



ORCHARD PARK QUAKERS



Athletes and Parents,

This booklet is to inform you of the athletic opportunities open to your child(ren) in the high school and middle school and the procedures required for participation. Additional details and information is available at www.opschools.org/athletics.

In order to participate in any sport, athletes must have a New York State physical either by our school physician or by a personal NYS certified physician. If you choose to have a physical by your personal physician, please be aware of the following:

1. Physicals must be given within one (1) year of the first day of practice.
2. All athlete information is entered through the Parent Portal. Once the information has been submitted, the nurse will verify that an updated NYS physical is on file and approve the athlete for tryouts. The Athletic Office will compile a tryout list for our coaches. Names on the list are the only ones that can tryout. Please check the Athletic Website for timeline and due dates.
3. Physicals are conducted by our school physician prior to the start of the fall and spring seasons. Physical dates, team schedules and forms are all available on the District web page at www.opschools.org/athletics.

We encourage you to discuss these opportunities with your child(ren) well in advance. This will allow time for the needed after-school schedule adjustments, plus time for the athlete to prepare him/herself mentally and physically for the tryout experience. Except for track & field and cross country, most programs hold tryouts for athletes to compete for a spot on the team. Deciding late may preclude the opportunity to be part of a team for that particular season.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, which supports the academic mission of the Orchard Park School District. The primary goal of the Orchard Park Interscholastic Athletic program is to provide high quality experiences that are fun and promote individual growth within a safe and healthy environment. We encourage all students to participate in some phase of our program. These are memorable times that will last a lifetime.

Sincerely,

David Hack
Director of Physical Education and Athletics
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CO-CURRICULAR ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY 7412

The Board of Education recognizes that the OPCSD co-curricular eligibility policy is intended to be a teaching/learning procedure for motivating students. The Board believes that participation in the co-curricular program is a distinct privilege extended to all students by the District. As such, it shall then be the responsibility of all advisors and coaches to publish a list of all participants for their activities, clubs and sports each season or year and distribute this list to the faculty.

It shall then be the teachers' responsibility to monitor and determine on a weekly basis that the student academic potential and classroom expectations are, in fact, being met.

Should the student demonstrate less than acceptable academic performance, and should the teacher(s) contemplate holding the student ineligible, the teacher(s) will take the following actions:

1. A warning of pending ineligibility will be made to the student and his/her parent ONE WEEK before any action is taken.
2. The teacher(s) will dialogue with the advisor or coach in advance of any ineligibility action and allow ONE WEEK for the individual student to be given the opportunity to meet the academic standards.
3. The student should be made to realize the consequences to self, team or club for not meeting classroom performance standards.
4. The expectation will be that significant improvement in performance will be demonstrated immediately by the student.

Eligibility for participation will be an ongoing process determined on a weekly basis with an initial appeal possible by the student to the teacher(s). Beyond this step, the normal line of appeal within the building will be followed. In those instances where the student fails to demonstrate significant improvement in his/her academic performance, the student may then be ruled ineligible for participation in all co-curricular activities for the next week.

CO-CURRICULAR ATTENDANCE POLICY 7410

Students who are suspended from school on a day of an athletic game or practice session, party, school dance, or other school affair scheduled after regular school hours are not eligible for participation or attendance at such events.

In order for students to attend a school-sponsored function, it is necessary that students attend classes for at least four full periods of the school day on the day of the activity and provide an excused absence for the remaining periods, unless otherwise excused by the building administrator.



CO-CURRICULAR BEHAVIOR ELIGIBILITY POLICY 7316

In addition to the standards of expected behavior and disciplinary sanctions enumerated in the District's Code of Conduct, the Board of Education recognizes that the co-curricular program is a distinct privilege extended to students by the District and that such participants represent the school during such participation.

Since all school Code of Conduct rules apply to students involved in after school activities as well as during the school day, participants in co-curricular programs will be held accountable for involvement with illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages, tobacco products (including smokeless tobacco and /or nicotine products), illegal drugs, counterfeit and designer drugs or paraphernalia (including but not limited to electronic cigarettes) while taking part in school clubs, student government, music, drama, intramurals, athletics and other student-centered activities designated by the Superintendent.

