STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

2026-2027

www.mhspolarbears.com

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GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME OF SCHOOL: Margaretta High School and Middle School

ADDRESS: 209 Lowell Street
Castalia, OH 44824

PHONE NUMBER: 419-684-5351

SUPERINTENDENT: Ed Kurt

TREASURER: Keegan Hall

PRINCIPAL: Dr. Jennifer Theis

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL: Michael Roberts

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR: Drew Grahl

ASSISTANT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR: Mark Freeh

SCHOOL COLORS: Kelly Green and White

CONFERENCE: Sandusky Bay Conference

DISTRICT WEBSITE: www.margarettaschooldistrict.com

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT TWITTER: @mhspolarbears

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT FACEBOOK: Margaretta Athletics

DISTRICT FACEBOOK: Margaretta Local Schools

FORWARD

This handbook has been prepared with the intention of being a reference guide for regulations, existing rules, and information now in effect concerning the athletic policies and procedures of the athletic department at Margaretta High School.

It is our hope that this handbook will contribute to a better understanding of policies and procedures which should give us a more efficient athletic program.

It is our wish that this handbook will be helpful to those for whom it is intended. Certainly, from time to time, our policies and regulations may change. We welcome any ideas or suggestions that will improve our athletic program at all times.

MISSION STATEMENT: MARGARETTA ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

We will build respectful and hardworking young men and women, who will be highly competitive in each respective sport, and who will represent their school and community with pride and dignity. Good sportsmanship will be expected from our coaches, athletes, and parents. Academics will always remain as the top priority of our student-athletes.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: MARGARETTA ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

We believe the interscholastic athletic program and other programs which support the interscholastic program exist for the purpose of:

1. Providing students who have interest and ability in sports with an outlet for the expression of these interests and abilities.

2. Providing an opportunity to experience important lessons of life which are part of athletics. For example:
    a. The opportunity to see that many limitations, physical and mental can be conquered.
    b. The joys of teamwork as well as individual accomplishment.
    c. The ability to accept both victory and defeat gracefully.
    d. The opportunity to develop ideas and habits of health, fair play, initiative, achievement and emotional control.

3. We believe that athletics provide tangible values for the student body. Athletics can make a substantial contribution to morale, and can provide an outlet for enthusiasm.

4. We believe the welfare of the individual student is always to be the primary concern. The game exists for the student.

In relating the desire to win with the purpose that has been listed, the Athletic Department feels that the lessons can be more easily taught in a winning atmosphere. However, the general philosophy underlying the Margaretta High School Athletic Department as guided by the policies of the Board of Education must emphasize not merely the winning of games, but the development of team and self-discipline, cooperation, and sportsmanship on the part of the students, the faculty, and the residents of the Margaretta Local School District.

Since Margaretta High School is a member of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the Sandusky Bay Conference, all athletic procedures conform to the rules and regulations of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Sandusky Bay Conference.

SANDUSKY BAY CONFERENCE
SPORTSMANSHIP-ETHICS AND INTEGRITY POLICY

The following are ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS at an athletic contest in the Sandusky Bay Conference:

- Applauding during introductions
- Cheerleaders leading fans in positive cheers in a positive manner
- Treating the game as a game and not a war
- Applauding the efforts of both teams at game's end
- Showing concern for an injured player regardless of team
- Encouraging, in fact, demanding sportsmanlike behavior from those fans near you
- Departing the game venue in a dignified and ethical manner
- Face painting and spirited costumes when not offensive or suggestive
- Loud positive noise in support of your own team.

The following are CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS AND SUBJECT TO SANCTION ranging from WARNINGS to DISMISSAL and SUBSEQUENT SUSPENSION FROM ATTENDANCE.

- Using an opponent's name or number in a cheer or chant.
- Profanity, Taunting, Trash Talking or Heckling.
- Wearing derogatory or offensive attire.
- Standing on seats or excessive bouncing up and down on the bleachers.

MARGARETTA ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATION CHAIN OF COMMAND

Margaretta Local Schools
Board of Education
|
Superintendent
|
High School Principal
|
Athletic Director
|
Coaches

Coaches, athletes, and parents should follow the line of authority on all matters pertaining to the athletic department. Ethical procedure demands that issues in the athletic program originating at any level shall proceed upwards through each office of responsibility, or inversely, it shall follow the same line of authority downward. To bypass any office not only delays consideration, but causes misunderstanding.

