

MARIN MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC LEAGUE

Parent Handbook

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Welcome

Welcome to the Marin Middle School Athletic League (MMAL).

Middle school athletics provide students with opportunities to learn valuable life lessons that extend far beyond the playing field. Participation helps students develop teamwork, responsibility, leadership, perseverance, sportsmanship, and respect while representing their school and community with pride.

Parents and guardians are essential partners in creating a positive athletic experience. By working together, families, coaches, officials, athletic directors, and school administrators help ensure that every student-athlete enjoys a safe, educational, and rewarding experience.

Mission of the MMAL

The Marin Middle School Athletic League (MMAL) promotes educationally based interscholastic athletics by providing safe, equitable, inclusive and developmentally appropriate opportunities for students to compete, learn, and grow. Through athletics, MMAL fosters sportsmanship, integrity, teamwork, leadership, and respect while creating a positive environment where all student-athletes can succeed both on and off the field.

Benefits of Participating in Middle School Athletics

Participation in middle school athletics helps students grow physically, socially, emotionally, and academically. Student-athletes learn teamwork, leadership, resilience, responsibility, communication, self-discipline, and healthy habits while building school pride and lifelong friendships.

The lessons learned through athletics often extend far beyond the playing field and prepare students for success in high school, college, careers, and life.

Student-athletes benefit by:

- Building confidence and self-esteem
- Developing teamwork and leadership skills
- Learning responsibility, accountability, and time management
- Practicing sportsmanship, respect, and integrity
- Improving physical fitness and healthy lifestyle habits
- Developing resilience through both success and adversity
- Build character through competition

- Forming lasting friendships and a sense of belonging
- Strengthening communication and problem-solving skills
- Learning goal setting, perseverance, and self-discipline
- Creating positive school connections that enhance the overall educational experience
- Represent their school with pride

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are expected to maintain high standards of conduct both on and off the field.

Core Values

MMAL athletics are built upon the following principles:

- Respect
- Sportsmanship
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Trustworthiness
- Fairness
- Citizenship
- Inclusion

Every participant is expected to demonstrate these values at practices, contests, school, and within the community.

Registration

Before participating, every student-athlete must complete all required school registration requirements, including:

- Annual athletic registration
- Emergency contact information
- Medical information
- Parent/guardian acknowledgments
- Any additional forms required by the student's school

Contact your school's Athletic Director for registration procedures.

Team Selection and Participation

The Marin Middle School Athletic League serves schools with varying enrollment sizes, athletic offerings, facilities, and program structures. As a result, team selection procedures may differ from school to school.

Some sports or grade levels may accept all interested students, while others may have roster limits that require a selection process. Team availability may also vary based on factors such as:

- School enrollment
- Number of students interested in participating
- Sport offered
- Grade level
- Gender-specific or coed programs
- Facility availability
- Coaching staff
- Safety considerations

Each member school establishes its own procedures regarding team selection, roster size, and participation opportunities.

Parents and student-athletes should contact their school's Athletic Director regarding specific information about:

- Team selection or tryout procedures
- Roster sizes
- Participation opportunities
- Expectations for attendance and commitment
- School-specific athletic policies and procedures

Whenever possible, schools strive to provide meaningful participation opportunities for all students while maintaining safe, developmentally appropriate athletic programs.

Multi-Sport Participation

MMAL encourages students to participate in multiple sports throughout the school year.

To support healthy multi-sport participation:

- Student-athletes should fully commit to their current in-season sport(s).
- Parents & Coaches are expected to communicate and cooperate when scheduling conflicts arise.

- Participation should always remain voluntary.
- Student well-being should always come before competitive interests.

Playing Time Philosophy

The primary goal of middle school athletics is student growth and development. Playing time is not guaranteed but should reflect the educational nature of middle school athletics.

Playing time may vary based on factors including

- Attendance
- Effort
- Attitude
- Sportsmanship
- Commitment
- Safety
- Skill development
- Game situations
- Adherence to team expectations.

Coaches are encouraged to provide meaningful participation opportunities whenever possible while balancing instructional goals and the competitive nature of interscholastic athletics.

