

Falmouth High School Student Athletic Handbook

Falmouth Public Schools
Falmouth, Massachusetts
www.falmouth.k12.ma.us

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The Athletic Department of Falmouth High School, under the auspices of the Falmouth School Committee, makes available to students of the high school a wide variety of opportunities to develop athletic skills and to become involved as members of interscholastic athletic teams. These opportunities are offered in full conformity with the mandates of Title IX and Chapter 622, which have established standards for equality for male and female students.

There is a rich athletic tradition at Falmouth High School. We view interscholastic athletics as a unifying force within the school community, affecting not just those who take active part on teams but the entire student body. We invite all students to take part in as many athletic programs as possible. Participation in Falmouth High School Athletics, however, is a privilege and not a right; and that privilege is earned by each participant through his or her adherence to the rules and policies set forth in this handbook.

The athletic program is an extension of the academic program, and all athletes are urged to strive for excellence in both the classroom and on the athletic field. Good sportsmanship, commitment to team, and the development of skills and strategies necessary for interscholastic competition are essential to a successful athletic program.

The central goal of this athletic program is to foster certain characteristics and qualities. These include respect for self and others, honesty, integrity, commitment, reliability, common sense and perseverance. The values learned through the athletic experience will help individuals become more productive members of the community.

SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY

“The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity should permeate all interscholastic athletics in our community. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior, which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Our athletic fields should be the laboratory to produce good citizens reflecting “fair play” in every area of life.”

Expectations of Players, Parents and Spectators:

- Game attendance is a privilege, not a license to verbally assault others or to be obnoxious.
- Respect the entire playing of the National Anthem.
- Respect decisions made by contest officials.
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.
- Become aware of the purpose of the league and rules to keep winning in its proper place.
- Respect fans, coaches and participants.
- Recognize outstanding performances on either side of the playing field.

Suggested Positive Behavior:

- Applaud during introduction of players, coaches and officials.
- Accept all decisions by officials.
- Handshakes between participants and coaches at end of contest, regardless of outcome.
- Treat competition as a game, not a war.
- Search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching.
- Applaud at end of contest for performances of all participants.
- Demonstrate concern for injured player, regardless of team.
- Encourage supporting people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.

Unacceptable Behavior:

- Yelling or negative chanting, or gestures toward opponent.
- Booing or heckling an official’s decision.
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official’s call.
- Taunting or trash talk.
- Refusing to shake hands or to give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches or participants.
- Laughing or name calling to distract an opponent.
- Using profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.

The Case for Sportsmanship, published by the MIAA

Please Note:

Any person displaying unsportsmanlike behavior may be removed from the athletic contest and risk being barred from future contests. Students face additional school penalties for inappropriate behavior.

EXPECTATIONS

All Falmouth High School Athletes are Expected to:

1. Attend every practice and game unless excused in advance through direct contact with the coach. In the event of an emergency, the athlete should notify the coach as soon as possible.
2. Be at practices and games on time.
3. Give their best effort (mental and physical) at practice and games.
4. Be accountable for their actions at all times (school, practice, game and in the community).
5. Support other teams in season and out of season. Attendance at other teams' events should be characterized by positive, mature and responsible behavior.
6. Represent the highest ideals of citizenship, academic performance, and sportsmanship. Any behavior, which reflects negatively on their team, school, or community, may result in suspension or removal from participation in the athletic program.

All Falmouth High School Coaches are Expected to:

1. Communicate openly and honestly with players and their parents.
2. Give their best effort.
3. Support tenets of the athletic mission statement and act as role models for the athletes.
4. Distribute to all prospective participants before the season begins, written statements of team rules, which have been previously approved by the Athletic Director.
5. Coaches will not engage in a professional counseling relationship with any members of their team during the school year. When a dual relationship (coach/counselor) is unavoidable the counselor is responsible for taking action to ensure to reduce the potential for harm. (ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, June 1998)
6. *All coaches, paid and volunteer, must follow the guidelines set forth in the Coaches Procedural Manual.*

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to become involved with and support their children in their participation in the athletic program. This support may include attending contests, providing transportation, participating in booster organizations, and reinforcing the athletic mission statement and rules of this handbook. A parent or legal guardian is required to attend a preseason meeting held by the Athletic Director and coach to review the rules and procedures described in this handbook, as well as any team rules, which will be in effect during the season.

