

Grant Park Middle School



Extracurricular Handbook 2025 - 2026

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SECTION I

Athletic Philosophy

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. It is sincerely hoped that this handbook will always provide consistency and equality within the entire program when considering each and every student, and meet the varied and changing needs of our students.

SECTION II

Winning and Participation

The Grant Park Schools believe that participation and winning are both important elements of competition at every grade level. It is also appropriate that individual coaches should be given the freedom within the intent and guidelines of this policy to use their discretion in rewarding exceptional player effort, attitude, behavior and attendance at practices and contests by granting additional playing time to deserving athletes.

However, it must be recognized that success and playing time tend to go hand in hand. Therefore, one of the goals of any Grant Park Middle School coach shall be to find playing time for all athletes whenever possible. The disbursement and amount of playing time will depend based on the grade level of competition.

Sixth Grade Athletics-The goal of the sixth grade program is to allow maximum participation that is reasonably possible, for each student during regular season play. The main objective will be to participate and use competition as a learning tool.

Seventh Grade Athletics-The seventh grade program begins to take a competitive approach toward athletics. The main objective will focus on being competitive with other IESA schools. Participation time will be a consideration, but will not be focused on throughout each contest.

Eighth Grade Athletics-The Grant Park eighth grade athletic programs have a highly competitive approach toward competition with other IESA schools. Participation time is not guaranteed for all participants.

Tryouts

Should the interested number of student-athletes exceed a number that is manageable and will detract from the athletic experience, it may be necessary to reduce the number of athletes during the first weeks of the season. Criteria will be decided upon by the coaches and administrators. If tryouts are necessary, each student-athlete will be given an identification number at the beginning of tryouts. The final roster (posted with identification numbers) who made the team, will be posted once tryouts have been completed.

SECTION III

Athletic and Extracurricular Eligibility

Athletes must have a current physical (not exceeding 1 year), insurance, insurance waivers, Concussion form, Sports Done Right Contract/extracurricular handbook signature pages and participation fee turned in before they are allowed to participate.

Students wishing to participate in extracurricular activities shall notify the school and/or coach of their desire to be included in participation in the first week of practice. This includes individuals who are unable to attend for various reasons: such as vacation, other obligations or injury.

In order to be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, including Math Team, Spelling, and Music/Chorus Contests, a student must maintain ALL passing grades for the **Semester** (A,B,C or D). Any student-participant failing to meet these academic criteria shall be suspended from the activity for one week or until the specified academic criteria are met, whichever is longer. A student suspended due to academic eligibility for three weeks during the extracurricular season which they are participating in, will be dropped from that activity. Eligibility checks will be performed on a weekly basis.

SECTION IV

Parental Behavior Guidelines

We strive to maintain pride, school spirit, and support of the school, players, and coaches.

The Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) and Grant Park Middle School support good citizenship and sportsmanship from coaches, participants and spectators.

We would like all adults to understand that their behavior at games is a large part of the entire Grant Park persona. It is our hope that our parent/fan behavior will not in any way cause embarrassment to Grant Park. In this way all of us can help, in our own way, create the spirit of Grant Park that we can be proud of.

Out of respect for all our participants, parent/coach discussions should be limited to concerns that they have with their son or daughter or general concerns of appropriate matters. Discussion of other participant's playing time or ability should not be a concern that is addressed to the coach.

SECTION V

Student-Athlete Behavior Guidelines

Social Media

Student-Athletes should be concerned with any behavior that might embarrass themselves, their families, their teams, their community and/or Grant Park Middle School. This includes any activities conducted online through social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, podcasting, blog sites, YouTube and/or chat rooms among others).

Before participating in any online community, understand that anything posted online is available to anyone in the world. Any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control at the moment it is placed online, even if you limit access to your site.

Any depictions of conduct in violation of any of the Grant Park Middle School Extracurricular handbook policies or laws found on a student-athletes website or posted by a student-athlete will be subject to a full investigation and possible disciplinary action.

Coaches, administrators, parents and fellow students can and do monitor these websites regularly.

