

This booklet contains information regarding rules, practices and regulations that govern the athletic program at Nipmuc High School and should be considered a supplement to the Nipmuc High School Student Handbook.

# **Athletic Handbook**

Nipmuc Regional High School

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# **Nipmuc Regional High School Athletic Handbook**

The following information will help answer many of your questions regarding interscholastic athletics at Nipmuc High School. This booklet contains information regarding rules, practices and regulations that govern the athletic program at Nipmuc High School and should be considered a supplement to the Nipmuc High School Student Handbook.

Please keep this booklet and refer to it whenever you have a question regarding your athletic experience. If you feel that your questions or concerns are not answered in this booklet, contact your coach or call the school's athletic director's office.

You are about to become a member of the Nipmuc High School athletic program. Nipmuc Athletics is rich in tradition and an integral part of this community. The Athletic Department at Nipmuc High School has six essential goals:

1. To provide an opportunity for maximum athletic development of players across the spectrum of ability.
2. To foster a strong sense of community involvement and participation.
3. To promote the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical development of our students.
4. To develop an understanding of the value of competition.
5. To develop respect for rules and authority.
6. Finally, the most important goal of any athletic program is to HAVE FUN!!!

I would like again to welcome you to Nipmuc Athletics and wish success for all of our teams in the upcoming season. The entire Nipmuc Athletic Department is looking forward to your association with the athletic program at Nipmuc Regional High School.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Bill Leaver  
Athletic Director

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## **Mission Statement for Athletics**

Athletics at Nipmuc Regional High School play an integral part in the school program. Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities that will enhance their educational experience. The sports program is committed to the physical, emotional, social, and mental development of all who participate.

### **Athletic Program Objectives**

- To provide opportunities for physical, mental, and emotional growth.
- To develop confidence and self-esteem.
- To develop and improve time management skills.
- To develop and understand the concepts of individual and team play.
- To develop a sense of commitment, loyalty, cooperation, and fairness.
- To learn that good sportsmanship means winning and losing with grace and dignity.
- To learn to make decisions under pressure.
- To foster town and school pride.

### **Philosophy**

**The athletic program at Nipmuc Regional High School is an integral part of the total school program. It offers the students the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities that enhance the educational experience. The program is committed to the physical, emotional, social, and mental development of all who participate.**

**Participation is a privilege that comes with responsibilities for the student athlete, Nipmuc Regional High School, and the towns of Mendon and Upton.**

**Athletics at Nipmuc Regional High School are open to all students who meet and maintain the standards of academic eligibility, are good school citizens, and meet basic physical health qualifications.**

**To be eligible to participate in athletics at Nipmuc Regional High School, students must meet academic and physical standards described in this guide.**

**Participation in sports is a privilege: athletes are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct on and off the field. They must show respect for everyone with whom they come in contact while at Nipmuc Regional High School: teammates, game officials, opponents, and spectators.**

## **The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association**

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (hereafter referred to as the MIAA) is the governing body of Athletics within the State of Massachusetts. Its Board of Directors is made up of School Administrators and Athletic Directors from various districts throughout the state. The Board of Directors and its various subcommittees establish policy for all member schools.

Nipmuc Regional High School is a member of the MIAA and is therefore governed by Association rules and regulations. Additional policies, rules, and regulations are set by the Mendon-Upton School Committee. Under MIAA guidelines local communities are allowed to set their own policy, rules, and regulations as long as they are more restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA. The MIAA organizes and establishes the guidelines for all post-season tournaments. All schools throughout the Commonwealth are responsible to govern themselves under the rules set forth in the rules identified as the Blue Book *The MIAA does not sanction nor sponsor a sub-varsity tournament competition.*

## **The Dual Valley Conference**

Nipmuc Regional High School is proud to be a member of the six schools Dual Valley Conference for most of its athletic competitions. The league is governed by the MIAA and its own constitution. The conference sets most games played by Nipmuc Regional High School, at most levels of competition. Some non-league games against schools from other MIAA governed communities are also scheduled. A few teams such as lacrosse and alpine skiing compete in other leagues, because the majority of schools in the Dual Valley Conference do not sponsor these specific sports. The Dual Valley Conference is made up of the following schools: Blackstone-Millville, Douglas, Hopedale, Nipmuc, Sutton and Whitinsville Christian.