A current parental/medical permission form must be filled out completely and filed in the athletic office before any student may try-out or participate in any practice or game. This form also attests to having read this handbook. Parents that volunteer in any capacity must complete a CORI form.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

In order to insure due process, if there are any questions by an athlete or his/her parents, the coach should be contacted first. If the parent or student is not satisfied, the athletic director should be contacted. The parent or student should then meet with the principal if the situation is still not resolved.

The coach will contact the parent/guardian about any behavior violation which will cause loss of playing time. In arriving at disciplinary decisions, coaches will directly consult athletes.

PHILOSOPHY FOR DIFFERENT ATHLETIC LEVELS

FRESHMAN

At the freshman level the importance of accountability, responsibility, hard work, and respect for teammates, opponents, officials and school personnel is stressed. In general, the squad will be kept to a workable number according to the sport. A major goal of the freshman program is for each participant to receive frequent competitive opportunities, unless limited by physical safety, lack of effort, or lack of practice commitment.

JUNIOR VARSITY

The junior varsity level will be a step up from the freshman level in intensity and approach. Any player competing at this level should view it as a step toward the varsity level. Added emphasis will be placed on team strategy and achievement of positive results. Playing time must be earned. At the JV level, squad size will be kept at a workable number as defined by the coaching staff and athletic director. Junior varsity players may include students from grades 9 through 11. Criteria for playing time are determined by the coaching staff, based on the athlete's ability, effort, and work habits.

VARSIITY

The varsity level represents the highest level of skill and citizenship in a sport. Students in grades 9-12 are eligible for varsity competition. The head coach will determine playing time at the varsity level with advice from his or her assistants. Practice habits, adherence to team and school rules, skill level, and the ability to execute assignments will determine the athlete's playing time.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC TRYOUT AND CUTTING POLICY

The following guidelines will be used by sports which have to use cutting to maintain workable numbers for their programs:

1. Candidates are expected to be present when tryouts begin and during all tryout sessions. Tryouts may be extended for students that miss tryout sessions due to illness, injury or other circumstances at the discretion of the coach and athletic director.
2. A minimum of a 5-day tryout will be given to all candidates in the overall program. Within that 5-day tryout, the coach will have the flexibility to move candidates to different levels within the program. If athletes are cut from a team, they may try out for a non-cutting sport (football, cross country, winter and spring track).
3. For fall sports, freshmen may try out for non-cutting sports until the end of the first week of school. For winter and spring sports, freshmen have two weeks to go out for a non-cutting sport.
4. *Head Coaches for each program will determine specific criteria for the evaluation and selection of team members at each level prior to the tryout period.* These criteria will include attendance during tryouts, cooperative attitude, effort and skills relevant to their sport.
5. A student who is cut will be notified through one-on-one, personal contact with a member of the coaching staff.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest a passing grade, and full credit, in the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses. A transfer student may not gain academic eligibility if he/she was not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving schools eligibility standards.

A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses which would provide Carnegie Units equivalent to four traditional year long major English courses.

To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.

An athlete who meets the minimum standard after the start of a season is not eligible to participate during that season; exceptions may be allowed for non-cutting teams with the approval of the principal, athletic director and coach and guidance counselor.

M.I.A.A. State Rules Concerning Eligibility

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.) is the official organization in Massachusetts for regulating and conducting athletic events, contests, and tournaments among member schools. The M.I.A.A. is also responsible for the formulation and enforcement of the rules relative to the eligibility of athletes for participation in inter-school athletic events. In pursuing these commitments the association annually publishes an updated handbook of rules and regulations governing athletics (the Blue Book). The following is a summary of the eligibility rules found in the Blue Book. Please note that this is not intended to be a complete or detailed presentation of all the M.I.A.A. rules. Copies of the Blue Book are available for reference in the offices of the Principal and Athletic Director, *and at miaa.net.*

Important MIAA Rules Regarding Eligibility include:

Students are ineligible if any of the following apply:

1. If you transferred from one high school to another, *you must meet with the Athletic Director prior to participation in the athletic program at Falmouth High School.*
2. If, since you entered grade 9, twelve (12) consecutive sport seasons have passed.
3. If your nineteenth birthday came before September 1 of the present school year.
4. If you have graduated from any secondary school.
5. If you use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids or any controlled substance from the first allowable day of fall practice through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later.
6. If you are put out of a game for fighting or flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct. As a result of such behavior, you will not be eligible to play in the next scheduled game. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of threatening, abusive or obscene language. If it is the second time during the same season, then you are disqualified from any further participation in the sport or sport season for one full year.
7. If you physically assault an official. As a result of such action, you will be ineligible for sports for one full year.
8. If you willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempt to injure an opponent. Such behavior will cause you to be immediately excluded from participation in that sport for one year.

Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members:

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Any student who violates this standard shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport.

Any waiver request to the Bona Fide Team Member Rule must be supported by the Athletic Director and coach, and approved by the MIAA. Students must notify the coach and Athletic Director of any request for a waiver to the Bona Fide Team Member Rule prior to the start of the season.

DISCIPLINE

1. Hazing

Hazing - willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person.

Hazing carries possible penalties as described below. The following sections from the Massachusetts General Laws concern the crime of hazing:

Section 17: “Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forcing calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substances, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.”

Section 18: “Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. A fine of not more than one thousand dollars shall punish whoever fails to report such crime.”

Penalties can range in nature from parent conferences; suspensions from athletic participation; up to, and including, exclusion from school. All hazing allegations will be reported to the police.

2. Substance Abuse: Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

From the first allowable day of fall practice through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later; a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. Nor may students violate the substance abuse standards set forth in the Falmouth High School Student Handbook.

First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. Students are expected to attend all athletic practices during the suspension period, but

may not participate in scrimmages or games. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season. The Principal is the final appeal on conditions regarding a student's eligibility for participation in Falmouth High School athletic programs.

In addition to the suspension from 25% of the interscholastic contests, the student and his/her parent(s) must meet with the athletic director, coach and other school staff as appropriate to discuss any additional conditions which must be met before a student may return to full athletic participation.

Second and Subsequent Violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season in which the violation occurs. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

Note: The "Memorandum of Understanding" with the Police Department will be followed for all violations involving alcohol and other drugs. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

3. **Attendance at Practices and Games:**

a. Unexcused absence (defined as any absence not verified by the coach or administration prior to the absence, with the exception of emergency situations where prior notification could not occur) from practice or games will result in:

1st offense: one game suspension

2nd offense: two game or two week suspension, whichever is greater.

3rd offense: removal from the team.

b. Athletes who do not follow practice rules or are disruptive during practice may be dismissed from that session at the coach's discretion.

c. Continuous disruptions during practice sessions may result in a report to the athletic director, parent, and possible suspension or removal from the team after following due process.

4. **Code of Discipline (Code of Conduct)**

The violations of the Code of Discipline enumerated in the school handbook describe the school-related disciplinary offenses for which a student may be subject to detention, suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion. Note that the school has the authority to impose such discipline when violations of the Code of Discipline occur:

- while the student is on school grounds (with the exception of discipline based upon a felony charge pursuant to M.G.L. c 71 § 37H1/2 – see below)
- during a school sponsored activity;
- while on school-provided transportation en route to or from a school or school-sponsored activity (field trip); or
- while walking to and from school or waiting for or riding on public transportation to and from school.

Note: School Suspension: If an athlete is suspended for violation of school rules, he or she will be ineligible when that suspension becomes effective, i.e. immediately upon the administrative decision to suspend.

5. Attendance in School:

- a. Any student who has been absent from school is not eligible to participate in a practice or play in a game scheduled for the same day. Students are considered absent if they report to school after 8:30 AM.
- b. This ruling may be waived in individual cases by the Athletic Director or Principal if in his or her judgment, the absence was for “good reason,” not the result of carelessness or willful disregard of responsibility.
- c. A student dismissed early from school is not eligible to participate in a practice or game without permission from the Athletic Director or Principal. Students dismissed due to illness will not be allowed to participate in practices or games on that day.

CAPTAINS

- Team captains (both in and out of season) are expected to be appropriate role models for all team members. They are required to demonstrate positive leadership qualities and the ideals of sportsmanship and to use good judgment in their decision making. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in their loss of captaincy.
- Coaches will work with the Athletic Director to determine the number of captains needed for their team and the procedure that will be used to select captains. Specific duties and responsibilities of captains are determined by coaches and reviewed by the Athletic Director.
- A student-athlete (in or out of season) who commits a violation of the policies in the Athletic Handbook, including but not limited to the substance abuse section, will risk his/her eligibility to be a captain for a period up to one calendar year. The Athletic Director with input from the coach will be responsible for decisions regarding the eligibility of a student-athlete for captain.

