

# Damascus High School

STUDENT – PARENT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION INFORMATION  
AND PARENT PERMISSION FORM



## Montgomery County Public Schools/Damascus High School

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#### Philosophy

Interscholastic athletics supplement and support the academic mission of the school system and assist students in their growth and development. Athletics assists in promoting the importance of teamwork, effort, goals, and commitment. Interscholastic athletics is highly competitive, but winning is not the primary measure of success. Sportsmanship, respect for participants, and dignity in the face of adversity are more important than the outcome of the contest. All athletes do not perform at the same level, but all can demonstrate effort, dedication, and fair play.

#### Sportsmanship

An important mission of the interscholastic athletics program is to teach and reinforce values relating to sportsmanship, competition, and fair play. It is expected that team personnel, parents, and spectators respect this mission by exhibiting appropriate behavior at athletic events. Countywide team and school awards are presented annually to schools whose coaches, players, and fans, demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.

#### Student Eligibility Requirements

Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible to participate. Participation of ineligible students shall result in individual and team sanctions, including forfeits for the team.

1. All participants are required to have a valid annual medical evaluation.
2. Students must submit a current *MCPS Health Inventory Form* (MCPS Form SRS-6), a *Medical Card for Athlete* (MCPS Form 560-30) and a *Student/Parent Athletics Participation Contract* before being allowed to participate in practices or contests.
3. Students selected for a team must pay the MCPS extracurricular activities (ECA) fee. Students may not participate in contests until they have paid the activities fee.
4. Students must achieve a minimum 2.0 grade point average for the most recently completed marking period, with no more than one failing grade. Academic eligibility is determined on the date report cards are issued, and remains until the next report card is issued.
5. Grades recorded as I (Incomplete) shall be considered passing until changed. Incomplete grades must be made up within two weeks after the close of the marking period.
6. A student who withdraws from a course after 25 days, receives a failing grade, and receives one or more failing grade(s) in another course(s) will be ineligible for the next marking period.
7. Students must attend all of their scheduled classes in order to participate in a practice or contest on that day. If the principal or designee grants an excused absence in advance for a prescheduled activity, or an unforeseen emergency, the student may participate on that day.
8. If during the season a student has an unexcused absence, he/she may not compete in the next contest after the violation has been verified.
9. In addition to other infractions, a student may be suspended or removed from a team for unexcused absences or chronic tardiness to classes or team practices.
10. Students who are 19 years old, or older, as of August 31 of the current school year are ineligible.
11. Students may not participate in more than one interscholastic sport in one season.
12. A student may not participate when he/she is serving an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The student becomes eligible to participate on the next school day following the suspension.
13. Students must satisfy school and school system Participation Standards.
14. Students whose legal residence is outside the designated boundary of a particular school may not participate unless they have received an official transfer and an athletic waiver.
15. Students and their parents must sign the school *Student-Parent Athletic Participation Contract and Parent Permission* form.

### **Assumption of Risk**

Participation in interscholastic athletic activities often includes intense competition and poses the potential for serious, catastrophic, or life-threatening injury. Participants and parents are urged to consider that there are inherent risks and hazards associated with athletic participation. Risks vary from sport-to-sport and can occur under direct supervision and with use of proper safety equipment.

### **Residency**

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) residency regulations require that students attend specific high schools, assigned by the school system, based on their legal residence. When a student participates at a school to which he or she is not assigned, or the home address of the student is not his or her legal residence, the student is not eligible to participate unless the student has received an official transfer, based on accurate information, and has received an athletic waiver from the Director of System-wide Athletics.

### **Hazing**

Hazing is prohibited at all times. Hazing involves any act that subjects teammates to mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. In some instances hazing constitutes a criminal act. Hazing may lead to immediate dismissal from a team.

### **Communication with Coaches**

Parents should not attempt to address coaches immediately after games and practices. Coaches have many post game/practice responsibilities, including supervision of players. Also, the post game/practice period is often emotionally charged, and not conducive to productive discussion. If a parent feels a need to communicate a concern, the parent should contact the coach and/or athletic director to arrange a later meeting.

### **Participation Standards**

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Accordingly, students must meet certain standards in order to earn the privilege of participation. At a minimum, the following standards are required of all student-athletes.

1. Exhibit public behavior that will reflect positively on the team, school, and community. Athletes should not be engaged in any activity that would result in police intervention.
2. Exhibit responsible, respectful, and trustworthy behavior to teammates and the coach.
3. Exert efforts to maintain a high level of academic achievement.
4. Comply with all team, school, and school system rules, regulations, and policies.
5. Exhibit appropriate behavior at all team and school-related activities.
6. Attend all team functions unless ill or given prior permission to be absent by the coach.
7. Respect and comply with decisions made by the coach and athletic department.
8. Respect calls and decisions made by game officials.
9. Display good sportsmanship at all times.
10. Report to the coach any issues or developments that may affect eligibility status.

### **Illegal Substances/Alcohol/Tobacco/Steroids/Controlled Substances**

All students at Damascus High School are expected to refrain from the use of all tobacco products, drugs, and alcohol, both at school and during non-school times. Parents are responsible to oversee and monitor their student's behavior while off school grounds and are expected to take appropriate, decisive action to identify and prevent non-prescribed use of these substances by their student.

