

**SAUCON VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**ATHLETIC POLICY, RULES, AND REGULATIONS**

Saucon Valley School District athletes take pride in themselves, their school, and their sport while striving for the highest academic achievement. Athletes must understand that it is a privilege to represent the Saucon Valley School District. They are expected at all times to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner prior to, during, and after all athletic practices, contests, and events. As a representative of their community, school, and fellow student athletes, deviation from the rules of common courtesy, lack of respect for others, and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Athletes are expected to adhere to the expectations, rules, and regulations, of the Saucon Valley School District, the Saucon Valley Athletic Department, and their individual teams. In addition to Saucon Valley School District disciplinary channels as outlined by the Parent/Student Handbook, athletes may be subject to additional disciplinary action, if violations are reported by coaches, spectators, opposing team representatives, or officials.

The intent of the Saucon Valley Student Athlete Policy is to encourage athletes to make a strong commitment to academics and athletics and to conduct themselves in a manner which brings credit to themselves, their community, and the Saucon Valley School District.

**ACHIEVING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

Academic excellence is the primary focus for all Saucon Valley School District athletes. At the same time, the Saucon Valley School District recognizes the importance of extra curricular activities to each student's personal and social development. Proper use of an athlete's time is essential for success in the classroom and on the athletic field. When classroom time is missed because of athletics, it is the athlete's responsibility to communicate with each teacher and to arrange a make-up schedule for lost classroom time. Team travel does not excuse an athlete from making up academic work.

**ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS:**

*Physical Eligibility:*

Prior to participation, all student athletes must complete a pre-participation physical exam as outlined by the PIAA. The exam must take place after June 1<sup>st</sup> each year in order to comply with PIAA regulations. All physical forms must be completed in their entirety and submitted to the athletic office prior to any participation in an athletic practice or event.

*Academic Eligibility:*

Article IX of the PIAA By-Laws outline academic standards for all student athletes. Student must sustain a full time schedule in order to be eligible for athletic participation. A PIAA eligibility report is run by the Saucon Valley Athletic Department each Friday at 9:00am. Any student failing 2 or more subjects at the time of the report becomes ineligible for 1 PIAA week (Sunday through and including Saturday). In addition, any student failing 2 or more subjects as their final grade at the conclusion of a semester will become ineligible for 15 school days starting with the day report cards are distributed.

The Saucon Valley Athletic Department does allow coaches to enforce more rigorous academic standards for their teams if they choose to do so as part of their team policy.

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to be sure their academics are in good standing and any student who needs assistance with academics should contact their teacher and coach immediately.

*School Attendance:*

On a daily basis students must be present in school no later than 9:30am in order to be eligible to participate in their athletic practice/event that day unless a student has secured prior permission from the principal or athletic director, or has a valid doctor's note.

On a semester basis, students must meet PIAA attendance standards. Any student absent for more than 20 days in a semester becomes ineligible to participate in athletics.

*School Imposed Suspensions:*

Any student that has received an in-school suspension is not eligible to participate in any practice or event the day that they served their in-school suspension.

Any student that has received an out-of school suspension is not eligible to participate in any practice or event for the entire length of their suspension.

*Other Eligibility Requirements:*

All Saucon Valley Athletic Department paperwork that accompanies the PIAA Pre Participation Physical must be completed and submitted prior to becoming eligible for athletics.

All school owned athletic uniforms and equipment must be returned or restitution made for lost or damaged school property prior to a student athlete becoming eligible for athletics or a second sport.

**SPORTSMANSHIP and CONDUCT STANDARDS:**

An athlete is expected to serve as a courteous host to visiting teams, officials, and spectators.

An athlete is expected to leave locker rooms, bench areas, and busses, clean and orderly after all practices and events both home and away.

An athlete is expected to play hard within the rules of the sport.

An athlete is expected to win with humility, lose graciously, thank officials, and congratulate opposing players and coaches after the event.

*Consequences for Sportsmanship and Conduct Standards:*

An athlete ejected from an event for the first time, by PIAA rule, must serve a one (1) game suspension during the next scheduled game for that team. If the ejection occurs during the last game of the year, the suspension will carry over to the first game of the following year. If an athlete is ejected from an event for actions deemed dangerous, flagrant, or obscene, a review of the incident will take place and the athlete may receive additional suspension time beyond that of the mandated one (1) game if warranted. An athlete under suspension may not sit on the bench, enter the locker room, travel with the team, or participate in any team functions, practices, or events.

Suspension guidelines for ejections:

\*Addition time may be added to suspension depend on the reason for the ejection as outlined above.

1<sup>st</sup> ejection during a season – 1 game suspension for next scheduled game.

2<sup>nd</sup> ejection during a season – 3 game suspension for next 3 scheduled games.

3<sup>rd</sup> ejection during a season – 1 calendar year suspension

#### **ILLEGAL ACTIVITY:**

Any illegal or criminal activities, including the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products by student athletes will not be condoned by the Saucon Valley School District. A primary goal of the Saucon Valley Athletic Department is the safety, health, and welfare of each athlete. Illegal or criminal behavior that takes place in school or out of school, is prohibited. Upon identification of such behavior and an investigation, the athlete may face suspension or termination from athletic participation, following prompt review by the Saucon Valley school Principal and Athletic Director.

