

Diamond R-IV Athletic / Activity



Handbook 2008-09

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Diamond activity/athletic program. Hopefully, your decision to take advantage of this portion of our co-curricular program will be educational, rewarding, and challenging. This handbook is given to you so that you might be more aware of the programs that are available and their inter-relationships. The Diamond School District encourages you to take advantage of as many programs as your time and talent will permit. **WE DO NOT ENCOURAGE SPECIALIZATION IN ONE SPORT, RATHER, WE WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO EXPERIENCE A VARIETY OF SPORTS AS WELL AS OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.** Naturally, due to conflicts in seasons, practice times, schedules, etc., some choices will have to be made by you. Good luck to you as you strive to grow emotionally, mentally, socially, and physically through activities/athletics.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that interscholastic activities shall supplement the secondary curricular program, and as such become a vital part of a student's total educational experience. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable the student to maximize use of his/her education.

Student participation in any part of our activities is a privilege which carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the activity, to the student body, to the community, and to the student himself/herself. This participation **privilege** represents a **year round** commitment and will help to develop the student physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

GOAL STATEMENT

Student activities and athletics shall be an integral part of the secondary educational program which shall provide experiences not otherwise provided and which will help students to acquire additional knowledge, skills and emotional patterns necessary as attributes of good citizenship.

I. SPORTSMANSHIP

A. Diamond R-IV School District is a member of the Spring River Valley Conference and the Missouri State High School Activities Association. As members of these groups we adhere to policies set down for the display of good sportsmanship by athletes, students, fans, parents, and patrons. Member schools are to enforce sportsmanship rules for our own school, players, and spectators. Violation of rules can result in the following consequences: written reprimand, probation, suspension, ejection, or permanent removal from events. Consequences are in force for players, coaches, students, and fans.

B. All school discipline policies and rules apply to Diamond R-4 students at school activities whether they are held on school property or away from school.

C. R-IV GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP CODE

1. Maintain pride in self and school.
2. Strive to keep high standards of conduct.
3. Cheering is always encouraged for one's own team.
4. No taunts, chants, noises, cheers, jeers, songs, profanity, signs or motions directed to the opposing team, coach, school, or officials. Treat everyone with respect.
5. No disrespect will be shown to the opposing team during introductions.
6. No noise makers.
7. Abide by the decisions of officials.
8. Accept victory and defeat graciously.

D. A school may be suspended from membership in the MSHSAA and from participating in interscholastic activities with other member schools for the unsportsmanlike conduct of teams, coaches, students, and fans. Each school is responsible for the conduct of its teams, coaches, students, and fans at games both at home and away.

Please support the players in a positive manner rather than possibly placing them in a position of being penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in the spirit of high school athletics.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. As a student participant, you are in school to secure the best secondary education you are capable of achieving. Deciding to take advantage of THE OTHER HALF OF EDUCATION plays a significant part in your total educational development. However, with this decision also comes certain responsibilities, if the value of activities is to be achieved, namely:

1. Striving to achieve sound citizenship and desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation, dependability, and respect for others and their abilities.
2. Maintaining academic citizenship and eligibility standards as established by the Missouri State High School Activities Association and the R-IV schools.
3. Learning the spirit of hard work and sacrifice.
4. Learning to attain physical fitness through good health habits.
5. Desiring to excel to the limits of your potential.
6. Showing respect for both authority and property
7. Be willing to accept the leadership role that is instilled through the activities program.

B. Keep in mind that you are in the public eye and your personal conduct always must be above reproach. You have an obligation to create a favorable image and gain the respect of your teammates, the student body, and the Diamond community.

C. It shall be the responsibility of the student to maintain high standards of citizenship. It shall be a violation of the requirement of being a good citizen if any student is engaged in activities or actions that lead to his arrest for (1) drug and/or alcohol violations; (2) causing damage to the property of others; or (3) placing others in jeopardy of loss of life or subject to injury or fear of injury or loss of life. It is the student/athlete's obligation to conduct his/her life in a way that he/she is free from suspicion of crimes. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the coach or school administration of any impending legal actions against said student. Should any such actions be made know to the coach by any type of law enforcement agency or department, said student will be suspended from participation in all extra curricular activities for the period of 365 days.

