

**Averill Park Central School District  
Athletic Department**

**“Winners in the Classroom, in the  
Community and in Competition”**



**Interscholastic Athletics Handbook  
for  
Student-Athletes and Parents/Guardians**

**2025-26**

updated 7/7/25

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Dear Student-Athletes and Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the Averill Park interscholastic athletic program. This handbook has been prepared to be used as a reference by our student-athletes and their parents/guardians in an effort to define responsibilities as they pertain to the rules and regulations, as well as the guidelines for participation in our interscholastic athletic program.

Upon entering secondary school students are exposed to many new opportunities and challenges. An important part of the educational experience at this level is the extra-curricular programs available to students, in particular the interscholastic athletic program. Nationwide studies have shown that students involved in extra-curricular programs, such as interscholastic athletics, achieve better grades, manage their time more effectively, have less discipline problems, and stay in school.

I am very pleased that you have shown an interest in this phase of our school program. It is my belief that participation in athletics is a privilege and honor that provides an opportunity for developing life-long skills that are not always available in the classroom. Our goal is to provide a first class experience that reflects the total educational goals of our district and promotes team and individual growth in a safe and healthy environment.

When a student chooses to participate in our athletic program he/she has committed himself/herself to certain responsibilities and obligations. This handbook will acquaint you with some of the specific rules, regulations, and guidelines that are necessary for a well-organized interscholastic athletic program.

The Averill Park interscholastic athletic program is governed by the Regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education's basic code for extra-class athletic activities. In addition, Averill Park is a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), Section 2, and the Suburban Scholastic Council (SSC).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Averill Park interscholastic athletic program. I look forward to working with you to ensure that you take advantage of the tremendous opportunities that athletics can provide.

Sincerely,



Mark Bubniak  
Director of Athletics  
(518) 674-7010  
[bubniakm@apcsd.org](mailto:bubniakm@apcsd.org)

### Directory

Averill Park High School  
146 Gettle Rd.  
Averill Park, NY 12018  
(518) 674-7000

Algonquin Middle School  
333 NY 351  
Averill Park, NY 12018  
(518) 674-7100

Director of Athletics	Mark Bubniak	674-7010
Athletic Dept. Secretary	Jess Haskin	674-7012
Athletic Trainer	Rachel Brown	674-7048
APHS Nurse	Valene Miller	674-7000
AMS Nurse	Valerie Dingee	674-7100

<http://www.averillpark.k12.ny.us/programs/athletics>  
[https://x.com/AP\\_Athletics](https://x.com/AP_Athletics)

### 2025-26 Important Dates

#### **Fall Sports Start Dates**

JV & Varsity – Monday, Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>  
Modified – Thursday, Aug. 28<sup>th</sup>

#### **Winter Sports Start Dates**

JV & Varsity – Monday, Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>  
Modified – Monday, Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>

#### **Spring Sports Start Dates**

JV & Varsity – Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>  
Modified – Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>

#### **Meet the Coaches Nights**

Fall – date is program specific  
Winter – date is program specific  
Spring – date is program specific

### **Philosophy of Interscholastic Athletics**

Interscholastic athletics are considered an integral part of the total educational process. To ensure this the program is based on sound educational principles. Students learn a great deal from participation in interscholastic athletics. Athletics serves as a miniature model of life in that they provide opportunities for students to learn responsibility, fair play, cooperation, concern for others, leadership, respect for authority, good citizenship, loyalty, tolerance, and accountability. A well-coordinated program is vitally important to the morale of our school and our community.

#### **Vision**

We are committed to individual growth for each of our program participants by facilitating excellence in citizenship, academics, sportsmanship, and athletic skills.

#### **Mission**

To provide students with the opportunity to positively represent their school and community in a wide range of quality interscholastic athletic programs.

#### **Goal**

To provide a first class experience that reflects the total educational goals of our district and promotes team and individual growth in a safe and healthy environment.

#### **Objectives**

Our foremost objective for our interscholastic athletic program is to see that the highest standards of commitment are maintained throughout the program, while ensuring that our primary responsibility is to the student participants in the program. We will strive to provide an opportunity for the complete development of the individual including personally, academically, socially, and athletically.

### **NYSPHSAA Code of Ethics**

It is the duty of all concerned with high school athletics:

1. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
2. To eliminate all possibilities which tend to destroy the best values of the game.
3. To stress the values from playing the game fairly.
4. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. To establish a happy relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. To respect the integrity and judgment of the sports officials.
7. To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and standards of eligibility.
8. To encourage leadership, use of incentive, and good judgment by the players on the team.
9. To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players.
10. To remember that an athletic contest is only a game.....not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, official, fan, community, state, or nation.

### Philosophy by Sport Level

#### **Modified**

This program is available to all students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. A student reaching the age of 16 during a sport season may complete that season and must play junior varsity or varsity the following season. Sports activities offered are determined by existence of leagues, student interest, and relationship to the high school program. At this level the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, social and emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition. This program is designed to offer students the opportunity to engage in a more highly organized competitive experience than what is found in intramural or recreational programs, but not as involved as those found on junior varsity or varsity teams. An attempt will be made to give all team members meaningful contest participation over the course of a season. At this level there may be limitations on the number of student-athletes on one team.

