

Sayre



Student Athlete Handbook

Go Spartans!!

“It’s not the will to win that matters-everyone has that. It’s the will to prepare to win that matters.”

-Paul “Bear” Bryant

Table of Contents

Section I	4
Mission Statement	4
Philosophy	4
Title IX and Diversity Statement.....	4
Hiring Practices	4
Section II.....	5
Fall Sports	5
Winter Sports	5
Spring Sports	5
Section III.....	6
Facilities	6
Services	6
Membership and Affiliations.....	6
Safety and Assumed Risk.....	6
Insurance and Liability Coverage.....	7
Communication	7
Section IV	8
Pre Participation Physicals	8
Player and Parent Participation Agreement.....	8
Transfer Students.....	8
Lettering at Sayre	8
Section V.....	9
Open Participation Policy.....	9
Hazing and Harassment Policy.....	9
Sayre Upper School Student Handbook.....	10
Acceptable Use and Social Media Policy.....	10
Playing Time	10
Practice and Game Attendance.....	11
Attitude and Behavior	11
Sportsmanship Statement	11
Academic Requirements	11
School Attendance and Eligibility.....	12
Drugs and Alcohol Policy	12
Junior Varsity	12
Length of Seasons	12
Playing Up Policy.....	13
Section VI	14
Health and Safety	14
Game and Practice Preparation	15

Section I

Mission Statement

The Sayre Athletic Department plays an integral role in delivering on the schools educational mission. We strive to offer challenging, inclusive and competitive co-curricular athletic opportunities for all interested student athletes that extend the walls of the classroom and inspire personal growth as they strive towards their potential as students, athletes and individuals.

Philosophy

Delivering on the schools mission requires each member of Sayre Schools' diverse community to play an interested and active role in the life and learning of every child. As an important part of that community, the Department of Athletics provides a safe, inclusive and competitive athletic environment that encourages students to participate in interscholastic athletics. We believe that participation in competitive athletics can be a positive force in shaping the hearts, minds and bodies of Sayre athletes. Training and competing as a member of a team can be a powerful tool for instilling positive values and sparking meaningful character development both of which are important parts of the athletic experience at Sayre School.

Title IX and Diversity Statement

The Sayre School Athletic Department welcomes the contributions of all of our students. We recognize the value of a diverse school community and are committed to providing equal athletic opportunities to both male and female athletes. No student enrolled at Sayre School shall, on the basis of gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation be denied the benefits of, excluded from or otherwise discriminated against in any Sayre School sponsored activity.

Hiring Practices

The Sayre Athletic Department follows the hiring practices set forth in the "Sayre School Employee Handbook". Talented and knowledgeable coaches who are committed to our athletic mission and share the Athletic Departments' philosophy are the strength of our department. We encourage interested and qualified applicants to contact the Director of Athletics regarding any coaching opportunities that may exist.

Section II

Fall Sports

Lower School

- Future Spartans Lacrosse (Boys and Girls Grades 1-4)
- Multi-Sports Camp (Boys and Girls Grades 1-4)
- Girls on the Run (GOTR)
- Tennis Clinics (Boys and Girls Grades 1 – 4)

Middle School

- Volleyball (Girls) (Practices begin one week prior to the start of school)
- Soccer (Boys & Girls) (Practices begin one week prior to the start of school)
- Cross Country (Boys and Girls) (Practices begin on or shortly after July 15th)

**Opportunities to participate in Upper School golf in grades 7/8 may also exist*

Upper School

- Volleyball (Girls) (Practice to begin on July 15th)
- Cross Country (Boys and Girls) (Practice to begin on July 15th)
- Soccer (Boys and Girls) (Practice to begin on July 15th)
- Golf (Boys and Girls) (Practice to begin on July 15th)

Winter Sports

Lower School

- Future Spartans Basketball (Boys and Girls Grades 1-5)
- Y-League Sayre Basketball

Middle School

(Practices begin the week of Nov. 1st)