III. BASIC GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

A. General Rules

1. Students are free to make their own selections as to activities in which they wish to participate. It is the R-IV policy that students facing a conflict between two R-IV sponsored activities will be given the choice of which to attend. Certain school activities (to be determined by the administrators) will have priority. Students are not to be penalized by the activity not attended.

2. A student who has gone out for a sport but quits of his own accord, will not be eligible to start practicing for another sport before the end of the competition in the sport that was dropped.
3. Should a student decide to drop from an activity during the regular playing season, the student will be required to participate in an exit interview. The interview will be conducted by the building Principal or the District Athletic Director. Failure to attend the exit interview will result in the student not being allowed to participate in another activity until completion of the exit interview.

EXCEPTIONS AND CONDITIONS.

- a. In the event that student voluntarily drops or quits one sport (a primary sport) to participate in another sport (a secondary sport) and has not applied to participate in multiple sports under Section B below, then, and in such event, the student may not participate in the secondary sport unless:
 1. The head coach of the primary sport consents; and,
 2. The head coach of the secondary sport consents; and,
 3. The parents and/or guardians of the student consents.
 - b. In the event that a student drops a primary sport in one season, after game competition for that season has started, and seeks to participate in that same sport in the following season he/she may do so only with the consent of the head coach and the AD. Such consent shall be granted liberally but the AD may impose such conditions as he/she deems appropriate and those conditions may include a requirement that the student shall be barred from participating in this sport in the future if he/she quits a second time.
3. All students will be transported to and from respective activities via school transportation. The only exception to this is when a parent makes a request to transport the student and contacts the head coach personally to seek permission. Student/athletes are not to transport other student/athletes.
 4. If it is necessary to be absent from practice, the student is expected to communicate with the coach or an administrator.
 5. Students must be in attendance a minimum of four hours to participate in any activity or practice scheduled for that day. Exceptions are granted with administrative approval only. If a student comes to school and during the day becomes ill and goes home; they may not return to participate in any activity or practice that day without medical approval and the consent of the school's administration.
 6. In the event that truancy or suspension by a student takes place, the student will not be eligible for participation until he has fulfilled the disciplinary requirements established by the administration.

7. Any student with a failing grade in ANY subject, will NOT be permitted to leave school early to participate in any extra curricular activity scheduled, until said failing grade is brought up to passing.

8. The possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or nonprescriptive drugs is known to be detrimental to the individual as well as the team he represents. Therefore, disciplinary action will be taken. This is a **year round** commitment. If a student athlete is caught in possession or using any of the above, the drug suspension guidelines will be followed. The suspension will be served during the first varsity sport season completed by the student athlete.

B. Participation In Multiple Activities

1. There are students who may wish to participate in more than one activity during a given season, i.e., football and cross country. The Diamond R-IV School District will consent to this under the following conditions:

A. Consents are given by the parents/guardians;

B. The student must select a primary sport;

C. Student must agree that, in the event there is a conflict as to competition dates for the two activities, then, and in such events, the student must participate in the event relating to the primary activity selected by the student;

D. Student may not change the designation of a primary sport or activity once competition has begun for the season;

E. Student may not quit the primary sport to participate solely in the alternate activity unless consent is given by the coach of the primary sport, the coach of the alternate activity, and the appropriate principal or athletic director;

F. All MSHSAA requirements for participation in multiple events have been met.

IV. PROTECT YOUR ELIGIBILITY

A. The Missouri State High School Activities Association, of which the Diamond R-IV School District is a member, is a voluntary, nonprofit, educational association of junior and senior high schools established for the purpose of working cooperatively in adopting standards for supervising and regulating interscholastic activities and contests.

B. One of the primary functions of MSHSAA is to establish eligibility standards that must be met by all students to sustain the **privilege** of representing their school in interscholastic activities.

C. Eligibility is a PRIVILEGE to be granted by the school to a student. Eligibility is NOT A STUDENT'S RIGHT BY LAW. Precedent setting legal cases have determined that eligibility is a privilege to be granted only if the student meets all standards adopted by the school.

D. Listed below is some information to acquaint you with the major rules and regulations you must follow in order to protect your eligibility.

****NOTE:** (as noted in the MSHSAA Official Handbook 07-08)

Effective July 1, 2009, as a result of the 2007 Annual Ballot, the minimum academic standard will be increased to 3.0 units of credit or 80% of the maximum allowable credits which may be earned, which ever is greater.

1. * You must be a creditable school citizen as defined in the Missouri State High School Activities Association Handbook 212.0.