#### **Junior Varsity (JV)**

This program is intended for those who display the potential for continued development into productive varsity level performers. Team membership varies according to the structure of each sport, but freshman and sophomores occupy the majority of the roster positions. Juniors may be eligible for the junior varsity program in certain instances. Also, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have satisfied the requirements of the Athletic Placement Process may be included. **It should be noted that once a student participates at the junior varsity or varsity level all NYSPHSAA transfer regulations apply, regardless of grade level.** At this level increased emphasis is placed upon elements and strategies of team play, physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, and social and emotional development. The junior varsity program works towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and team success. The outcome of a contest becomes a consideration at this level. An attempt will be made to give all team members meaningful contest participation over the course of a season, however equal playing time is neither required nor expected. With the goal of becoming a varsity student-athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level. At this level there may be limitations on the number of student-athletes on one team.

#### **Varsity**

The varsity level of interscholastic athletics is the culmination of the high school athletic program. Normally juniors and seniors occupy the majority of the roster positions, however gifted freshman and sophomores may be considered. Also, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders who have satisfied the requirements of the Athletic Placement Process may be included. **It should be noted that once a student participates at the junior varsity or varsity level all NYSPHSAA transfer regulations apply, regardless of grade level.** Team play, sportsmanship, individual physical ability, motivation, and mental attitude are all very important aspects of competition at this level. While contest participation over the course of the season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time is not guaranteed. Preparing to win and striving for victory in each contest are worthy goals of a varsity level team. The varsity coach is the leader of his/her program and is responsible for communication and system development at each level. At this level there may be limitations on the number of student-athletes on one team.

### **Athletic Placement Process (APP)**

The Athletic Placement Process is a program for evaluating student-athletes who want to participate in sports at higher or lower levels, as approved by the Board of Regents as a part of the school eligibility rules in 1980, and is aligned with Learning Standards 1 and 2. Commissioner's Regulation Section 135.4(c)(7)(ii)(a)(4) states:

*A Board of Education may permit pupils in grades no lower than seventh to compete on any senior high school team, or permit senior high pupils to compete on any teams in grades no lower than seventh, provided the pupils are placed at levels of competition appropriate to their physiological maturity, physical fitness, and skills in relationship to other pupils on those teams in accordance with standards established by the Commissioner.*

This program is intended for the **exceptional** few in each school who would be better served playing on a higher level than age or grade might indicate. It is based on readiness, rather than grade level. **It should be noted that once a student participates at the junior varsity or varsity level all NYSPHSAA transfer regulations apply, regardless of grade level.** Only those student-athletes personally asked by the head varsity coach prior to sports registration will be allowed to go through the APP. The student-athlete must progress through the following steps before being allowed to try out for a team:

1. Parent/Guardian Permission – All students who are to be evaluated must first obtain written parent/guardian permission before any evaluation may begin.
2. Administrative Approval – The athletic administrator should confirm that the student is suitable for consideration, which includes the likelihood that the student would play in at least 50% of the games. Additionally, because of the increased time demands of participation at the high school level, the student's academic performance (as determined at the local level) should be at or above grade level. Furthermore, administration should assess the student's emotional readiness to socialize with high school-aged students. If the student is not academically or socially ready, the student should not proceed through the APP.
3. Medical Clearance – The student's primary care provider will determine a student's physical maturity level, and compare the physical size of the student in relation to that of the students whom the student wishes to compete. In the event that the primary care provider's rating is in question the student will be referred to the district medical director for a review and final determination. If the student is determined to have attained the appropriate physical maturity level and comparable physical size for the desired sport and level, the student may proceed to the next step. If the student is determined to not have attained an appropriate physical maturity level for the desired sport and level, the process stops.
4. Sport Skill Evaluation – The sport coach will rely on past personal observations and may consider input from the student's former coaches to complete the evaluation. If the coach is unfamiliar with the student, the sport coach may wish to observe the student in a physical education class.
5. Physical Fitness Testing – This test must be done by a certified physical education teacher who is not a coach of the sport for which the student will be trying out. The President's Physical Fitness Test has been selected as the test for this process, and the student must meet the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile level for their age in 4 out of 5 test components. *Students who desire to try out for bowling or golf teams are not required to complete the physical fitness testing.*

For more information regarding APP please see:

- <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/athleticplacementprocess12-11-17finalrevised.pdf>

- <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/faq-athleticplacementprocessforinterschoolathleticprograms4-23-15.docx.pdf>