## **Administrative Chain of Command**

- 1. Mendon-Upton School Committee:** The governing body for Nipmuc Regional High School. It sets all policy within the school district relative to athletics.
- 2. Superintendent of Schools:** He/She administers school policy established by the school committee and works in conjunction with the school committee for the actual establishment of the athletic policy.
- 3. High School Principal:** The official representative of the school and is directly responsible for the total conduct of all athletic activities. The Principal is the official school representative in matters dealing with the MIAA, District E, and Dual Valley Conference. He/She insures that all MIAA guidelines and policies are followed. The Principal is responsible for any official action taken by the school.
- 4. Athletic Director:** The Athletic Director is directly responsible to the Principal. He/She is responsible for the supervision and administration of the entire interscholastic athletic program. The Athletic Director provides the leadership necessary for the daily operation of the Athletic Department. The Athletic Director is responsible for carrying out and enforcing all Nipmuc Regional High School, Dual Valley Conference, and MIAA rules and guidelines. He/She is responsible for the direct supervision and evaluation of all coaches.
- 5. Head Coach:** The Head Coach is responsible to the Athletic Director, and is responsible for the total operation of his/her respective sports program.
- 6. JV/Assistant Coach:** The Assistant Coach is directly responsible to the Head Coach.

## **Communication and Conflict Resolution**

Athletic involvement with athletic issues can be highly emotional and very time consuming. From time to time conflicts and issues between a student athlete and his/her coach may arise. It is imperative that any conflict and/or issue be addressed immediately and as directly as possible so that it can be resolved promptly. **Every effort should be made to resolve all issues at the lowest possible level:**

### **1. Student Athlete contacts coach**

### **2. Parent of Athlete contacts coach**

In order for the discussion between student or parent and coach to be productive, the following times to approach a coach should be **avoided**:

- Either prior to or immediately following a game
- During a practice session
- During a time when other teammates are present
- At a time when it is apparent that there will not be sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion

### **3. Athlete or parent contacts Athletic Director**

The Athletic Director will inform the coach that this meeting will take place.

If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled with all parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.

### **4. Student and/or Parent contacts Principal**

The Athletic Director should be informed that this contact will be made.

### **The Athletic Trainer and Training Room**

*Due to budgetary constraints Nipmuc does not have an athletic trainer within our athletic staff.*

***The trainer's room is neither a storage area (other than health related items) nor lounge.*** If students need anything from the training room, they should ask for assistance from either the athletic director or a coach. Training services will be granted on a first come, first serve basis on practice days. On game days, athletes will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met.

**After a serious enough injury that needed licensed attention the student athlete may not return written permission from a doctor.**

## The Nipmuc Athletic Program

### Fall

#### Boys

Football V. JV. Fr.  
Soccer V. JV.  
\* Golf V.  
Cross Country V. JV

#### Girls

Field Hockey V. JV  
Soccer V. JV.  
Cheerleading V. JV  
Cross Country V. JV.  
Volleyball V, JV

### Winter

Basketball V. JV.  
Indoor Track V. JV.  
\*Alpine Ski V (co -ed)

Basketball V. JV.  
Indoor Track V. JV  
Cheerleading V. JV

**Ice hockey, Swimming and Wrestling**  
(co-op with Northbridge)

### Spring

Baseball V. JV.  
Lacrosse V. JV.  
Track V. JV.

Softball V. JV.  
Lacrosse V. JV.  
Track V. JV.

\* *mixed gender team*

### Awards

The criteria for winning a varsity letter award are determined by the coach. The Head Coach will explain the requirements at the beginning of the season. An athlete will be awarded one varsity chenille letter for the first varsity sport he/she participates in. A felt emblem will also be awarded for every varsity season. Nipmuc Regional High School Athletic **certificates** will be awarded to each varsity letter winner, and to JV and freshman players alike.

The Dual Valley Conference may also recognize Nipmuc Regional High School athletes. The criterion for winning this award is determined by the League Head Coaches and Athletic Directors.

A senior may be awarded a letter for faithful participation at practice and games, even though failing to meet playing requirements, at the discretion of the Head Coach. Injury, which prevents the participation of a player after the league schedule has started, may not prevent the awarding of a letter if the Coach recommends a letter. Student managers who meet the specific criteria established by the Coach are eligible for varsity letters.

Each senior athlete will receive a senior plaque noting his/her participation at the varsity level. In order to qualify for this award, the senior must participate in athletics during his/her senior year.

