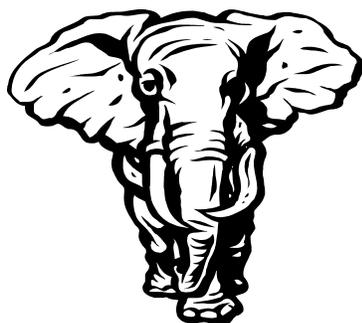


SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



**ATHLETIC PROGRAM
HANDBOOK**

2018-2019

**SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

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SOMERS PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Interscholastic athletics in the Somers Central School District is a component of the physical education and wellness program and, therefore, an integral part of the district's total educational program.

Everyone involved in the delivery of athletics possesses a unique opportunity to teach positive life skills and values. Desire, dedication, and self-discipline need to be developed in order to ensure the commitment and personal sacrifice required by athletes. Making such a commitment helps to nurture integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character. The final outcome is a better citizen carrying these values throughout his/her life.

It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one criterion when determining a season's success. Guiding the team and individuals to attain maximum potential is the ultimate goal. To this end, the coaching staff must teach student/athletes to prepare their minds and bodies in order to reach maximum potential and then to be modest in victory and steadfast in defeat.

VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Varsity competition is the culmination of each athletic program. The varsity team is the showcase for each athletic program. The varsity team will be composed of the most skilled, dedicated members of the program, regardless of grade level. Seniors are **not** guaranteed a position on the varsity team. Participation on a varsity program one year does not guarantee a spot the following year.

Squad size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is vital that each team member has a role and is informed of its importance. The number of roster positions is relative to the students' acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the team's goals. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on a varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport requires a six-day-a-week commitment. This commitment **is** extended into vacation periods for all sport seasons.

The varsity coach is the leader of that sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. The communication among the freshman, modified, junior varsity and varsity programs is the responsibility of the head varsity coach. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest and working to reach the group's and individual's maximum potential are worthy goals of a varsity level team.

JUNIOR VARSITY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The junior varsity level is intended for those who display the potential for continued development into productive varsity level performers. In certain situations, juniors who are expected to make future contributions at the varsity level will be considered for junior varsity participation. Also, freshmen may be included on a junior varsity roster, as well as middle school students who have satisfied all selection classification requirements. The junior varsity team is composed of freshman, sophomores, juniors.

At this level, athletes are expected to have visibly committed themselves to the program. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play in addition to socio-emotional development. Junior varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. The outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level.

The realization that practice sessions are important is a premise that is vital to a successful junior varsity team and player. Team members will have meaningful contest participation over the course of a season, however, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for the six-day-a-week commitment that is expected at the varsity level. Practice sessions are sometimes scheduled during school vacation periods. With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level.

FRESHMAN PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Freshman programs help students make the transition from modified to high school athletics. Only freshmen are eligible to participate on a pure freshman team. Whenever numbers warrant, we will add a freshman team to enable greater participation at the freshman level. We will try to maintain larger squads to encourage participation. At this level athletes are expected to make a five-day a week commitment. Although it is not common, games and practices can occur on a weekend or holiday. Every effort is made at this level to ensure playing time for all team members in all games. However, practice, attendance, attitude, and participation at practice can affect this goal.

MODIFIED PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

All seventh and eighth grade students are eligible to participate in the modified interscholastic athletic program. At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, healthy competition, while placing appropriate physiological demands upon the adolescent body.

Emphasis is placed on participation of athletes. The amount of contest participation is based on attendance, commitment, attitude, skill level and effort. Participation is not necessarily equal at this level. However, opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each team member will exist over the course of the season.

GETTING READY TO PLAY

1. Attend the Athletic Sign-up Meeting prior to each season.

Approximately one month prior to each season a sign-up meeting will be conducted during the school day. The Athletic Department uses this information to determine program numbers and for coaches to generate rosters.

2. Requirements for Participation

A. Physical Examination

A yearly physical examination is required. The “Pre-Sports Medical Screening and Health History” form must be completed by a physician and submitted to the School Nurse prior to participation. The physical covers all sports. The physical exam is good for 365 days from the date of the physical. Any student who has not elected to have a sports physical performed by their family physician may make arrangements for a physical exam to be conducted by the school physician. “Sports physicals” are conducted once a year at the middle school and high school during March. These physicals are conducted by our school physician and health services team. If a student elects not to take part in the school sponsored screening, it is the parents responsibility to have the family physician administer the screening at his/her own expense. Under no circumstances will any athlete be allowed to participate without the athletic director receiving all completed forms.