TRAVEL TO ATHLETIC CONTESTS

All team members and coaches are expected to travel in school-provided transportation to away athletic contests. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in advance.

- Only team personnel (players, coaches, trainers, and team managers) will be allowed on team buses unless otherwise directed by the Athletic Director.
- All team members who ride to an away game on the bus must return on the bus unless the coach has approved parents' written permission.
- Athletes will be released to travel with their parents or their adult designees only. Prior approval must be obtained in writing from the Athletic Director to release students with parental designees.
- Students are not allowed to drive to away games without special permission from the Athletic Director and Principal.

VACATION POLICY

The coaches and staff of Falmouth High School realize how important the time spent with family is for our students. For this reason, family vacations that fall during a school vacation period are understandable disruptions to the program. Generally, the expectation is that varsity athletes will not go on vacation during their season.

As coaches plan practices and prepare game lineups, it is important to know which athletes will be available. For this reason, we expect all athletes to speak to the coach prior to the season about their intent to go on a family vacation.

All athletes should be aware that if they leave the team for a family vacation they obviously run the risk of losing their position. There is no guarantee that the athlete who has left the team for a vacation will continue to play in the exact position that he/she left. The athlete who took the place of the vacationing athlete should be given priority for the starting position.

Vacations other than family vacations should be cleared with the coach and athletic director. Athletes who miss practice and games for vacations other than family or those approved by the athletic director run the risk of being dropped from the team.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS/MEDICAL CLEARANCE

All students must pass a physical examination prior to participation in High School Athletics. A physical exam covers the student for 13 months from the exam date. A student's eligibility will terminate once a physical has reached the 13 month limit. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Physician, Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner. (MIAA Rule 56.1)

Coaches will be provided with an eligibility list, which will be updated as needed. Ineligible athletes are **NOT** allowed to participate in tryouts, practices or games.

Any athlete who sees a doctor for either an injury or illness must bring a note stating he/she may return to athletic participation. The note must be given to the Athletic Trainer or Athletic Director prior to the athlete's return. MIAA RETURN TO ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION forms are available from the Athletic Office.

All athletes returning from injury will be functionally tested by the Athletic Trainer prior to their return. The Athletic Trainer reserves the right to restrict or limit an athlete's participation based on these tests, regardless of the return note. Occasionally, an athlete with a return note from a doctor may be held out of participation for further recovery. The Athletic Trainer, in conjunction with the Primary Care Physician, has the final determination on the return of any athlete. In most cases, an injured athlete will be required to participate in a full team practice prior to returning to full game participation.

MDPH Prerequisites for Student Participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity

In addition to a current physical examination, the Department of Public Health requires that each student and their parents complete MDPH approved training in the prevention and recognition of sports related head injuries. This training is available from the National Federation of State High School Associations Concussions in Sports – What You Need to Know at <http://www.nfhslearn.com>.

Prior to a student's participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity, the parent and student must also provide to the Athletic Director a completed *Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form*.

INJURY REPORTING/SCHOOL ACCIDENT INSURANCE POLICY

All injuries must be reported to the coach and Athletic Trainer within 24 hours of occurrence. Serious injuries requiring EMS or hospitalization require notification of the Athletic Director. The Athletic Trainer will complete the injury/accident report form and submit it to the school nurse. A copy of the report and information regarding the School Accident Insurance policy will be mailed to the parent or guardian.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

All equipment and the full uniform must be returned in good condition after the season is over or the athlete will be expected to pay to replace it. A student shall be unable to participate in another sport until all equipment and uniforms are returned. Report cards may be withheld until this obligation is met.

VOLUNTEERS

All individuals who volunteer in the Athletic Department must complete a CORI form. This includes parents that agree to help transport students, other than their own child, to or from athletic contests.

All volunteer coaches must complete CORI form and meet with the Athletic Director prior to assisting with any athletic teams.

POLICY TO ADDRESS SUSPECTED SPORTS RELATED HEAD INJURY/CONCUSSION

The Falmouth School Committee has adopted this policy to address the identification and proper handling of suspected head injury for students in grades 6-12 who are participating in school-sponsored extracurricular athletic activities in accordance with Mass. Gen. L. c. 111, Section 222 and accompanying regulations (105 CMR 201. et seq.) (“Regulations”). Affirmation of an Interim Policy was provided to the Department of Public Health on school letterhead in January 2012, with affirmation of the Final Policy to be provided by March 1, 2012. Review and affirmation of the Policy will again be provided no later than September 30, 2013, and bi-annually thereafter.