MARGARETTA ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Introduction

We are pleased that your son or daughter has chosen to participate in the Margaretta Local School District interscholastic athletic program. Our goal is to provide our student-athletes with the most rewarding experience possible. We believe that this goal may not be realized without appropriate lines of communication available to all parties involved. This "Communication Guide" has been developed to help coaches, parents, administrators, and athletes communicate more effectively:

Communication You Should Expect From The Coach

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach may have for your child and team
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements (attendance, off-season conditioning, fees, equipment, eligibility, etc.)

Communication The Coach Expects From Parents And Student-Athletes

- Notification of scheduling conflicts well in advance
- Special needs of the athlete that may not be apparent to the coach
- Concerns expressed directly to the coach first

Appropriate Concerns To Discuss With A Coach

- The mental and/or physical treatment of your child
- Concerns about your child's behavior
- Ways to help your child improve

Concerns Not Appropriate To Discuss With A Coach

- Playing time/Position Assignment
- Team strategy/Play calling
- Matters concerning other student-athletes

Procedure For Addressing Appropriate Concerns With A Coach

- Encourage your child to first address the concern with the head coach
- Contact the head coach to set up an appointment
- If the head coach cannot be reached after a reasonable amount of time, call the Athletic Director. An appointment with the head coach will be arranged for you.
- **Important!** Please **do not** attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice session. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution and in fact often escalate the situation.

What If The Meeting With The Coach Did Not Provide A Satisfactory Resolution?

- Although total agreement may not always be reached, a meeting affords the opportunity for productive discussion and better understanding. If a parent desires further discussion, please call the Athletic Director to set up a meeting.
- The Margaretta Local School District in conjunction with the Athletic Department follow the chain of command listed below. We ask that you observe the order of this line of communication if you elect to pursue any concern you may have in regard to the athletic program.
    1. Head Coach
    2. Athletic Director
    3. Building Principal
    4. Superintendent
    5. Board of Education

Parents' Role In Interscholastic Athletics – Communicating With Your Child

- Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship, and actual skill level.
- Be helpful, but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for a child to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach your child to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. Remember, you were frightened at times and were not always heroic. Your child needs your support. There is a thinking, feeling, sensitive, free spirit in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when things don't go their way. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coaches. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become confused.
- Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach. Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

STUDENT ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

Academics:

- Students in grades 9-12 must maintain a 1.5 grade point average and/or earned no more than one "F" in the immediately preceding grading period. They must also have a passing grade of "D" or higher in the equivalent of five full credit courses or more. (Example: Physical Education does not count as a full credit course)

- Students in grades 7-8 must maintain a 1.5 grade point average and/or earned no more than one "F" in the immediately preceding grading period. They must also have a passing grade of "D" or higher in any five courses or more. Students who are just entering 7th grade are automatically eligible during the first quarter of the school year.

- Each school team/sport roster will be considered final following the completion of 30% of that team/sports regular season schedule. Any extenuating circumstances would have to be approved by the building principal and athletic director to override this 30% policy.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

** PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL ATHLETIC FORMS CAN BE LOCATED ON THE DISTRICT'S FINAL FORMS ONLINE PLATFORM. There are numerous forms required for athletic participation. Below are just a few examples of these required documents.

1. EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM: All students must have a current emergency medical form on file at the school. Coaches must keep a copy of this form in order for a student to be allowed to practice.

2. PHYSICAL PACKET: Each student must be cleared by a medical physician before being permitted to practice. The current physical packet must be completely filled out and kept on file in the Athletic Office. Physicals are good for 13 calendar months after signed by a physician. A blank physical packet can be found in the Athletic Office, the Margaretta Schools Athletic website: www.margarettaschooldistrict.com, or on Final Forms. Please note that only the two pages that are completed by the physician are required to be printed off, completed by the physician, then turned in to the Athletic Office.