Any student suspected and then verified to be in possession of, under the influence, or found to be selling or distributing illegal drugs, inhalants, steroids, or alcoholic beverages, tobacco products (including smokeless tobacco and /or nicotine products), illegal drugs, counterfeit and designer drugs or paraphernalia (including but not limited to electronic cigarettes) will be immediately suspended and potentially dismissed from the activity after meeting with their School Building Principal and or other administrative staff as appropriate.

These standards of expectations are in effect at all times, which includes violations on school property, at school related functions, and in the community at large.

Once the Principal makes a final determination in the matter, verbal and written notice will be given promptly to both student and parent/guardians.

Initial *Infraction

- 1) Minimum **ten (10) school days** of suspension from co-curricular activities as determined by the administrator and coach/advisor of the activity. Further, any activity officer or sports team captain will forfeit that position.
- 2) Meetings with an in-school counselor/social worker will be assigned as directed by the administrator.

Subsequent Infractions

- 1) Minimum **thirty (30) school days** of suspension from co-curricular activities as determined by the administrator and coach/advisor of the activity. Further, any activity officer or sports team captain will forfeit that position.
- 2) Meetings with an in-school counselor/social worker will be assigned as directed by the administrator.

*Infraction (initial or subsequent) - days of suspension from co-curricular programs may not expire until the consequence is fulfilled, and will be determined by the administrator and coach/advisor.



CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

The **Concussion Management and Awareness Act** went into effect on July 1, 2012 for all public schools and charter schools. Several items are required for school districts to be in compliance with the law. Some of the items are specifically spelled out in the law and others have been recommended by the State Education Department and Department of Health and approved by the State Board of Regents.

Orchard Park Central believes in the importance of effective concussion prevention and post-concussion management. All coaches, physical education teachers, and school nurses will complete a concussion prevention certification biannually entitled "Heads Up! Concussion in Youth Sports" or NFHS Concussion Course, as per State Education Department guidelines. By educating staff, students, and parents, we can all help prevent injuries and minimize risks associated with head traumas.

When can my son/daughter return to sports?

- Once the Athlete is asymptomatic for 24 hours (and no longer using medication prescribed by a physician to manage signs and symptoms) and has medical clearance from a licensed physician.
- Must complete return to play protocol with certified athletic trainer working with OPCSD
- The return to play protocol is as follows:
- **Phase 1:** Light aerobic exercise- walking, swimming or stationary bike without resistance
- **Phase 2:** Higher impact, higher exertion, moderate aerobic activity. No resistance training.
- **Phase 3:** Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter.
- **Phase 4:** Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter
- **Phase 5:** Full contact practice and intense aerobic activity.
- **Phase 6:** Return to play- full activities without restrictions.

- The return to play progression should be over 7-10 days, with a minimum of 7 days. The athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next phase. In the event that symptoms return the athlete must stop activity and return to previous level 24 hours later if asymptomatic.

Upon completing the return to play protocol the student-athlete **must be cleared by the school physician.**

ALL ATHLETES regardless of in-season or off-season are required to complete the return to play protocol before returning to athletics.

Please find links and documents below for more information on what you can do to protect yourself and your child(ren).

- **OPCSD Policy 7522 Concussion Management** <https://www.opschools.org/cms/lib/NY02208923/Centricity/Domain/11/7522%20Concussion%20Management.pdf>
- **CDC - Heads Up Concussion** <https://www.cdc.gov/HeadsUp/>
- **NYS Department of Health** https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/concussion.htm

Two Sport Athletes 7420

Consideration will be given for high school student athletes wishing to play two sports within a given season. Such consideration will be given for one season only, and a student athlete will not be permitted to participate in more than four sports within a given school year. Student athletes requesting such consideration must do so at least two weeks prior to the start of the athletic season, thereby allowing ample time to evaluate and consider the request. Consideration for two sport athletes will be limited to high school athletic teams (i.e. freshman, junior varsity and varsity teams), and such exceptions will not be made for middle school level sports teams.