Parents with questions regarding playing time should follow the league's communication protocol and the 24-hour rule.

Student-Athlete Expectations

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Be respectful toward teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators.
- Attend practices and contests consistently.
- Be on time and prepared.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Maintain academic responsibilities.
- Follow team, school and league rules and expectations.
- Compete with effort, humility, and sportsmanship.
- Display self-control.
- Accept victory with humility.
- Accept defeat with dignity.

- Create a positive environment for everyone.
- Accept officials' decisions respectfully.
- Represent their school and the MMAL positively at all times.

[Code of Conduct](#)

Sportsmanship

The Marin Middle School Athletic League has zero tolerance for behavior that diminishes the educational value of athletics.

Unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Taunting
- Profanity
- Arguing with officials
- Disrespect toward coaches or opponents
- Throwing equipment
- Fighting
- Intimidation
- Bullying
- Harassment
- Discriminatory or hateful language
- Unsportsmanlike social media behavior

Violations may result in disciplinary action outlined later in this handbook. Students are responsible for their actions both on and off the playing field.

Parent & Spectator Expectations

Parents and spectators play a critical role in creating a positive educational athletic environment. Students often model the behavior they observe from adults. MMAL expects all spectators to demonstrate respect, sportsmanship, and encouragement. Parents, family members, and spectators are expected to:

- Cheer positively for all participants.
- Respect officials and their decisions.
- Respect coaches and opposing teams.
- Model good sportsmanship

- Encourage effort over winning
- Remain in designated spectator areas.
- Never enter the playing area unless directed by school personnel.
- Never confront officials, coaches, or players before, during, or after contests.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Follow directions from school staff and game management.

The behavior of spectators directly impacts the experience of every student-athlete.

Spectators who violate league expectations may be:

- Removed from the event
- Suspended from future contests
- Prohibited from attending future league events
- Subject to additional school or district disciplinary action

School administrators reserve the right to remove any individual whose behavior disrupts the educational environment.

[Code of Conduct](#)

Communication Guidelines

The Marin Middle School Athletic League values positive, respectful, and open communication between coaches, student-athletes, and families. Questions and concerns are best addressed through direct communication while maintaining mutual respect and professionalism.

To promote productive conversations, parents and guardians should not approach a coach immediately following a practice or contest regarding playing time, coaching decisions, or other concerns. Emotions are often heightened after competition; therefore, MMAL recommends observing a 24-hour cooling-off period before requesting a meeting or conversation.

If a concern arises, the following communication process should be followed:

1. Speak directly with the coach.
2. If the concern remains unresolved, contact the school's Athletic Director.

Appropriate Topics to Discuss

- Your student's improvement and development
- Attendance or scheduling concerns
- Team expectations and student behavior
- Safety or health concerns

- Ways to help your student improve

Topics Not Appropriate for Discussion

- Playing time
- Other student-athletes
- Team strategy or play calling
- Officials' decisions

Following this communication protocol helps foster respectful relationships and supports a positive athletic experience for all participants.

Consequences for Player Misconduct

Violations of school or league expectations may result in disciplinary action, including:

- Warning
- Suspension from practices or contests
- Removal from contests
- Suspension from the team
- Dismissal from the team
- School disciplinary action when appropriate

Serious misconduct, including fighting, harassment, discrimination, hate speech, threats, bullying, or behavior that endangers others, may result in immediate removal from participation and additional disciplinary consequences.

Transportation

Transportation to and from practices and contests is the responsibility of each family unless otherwise provided by the school.

Parents should ensure student-athletes arrive on time and are picked up promptly after practices and contests.

Equipment & Uniforms

School-issued equipment remains the property of the school.

Student-athletes are responsible for:

- Proper care of equipment
- Returning uniforms clean and on time

Paying replacement costs for lost or damaged items, consistent with school policy

Non-Discrimination

The Marin Middle School Athletic League is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, and retaliation.

All participants deserve to be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Our Commitment

Together, student-athletes, families, coaches, officials, athletic directors, and schools create an athletic experience that teaches lessons for life.

Thank you for helping make MMAL athletics a positive experience for every student-athlete.

Together We Learn. Together We Compete. Together We Grow.