

# Iron Mountain Athletic Handbook

2022-2023



# Home of the Mountaineers

The following handbook provides rules for the eligibility and participation of all middle and high school students taking part in school-sponsored interscholastic athletics and Iron Mountain Public Schools. This athletic policy remains in effect throughout the entire calendar year and is not necessarily limited to the athletic season in which an athlete is participating. In addition, rules for athletic conduct govern the student-athlete both on and off of school grounds. They apply from the first day of involvement with a sport until the end of an athlete's career at Iron Mountain Public Schools, and exist to provide a safe, fair, healthy and educational experience for everyone involved.

## **MHSAA, Mid-Pen, West Pac Athletic Conference Membership**

Iron Mountain Public schools maintain a continuing membership with the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) and all programs, coaches and athletes are expected to adhere to MHSAA rules concerning athletic eligibility and participation.

Iron Mountain Public schools is also a member of both the Mid-Peninsula Athletic Conference, West Pac Athletic Conference and agrees to all policy, governance, and scheduling handed down by the Conferences and its administrators.

School-sponsored sports that are offered to middle school students:

Basketball (boys & girls)	Track and Field (boys & girls)
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School-sponsored sports that are offered to high school students:

Baseball	Basketball (boys & girls)	Bowling (boys & girls)
Competitive Cheer	Football	Golf (boys & girls)
Soccer (boys & girls)	Softball	Tennis (boys & girls)
Track and Field (boys & girls)	Volleyball	Wrestling

School-approved co-op sports that are offered to high school students:

Cross Country (boys and girls)	Hockey	Swimming/Diving (boys & girls)
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## Parent Commitment Guidelines

Positive parental involvement in school athletics is vital to your student's success. To help stress the importance of this involvement we have developed a set of guidelines to remind parents of some of the key areas of concern. The following are commitment guidelines for parents who have student participating in interscholastic competition.

1. **Transportation** – Please pick students up within one half-hour after completion of practice or contests.
2. **Volunteering** – Concession stand coverage is needed at our events. Both high school and middle school teams will be assigned specific events to work by our athletic boosters and parent volunteers are extremely important. Money raised by the concession stand goes to benefit and offset costs to the individual teams. Please volunteer to staff these concessions if you are able.
3. **Sportsmanship** – Modeling proper behavior is vital to our athletes. It is our goal to develop sportsmanship in each of our athletes. Parents are expected to talk to their student about their behavior at practice and before, during, and after athletic events. Eliminating poor sportsmanship at games has been an important goal of the MHSAA and Iron Mountain Athletic Department. It will NOT be tolerated at our contest home or away. Those continuing to violate this policy will be removed or restricted from events.
4. **24 Hour Rule/Communication** – Proper and timely communication between parents and coaches can help eliminate most, if not all, misunderstanding and conflicts that might occur. Communication should take place with the coach first before contacting school administration. We ask that communication with a coach concerning your student take place after 24 hours of the incident to allow ample time for all involved to be in the right frame of mind for discussion. Setting up the meeting may take place before the 24 hours.
5. **Support of Coach/Parents** – Coaches and parents are not always in agreement and will from time to time make a mistake. It is vital that they work together to support one another when making decisions concerning the athletes. Modeling this respect by the parent is very important! Please support your coaches and athletic department when discussing playing time, discipline, team policies, and other topics with your student.

**Eligibility:** All students must be eligible under both the MHSAA rules and those of Iron Mountain Public Schools in order to participate and compete. A student must:

- Be enrolled in Iron Mountain Public Schools and receive credit in 66% or more of his/her classes. High school students who have recently enrolled IMHS are subject to MHSAA rules regarding transfer eligibility.

- Be a student in good academic standing, attending the school for which he/she wishes to participate. Further information about academic requirements can be found in the Academic Eligibility section.
- Display appropriate citizenship. Disciplinary action as a result of poor conduct may be cause for athletes to lose eligibility. Example of poor conduct include, but are not limited to, skipping class, cheating, fighting, stealing, destruction of school property, sexual harassment, poor citizenship and disrespect.
- Have a current physical (Done after April 15) completed, signed and on file in the school office.
- All rules for the MHSAA eligibility can be found on their website [www.mhsaa.com](http://www.mhsaa.com). The MHSAA also produces a useful document of frequently asked questions that can be found at: <https://www.mhsaa.com/About-the-MHSAA/FAQs>

#### **Athletic Department Policies:**

All student athletes must abide by the rules contained within the IMPS Athletic Handbook, which will be available both in written form and online at [www.imschools.org](http://www.imschools.org).