The Athletic Director will work the student athlete, his/her parents, school building administration, the guidance counselor and the student athlete's teachers and coaches to evaluate whether or not the student would likely be academically successful while meeting the demands of participating in two sports. It is the belief of the Orchard Park Central School District Board of Education to prioritize academics over athletics, and consideration for participation in two sports within a season will only be given to students in strong academic standing. The Athletic Director will evaluate the student's academic performance, student discipline record, and attendance. After consulting with school personnel and evaluating the criteria outlined a determination will be made by the Athletic Director.

ATHLETIC AWARD POLICIES:

The basic philosophy of athletics at the Orchard Park Central School District is one of participation for the pleasure of doing so, rather than participating for materialistic awards. Awards are, however, given for those individuals who, by their enthusiasm, good sportsmanship, citizenship and general attitude, denote that they deserve some form of recognition.

Certificates:

All participants will receive a certificate.

Letter Awards:

The actual requirement for awards for any sport and level of competition will be designated by the coach of that sport. Letter awards are not given indiscriminately, therefore, are an honor rather than a right. The following letter awards are normally given.

Varsity:

8" OP interlocking chenille award with a metal insert for the sport. The first time a boy or girl receives the Varsity Major Award, he will receive a letter and metal insert. Thereafter he/she will receive a certificate and a Chevron.

JV/Freshman:

6" OP interlocking felt award. There will be no designation of sport and all subsequent JV letter awards will be in the form of a certificate.

Modified B (7th & 8th Grade)

Circular embroidered patch award. There will be no designation of sport and all subsequent modified B awards will be in the form of a certificate.

SPECIAL AWARDS

Maroon Key:

The Maroon Key plaque is presented to that student athlete on each varsity team who has contributed the most to the team for that year in the opinion of the team members.

MVP Award:

A plaque is presented to that student athlete on each JV and Modified B team who has contributed the most to the team for that year in the opinion of the team members.

Varsity Club Sportsmanship Award:

This award is selected by the team and coach. A certificate is given to the athlete who demonstrates true sportsmanship on and off the athletic arena.

Captains Club:

Captains from all the varsity and JV teams will be part of the OP Athletics Captains Club. Team captains will meet twice seasonally to discuss OP Athletics, the promotion of our teams and athletes and mentoring of our middle school athletes. Certificates will be awarded at the conclusion of each season.

TRYOUTS AND CUT PROCEDURE

It is an unfortunate fact that in certain situations, athletes must be cut from athletic teams. It would be ideal to keep all who try out and to guarantee everyone playing time, but in some sports that is impossible. The decision to cut is based on, but not limited to, the following factors:

1. Keeping certain athletes with limited skills may not be good for the athlete.
2. The individual's potential for future growth.
3. The sport is such that only a limited number of athletes can be assured playing time.

It is recommended that coaches use the following procedures when cuts need to be made:

1. The team is told at the first practice how many players will make the team, how many tryout practices will be held before cuts are made, and the selection criteria.
2. An objective list of criteria should be established by the individual coach and evaluated by the entire coaching staff over the try out period.
3. Criteria may include (but are not limited to) such things as:
 - a. skills
 - b. attitude
 - c. speed
 - d. strength
 - e. general condition
 - f. agility
 - g. practice attendance
 - h. understanding of rules and concepts
4. Coaches weigh each category according to its importance in their sport and assign points to each criteria.
5. Players are chosen objectively from these point totals.
6. Coaches post the names of players who make the squad (not those who were cut).

When athletes are cut from a sport, they may join another sports team that has not settled a final roster and some of their practices from the first sport may be counted toward the second sport.

PLAYING TIME PHILOSOPHY

An often controversial issue in athletics is the amount of time that each athlete is allowed to participate. Not all athletes possess the same skills, desire and potential for success. Many factors determine the amount of playing time that an athlete gets during games. Some factors include (but are not limited to):

1. Skills as demonstrated in practice.
2. Understanding of concepts, rules and strategies as demonstrated in practice.
3. Practice attendance.
4. Effort during practice.
5. Attitude as demonstrated in practice.
6. Physical condition.
7. The ability of other players at that position.
8. The ability to contribute to team success.
9. The score of the game and the time remaining.

Playing time and positions are non-negotiable and at the discretion of the coach.

LEVELS OF PLAY

Modified B:

This level of play is for 7th and 8th grade students. The size of the team shall be determined by the Coach and Athletic Director.