B. Athletic Participation Form

- Permission to Participate
- Sports Warning
- Medical History Update
- Emergency Medical Treatment Cards

Forms can be picked up in the Athletic Office or Nurse’s Office. All forms are returned to the Athletic Office.

Form can be returned up to 30 days prior to the start of the season, but **no earlier**. A form must be submitted for each sport season.

3. Attend Pre-Season Meeting

One of the most important ingredients for a successful sport season is effective, open and appropriate communication between the coach, parents, and student/athlete. In order to ensure that this communication takes place, **pre-season meetings** are scheduled by the athletic department at the beginning of each season. Coaches will inform prospective team members when pre-season meetings are scheduled. Student/athletes and parents are required to attend.

Topics of Discussion at Pre-Season Meetings

- Athletic Program policies & procedures
- Game
 - Schedules
- Practice schedules
- Expectation of players, coaches, and parents
- Communication with coaches
- College recruiting
- Goals for season
- Parent roles
- Transportation
- Eligibility rules
- Code of conduct
- Athletic award program

ELIGIBILITY

We believe that students who have the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities should conduct themselves as responsible representatives of the Somers Central School District. In order to ensure this conduct, coaches, advisors and administrators will enforce the Somers High School Code of Conduct and this Co-Curricular Behavioral Eligibility Policy, each of which will be issued to all students annually.

New York State Public High School Athletic Association Eligibility Standards

- **College:** A student is no longer eligible to represent the school in that sport in that season if the student participates in practice or competition with or against any college athletic squad during that season.
- **National Team/Olympic Development Programs:** A student may participate as an individual as a member of a National Team or in an Olympic Development Program during the school year if such participation is approved by the student's high school principal and chief school officer, and the Executive Director is notified in writing by the principal at least 30 days prior to the start of the program.
- **Professional Tryouts:** No tryouts for, or practice with, professional teams are approved except during the summer vacation. A student who participates in such a tryout is ineligible to represent the school in that sport. A school may apply on behalf of the student to their section for reinstatement one year from the date of the latest violation. Penalties for violations of these standards can result in loss of eligibility from that sport.

SELECTION CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURE

Our district utilizes the Selection/Classification process on a very limited basis. The intent of the Selection/Classification Program is to provide safe and suitable participation in an appropriate level of competition for students who do not have the opportunity to play that sport at the middle school level.

In the Somers Central School District, Selection/Classification will be offered only to **eighth grade** students in sports where there are no modified programs offered in that sport. The exception to this policy is wrestling, where decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

OUT OF SEASON/OUTSIDE COMPETITION

As youth sports continue to expand in our society, and the desire for specialization advances, student/athletes are faced with difficult decisions as to what they will commit to and what takes priority in their life. **If you make a commitment to a school team, you commit to the coaches, your teammates, and the school. Your first commitment and allegiance should be to that team.**

You must also consider the health and safety risks. Is it healthy to play and practice 7 days a week, year round, or 26 weeks consecutively? Is it healthy to finish practice, then go to another practice or another game the same day? These are questions to ask. Even within our own athletic program, coaches are trying to get athletes to participate year round.

Special consideration will not be afforded athletes that must leave early, or miss practice or a game due to outside participation in athletic events. Athletes who miss more than 2 practices due to attendance at an outside or off- season team will meet with the coach and Athletic Director to discuss a course of action that could include missing of games or expulsion from the team.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Participation in co-curricular activities, such as practices, rehearsals, club/class meetings or athletic contests) is allowed only if a student attends his/her scheduled classes, including physical education and study halls. In addition, students are expected to arrive at school by period 4. Students who miss 4 or more periods in any given day may not participate in co-curricular activities on that day. The only exceptions would be seniors who are officially scheduled for late arrival or early dismissal. Any emergency situations that would cause a student to be late for school during periods 1-3 shall be referred to the High School Assistant Principal.

