

# HELENA ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

## ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

### ATHLETIC STATEMENT

The following information is designed to inform student-athletes and their parents of the rules, regulations and information that help guide athletic activities at Helena Middle School. Participation in middle school athletics is a privilege, which carries varying degrees of honor, responsibility, commitment and sacrifice. Participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right, those who choose to participate shall be expected to follow the rules established by the Athletic Department. Each student-athlete represents his/her school and student body. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to conduct himself/herself in a manner that is becoming the student-athlete, his/her family, Shelby County Board of Education, and the community. It must be understood that the athletes who violate these rules, regulations, policies and procedures shall face disciplinary action.

*While an attempt has been made to answer as many questions as possible and provide information on all aspects of athletic participation, it is possible that you may have some questions that are not answered here. Please contact the principal and/or athletic director for this information.*

### ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

Athletics are an integral part of the total school educational program. Athletics can help to develop young athletes in the areas of knowledge, skills, and emotional patterns. Athletics should promote the development of qualities such as self-control, loyalty, leadership, teamwork, hard work, and friendship. Additionally, the concept of being on a team should allow the athlete opportunities to excel in the areas of humility and selflessness and at the same time give the athlete a proud sense of belonging.

Sportsmanship is paramount at Helena Middle School and held in high esteem. Winning is not the only thing, but to play at a maximum ability level with maximum effort, is the goal for every team. Athletics should be fun, and at the same time be a great challenge.

### ATHLETIC GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

**GOAL:** The student shall become a more effective citizen.

#### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To learn teamwork – To work with others, an individual must develop self-discipline, respect for authority and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. Athletes must place the team and its objectives higher than personal desires.
- 2) To have fun – the main reason people participate in sports and games
- 3) To be successful – Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
- 4) Sportsmanship – To accept success and defeat like a true sportsman, knowing you have done your best. We must learn to treat others as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
- 5) To improve – Continual improvement is essential to good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and constantly try to reach that goal. Try to better yourself in the skills involved and in those characteristics set forth as being desirable.
- 6) Enjoy athletics – It is necessary to acknowledge all of the personal rewards we derive from athletics and to give sufficiently of ourselves in order to preserve and improve the program.
- 7) To develop desirable personal health habits – To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits and to develop a desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

## **ATHLETIC SEASONS**

**Fall Season:** Football, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Cross Country

**Winter Season:** Boys and Girls Basketball, Wrestling, Cheerleading

**Spring Season:** Baseball, Softball, Boys and Girls Track & Field, Soccer, Tennis, Golf  
(The beginning date for each sport will be set annually.)

## **ELIGIBILITY**

The Shelby County Board of Education and the AHSAA prescribes the following regulations for eligibility by students in this school system to participate in athletics, fine arts, and/or other extracurricular activities:

1. Seventh graders must have been promoted from 6th grade to preceding year. The student must be taking new courses including Math, English, Social Studies, and Science.
2. Eighth graders must have passed at least 5 subjects from the previous year. These grades must have an overall average of 70%. Physical Education and electives may count for a credit.

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

Student-athletes, managers or support-group members must meet the residency requirements of the Shelby County Board of Education as well as the AHSAA.

## **BONA FIDE MOVE**

A student whose parents make a bona fide move from one community, school zone or district to another may transfer all rights and privileges to the new school that serves the area into which the parents moved and where the parents reside.

**A legal bona fide move means:**

Household furniture of the family must be moved, all principle members of the family must reside in the new place of residence, the original residence must be leased, rented, sold, disposed of and not used by the family, and six months shall be required to make a move bona fide. (If a family moves into a new school district and remains there for less than six (6) months, the move will not be considered bona fide.)

## **BEFORE YOU CAN PRACTICE**

The following list must be completed by the student-athlete **BEFORE THE FIRST PRACTICE** with any team:

1. Meet academic eligibility requirements
2. Take and pass a pre-participation physical with parental signature
3. Provide proof of insurance
4. Complete forms (permission to participate, travel, emergency contact, drug form, concussion form)
5. Parent and athlete sign "Acknowledgement of Athletic Handbook Document"

## **CONFLICTS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES**

Activities and teams at Helena Middle School share many students and therefore it is inevitable that conflicts will arise between activities. Communication between the student involved and the coaches involved is vital, so conflicting events can be handled in a timely manner. Consideration must be given to the importance of the event and the role the student-athlete will play in it.

