



2026-2027

**STUDENT
ATHLETE**

Handbook

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR
INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

JUNE 2026

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to educate our Sagemont Prep student-athletes and their parents on the policies and procedures regarding participation on a school-sponsored athletic team. These guidelines are implemented and enforced by Sagemont Preparatory School, the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA), and the Small School Athletic League (SSAL).

The main goal of the Sagemont Prep Athletic Department is to provide quality experiences that enrich individuals within a safe and healthy environment. We encourage all students to participate in one of our programs, creating memorable school experiences that will last a lifetime.

If you have any questions/concerns regarding the Sagemont Prep Athletic Program, please contact Sean Leonardo at sleonardo@sagemont.com.

Sportsmanship Expectations

It is the duty of all student-athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators concerned with interscholastic athletics to:

- Remember that an athletic contest is only a game, not a matter of life or death.
- Emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
- Stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
- Establish a cordial relationship between the visitor and the host.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials.
- Achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
- Encourage leadership, use of initiative, and good judgment by all student-athletes on the team.
- Recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual student-athletes.
- Any type of “hazing” or initiation activity is not endorsed by The Sagemont School and is strictly prohibited.

Responsibilities of a Student Athlete

Being a member of a Sagemont Prep 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 upheld. A great athletic tradition is being developed by the hard work of many people over the next several years. As a member of an athletic team at Sagemont Prep, your actions will reflect not only on those with whom you are now associated but also on those who have contributed to our school in the past. The benefits of athletic competition are achieved through hard work, dedication, and discipline, and are rewarded with the development of fond memories and personal achievements.

Required Athletic Forms

Each student wishing to participate in the interscholastic athletic program at Sagemont Prep must have the following completed and signed forms on file and approved in their Aktivite (formerly RegisterMyAthlete) account.

1. Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (EL2) PAGE 4 ONLY
2. ECG (EL1) 9TH Grade Only
3. Consent and Release from Liability Certificate (EL3)
4. Insurance Card Upload
5. GA4 for Transfer Students Only
6. Student-Athlete Handbook
7. SEG Field Trip Form
8. NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest
9. NFHS Heat Illness
10. NFHS Concussion for Students
11. NFHS Bullying, Hazing, and Inappropriate Behaviors
12. NFHS Sportsmanship
13. Baseline Concussion Testing

#1-6 must be submitted BEFORE the first team practice, preseason conditioning session, or open gym. Athletes will not be permitted to participate in any team activities until all forms are complete. There are NO exceptions to this policy.

Injuries

For the coach to make the best decision for both the student-athlete and the team, it is extremely important to report all injuries a student-athlete suffers immediately to the coach. Medical expenses resulting from any injury must first be submitted to your insurance carrier. Any remaining balance can be submitted to the school's accident insurance carrier by processing a claim form that can be obtained from the athletic director.

RETURNING TO AN ATHLETIC TEAM AFTER AN INJURY OR ILLNESS

Any athlete who is seen by a doctor for an illness or injury must obtain a signed physician's release to resume participation with their team. If you have to go to an emergency room for care, a written release should be obtained either before leaving the hospital or from the athlete's family physician at the time of a follow-up examination. The release should indicate that the athlete may participate in school athletics or the minimum time before an athlete may resume playing, e.g., "no strenuous exercise or sports for two weeks". This release must be submitted to the athletic director. It is the student-athletes' responsibility to get the release from the athletic director prior to team participation.

Please note: Head injuries are a great cause for concern. Recent findings of post-concussion syndrome have led to an increased awareness of the long-term dangers associated with severe head injuries. For these reasons, athletes participating in varsity volleyball, flag football, basketball, soccer, and baseball will be required to complete an Impact Baseline test administered on campus by our athletic trainer from Cleveland Clinic. In cases where the coach is aware of a potentially significant head injury suffered by an athlete, the coach will request that the athlete see a physician. The athlete will not be permitted to participate in the sport until examined and released by a physician and submit a signed copy of the FHSAA form AT10 to the Athletic Department.

FHSAA Student Eligibility

According to FHSAA by-laws, a student-athlete must maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA upon entering the 9th grade. An incoming 9th grader will be deemed eligible and will not be held to a cumulative 2.0 until after the first semester of their freshman year. This cumulative GPA will be verified by the athletic director before the first semester, in between the first and second semesters, and following the second semester of any given school year.

If a student-athlete is deemed academically ineligible, they will not be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics until they can achieve one of the following:

- Raise their cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher on the next GPA verification period.
- Sign an academic performance contract with the school (9th and 10th grade only).
- Attend Sagemont's summer school program. These summer classes must raise their cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher.

