

ETHICAL CULTURE FIELDSTON SCHOOL

Athletics

HANDBOOK

FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES AND PARENTS



FIFTH EDITION 2017

The purpose of this athletic handbook is to explain and clarify the Fieldston athletic department's program, policies, and philosophy, and to communicate as much information as we can assemble in one document about Fieldston's athletic program. It is our hope that in reading this handbook our parents and our student-athletes will come to a clear understanding of what we do and why we do it.

This handbook aims to supplement but not to replace our other forms of communication to members of the Fieldston athletic community. In particular we will continue to send Fieldston students and parents information about specific teams or upcoming seasons.

The third edition of the Athletics Handbook. Your suggestions for improving it are welcome, and will be reflected in future editions.

Please consult with Gus Ornstein, Director of Athletics, about any questions or concerns you have about our athletic program. Thanks for your attention.



Table of Contents

PART 1

Interscholastic Athletic Teams	4
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PART 2

Fieldston's Interscholastic Athletics Philosophy	5
Middle School Program Philosophy	6
Junior Varsity Program Philosophy	7
Varsity Program Philosophy	8

PART 3

Requirements for Participation on Interscholastic Teams	9
Obtain Medical Clearance	9
Attend the Organizational Meeting.....	9
Attend Tryouts	10
Selection Policy	10
Attending Practices	11
Normal Practice Times	11

PART 4

Athletic Department Policies and General Information	12
Apparel	12
Attendance.....	12
Captains.....	12
Competing on Non-School Teams In Season	13
CSAB and Athletics	13
Equipment/Uniforms.....	13
Family Vacations.....	14
Individual Team Policies	14
Insurance	14
NCAA Clearinghouse	15
Post-Season Competition.....	15
Quitting a Team	16
Reporting of Injuries or Illness	16
Schedules	16
Schedule Conflicts.....	17
Spectators and Sportsmanship	17
Standards	18
Team Trips.....	19
Transportation	19
Website	20

Interscholastic Athletic Teams

FALL

	V	JV	8th	C	7th
Boys' Football	✓	✓		✓	
Boys' Soccer	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls' Soccer	✓	✓	✓		✓
Boys' Cross Country	✓			✓	
Girls' Cross Country	✓			✓	
Girls' Field Hockey	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls' Volleyball	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls' Tennis	✓	✓			
Water Polo	✓	✓			

V = Varsity
 JV = Junior Varsity
 C = Combined
 7th & 8th

WINTER

Boys' Basketball	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls' Basketball	✓	✓	✓		✓
Squash	✓	✓			
Boys' Swimming	✓			✓	
Girls' Swimming	✓			✓	
Boys' Indoor Track	✓			✓	
Girls' Indoor Track	✓			✓	
Ice Hockey	✓			✓	

SPRING

Boys' Baseball	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls' Softball	✓	✓	✓		✓
Boys' Lacrosse	✓	✓	✓		✓
Girls' Lacrosse	✓	✓	✓		✓
Boys' Tennis	✓	✓			
Golf	✓				
Boys' Track & Field	✓	✓		✓	
Girls' Track & Field	✓	✓		✓	
Ultimate Frisbee	✓				

Fieldston's Interscholastic Athletics Philosophy

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School is a component of the physical education program. Interscholastic athletes at Fieldston receive physical education department credit for participation on a team and completion of an interscholastic season. Policies governing credit and graduation requirements extend to interscholastic athletics.

Participation in interscholastic athletics promotes the development of physical, mental, and social skills, a positive self-image, an understanding of teamwork and cooperation, and a sharing of personal experiences. Everyone involved in the Fieldston athletic program, both coaches and athletes, possesses a unique opportunity to teach other participants positive life skills and values. The Athletic program is designed to empower student athletes, while instilling self confidence and creating leaders.

Fieldston makes every effort to hire the most qualified coaches we can find to ensure that our students' athletic experience is the best it can be. Like our academic colleagues, we take our coaching roles seriously. Our coaches seek to inculcate in individual athletes the dedication, discipline, and desire and the spirit of commitment and personal sacrifice that a successful team depends upon. Making such a commitment helps to nurture integrity, pride, loyalty and overall character in our students and so supports the mission of the School. As in other aspects of School life, our goal is to graduate people who have become better people because they have been through our athletic program. It is incredibly important for our athletic program and all those involved to embody the progressive ideals of our school. We want everyone involved in the athletic program to ensure that our overall athletic philosophy is one that mirrors the positive experience our students have on a daily basis.

