

Manchester Essex Regional School District

Coaches Information Guide, 2022-23

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Interscholastic athletics is a vital part of the entire educational program offered at Manchester Essex Regional High School. Educational athletics is viewed as an extension of the classroom that provides outstanding opportunities to teach life lessons. Through participation in such programs, student-athletes learn values and skills that help prepare them for the future. Leadership, goal setting, teamwork, perseverance, sacrifice, commitment, and overcoming adversity are inherent in the interscholastic framework and also supports the academic mission of MERSD. The athletic program shares with the other elements of a Manchester Essex education to contribute to the development of the whole child. The experiences through athletic participation is an essential part of a holistic approach encompassing the social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual elements of each student.

PRIOR TO COACHING CHECKLIST

Athletic Handbook: Read and fully understand the Athletic Handbook. The Athletic Handbook has been added to the end of this guide for your convenience.

Seasonal Employee Status: All coaches must sign the Manchester Essex seasonal employee form handed out at the pre-season coaches meeting.

Anti-Hazing Sign Off: All coaches must sign the Anti-Hazing form handed out at the pre-season coaches meeting.

CPR & First Aid Certification: All coaches are required by Massachusetts General Law to be certified in CPR & First Aid. Please be sure to hand in a copy of your certification to the Athletic Office. If your certification is set to expire mid-season, please make plans to renew your certification.

Coaches Education: All coaches must successfully fulfill the MIAA Coaches Education Requirement (Rule 33) in the MIAA Handbook.

Concussion Information: All coaches are required by law to complete the online concussion course at www.nfhslearn.com. Please hand in a copy of your completion certificate to the

Athletic Office. All athletes must be impact tested. Please see the Athletic Trainer if you have further questions.

Implicit Bias Course: All coaches are required by the MIAA to complete the online implicit bias course at www.nfhslearn.com. Please hand in a copy of your completion certificate to the Athletic Office.

CORI and Fingerprints: Must be on file with the Human Resources Department.

STUDENT ATHLETE REQUIREMENTS

Registration: Online registration is required prior to any athletic participation. Directions can be found on the [MERSD Athletics website](#). Coaches will receive a list from the athletic office with all eligible participants. If a student is not listed, they cannot participate. Late registrations will need clearance from the athletic office before they can participate. After the coach receives the initial list, the coach can request updated lists from the athletic office at any time.

Link to registration page: [Family ID](#)

User Fees: All student-athletes are required to pay a user fee in order to participate. The breakdown of the user fees can be found on our website. Payment can either be made online through our district website or in the form of a check made out to MERSD Athletics.

If families have financial hardship, their parents/guardians must apply for a waiver by filling out the Free or Reduced Lunch form.

Physicals: All student-athletes are required to have a current physical on file with the school's athletic office. A physical is valid for 13 months. We all need to be cognizant of this as athletes could become ineligible during the season if their physical is not updated in time. Families and coaches are notified once at the beginning of the season if their student-athlete(s)'s physical will expire mid-season. Updated physicals must be turned in directly to the athletic office. No coach shall ever have a physical or medical clearance note in their personal possession.

Academic Eligibility: All student-athletes are required to be in good academic standing in order to compete. To be in good standing, student-athletes must have a passing grade or higher in four, year-long core courses. The Athletic Director will notify coaches prior to the start of the season if any students are not academically eligible to compete. Academic eligibility can only be regained at the end of the quarter once grades are posted and report cards are sent to families. Fall academic eligibility is based on the final grades of the previous academic year.

ORGANIZATION OF TEAMS

Practice/Tryout and Gym Times: Send the athletic office your preferred practice schedules as soon as possible. If you need time in the gym, weight room, or cardio room, you must first contact the Athletic Director for approval. If you plan to be in the building or use the field during non-school hours (6am - 9pm Monday-Friday), a permit is required, so please let the athletic office know ahead of time. The athletic office will coordinate with the Facilities Manager and the business office to complete the permit.

All practice schedules will be posted to MA Scores. If you would like to change or cancel practice times, you must first contact the athletic office to confirm the change before notifying families and players.

Tryout Evaluation: All coaches must have a tryout evaluation form. This form should include the evaluation criteria coaches will refer to when making roster decisions. All coaches must turn in a sample of their tryout evaluation form to the athletic office prior to the start of tryouts.

Cuts: Any cuts to the program must be discussed with the Athletic Director in advance. All cuts should be done face to face with the student. Be kind, as this will be a very difficult conversation for the student. We know how hard it is to have to tell someone that they can no longer play; it is certainly harder to be the one being told. In most instances, this is the first time they are being told they can no longer do what they love. Coaches should give each student being cut from the program a piece of paper with the coach's contact information (at least an email address) and encourage the student to follow up if they have any more questions or concerns or just want to discuss further. When applicable, establish the role of the players, especially seniors, who's playing time will be limited ASAP.