2. * Academics:

a. You must be enrolled in courses offering 2.50 units of credit.

b. You must have earned 2.50 units of credit the preceding semester. Credits earned or completed after the close of the semester, through correspondence course work WILL NOT FULFILL THIS PROVISION.

c. Summer School classes may count toward eligibility requirements - see the building administrator or athletic director for specific guidelines.

3. *Transferring schools:

a. If you transfer schools and your parents do not move to your new school district, you will be ineligible for 365 days, unless you meet one of the exceptions to the transfer or promotion rules. (See your principal or athletic administrator.)

b. If you move with your parents to your new school district you will be eligible immediately.

4. * Participation Limits:

a. You are eligible to participate in any sport for a maximum of four seasons. Any part of a game played during a season counts as a season of participation.

b. Your eligibility to participate in high school activities begins when you first enter the ninth grade and lasts for the first eight semesters that you are enrolled in high school. Your eighth semester must immediately follow your seventh semester.

5. Awards Standards:
 - a. You may not receive cash, merchandise, or gift certificates for participating in an athletic contest.
 - b. You may accept awards that are symbolic in nature, such as medals, trophies, ribbons, plaques, etc., for participating in a school athletic program. These awards may be received only from your school, from a school hosting an event, or from the MSHSAA.
 - c. You may accept awards for participating in non-school sponsored athletic competition only if the awards are symbolic in nature, such as medals, trophies, ribbons, plaques, etc.
6. * If you reach the age of 19 prior to July 1, you will be ineligible for interscholastic competition the next school year.
7. * Non-school competition:
 - a. You may not participate in any organized non-school athletic competition and your school team IN THE SAME SPORT during the same season.
 - b. You may participate on a school team and a non-school team in different sports during the same season; however, you may not practice or compete in non-school organized athletic competition ON THE SAME DAY that you practice or compete with your school team without approval of the school administration.
 - c. Before you join any non-school team or enter any non-school competition involving athletics, check with your athletic administrator to make certain these standards are being met.
8. * You may participate in an “audition” or “try-out” for a college team only after you have completed your last season of eligibility in the sport for which you wish to tryout.
9. * You may not compete in an all-star game or contest before you complete your eligibility in all high school sports.
10. * Sports camps/Clinics
 - a. You may attend a non-school sponsored summer specialized sports camp for as long as you wish.
 - b. You may not attend a specialized athletic camp during the school year.

c. You may attend a camp or clinic where your school's coaching staff instructs or coaches for a period no longer than two weeks in duration.

11. * In order for any student/athlete to consider a NCAA Division I or II college, he/she must be processed through the NCAA clearinghouse. This process must be started during his/her junior year. See your guidance counselor for information.

A REMINDER: Any questions pertaining to eligibility that are not answered above should be brought to the attention of your athletic administrator.

E. Suspension or Removal from a Team

1. A student may be removed from the team or suspended from participation by the Diamond R-IV District if:

a. It is determined by the district administrative team, or a member thereof (including the Athletic Director) that the student:

*engaged in any activity that was contrary to any part of these policies, including the references in these policies to sportsmanship and citizenship;

*engaged in any activity detrimental to the team and/or the positive educational environment sought for the program

*disrespected any coach, player, fan, official, or any administrator.

The term of this suspension or removal may be for a period of up to 180 school days without Board of Education approval, but, may exceed 180 school days (including permanent removal) after a hearing before the Board of Education.

2. In the event a student has been removed or suspended from a team currently engaged, or preparing to engage, in a MSHSAA sanctioned competitive season under any part of these policies, then, and in such event, the student may not participate in any activity or practice for the period of the suspension unless otherwise stated below. The period of suspension may be: (a) for some part of the current season; (b) may extend for the entire current season; (c) may be extended to a period of up to 180 school days; or, (d) with Board approval the ban may exceed 180 school days or include a permanent ban from participation in extra-curricular activities. In (a) or (b) the suspension may be implemented by the head coach for the sport in question without prior approval of the school district administration. Any period of suspension from athletic programs that extends beyond the current season of the sport from which the student is

suspended, must be approved and implemented by the school district administration (which will include the Athletic Director for the school district). In the event that there is a suspension from the team by a coach as allowed under (a) and (b), it shall be up to the coach to determine whether or not the student may attend and/or participate in practices. In the event that there is a suspension from the team under (a) or (b), the coach may require that the student attend the games even though the student will not be allowed to participate in the games. In the event that a student is removed from a sport and the administrative team determines that the student should be banned from participation in all sports and extra curricular activities for a period of up to 180 school days or, in the event that the administrative team asks the Board to approve a ban on participation of more than 180 school days, then, and in such event, the student may not be not participate in the practices, games, or qualifying events for any sport or activity where this district operates a program that is sanctioned by the MSHSAA.