It is the nature of athletic competition to pursue victory. However, a won-loss record does not always reflect the success that a team has achieved in a given season. To a good coach, guiding a team to attain its maximum potential and to develop the maximum potential of its individual members is the ultimate goal, as well as ensuring that the overall experience of the participants is a positive one. We all want to win, but it is more important that we are winning by doing things the right way and in a way that is aligned with our overall school and athletic philosophy.

Finally, because it involves so many students and because it provides forums to bring students, parents, and faculty together, a successful interscholastic athletic program is vital to the spirit of any school and to the sense of pride that members of the community feel in the school as well as ensuring that the overall experience of the participants is a positive one. We all want to win, but it is more important that we are winning by doing things the right way and in a way that is aligned with our overall school and athletic philosophy.

Fieldston Middle Program Philosophy

CURRENTLY WE OFFER A MIDDLE SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC PROGRAM to 7th and 8th grade students. Which middle school athletic teams we offer and how many we offer are determined by student interest and by the junior varsity and varsity teams we are able to offer.

Although the middle school program is a competitive program, it is designed chiefly to meet the developmental needs of its participants. At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills, game rules, the fundamentals of team play, and sportsmanship. In that vein, athletes in our middle school program are prohibited from practicing or playing on junior varsity or varsity teams.

Middle school team coaches are expected to make every effort to provide each team member with an opportunity to play in every game or, if numbers make that goal impossible, to develop a rotation that will ensure meaningful playing time for each team member in as many games as possible. Unfortunately, because of the large number of students who want to play on certain teams and the safety and space issues those large numbers can raise, we sometimes have to limit the number of players on a middle school team roster.

The middle school program takes place within the regular school calendar. In particular, there is no summer pre-season program. Team sign-ups occur during the first few days of each season's physical education class, with tryouts taking place shortly after. Once selected, athletes on teams practice during their scheduled physical education classes. Middle school football, however, practices 3 times per week after school. Those days are determined by the coach each year. Games take place after school.

Junior Varsity Program Philosophy

THE JUNIOR VARSITY PROGRAM is intended for Upper School students who display the potential to develop into varsity level performers. Although team membership varies, freshmen and sophomores occupy the majority of junior varsity roster positions. In certain situations, juniors who might be expected to contribute to the varsity level as seniors will be considered for junior varsity teams. The final decision about junior varsity participation is normally made by the coach, in consultation with the Director of Athletics.

At the junior varsity level, athletes are expected to have committed themselves to the team and to continued self-improvement. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, fundamental skills, strategy and teamwork. At the junior varsity level, although coaches make an effort to provide meaningful playing time for all team members, the outcome of the game becomes a more important consideration than at the middle school level, and the amount of playing time a junior varsity player has in a given game and throughout the season has more to do with the coach's assessment of how that player will perform in a given game against a given opponent than in the middle school program. This is an important year for an athlete, as it is a time to develop the necessary skill set and work on the fundamentals needed to become a varsity player in the future.

Faithful attendance and effort at practice also become more important at the junior varsity level. The JV season is a time for a student athlete to develop and gain confidence through playing time that would not have occurred at the varsity level. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the six day-a-week commitments that will be expected of them at the varsity level. Games and practices rarely take place on Sundays and holidays, but they sometimes occur on Saturdays and during school vacations. Except in rare cases, during the December and March breaks, families of junior varsity athletes can expect to be off for the entire vacation time.

Varsity Program Philosophy

IN EVERY SPORT, varsity competition is the culmination of the program. Normally, seniors and juniors make up the majority of a varsity roster. Some sophomores and a very few freshman students are sometimes included on Fieldston varsity teams.

Team size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on a team is based on the number needed to conduct an effective practice and the number needed to compete in interscholastic games. A student who chooses to participate on a varsity team needs to understand his or her role on that team, and early in the season a coach is expected to communicate clearly and candidly with each varsity player about that role. While we understand that playing time is important to every team member and coaches try to give every varsity athlete a meaningful amount of playing time over the span of a season, playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A positive attitude and a high level of skill are prerequisites for a position on a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport may require a six – day per week commitment. We expect all varsity athletes to be available for practices and games during the second week of a two-week vacation period.