Team Lists: The team list supplied by the athletic office should be updated by coaches to remove students who are cut or leave the sport. Lists should be submitted to the athletic office the moment roster decisions are made and after any changes are made throughout the season.

Rosters: Please provide the athletic office with a final roster no later than three (3) days before the first contest. Rosters should include all pertinent information such as name, uniform number, and position. ****IMPORTANT NOTE:** Seniors are not required to be placed on Varsity unless they have been a member of the program for a minimum of two years.

Captains: Captains are elected by team members and/or appointed by coaches. Prior to the selection, the coach will inform the team members of the selection criteria and obligations for the position. The coach will also provide the Athletic Director with this information in writing. The

position of team captain is one of honor, leadership and responsibility. As a result, students serving in that capacity are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school. Any leader that violates the MERHS Chemical Health policy is ineligible to serve as a captain for one year.

ORGANIZATION OF TEAM ACTIVITIES

Parent Email: All teams are required to send a parent email with the Athletic Director CC'd once teams are selected. The email should include contact information for coaches and communicate all expectations for the season. The email should also encourage families to sign up for MA Scores notifications so families know when there are changes to their child's practice/game schedule.

Schedules: Check MA Scores to be sure that your schedule looks correct. All updates and changes will be made to that site by the athletic office, so please check the website regularly. If a change needs to be made after the game schedule has been finalized, reach out to the athletic office ASAP to request the change. The Athletic Director will coordinate with the opposing team's Athletic Director to make any changes.

Senior Days: Will be the last home game of the varsity team's regular season unless otherwise requested by the Head Coach.

Non-League Games/Scrimmages: The Athletic Department will pay for one set of home officials and one away bus for scrimmages. Please communicate needs. Varsity coaches are expected to find and secure non-league opponents in the off-season. As non-league opponents are confirmed, coaches must notify the Athletic Director to secure dates/times/locations.

Buses: All teams must travel to all away athletic contests by school provided transportation. Check MA Scores for your departure times and let the athletic office know of any necessary changes. If a bus is not on time, call the athletic office. If it is not during athletic office hours, call the bus driver directly. Do not call the Athletic Director until after you have called the bus driver.

The bus will stop in Essex to drop off students on the way home from an away game as long as the bus is driving through Essex. Parents/guardians must be waiting at the bus stop to pick up their child. If a parent/guardian is not there, students will stay on the bus and continue back to the High School.

If a parent/guardian wishes to drive a student home from an away game, the parent/guardian must send an email to the athletic office with the coach CC'd requesting permission.

Buses are not provided for practices with the exception of Essex Elementary School (Middle School Basketball) and Memorial Field (Baseball). Coaches of these programs must first confirm the total number of student-athletes requesting to take the bus before the bus can be arranged.

Tournament Transportation: As a result of the MIAA moving to a new statewide tournament structure, several tournament games may require extensive travel (1 hour or more). The Athletic Department will only secure charter buses for trips 100 miles or further. All other trips will continue to use Salter Transportation.

IMPORTANT MESSAGES TO THE STUDENT-ATHLETES

Hazing/Bullying: It is imperative we stress to our teams that hazing is against the law and will in no way be tolerated at Manchester Essex Regional High School. Team members must know they should report immediately to the coaches or Athletic Director any form of hazing or initiation. We will act to be sure everyone feels safe in our program. If there is a concern, contact the Athletic Director as soon as possible.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: It is our duty as educators and coaches to ensure the safety of all participants in, at, and around our athletics events. If you suspect or observe discriminatory incidents on your team, in your program, or during an athletic contest, the incident must be reported to the Athletic Director or site manager immediately. All incidents will be fully investigated by school administration and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Team Spirit: Must be team related and school appropriate. Please be sure that you are ok with what the team plans and remind the players to keep in mind the hazing law. If there are any questions as to what is acceptable, please check with the Athletic Director.

Drug and Alcohol Policy: Be sure to familiarize this policy with your team.

Concussion Protocol: All athletes will be baseline ImPACT tested prior to the start of their first athletics season at MERHS. Student-athletes are excused from practice on test days.

If you believe a student-athlete sustained a concussion during an athletics event, immediately contact the Athletic Trainer for next steps. If the Athletic Trainer is not available, contact the athlete's family and refer them to their physician. Any student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion must complete the full return-to-play protocol.

School Attendance and Discipline: Students are expected to be in school every day by 8:40 am and stay out of trouble to remain eligible for after school athletics activities. Students who are excused from school for a doctor's appointment, dentist appointment, college visit, court appearance, or funeral services are exempt from this rule and may participate. Students who receive detention must first take care of their disciplinary obligation before they may attend their practice or athletic contest. Remember they are student athletes and school comes first.

