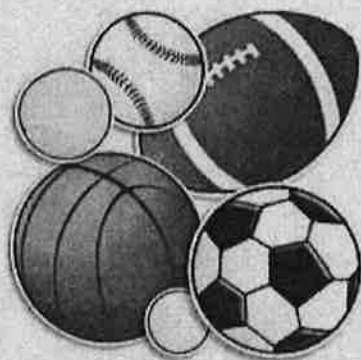


MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



Benson Village School
Castleton Elementary School
Castleton Village School
Fair Haven Grade School (ARSU Sports Only)
Orwell Village School

2017 - 2018



Athletic Philosophy

Our interscholastic sports program is based upon promoting the respective sport **as** a positive, enjoyable experience to our students. To do this, **we *must*** emphasize good sportsmanship, ensure the significant participation of all teams and encourage responsibility, dedication, self-discipline, teamwork and the spirit of competition. We also hope to help improve and develop the skills of all team members. We do subscribe to the fair playing time philosophy; however students must have regular attendance, a good attitude and attend all practices in order to be allowed playing time. We also realize the importance of setting priorities and placing academics first and foremost in our students' total educational program.

Please remember that while winning is nice, these principles must come first in our program.

The Standards for Athletics and Activities for the Middle Schools are outlined by the Vermont Principal's Association. These guidelines are available online, www.vpa.org, or by request at any of the Schools.

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Sports Offered to Middle School Students

Fall Sports (September - October):

Soccer	5th & 6th Grade 7th & 8th Grade	Co-ed Boys & Girls or Co-ed
Flag Football ¹	7th & 8th Grade	
Cross Country	6th, 7th, & 8th Grade	

Winter Sports (November - March):

Basketball	5th & 6th Grade ² 7th & 8th Grade	Boys & Girls Boys & Girls
Wrestling	7th & 8th Grade	

Spring Sports (April - June):

Baseball	7th & 8th Grade
Softball	7th & 8th Grade ³
Track & Field	6th, 7th, & 8th Grade

Other sports may be offered depending on availability

1. Football is full pad and helmet and full contact
2. 5th grade basketball for Castleton is only offered through the recreation department
3. Depending on the number of 7th and 8th grade girls, softball may be offered to 6th grade girls

Contact Information

Superintendent - ARSU

Brooke Olsen-Farrell 265-4905 bfarell@arsu.org

Athletic Director

John R. Tester 989-3760 jtester@arsu.org

Principals

Benson Village School

Kim Prehoda 537-2491 kprehoda@arsu.org

Castleton Elementary School

Kathleen Kilbourn 468-5624 kkilbourn@arsu.org

Castleton Village School

Linda Peltier 482-2203 lpeltier@arsu.org

Fair Haven Grade School

Wayne Cooke 265-3883 wcooke@arsu.org

Kim Alexander (Athletic Director) kalexander@arsu.org

Orwell Village School

Patrick Walters 948-2871 pwalters@arsu.org

Eligibility

1. A student must be enrolled at one of the participating schools for ARSU or as outlined through home schooling regulations and must meet the school's prescribed academic and eligibility rules.
2. A student must have a current sports physical and be cleared to play.
3. A student must be in school at the start of the school day in order to participate in athletics for that day. Exceptions are made for doctors/dentist appointments or other excused tardiness/absences that are approved by the school administrator.
4. Any other eligibility requirements as outlined by the School Boards, Superintendent, or school administration.

Sports Physicals

Students may NOT participate in any athletic program, practice, game, or event unless they have an up-to-date sports physical. The sports physical cannot be more than 12 months old at the time of the end of the sports season.

The school nurse will review the records of all student-athletes and notify the Athletic Director and school principal of student-athletes who are not eligible to participate.

Sports physical deadlines:

Fall Sports - Must not be more than 12 months old as of November 1

Winter Sports - Must not be more than 12 months old as of March 1

Spring Sports - Must not be more than 12 months old as of June 15

Expectations

Student-Athletes

1. Student-athletes are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior and to represent their schools goals and philosophy at all times. This is expected on the bus while traveling to and from activities, while waiting to participate, in the locker room, and during participation. Good sportsmanship, respect for the visited school's property, and appropriate bus behavior is expected. Violation or non-compliance for any of the listed expectations could result in loss of privilege to participate.
2. Student-athletes will attend every practice and game and will notify their coach when they cannot.
3. Student-athletes will not engage in the use of profanity while participating in any athletic event.
4. Student-athletes will treat coaches, other student athletes, and parents, with respect at all times.
5. Student-athletes will be respectful of officials at all times, despite the circumstances.
6. Student-athletes will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any official, coach or other student-athlete.
7. Student-athletes will remain drug, tobacco, and alcohol free at all times.
8. Student-athletes will keep their uniform neat and clean and will return it undamaged at the end of the season.
9. Student-athletes will respect their equipment and use it for its intended purpose only.
10. Student-athletes will not engage in horseplay or unsafe conduct before, during, or after the game.
11. Student-athletes will be responsible for their personal property while on the bus and at sports events.