### **Interscholastic Athletic Offerings**

<b><u>Fall</u></b>	<b><u>Varsity</u></b>	<b><u>Junior Varsity</u></b>	<b><u>Modified 9</u></b>	<b><u>Modified</u></b>
Football	X	X		X
Boys Soccer	X	X		X
Girls Soccer	X	X		X
Girls Volleyball	X	X		X
Girls Tennis	X	X		
Boys Cross Country	X		X	
Girls Cross Country	X		X	
Boys Golf	X	X		
Girls Swimming & Diving (merged)	X			
Cheerleading (Football)	X			
Unified Bocce		X		
<b><u>Winter</u></b>	<b><u>Varsity</u></b>	<b><u>Junior Varsity</u></b>	<b><u>Modified 9</u></b>	<b><u>Modified</u></b>
Boys Basketball	X	X		X
Girls Basketball	X	X	X	
Boys Wrestling	X	X		X
Girls Wrestling	X			
Boys Indoor Track & Field	X			
Girls Indoor Track & Field	X			
Boys Bowling	X			
Girls Bowling	X			
Competitive Cheerleading	X			
Boys Ice Hockey (merged)	X			
Unified Bowling		X		
<b><u>Spring</u></b>	<b><u>Varsity</u></b>	<b><u>Junior Varsity</u></b>	<b><u>Modified 9</u></b>	<b><u>Modified</u></b>
Baseball	X	X		X
Softball	X	X	X	
Boys Lacrosse	X	X		X
Girls Lacrosse	X	X		X
Boys Outdoor Track & Field	X			X
Girls Outdoor Track & Field	X			X
Boys Tennis	X	X		



### Preseason Registration

The Director of Athletics, physical education teachers, and/or school nurses will provide adequate notice and opportunity for potential student-athletes to register for the next sports season. We have moved to online registration for participation in interscholastic athletics through Arbiter Registration for your convenience. Arbiter Registration is a secure registration platform that provides you with an easy, user-friendly way to register for our interscholastic athletic programs, and helps us to be more administratively efficient and environmentally responsible. When you register through Arbiter Registration, the system keeps track of your information in your Arbiter Registration profile. You enter your information only once for each family member for multiple uses and multiple programs. **Student-athletes who are not registered on time and/or do not complete the necessary requirements on time risk not being able to participate.** The NYSPHSAA, Section 2, and the Suburban Scholastic Council determine sports seasons and follow the guidelines below.

**Fall** – mid-August to early December (register in mid-July)

**Winter** – mid-November to late March (register in mid-October)

**Spring** – mid-March to mid-June (register in mid-February)

### Team Selection

The philosophy of the Averill Park Athletic Department is to see as many student-athletes participate in the athletic program as possible. We encourage coaches to keep as many student-athletes as they can on a team without compromising the integrity of the team. This does mean that there will be cuts in certain programs and on certain teams. The final decision on team size will be at the discretion of the coach.

### Eligibility for Participation

Each student-athlete will participate under the eligibility requirements, rules, and regulations set forth by the New York State Commissioner of Education, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Section 2, the Suburban Scholastic Council, as well as the Averill Park Central School District Board of Education.

#### **Age and Grade**

*Regulation of the Commissioner of Education:* A student shall be eligible for interschool competition in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen years is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports. NOTE: Students may be eligible regardless of age or grade if they have been approved through the State Education Department's Athletic Placement Program. The 15 year old below the 9th grade needs only to meet Athletic Placement Process maturity standards to be eligible at the high school level.

#### **Bona Fide Students**

*Regulation of the Commissioner of Education:* A contestant must be a bona fide student of the high school represented and must be taking at least four subjects including Physical Education. A foreign exchange student may be considered a bona fide student if all of these eligibility rules are satisfied. A student in an education program in two schools may represent only the home school. NOTE: A student in shared services, part-time or full-time program, taking the equivalent of four subjects including Physical Education, is considered as being registered in the home school. A shared services student is only eligible at one school per school year (home district or shared service school) regardless of the

interscholastic athletic programs offered. Exceptions for special cases must be approved by league and section.

A student who satisfies all eligibility standards, enrolled in the equivalent of three requirements for graduation, may be enrolled in one or more college courses for advance placement. The student must be earning a minimum of three high school credits and Physical Education to be eligible.

Students enrolled in a TASC program (GED) must be receiving 2.5 hours of instruction daily and also meet the Physical Education requirement in accordance with NYSED Bona Fide Student Regulation.

Students may only be athletically placed through the APP into a member school. Furthermore, to be eligible to be athletically placed into a member schools' athletic programs a student must be registered in that school district; excluding the 13 K-8 school districts in New York State.

### **Duration of Competition**

*Regulation of the Commissioner of Education:* A pupil shall be eligible for senior high school athletic competition in a sport during each of four consecutive seasons of such sport commencing with the pupil's entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation, except as otherwise specified by the Commissioner Regulations. A pupil enters competition in a given year when the pupil is a member of the team in the sport involved, and that team has completed at least one contest. The eligibility for competition of a pupil who has not attained the age of 19 years prior to July 1 may be extended under the following circumstances.

- i. If sufficient evidence is presented by the chief school officer to the section to show that the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of a sport caused by illness or accident, documented social/emotional condition, or documented social/emotional circumstances beyond the control of the pupil, such pupil's eligibility shall be extended accordingly in that sport.