## Rules and Regulations for all Athletes

Nipmuc Regional High School athletes are bound by MIAA rules for Interscholastic Athletics. Although a coach may have additional rules for his/her athletes playing on his/her team, the following rules are to apply to all athletes participating in the athletic program at Nipmuc Regional High School:

### 1. Physical Examination:

Athletes must pass a physical examination each year before participating in any sport. This must be done prior to the first practice session. No athlete will be issued equipment or participate in organized practice or scheduled games until he/she has given the School Nurse/Athletic Director a current physical examination form from a physician. In order for an exam to be considered current and valid, it must be dated within 13 months of the date of any athletic involvement. It is strongly recommended that an annual examination be scheduled between June 15 and August 20 each school year.

### 2. Parental Permission:

Each athlete must complete and submit a properly signed “green” card to his/her coach before participating in any practices/tryouts for **each** sport he/she chooses (each season). **Failure to do so will result in a one game suspension for each day he/she does not comply.**

### 3. User Fee:

The Mendon Upton School Committee voted to establish a User Fee for students participating in the high school Athletic Program during the school year. The User Fee account will provide the supplementary funds required to maintain the athletic programs currently provided and will avoid the necessity of eliminating any sport from the program.

The fees approved by the School Committee for the current school year is as follows: \$250 for cheerleading, \$325 for cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track, \$375 for all others except for football which is \$425.

Check or money order should be made payable to **Nipmuc Regional High School or Mendon Upton School District. Please indicate the sport(s) for which the student/athlete(s) is/are participating.** The fee will be collected along with a completed athletic card by the coach before the start of every season.

No student will be denied the opportunity to play due to financial hardship. In cases of family financial hardship, a fee waiver may be granted by the high school Principal/Athletic Director in accordance with criteria for free or reduced price meals. Other evidence that a hardship is involved should be brought to the Principals/Athletic Director’s attention.

The playing time of each participant is the prerogative of the coach of the sport. There is **no assurance** that each squad member will receive equal playing time nor is there a guarantee that a student will participate in any event.

#### 4. Eligibility:

All athletes must meet all school and MIAA eligibility requirements.

- a. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade in the equivalent of five major subjects.
- b. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses which would provide course credits (aka Carnegie Units) equivalent of five 1-year major English courses.
- c. Fall eligibility is based on the passing of at least five subjects from the previous academic school year. **summer school may not count towards athletic eligibility. (see g)**
- d. Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official only on the date when the report cards for that marking period have been issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.
- e. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility.
- f. A student who repeats work for which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
- g. *For eligibility purposes, a student cannot count points obtained in a subject taken during the summer vacation unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.*
- h. If a student is ineligible at the end of the second marking period and signs up for a “cut” sport in the winter/spring, he/she may have the opportunity to try out for that sport once eligible, provided he/she is declared eligible when report cards are issued and has the approval of the Athletic Director.
- i. Students may go out for non-cut sports as soon as eligible, subject to the approval of the Head Coach of the sport in question **and** the Athletic Director.
- j. **Students who are 19 years old prior to September 1 of the school year are not eligible for high school athletics.**
- k. Students are eligible for athletics for 12 consecutive seasons beginning with their entry into the ninth grade.



### **5. Athletic Responsibility:**

Nipmuc Regional High School athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of academic achievement possible. Extra help sessions and make-up work are expected to be completed as soon as possible. On a practice day, athletes should stay after school to complete work whenever necessary. Students should inform coaches in advance, if possible, when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations. Once the obligations are completed, athletes are expected to report to practice as soon as possible. If advance notification was not given to the coach, students should ask their teacher for a note explaining the tardiness. Students arriving late to practice due to make-up work or extra help will not suffer an athletic team penalty. On game days, if time allows, students should ask their classroom teacher if make up work or extra help may be postponed to a practice day. A classroom teacher may or may not grant a postponement. Teachers should be able to contact coaches through the Athletic Director. Teachers will receive a copy of team rosters as close to the beginning of a season as possible.

### **6. School Discipline - Detention:**

An athlete with a school discipline obligation or detention is expected to fulfill the disciplining obligation **before** reporting to practice and/or a game. Students cannot expect, and should not request disciplining action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. **An athlete may be removed from a team for excessive disciplinary problems.** The athlete may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that athletes at Nipmuc Regional School be model citizens both in and out of school.

### **7. Attendance Requirement for Interscholastic Athletics:**

If an athlete has accrued his/her fourth **unexcused** tardy (and subsequent others) during any one term, he/she cannot participate in that day's athletic activities. The athlete will be allowed to and (encouraged to) be at the practice and/or game but may not dress for such athletic activity.