Participant Expectations

Rules

I. In accordance with our beliefs of good sportsmanship and the Athletic/Student Handbook and Athletic Code, we hold our participants at a high standard. Any individual that is found to participate in acts that go against this will be dealt with accordingly. Such acts include disrespectful conduct (i.e. during school, out of school or in participation), use of tobacco, alcohol and/or illegal drugs, or other illegal activities. Consequences could include but are not limited to suspension/expulsion from participation.

Note Regarding Referral Process and Due Process Procedure: Violations reported to the middle school administration will be investigated. If a student is found to be in violation, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken and the consequence will be determined by the administration.

II. Athletes must, in season, clear any multiple sport participation with the head coach and athletic director.

III. Athletes leaving on vacation should notify the coach in writing as soon as possible so that necessary actions may be taken. Violation of this will be left to the coach's discretion.

IV. Travel to and from contests will be on school-authorized vehicles only. Parents must sign a release form supplied by the coach to transport their child to/from a contest. Special situations will be handled as they arise.

V. Students must be in attendance at school on the day of a contest at least half of the day. Special situations will be handled as they arise.

VI. Any other situation that may occur that is not covered in this document may be dealt with as deemed appropriate by the coach, athletic director, or school administration.

VII. The interscholastic program strives to create pride in you and the programs you are part of. To show our pride for Grant Park Middle School our student athletes will be required to dress professionally when competing at away venues. Away game attire should consist of dress pants (khakis), collared shirt (polo shirt), NO JEANS. Students who do not dress professionally for an away game will be handled by the coach's discretion.

SECTION VI

Awards

Awards for interscholastic completion are to be earned. The coach or sponsor may award an individual whenever he/she feels the individual has made significant contributions to the squad.

Awards will be presented by issuing of participation certificates, numbers, letters and/or pins in the respective area of participation. The Dragon Award is awarded to one 8th grade boy and one 8th grade girl who participates all three years (6-8) in three of the following sports: Softball (girls), Baseball (boys), Girls Basketball, Boys Basketball, Cheerleading, Girls Volleyball, and Track and Field. Highest GPA is used as the tiebreaker. In the event that we do not have anyone that qualifies due to lack of participation the Dragon Award will not be handed out.

The Middle School awards recognition program will be at the end of the school year.

Communication Procedures

We try very hard at Grant Park Middle School to communicate with our students and our parents. However, there can be occasions where extra communication needs to exist in order for all parties to have a clear understanding of a particular situation. The following guidelines have been established in order to effectively and concisely handle these types of situations.

To protect the productivity and respect during communications with coaches, certain tense situations should be discussed at another time. Many times IMMEDIATELY following a competition or practice is not the best time to communicate with a coach. Please feel free to schedule a meeting with the coach and others that may need to be involved to keep the lines of communication respectful and productive.

- Contact the Coach of the team.
- If not resolved, contact the Athletic Director for a meeting with both the Coach and Athletic Director.
- If not resolved, contact the Principal for a meeting with the Principal, Athletic Director, and Coach.
- If not resolved, contact the Superintendent for a meeting.

Overnight Trip Request and Procedures

Grant Park School District requires prior approval for any student-athlete or coach participating in an event that is deemed necessary to have overnight accommodations. Specific consent forms, as well as other required documentation, must be presented to the Athletic Director. In addition, the Athletic Director, Principal, and Superintendent must approve the request and will only consider when all documentation has been provided.

Sports Done Right Contract – Athlete

We recognize that healthy sports experiences require commitment from student-athletes. This compact is based on the District's Athletic Program's Mission and Values.

- I will exhibit good sportsmanship and show respect for everyone associated with the program, including teammates, coaches, support staff, opponents and officials.
- I understand the value of competition-without-conflict and how to handle both success and failure with dignity.
- I understand that academics should be placed first and appreciate the opportunity presented by extracurricular activities.
- I will uphold substance abuse policies endorsed and enforced by the school and supported by the community.
- I will attempt to focus on lifetime health and fitness habits of activities and good nutrition.
- I appreciate sports opportunities regardless of my degree of success, level of skill or time on the field.
- I will respect coaches and appreciate the importance of contributing to the team and its success, even when there may be differences of opinion.
- I understand that playing sports is a privilege and in doing so I will not waste my time or others time by being discourteous.
- I understand the highly competitive nature of both academic and athletic scholarship.