a. Any suspension that exceeds a current athletic season will only be implemented upon review of the administrative team (the Athletic Director and/or the building level principal).

b. During the period of suspension that exceeds the current season of the sport from which the student was suspended the student may not engage in: (1) the activities related to any other sport (including practices); (2) any after school programs not related to any competition (this would include attendance and participation in open gyms); or, (3) any weight room clinics or activities that are outside the curriculum of a class in which the student is enrolled. If a student is enrolled in weight training class and all students in that class are eligible to come to the weight room after school, in a teacher supervised setting, to earn points for that class, then that student may engage in such activities unless otherwise suspended from school. If a student is coming to school after hours for participation in any tutoring program not related to sports, or, if the student is coming to an after school program not related to competitive sports, such as a lifetime sports event such as a ping-pong tournament, then the student may participate in such an activity unless otherwise suspended from school.

3 Upon appropriate review, the building level administrator may determine that a student's behavior exhibits such poor sportsmanship and/or citizenship, that the student should be suspended from participating in a MSHSAA sanctioned activity even though said student is not currently participating in any such activity. In such circumstances the term of suspension will follow the guidelines set forth in this handbook.

V. CARE OF EQUIPMENT

In order to give the student a sense of responsibility and an appreciation of his/her equipment, each student athlete will be held responsible for the abuse or loss of it. ANY

EQUIPMENT LOST OR STOLEN MUST BE PAID FOR BY THE STUDENT IN WHOSE NAME IT WAS CHECKED OUT before they will be allowed to practice or participate in any other activity.

The following guidelines, if adhered to, will reduce the chances for lost or stolen equipment.

1. Do not exchange or loan any of the equipment checked out to you to another teammate. If exchange is warranted, have the coach make the necessary adjustments.
2. Except when you are in visual contact, keep your locker closed and LOCKED at all times. This includes while you are in the shower. School and personal equipment and belongings should be locked up at all times.
3. Any loss of equipment should be reported immediately to the head coach, rather than waiting until the end of the season.
4. Any protective equipment that does not fit properly or that has any defective parts should be reported to a coach immediately. Do not wear the equipment until the necessary adjustments have been made. This is for your protection.
5. It is against MSHSAA regulations to sell or rent any equipment to individuals. The Diamond athletic departments strictly adhere to the regulations. Therefore, any equipment you may see out of the school environment does not belong to the individual(s). Please report any such violation to a coach or the athletic administrator.

VI. CONDITIONING AND THE PREVENTION OF INJURIES

Proper sports conditioning will improve the power, speed, and endurance of athletes. Statistics indicate that sports conditioning will assist in preventing injury. Year-round conditioning can increase athletic performance considerably. Opportunities are provided for athletes at Diamond to be involved in year-round conditioning.

VII. PHYSICAL EXAMS AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Athletic By-Law 309 (a) and (b) in the Missouri State High School Activities handbook states: The school shall require of each student participating in athletics or an activity performance group a physician's certificate stating that he or she is physically able to participate. The medical certificate is valid for the purpose of this rule if issued after February 1st of the previous year. This certificate must be on file before the student will be allowed to practice with any of the District's athletic teams. A student shall not be permitted to practice OR compete for a school until it has verification that he or she has basic athletic insurance coverage (also on file.)

VIII. ATHLETIC LETTERING

All of the Diamond R-IV athletic programs offer an athletic letter. Each sport offers objective criteria and qualifications for lettering set by the individual sport coaching staff. The additional factors of good school citizenship and a constructive, positive attitude are integral criteria of the lettering process.

Baseball

The player must participate in at least 50% of all innings played during the season. The coach will give consideration in special cases.

Boys Basketball

Any player that plays in half of the varsity quarters will letter. The coach will have the right to letter any player that he feels helps the team enough even though he did not play in half the quarters.

Cross Country

Runner must run in at least one-half of the varsity races.

A Senior will letter if they complete the season.

The coach has the final decision on special cases.