- Basketball (Boys and Girls)
- Cheerleading

**Opportunities to participate in Upper School swimming and diving in grades 7/8 may also exist*

Upper School

- * Basketball (Boys and Girls) (Practice to start Oct. 15th)
- * Swimming (Boys and Girls) (Practice to start Oct. 15th)
- * Cheer

Spring Sports

Lower School

- Y-League Sayre Soccer

Middle School

(Practices begin the week of March 1st)

- Lacrosse (Boys and Girls)
- Track (Boys and Girls)

**Opportunities to participate in Upper School tennis, baseball and track in grades 7/8 may also exist*

Upper School

- Tennis (Boys and Girls) (Practices begin on or shortly after Feb. 15th)
- Baseball (Practice begins on Feb. 15th)
- Lacrosse (Boys and Girls) (Practice begins on Feb. 15th)
- Track (Boys and Girls) (Practice begins on Feb. 15th)

Section III

Facilities

Our athletic facilities are located both on campus in the CV Whitney Gymnasium and also at our athletic complex located at 300 Canebrake Rd, Lexington Kentucky. The CV Whitney Gymnasium is the site of home Volleyball and Basketball games and many of our practices. The gym also houses varsity and general use locker rooms, training facilities, weight/fitness facilities, Coach and Administrative offices. Our Athletic Complex boasts 10 tennis courts, a baseball and softball diamond, cross country course, 4 athletic fields and a pavilion with bathrooms, locker rooms(4), training room, concessions and living quarters for the facilities manager.

Services

The Sayre Athletic Department takes pride in its efforts to provide a challenging, competitive and rewarding athletic experience for all of our student athletes. To that end, Sayre provides the following services:

- Qualified coaches that have met KHSAA mandated coaching and hiring criteria
- Athletic training services
- Practice facilities
- Game facilities
- Practice, game and training equipment
- Weight training facilities
- Team transportation to practice sessions (when needed)
- Team transportation to games/matches outside Fayette County

Membership and Affiliations

Sayre School is a member of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) which governs the interscholastic athletic competition of both public and private schools in Kentucky. Sayre also competes as a member of the Class A which is comprised of smaller schools throughout the state. On a regional level, Sayre is also a member of the *Bluegrass Conference which includes the following regional schools: Burgin, Berea, Model, Nicholas County, Paris, KSD, and Sayre.*

Safety and Assumed Risk

Providing a safe environment for practice and competition is a priority for everyone involved in the Sayre Athletic Department. Every effort is made to ensure the safety and well being of all participants. However, students and parents must understand that participation in athletics is inherently dangerous. Injuries ranging from mild to severe can occur at any time during athletic participation and the risk of injury can not be eliminated by Sayre School, its coaches or the Department of Athletics.

Tips to Reduce Injury Risk:

- *Attain and maintain physical fitness and flexibility:* Injuries often occur when athletes attempt to practice or compete without preparing their bodies adequately.
- *Fuel and Hydrate:* Muscles and joints can not function or recover properly if you fail to provide them adequate nutrition and hydration.
- *Have injuries evaluated:* If an athlete suffers an injury or has pain, do not assume it will be alright. Alert the coach and/or your medical doctor and follow their advice.
- *Adequate sleep:* In addition to being an important part of preparation, sleep is essential to a body's ability to repair and recover after training and competition.
- *Abstain from alcohol and drug use:* In addition to being illegal and against stated school and athletic department policies, alcohol and drugs decrease physical and mental performance. Alcohol use also negatively impacts muscle recovery and repair.

Insurance and Liability Coverage

All student athletes that compete for Sayre on an established team during the academic school year are covered by our supplemental school wide liability coverage. This school insurance is secondary to a family's primary insurance coverage and can serve to help cover co-pays, deductibles and other costs not covered by primary insurance. Further, the KHSAA maintains catastrophic coverage for student athletes competing in KHSAA sanctioned activities during their defined seasons.