Requirements for Participation on Interscholastic Teams

Obtain Medical Clearance

All Fieldston athletes must be medically cleared before beginning practice for each season in which they participate on a team. The required ECFS Physician's Health Form (accessible through Magnus Health) now contains a statement at the bottom authorizing a student to participate in the athletic program and play contact sports. We **no longer require** a separate Physician's Athletic Authorization Health Form. A physical form must be current and on file through the Magnus website by August 1, 2017 in order for students to participate in pre-season athletics. For students who have previously participated in athletics and have a current physical on file, parents must complete the fall **interval sports form** available through Magnus (this form **does not require** a doctor's signature).

Attend the Organizational Meeting

A few weeks before the start of each season, the team coach holds a meeting. At this time, the coach will provide important information about the upcoming season. Please note that organizational meetings for fall teams take place during the spring.

Attend Tryouts

In accordance with our philosophy and our desire that as many students as possible participate in the Fieldston athletic program, coaches are encouraged to keep as many students as they can on a team. However, practice and game time, space, facilities, and other factors can limit the size of the team. In determining how many players to keep on a team, coaches always strive to maximize opportunities up to the point where numbers will dilute the quality of the experience for all team members.

Selection Policy

Choosing the members of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those teams. Non-varsity coaches take into consideration the philosophy of their level of play as described earlier. They also normally consult with the varsity coach and with the Director of Athletics to help determine the final team rosters.

During the tryout period, coaches are responsible for providing the following information to all athletes:

- The length of the tryout period
- The criteria used to select the team
- The number to be selected
- The practice commitment if the student makes the team
- The game commitment if the student makes the team

The selection process will include three important elements. Each candidate shall:

- Have participated in two tryout sessions
- Have performed in at least one intra-squad competition, if possible
- If he or she is not selected for the team, each candidate shall be personally informed by the coach with an explanation of the decision. The coach will also discuss alternative possibilities for participation.

Attending Practices

Student athletes are expected to attend all scheduled practice sessions and games unless excused by the coach. The importance of attendance is discussed in the philosophy section of this handbook. Note that fall practices for varsity and junior varsity teams begin in the third week of August.

Normal Practice Times

Practice Times for Varsity and Junior Varsity teams are as follows:

Monday 4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Tuesday 4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday 3:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Thursday 4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Friday 3:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Note that some varsity teams will also practice on Saturday. Individual coaches will inform team members of Saturday practices.

Middle School teams practice 5 days a week during their physical education classes.

Athletic Department Policies and General Information

Apparel

Each team may elect to order team apparel to complement what the school provides. In such situations the coach is responsible for adhering to department purchasing procedures. The coach and the Director of Athletics are responsible for the wording, logo, and graphics to be used. All apparel must adhere to the school colors of orange, white and navy blue. All monies must be collected before an order can be sent out. Students on financial aid are eligible for a discount in the purchase of such apparel, and should consult with the coach or the Director of Athletics.

Attendance

A student must be in school by 12:00 noon in order to participate in after school activities unless permission is granted by the Form Dean and/or the Director of Athletics. Exceptions to this rule are normally granted only for college visits. For health and safety reasons, a student who is absent or tardy due to illness cannot practice or compete on that day. As noted earlier, students in CSAB are allowed to miss Thursday practices for their CSAB commitments but not games.

Captains

The selection of captains falls within the coach's discretion. The selection process and eligibility varies from team to team and from coach to coach. At Fieldston the position of captain is not reserved for seniors.

As a captain, you assume a leadership role. Your coach, your teammates, the Fieldston and visiting communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field. Student athletes are advised to discuss expectations with a coach prior to accepting this position.

Competing on Non-School Teams In Season

Opportunities exist for Fieldston student athletes at all levels to participate on non-school teams while participating on school-sponsored teams. When these situations occur, there must be communication between the student athlete, parent or guardian, the coaches and the athletic administration. Participation on the school team must take priority over obligations to the non-school team.

CSAB and Athletics

Junior and senior athletes involved in the School's CSAB community service program face a dual commitment on Thursdays, which is the traditional day for CSAB service. School policy is that Thursday games take priority over CSAB, and CSAB service takes priority over Thursday practices. On occasion a CSAB student's absence from a Thursday practice may affect his or her readiness to play in a particular Friday game, but our coaches and our CSAB program coordinators respect the dedication that motivates our students to undertake these two important commitments. Fieldston students who aspire to play on varsity teams should not allow this dual Thursday commitment to influence their decision about whether to apply for CSAB.