Football

Any player who participates in at least one-half of the total varsity quarters will receive a varsity letter. The head coach reserves the right to letter any participant under special circumstances.

Girls Basketball

A player must participate in 50% of the varsity games played in the season. Special cases may be decided by the coach.

Softball

A player must participate in 60% of the varsity games played in a season. Special cases may be decided by the coach.

Track

Athletes must participate in an average of two events per meet. Athletes must complete the season through the finish of Districts. Athletes must attend all meets unless excused by the coach.

Volleyball

Any player who participates in one-half the total games (not matches) or under special circumstances at the discretion of the coach.

Wrestling

An athlete must have six varsity starts or matches for the year.

IX. SUPERVISION POLICY

No individual student, team, or activity group shall be permitted to participate in events without being accompanied and supervised by a representative of the school faculty or administrative staff. Activity staff are responsible for supervision of groups while on the bus traveling to and from events, while at the events, and until the students' rides arrive. Activity may not occur without school representative supervision. This includes but is not exclusive to: practices, meetings, performances, contests, and bus transportation.

Sponsorship includes the coach/staff advisor riding the bus, accompanying the activity and/or supervising any activity under the sponsorship of a particular department. Sponsorship may necessitate the coach/advisor procuring assistance from within his/her own department and/or activity personnel. It is the responsibility of the coach/advisor to cover his/her events.

X. CURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR ORGANIZATIONS

Some organizations fall under both academic class guidelines **as well as** activity guidelines and requirements because a class period is given to the organization as well as academic credit. Such classes have academic objectives and independent grading criteria. Students enrolled in these courses may have other required expectations. The individual staff advisors will acquaint the students with the full scope of responsibilities in these activities and classrooms.

XI. CONFERENCE AFFILIATION

The Diamond R-IV School District is a cooperating member of the Spring River Valley Conference, and as a member is committed to adhere to the rules and regulations of the conference.

Presently there are 10 members of the Spring River Valley Conference as follows:

- Diamond
- College Heights
- Golden City
- Greenfield
- Jasper
- Liberal
- Lockwood
- Miller
- Pierce City
- Sarcoie

SPORTS BY SEASON

FALL:

Cross Country – Boys & Girls
Football
Softball
Volleyball

WINTER:

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Wrestling

SPRING:

Baseball
Golf
Track – Boys & Girls

NON-ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES OFFERED

Academic Team
Band
Choir
Cheerleading
Debate/Forensics
Drama
Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCA)
Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
Future Farmers of America (FFA)
National Honor Society
Newspaper/Journalism
Yearbook

XII. PARENT/COACH/STAFF ADVISOR COMMUNICATIONS

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to students. As parents, when your student becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your student. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your students program.

A. Communication coaches/staff advisor expect from parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach/advisor.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.

3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's/advisor's philosophy and/or expectations. As your student becomes involved in the programs of the Diamond R-4 Schools, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your student wishes. At these times discussion with the coach/advisor is encouraged.

B. Communications you should expect from your student's Coach/Advisor:

1. Philosophy of the coach/advisor.
2. Expectations the coach/advisor has for all squad members.
3. Location and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
5. Procedure should your student be injured during participation.
6. Discipline that results in the denial of your student's participation.

C. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coach/advisor:

1. The treatment of your student mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your student improve.
3. Concerns about your student's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your student not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches/Advisors are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your student's coach/advisor. Other things, such as those listed below must be left to the discretion of the coach/advisor.

D. Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches/advisors:

1. Playing time.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student-athletes/participants.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach/advisor and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

Procedure:

1. Call to set up an appointment with the coach/advisor.
2. Please do not attempt to confront a coach/advisor before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach/advisor. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote resolution.

The next step:

If the meeting with the coach/advisor does not provide a satisfactory resolution the parent is encouraged to call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director or Principal to discuss the situation. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

E. Practices

All coaches have the right to have closed practices. This will be discussed at the parent/athlete meeting.

F. Dismissal of participants in any given activity

Dismissal of participants in any activity may be done at the discretion of the coach as the need arises (i.e. too many players, lack of effort, disrespectful attitude, etc.) The coach must have prior approval from the high school principal, or the athletic director to dismiss any student-athlete from an activity.

Since research indicates that a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be successful participants are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope the information provided within this handbook makes both your student and your experience with the Diamond R-IV Activity/Athletic Program less stressful and more enjoyable.