*****Please Note:** Athletes practicing or playing during the summer, outside of the academic school year and not during a defined season, are not covered by Sayre's supplemental insurance or the KHSAA plan.

Communication

Technology is an integral part of our attempts to maintain frequent and open communication with the Sayre Community. Game schedules are posted on the Sayre web site and updated as needed. Directions to away contests can also be found on our web site. Since both practice and game schedules can frequently change, coaches and administrators frequently use e-mail or text messaging to communicate with players, parents and the school community as a whole. In many cases, PA announcements in the Upper School or Middle School are also used to communicate last minute schedule changes to students.

During the course of any season, the need for personal communication outside of practice between athlete, coach and/or parent may arise. We recognize that all parties are working hard to develop individual talents and skills and coaches are always attempting to also keep the needs of those individuals in balance with the needs of the team. Problems, misunderstandings and/or unrealized expectations do occur and open communication lines between athletes and coaches can be vital. The following communication guidelines should be followed whenever possible.

1. We strongly encourage any student athlete experiencing difficulties to address it directly and privately with their coach. Developing the ability to communicate and problem solve directly with an adult is consistent with our educational philosophy.
2. If an athlete has attempted to resolve an issue directly with his or her coach and has not been successful, parents may then feel compelled to assist in this process. Parents are asked to also schedule an appointment with the coach. Approaching a coach with an issue before or after a practice or game when emotions may be high is not acceptable and strongly discouraged.
3. If an athlete and parent have both spoken with the coach and still feel that their issues are unresolved, it is appropriate to involve the Director of Athletics in discussions.

Section IV

Pre Participation Physicals

The Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) and Sayre School require that every student athlete have an updated physical every year in order to practice or compete. Physicals must be completed on the standard KHSAA form (GEO4 part 1) and are good for 13 months from the date of the physical exam. Please understand that our primary concern is always the health and safety of your child and compliance with this rule is **MUST**. Thus, all student/athletes will be held out of both practice and games until the Athletic Department has a current physical on file. Athletes and parents can help the process run smoothly by following the procedures outlined below:

- Have your new physical form completed and turned in at least one week prior to the first day of practice.
- Always make and keep a copy of the physical for your records.
- Original copies of physicals can be scanned and e mailed, hand delivered or mailed directly to the Athletic Director at:
Sayre School
Attn: Cindy Eason
194 N. Limestone Street
Lexington, KY 40507
ceason@sayreschool.org
- If timing and/or circumstances require you to give a physical directly to a coach, give the coach a copy only. Always send the original to the athletic department for safe keeping.

Player and Parent Participation Agreement

Prior to competing in a sport at Sayre, students are asked to read and sign a participation agreement each year. The purpose of the agreement is to clearly communicate important Sayre Athletic Department philosophies and policies to parents and student athletes. In this way, we hope to add consistency to all of our athletic programs and both establish and maintain an athletic culture that pushes every student athlete to consistently strive to reach their potential.

Transfer Students

Any student that transfers to Sayre School after the beginning of their 9th grade year must verify their eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics with the KHSAA. Please notify both the admissions office and the Athletic Department if you are a transfer student that wishes to play any sport for the school. Sayre will coordinate with you, your previous school and the KHSAA to determine your eligibility status.

*Please note that no transfer student may practice or compete without verification of eligibility from the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA).

Lettering at Sayre

Student/athletes that compete on the Upper School Varsity level at Sayre will receive a varsity letter “S” and a bar for their participation in that sport. Sport specific bars will be awarded each time that athlete competes on the varsity level for any sport thereafter. Lettering requirements for a given sport will be left to the discretion of the coach.

Middle School students will receive a “Certificate of Participation” for each Middle School sport in which they compete.