I. Definitions

The definitions of terms used in this policy are those set forth in the Regulations at 105 CMR 201.005. The following are selected for reprinting here:

Coach means an employee or volunteer responsible for organizing and supervising student athletes to teach them the fundamental skills of Extracurricular Athletic Activities. The term coach includes both head coaches and assistant coaches (and per the definition of Extracurricular Athletic Activity below, marching band directors).

Concussion means a complex disturbance in the brain function due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury.

Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the director of coach, athletic director or band leader. (Among the examples listed in the definition are cheer leading and marching band.)

Head Injury means a direct or indirect trauma to the head including a concussion or traumatic brain injury.

Second impact syndrome means a potentially lethal condition that can occur when a person sustains a head injury prior to the complete healing of a previous brain injury causing deregulation of cerebral blood flow with subsequent vascular engorgement.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) means a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. TBI may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head. TBI includes, but is not limited to, a concussion.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

Athletic Director

The Athletic Director shall be responsible for the general implementation of this policy and any accompanying procedures. These responsibilities include:

1. Supporting and enforcing protocols, documentation, training and reporting requirements.
2. Supervising, reviewing and properly distributing all documentation received.
3. Reviewing the policy every two years and recommending changes and/or updates to the school committee for adoption.
4. Reviewing and recommending updated training programs and student/ parent handbooks at least once every two years.
5. Reviewing all *Pre-Participation Forms* and forwarding to the school nurse those forms that indicate a history of head injury.
6. Coordinating outreach to parents who have not provided required pre-participation forms and documentation.

School Nurse and other School Based Staff

As reflected throughout this policy, various members of the school staff play an important role in implementation of this policy. The School Nurse's role is particularly key, involving responsibilities for:

1. Reviewing or having the school physician review completed *Pre-Participation Forms* forwarded to her by the athletic director.
2. Communicating with coaches regarding a student's history of head injury.
3. Following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student's participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities.
4. Reviewing *Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* which a parent submits as a result of a head injury occurring outside of extracurricular activities, with follow-up reporting requirements outlined herein.

Coaches

As reflected in this policy, coaches also have a key role in its implementation. In addition to their other responsibilities listed herein, all coaches are required to instruct students in form, technique and skills that minimize athletic-related head injury and are required to discourage and prohibit students from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health and safety of a student, including using a helmet or any other equipment as a weapon.

Students

Students are expected to adhere to skills and instructions designed to minimize athletic related injuries. Students who engage in unreasonably dangerous behavior while participating in Extracurricular Athletic Activities may be excluded from the privilege of further participation and, further, may be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the code of conduct.

III. Training

The following personnel, both those employed and those serving in a volunteer capacity, shall be required to participate in an annual training approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDHP) in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related head injury, including second impact syndrome: coaches (as noted above, this term includes marching band directors), certified athletic trainers, school physicians, school nurses, Athletic Director. In addition, students who wish to participate in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity and their parents shall be required to participate in such training annually

The trainings available for school staff, parents/guardians and student athletes are MDPH Approved Training On-line courses annually listed below.

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports On-Line Training Program](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html) http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

[National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports – What you Need to Know](http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000) <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000>

The training materials are available at (www.falmouth.k12.ma.us and hard copies are available in the athletic department office, the school nurse office and the athletic handbook.

Individuals who are required to participate in the training must submit documentation verifying their completion of the training on an annual basis to the Athletic Director.

IV. Prerequisites for Student Participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity

Prior to a student beginning (or continuing) participation in any Extracurricular Athletic Activity, whether involving tryouts, practices, contests, or performances, the following must take place;