To be deemed sufficient, the evidence must (include documentation showing that as a direct result of the illness or accident the pupil will be required to attend school for one or more additional semesters in order to graduate) demonstrate that: a) the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of sport was caused by illness, accident, documented social/emotional condition or documented social/emotional circumstances beyond the control of the pupil; b) as a direct result of such circumstances the pupil is required to attend school for one or more additional semesters in order to graduate; and c) such participation would not have a significant adverse effect upon the opportunity of other pupils to participate successfully in interschool competition in the sport.

- ii. If the chief school officer demonstrated to the satisfaction of the section that the pupil's failure to enter competition during one or more seasons of a sport is caused by such pupil's enrollment in a national or international student exchange program or foreign study program, that as a result of such enrollment the pupil will be required to attend school for one or more semesters in order to graduate, and that the pupil did not enter competition in any sport while enrolled in such program, such pupil's eligibility shall be extended accordingly in such sport.

### **Promotion Policy**

*Suburban Scholastic Council Regulation:* Unless extenuating circumstances warrant a variance in the policy, a member of a team may move up or down from one level of competition to another for the first one-half of all league scheduled contests only. After that point, a boy or girl may move up in level of competition but not down in the following sports: football, soccer, baseball, basketball, field hockey, volleyball, softball and lacrosse. A player may participate at only one level in any sport in one day. One half is defined as four games in a nine game schedule; 7 out of 15 and 7 of 14.

### **Single Season Participation**

*Suburban Scholastic Council Regulation:* A boy or girl may participate in only one school sponsored sport per season.

### **Health and Medical**

- Participation by a student in interscholastic athletics involves a certain degree of risk of physical injury. Such physical injury can occur in any sport during practice or a contest. By volunteering to participate in interscholastic athletics a student and his/her parents/guardians acknowledge the potential risk for physical injury to occur.
- Physical exams should be performed by the student's primary care provider. The student is responsible for scheduling their physical exam well in advance of the expiration date. If this is not possible please contact either the APHS or AMS health office. All students must pass a physical exam prior to participation in interscholastic athletics. Physical exams are good for one calendar year.
- Completing the registration via Arbiter Registration is required for each season of participation.
- We are fortunate to have an athletic trainer work with our student-athletes. The athletic trainer is available at the high school for most practices and home contests.
- The student-athlete should report all injuries to their coach and/or athletic trainer. If warranted the coach and/or athletic trainer will complete an accident report to be filed with the health office.
- If a student-athlete has a physician-attended injury or is absent from school due to illness for five or more consecutive days, he/she must have a medical release on file in the health office before returning to play. If a student-athlete goes to the emergency room, he/she must obtain a written release from the attending physician to give to the health office before returning to play.
- Medical expenses resulting from any athletic injury must first be submitted to the parent's/guardian's insurance carrier. Please keep in mind that our school insurance is secondary coverage, implemented after the parent's/guardian's coverage has been used.

### **Concussion Management**

Any student-athlete exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors of a concussion shall be removed from participation in interscholastic athletics and be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. The district will notify the student-athlete's parents/guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring. The student-athlete shall not return to participation in interscholastic athletics until authorized to do so by an appropriate health care provider. Once cleared the student-athlete will need to complete the return to play protocol. The school physician will make the final decision on return to play. Any student-athlete who continues to have signs or symptoms upon return to participation must be removed from play and reevaluated by their health care provider.

Student-athletes may, depending on the sport, be subject to neurocognitive baseline testing (ImPACT) prior to the start of the season. ImPACT is a computerized exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school athletic programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. If a student-athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during competition, ImPACT is used to help determine the severity of head injury and when the injury has fully healed. The computerized exam is given to student-athletes during the first few weeks of practice. This non-invasive test is set up in “video-game” type format and takes about 15-20 minutes to complete. It is simple, and actually many student-athletes enjoy the challenge of taking the test. Essentially, the ImPACT test is a preseason physical of the brain. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, speed, and concentration. It, however, is not an IQ test. If a concussion is suspected, the student-athlete may re-take the test. Both the preseason and post-injury test data is given to the school physician and/or primary care provider when requested to help evaluate the injury. The test data will enable these health professionals to determine when return to play is appropriate and safe for the injured student-athlete. Post-concussion testing will only occur after symptoms have completely resolved and before any return to play is permitted. Baseline and post-concussion testing is conducted by the athletic trainer.

A proper return to play protocol following a concussion ensures that a student-athlete can return to play safely while also decreasing the risk of re-injury. Protecting student-athletes from Post-Concussion and Second Impact Syndrome is vital. Return to play is a stepwise progression that a student-athlete will undergo after a complete resolution of symptoms has occurred for at least 24 hours and medical clearance has been given by the student-athlete’s primary care provider or the school physician. The athletic trainer and physical education teachers, working in collaboration with the school nurse and under the direction of the school physician, will administer the return to play protocol. Each step in the progression should take 24 hours. If any symptoms return at any time during the progression the student-athlete must return to the previous step and wait for symptoms to resolve. The student-athlete’s parents/guardians and school physician will be notified in such an event. Following successful completion of the progression, the student-athlete will be cleared to resume full interscholastic athletic activity without restriction by the school physician.