The purposes of the Modified B program are to have:

1. Sportsmanship and teamwork are promoted as a function of the athletic experience.
2. Coaches teach the fundamentals of the sport and the experience for the athlete is one of learning the game.
3. Participation is promoted at the modified level; however, playing time may not necessarily be equal for all.
4. The experience of competing and exploration of the sport being more important at this level than winning the contest.

Freshman:

This level of play is primarily for 9th grade students. Rules for this sport are the same as Varsity and JV sports.

The purposes of the Freshman program are to have:

1. Sportsmanship and teamwork are promoted as a function of the athletic experience.
2. Coaches teaching the fundamentals of the sport and the experience for the athlete is one of learning the game.
3. Participation based on competition for playing time. While adequate playing time for all is a goal, team members may not receive equal playing time or any playing time.
4. The experience of competing and exploration of the sport being more important at this level than winning the contest.

Junior Varsity:

This level of play is primarily for students in grades 9 and 10. Teams may be limited in size as determined by the Coach.

The purposes of the JV program are to have:

1. Sportsmanship and teamwork are promoted as a primary goal of the program.
2. An emphasis on individual and team development.
3. Participation based on competition for playing time. While adequate playing time for all is a goal, team members may not receive equal playing time or any playing time.
4. An increased emphasis on winning.
5. Preparation of the athlete and team for varsity play.

Seniors are not eligible for JV competition.

Juniors who have not reached their 16th birthday by September 1st shall be eligible for JV competition.

Juniors who have reached their 16th birthday by September 1st shall be eligible for JV competition for one year if:

- A varsity team in that sport is not available
- The purpose is to maintain or improve the program
- The request is in writing to the league and the request is approved by the Athletic Council.

Varsity:

This level of play is primarily for students in grades 11 and 12. For those programs that do not have JV level teams, this level is primarily for grades 9-12. Teams may be limited in size as determined by the Coach.

The purposes of the Varsity program are to have:

1. Sportsmanship displayed at all times.
2. These athletes serve as role models for the younger athletes
3. Playing time that is earned, not guaranteed.
4. Athletes showing a commitment to the team, and an emphasis on teamwork that is expected from Varsity athletes.
5. Winning as one of the goals.

Athletes must recognize that competing as an athlete is a privilege in the Orchard Park School District and representing the school comes before representing their individuality.

TRANSPORTATION

An athlete is a representative of the Orchard Park School District. When traveling to or from a game, athletes should dress appropriately. It is expected that teams will travel together to all games. A member of an athletic team may not drive himself/herself to or from an athletic event. Proper decorum is a must when traveling to and from all contests and scrimmages.

Athletes must respect the bus driver at all times.

- NO PROFANITY AT ANY TIME.
- No yelling or screaming on the bus.
- Once the bus is in motion, all athletes must be seated.
- Food and drink is not permitted on OPCSD provided transportation.
- Before boarding the bus, athletes must make sure shoes (cleats are not allowed to be worn) are free of mud and debris. Students are responsible to clean all debris off the bus before exiting.

Student-athletes will be transported to and from away contests by school authorized vehicles only. Parents who provide transportation home for their children after away contests must notify the coach in writing before leaving the site.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS (APP) FOR 7TH AND 8TH GRADERS:

Parent signatures on the (APP) permission form are required to begin this process.

The purpose of this statewide Athletic Placement Process physical fitness testing program is to determine the physical fitness of a 7th or 8th grade athlete when compared to older athletes who will be participating at the freshman, junior varsity or varsity level. This fitness test, along with a special physical examination, will determine whether the appropriate physical development has evolved that equates to the similar levels of high school athletes. Passage of all required parts must occur in order to be eligible for a tryout and will help ensure the safety of their participation.

NOTE: the OPCSD physician must give the physical maturity examination for this opportunity.

This program is designed for the exceptional athlete in that the specific talent and conditioning level would need to be well above the level of the average for athletes of a similar age. It is not intended to help schools fill out high school rosters or give kids a head start for the sake of early involvement.