## **QUITTING A TEAM**

Any student-athlete that decides to quit a team during the season will be prohibited from participating on another school sponsored team during the same season; this includes practicing with another team until that team he/she quit has completed its season. If a student-athlete is participating on two teams in the same season and quits one of them, the decision to allow him or her to continue on the other team will be at the discretion of the two head coaches involved. If necessary, the athletic director and principal will handle any extenuating circumstances. If an athlete quits a team all fee money must be paid in full and none will be returned.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Student-athletes will not be allowed to participate or attend a school sponsored activity such as an athletic contest or practice, if they are not in school for at least one half of the school day on the day of the event. To be considered in school, a student must be in attendance for at least one-half of the school day which is 8:00-11:30. One-half of the school day is also considered from 11:30-3:00. Any exceptions must be approved by the principal.

## **HAZING**

Under no circumstances will hazing in any form be tolerated within the scope of any extra-curricular sponsored program at Helena Middle School. Student-athletes are obligated to discourage and report hazing to their coaches, teachers, and or administrator. Hazing or an initiation is a form of harassment and endangers the physical and mental health of an individual or group. Hazing would include, but is not limited to, ridicule, criticism, humiliation, intimidation, physical activity, or by extracting unnecessary work or participation in a disagreeable, unpleasant, or illegal activity for the purpose of initiation or maintaining membership. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in any of the described acts and is prohibited on and away from school property. Helena Middle School reserves the right to limit participation because of inappropriate behavior at any time.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

All students desiring to practice in interscholastic athletics must undergo a physical examination performed by a licensed medical doctor prior to the first practice of any sport. The physical form, which must be signed by the doctor, student and parent/guardian, may be obtained from the athletic office, main office or from the coaching staff. Each physical must be on file in the main office and will be good for one calendar year from the date of the doctor's signature. Each spring HMS will provide an opportunity for athletes to have physical examination at school with a minimal cost.

## **INSURANCE**

All Helena student athletes are required to have medical insurance and must supply information verifying such before participating in practice and/or competition.

## **DRUG POLICY**

At Helena Middle School, we fully support the substance abuse policy of the Shelby County Board of Education. In order to participate in athletic activities athletes and guardians must sign the drug consent form. In addition to the policy from the SCBOE, the athletic department at HMS will take disciplinary action for any student athlete that is engages in the use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs or any other at risk behaviors. If a student athlete that is caught or suspected of partaking in any of the substances listed above a required meeting will take place involving the student athlete, parents, coach, athletic director, and administration to determine a suitable disciplinary action.

## SELECTING SCHOOL TEAMS

Each head coach has the responsibility of selecting his/her own team. In some sports it is necessary to select specific numbers due to squad size limitations. Coaches will post in advance of tryouts the dates of the tryouts and explain their tryout policies before the first tryout date.

## TRANSPORTATION

The athletic department will provide transportation to events when necessary. Parents may be called upon, at times, to help transport team members to events.

## EQUIPMENT

HMS strives to provide each sport and team member with the safest and the highest quality equipment available. All equipment issued to an athlete is expected to be returned in the same condition as when issued (except for normal wear). When equipment is lost or damaged, the athlete will be required to compensate the athletic department for the item. Failure to return equipment or compensate the school for lost or damaged equipment will result in report cards and transcripts being held until such equipment are returned/replaced or restitution has been made.

## PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

As your son/daughter becomes involved in the sports program at Helena Middle School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may also be times when things do not go the way your child wishes. This is an opportunity for your child to talk with their respective coach and discuss the situation. When your child addresses the issue properly, it becomes part of the learning and maturation process. There may also be situations that require a conversation between the coach and the parent. If this is the case please follow the following procedures.

First Level: Parent/Guardian calls or emails the head coach involved at least 24 hours after the incident to discuss the concern.

Second Level: Parent/Guardian sets up an appointment for a meeting with the head coach and other coaches involved to discuss the concern.

Third Level: If the concern is not resolved, call the Athletic Director to arrange a conference. A meeting will be arranged with the coach, parent and Athletic Director.