DHS staff, including sponsors, coaches, and administrators are charged with the task of alerting students to the harmful effects of tobacco products, drugs, and alcohol and to take corrective action upon verification of student use of these items. The commitment to tobacco-free, drug-free, and alcohol-free behavior is especially important for those students who represent

Damascus High School in any school sponsored extracurricular activity. The reputation of our school and the ultimate safety and welfare of our students are jeopardized if the commitment is broken. For this reason, the Damascus High School Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco Pledge has been developed.

Your pledge will be in effect for the entire school year. Each student who wishes to participate in an extracurricular activity during the school year must have signed a pledge with all required signatures submitted to the coach or sponsor. Students will not be permitted to begin an activity/sport until the pledge is signed and returned.

### **The Pledge**

I agree to refrain from the possession, use, and distribution of any tobacco products, drugs (unless prescribed), alcohol, and controlled substances, both on and off school grounds, during the school year. If it is verified that I have used any of these substances, I understand that the following consequences will apply:

#### **Consequences for tobacco:**

First Offense: exclusion from the next scheduled game or non-athletic extracurricular activity.

Second Offense: a) exclusion from 2 games

b) conference with the student, athletic director or sponsor/coach, and parent

#### **Consequences for drugs and alcohol:**

First Offense:

(a) removal from all teams and/or non-athletic extracurricular groups for 10 school days

(b) referral to the Student Assistance Team for drug/alcohol assessment and follow-up

(c) conference with the student, athletic director or sponsor/coach, and parent

Second Offense in the same school year

a) suspension from all teams and/or non-athletic extracurricular groups for 45 school days

Third Offense in the same school year

a) suspension from all teams and/or non-athletic extracurricular groups for one calendar year starting from the day of the infraction.

I also realize that any possession, use, or distribution of any of these substances on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity will result in additional serious disciplinary consequences as outlined in the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) Policies and Procedures and the Damascus High School Discipline Policy.

A student who is ineligible due to violating the pledge may tryout for the next sport season, but the consequence must be met before he/she competes in the activity.

Ineligibility does not include summer days. If there are penalties left at the end of the school year, the penalty will carry over to the first day of the next school year.

### **Steroids**

Athletes who take steroids to enhance performance and muscular appearance are involved in a dangerous activity. The drugs they believe give them a competitive edge can also cause serious side effects. Anabolic steroids are chemical derivatives of testosterone, a male sex hormone. As such, they enable athletes to increase muscle bulk and improve performance in such activities as body building, weight lifting, football, and several track and field events.

Major side effects from abusing anabolic steroids can include liver tumors and cancer, jaundice (yellowish pigmentation of skin, tissues, and body fluids), fluid retention, high blood pressure, increases in LDL (bad cholesterol), and decreases in HDL (good cholesterol). Other side effects include kidney tumors, severe acne, and trembling. Aggression and other psychiatric side effects may result from abuse of anabolic steroids.

If the use of steroids by an athlete is verified, then it will be treated as a violation of the Damascus High School Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Pledge.

### **Dismissal From or Quitting a Team**

Once an athlete begins practice in a sport and his/her squad membership is terminated for a reason other than being cut due to lack of ability, he/she is ineligible to participate in any other sport during that season unless he/she is given prior approval by the athletic director and/or the administration after a thorough investigation of the case with all involved parties.

Once an athlete is on a team and voluntarily quits that team, he/she is ineligible to participate in any other sport during that season unless he/she is given prior approval by the athletic director and/or the administration.

### **Participation on Outside Teams**

While participating on a school team, athletes are permitted to participate in the same sport outside of the school during the sport season. The outside participation may not conflict with the team schedule of the school. This includes practices, games, and playoffs.

### **Inclement Weather**

The MCPS Board of Education policy states that in the event that schools are closed or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions or other reasons all school activities are canceled. These activities include practices and contests. If teams are participating in a contest or tournament in any other jurisdiction or any other facility and MCPS schools have been closed or dismissed early, the teams may not participate on that day.

### **Criteria for Earning Junior Varsity and Varsity Awards**

An athlete must satisfactorily complete the season to receive awards. This includes participation in post season play. In the case of an injury prohibiting an athlete from completing the season, the coaching staff will determine the athlete's eligibility to receive awards.

Managers, statisticians, and trainers are eligible for awards if they assist with practices and contests on a regular basis and maintain expected team standards.

Each team has its own criteria for giving awards. The coaches should communicate those criteria to the athletes and parents at the beginning of the season.

The awards given are:

Junior Varsity – a certificate each season and graduation year numbers the first time meeting minimum criteria

Varsity – a certificate each season, a "D" letter the first time meeting minimum criteria, a pin the first time lettering in a particular sport, and a bar each succeeding time meeting minimum criteria

**Personal Webpages and Blogs**

Personal webpages and blogs are considered an extension of how you represent yourself. Pictures and/or information included on such sites will be considered the truth. Any student who has this information or acts/speaks in a derogatory way on personal webpages or blogs will be held to the same standards as if acting in person.