Equipment/Uniforms

Athletic equipment becomes more and more costly each year. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to care for **and return all clothing and equipment that he or she has been issued**. If any equipment, including the team uniform, is lost or damaged, the student athlete will be charged the replacement cost of that equipment. If a student athlete does not return equipment, we reserve the right to withhold grades, yearbooks, to deny that student the opportunity to participate on another team, or to take what measures we deem appropriate to encourage the return or replacement of that equipment.

Family Vacations

When parents and student athletes choose to take family vacations during sports seasons, the time missed by the student athlete can affect team chemistry and the athlete's own conditioning. Student athletes who miss practices or games for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted. Coaches will make every effort to inform parents and student athletes of the vacation schedule as far in advance as possible. Conversely, parents and student athletes should inform the coach of potential schedule conflicts as far in advance as possible. As explained above, during a two week break from school practices and/or team trips will normally take place in the second week, so that family vacations can be scheduled for the first week.

Individual Team Policies

In addition to Athletic Department policies, coaches may establish additional policies with the approval of the Director of Athletics. The coach must provide these policies to all team members and explain them at the earliest possible team meeting. Penalties for violating team rules should also be provided to all team members and explained fully by the coach.

Insurance

The School's insurance covers all students enrolled in the school, while they participate in school sponsored and supervised activities, including sports. Travel directly to and from a school sponsored and supervised activity is also covered. Students are not covered while at home or while they participate in activities which are not sponsored and supervised by the school. Our insurance program is excess over all other valid and collectible insurance covering your son or daughter. In instances when your son or daughter does not possess any other insurance coverage, this program will become the primary insurance coverage. When there is other insurance coverage available to protect your son or daughter, this program can be used as a supplement, offering reimbursement for deductibles, coinsurance or other expenses which you may be required to fulfill.

Exact details of our coverage are available in the information about insurance coverage sent out at the beginning of the school year.

NCAA Clearinghouse

The Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse has been established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) for the benefit of those students wishing to participate in intercollegiate athletics while attending a college or university in the United States. The Clearinghouse is designed to certify an individual's athletic eligibility before he or she enters a college or university. The focus of the organization is on Division I and Division II schools, but it also acts as an advisor model for Division III schools. **If you would like more detailed information, please contact the College Counseling office or contact the NCAA directly and request the NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete. This publication includes a wealth of information for parents and students.**

Completion of the Clearinghouse form is a requirement for any high school student athlete who wishes to be eligible to compete on an NCAA team. Any student interested in participating in intercollegiate athletics should become familiar with this requirement. A good website to go to regarding college recruiting is www.athleticquest.com

Post-Season Competition

Post-season competition is available to teams and individuals whose performance during the regular season merits the opportunity to participate in post-season tournaments and meets. Most of our teams compete for Independent School Championships. Since Fieldston is a member of NYSAISAA, most of our post-season opportunities involve this association. In some cases our teams compete in a state federation tournament through NYSAISAA. In these latter cases, the team or individual(s) must have a truly extraordinary season to be considered for post-season competition.

Please note that if your son or daughter is on a team or individual sport that declares for a federation tournament, he or she is obliged to participate in that tournament. There are strict rules regarding the declaration process. It is a binding contract that the state takes very seriously.

Quitting a Team

We believe that a student who is selected for a team after the tryout period should remain on the team through the season, and that quitting is almost never the right course of action for a team member. An athlete who chooses to leave a team during the season normally will receive no credit for physical education during that season. On occasion, an athlete may have a good reason for quitting a team. In such cases he or she should consult with the coach to explain the reason for the decision to quit, return all equipment, and report immediately to the Chair of the Physical Education department for assignment into a PE class.

Reporting of Injuries or Illness

It is the student athlete's responsibility immediately to report any injury to his or her coach or the athletic trainer. All injuries that are seen by our athletic trainer or our coaching staff require that an Accident Report Form be filled out. If the injury is so severe that we recommend seeking medical attention, our athletic trainer, coach or athletic administrator will call home immediately. Once a physician treats an athlete, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the team.