LEAVING A SQUAD

Individuals leaving a squad without the coach's permission or having been dismissed because of an Athletic Training Rule violation, forfeit all awards and may not participate on any other athletic team that same sport season and may be prohibited from playing during the next season as well. If an individual leaves the team before final cuts, he/she may try out for another team, only if permission from the team he/she is leaving and the coach of the team he/she would like to try for approve the move. Reminder, practices are sports specific and cannot count from one sport to the other. If no cuts are made for that particular team, any moves have to be approved before final team rosters are sent to the athletic office prior to the first game.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SOMERS ATHLETE

Being a member of a Somers athletic team is a privilege and an honor. To many athletes, it is the fulfillment of an early ambition. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be fulfilled. A great athletic tradition has been developed by the hard work of many people over the years. As a member of an athletic team at Somers, you have inherited a great tradition. Your actions will reflect not only on those who you are associated with now, but those who have contributed so much to our school in the past.

Many of our athletes have gone on to successful collegiate careers. Many others have established league, section and state records. Because of this fine tradition a challenge is set for you to work hard and to make sure that your actions reflect the standards that are set up by the Athletic Department.

In today's society you will be asked to make sacrifices that will benefit yourself, your team and your school. Never before has the pressure of peer groups been so strong. You must learn to say "NO" to risky lifestyle choices. In the long run you and your family will be proud of the sacrifices and dedication that you will have put forth to be a member of our athletic teams. If you take this opportunity to make yourself a better individual, it will be truly a gratifying educational experience. The highs and lows of athletic competition are the result of hard work, dedication and discipline and are rewarded with the accumulation of fond memories and personal achievements.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden yourself and to develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the most from your high school experiences. Your studies, your participation in other school activities, as well as in athletics, prepare you for your life as an adult.

SPECIALIZATION

It is the philosophy of the Somers athletic program to encourage student participation in a number of sports, co-curricular activities, and clubs. Student specialization in one sport a year around goes against the District philosophy of developing well-rounded individuals.

Colleges are generally more interested in the athlete who has the skills and athletic ability to participate in more than one sport during their high school career. Remember to get involved and participate and become an active member of your school community.

CAPTAINS

The captaincy should not be based solely on popularity, and the captains will not always be the best player on the team. Team captain is a leadership role where the individual has consistently demonstrated: commitment, honesty, and sportsmanship, the ability to develop team work, citizenship and character. The captaincy is attained as the result of coach's appointment and team vote. Whenever possible or agreeable, coaches will have captains prior to the start of a season. The role of captain is not restricted to a senior athlete.

QUALITIES OF A TEAM CAPTAIN

- Role Model – Hardworking, committed, dedicated, humble, leader by example, positive attitude, shows respect for coaches, teachers, adults & peers.
- Exhibits good citizenship – dependable, loyal, trustworthy, unselfish – has a great deal of pride in the team, school and community.
- Committed to be alcohol and drug free – shows social confidence.
- Has a strong self image, mature, motivated, good communication skills
- Good school behavior – Acceptable academic progress
- Willingness to follow team rules and act as a liaison between teammates, coaches and athletic director

STUDENT ATHLETE CODE OF BEHAVIOR

The educational and co-curricular programs offered by the Somers Central School District are based on our guiding principles of trust, decency and respect. Somers students' participation in co-curricular activities is considered a privilege, not a right. If Somers High School or Somers Middle School students choose to participate in any high school co-curricular activities, they are subject to additional behavioral and academic eligibility requirements as outlined below.

CO-CURRICULAR BEHAVIORAL ELIGIBILITY POLICY

1. Statement of Purpose

- We believe that students who have the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities should conduct themselves as responsible representatives of the Somers Central School District. In order to ensure this conduct, coaches, advisors and administrators will enforce the Somers High School Code of Conduct and this Co-Curricular Behavioral Eligibility Policy, each of which will be issued to all students annually.

2. Disciplinary Action

- Any student engaging in conduct that is egregious or inappropriate, whether on campus or off campus, and/or brings discredit to the Somers Central School District, may be disciplined with a penalty up to and including a suspension from activities for an entire season or beyond, depending upon the circumstances of the incident. Activities include all events associated with the school, both on and off campus.
- Additionally, any student who is issued either an in-school suspension ("ISS") or out of school suspension ("OSS") will lose eligibility to participate in co-curricular activities on those days, including weekends if the suspension spans those days. Further disciplinary action may extend beyond the ISS or OSS period, depending upon the circumstances of the incident.
- The decision to suspend a student's eligibility to participate in co-curricular activities, as described above, shall be made by the Athletic Director, in consultation with an advisory committee consisting of the coach or advisor and other appropriate administrative personnel as necessary.