### **Code of Conduct**

Participation in interscholastic athletics at Averill Park is a privilege, not a right, and is contingent upon the student-athlete’s willingness to commit to the provisions of the Athletic Code of Conduct. The privilege of wearing the blue and gold should elicit great pride in both student-athletes and his/her family. It is also a responsibility which requires an extra commitment, both inside and outside of the school building. Standards of behavior are necessarily high and a willingness to live up to them is a condition for participation. Consistent with these standards, and as a continuing condition of eligibility, student-athletes are required to sign the Athletic Participation Contract prior to each season. The student-athlete’s signature, along with that of his/her parent/guardian, indicates they both recognize and understand this responsibility and that the student-athlete agrees to adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct.

### **Appropriate Conduct Requirements**

Student-athletes shall avoid any infractions of the Averill Park Central School District Code of Conduct. In addition, student-athletes shall avoid any action(s) or the participation in an activity outside of school, which might bring embarrassment or an unfavorable view on the student-athlete, his/her teammates, coaches, family, school or community. Such alleged violation(s) will be subject to review and possible

subsequent action. Examples of some behaviors which would be considered as violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct and subject to the eligibility chart include, but are not limited to:

- Any infraction which results in an Out of School Suspension (OSS)
- Use, Possession, or Sale of Alcohol
- Use, Possession, or Sale of Tobacco Products (including alternative nicotine products and/or paraphernalia)
- Use, Possession, or Sale of Cannabis Products (including alternative cannabis products and/or paraphernalia)
- Use, Possession, or Sale of Illegal Drugs (including drug paraphernalia) – Any student-athlete found to be selling illegal drugs will be **suspended for one year** from the date of the sale.
- Constructive Possession – Student-athletes who are found to have been voluntarily associating with others who are illegally using, possessing or selling drugs, drug paraphernalia, cannabis, cannabis paraphernalia, or alcohol, and who do not attempt to remove themselves in a reasonable amount of time are in violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct.
- Hazing – Coaches will not permit, nor will student-athletes participate in, any type of hazing at any time. Hazing is defined by any conduct or method of initiation into any interscholastic team, whether on public or private property, which deliberately or recklessly exploits a less powerful student-athlete physically, emotionally, and/or socially.
- Theft and/or Destruction of Property – Theft and/or destruction of property of any kind, including property of Averill Park or our opponents will not be tolerated.

### Application of the Code

The Athletic Code of Conduct shall be in effect for **365 days per year** and will be in effect at all times, in all locations, including non-school activities. Each coach also has the prerogative to establish additional guidelines specific to his/her particular team, so long as such guidelines do not erode or minimize the criteria set forth herein.

### Self-Reporting

Any off-campus Athletic Code of Conduct violation that is self or family reported to the Director of Athletics **prior** to athletic staff and/or Director of Athletics awareness of the violation may result in up to a 50% reduction of the normal penalty. This will only be honored one time during the career of the student-athlete.

### Penalties

Violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct will result in penalties as determined formally by the Director of Athletics and Building Principal. **The consequences listed below may be modified or tailored by the Director of Athletics and Building Principal to meet the circumstances of special situations as they arise.** In determining appropriate penalties, the Director of Athletics and Building Principal shall be guided as follows:

#### First Offense

- 1) If an offense occurs that is deemed to be a violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct, the student-athlete will be allowed to practice with the team, but shall not be allowed to participate in the team's scheduled contests according to the eligibility chart. Scrimmages are **not** considered scheduled contests.
- 2) Penalties which cannot be served during the sport season in which they are imposed will be carried over for completion in the next sports season in which the student-athlete

participates. The penalty assigned will be adjusted proportionately based on the number of regular season scheduled contests in the subsequent season.

### **Second Offense**

If a second offense occurs, the game penalty will be increased according to the eligibility chart. If the second offense occurs within the same calendar year as the first offense, the games penalty will be increased proportionally. For example, for a 16 game season a second offense in the same calendar year as the first offense the penalty would be 12 games. **For a second offense within the same sports season the athlete will be suspended for the remainder of the season.**

### **Third Offense**

If a third offense occurs the student-athlete shall be removed from participation in **all** interscholastic athletics for one year beginning on the date the penalty for the third offense is imposed.

### **Offenses Resulting in Arrest or the Filing of Formal Charges in Court**

In the case of an arrest for a criminal offense or filing of charges, disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the Director of Athletics and Building Principal.