**Any athlete who is not in school on the day of practice or game is not allowed to attend practice or game (not allowed on school grounds).**

Tardiness or dismissals will only be accepted under extenuating circumstances and must be cleared through the administration the day of the tardiness or dismissal. If an athlete cuts a class or leaves the building unannounced, he/she will be ineligible to play in that day's game or practice.

If an athlete must miss school for a portion of, or the entire day due to extenuating circumstances such as a college interview that can not be scheduled on a weekend, or a prolonged orthodontist appointment, clearance must be given by a school administrator, in order for the athlete to practice or play in a game. **An athlete may be removed from a team for excessive cuts or truancy.** He/She may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

## **8. Student/Family Vacations:**

A. Student participation in junior varsity or ninth grade athletics during school vacations, whether in practice or games, is not compulsory. **However, it is compulsory for varsity athletes.** Varsity letters may not be awarded or the student may be removed from the team if the coach sees fit.

B. Nipmuc Regional High School has no control over varsity athletic events scheduled during regularly-scheduled school vacations. These events are controlled by the dates of the MIAA state tournaments, the Dual Valley Conference and games per week allowed by MIAA rules.

C. An athlete playing on the VARSITY level **must make a commitment** to the team. Games that are lost because of the absence of players can have severe negative consequences, which include the loss of a League Championship or the failure of the team qualifying for a State Championship. They are part of a team and teammates are depending on them.

## **9. Daily Commitment:**

Athletes should plan to make a daily commitment of two to three hours, five or six days a week. At the sub-varsity level, some teams might not practice or play on weekends. The preparation times before and after practice and games bring the usual total time to three hours. It is important that a coach be notified if an athlete is not going to be present at a practice or game. All coaches expect their athletes to be present at all team related activities. A coach may suspend an athlete from practice or games for repeated unexcused absences. All athletes are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic assistance, family emergencies or religious holiday observances reasons. Prior notification is expected when possible. **Vacation is not an excuse.**

## **10. Tryouts:**

There are some teams that athletes must try out for and risk being cut. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is then the athlete's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet them. Athletes cut from one team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team. **Students who are cut will be informed as to the reason for their being cut.**

## **11. School Suspensions:**

Any athlete suspended **from school** may not practice, play, or be with the team on the day(s) in which he/she is serving the suspension. Any student serving an in-house suspension is allowed to attend practice or game but is not allowed to participate. **A student athlete serving an in-house or out of house suspension during his/her season must see the Athletic Director before he or she is allowed to return to action.**

## **12. Transportation:**

Nipmuc Regional High School provides transportation to away games. All team members are required to travel to and from all away events on transportation provided by the Athletic Department. Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing, to the Athletic Director, or coach by an athlete's parent prior to the event. **Under no circumstances will students be allowed to transport themselves or ride with other students to or from away games unless authorized by the school's administration or athletic director.** If cleared through the head coach, an athlete may return from a game with his/her parents. Any venue that a team practices at will be treated like a home venue. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner on all bus trips. Yelling at passing cars, obscene gesturing, unruly conduct, or other forms of inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

## **13. Equipment:**

All athletes are responsible for the equipment issued to them during the course of the season. Equipment must be returned at the end of the season, and prior to the next season or graduation. Athletes failing to turn in all issued equipment, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost. In the event that the equipment is found and/or returned after the payment, a refund will be made.

1. Parents will be notified by the coach and/or the Athletic Director of collection for payment for equipment not returned.
2. An athlete may be denied participation on any Nipmuc Regional High School athletic team until equipment has been returned or payment has been made.
3. **A senior athlete who has failed to return equipment or failed to pay for lost items may not be allowed to participate in graduation.**

## **14. Sportsmanship:**

**Sportsmanship is a top priority at Nipmuc Regional High School.**

The Athletic Department expects all parties present at an event to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect.

All athletic events are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the MIAA, the NCAA or the National Federation. Any form of taunting of officials or players will not be tolerated at any Nipmuc Regional High School athletic event. Likewise, profanity, objectionable cheers, or gestures have no place at an athletic event, be it at Nipmuc Regional High School or at another town.

The MIAA reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. Nipmuc Regional High School in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any athletic event, home or away. No one is to bring an open and *uncapable* container into any Dual Valley Conference venue.

### **15. Fighting:**

Athletes should be aware that MIAA regulations invoke a one game suspension for fighting, with a second offense resulting in a suspension from all athletic activities during that season for a period of one year from the date of his/her second disqualification.