3. Timeline

- The "seasons" of clubs and activities will be as follows: September to November 30; December 1 to February 28/29; March 1 to end of school year.
- Sports and Marching Band seasons are: Fall (August to conclusion of season); Winter (November to conclusion of season); and Spring (March to conclusion of season).
- Appeal Process for Behavioral Eligibility

If a student or his/her parent disagrees with the disciplinary penalty relating to participation in extra-curricular activities, the student or his/her parent must make a written request to the building principal for review of the penalty within three school days of the penalty being imposed

CO-CURRICULAR ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Participation in co-curricular activities is part of the educational program at Somers High School. Students' first priority should be their academic responsibilities. Students who participate in co-curricular activities are expected to maintain academic eligibility each marking period by not failing more than one subject. In addition, athletes must pass physical education.

- Requirements

To be eligible to participate in high school co-curricular activities and sports, Somers High School students and Somers Middle School students:

- Shall be taking at least 5 academic credits per semester plus physical education. (Students with special circumstances may seek a waiver from the high school Principal.)
- Shall not be failing more than one course. (Honor societies have separate standards for induction. Once inducted, #2 applies.)
- Shall be passing physical education, if a member of an athletic team.

- Process of determining and regaining academic eligibility

- Eligibility is determined at the end of each marking period. A two-week probationary period begins on the last day of the marking period. During the probationary period, students failing more than one subject will have two weeks to attain passing status and remain eligible to participate in co-curricular activities.
- Fall eligibility is determined by the results of the June final course averages or summer school grades, if a course is being made up.
- Students can improve their probationary status two weeks into the new marking period by presenting evidence that they are passing the required number of courses. Special reinstatement applications must be completed and signed by subject teachers and presented to the High School Assistant Principal every two weeks. Failure to achieve passing status will result in ineligibility for the next two-week period.
- During the period of ineligibility, students may continue to participate with their teams or performing groups and attend co-curricular meetings. However, participation in contests, performances, projects or activities may not resume until eligibility is reinstated.

- **Appeal Process for Academic Eligibility**

- **Appeals of academic eligibility will be subject to review by the High School Principal.**

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These conferences are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. These conferences should never take place directly before or after an athletic contest and arrangements can be made through the Athletic Director's office

Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all players on the squad
- Locations and times of all the practices and contests
- Team requirements, i.e. special equipment, off-season equipment
- Discipline that results in denial of your child's participation
- College prospects

Communication Coaches Should Expect From You

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concern in regard to a coach's expectations
- College prospects

Appropriate Concerns To Discuss With Coaches

- The treatment of your child mentally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgments based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those described in the next segment, must be left to the discretion of the coach. Please refer to philosophy of levels.

Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student athletes

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

1. Be positive with your child. Let him/her know that it is a proud accomplishment simply to be part of an athletic team.
2. Try not to offer excuses if he/she is not playing. Encourage him/her to work hard and try his/her best. Help your child set goals as a good way to show your interest and monitor progress.
3. Discourage putting down coaches or other athletes which teaches your child to be a complainer, not a doer. Keep in mind, your child has to return to practice the next day.
4. Encourage your child to follow the rules with respect to attendance, training rules and school work.
5. Demonstrate good sportsmanship and live as a role model for your child.
6. Encourage respect for team and school rules, game officials, and sportsmanship.
7. Encourage your child to improve his or her self image by continuing to set individual goals.
8. Making comparisons between older or younger siblings and other athletes can hinder the growth of an individual's self-esteem. Progress should be monitored on an individual basis.
9. Encourage your child to play for the enjoyment of the game, not for receiving a scholarship or a select college admission. Be realistic about your student's abilities.
10. Remember that although you may not be in agreement with a coach's style of coaching, your child will have to deal with different leadership styles in life.
11. Make an appointment with the coach to discuss a problem and discuss your concern in a calm courteous manner.
12. Be a positive role model at an athletic event or practice. You represent your family, school, and town.

SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS

As a member of the Somers community, it is important to present each school in a positive image. This includes exhibiting proper conduct while participating as a spectator. Any spectator who does not abide by suitable rules of conduct may be asked to leave school property regardless if the contest is home or away. Suitable conduct includes:

1. Cheering for our team and directing comments only to our team.
2. Being considerate of all players, coaches, cheerleaders and referees.