Section V

Athletic Department and Team Policies

Open Participation Policy

Participation in interscholastic athletics can be a powerfully positive force when it comes to teaching and learning. Being a member of a team and working towards a common goal teaches valuable life lessons and provides fertile ground for meaningful character development. The Open Participation policy at Sayre School exists to encourage student athletes to participate in interscholastic athletics regardless of experience or skill level. All interested student athletes are encouraged to take advantage of this unique opportunity to enhance their High School experience and expand their learning environment beyond the walls of their respective class rooms.

However, it is important that each student recognizes the necessary level of commitment and responsibility needed to be part of a Sayre team. Interscholastic athletics are competitive by nature and the Sayre Athletic Philosophy and culture compels each individual team member to push themselves to reach their potential as athletes and to support team mates and coaches. The Sayre Athletic Department policies listed below outline the expectations that are in place for all student/athletes that choose to participate in interscholastic sports.

**At times, and with certain sports, it may prove necessary to limit the size of an athletic team at Sayre. When confronted with such limitations the Department of Athletics will cooperate with coaches to determine which athletes should remain on a varsity roster and do so as objectively as possible.*

Hazing and Harassment Policy

Hazing- Hazing is considered a serious infraction at Sayre and contrary to the athletic culture we wish to create. The potential for hazing typically arises as part of a student's introduction to or initiation into an organization (athletic team, or other group) in which there is often a perceived or real power differential between members of the organization and those newly joining it.

Hazing is defined as any action taken or situation created, whether on or off school property, that is harmful or potentially harmful to an individual's physical, emotional, or psychological well-being, regardless of an individual's willingness to participate or its bearing on his/her membership status. Any individual or group that singles out other members of a team and engages in any activities that are degrading, humiliating, belittling, physically or emotionally abusive and could be construed as hazing will be disciplined. Disciplinary consequences can range from individual internal athletic penalties within the team to removal from the team, school suspensions and/or expulsion from Sayre School and will depend on the severity of the infraction. Further, the actions of an individual team member or group of team members may also result in team/program wide consequences.

Harassment- At the Sayre School we strive to foster and provide an environment that encourages, supports and values the individual. Therefore, we do not endorse or condone, accept or abide, any form of harassment be it emotional, physical, psychological or sexual. Since we are committed to maintaining a learning and working environment free of harassment and intimidation, we strictly prohibit harassment of or by any member of the Sayre School community including but not limited to students, staff, faculty, administration, board members, parents volunteers and guests.

An atmosphere of mutual respect and physical and emotional safety is essential to the Sayre community. Conduct, comments or gestures that create an intimidating, hostile, offensive or uncomfortable environment can be considered harassment and are contrary to our community values. In order to create a respectful and safe school community for everyone to enjoy it is the responsibility of every member to stand up and speak out on behalf of classmates, colleagues and peers. We must not allow ourselves to be silent bystanders that allow harassment to continue.

It is critical that all members of the school community report incidents of harassment promptly to a member of the faculty such as a teacher, advisor, school counselor, division director or the Head of School. The school will respond to reported incidents with great care, sensitivity and thoughtfulness and a record of the incident will be kept on file in the relevant division.

If any member of the Sayre School community violates these policies, appropriate disciplinary action up to and including discharge or expulsion, will be taken by the Department of Athletics and Sayre School.

Sayre Upper School Student Handbook

Sayre student athletes should understand that policies outlined in the Sayre Upper School Student Handbook remain in effect when participating in any Sayre co-curricular activity including athletics. Violations of policies in either this handbook or the Sayre Upper School Student Handbook, including the honor code, can have repercussions in both the Upper School and on a student athletes standing and/or participation in athletics.

Acceptable Use and Social Media Policy

- The Sayre School acceptable use and social media policy is in effect and applicable to both parents and students involved with Sayre Athletics. We understand that social media can be used in a positive way to build enthusiasm and provide positive exposure to Sayre athletics but negative and inappropriate use of social media can be damaging and reflect negatively on teams, coaches, Sayre Athletics and Sayre School. Further, the use of Smart Phones or other social media and/or recording and filming devices are not appropriate at practices, games or in our locker rooms. Participating student athletes will refrain from using smart phones or recording devices during any athletic event (practices/games) unless permission is granted by the coach and/or the department of athletics. The use of any such device is expressly forbidden in any locker rooms and bathrooms.
- *Please consult Sayre's acceptable use policy for more details regarding the use of social networks.