**ELIGIBILITY CHART**

<b># of Regular Season Scheduled Contests</b>	<b>Contest Penalty First Offense</b>	<b>Contest Penalty Second Offense</b>
<8	1	2
8	2	4
9	2	4
10	2	4
11	2	4
12	3	6
13	3	6
14	3	6
15	3	6
16	4	8
17	4	8
18	4	8
19	4	8
20	5	10
21	5	10
22	5	10
23	5	10
24	6	12

\*This eligibility chart is in effect for any disciplinary infractions resulting in OSS and the above listed, but not limited to, infractions of the Athletic Code of Conduct. The final determination will be made by the Director of Athletics.

\*It should be noted, notwithstanding the above chart of penalties, that facts of an incident may warrant immediate removal from the team if the Director of Athletics and Building Principal believe that the offense committed by the student-athlete warrants such action.

### **Due Process**

Prior to the imposition of any penalty under the Athletic Code of Conduct, the Director of Athletics and/or Building Principal will notify the student-athlete of the nature of the infraction and the student-athlete will be given an opportunity to explain his/her side of the story.

### **Appeal Procedure**

The student-athlete and/or parent/guardian have the right to appeal penalties under the Athletic Code of Conduct to the Superintendent. Appeals must be made in writing within three school days of assignment of a penalty for an Athletic Code of Conduct Violation. The Superintendent will provide a response to the appeal within three school days after receipt of the letter.

### **Extended School Detention (ESD)/In School Suspension (ISS)**

Any student-athlete serving an ESD/ISS will not be able to practice or play on the day of an ESD/ISS.

### **Academic Eligibility**

Participation in athletics generally has a positive effect on academic performance. Student-athletes are required to meet prescribed academic standards as a condition of participation in athletics at Averill Park. The following academic improvement plan framework is in place for students that are failing one or more courses on the five-week report or on a report card:

- One failure – The student-athlete must stay after school at least two times per week.
- Two failures – The student-athlete must stay after school at least three times per week.
- Three or more failures – The student-athlete must stay after school at least four times per week.

\*Approved tutor sessions will count as an after school session.

\*Failures from the fourth quarter of the previous school year will carry over.

Any student-athlete that is on an academic improvement plan will need to turn in a progress report to their respective coach at the end of each week to ensure that the student-athlete is meeting the expectations of staying after school and displaying academic progress. Once a student-athlete is placed on an academic improvement plan they will be required to stay on the academic improvement plan until the next five-week report or report card comes out. If the student-athlete is passing all of his/her courses at this time the student-athlete will be taken off of the academic improvement plan, otherwise the student-athlete will remain on the academic improvement plan. **Student-athletes who do not meet the requirements of the academic improvement plan will jeopardize their ability to participate in interscholastic athletics.**

## Sportsmanship

The Averill Park interscholastic athletic program is committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical play, and fair conduct at all athletic events. Sportsmanship is an integral and vital ingredient of any interscholastic athletic program. Good sportsmanship must be taught, modeled, expected, and reinforced in the classroom and during all competitive activities. We are further committed to the belief that schools participating in interscholastic athletics should be held responsible for the conduct of their players, coaches, staff members, and spectators. **Conduct which is detrimental to the educational value of athletic events could result in appropriate disciplinary action by the school, including permanent suspension from athletic events.**

### **Section 2 Sportsmanship Policy for Spectators**

1. Any spectator removed by an official, law enforcement, school administration, chaperone or coach is ineligible to attend any interscholastic competition for that school, until after the next previously scheduled contest at the same level has been completed.
2. A second removal in the same sport in the same season: they shall not attend until the next two regularly scheduled contests, for that school, have been completed.
3. If the spectator doesn't comply with the suspensions (home or away), the suspension is increased to a second or third offense.
4. A spectator who receives a third removal in the same sport season will not be allowed to attend for the rest of the season (regular season and postseason).
5. The section and/or the school district has the authority to extend the period of ineligibility in those cases where the actions are warranted.
6. The home school may also require the individual removed to take the NFHS Parent Credentialing course, in addition to the suspensions.
7. Schools will provide warnings through announcements, posters and/or direct communication.
8. Schools and leagues can always be more restrictive.
9. Removed or suspended spectators will be notified both verbally and in writing of their suspensions.

### **Section 2 Sportsmanship Policy for Student-Athletes**

1. Learn and understand the rules of your sport. Play hard, play to win, but play fairly within these rules.
2. Do not allow your temper to distract you from the fundamentals of good sportsmanship. Maintain self-control.
3. Respect your opponent. Never taunt. Congratulate him or her at game's end. Acknowledge good play.
4. Respect the integrity and judgment of officials. Never question the decision of an official.
5. Be an example for your school, teammates, and opponents.

### **Section 2 Sportsmanship Policy for Coaches**

1. Greet and be courteous to opponent's coaches and players.
2. Know the rules of your sports and teach them to your team. Respect officials and their decisions. Demand that your athlete abide by an official's decision without emotional display.
3. Display concern for the physical well-being of your opponent's players as well as your own.
4. Win with humility; lose with grace; do both with dignity.
5. Encourage your team to interact with the opponent. A pre-game or post-game handshake for every Section 2 contest is strongly recommended.