#### **Academic Eligibility:**

In addition to satisfying all MHSAA academic eligibility requirements, IMPS requires that student athletes be passing six of seven classes in which they are currently enrolled. Passing is defined as a D- or greater, which is usually greater than or equal to a 60%. In the case of online courses, all policies apply and students will be expected to not only be passing their classes, but also to be making appropriate progress so as to finish their classes by the semester's end.

Grade checks are conducted every week during the duration of the season. If a student is failing two or more classes at the time of a grade check, he/she will be considered on probation and have one week from the date of that grade check to bring up failing grade(s). During that probationary period, the athlete will still be eligible to practice and compete as usual. A second grade check will be conducted after the one-week probation period and, if the student is still failing at that time, he or she will be deemed ineligible.

An ineligible athlete may practice with the team, but may not participate in any competition or scrimmages. Student will be ineligible for a minimum of one week and may only regain their eligibility after a subsequent weekly grade check reveals that they are no longer failing the classes that brought about the initial ineligibility.

An athlete who is academically ineligible for multiple weeks may be removed from the team to concentrate on their academics. Such a decision will be up to the discretion of their coach and the athletic director.

High school students participating in winter sports who receive a failing grade for a semester class will be declared ineligible for the first three weeks of the second semester, during which time they must put together a plan for recovering the credits which they lost. Only after they

have served their three-week suspension and have worked with the athletic director or guidance counselor to come up with a credit-recovery plan will their eligibility be reinstated. High school athletes who fail three or more semester classes in the spring will be required to make up those missing credits (presumably in summer school or during FUTURES) before being eligible to play in the fall.

Student who fail to do so before the first day of fall sports may practice with the team at the discretion of the athletic director, but will not be eligible to compete until school begins in September and they have the opportunity to put together a plan for credit recovery.

Incoming freshman are not subject to this rule and benefit from a one-time automatic eligibility once they advance to the high school, regardless of what their grades were in Middle School.

For rules regarding MHSAA eligibility standards, visit their website, check out their page of FAQ at: <https://www.mhsaa.com/About-the-MHSAA/FAQs>, or feel free to call your athletic director for assistance.

### **Attendance:**

Because student attendance is critical for academic success, and because athletics exist for the purpose of educating our students, student athletes are required to be present for most periods of the school day in order to play or practice. Students need to attend school at least 50% of the school day. The 50% of school missed must be excused by the parent prior to the day missed. Exceptions will be made for absences that are arranged in advance and medical by nature, and the athletes and/or parents should be ready to provide proof of the appointment if necessary.

### **Dual Sport Participation Agreement:**

While it is unusual, high school athletes may participate in two sports during the same season. In order to be a dual sport athlete, a student must obtain a dual sport contract from the school office. Such agreement requires permissions from the athlete's coaches, parents, and the athletic director.

### **Detentions:**

Any student athlete who has been assigned an after-school detention is expected to honor it, and honoring it should take precedence over any athletic practice or contest. Athletes will be subject to all additional team discipline that results from their absence. It may be acceptable for an athlete to negotiate an alternate date or consequence provided it is done in advance and with the complete agreement of the staff member in charge.

### **School Suspensions:**

Any athlete who is suspended from school is also suspended from all practices, competitions and team activities during their suspension. This rule includes in-school suspensions. If a student is assigned to be in ISS for a day for disciplinary reasons, then he/she will not be allowed to practice or compete on that day. Athletes who miss team events due to suspension may also be subject to all additional team discipline that results from their absence.

**Expulsion:**

Any student who has been expelled by Iron Mountain Public Schools may not join or practice with a team, nor may they use Iron Mountain facilities for training. In most cases, the expelled student will also not be allowed to attend athletic contests, even as a spectator.

**Athletic Injuries:**

Athletes who are injured should report their injuries to the coach and athletic trainer immediately. Iron Mountain's athletic trainer is present on game days, and athletes are strongly suggested to consult with him/her about all sport-related injuries. Concussion and other injuries that require ongoing treatment should be brought to a physician if necessary.

**Concussions:**

Head injuries are particularly serious and should be reported to a medical professional as soon as possible. Athletes found to have incurred a head injury during the activity will be immediately removed from practices or games. All athletes who sustain a concussion will be reported to the MHSAA by the athletic staff. All athletes who sustain a concussion will not be allowed to return to practice/games until they are cleared by our trainer and their personal physician (if necessary). Information regarding concussions, their symptoms and management is available to parents and athletes at [www.cdc.gov/concussions](http://www.cdc.gov/concussions) for additional resources.