3. DRUG TESTING CONSENT FORM: All students must turn in a drug testing consent form in order to participate in extra-curricular activities. This form is to be kept in the Athletic Office. Students who do not submit this document will be denied the privilege to participate in sports until it is turned in. The drug testing policy and a blank drug testing consent form can be found in the Athletic Office, or on the Margaretta Schools Athletic website: www.margarettaschooldistrict.com

4. OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET: All students must turn in this document which provides students and parents awareness information on concussions. The document requires a signature from the student-athlete and the parent/guardian. This form is to be kept in the Athletic Office. A blank concussion information form can be found in the Athletic Office, or on the Margaretta Schools Athletic website: www.margarettaschooldistrict.com

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY DISCIPLINE CODE

All students and their parents/guardians are responsible for being familiar with the Margaretta Student Handbook. One specific section of the handbook that you will want to pay close attention to is the Extra-Curricular Activity Discipline Code, which includes the Code of Conduct for Athletics. The Margaretta Student Handbook for High School and Middle School students can be found on the Margaretta Schools website: www.margarettaschooldistrict.com. Additionally, a paper copy of the Student Handbook will be available in the High School Office upon request.

CONDUCT RULES FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR & CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Margaretta Local Schools Board of Education recognizes the value of extra-curricular and/or co-curricular activities in the educational process and the values that young people develop when they have an opportunity to participate in organized activity outside the traditional classroom. The Board of Education regards the participation in any extracurricular activity as a privilege, not a right. Students involved in Board approved activities are expected to demonstrate the same level of responsibility and behavior at practice and competitions as is expected in the classroom. The Board further expects each students who chooses to participate in extracurricular activities to demonstrate a high level sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity in all phases of the educational process and in all segments of their involvement in the community. In order to aid our students in maintaining an optimum performance level and so that there can be consistency throughout the many programs, the following policies have been developed. These regulations are to be in effect and enforced for their entire year (12 months).

Therefore, as provided for in Ohio Revised Coded Section 3313.664, the Board of Education authorizes the building principal or designee to deny participation to a student from one or all extracurricular or co-curricular activities for the following:

1. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct;

2. Violations of established athletic training rules or rules of the school organization that the student is a member;

3. Failure to meet academic standards as established by the Board of Education;

4. For conduct that demonstrates lack of character, integrity, or ethics and/or conduct that may bring discredit to the school or its programs. (i.e. criminal charges for any felony or serious misdemeanor);

5. For behavior which indicates that a student's further participation in any activity that may represent a threat to the safety and/or well being of other students and or staff.

Denial of participation may be invoked for student conduct that occurs at school and/or a school related activity and/or for conduct outside the school day and/or off school property.

The length of the denial from extracurricular activities may be from one (1) school day to a complete school year. The exact length of the denial shall be determined by the building principal or designee. This determination shall be based upon such factors as the severity of the misconduct, the frequency of a student's involvement in other situations involving misconduct, concern for the safety of other students and/or staff members, concern for the reputation of the school and/or the extracurricular program(s) that the student is associated with, and/or other factors that may be deemed relevant by the principal or designee.

A student that is denied participation from extracurricular activities for items #4 or #5 may request a review of his/her denial by the superintendent of the school. This request must be submitted in writing within five (5) school days of the student receiving notice from the building principal or designee that he/she has been denied from an extracurricular activity.

Denial, as used in this policy, relates only to extracurricular activities and does not relate to the removal of a student from the school district's educational program.

1. <u>Students:</u>

All behavior unbecoming of a Margaretta student such as insubordination toward the coach(es), directors, advisors, and officials, unsportsmanlike conduct, and any obscene gestures may result in the denial and/or loss of participation in all activities.

All Student Handbook violations may also be subject to disciplinary actions taken by the coach/advisor/administration which may result in denial and/or loss of participation.

2. Use of drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco products:
(this includes students 18 years of age and older)

No student-athlete will possess, transmit, or use drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco products in any form, or have them in his/her possession. This includes, but is not limited to "look-a-like" drugs, drug paraphernalia, any materials used in vaping, illegal edible materials, etc.

1). **First Violation**:

A). The eligible student will make an appointment with a chemical dependency counselor for a drug assessment and then follow the recommendations of the counselor. The counselor and/or agency must be certified by the Ohio Department of Health or the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. Parents/Guardians/Custodians must pay for this expense.