Playing Time

All eligible players will be given the opportunity to compete in practice and develop sport specific skills. Successful teams are developed during practice and every athlete plays an important role in preparing for success on game day. While every player will be given opportunities in practice, playing time in games is a coaching decision and IS NOT ASSURED. Many factors are considered when it comes to determining playing time in games and ultimately coaches will call on those athletes that, in their opinion, will give their team the best chance to compete and win. Athletes with questions about their role on the team should make an appointment and speak directly with the coach. Playing time is not an appropriate topic of conversation between parents and coaches particularly at the High School level.

- Lower School- Meaningful and equal playing time will be given to each player in an effort to develop each player. The focus on the Lower School level is to gain experience, develop skills and to have fun.
- Middle School- In Middle School, the level of competition increases. Coaches will make an effort to give playing time to every team member but playing time will often not be equally distributed. Experience and skill development are still the focus but competing and winning at the Middle School level starts to play a more prominent role.
- Upper School- Upper School sports at Sayre are competitive and playing time is not assured at any level of HS play. Coaches are always looking to challenge and develop players and they will determine playing time on game days based on which players they believe will give their team the best chance to compete and win.

Practice and Game Attendance

At each successive level of competition (LS,MS,HS), commitment and attendance at practices and games becomes an increasingly critical component of athletic participation at Sayre. At the High School varsity level, team members are expected to attend ALL scheduled practices and games. However, coaches recognize that extenuating circumstances may arise that interfere with athletic commitments. When they do, it is imperative that any player with a conflict contact their coach directly with as much advance notice as possible to inform them of the conflict and request to be excused. It will be up to the coaches' discretion whether to excuse the student/athlete for a missed practice.

Note: Unexcused or repeated absences may result in additional fitness activities and/or reduced playing time. Repeated absences can undermine the team and represent a lack of commitment. In such cases repeated absences may, at the discretion of the coach and the Director of Athletics, be grounds for dismissal from a team.

Attitude and Behavior

Being a good team member often requires a student/athlete to be selfless and to put the needs of the team ahead of their own. A positive attitude and maximum effort inspires teammates to give their best and is a vital ingredient to any teams' success. Every player should strive to be an asset to the team in both practice and in games whether they are competing or encouraging teammates from the side lines. A player's conduct is on public display and reflects not only on that individual but also on teammates, coaches and Sayre School.

Sportsmanship Statement

The Sayre Athletic Department is deeply committed to the practice of good sportsmanship. Our goal is for everyone involved with athletics to treat others the way that they would like to be treated and to conduct themselves in a respectful manner that reflects positively on Sayre School. For us to be successful in our efforts to instill the values inherent in good sportsmanship to our student athletes, everyone in our school community must set a positive example. We expect athletes, coaches, parents faculty and staff to show respect to players and coaches from all teams as well as officials and fans of the opposing schools.

Parents- You are an integral part of our athletic community. We understand that watching your children compete can elicit a strong emotional response. Any contest has the ability to be positive or negative and yet, as we expect your children to do in competition, we require you to model good sportsmanship in the stands by:

- Supporting all of our student/athletes
- Supporting the coaching staff
- Respecting the work of officials
- Showing respect for the efforts of opposing teams and coaches
- Being respectful of opposing fans even if you experience disrespectful behavior

Academic Requirements

Student athletes at Sayre are consistently challenged to balance the rigorous academic requirements of school with the demands of competitive athletics. Time management skills and the ability to plan and prioritize are frequently tested skills that every student athlete must learn to master. If a student falters in his or her studies, teachers and coaches will work cooperatively in an effort to help students realize success in both areas of their lives. Ultimately, academics are the first priority at Sayre and sub-standard performance in the classroom will lead to temporary suspension or dismissal from a team if an athlete is unable to balance academics with their athletic pursuits. Please refer to the appropriate Division Handbooks (Middle School or Upper School) for specific academic eligibility requirements.