**Risk of Participation:**

By allowing their daughter/son to participate, parents/guardians acknowledge and accept that there is always a risk of serious injury as a result of athletic competition. The Iron Mountain Athletic Staff will do everything within their power to minimize any harm to an athlete, but the possibility remains, a reality due to the nature of athletic participation.

**Athletic Equipment:**

Athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of uniforms and equipment issued to them. School furnished uniforms and equipment may only be used for practice or contests unless expressly approved by the coach. Athletes will be expected to pay for any loss or damage to uniforms and equipment. All financial obligations of school equipment must be fully paid to the school before the athlete may compete in another sport.

**Transportation:**

All Athletes are expected to travel to, and return from, away contests with the team unless transportation is not provided by the District. During that time athletes must remain with their team and under the supervision of the coach for the duration of the meet or game. Positive, appropriate behavior is required by Iron Mountain Athletes at all times, especially when representing the school in other schools or communities.

Under certain circumstances an athlete's parent or legal guardian may opt to drive him/her home from an event. In order to do so, that parent/guardian must sign their athlete out and also verbally communicate their intentions with the coach. This option is only available to an athlete's parent or legal guardian, and all other parties who wish to transport Iron Mountain Student-Athletes must contact the athletic department prior to the day of the event to gain written approval from the athletic director and the coaching staff. Adults who choose

to sign an athlete out after a contest do so with the understanding that they are assuming all responsibility at that point and absolving IMPS of any liability.

### **Quitting a Team:**

While quitting an athletic team is strongly discouraged, athletes who wish to quit are expected to discuss their situation with their coaches before making a final decision. Any athlete who quits a team in-season will not be permitted to join another athletic team during that season, nor will he/she be permitted to begin workouts for an upcoming season (with the exception of normal strength training) until the previous sport's season is finished.

### **Medication:**

School personnel and coaches will not be allowed to dispense any drug, medication or food supplement. All dispensing of drugs must follow school procedures for dispensing medications.

### **Additional Program Rules:**

Individual sports programs may reserve the right to add to the guidelines listed above. Any team rules that deviate significantly from a policy outlined in this handbook must be cleared by the athletic director and presented clearly to athletes and parent.

### **Student Conduct, Discipline and Consequences**

Iron Mountain Public Schools strongly believes that athletics plays an important role in the education of our students. Sports exist to teach health, life skills, vocational skills, morality, teamwork, and fun. However, because these lessons quite often involve other schools, their fans, and members of our own community, the conduct of our coaches, athletes and administrators is expected to be exemplary. Participation in extracurricular athletics, while extremely important, is a privilege and is not guaranteed. Athletes are expected to conform to the following athletic code of conduct. Iron Mountain athletes should:

- Do their very best in the classroom and on the playing field to represent themselves, their school and their community in a positive manner.
- Be a positive example both inside and outside the school building.
- Follow the rules prescribed by their school and its athletic department.
- Promote honesty, and do the right thing even when they aren't being watched.
- Treat themselves, their peers, the IMPS staff and their school with respect.
- Pay attention to their health getting proper rest and being mindful of what they put in their bodies.
- Be on time, and attend practices and classes every day.
- Be proud of themselves and their community.
- Display exemplary sportsmanship.

### **Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use:**

Student-athletes are required to remain drug-free during their entire athletic career, both in-season and out-of-season. Drug-free means abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances and other mind-altering drugs, and from the abuse of prescription drugs, dietary drugs, other drugs and medications. This also included steroids or other performance enhancing drugs. Student athletes are also prohibited from possessing, purchasing, using, manufacturing, or distributing alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances,

and other mind-altering drugs. The possession of drugs or smoking paraphernalia and the possession, use, manufacture or distribution of “look alike” or “designer” drugs is also prohibited.

### **Self-Help Clause:**

In the interest of promoting honesty and the health of our individual athletes, any student who comes forward to a school official expressing concerns about having an alcohol, tobacco, or drug problem will be exempt from disciplinary action. That student will be directed to the Dickenson-Iron District Health Department (DIDHD) for an assessment. If treatment is necessary, all prescribed treatment will take precedence over athletic practices and competitions. All recommendation made by the DIDHD will have to be met and completed successfully in order for the student to remain eligible for athletics. If a student fails to follow these recommendations through to completion, then he/she will immediately be suspended from participation until his/her treatment is complete.