6. Offer your assistance, and that of your staff and players, to the opponent and officials.
7. Do not accept unruly behavior from your players, staff, or spectators. Set standards of conduct.
8. Maintain self-control at all times. Players and spectators tend to follow the coach's example.

### **Suburban Scholastic Council Sportsmanship Code**

In the belief that good sportsmanship on the part of spectators at high school athletic contests is as important as good sportsmanship on the part of athletes, the following guides for conduct are suggested as a means of continuing and strengthening the ties that exist between competing schools.

Basic Philosophy: Visiting team members, students, and adult spectators are guests to be accorded all courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well mannered, and well intentioned host would normally give. The visitors, in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school's facilities with care and respecting the rules and customs of the home school.

It is expected that all spectators and participants will follow this code:

- Athletic opponents are guests and should be treated as such.
- Spectators should watch the game from those areas designated by each school as spectator areas. Signs will be posted for spectators designating home and away seating.
- Verbal abuse of opposing athletes or officials from team members or spectators shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- It shall be the responsibility of authorized school personnel attending games, either at home or away, to make sure students and spectators from their school conduct themselves appropriately.
- Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their interpretation; these decisions should be accepted.
- Cheering should be in support of either team and should not be directed toward creating unfriendly rivalries among athletes or fans.
- Any spectator who evidences poor sportsmanship will be requested to leave and may be denied permission to future contests.
- All chaperones will be wearing identifying badges designating their responsibility and the school they represent.

Spectators, athletes, and coaches must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of their schools and that their positive actions can relate directly to the success of their teams.

### **Disqualification**

**Any Averill Park student-athlete, coach, or spectator who is ejected from a contest will automatically be suspended for a minimum of one game.** The contest(s) is to be the next regularly scheduled contest(s) and may be carried over to the next sports season. A conference between the student-athlete, coach, or spectator and the Director of Athletics will take place before being allowed to return.

### Social Media

It is important that student-athletes recognize the power of social media and the potential negative image that they can portray about other student-athletes, coaches, the athletic program, and the school district. While we respect the right of student-athletes to utilize the variety of social media options available, we ask that the following guidelines be followed by our student-athletes at all times:

1. Refrain from posting material, including pictures, that is threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, hostile, or promoting illegal activities.
2. Refrain from posting email addresses or any other confidential information of student-athletes, coaches, or any other person other than yourself.
3. Be aware that college coaches, college recruiters, and future employers access your social networking sites. The information that you post is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image that you can be proud of years from now.

Any inappropriate activity that is in violation of the above guidelines is subject to investigation and possible discipline.

### School Attendance

Student-athletes will need permission from the Director of Athletics to practice or play on a day where more than one block is missed.

### Participation in Physical Education

Athletics is an outgrowth of physical education. Student-athletes who are absent from or do not participate in physical education will not be permitted to practice or play on the day of the absence. Student-athletes will need permission from the Director of Athletics to practice or play on a day that physical education is missed for a legitimate reason.

### Personal Commitment

Once a team has been chosen a student-athlete has made a commitment to complete the season with that team. Student-athletes considering quitting a team are required to have a conference with the coach and Director of Athletics. **Quitting a team may jeopardize the ability of a student-athlete to play on teams in future seasons.**

### Attendance at Practices and Contests

Practice schedules and attendance rules are set by coaches. Practices are essential for proper conditioning, skill development, and teamwork. Student-athletes are required to attend all practices and contests unless excused by their coach. Any student-athlete that misses a practice or a contest will likely have their playing time and/or position adjusted accordingly by their coach.

When parents/guardians and student-athletes choose to take a vacation during the sports season, it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry and personal conditioning. Student-athletes who do not train during an extended period of time could be seriously injured if allowed to participate under competitive game conditions. Teams cannot be developed to their fullest potential when all team members are not present. Many varsity teams will have their seasons extended into sectionals, regionals, and states. We ask that parents/guardians and student-

athletes take this into account when planning vacations and trips. The student-athlete **must** personally inform the coach **prior** to the tryout period of any vacation plans and/or any other conflicts. The coach will then share his/her plan with the student-athlete at that time, including the possibility that the student-athlete may not be able to try out for the team.

### Conflicts

A student-athlete who attempts to participate in too many activities will undoubtedly be in a position of conflict of obligation. The athletic department recognizes that each student-athlete should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in school activities and, to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts. The student-athletes and parents/guardians must realize that many times schedules cannot be changed because of council, section, or state regulations, facility usage, transportation, or officials' availability. Student-athletes have a responsibility to do everything that they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the coach prior to the tryout period of a conflict, not the day of the conflict.

### Outside Participation

The NYSPHSAA allows outside participation (AAU, travel, club, etc.). **Student-athletes must understand that commitment to the school team comes first, and outside participation should not be detrimental to an individual or Averill Park team.** Student-athletes who choose an outside team over their school team are subject to dismissal from the school team. There will be many circumstances where a student-athlete should not participate in an outside activity due to the possible effect on the team. Always check with your coach and/or the Director of Athletics.