School Attendance and Eligibility

Student athletes must be in school on game days in order to be eligible to play in games or practice. A student is considered present at school if they are signed in with the office no later than 10:30 AM that morning. Students who arrive at school by 8:15 AM and remain on campus and in classes until at least 12:30 PM are also considered eligible for athletic participation that afternoon. Students who are unable to attend school the day before a weekend or holiday will remain eligible to participate in athletic events on subsequent days.

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

The use of drugs and alcohol by high school athletes is illegal and is inconsistent with achieving peak performance. It is detrimental to the health of the individual athlete and also to the team. Athletes competing for Sayre School are expected to abstain from using drugs and alcohol. If an athlete uses or is found to have in his/her possession any illegal drugs or alcohol at any school sponsored event he/she will, at a minimum, be suspended from practice and competition for one full week (7 days), will miss at least one regular season game and will be put "on probation" for the remainder of the academic year. A second infraction will result in suspension from any and all athletic participation for the remainder of that academic year. More serious infractions or in cases that involve the selling/distribution of drugs or alcohol, additional penalties may be warranted and will be considered on a case by case basis by the Director of Athletics, the Upper School Director, and the Dean of Students and could include more significant team penalties up to and including dismissal from a team or expulsion from Sayre School. The use of drugs and/or alcohol outside of school sponsored events is similarly prohibited yet coaches and administrators realize that events that take place away from school and school sponsored events are impossible for us to control.

- The Athletic Department respectfully requests that parents assist us in our efforts to teach positive values and the importance of honoring a commitment by being actively involved with your child's activities away from school. Talk to your child about the negative impact that alcohol and drug use can have and their responsibility to their teammates, their school and to themselves.
- Late night social events the night before a game can have a negative impact on game day performance. Parents can further assist us in our efforts by ensuring that student/athletes are home by 12 midnight on any night prior to competition.

Junior Varsity

When the number of interested athletes in a given sport is large enough, the athletic department may provide athletes with the opportunity to compete and gain experience on the Junior Varsity level. When these situations arise, coaches will determine, based on their player evaluations and observations which players will compete on the Varsity level and which will play Junior Varsity.

Length of Seasons

The KHSAA sets forth guidelines for the length of season in our interscholastic high school sports. Starting dates for each season are in keeping with those guidelines. Coaching and/or mandatory practices outside of a given sports season is prohibited during the school year. However, summer practices are permitted by the KHSAA except during the two week mandatory dead period which typically begins the end of June through early July (please see the current KHSAA schedules for specific dead period dates). Sayre School coaches often hold regular conditioning sessions during the school year to allow students and athletes alike to train during the off season. Conditioning sessions held outside of an athletes' normal season are not mandatory and are open to all interested like gender High School students.

Playing Up Policy

The Athletic Department may, in some instances, permit younger student/athletes to “play up” onto Middle School or High School teams. Parents and younger players should understand that playing up is both an honor and a privilege and coaches often prioritize playing time in games for older athletes. In addition practices, games and seasons become increasingly demanding both physically and emotionally at higher levels. Parents and young athletes should consider both the short and long term physical and emotional impact of playing up. Despite the best intentions on the part of all involved parties, the increased demands and premature exposure to more mature athletes can be detrimental to the overall development of a young athlete.

Middle School Sports

No Lower School student will be allowed to play up on a Middle School team.