1. Parents and students must submit to the Athletic Director a certification that they have completed the training requirements described in Section III above. Once submitted, the certification is valid for one school year.
2. Parents and students must submit to the Athletic Director documentation of an annual physical examination for the student providing medical clearance for the student to participate in the relevant Extracurricular Athletic Activity. Physical examinations must have occurred within the past 12 to 13 months. If the student's physical exam expires during the season of participation, the student must submit an updated exam in order to continue participating. The Athletic Director will forward all exam reports to the School Nurse, who shall maintain them as part of the student health record and shall notify a student in the event his/her physical exam expires during the season of participation.
3. Prior to a student's participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity, the parent and student must provide to the Athletic Director a completed form for *Pre-Participation Head Injury/ Concussion Reporting For Extracurricular Activities* ("*Pre-Participation Form*") which shall include:
 - a. A comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history, any history regarding head, face or cervical spine injury and/or any history of co-existent concussion injuries; and
 - b. Signatures of both the parent and the student;

4. During the season of participation if a student sustains a head injury outside of the extracurricular activity, his/her parent is required to complete and submit *Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* to the Athletic Director.
5. The Athletic Director will forward to the coach the *Pre-Participation Forms* and all *Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season* for each student member of that coach's team. In addition, the Athletic Director will forward the *Pre-Participation Forms* indicating a history of head injury and all *Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season* to the school nurse, who will consult with the school physician and athletic staff regarding whether the student will be allowed to begin (or continue) to participate and if so, whether limitations may apply.

In the event a parent and/or student has not provided the documentation set forth above to the Athletic Director in a timely manner, school staff will make two attempts to contact the parent using the district's typical communication methods (e.g., email, first class mail or telephone). The student will be ineligible to begin (or continue if applicable) participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity until all documentation has been received and reviewed by appropriate school personnel.

V. Removal Due to Head Injury and Protocols for Re-entry

Any student who sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, during participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity shall be removed from the activity immediately and may not return to the activity that day even if the condition seems to resolve itself. If there is an athletic trainer on site, the coach must immediately report the suspected injury to the trainer or nurse for a medical assessment. If no trainer or school nurse is on-site, the coach is responsible for notifying the student's parents and contacting EMS for emergency service and transport to a local hospital if in their reasonable judgment such intervention is appropriate.

In all circumstances, the coach must complete a *Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* and follow all Reporting Requirements outlined below in Section VII.

Any student removed from an Extracurricular Athletic Activity due suspected head injury must provide a *Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form* completed by a licensed medical professional (physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, certified athletic trainer in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) to the Athletic Director prior to the student's return to normal physical activities (including physical education class). The Athletic Director will consult with the School Nurse in reviewing such forms if appropriate. In the event a student exhibits symptoms of head injury following return to participation, the coach will immediately remove the student from the activity and will inform the Athletic Trainer, School Nurse and/or the parents in order to initiate further consultation.

VI. Graduated Reentry Plan and Medical Clearance following Diagnosis of Concussion

In the event the student has been diagnosed with a concussion, the student may not resume full participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities until he/she has participated in a graduated re-entry plan and provided a completed *Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form* to the Athletic Director.

In addition, school personnel, including but not limited to teachers, school nurse, and certified athletic trainer, along with parents shall develop a written graduated entry plan for return to academics and other school based activities, including Extracurricular Athletic Activities. Accommodations, may include, as appropriate: provision for physical or cognitive rest; graduated return to classroom studies; estimated time intervals for resuming activities; assessments by the school nurse; periodic medical assessment by a physician until the student is authorized to full classroom and extracurricular activities. The school physician and/or student's physician may be consulted as appropriate in devising the graduated entry plan.

VII. Additional Communication and Reporting

The Athletic Director shall disseminate to each coach copies of the completed *Pre-Participation Form* for each member of that coach's team or student group. The Athletic Director shall ensure that the nurse receives a copy and reviews any forms that indicate a history of head injury, with review by the school physician and certified athletic trainer if appropriate. The Athletic Director shall also ensure proper dissemination and review of any *Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form*.

All coaches are required to report any circumstances in which the student under their supervision was removed from participation for suspected head injury, suspected concussion, or loss of consciousness and the nature of the suspected injury to the student's parent in person or by telephone immediately after the competition or practice, with written confirmation to the parent by paper or electronic format no later than the end of the next business day. The Coach must also notify the Athletic Director and school nurse of the removal from play and the nature of the suspected injury no later than the end of the next business day. The coach is responsible for ensuring that a *Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* has been completed and provided to the Athletic Director, parent, certified athletic trainer and school nurse.

The School Nurse shall inform the principal and guidance counselor of the injury so that an appropriate graduated reentry plan can be initiated.