An athlete who physically assaults an official shall be expelled from the activity immediately and banned from further participation in all sports for one year from the date of the offense. An athlete who willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the contest immediately and shall not participate in that sport season for one year from the date of the incident.

### **16. Taunting:**

A. Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters.

Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: trash talk, defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skill efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including in the face confrontation by one player to another and standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player.

B. In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing MIAA expulsion rules. Game officials prior to the contest shall give a warning to both teams.

C. At MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, appropriate management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators are subject to ejection.

### **17. Hazing - Massachusetts State Law MGL. 269 Chapter 536 Sections 16-19:**

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person. Incidents of hazing must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials as soon as reasonably practicable.

*Section 17. Whoever is principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars (3,000) or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.*

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which will fully or recklessly endanger the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

*Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such a crime shall, to the extent that such a person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such a crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. A fine of not more than one thousand dollars shall punish whoever fails to report such a crime.*

#### **18. MIAA Rule 71... Chemical Health... Drug and Alcohol Policy:**

As a member of the MIAA, Nipmuc Regional High School will strictly enforce the following rules:

“A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol: any tobacco product: marijuana: steroids: or any controlled substance. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.” (Note: **The rule is in effect seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day all year, including summer and school vacations.**)

#### **19. A. Minimum Penalties of the Chemical Health Abuse:**

1. First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall **lose eligibility for 25%** of the athletic season. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purposes of rehabilitation.

2. Second and Subsequent Violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a second or subsequent violations have occurred, the student shall **lose eligibility for the next 60%** of the athletic season. The penalty may be reduced if the student athlete becomes a participant in a treatment program.

3. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but a penalty period will extend into the next academic year, (e.g. if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, then the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.) If the student is a captain of any sport they will lose that status and not be reinstated at any time.

#### **20. Steroid Use:**

Anabolic steroids use at the high school level is a grave concern. Some athletes in sports use steroids, and the seriousness of the problem has recently been well documented. The issue goes well beyond protecting the integrity of your sport. The use of steroids in sports is considered to be cheating. The Nipmuc High School Administration, Athletic Department and coaches are opposed to the use of steroids by athletes and all members of the student body for ethical as well as health concerns.

#### **21. Tobacco Use (any form):**

The American Medical Association has identified tobacco smoking as detrimental to one's health. The law clearly prohibits anyone under the age of 18 from purchasing cigarettes. Smoking is not allowed for any student participating in athletics at Nipmuc Regional High School. The "No Smoking" rule also applies to chewing tobacco or other smokeless tobacco products.

#### **22. Out of Season or Between Seasons Violations:**

If a substance abuse violation takes place between seasons, (Example: The end of Winter season until Spring season begins, the third Monday in March) or during a season an athlete is not a member of a team, the MIAA rule will be in effect **every day, seven days a week all year long**. The MIAA penalties for alcohol and/or drug abuse will commence for the "out of season" or "between season" athlete at the start of his/her next athletic season.

#### **23. Nutritional Needs of Athletes:**

It is essential that all athletes are educated regarding their nutritional needs and the consequences that may result from poor nutrition and eating disorders. Eating disorders are serious conditions, which compromise one's health and well being. If you are concerned about your eating behaviors it is essential that you seek professional medical assistance. Talk to your coach, the athletic trainer, guidance counselor, school psychologist, clinical counselor, or nurse. They are there to help you. Take advantage of their expertise.

An athlete who practices or plays in a high school game during the day should spend the evening eating a nutritional dinner, studying to maintain good grades and going to bed at a reasonable hour. Proper diet and rest are essential for maintaining good academic and athletic performance.

#### **24. MIAA Bonafide Team Member Rule 99:**

A Bonafide team member of a school team is a student who is regularly present for and actively participating in all team practices and competitions. Bonafide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with an out of school team. Any student who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two contests or two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately upon confirmation of the violation.

**1. Students may also be penalized for missing practices or games for such activities (but not limited to) martial arts, disc (Frisbee), dance and/or cheerleading.**

#### **25. Season Limits:**

A. The fall season must not begin before the MIAA set guidelines. The fall season must end with the completion of the regular season schedule except for the teams or individuals completing their participation in MIAA Tournaments.

B. Winter season will begin on the first Monday after Thanksgiving and conclude on the last scheduled competition unless a team qualifies for post season MIAA Tournaments.

C. Spring season begins on the third Monday in March and concludes with the last scheduled competition unless teams qualify for post season MIAA Tournaments.