**Activity Probation**

At the discretion of the principal, an athlete may be placed on athletic probation in lieu of or in addition to other penalties when an athlete is involved in a significant breach of the general policies of the Athletic Handbook. If a second breach of general policy occurs within one calendar year of being placed on athletic probation, the athlete will be suspended from participation in the Damascus High School athletic program for a length of time to be determined by the principal.

**General Discipline Policies and Procedures**

The rules, policies, and procedures addressed in the Athletic Handbook does not cover every possible infraction. Any infractions not listed will be covered by MCPS Policy and/or Damascus High School Discipline Policy and Procedures. Consequences for athletes not adhering to any rule, policy, or procedure will be at the discretion of the principal.

**Montgomery County Public Schools/Damascus High School  
STUDENT – PARENT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION CONTRACT  
and PARENT PERMISSION FORM**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent and Student-Athlete:** Review this contract carefully (front and back), complete information as requested, affix signatures, and return the completed contract/permission form to the school.

**Stipulations**

The student-athlete and his or her parent/guardian have received and read the *Student-Parent Athletic Participation Information*. Based on this information, the student and parent/guardian understand and stipulate to the following:

1. I/We understand the eligibility regulations required for participation.
2. I/We affirm that the student has satisfied all of the eligibility requirements, including age, residence, and academics.
3. I/We understand that participation of ineligible players will result in individual and team sanctions, including forfeits for the team.
4. I/We affirm that the student will exert effort to maintain a high level of academic achievement.
5. I/We understand there is potential for serious, catastrophic, or life-threatening injury associated with participation in a sport.
6. I/We affirm that the student will not participate in hazing at any time, of any nature.
7. I/We, as a participant or spectator, will exhibit a high level of sportsmanship at contests.
8. I/We will follow appropriate procedures in communicating concerns to coaches.
9. I/We affirm that the student will abide by all team and participation standards.
10. I/We affirm that the student will not use steroids, illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco unless medically prescribed for a specific condition or illness.

**Residency Verification**

Students must be legally enrolled at a high school designated by the school system based on their legal address. Please respond to the following residency questions:

A. I reside at		MD _____
_____	_____	_____
	Street Address	City      Zip Code
B. This residence is within the boundaries of Damascus High School:	_____yes	_____no
C. I reside at this residence with a parent or legal guardian:	_____yes	_____no
D. My current address is the same as last year:	_____yes	_____no
E. I have only played at my current high school:	_____yes	_____no
F. I agree to notify the coach / school of any changes in residence:	_____yes	_____no

**Permission to Participate**

I/We hereby authorize and consent to our child’s participation in interscholastic athletics and sports. We understand that the sport(s) in which our child will be participating is potentially dangerous, and that physical injuries may occur to our child requiring emergency medical care and treatment. I/We assume the risk of injury to our child that may occur in an athletic activity.

In consideration of the acceptance of our child by the Montgomery County Public Schools in its athletic program, and the benefits derived by our child from participation, I/we agree to release and hold harmless the Board of Education of Montgomery County, its members, the Superintendent of Schools, the principal, all coaches, and any and all other of their agents, servants, and/or employees and agree to indemnify each of them from any claims, costs, suits, actions, judgment, and expenses arising from our child's participation in interscholastic athletics.

I/We hereby give our consent and authorize the Board of Education of Montgomery County and its agents, servants, and/or employees to consent on our behalf and on behalf of our child, to emergency medical care and treatment in the event we are unable to be notified by reasonable attempts of the need for such emergency medical care and treatment.

Each year the Board of Education makes available a Student Accident Policy at a nominal premium. This insurance is secondary to the family's own insurance. Because accidents will inevitably occur despite our best efforts to maintain a high level of safety in all student activities, this insurance coverage is recommended unless the family deems that other insurance coverage (in force) will meet the needs of the student. The Board of Education Student Accident Policy is available anytime throughout the school year. The coverage may be obtained from the insurance carrier. Forms are available at the school. Check one of the following.

- Student covered by the Board of Education Student Accident Policy.
- Student covered by a policy (family) which will pay expenses and no claim will be made on the school.
- I/We will obtain coverage for the balance of the school year by applying for the Board of Education policy.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, and I, \_\_\_\_\_  
(parent's name printed) (student's name printed)

have carefully reviewed the *Student-Parent Athletic Participation Information* and the *Student-Parent Athletic Participation Contract and Parent Permission Form*. I/We understand the conditions for participation in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) interscholastic athletic program, and we understand there are inherent risks associated with participation.

I/We agree as follows:

- My son/daughter has my/our\* permission to participate in athletics at Damascus High school.
- I/We understand and conform to all of the statements in the Stipulations portion of the Contract.
- I/We understand and will abide by the policies set forth in the Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Pledge.
- I/We I have responded truthfully and accurately to the questions in the Residency portion of the Contract.

Please affix signatures below and return to the school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian      Date      \_\_\_\_\_      Date  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student      Date

*\*When parents are divorced and have legal joint custody, the signatures of both parents are required.*