3. Treating visiting teams as invited guests.
4. Becoming familiar with the spirit and rules of the game.
5. Accepting decisions made by referees.
6. Being gracious in victory, sportsmanlike in defeat.
7. Cheering good plays by the opposing team.
8. Abiding by the Somers High School Code of Conduct

NOISE MAKERS

All noise makers (cow bells, whistles, air horns, etc.) are prohibited from all Section I contests, both home and away for all sports.

PRACTICES AND CONTESTS

1. All student athletes must make a commitment to attend all practices and contests on time.
2. Athletes must attend school in order to participate in that day's practice or athletic contest. An athlete must be in attendance for a minimum of half of the school day (4 consecutive periods).
3. The Coach will notify athletes and their families of the team's games, practices and time schedules.
4. If an athlete is going to be late or absent from practice it is his / her responsibility to notify the coach.
5. An excused absence is for family emergencies or sickness. Please notify the coach directly.
6. Absence on a day preceding a contest may be a reason for not participating in the next contest.
7. Each sport has a required number of practices necessary in order to scrimmage or play in a contest, as outlined by NYSPHSAA, Inc.
8. Students scheduled for Physical Education must participate in class in order to be eligible to practice or compete on an athletic team
9. If a student is suspended from school then he/she will be ineligible to participate on the day of the suspension, and subsequent suspension days.
10. If an athlete goes home from school sick, they are not allowed to return for a practice or game.
11. Schedules - Keep in mind that schedules are only a guideline. There are many reasons (inclement weather, unplayable facility, transportation problem, etc.) that can cause game cancellations. During Sectional play; game opponent, date, and time are not determined until shortly before the contest.

12. “Captain Practices” are student-led activities and are **not** monitored or endorsed by the school district.

VACATION/HOLIDAY EXPECTATIONS

When athletes commit to a varsity or a junior varsity sport, they should assume that practices and/or contests will take place over school vacations and holidays. Since it is the policy of Section One to schedule contests during some vacations (especially in the spring) Somers must also do so. Somers’ teams would be at an extreme disadvantage if they took time off while others are playing and practicing. In addition, it would be unfair to ask other schools to reschedule Somers’ contests to another time, thus forcing them to play 3, 4 or even 5 games during a week in order to accommodate our athletes. Due to safety and health concerns, and a recommendation from the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, if we were to suspend athletic practices for approximately one week, we would need to spend approximately 3-4 days training and recertifying our athletes before participation in interscholastic contests.

When athletes go away and do not fulfill their commitment to the team, these decisions have an impact on those players that attend practices and games. The decision to not attend practice and games during vacations and holidays causes our teams to forfeit games, move junior varsity players up to the varsity to round out the team, and cause coaches to alter their plans for overall team development.

Athletes who must go away and miss practice and/or contests during vacations and holidays can expect that there could be some effect on their standing on the team, their playing time and their ability to earn a letter for the sport. When a varsity athlete, or junior varsity athlete, misses a practice or a contest during a vacation or holiday period, they must make up one day for each practice missed and one contest for each contest missed. Although junior varsity teams will practice and play over the holiday and vacation periods, the practice requirement will be slightly less than that of the varsity teams in accordance with the philosophy statement at each level of play. Athletes must understand that upon completion of the penalty for days missed, they are not guaranteed immediate return to playing time. That decision, like all decisions related to play time, will be at the discretion of the coaching staff.

No modified teams will hold required practices or contests during school vacations or holidays. Parents and athletes should understand, though, that if athletes continue in later years to play on junior varsity or varsity teams, required practices and games during some vacations and holidays are an expectation. Students and parents should inquire about such expectations before deciding to commit to a high school sport team.

SECTION ONE EJECTION AND CARD ACCUMULATION POLICY

1. When an athlete is ejected from a contest, the following action will be enforced:
 - A. First ejection – that player cannot attend or participate in the next scheduled contest.
 - B. Second ejection – that player cannot attend or participate in the next two scheduled games.
 - C. Third ejection – that player cannot attend or participate in any remaining contests including sectionals or any post season games.

Note: If an athlete is ejected in the final game of the season and participates in a sport during another season, he/she is ineligible to participate in the first scheduled contest. Example: A football player is ejected in his final game and also participates in baseball in the spring. He is ineligible for the first game of the baseball season.