B). The eligible student will be denied 40% of participation in athletics. The eligible student will be denied participation of the current season, with any remaining percentage of the denial of participation applied to the next season of participation if needed. The eligible student may continue to practice with the team and sit with the team during contests only. The eligible student may not wear a team uniform during this denial of participation.

C). The eligible student will be denied 30 school days of driving/parking privileges on school property.

D). The eligible student will be denied participation for 30 calendar days of all extracurricular/co-curricular activities, with any remaining days of the denial of participation applied to the next season of participation if needed. The eligible student may not attend club meetings and/or participate in off campus trips or special events. In the case of performing arts, an eligible student may continue to practice with the group but not participate in the performance. The eligible student may not wear a uniform during this denial of participation.

2. Second Violation:

A). The eligible student will make an appointment with a chemical dependency counselor for a drug assessment and then follow the recommendations of the counselor. The counselor and/or agency must be certified by the Ohio Department of Health or the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. Parents/Guardians/Custodians of the eligible student must pay for this expense.

B). The eligible student is denied participation in athletics, extra-curricular/co-curricular activities (which does not include class time), and

driving/parking privileges for one calendar year. The calendar year begins from the date of notification of the violation.

3. Third Violation:

The eligible student will be permanently denied participation in athletics, extra-curricular activities, driving/parking privileges, and co-curricular activities (with no class time missed and no academic impact) immediately. The principal/designee will determine the beginning date for denial of participation in co-curricular activities.

Violations are accumulative throughout the eligible student's schooling from 7th to 8th grade then from 9th through 12th grade.

3. Written/Electronic Transmissions

Student-athletes are responsible for information contained in written or electronic transmissions(i.e.: email) and any information posted on a public domain (i.e. internet, chat room, Facebook, You Tube, Twitter). Inappropriate or embarrassing information or pictures should not be posted in any public domain. Student-athletes are not precluded from participation in such online social network sites; however, student-athletes should be reminded that they serve as representatives of Margaretta Schools. Any individual that is identified on a social networking site which depicts illegal or inappropriate behavior will be considered in violation and is therefore subject to extra-curricular discipline.

4. Theft of personal belongings

Margaretta Local Schools will not be responsible/liable for any lost or stolen personal items while a student or staff member is at school or attending any district approved activities, i.e., Athletic Contest, performance or field trip.

MARGARETTA ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Dual Sport Participation Form

Step 1: The student-athlete is required to communicate with the head coaches of each of the two teams he/she would like to be considered for **PRIOR** to the start of official practices. Once the request has been made to the coaches, the student-athlete will request a meeting with the head coach of each sport to discuss if it would be possible to participate on both squads. It is at this meeting that the student-athlete must declare which sport will be considered "primary" and what sport will be considered "secondary". Other things that should be taken in to consideration at this meeting are calendar issues, guidelines, safety protocols, and academics. Each situation will be addressed on a case-by-case basis **and if one coach does not agree that it is in the best interest of the team or the student-athlete to partake in dual sport participation, the request will be denied.**

Step 2: If an agreement can be reached by the two head coaches, the agreed upon calendar and criteria should be shared with the student-athlete's parents/guardian, the Athletic Director, and the Principal. All parties must sign the form below signifying their agreement with the Dual Sport Participation plan. ** Upon signing it is hereby agreed upon and understood that in the event of a conflict, the student-athlete shall attend the game/meet of their declared "primary" sport, unless other arrangements have been agreed upon by both head coaches.

Step 3: This completed form is to be given to the Athletic Director and kept on hand in the Athletic Office.

Step 4: If the athlete earns a letter in both sports he/she will be awarded a letter in each sport. If the athlete breaks the contract, he/she will forfeit any awards or recognition that would have been earned in the program neglected.

Student-Athlete's Name (Print): _____

Declared Primary Sport: _____

Declared Secondary Sport: _____

Primary Sport Head Coach Signature:_____ Date:_____

Secondary Sport Head Coach Signature:_____Date:_____

Student-Athlete's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal Signature: _____ Date: _____

Athletic Director Signature:_____Date:_____