Each athlete will be asked to successfully complete four (4) to five (5) parts of the test. Tests include curl-ups, a shuttle run, sit and reach (flexibility), 1 mile distance run (or 500 yard swim) and pull-ups. Athletes may be given a second chance at parts of the test if they are close to achieving the needed score.

Parents are cautioned that even though an athlete may be physically ready, **it does not mean that he/she may be emotionally or socially ready to handle the normal stress of competition, or have the ability to socially mix with older athletes.** Even though our coaches set the stage for the assimilation of the younger athletes into the team structure, these athletes must be comfortable within this environment. Should this not be a natural adjustment, it is recommended that the athlete remain at the district's modified level or just wait until high school. This decision must be made during the first few days (depending upon the sport) of upper level practice as required by state modified rules.

Football: may participate in eight (8) of the first ten (10) practices

Wrestling, Lacrosse, Ice Hockey: may participate in five (5) of the first seven (7) practices.

All other sports: may participate in three (3) of the first five (5) practices.

The Director of Physical Education and Athletics or his designee will conduct the Athletic Placement Physical Fitness tests in July/August for Fall sports and at designated times in October and February for Winter and Spring sports. Athletes will meet at the high school field house with light weight gym clothes and good running shoes during the dates in August, and at the Middle School Auxiliary Gym in October and February.

NOTE: Tryouts for varsity golf, rifle and bowling do not require the fitness test. Candidates must score in the top 8 competitive scores during tryouts to make the team.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

Lost Equipment:

All equipment issued by the school will be the responsibility of the individual athlete. Athletes/parents are financially responsible for lost or stolen equipment or uniforms supplied for competition by the school. Parent/Student Portal accounts will be locked, future sports registration will be prohibited and your child may be subject to a school referral if their equipment/uniform is not turned in at the end of the season.

Vandalism and Misuse of Equipment:

All equipment should be cared for and secured as if it were the athlete's personal property. The cost of replacement is quite high and we want our teams to have the best possible equipment. Please be aware of the concern for the care of equipment.

DISMISSAL/QUITTING A TEAM

Everyone cannot be a starter. All teams need a full squad for practice and for the development of future teams. Therefore, students should be committed to a team for the full season. However, if an athlete must leave the team for any reason, he/she may do so by immediately discussing the reasons with the coach and cleaning and returning all equipment within one week.

Remember, co-curricular activities are a privilege and we expect student-athletes selected for a sports roster to make a season long commitment upon making a team.

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Parenting and coaching are both challenging and rewarding. By establishing a **professional** understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. Below are listed some general expectations that are important for each role:

COMMUNICATION PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM THEIR CHILD'S COACH

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for members of the team.
3. Locations and times of practices and contests.
4. Team requirements; i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season equipment.
5. Procedures should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline resulting in the denial of your child's participation.
7. Encouragement to approach coach with appropriate questions or concerns.

COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM PARENTS

1. Expectation that concerns will be expressed directly to the coach.
2. Expect notification of any schedule conflicts of an athlete well in advance.
3. Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your child(ren) become(s) involved in programs at Orchard Park High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way you or your child(ren) wish(e)s. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS FOR PARENTS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. The treatment of your child, emotionally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It may be difficult for parents to accept their child not playing as much as they may have hoped. Coaches are professional. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those below, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE FOR PARENTS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. Playing time.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other students/athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue(s) of concern.

PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS TO FOLLOW TO DISCUSS A CONCERN WITH THE COACH

1. Make an appointment with the coach to meet with him/her.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director. He will arrange the meeting for you.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

WHAT CAN A PARENT DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

1. Call the Athletic Office at 716-209-6208 to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director. The parent/guardian, coach and Athletic Director will meet to discuss the problem.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

It is very important that the parent and coach discuss areas of concern prior to involving the Athletic Director or other district employees.

ARBITER LIVE HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

The Athletic Department subscribes to an online scheduling program that allows you round-the-clock access to team-by-team schedules. The Athletic Department encourages you to check the website before phoning the office with game day questions.

- Go to: www.opschools.org/athletics
- On left hand side, click “Team Schedules and Information”
- Select the Arbiter Live link to be directed to the Arbiter Live site.

ArbiterLive.com has accurate, complete, and up-to-date scheduling information directly from our Athletic Department.