

## 1. The value of participation in Saline Area Schools athletics:

Participation in athletics at Saline High School is an integral part of the overall education process. It is our belief that the lessons learned on the playing field are in many ways lessons of life. Athletics at Saline teach the following lessons:

- The value of setting common, achievable goals that will challenge the team.
- The value of teamwork and working together to achieve those common goals.
- The value of sportsmanship.
- The value of setting individual goals to support the team and then working hard to achieve them.
- The value of accepting responsibility.
- The value of having a desire to succeed.
- The value of developing healthy lifestyle habits.
- The value of respecting authorities, teammates, opponents, fans, the school, and community.

## 2. Athletic philosophy for middle school athletics:

The SEC (our conference affiliation) encourages equal playing time for Middle School student athletes and has rules governing playing time in some sports. Saline Area Schools is quite proud of our coaching staff's support of the League mandates for equal playing time.

## 3. Philosophical differences for participation at different levels::

- 7th and 8th grade athletic experiences should serve as a time of exploration and discovery as student athletes participate in interscholastic sports for the first time. Practice and playing time are maximized to benefit the development of the athletic skills. Playing time is determined by first providing all who are able to participate the opportunity, while taking into consideration effort, attitude, etc., during practice.
- The 9th grade level serves as a transition year during which the concepts of exploration and discovery give way to the development of the cornerstones for success. Fundamentals of the sport are emphasized along with a commitment to the sport.
- At the J.V. level the athlete needs to discover what it takes to be a successful athlete at Saline High School. Dedication, desire, and willingness to sacrifice for the good of the team are just three of many character traits that begin to be emphasized.
- The Varsity level is the culmination of the athletic experience. Emphasis at this level is on the use of the fundamentals of the sport, dedication, desire, hard work, and sacrifice for the team to succeed. Success should not be always measured by wins and losses. Success can be measured by the quality of the effort and performance, how the team represents the school and community, how the team measures up its potential, and if the team achieves its goals.

## 4. Participation is a privilege, not a right:

Participation is a privilege for all students who choose to participate; it is not a right. We maintain strict standards in academics, behavior, and making healthy choices. We believe our athletic programs represent the school and community. It is because of this belief that we hold our student athletes to a high standard. We emphasize dedication and commitment to the team and program, a desire for success, and sacrificing personal goals for team goals.

## 5. Parental Involvement in sporting events and athletics:

- Parents should practice sportsmanship as well as their student athletes. Parents need to remember the purpose of educational athletics: to train young people for life, but also to allow student athletes to have fun. Parents can be the biggest role model for student athletes when it comes to their understanding of sportsmanship; therefore, parents should exhibit the qualities of fairness, courtesy and grace in winning and defeat at home or away games and events.
- Goals for parental sportsmanship include:
  - Maintaining dignity under all circumstances.
  - Respecting the rules of the game.
  - Respecting the officials who administer the rules.
  - Respecting opponents.
  - Acknowledging opponent's efforts to do their best.
  - Refraining from disrespectful or disruptive behavior.
- Positive athletic parenting – emphasize the following:
  - Play the sport for the enjoyment of the experience.
    - Do not make the focus scholarships for college.
    - Be a positive motivator (four positives for each negative).
    - Do not degrade the coach or his/her staff – use opportunities to reinforce the life lesson that everyone makes mistakes, including coaches.
  - Encourage participation in several sports (three max for the schools).
    - Specialization has led to student athletes' decreased enjoyment, burning out, and dropping out of the sport. When parents follow the trend of committing large amounts of finances and time for lessons, travel, etc., for a child's development in one sport, undue pressure may be placed on the child to be exceptional and/or earn a scholarship.
  - Be realistic about your child's ability.
    - Remember, the coach sees all the athletes at practice every day, in competitive drills, etc. He/she knows the abilities at this stage of development, not how good someone was in the past.
  - Emphasize commitment to the program.

- But never sacrifice academics for athletics.
- Encourage good decision making.

Encourage your child to be a leader. All team members have leadership responsibilities.

## 6. Addressing a concern and the chain of command:

- Appropriate issues to discuss with coaches:
  - The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
  - Ways to help your child improve.
  - Concerns about your child's behavior.

It may be very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you had hoped. Our coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe is best for all participants. As you can see from the list above, there are certain things that can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as in the following list, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

- Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches:
  - Team strategy.
  - Play calling.
  - Other student-athletes.
- The 24 Hour Rule (even when a topic is appropriate):
  - This is a tool for giving "space and time" to allow discussions to occur in a productive environment. After a game, waiting for a day to discuss concerns with your child, or with a coach, will help remove the raw emotions that can cause a breakdown in communication.
- It is the position of Saline's Athletic Department that e-mail should not be used to discuss concerns beyond routine questions (such as time of competition, location of a competition, etc.). To discuss a more serious concern with a coach, here is the procedure you should follow:
  - Contact the coach to set up an appointment.
  - It is expected that your student athlete will be a part of the meeting. Since the focus of the meeting will be centered on your student athlete, we believe that athlete needs to be present at the meeting. Getting all parties involved in the discussion will assist in coming up with a plan to address the issue.
  - If the meeting with the coach did not provide satisfactory resolution, you may call the Athletic Director to set up a meeting. At this meeting it is also expected that your child be present. At this meeting the next step will be determined.

## Saline High School

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### ***Sports offered at Saline Middle School:***

Basketball (Boys and Girls)  
Cross Country (Boys and Girls)  
Football  
Track (Boys and Girls)  
Volleyball  
Wrestling  
Softball (C.E.) Swim/Dive  
Lacrosse (C.E.) Tennis (C.E.)

### **MHSAA Tournament Sponsored Sports offered at Saline High School:**

Baseball  
Basketball (Boys and Girls)  
Competitive Cheer  
Cross Country (Boys and Girls)  
Football  
Golf (Boys and Girls)  
Gymnastics  
Soccer (Boys and Girls)  
Softball  
Swimming/Dive (Boys and Girls)  
Tennis (Boys and Girls)  
Track (Boys and Girls)  
Volleyball  
Wrestling

Saline High School supports cheer teams during the fall.

Club Teams are not supported financially by SAS until they reach a prescribed level of development. Current club teams include:

Ice Hockey (Boys), Water Polo  
Lacrosse (Boys)  
Crew (Boys & Girls) (Comm. ED.)  
Indoor Track (Boys & Girls) (Comm. ED)  
Field Hockey (Girls) Bowling

# Saline Area Schools Athletic Programs 2009-2010



## A Guide for Parents and Athletes