2. Three yellow cards accumulated by a single player in the regular season will result in a one game suspension. The continued accumulation of yellow cards after his/her one game suspension will result in the following:
 - A. The fourth accumulated yellow card will result in an additional one game suspension.
 - B. The fifth accumulated yellow card will result in a two game suspension.
 - C. The sixth accumulated yellow card will result in suspension for the remainder of the season including all sectional and post season contests.

*In the event that a player receives two yellow cards in the same game, resulting in a red card, the two yellow cards will still count towards the season total.

3. The accumulative card total is for regular season play only. This process will begin again for postseason play unless the athlete was removed from competition in the regular season due to an accumulation of six yellow cards.
4. During the postseason a one game suspension will be implemented after three yellow cards and a one game suspension for each additional yellow card received through the Sectional, Regional and State championship tournament.
5. The coach is to report all ejections and yellow cards to his/her Athletic Director and the Section I office for tabulation. Reporting may be by mail, fax or e-mailed for tabulation.
6. Refusing to report, or failing to report infractions, and allowing players to continue to play under these circumstances will result in the forfeiture of all games played by the individual.

If/when a team's card total (yellow and red) reach more than 10 cards, the coach and Athletic Director is responsible to inform the Section One Director and the Sportsmanship Committee Chairperson. If 10 cards are totaled during the season, the school will be considered in need of assistance with sportsmanship. League representatives, the Sportsmanship Committee of both will meet to determine what appropriate action might be taken to assist this school.

SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY

Visiting team members, students and adult spectators are guests to be accorded all the courtesy and consideration that a friendly, well-mannered and well-intentioned host would normally give. The visitors, in turn, are to act as invited guests, using the home school's facilities with care and respecting the rules and customs of the home school.

- Officials are the proper authorities to make decisions regarding rules and their interpretation; these decisions should be accepted.
- Spectators, student athletes and coaches must recognize that their conduct plays an important role in establishing the reputation of their school and that their positive actions can relate directly to the success of their teams.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/EARLY DISMISSAL

On any day that school is closed due to inclement weather or other unplanned circumstances, teams cannot practice or compete in games or scrimmages. The same procedure will be followed on days when there is an early dismissal due to weather, or other unplanned circumstances.

TRANSPORTATION

- Team Bus Travel and Transportation Release
 - The Somers Central School District will provide transportation for all students, support, and coaching personnel of each athletic team in authorized school vehicles when the contest or practice has been scheduled away from the high school site. The coach of the team must ride the provided transportation with his/her students. Team members are strictly forbidden from driving an automobile, transporting members of an athletic team, or being driven by another student to an athletic contest or practice. If a student misses the district provided transportation to a contest or practice, he/she must be transported by his/her own parent. This must be approved by the Athletic Director or Principal. Under certain circumstances or exceptional situations that are reviewed and confirmed by the Athletic Director, a student may be excused from riding to or from an athletic event by school-authorized transportation. This request must be made in writing and submitted to the Athletic Director 24 hours in advance. This privilege is kept to a minimum, since the athletic philosophy continues to be that a student is part of a team in all phases of team activity. Should a parent approach a coach at an away contest and request that his/her student ride home with him or her, the coach does not have the authority to release the student. This request is to be used for special situations and is not a common practice. A student will NOT be allowed to ride home with another student.

Bus Conduct

1. Athletic shoes with cleats are not to be worn on the bus.
2. Food and beverages are permitted on the bus. Check with the bus driver for any restrictions.
3. The use of chewing tobacco, spitting or leaving the bus in unsanitary conditions may cause the athletic team to lose its travel privilege and play only home contests. A student who uses chewing tobacco is subject to the regulations regarding drug use.
4. A student who does not obey bus safety rules or who defaces bus equipment will have the privilege of bus transportation removed.

Procedure if the Bus Does Not Arrive

1. If the scheduled bus does not arrive the coach will call the bus company.
2. If no answer, the coach will call the Athletic Director.
3. The coach is not authorized to use private cars to transport students to a contest or a scrimmage.
4. The bus is not authorized to leave the site of an away contest for any reason except emergency or planned transportation scheduling. The coach will be notified if an alternate plan needs to be used. If the bus does not arrive at the away contest, call the Athletic Director immediately.

ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

Athletic equipment becomes more costly each year. It is the responsibility of the student to return to the coach all clothing (cleaned and in good repair) and equipment (including crutches, air casts, elastic wraps and other items). No one should retain any equipment after the season without school permission. The student will be charged for the missing articles.