Our athletic trainer is at Fieldston from 10:30 am until the last athletic event of the day is completed. If you have any questions regarding our sports medicine program or your child needs rehabilitation due to an athletic injury, please set up an appointment with the athletic trainer by calling (718) 329-7298.

Schedules

Fieldston is a member of the New York State Association of Independent Schools Athletic Association (NYSAISAA). Our primary game schedules are in the Ivy Preparatory School League. Sometimes a change in schedule is necessary due to school conflicts or inclement weather. We do everything we can to complete the assigned schedule.

Schedule Conflicts

Every effort will be made to schedule athletic events to avoid students missing academic classes. Students are responsible for the academic material due or assigned the day of the missed class. The athletic department understands that each student should have the opportunity for a wide range of extracurricular experiences, and we schedule events in a manner that minimizes conflicts. Students need to recognize, however, that absences from practices will hinder skill development and physical conditioning, as well as jeopardize team unity. Time missed from practice, therefore, will influence an athlete's performance, and potentially his/her playing time and/or position with the team.

A student who has decided to participate in more than one extracurricular activity during an athletic season when he or she is on a team should provide as much information as possible to all parties so that conflicts can be minimized.

Spectators and Sportsmanship

We appreciate fan support for Fieldston athletic teams, as long as the cheers are positive and directed toward our teams' athletes. At no time should spectators be directing negative comments towards opposing teams or coaches or towards referees, or speaking directly to participants in an athletic event. It is both distracting and dangerous. Please remember that these are high school students participating in an extension of the classroom environment, not professional athletes.

Ethical Culture Fieldston School, in association with the Ivy Preparatory School League, promotes good sportsmanship by student athletes, coaches and fans. We request the cooperation of fans in supporting the participants and officials. Profanity, racial or ethnic slurs, fighting or other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal of the offenders from the site of competition and further disciplinary action. The use of artificial noisemakers is not permitted at Fieldston athletic contests. Smoking is not permitted at any interscholastic games in which Fieldston participates, whether indoors or outdoors, home or away.

Standards

The New York State Association of Independent Schools Athletic Association (NYSAISAA) Sports Standards outlines the minimum number of required practices an individual or team shall need before participation in a scrimmage or contest. Among Fieldston teams, only Ultimate Frisbee are not recognized by NYSAISAA and therefore are not required to observe these standards. For more information regarding the standards for a particular sport, feel free to contact the Director of Athletics.

Team Trips

Many varsity teams supplement either their pre-season preparation or their competitive schedule by traveling during the summer, or during the winter or spring recesses. All costs associated with team travel are to be incurred by the participants. As with apparel, students on financial aid are eligible for a discount, and should consult with the coach or the Director of Athletics.

The coach will provide the following information regarding team trips:

- Purpose of the trip
- Date, time, and place of departure
- Place, date and estimated time of return
- Mode of transportation
- Location of housing
- Packing list
- List of expenses that students will incur on the trip
- Printed copy of rules, regulations and itinerary
- Permission Form

Transportation

Student athletes will be transported to and from away games and/or scrimmages on school authorized vehicles. All transportation provided by Fieldston will originate from the parking lot at the Riverdale Avenue gate, and return trips will bring the teams back to the same spot. If a bus is traveling in or through Manhattan, the coach will ask the bus driver to make one stop on the Upper West side. This one stop will occur only if the bus driver believes it is safe to stop.

Under certain circumstances or in exceptional situations, students may be excused from riding back to school from an away athletic event on school authorized transportation, provided that the parent or guardian has checked the proper box on the athletic participation form on Magnus.

The late bus for all after school activities departs from directly in front of the school on Manhattan College Parkway at 6:15 P.M. sharp. As a general rule, due to the length of away games, athletes will often miss the late bus and must make their own arrangements to get home.

Website

Please be sure to visit our website at www.ecfs.org/athletics to gain valuable information about our athletic programs. You can view important dates for the entire year, follow your teams' results, get directions to games and check team standings in the Ivy League.

From the website you can also view and download our [Athletic Handbook](#). Please read and review the policies with your child.

You now can sign up for **team alerts** as either a text message or email letting you know when a game has been canceled, or a location or time change. To sign up:

- Log in to the parent portal on the ECFS website:
<https://www.ecfs.org/loginlink/parents>.
- Click on the gray “Sports: Sign Up for Alerts” button in the righthand column (second button from the top).
- Follow instructions to sign up for iCal feeds and alerts for specific teams.