Upper School Sports

- Upper School Boys/Girls Basketball- The coaching staff or Director of Athletics may contact parents of Middle School basketball players and ask them to play up onto JV and/or Varsity High School teams when they feel there is a need for additional athletes. If the coaching staff and Director of Athletics feels that a particular Middle School athlete possesses uncommon skill, athleticism and promise, they may at their sole discretion speak to that players parents and invite them to play up in an effort to challenge and develop them.
- Upper School Boys/Girls Soccer- The KHSAA mandates that 8th grade soccer players may not compete on the same field with junior and seniors in high school. Parents of 8th grade soccer players may, at the sole discretion of the coaching staff and the Director of Athletics, be contacted to ask about having their 8th grade athlete play up onto JV soccer teams when additional athletes are needed to field a JV squad.
- Upper School Boys/Girls Lacrosse- Middle School lacrosse players are not permitted to compete at the high school level. This is not true for Girls in the league we are currently in.
- Upper School Baseball/Softball- Parents of Middle School athletes who are interested in baseball and softball are encouraged to speak with the respective coaches to discuss the possibility of playing on JV/Varsity High School teams. The decision whether or not to allow Middle School athletes to play up will be at the discretion of the coach and Director of Athletics and will depend on the number of High School players and the overall readiness of the Middle School athlete.
- In individual and/or non contact sports such as track and field, cross country, swimming, diving, golf and tennis Middle School athletes may be permitted to play up onto High School teams at the sole discretion of the coaching staff and the Director of Athletics. Parents of interested Middle School athletes should contact coaches directly to discuss the possibility of participating on the High School level.

NOTE: No athlete below 7th grade is eligible to compete on any team in KHSAA sanctioned sports.

- **Transportation:** Transportation is provided both to and from away games that take place outside of Fayette County. All student athletes are required to ride the team bus to away games when transportation is provided by the school. Coaches may, at their discretion and that of the Director of Athletics, allow students to ride home from an away event with a parent or adult family member. Any such request should be made to the coach in advance and will be considered on a case by case basis. Athletes **MAY NOT** ride home from away events where transportation is provided with another student. If the need arises, special permission to ride to an away event with a parent may be granted on a case by case basis.

Section VI

Health and Safety

- **Fitness:** Interscholastic athletics is physically demanding and preparation is essential for performance and injury prevention. All athletes and coaches should place a high premium on fitness, strength and flexibility so athletes are prepared to compete safely and at a high level. All Sayre athletes are strongly encouraged to engage in off season team training and year round fitness activities to improve their skill and conditioning and prepare for their season.
- **Nutrition:** Proper nutrition is an important and often overlooked aspect of performance in High School and Middle School athletics. While the topic may be too extensive to address adequately in this format, some general guidelines and pre participation guidelines should be helpful.
 - A diet rich in vegetables, fruits, lean meats, whole grains and healthy fats is a sound foundation for a lifetime of healthy living and will effectively support the efforts of an athlete.
 - Pre participation snacks and meals should follow the same guidelines. The list of healthy pre participation choices is immense but athletes should specifically try to avoid the following choices since they can have a negative impact on energy and performance:
 - Fried and/or high fat foods as they do not provide an easily digestible energy source
 - High sugar foods such as cookies, cakes and candy which will spike blood sugar quickly and often result in an a corresponding drop in blood sugar during competition
 - Stimulants such as caffeine and energy drinks as they also cause a temporary boost in energy and a corresponding drop that often occurs during competition.
- Do we need to add something about the testing we do?
- **Concussion Management:** Concussions sustained during athletics have increasingly become a focal point in sports medicine. Traumatic brain injuries are always concerning and can result in a loss of cognitive function or, in more severe cases, severe brain damage or death. If after sustaining a concussion, an athlete sustains another traumatic blow to the head before the damage caused by the initial trauma has completely resolved, the impact to the brain is magnified and the resulting injury compounded. In keeping with our steadfast commitment to the health and safety of our student/athletes, the Sayre Athletic Department will follow the following guidelines when managing suspected concussions:
 - If a coach or trainer believes that an athlete may have sustained a concussion during practice or competition, that athlete will be removed from play immediately and evaluated for symptoms of a concussion.
 - If an athlete removed from play is found to have symptoms consistent with a concussion they may not return to play that day, no exceptions. All concussions must be evaluated by a medical doctor and any suspicion of a more significant concussion warrants prompt medical care.
 - Student/athletes found to have symptoms consistent with a concussion may only return to practice and/or competition once they receive written clearance from a medical doctor to do so. Additionally, a copy of the written clearance must be given to the Director of Athletics prior to participation.
- **Skin Infections:** Skin infections have become commonplace in athletics and can pose a significant health risk. Be on the lookout for any indication of skin infections, rashes or boils. If you find a questionable lesion or irritation, cover it and then consult with your family physician or team trainer. To reduce your risk of infection, follow the following guidelines:
 1. Wash all jerseys, shorts and other practice apparel in hot water and air in the dryer. Practice and game apparel should be washed after each practice or game. (Do not dry in dryer)
 2. Clean and cover any exposed wounds, scratches or other breaks in the skin that could become infected.
 3. Wash your hands frequently and after every practice.
 4. Shower soon after every practice and game.