Expectations (cont'd)

Parents

1. Parents will lead by example.
2. Parents will never yell at or ridicule any child while at any athletic event.
3. Parents will not engage in the use of profanity while attending any youth athletic event.
4. Parents will make all of their comments and behavior positive and supportive.
5. Parents will treat other coaches, student athletes, parents, officials, and school administrators with respect at all times.
6. Parents will not engage in the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products while at any sports event, including outside of the entrances and in the parking lot.
7. Parents will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, official, or student athlete.
8. Parents will respect the decisions of the officials at all times and will never issue insults, arguments, or derogatory remarks to any official before, during, or after a game.
9. Parents will always remember that the game is for youth and not adults.

Although this section refers to “parents”, it’s intention is to apply to ALL adults and younger guests who attend a sports events.



Expectations (cont'd)

Coaches

1. Coaches will lead by example.
2. Coaches will praise efforts, not results.
3. Coaches will encourage safe play at all times.
4. Coaches will know the rules of the game and how to apply them.
5. Coaches will make all of their comments and behavior positive and supportive.
6. Coaches will create an enjoyable environment in which student-athletes can learn and play the game.
7. Coaches will condemn unsporting behavior and promote respect for all opponents.
8. Coaches will not engage in the use of profanity while coaching any youth athletic event.
9. Coaches will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any other coach, official, or student athlete.
10. Coaches will respect the decisions of the officials at all times and will never issue insults, arguments, or derogatory remarks to any official before, during, or after a game.
11. Coaches will communicate effectively with athletes, parents, and administration by:
 - Handing out schedules and other important information.
 - Keeping athletes and parents informed of all changes and cancellations.
 - Addressing issues and concerns in a timely manner.
 - Making clear the team rules and expectations.
 - Keeping the Athletic Director and school administration informed of any concerns or issues.

Health and Safety

Concussion Protocol

This protocol has been developed to address the issue of the identification and management of concussions for students who participate in school sports. Act 68 was passed into law in 2013 and requires that schools have an action plan (*text in italics* are items required by Act 68).

A safe return to activity protocol (learning and athletics) is important for all athletes following any injury, but it is essential after a concussion. The goal of this concussion protocol is to ensure that concussed athletes are identified, treated and referred appropriately for return to learn and return to play. Consistent use of a concussion management protocol will ensure that the athlete receives appropriate follow-up and/or academic accommodations in order to make certain that the athlete is fully recovered prior to returning to full athletic play activity.

This protocol will be reviewed annually by administration. Changes and modifications will be reviewed and written notifications will be provided to athletic department staff, coaches and other appropriate school personnel.

All coaches are required to certify in concussion management training annually. Parents and athletes must be educated about concussions annually. The written documentation of the coach's annual training shall be kept in the coach's personnel file and the student/parents in the student file and be tracked by the athletic coordinator.

Recognition of Concussion

These signs and symptoms, following a witnessed or suspected blow to the head or body, are indicative of a probable concussion:

Headache	Double vision, blurry vision
Fatigue	Answers questions slowly
Confusion	Balance
Nausea or vomiting	Feels sluggish
Appears dazed or stunned	Feels “foggy”
Sensitive to light or noise	Changes in behavior

Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion must be removed from competition or practice and will not be allowed to train or compete with a school athletic team until the athlete has been examined by and received written permission to participate in athletic activities from a health care provider (per Act 68, approved by the VT Legislature in 2013).

Return to Play

The athlete will be removed from the game immediately.

The coach **MUST** notify the parents and Athletic Director when an athlete suffers a probable concussion, and fill out an accident report that is turned into the school nurse within 24 hours.

The athlete must be seen by and then cleared by his/her personal physician.

The School nurse must clear the athlete to return to play.

The Athletic Director will inform the coach that the athlete is cleared to return to play.

The coach, parents, and athlete must abide by all the restrictions of the return to play protocol as set forth by the school nurse.