Vacation Policy: All varsity level teams are **required** to participate in an athletic contest during school vacation periods per CAL policy. JV level teams can choose whether to hold practices during vacation periods, but JV2/MS teams will always be OFF. It is the coach's responsibility to communicate the practice/game schedule during vacation periods with their student-athletes and strongly encourage varsity players not to travel during this time period. Student-athletes are excused from this policy if they are attending a co-curricular school trip. Please refer to the Student-Athlete Handbook for more details.

Music: Teams are not permitted to use the school sound systems during practices. If your team wishes to play music during practices with your own speaker, coaches must approve all songs in advance. If your team would like to play pre-game music, the playlist must be approved by the Athletic Director a minimum of 24 hours in advance. If you are outside, be considerate of neighbors and keep the volume at a respectful level.

Injuries: The trainer's room is available from 2:00 PM on every weekday and our Athletic Trainer will be available for most games. All injuries should be reported. If a trainer is unavailable and there is an injury that you believe is severe enough to call an ambulance, do not hesitate to call. Also, call the parents, the Athletic Trainer, and then the Athletic Director. When determining return to play from an injury that has been diagnosed by or been referred to a Physician, a Doctor's note will be required to be turned in to the Athletic Trainer before the athlete is eligible to participate.

IN SEASON RESPONSIBILITIES

General/Specific Supervision: Coaches are responsible for the supervision of student-athletes in their program during practices, contests, bus rides, lifts, team activities on school grounds and in the locker room. You must wait for all student-athletes to be picked up or leave before you may leave the facility.

Locker Room: The locker room is the coach's responsibility. If anyone on your team is using the locker room, they should be supervised. Coaches must ensure student-athletes pick up after themselves and keep the space tidy. For outdoor sports, external locker room doors should never

be propped open unless the team is currently on the field practicing or competing. At the end of the season, it is the coach's responsibility to ensure the locker room is cleaned and emptied. Failure to do so may result in loss of locker room privileges the following season.

Equipment/Uniforms: Equipment and first aid kits will be distributed to coaches prior to or on the first day of pre-season. Please coordinate equipment pick-up with the Athletic Director.

Donna Furse will handle uniform distribution and inventory. Donna can be reached via cell phone at 617-851-7514 or email at donnafurse@hotmail.com. Athletes are not to wear team issued uniforms outside of the team environment of games, practices, game day spirit, etc. Athletes are not permitted to loan uniforms to friends or family.

All uniforms and equipment must be returned to the athletic office one week following the final contest. Coaches are responsible for their team's uniform collection.

ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

Newspapers/Calling in Games: All scores must be texted or emailed to the athletic office after each game at molinarec@mersd.org or 978-473-5908. Please refer to the last page of the coaches handbook for newspaper contact information.

Officials Sheets: Coaches must pick up officials' sign-in sheets from the athletic office and have them filled out at the game site by the officials. All officials' sheets should be turned in to the athletic office the day of or the day after the contest. Please do not hold on to them and make sure it is legible before the official leaves.

Playing and Equipment Conditions: Be sure, on a daily basis, that you walk the playing environment and also check your equipment to ensure that the conditions of both are up to the safety standards necessary. If there is a problem with either, be sure to contact the Athletic Director immediately and do not use.

Managers: Are an important part of and play an integral role on the team. However, managers are not allowed to practice or play in games. If they are practicing then they are players and need to be registered, have a current physical, and pay the user fee. For managers to travel to away contests with the team, they must fill out a registration form with the athletic office.

Volunteer Coaches: Coaches who wish to bring on additional volunteers to help coach their program must first get approval from the Athletic Director. All volunteers must submit the following to the athletic office before they may begin: CORI, fingerprints on file with HR,

Anti-Hazing form, NFHS Concussion Completion Certificate, NFHS Implicit Bias Completion Certificate and First Aid & CPR Certification.

COMMUNICATION

Email: Please check daily for messages as this will be the primary method of communication. Coaches must use their MERSD email account and BCC the Athletic Director when sending messages to players and families.

Player Communication: Emails are the preferred method of communication at MERHS. Coaches are not permitted to text or call their players with the exception of their varsity captains. Coaches who wish to expedite communication with players may choose to set-up group messaging through Google Classroom, the Remind App, the Band App, or GroupMe.

Social Media: If you use social media for your team, be sure that it is only positive, team related, or factually contest related. Please remind your team to be very careful what they post on their personal social media accounts.

Website: <https://www.mersd.org/domain/22>

Twitter: @MEHornets

Livestream: ME Hornets Youtube Channel -
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHaRv0Q9km1q618Lfivg2fQ>

Inclement Weather: Be certain that you have a chain or method to contact all team members and remind the team that they should report to the locker room or designated area to meet you.

Emergency Action Plans: Download the Crisis Manager Application and sign in using your MERSD login credentials. All athletics EAP's are located in the app.

If there are any unusual circumstances, issues, or problems, please call the Athletic Director immediately at 978-473-5908. HAVE A GREAT SEASON!