#### **26. Transfer Students:**

Students who have played in the preceding year at the varsity level at another high school or its equivalent are ineligible for one year from the date of transfer.

A student who transfers from another high school is ineligible under the following conditions:

- A. He/She participated at the varsity level in a sport in which he/she intend to play at Nipmuc Regional High School.
- B. The parents of transferred student do not change address.
- C. The student transferred after the start of the practice season during that sport season.
- D. Until an MIAA form 200 has been completed and approved.

**A waiver request is available for any transfer student with special circumstances.**

The parent of any transfer student who intends to participate in athletics should contact the Athletic Director immediately upon considering a transfer to Nipmuc Regional High School. **The penalty for a transferred student athlete playing on a team without a waiver is forfeiture of those games in which he/she played.**

#### **27. Foreign Exchange Students**

Foreign exchange students are eligible under the following conditions:

- A. Only if they are in a C.S.I.E.T. (The Council on Standards for International Education Travel) approved program and they meet all other eligibility requirements.

A list of all C.S.I.E.T. approved programs may be obtained in the Guidance Office

- B. Their parents move to the U.S. and establish residence in Mendon or Upton.

- C. All parents hosting a foreign exchange student should contact the Athletic Director as soon as they know that the student coming to this country is interested in participating in an athletic program.

### **28. Postponed Contests:**

Throughout the school year, events may have to be postponed due to factors such as inclement weather. In most situations the home team makes the decision to postpone. By Dual Valley Conference rules, games are to be made up on the next available open date on both school schedules, including weekends, whenever practical.

Decisions to postpone games are made as late in the day as is practical for proper notification of all interested parties. On school days the usual time is about 1:00 pm for afternoon events. If there are any questions as to the status of an event, please wait until after 1:00 pm before calling the Athletic Office. Please check the high web page or [highschoolsports.net](http://highschoolsports.net) for any postponements on the athletic schedule. On non school days and for evening contests, postponements are made approximately two to three hours prior to the event.

### **29. Directions to Away Events:**

Directions to away contests can be found through the school's athletic web site: [nipmuc-warriors.com](http://nipmuc-warriors.com) or the school's scheduler: [dualvalleyconference.org](http://dualvalleyconference.org)

### **30. Playing Time:**

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Athletes learn discipline, to perform under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership and to play within the rules. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each athlete, perhaps the most emotional is "playing time" during games. If an athlete has a question about the amount of playing time he/she is getting, he/she should be encouraged to discuss it with the coach. Being a member of a team at Nipmuc High School does not guarantee "playing time," but there are some guidelines:

#### **A. Freshmen and Junior Varsity Teams**

This is the developmental level where athletes learn skills and strategies to prepare them for varsity competition. The coaching staff will play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time. Some of the most important are: attendance at practice, effort, attitude, commitment, and athletic skill. This is the level for athletes to show their potential and demonstrate to the coaching staff that they are ready for varsity level competition.



## **B. Varsity Teams:**

This level of competition has the same factors and guidelines as the sub-varsity teams. However, there is one additional major factor. The varsity teams compete against opponents at the highest possible level. There is a greater emphasis on winning. To reach this goal, the most competitive, skilled team members will get the most playing time. However, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes or “second string” players. These athletes have to be ready to step up when needed, and practice hard to help make the team as competitive as they can be. They should constantly strive to move up to the “starting” role. There are many decisions made by the coaching staff during the course of a season. These include which athletes should be starters, who should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff, and are approached with the best interest of the team as the top priority.

### **31. Team Captains:**

It is a coach’s decision how team captains are chosen. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled event. Captains may also be appointed on a game-by-game basis.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team. Captains are expected to assist the coaching staff by promoting team rules, and communicating with coaches about problems that arise that could affect the team.

Captains of a team will be relieved of their position for violating team, athletic department, school, or MIAA rules.

Please remember, “**Captain is a title, Leadership is an action!**”

### **32. College/Career Guidance:**

One of the most important decisions facing high school athletes is what to do after high school. The Nipmuc Regional High School coaches can assist their players with this extremely important decision. Coaches can answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videotapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. **If an athlete has the desire to compete at the collegiate level, it is very important to be knowledgeable about the up-to-date National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulations.** Copies of the latest regulations can be obtained at the Athletic Director’s office or from the Guidance Department. (Athletes are strongly encouraged to schedule visitations in a way that does not conflict with current athletic schedules.)

### **33. Unsupervised Use of School Facilities:**

At no time may an athlete use the weight room or any other school facility without **adult** supervision. No student should be in the building unsupervised.