Any student charged with an illegal or criminal act may be subject to disciplinary action in compliance with Saucon Valley School District disciplinary code as outlined in the student handbook. In addition, an athlete is subject to the following disciplinary actions:

The athlete may be ineligible to participate in athletic functions (practices or events) for a minimum period of seven (7) to fourteen (14) calendar days. An athlete under suspension may not sit on the bench, enter the locker room, travel with the team, or participate in any team functions, practices, or events (unless special dispensation is given in connection with counseling). The athlete must request, in writing, permission to be re-instated to the athletic program on a probationary basis before being allowed to return to their program after the conclusion of suspension in connection to illegal or criminal activity. The Saucon Valley school Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director, and Coach will review the request. After reviewing the request, the ineligibility period may be extended or the athlete may be re-instated on a probationary basis. The following conditions will be viewed favorably in terms of an athlete's length of suspension and for athletic participation re-instatement.:

- 1). The athlete has cooperated fully with the investigation
- 2). The athlete has participated in a drug/alcohol assessment (if a drug/alcohol related offense) or other form of assessment based on the illegal/criminal activity.
  - a. Agreement to participate in counseling based on the results of the assessment
- 3). The athlete will follow the recommendations of the Student Assistance Program

In the absence of an athletic eligibility re-instatement request, the athlete is considered ineligible for all Saucon Valley School District athletic participation indefinitely.

Any student charged with multiple offense over time will be dealt with on a individual bases at the discretion of the administration. At minimum, a second offense will require a suspension of fourteen (14) to twenty-eight (28) days in combination with the conditions as seen above. Three or more charged offenses will require a suspension of a minimum of thirty (30) days but will likely result in the termination of the student-athletes from all future participation in Saucon Valley Athletic Programs.

**DISCIPLINE:**

The parent(s), Superintendent, school Principal, and Head Coach shall be informed, in writing, of any suspension that exceeds the suspension for ejected players as outlined above. When a suspension exceeds seven (7) calendar days for a sportsmanship related offense or fourteen (14) calendar days for a drug/alcohol related offense, upon request, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school personnel to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or terminated or to show why the student should not be suspended or terminated.

**UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT:**

All school district owned, uniforms, equipment, and facilities should be treated with the utmost care. Please be diligent with the upkeep and care of uniforms and equipment. During the season, uniforms are to be cleaned and cared for on a regular basis. Within one (1) week of the final event, all uniforms and equipment articles distributed to student athletes prior to the season must be returned in to the head coach in accordance to the procedures established by the coach. Student will not be eligible for any sport until all school owned property is returned in acceptable condition or until replacement/damage costs are paid to the Saucon Valley Athletic office.

**TRANSPORTATION:**

An athlete is required to travel to and from athletic events on Saucon Valley School District provided transportation. An athlete is not permitted to travel by other means of transportation except in emergencies or if prior arrangements have been made in writing between the parent and the head coach or parent and athletic director. In cases where alternate transportation is required for an offsite event (i.e. golf / tennis), parents are requested to submit a note to the athletic officer prior to the season beginning giving permission for their child to drive to the event or for their child to drive with another student to the event.

**TRAVEL & DRESS:**

All athletes traveling to athletic events while representing Saucon Valley are expected to do so in a respectful manner. Unless traveling in uniform or in team issued warm-ups, players are expected to dress in a manner that represents Saucon Valley in a positive and respectful way. Many times coaches will outline expected dress. In those cases, teams are expected to follow their coach's guidelines for dress to away contests.

**INJURIES & INSURANCE:**

An athlete participating in the Saucon Valley School District Athletic Program is covered by accident insurance approved by the Saucon Valley School District. The insurance coverage is not intended to replace major medical coverage provided by the parent/guardians group insurance plans.

Any injury must be reported by the student-athlete to the Athletic Training Staff as soon as possible. Failure to report an injury not only puts a student at risk but also reduces the likelihood of insurance coverage. Under the Saucon Valley School District insurance policy, any injury must be reported within 90 days.

Under the insurance policy provided by Saucon Valley School District, the first \$100 of medical expenses are paid regardless of other medical insurance. After the initial \$100 of expenses, the athlete's own medical insurance policy becomes primary. The school district's policy will provide coverage in the absence of other valid and collectable insurance, and will pay in accordance with the approved schedule of benefits as outlined in the policy. These benefits are provided on a "usual and reasonable" basis up to the policy limits.

An injured athlete who has obtained treatment may not resume athletic participation unless the Athletic Training Staff grants permission. The Saucon Valley Athletic Training Staff has the final discretion for the release of a student-athlete back to participation. Obtaining a doctor's release for an injury for the purpose of returning an athlete to play prior to what is deemed safe by the Saucon Valley Athletic Training Staff will not be accepted. It is the intention of the Athletic Training Staff to work in concert with the physician to determine an appropriate return-to-play timeline.

In addition, the health and well being of our student athletes is of the utmost importance. If the Saucon Valley Medical Staff or coach determines that an athlete is in need of emergency medical care, they will be sent to the hospital for treatment.

#### **SAUCON VALLEY ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Athletic Department at Saucon Valley High School expresses its commitment to the students overall development by providing a competitive, culturally diverse, gender equitable sports program which operates within the rules of the Saucon Valley School District, the Colonial League, District XI, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). At Saucon Valley, participation in scholastic athletics is a privilege and an integral part of the total educational process and a vital part of the student/athlete development. Sport participation is encouraged by maximizing the number and variety of athletic opportunities for males and females in varsity and intramural sports. The ultimate objective is to promote academics, sportsmanship, set and achieve goals, build relationships, communicate effectively, learn life skills, respect and appreciate differences in others, and become leaders. Student athletes are supported in their efforts to reach their highest level of performance by providing them with quality coaching, appropriate support of health and wellness needs, competitive opportunities with students from similar institutions, and working toward providing our student athletes with adequate to outstanding facilities for training and competition.