Middle School students must have a GPA of 2.0 or higher in the previous semester to attain athletic eligibility. They are eligible for one year each in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. A middle school student who turns 15 years of age before any given season will be deemed ineligible for competition on a middle school team. If they turn 15 years of age DURING a season, they will be allowed to finish that season but will be ineligible for any subsequent middle school team. The beginning of a season is defined as the first date of tryouts for that team.

AGE AND GRADE

According to FHSAA Regulations, a student is eligible for varsity athletic competition for eight (8) consecutive semesters upon the student's entry into the ninth grade or entry into the US equivalent of 9th grade. The FHSAA does permit students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades to compete in varsity competitions provided that they meet the standards of that program. A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition in grades 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, but may not be 19 years of age before September 1st.

*If any of the above are not satisfied before the first team practice, the student-athlete will be ineligible until they can produce the missing documents.

Conduct & Participation

CONDUCT

Exemplary conduct and behavior are expected at all times of students representing Sagemont Prep through participation in athletics. We expect our athletes to set the standard, not simply meet it as being a Sagemont Prep athlete is a privilege, not a right. A teacher or supervisor may refer continued or severe discipline problems to the principal or athletic director. Insubordination, profanity, destruction of personal or school property, fighting, habitual removal from class or uniform infractions, and other unacceptable behavior may result in removal from a team by the coach, athletic director, or principal.

PARTICIPANT OBLIGATIONS

An athlete is obligated to contribute the necessary time and effort to the sport in which he/she is involved. Athletes are expected to begin the season on the scheduled start dates unless they are participating on a team in the previous season. In this case, a conversation with both head coaches is required in order to communicate the conflict and come to an agreement among all parties. Failure to begin on time may result in the inability to participate in that season. All practice sessions and competitions are mandatory unless specifically stated otherwise by the coach. Team members must be present and on time for all scheduled practice sessions and games.

Any athlete who is present in school, but absent or late to the athletic activity (practice or game) without prior permission from the coach will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. That action ranges from a warning to a suspension to dismissal from the team. It is the responsibility of the athlete to inform the coach in advance, before being tardy or absent from a practice or game.

It should be noted that the Sagemont Prep athletic department realizes that unusual situations may arise. These are excused but should be limited to emergency appointments (doctor, dentist), court appearances, college visitation, funerals, religious obligations, special examinations and tests, and overlapping seasons.

Once committed to a sport, the student-athlete is expected to remain a member of the team for the entire season. Commitment is defined by starting the season on time, participating in practices, being added to the official roster, and dressing for the first competition. Athletes not fulfilling this obligation (quitting a team) will be ineligible to participate in any other sport during that season. The athlete will also be ineligible to start a sport in the season following until the conclusion of their previous sport (including preseason workouts). Athletes will be ineligible to tryout/participate in the following year in the sport he/she quit unless a meeting is scheduled with both the Athletic Director and Head Coach before the start of the season. Finally, if at any time during the season, an athlete quits or is removed from the team, he/she will forfeit all awards, recognitions, and records.

COACH'S AUTHORITY

Each coach has the authority to establish additional rules about the organization and the efficient operation of the program. The coach will review any such additional rules with student-athletes. Violations of team rules that may warrant suspension or dismissal from the team will be discussed with the athletic director. After the due process has been granted by the athletic director, the coach may dismiss or suspend any member for insubordination, unsportsmanlike conduct, repeated tardiness, or absences from practices and competitions.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

An athlete must be present in school for a minimum of 50% of their scheduled class time on the day of a contest. If a student is absent from school, excused or unexcused, or is not present for at least 50% of their classes, they will not be eligible to participate in team practice or an athletic contest on that day. NEW: Students are NOT PERMITTED to sign out early on days of competition unless a physician's note is provided to the Athletic Director. Exceptions include school-based field trips, activities, or programs.

TRANSPORTATION

Each student-athlete will be transported to and from all away athletic contests by school-sponsored methods only. Driving personal vehicles is not allowed without specific permission granted by the Athletic Director.

The only exception to this policy would be a written request on an Athletic Transportation Release Form (which can be obtained from the coach) that is turned in to the coach and signed by the parent/guardian of the athletic contest or practice. In this case, it is understood that the student-athlete must be transported by their parent/guardian, not siblings, themselves, friends, etc. It is stressed that this is to be an exceptional case. Travel time is an integral part of being on an athletic team. It affords time for the coaches and student-athletes to prepare before the contest and to reflect on the contest afterward.