Equipment Issued by the School

It is the school's responsibility to supply all of the safety equipment that is outlined by the rules of each sport.

1. Mouth guards are required in the following sports: Football, Girls' Field Hockey and Girls' and Boys' Lacrosse and Ice Hockey. They are elective in all others, although highly recommended.
2. Football equipment supplied by the school: helmet, shoulder pads, rib pads, hip pads, thigh and knee pads, and other safety equipment specified by the Athletic Trainer.
3. Field Hockey: required goalie equipment.
4. Volleyball: knee pads.
5. Boys & Girls Soccer: goalie gloves and goalie jersey.

6. Wrestling: head gear.
7. Baseball & Softball: all required catcher's equipment and button helmets.
8. Boys Lacrosse: helmet, shoulder pads, arm pads (gloves are usually a personal item) and goalie equipment.
9. Girls Lacrosse: Protective goggles and required goalie equipment.

All of the required safety equipment is sent to a reconditioning company after each season to be inspected for safety and repaired. Students who choose to purchase their own personal safety equipment must have prior approval from the Athletic Director. Examples of this type of equipment are as follows: football helmets, lacrosse helmets, batting helmets, catcher's equipment and other non-personal protective items.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are to be returned at the end of the season in a clean, sanitary condition unless instructed otherwise by the coach. Follow the washing instructions that are often included with the article of clothing. Usually this involves washing in lukewarm water and drying in the permanent press cycle. Teams may choose to purchase personal athletic equipment such as game jerseys, shorts and warm up clothing. These items are the personal property of the individual and the Athletic Department is not responsible for care, repair or replacement. Items that are to be worn during a game or contest must conform to the current team uniform or be approved by the Athletic Director.

PERSONAL ATHLETIC CLOTHING AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Male athletes who participate in contact and collision sports must wear a protective cup inserted into a jock. Female athletes should always wear a sports bra. Other personal items such as spandex pants, shorts, T shirts and sweats need to be cleaned on a regular basis, especially in sports where protective padding is worn over the clothing.

HEALTH OF THE ATHLETE

Benefits of Conditioning

The quality of one's athletic performance depends on each individual being in optimum physical condition. Proper conditioning allows the athlete and team to function at the highest possible level. A well conditioned athlete is a successful athlete; a well conditioned team is a successful team. The benefits of conditioning during practice sessions are considered as important as or even more important than the contests. Developing a proper appreciation for the benefits of conditioning can carry over into later years and lead to an improved quality of life. The health benefits derived from a regular exercise program are well documented. Developing lifelong habits are important goals to improve or maintain cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility.

Nutrition

For an athlete to develop his/her full potential, it is important to have an understanding of how to properly fuel, rebuild and nourish the body. The following are basic dietary guidelines that will help ensure peak performance:

1. Eat more complex carbohydrates such as breads, pasta, rice.
2. Eat moderate amounts of protein ~ limit red meat intake.
3. Eat fewer high fat foods.
4. Stay well-hydrated, especially in hot weather. Increase your intake of water each day and always replenish fluids immediately after practice and contests.
5. Maintain a healthy body composition and avoid quick weight loss.
6. Replace carbohydrates used for energy during training and competition.
7. Eat an appropriate pre-practice or pre-competition meal high in carbohydrates.
8. For obvious legal, health and safety and conditioning reasons, one must abstain from drugs, tobacco and alcohol. This is very important. It is advisable to pack a snack to be eaten after school, prior to an away contest or before a practice, especially if the student has lunch before 12:00 pm. The snack should include easily digestible foods such as a bagel, soft pretzel, fruit, granola snacks, etc. Avoid sandwiches that contain meat, or cheese or high fat content food items. These items are too hard to digest in a short period of time.

Training Rules:

Our coaching staff believes that athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules that include the absolute restrictions on the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, either on or off school property and during or after school hours. Medical research clearly substantiates that the use of tobacco, alcohol and any type of mood modifying substance produces harmful effects on the mind and body: such use will not be tolerated in the Somers High School athletic program. Therefore any student athlete known to use alcohol, tobacco or drugs will be held accountable and disciplined according to the SOMERS HIGH SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT AND THE CO-CURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletic Trainer

The athletic trainer provides emergency service for student-athletes and develops prevention strategies through appropriate training methods and physical conditioning programs. To ensure proper follow-up after an injury the trainer consults with parents, the school nurse, the coach, and/or the school physician.