5. **Do not share any personal items.** This includes towels, jerseys, practice apparel, shorts, shoes, shaving items, drink bottles, soap etc...
 6. **Do not share protective equipment and disinfect it on a regular basis.** This includes gloves, helmets, masks, shin guards and any other protective padding.
 7. **Have any suspicious skin lesion evaluated immediately.** Untreated and uncovered lesions can pose a significant threat to both the patient and other athletes who come in contact with them.
***Note:** Any athlete who is held out of practice by their physician must provide written permission from their doctor prior to their return to practice or competition.
- **Heat Illness:** Heat illness can be a significant concern for athletes competing or practicing in hot and humid conditions. All athletes require time to acclimatize to exercising in the heat, especially young athletes. Any athlete that loses more than 3% of his or her body weight during exercise is at significant risk of heat related illness. To decrease the risk of heat illness, athletes should:
 - Arrive at practice and games hydrated
 - Wear light colored breathable clothing for practice
 - Request water if they feel excessively thirsty or hot
 - Condition and acclimatize before the season starts
 - Get adequate sleep
 - Be especially cautious if recovering from an illness (especially one that involved vomiting or diarrhea) or if taking certain medications such as diuretics, amphetamines, anti-histamines or beta blockers
 - **Hydration:** Proper fluid and electrolyte balance begins before an athlete ever arrives at practice or games. The most effective fluid for hydration is water. For electrolytes athletes should reach for fresh fruits and vegetables and use sports drinks sparingly and primarily during competition.
 - Athletes should drink approximately 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes during athletic participation. Consumption needs will vary depending on the size of the athlete, the intensity of activity, environmental factors such as temperature and humidity and the athletes' physical fitness level. Water is always available to athletes at practices and games.
 - Sports drinks can be helpful to athletes who are exercising at a high intensity for 60-90 minutes or more. In addition to hydrating, they contain easily absorbed carbohydrates and also help to replenish electrolytes lost during intense exercise.
 - Caffeinated beverages should be avoided. Caffeine is a stimulant and a diuretic which ultimately depletes body fluids and electrolytes.
 - Energy drinks can hurt sustained athletic performance and can also pose a health risk. The energy provided is short lived and can result in an inability to maintain energy and performance.

Game and Practice Preparation

Interscholastic athletics are physically and mentally demanding. Athletes who prepare themselves properly for competition will give themselves the best chance to experience consistent success. In contrast, poor choices can negatively impact performance and also put an athlete, teammates and/or opponents at increased risk of injury.

Some points of emphasis for the preparation are:

- Hydrate before, during and after competition
- Practice good nutritional habits, it fuels optimal performance and recovery
- Getting adequate sleep is necessary for an athletes body to prepare and repair
- Abstain from using drugs and/or alcohol (please see specific alcohol/drug policy below)
- Abstain from using tobacco products
- Avoid the use of stimulants (caffeine and energy drinks) before competition. They impair sustained athletic performance and can pose a health risks to some athletes