RETURN OF SCHOOL CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

It is the responsibility of the athlete to return to the coach all clothing and equipment issued during the season. Failure to do this will result in an obligation for the missing articles, and the athlete will not be eligible to start another sport/season. Athletes not paying the obligation will have their report cards (and diploma if applicable) held until return or payment, and will forfeit their right to receive any school clothing in the next sports season.

CONFLICTS WITH OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in school activities and, to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflict. Athletes have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts and to notify the coach immediately when a conflict is recognized. NOT the day of the conflict.

Athletics' 24-Hour Policy

The "24-Hour Policy" requires parents to wait 24 hours before addressing any issues with the coach concerning their child's involvement on the team. Knowledge of the appropriate manner and timeframe in which to speak to coaches is important in moving forward with a positive solution while avoiding emotional and inappropriate confrontations.

We encourage athletes to establish an open line of communication with our coaches. We feel athletics provide a safe environment for our athletes to learn valuable life lessons and develop effective communication skills. If an athlete would like feedback from their coach regarding ways in which to improve, our coaches and administrators have an open-door policy and encourage our athletes to take advantage of it.

However, coaches WILL NOT discuss “coaching decisions,” which can include but are not limited to positions, playing time, substitution decisions, or in-game decisions. The previous examples all require complex analysis and include the coach’s professional opinion, the athlete’s ability, the athlete’s potential, the team’s needs, the game strategy at that particular moment, the momentum of the game, and the team’s needs for the immediate or distant future. The coach will not be required to defend his/her decisions or conclusions, and it is improper for an athlete or parent to make such a request.

In addition, Sagemont Prep Athletic Administration has instructed its coaches not to discuss any athlete other than the parents’ own or the actions of any other Sagemont Prep coach. If a parent has what they believe is a legitimate concern regarding another coach or athlete other than their own, a meeting with the Athletic Director should be requested.

POLICY PROTOCOL

1. The athlete will first request a meeting with the coach concerning the matter. If the matter remains unresolved following the meeting, then refer to Step 2.
2. The parent(s) will request a meeting with the coach. The parent(s) should contact the coach via telephone or email to set up a meeting time.
 - A parent should never approach a coach at the competition. We have instructed the coaches to refuse to discuss any controversial matter and to walk away.
 - The appropriate time for a parent to schedule a meeting other than by phone or email is immediately following a scheduled practice.
 - If the matter remains unresolved following the meeting, then proceed to Step 3.
3. The parent will request a meeting with the Athletic Director.
 - In certain situations, the Athletic Director may request the athlete to also attend.
 - The Athletic Director will not engage in discussions about specific coaching decisions.

The parent or athlete WILL NOT:

- Approach or contact a coach regarding any controversial matter within the required 24-hour period.
- Expect meetings to be set during practice or following a competition
- Attempt to compare or evaluate another athlete to your athlete.
- Make comments to or about other players while attending tournaments.
- Harass, threaten, or use profanity towards the coach.
- Discuss their concerns with any other parents or players until the issue is resolved.

Consent Form

I have received a copy of the Sagemont Prep Athletics Student-Athlete Handbook and have read and fully understand the standards for participation. I agree to uphold them and abide by them while participating in the interscholastic athletic program at Sagemont Prep.

I know that athletic participation is a privilege. I recognize and agree that participation in athletics is done with the primary purpose of enriching my child's experience at school, and that Sagemont does not participate for commercial purposes. I acknowledge and agree that my child's participation in athletics is appropriate for my child and consent to my child's participation.

I know of the risks involved in athletic participation, understand that serious injury and even death are possible in such participation, and choose to accept such risks. I voluntarily accept any responsibility for my safety and welfare while participating in athletics, with a full understanding of the risks involved.

I agree to release and to hold harmless Sagemont Prep, its parent company, affiliated companies and subsidiaries, and all of their directors, officers, headmasters, members, principals, teachers, regularly contracted independent contractors, servants, and employees (collectively the "Sagemont Preparatory School") from any from and against all claims, suits, actions, demands, and causes of action arising from or in connection with these activities and regardless of any negligence on the part of the Sagemont Prep.

The Student-Athlete Handbook does not create any contractual rights and is intended to provide guidelines. It can be altered at any time without advance notice.

I further agree and authorize emergency medical treatment should the need arise for such treatment while under the supervision of Sagemont Prep.

For Parents/Guardians, your electronic signature within your RegisterMyAthlete.com account indicates that you acknowledge and agree to the foregoing.