Return to Play After an Injury

Following any injury, that required treatment by medical personnel (emergency room or private physician), or for any student-athlete under treatment by a private physician, a written “permission for return to participation in the athletic program” must be submitted by the attending medical personnel. This permission must include: nature of the injury, date of return, restrictions and modifications if any, and must state “return to athletics.” Such permission is subject to the review of the School Physician who will have final authority over permitting a student to return to play.

Risk

By the very nature of athletic activity, participants are at risk of physical injury. No matter how careful the athlete and the coach are, no matter how many precautions are taken, the risk cannot be eliminated. The risk of injury includes minor injuries such as ligament sprains and muscle strains. The risk also includes catastrophic injuries such as permanent paralysis or even death. It is important everyone understands these risks and that athletes follow ALL safety directions from their coaches because they are established to reduce risk of injury.

Medical Insurance

The Somers Central School District carries insurance coverage for student injuries that occur within its supervised activities. Please be aware that a family’s personal insurance coverage must first be used to its allowable limits. The school’s coverage makes payment toward any unpaid balance incurred due to the injury.

Jewelry and Valuables

No jewelry shall be worn in any sport according to the NYSPHSAA Jewelry Regulation. Students wishing to pierce their ears or body parts should be aware that jewelry must be removed in order to be an eligible participant. Coaches are not permitted to allow “taping over” of earrings or other jewelry. Necklaces, earrings, bracelets, rings, etc. must be removed for all practices and contests. Any visible body jewelry must be removed as well.

Lockers

All athletes will be issued a locker by their coach. A combination lock is to be provided by the individual athlete. The athlete must provide the coach with their combination numbers. It is the responsibility of the athlete to keep personal property locked.

SOMERS ATHLETIC OFFERINGS

FALL	VARSITY	JV	FROSH	MODIFIED
Cheerleading	X	X		
Boys Cross Country	X	X		X
Girls Cross-Country	X	X		X
Field Hockey	X	X		X
Boys Football	X	X	X*	
Boys Soccer	X	X		
Girls Soccer	X	X		
Girls Swimming	X			
Girls Tennis	X	X		
Girls Volleyball	X	X		X

WINTER	VARSITY	JV	FROSH	MODIFIED
Boys Basketball	X	X	X*	
Girls Basketball	X	X	X*	
Cheerleading	X	X		
Ice Hockey	X			X
Boys Swimming	X			
Boys Indoor Track	X	X		X
Girls Indoor Track	X	X		X
Wrestling	X	X		X
Skiing	X			
Gymnastics	X			

SPRING	VARSITY	JV	FROSH	MODIFIED
Baseball	X	X	X*	
Golf	X	X		
Boys Lacrosse	X	X	X*	
Girls Lacrosse	X	X	X*	
Softball	X	X		
Boys Tennis	X			
Boys Track & Field	X	X		X
Girls Track & Field	X	X		X

Interest and participation will result in additions and deletions to our programs.

*These teams are subject to year-to-year decisions based on participation numbers.

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE

I give permission for my child _____ to participate in the Somers High School
Name of Child

Interscholastic _____ Program. It is my understanding that my child will
Sport and Level

comply with the established policies and procedures of Somers High School and the Athletic Department. I will assume responsibility for paying fines incurred by my child for loss and/or damage to equipment, supplies and uniforms with the exception of normal wear.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

SPORTS WARNING

We are aware that playing or practicing in any sport can be a dangerous activity involving MANY RISKS OF INJURY.

We understand that the risks of engaging in the sport of _____ include, but are not limited to, death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons and other aspects of the muscular skeletal system and serious injury or impairment to other aspects of the body, general health and well being.

We also understand that the dangers and risks of engaging in the above sport may result not only in serious injury, but in a serious impairment of the future abilities of the athlete to earn a living, and engage in business, social and recreational activities and generally to enjoy life.

Because of the risks described above, we recognize the importance of listening to and following all of the coach’s instructions and warnings regarding playing techniques, training methods, rules of the sport and other team rules. We therefore expressly agree to obey all of the coach’s instructions and warnings.

It is acknowledged that we have read and understand the implications of this sports warning.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

(Please sign, detach and return the copy to the student’s coach)

I have read, and understand the contents and meaning of the Student Athlete Code of Behavior and Ethics and Parent Expectations.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date