking part in any out-of-season sport's program, *and never more than 50%* competing on any team at any moment. In sports that are individual in nature, or where competition involves a series of scoring events, candidates of that high school coach must be fewer than 50% of those participating in the overall competition or program.

***MIAA Rule #56. Student Eligibility/School Requirements: Physical Examinations/Medical***

***Coverage/Concussions***

56.1 All students must pass a physical examination prior to participation in High School Athletics. A physical exam covers the student for 13 months from the exam date. A student's eligibility will terminate once a physical has reached the 13-month limit.

Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Licensed Physician, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner.

PENALTY: A student in violation shall be suspended for the number of contests in which he/she participated without a proper physical.

**Concussions:**

Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the practice or competition and must not return to practice or competition that day, and further shall not return

to play until they are symptom free and have completed a gradual return to play with the athletic trainer and have been cleared by a medical professional.

Report all concussions to the Athletic Trainer – regardless of where concussion occurred students will be provided a recovery plan and graduated return to play plan in accordance with state law.

*\* Somerville High School requires clearance by a medical professional and the athletic trainer. The athletic trainer has final authority on when an athlete is prepared to play in contests.*

***MIAA Rule #62. Student Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco***  
Athletes may not use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; (including e-cigarettes, VAP pens & all similar devices) marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer.”

\*\*\* includes posts on social media

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.

1st Offense - 25% season suspension

2nd Offense - 60% season suspension

\*\*\* students will also take an education class/receive counseling

**Addendum A**

**ATHLETIC TRANSPORTATION RELEASE FORM**

As parent/legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, I am assuming all responsibility  
(NAME OF STUDENT ATHLETE)  
for transporting my son/daughter from the away contest/event listed below. I further represent that I will only be transporting my own child(ren) who are attending the away contest/event and that I will not be transporting any other student athletes who are attending the away contest/event. I understand that by signing this release form, I am releasing the City of Somerville, Somerville School Committee and Somerville Public Schools and their respective officers, directors, agents and/or employees from and against any and all liability, loss, damage, costs, claims and/or causes of action arising out of or related to my transportation of my son/daughter from the away content/event list below.

Date of Contest/Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Level & Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for request: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Athletics/Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

***FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED INTO ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S OFFICE  
48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF TRIP. (ONLY EXCEPTION TO ADVANCE NOTICE IS AN  
EMERGENCY.)***