### Specialization

The Averill Park Athletic Department encourages student-athletes to participate in a variety of sports and does **not** endorse in principle or practice the concept of specialization. Specialization occurs when a student-athlete involves himself/herself in one athletic activity over an extended period of time, forsaking other athletic endeavors of interest. Student-athletes who specialize in one sport tend to get injured more often and lose interest in their sport over time.

### Athletic Awards

To be eligible for an athletic award, a student-athlete must complete the season, although the coach may make exceptions (pending approval by the Director of Athletics) in unusual cases. The student-athlete must be a good representative of the school and team and abide by all of the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook.

### **Varsity Letter**

A student-athlete may receive one varsity letter during their athletic career. Each individual coach will establish criteria for earning a varsity letter in his/her sport. **A varsity letter is not given for participation and attendance alone.**

**Emblem Pin**

A student-athlete will receive an emblem pin with their first letter in a particular sport.

**Service Bar Pin**

A service bar is given to a student-athlete who has already received a varsity letter and emblem pin in a particular sport. A student-athlete will earn one additional bar each year that they participate.

**Certificate**

A student-athlete will receive a certificate for each season that they participate in.

**Plaque**

Each varsity team is given the opportunity to hand out up to five individual awards at the discretion of the head coach.

**Transportation**

Student-athletes will ride school provided transportation to and from all away contests. It is highly recommended that all student-athletes travel to and from away contests with their team; however there are certain circumstances where a student-athlete will need to travel with their parent/guardian. In this case the parent/guardian must sign out their son/daughter with the coach after the contest. Permission for a student-athlete to leave with any other individual will not be given, except in rare circumstances. **Any student-athlete who uses non-school transportation to or from a contest without prior approval from the Director of Athletics will be required to sit out the next contest.**

**Uniforms/Equipment**

All athletic department issued uniforms and equipment must be returned at the end of the season to the coach. This includes uniforms, pads, helmets, etc. A student-athlete will not be given a uniform for another sport until all uniforms and equipment are returned. The student-athlete will be financially responsible for any lost or unreturned uniforms or equipment. All valuable possessions, including uniforms and equipment, should be **locked** in a locker.

**Appearance**

Members of an Averill Park team should always look presentable. You look good, you feel good, you play good! Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of student-athletes, the team, the school, and the district. Team members are expected to dress presentable at all times. This includes before and after contests. Sloppy dress leads to sloppy attitudes, which leads to sloppy play.

**NCAA Information**

If a student-athlete is planning to enroll in college as freshman and wants to participate in intercollegiate athletics at the Division I or Division II level, the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse must certify him/her. Questions can be directed to the guidance office or the Director of Athletics. More information can be found at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

### **Booster Club**

The Averill Park Athletic Booster Club meets quarterly. Any interested parents/guardians are welcome to attend. The purpose of the Booster Club is to raise money to support, encourage, and enhance the interscholastic athletic programs of the district. Any fundraising efforts by individual teams must first be approved by the Director of Athletics. All money raised should then be turned over to the Booster Club treasurer in a timely manner.

### **Communication Guidelines**

Both parenting and coaching can be extremely difficult at times. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a great benefit to student-athletes. From time to time during the course of a student-athlete's career parents/guardians and student-athletes may have questions or concerns that need to be addressed. The coach of the team is the best source of information.

#### **Communication Parents Should Expect from a Coach**

- Philosophy of the coach and program.
- Expectations the coach has for your student-athlete as well as the entire team.
- Locations and times of all practices and games.
- Team requirements, such as special equipment, offseason expectations, etc.
- Procedures should your student-athlete be injured during participation.

#### **Communication Coaches Should Expect from a Parent**

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach only after the student-athlete has talked with the coach.
- Specific concerns in regards to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As a student-athlete becomes involved in interscholastic athletics at Averill Park they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you and/or your student-athlete wish. At these times, depending on the concern, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

#### **Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches**

- The treatment of your child, either mentally or physically.
- Ways to help your student-athlete improve.
- Concerns about your student-athlete's behavior.

#### **Inappropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches**

- Playing time.
- Team strategy and/or play calling.
- Other student-athletes.

It is very difficult to accept your student-athlete not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals and they make judgments based on what they believe is in the best interest of the entire team. As you have seen from the list above, certain things should be discussed with the coach, while others should not be and need to be left to the discretion of the coach.

## Conferences

There are situations that may require a conference between a parent/guardian and a coach. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern:

1. The student-athlete should first contact the coach in an attempt to resolve the situation. **This should always be the first step.** Coaches are always willing to meet with a student-athlete.
2. If a resolution is not reached then the parent/guardian can contact the coach to set up an appointment with the coach. In most instances when a parent/guardian meets with the coach the student-athlete should also be present.
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Director of Athletics to assist in arranging a meeting.
4. Please do not attempt to meet with a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent/guardian and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

What can a parent/guardian do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call the athletic office to set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics. The parent/guardian, student-athlete, coach, and Director of Athletics will meet to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next steps can be determined, if needed.