I recognize that school sports experiences can contribute greatly to the values and ethics of each player, and that positive sports experiences teach important life skills, encourage teamwork, help shape character and citizenship to encourage an active lifestyle.

Sports Done Right Contract – Parents

We recognize that healthy sports experiences require support and commitment from parents. We agree to honor the District's Athletic Program's Mission and Values in support of our student-participant and a positive learning environment.

- We will give consistent encouragement and support to our children regardless of the degree of success, the level of skill or time on the field.
- We will stress the importance of respect for coaches through discussions with our children, and highlight the critical nature of contributing to the team and its success.
- We will attend school meetings at the outset of sports seasons to meet coaches and school officials and learn first-hand about expectations for participation in interscholastic athletics.
- We will serve as role models, see the "big picture" and support all programs and athletes.
- We agree to abide by the rules guiding the conduct of sports, modeling the principles of their student-athletes.
- We will ensure a balance in student-athlete's lives, encouraging participation in multiple sports and activities with academics placed first and foremost.
- We will leave coaching to the coaches. We will avoid putting pressure on our children about playing time and performance.

We recognize that school sports experiences can contribute greatly to the values and ethics of each player, and that positive sports experiences teach important life skills, encourage teamwork, help shape character and citizenship and encourage an active lifestyle.

Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one of more of the following	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Headaches ● “Pressure in head” ● Nausea or vomiting ● Neck pain ● Balance problems or dizziness ● Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision ● Sensitivity to light or noise ● Feeling sluggish or slowed down ● Feeling foggy or groggy ● Drowsiness ● Change in sleep patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amnesia ● “Don’t feel right” ● Fatigue or low energy ● Sadness ● Nervousness or anxiety ● Irritability ● More emotional ● Confusion ● Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays) ● Repeating the same question/comment
Signs observed by teammates, parents, and coaches include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appears dazed ● Vacant facial expression ● Confused about assignment ● Forgets plays ● Is unsure of game, score, or opponent ● Moves clumsily or displays in coordination ● Answers questions slowly ● Slurred speech ● Shows behavior or personality changes ● Can’t recall events prior to hit ● Can’t recall events after hit ● Seizures or convulsions ● Any change in typical behavior or personality ● Loses consciousness 	

Concussion Information Sheet Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport Document created 7/1/2011, Reviewed 4/24/2013, 7/2015, 7/2017, 6/2018

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key to student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion.

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The Return-to-Play Policy of the IESA and IHSA requires athletes to provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest. In accordance with state law, all schools are required to follow this policy.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Student/Parent Consent and Acknowledgements

By signing this form, we acknowledge we have been provided the information regarding **concussions**.

Student

Student Name (Print): _____ Grade: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent or Legal Guardian

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Each year IESA member schools are required to keep a signed Acknowledgement and Consent form and a current Pre-participation Physical Examination on file for all student athletes.

Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport Document created 7/1/2011, Reviewed 4/24/2013, 7/2015, 7/2017, 6/2018

***signature consent when you check the box on online registration**

Student Athletic / Extracurricular Code of Conduct

Grant Park Middle School and the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) believe that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. Students have a duty to assure that their teams promote the development of good character. This code of conduct applies to all students involved in interscholastic activities.

1. Students will support the value of academics and the education process.
2. Students will advocate, model and promote the development of good sportsmanship and character to include: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.
3. Students will respect peers, officials, opponents, parents and all others associated with the event.
4. Students will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
5. Students will model appropriate behavior at all times.

I have read and understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct and acknowledge that I may be disciplined if I violate any of its provisions.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

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2025-2026**

I have received a copy of the Grant Park Middle School Extracurricular Handbook and understand that participation is contingent upon meeting the requirements set forth in this document.

I also understand that I must obey the rules that are set forth in the GPMS Student Handbook.

I also acknowledge the concussion education initiative set forth by the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA).

I also acknowledge the Sports Done Right Contract (parent & athlete) and will abide by all rules as set forth in the contract.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

***signature consent when you check the box on online registration**