### **Criminal Activities:**

Because students involved in extracurricular activities are representing our school and community, they must behave in a manner that reflects well on those institutions. Committing a criminal act obviously does not reflect well on the individual or on our school and community as a whole. Student who are arraigned for criminal activities will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

- Any student who has been arraigned for criminal activities (discounting traffic violations) may be subject to suspension from all athletic participation, including practices and travel, until the matter is resolved through the court system.
- Penalties for being found guilty of criminal activity will be a minimum of what is prescribed in the Disciplinary Tier System below, but may be more significant. Once the matter has been settled by the legal system, if additional penalties are necessary, the athletic department will convene an ad hoc committee made up of no less than three people and consisting of administrator(s) and coach(es) to decide on what additional discipline is appropriate.

### **Disciplinary Tier System:**

The following system provides a framework for issuing discipline to athletes who have not followed Iron Mountain athletic code of conduct. All decisions will be subject to review by the athlete’s coach and their school’s administration. Multiple violations that occur during a season may be cumulative, and may carry over from season to season based on the severity of the misconduct.

#### **1. Tier One Violations**

- a. Removal from a class for disciplinary reasons
- b. Displaying disrespect toward a coach or school personnel
- c. Trespassing (unauthorized presence on school property)
- d. Unsportsmanlike conduct (profanity, temper tantrums, technical fouls, red cards, etc.)
- e. Any suspension from school (including in-school suspensions)
- f. Insubordination towards a coach (failing to follow a reasonable request)

### **Consequences for Tier One Violations:**



Most violations in this category will initially result in a warning from either the coach or the athletic director. Repeat offenses will result in a one game suspension from competition per offense. Multiple Tier One offenses may result in the behaviors being considered a Tier Two violation.

## **2. Tier Two Violations**

- a. Police contact resulting in an arrest (this may also fall under Tier Three).
- b. Theft (within the confines of the school and outside of the legal system)
- c. Fighting
- d. Bullying or Harassment
- e. Damage or destruction of property
- f. Multiple Tier One violations

### **Consequences for Tier Two Violations:**

Violations in this category will result in a maximum suspension of 25% of the season, with a minimum suspension of one contest. Consequences will be considered by the athletic director and coach based on the severity of the infraction. Multiple Tier Two offenses will result in the behaviors being considered a Tier Three violation.

## **3. Tier Three Violations**

- a. Being involved in the use, possession, buying, selling, or giving away of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.
- b. Being present at establishments or gatherings where alcohol or controlled substances are present and not under the supervision of someone over the age of 21 who is preventing students from gaining access to the alcohol or controlled substances. Students who do not leave immediately will be subject to discipline.
- c. Being convicted of a felony (More severe penalties up to and including permanent suspension from athletics may be imposed depending upon the severity of the felony)
- d. Assault of a coach, teacher, or other school personnel
- e. Multiple Tier One or Tier Two violations.

### **Consequences for Tier Three:**

Due to their severity, violations in this category will vary with a maximum penalty being removal from the team and a minimum being a suspension of 25% of the season. Multiple Tier Three infractions will result on the athlete being removed from the team and possibly suspended for more than one athletic season. These decisions will be made by an ad hoc committee consisting of the principal, athletic director and at least one other school employee. Depending on the nature of the offense, reinstatement may also be contingent on the student completing mandatory drug/alcohol/substance abuse counseling at the expense of the parent/guardian.

### **Appeals Committee:**

Students may file an appeal if they disagree with discipline handed down by the athletic department. Appeals must be filed, in writing, to the principal or athletic director. Guidelines regarding the appeal process are:

- Appeals must be filed within five school days of notification of a suspension
- The appeal hearing will be held within five days of receipt of the appeal request
- All appeals must contain a release of information statement
- The appeals committee will consist of an ad hoc committee made up of not less than three school employees, and consisting of at least one administrator and one coach. The individual(s) who handed down the original discipline may not be members of the appeals committee

The appeal process will be as follows:

- The student's athletic, social, disciplinary, and academic history will be reviewed
- The original violation and resulting discipline will be discussed
- Any other pertinent information or documentation will be reviewed
- The students and/or his or her parents will present their request

All decisions made by the appeals committee are final. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the student and his/her parents within 24 hours. A written statement of the results will be sent to the parents and coaches, and be on file in the school's office. Any discipline imposed on an athlete that result from a violation of the general student code of conduct should be appealed to the principal or assistant principal rather than the athletic department, and any changes that result from that appeal will immediately apply to an athlete's athletic discipline as well.