VIII. Maintenance of Records and Confidentiality

Copies of all documentation received by the school department under this policy will be maintained for a minimum of three years. Such documentation includes Verification of Training Completion, which will be kept by the Athletic Director. The School Nurse shall maintain copies of *Annual Physical Exams, Pre-Participation Forms, Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season, Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season, Department Post Sports Related Head Injury and Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms*, and any *Graduated Reentry Plans* that may be necessary.

Medical information received by the district in implementing this policy is part of the student health record and may be disclosed only as authorized by the laws governing student records. Generally, authorized school personnel who work *directly with* the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity will have access to the information on a need to know basis. Authorized school personnel should be instructed not to disclose the information to others. Notwithstanding these limitations, there may be times when school officials may or must disclose health or related information to others in order to protect a student's health or safety.

IX. Notification of Policy Information to Parents and Students

The Athletic Director in consultation with the Principal shall disseminate to parents and students on annual basis information regarding this policy, including but not limited to:

1. Pre-requisites for students to participate in Extracurricular Athletic Activities, including opportunities for students and parents to fulfill their obligations to participate in training under this policy;
2. Requirements for parents to report to the Athletic Director a head injury occurring outside of school;
3. Procedures for notifying parents of a student's removal from play due to head injury;
4. Protocols for medical clearance prior to return to participation;
5. Contact information for key personnel.

In addition, information regarding this policy shall be incorporated into the Student Handbook. Copies of forms referenced in this policy may be obtained from the Athletic Department or the nurse's office.

School staff will work with parents of limited English proficiency to facilitate effective notice of this policy and effective communication regarding suspected head injury. In the event an interpreter is needed, parents and/or staff should contact the Principal's office.

X. Consequences

The Falmouth Public Schools takes the safety of student athletes seriously. All members of the school staff are expected to follow the policies and protocols set forth herein and in Massachusetts law to support the health and safety of students who participate in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. The underlying philosophy of these policies is "when in doubt, sit them out". Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games.

If students or parents have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Superintendent or Principal.

Parents are also expected to do their part in supporting the health and safety of students by ensuring that all documentation required by this policy is submitted in a timely manner.

Each student must also adhere to the rules of safe play as instructed by their coaches. Students must also immediately inform a coach or other adult in the event the student believes he/she may have been injured during an activity. No student will be permitted to participate in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity unless the student and his/her parents have complied with their obligations under this policy.

CROSS REF: Mass. Gen. L. ch. 111, Section 222
105 CMR 201.000 et seq.
603 CMR 23.07 (access to student records)
Student Handbook Policies

FORMS: *Pre-Participation Head Injury/ Concussion Reporting For Extracurricular Activities Form*
Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form
Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form

APPROVED: 2/28/12

SOURCE: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 Executive Office of Health and Human Services
 Department of Public Health
 250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

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GOVERNOR
TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
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COMMISSIONER

**PRE-PARTICIPATION HEAD
 INJURY/CONCUSSION REPORTING FORM
 FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

This form should be completed by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). It must be submitted to the Athletic Director, or official designated by the school, *prior* to the start of each season a student plans to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity.

Student's Name	Sex	Date of Birth	Grade
School		Sport(s)	
Home Address			Telephone

Has student ever experienced a traumatic head injury (a blow to the head)? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, when? Dates (month/year): _____

Has student ever received medical attention for a head injury? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, when? Dates (month/year): _____

If yes, please describe the circumstances:

Was student diagnosed with a concussion? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, when? Dates (month/year): _____

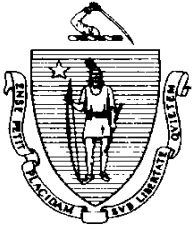
Duration of Symptoms (such as *headache, difficulty concentrating, fatigue*) for most recent concussion: _____

Parent/Guardian:

Name: _____ Signature/Date _____
 (Please print)

Student Athlete:

Signature/Date _____



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 Executive Office of Health and Human Services
 Department of Public Health

**POST SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURY
 MEDICAL CLEARANCE AND
 AUTHORIZATION FORM**

This medical clearance should be only be provided *after* a graduated return to play plan has been completed and student has been symptom free at all stages. ***The student must be completely symptom free at rest and during exertion prior to returning to full participation in extracurricular athletic activities.***

Student's Name	Sex	Date of Birth	Grade
----------------	-----	---------------	-------

Date of injury: _____ Nature and extent of injury: _____

Symptoms (check all that apply):