Fourth Level: Meet with Principal or Assistant Principal

***Do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote solutions.***

## PLAYING TIME

Playing time is an earned privilege not a right. Athletes earn playing time during the off season and in practice. Playing time or player positions will not be discussed between parents and coaches by any means of communication. Failure to abide by this rule will result in the athlete being removed from the team. Coaches will discuss playing time with athletes.

## MEDIA GUIDELINES

### Email:

Email groups serve Helena Middle School Athletics greatly as a tool to communicate pertinent information quickly to a large number of people for the benefit of our programs. It should be used for that purpose and that purpose only. It is not a sounding board for complaints and opinions. It

is not a means for anyone to pursue a personal agenda (i.e. business ventures, selling a home etc).

**Social Media & Public Forums:** (Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, al.com, etc.)

We live in a day where we have bought into this cultural idea, that if you have a thought it necessitates that you announce it to the world and it is not true! Parents and athletes must refrain from posting anything negative towards other athletes, coaches, teams or the athletic program in a public forum. Athletes must also refrain from using profanity and vulgarity in a public forum. Any violation of the rule will result in disciplinary action determined by the head coach and athletic director.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

HMS coaches will monitor grades weekly during the season of each sport. Athletes will be notified of any grades lower than a "C." Athletes carrying a grade below a "C" will be considered ineligible for athletic contests until the grade has been improved to a "C" or higher. Three consecutive weeks of unsatisfactory grades could result in removal from the team. This will be the head coach's decision.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Each sport requires financial support to maintain equipment, improve equipment and operate the program. Fees must be paid, or arrangements must be set up with the head coach by the beginning of the season for that sport. If fees cannot be paid by the deadline set by the coach, a payment plan (in writing) must be agreed upon between the coach and parents well in advance before the deadline approaches.

## **FUND RAISING**

At Helena middle school it is our desire to compete at the highest level we possibly can. In order to be competitive, fund raising is extremely important to provide equipment, uniforms, training. We want all of our student athletes to give their very best effort in everything they do. Fundraising is no exception to the rule. Everyone must do their part in order to be successful.

## **PARTICIPATION IN CONCURRENT SPORTS**

Helena Middle School supports the concept of participation in more than one school sanctioned sport. Coaches should not establish expectations out of season, which would prohibit or restrict a student's participation in another school sanctioned sport, which is in season. A student who wishes to participate in two sports concurrently in the same season (fall, winter and spring) must have written consent of both coaches and the athletic director. A schedule resolving all practices and competition conflicts must be established prior to the season and approved by the coaches and athletic director. There may be some occasions that there may be a change that is necessary because of weather or other extenuating circumstances. The coaches must work together to help resolve the situation. If a conflict occurs in scheduled events, the primary sport prevails.

## **INJURIES**

All injuries must be reported to the head coach of the specific sport in season. Going several days without treatment can make a minor injury very severe.

## **DOCTOR VISITS**

Athletes are strongly encouraged by the athletic department to go to a sports medicine doctor for any and all injuries. A general practice doctor and pediatricians will not take measures to get

student athletes back on the field or court like a sports medicine doctor. At Helena Middle School we are very fortunate to have an athletic trainer and a team doctor through the Shelby Baptist System. We highly recommend the following practice to you.

**Dr. Heath Hale**  
**Shelby Baptist Sports and Family Medicine**  
30 Racquet Club Pkwy  
Pelham, AL 35124  
205-620-1085

## **STAR Sportsmanship Program**

Using the search engine of your choice (Google, Firefox, etc.) to access the internet:

1. Type in [www.starsportsmanship.com](http://www.starsportsmanship.com)
2. Click on "Student Sign In".
3. Enter your school's STAR Code (this code is the same for all your school's coaches, students and parents). Your school's STAR Code is **STAR03881**.
4. Once you have entered your code, click OK.
5. Next you will verify your school by clicking OK.
6. Scroll down to the bottom of the list and select **Advanced Middle School**. Register your name. It is important that you use your correct name. No nick names or fictitious names will be accepted.
7. Complete the program.
8. Congratulations. You are in the program.
9. Print your certificate when you finish and give it to your head coach.

## **FORMS** *(The following forms must be on file with the athletic director).*

- Physical Form
- Emergency Information and Consent Form
- Drug consent Form
- Athlete/Parent Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Birth certificate
- Completion of Star Sportsmanship certificate
- Media Release Form
- Volunteer Driver
- Concussion Form
- Participant Agreement, Consent and Release