- Nausea or vomiting
- Headaches
- Light/noise sensitivity
- Dizziness/balance problems
- Double/blurred vision
- Fatigue
- Feeling sluggish/"in a fog"
- Change in sleep patterns
- Memory problems
- Difficulty concentrating
- Irritability/emotional ups and downs
- Sad or withdrawn
- Other

Duration of Symptom(s): _____ Diagnosis: Concussion Other: _____

If concussion diagnosed, date student completed graduated return to play plan without recurrent symptoms: _____

Prior concussions (number, approximate dates): _____

Name of Physician or Practitioner: _____

- Physician
- Certified Athletic Trainer
- Nurse Practitioner
- Neuropsychologist

Address: _____ Phone number: _____

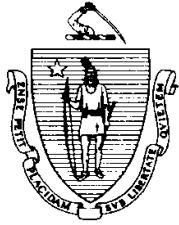
Physician providing consultation/coordination (if not person completing this form): _____

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE NAMED STUDENT FOR RETURN TO EXTRACURRICULAR ATHLETIC ACTIVITY.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Note: This form may only be completed by: a duly licensed physician; a certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician; a duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; a duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
 Executive Office of Health and Human Services
 Department of Public Health
 250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

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 COMMISSIONER

**REPORT OF HEAD INJURY DURING
 SPORTS SEASON**

This form is to report head injuries (other than minor cuts or bruises) that occur during a sports season. It should be returned to the athletic director or staff member designated by the school and reviewed by the school nurse.

For Coaches: Please complete this form immediately after the game or practice for head injuries that result in the student being removed from play due to a *possible* concussion.

For Parents/Guardians: Please complete this form if your child has a head injury outside of school related extracurricular athletic activities.

Student's Name	Sex	Date of Birth	Grade
School		Sport(s)	
Home Address			Telephone

Date of injury: _____

Did the incident take place during an extracurricular activity? ____ Yes ____ No

If so, where did the incident take place? _____

Please describe nature and extent of injuries to student:

For Parents/Guardians:

Did the student receive medical attention? yes____ no____

If yes, was a concussion diagnosed? yes____ no____

I HEREBY STATE THAT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, MY ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE COMPLETE AND CORRECT.

Please circle one: Coach or Marching Band Director

Parent/Guardian

Name of Person Completing Form (please print): _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Falmouth High School
Permission Form and Athletic Handbook Parent/Student Agreement

I hereby give my son/daughter _____ permission to participate in the following interscholastic sport _____ at Falmouth High School. I give my consent for him/her to accompany the team(s) on out of town trips. I also give my permission for designated physicians, emergency medical technicians, school trainers or team coaches to render medical aide to him/her in the event of an injury or emergency.

I understand that participation in the athletic program is governed by the rules and policies set forth in the Student Athletic Handbook, including the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations regarding sports related head injuries and concussions. By signing this form, students and a parent/guardian agree to complete the required training as described in this handbook.

I further agree that my son/daughter is responsible for the return of all equipment or uniforms issued to him/her by the school and that the loss or damage to any such equipment or uniform will be paid for by him/her at the present replacement cost.

We, the undersigned, have received a copy of the Falmouth High School Athletic Handbook, have read it carefully, and agree to comply with its rules and consequences, as well as, all team rules set forth by the coach for each season of competition.

Student (Print Name) Student Signature Date

Parent/Guardian (Print Name) Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Emergency Contact Information

Important: Please complete. This sheet will go with the coaches to all athletic events.

SPORT: _____ **Season:** _____

Athlete's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Home Address _____ Home Phone _____

1. Parent/Guardian _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

2. Parent/Guardian _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

The following persons are authorized to act for the guardian(s) in the event of illness or injury.

1. Name _____ Phone _____

2. Name _____ Phone _____

Name of Family Physician _____ Phone _____

Health Insurance Co. _____ Policy # _____

Name of Policy Holder _____

My child has the following medical condition(s) that may require immediate attention:
Please circle and complete if applicable:

Allergy to _____ Does this allergy require an Epi-Pen or Epi-Pen JR? _____

Asthma _____ Does child use an inhaler? _____

Diabetes _____

Seizures _____

Wears Contact Lenses _____

Other Medical Concern(s): _____

The coach will keep the following information. In the event of serious injury, the coach will make every effort to contact you as quickly as possible.

In emergency medical situations I give my permission for my son/daughter to be treated by an attending physician.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date