For more information regarding concussions in youth sports consult the handout “Parent/Athlete Concussion Information Sheet” from *Heads Up - Concussion in Youth Sports* or go to www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

Remember: When in doubt, sit them out!

Health and Safety (cont'd)

Sports Physicals

All student-athletes must have an up to date sports physical on file with the school nurse or they will not be able to participate in any athletic event.

Physicals must not be more than 12 months old by the end of the sports season.

Fall Sports - Must not be more than 12 months old as of November 1

Winter Sports - Must not be more than 12 months old as of March 1

Spring Sports - Must not be more than 12 months old as of June 15

Weather

The safety of athletes, coaching personnel and spectators is of paramount importance, and the school will always err on the side of safety when determining if a game or event should be played or continued due to weather or driving conditions.

During inclement weather for outdoor sports the coaches and officials will collaborate to determine if the field of play is still safe. If they determine it is unsafe to continue, the game will be halted and all participants will be sent home.

When thunder or lightning occurs during an outdoor practice or game, it will be halted immediately and all coaching personnel and student-athletes will find shelter inside of a building or a school bus. Student-athletes are NOT allowed to find shelter from thunder or lightning in a dugout or any other shelter that is not enclosed on all four sides.

The practice or game cannot continue until no incidents of thunder or lightning have occurred for at least 30 minutes.

There is no exception to this policy.

Health and Safety (cont'd)

Mouthguards

The use of mouthguards is required for all athletes who play flag football, including practice.

Castleton Village and Castleton Elementary Schools require mouthguards for all athletes who participate in soccer, basketball, softball, and baseball, including practice.

Benson and Orwell Village Schools highly recommend the use of mouthguards for all athletes who participate in soccer, basketball, softball, and baseball, including practice.

One mouthguard is provided to all athletes from all schools free of charge. Additional mouthguards can be purchased for one dollar.

Personal mouthguards are allowed but cannot be clear.

Mouthguards should not be shared among athletes and should be properly cleaned after each event.

Injuries

All teams are issued a school first aid kit.

When an athlete is injured the coach will immediately inform the parents and Athletic Director. An accident report will be filled out and sent to the school nurse and school principal within 24 hours.

The school nurse will make the determination as to when the athlete can return to play and with what restrictions.

Insurance

Accident/health/injury insurance must be purchased from the school if the athlete is not covered under a personal insurance policy. Injuries sustained at sports events are not covered by the school. Go to your schools website for more information.

Game and Practice Regulations

Seasons

- ◇ The fall sports season lasts nine weeks and begins the week that school starts.
- ◇ The winter sports season lasts 13 weeks and begins two weeks after the fall sports season ends.
- ◇ The spring sports season lasts nine weeks and begins two weeks after the winter sports season ends.
- ◇ No more than three games will be played in a week.

Practices

- ◇ Practices will be scheduled in advance.
- ◇ Coaches will give as much advance notice as possible when canceling or changing a practice.
- ◇ Practices will last no longer the 1 1/2 hours.
- ◇ There will be no more than 4 practices per week.
- ◇ Athletes must attend at least seven practices before they can participate in a game.

Sports

- ◇ SOCCER - Maximum of 12 games, including tournaments during the season. Consists of two 30 minute halves with a 10 minute intermission. No overtime for tied games. A jersey and socks are provided by Castleton Schools, a jersey, shorts, and socks are provided by Benson/Orwell. Shin guards are required and must be provided by the parents.

- ◇ **CROSS COUNTRY** - Practices will be held at Fair Haven Union High School. A jersey is provided.
- ◇ **FLAG FOOTBALL** - The flag football team will practice at Fair Haven Union High School. Home games are played at the Castleton University Spartan Field when available. All pads, helmets, mouthguards, and uniforms are provided.
- ◇ **BASKETBALL** - No more than 16 games, including tournaments will be scheduled. Games consist of four 6 minute quarters with a five minute intermission between the 2nd and 3rd quarter. There will be up to two 3 minute overtime quarters to break a tie game. No athlete can participate in more than four quarters per day (excluding overtime). A jersey and socks are provided by Castleton Schools and a jersey, shorts, and socks are provided by Benson/Orwell Schools.
- ◇ **WRESTLING** - Practice locations for wrestling will be provided at the beginning of the season. Wrestling meets will be arranged by the coaches as they become available. A singlet and headgear are provided. Mouthguards are required if the athlete has braces.
- ◇ **BASEBALL & SOFTBALL** - Practice locations will vary during the season. No more than 12 games, including tournaments, will be scheduled. Games consist of 7 innings or two hours. Home game locations will be determined at the beginning of the season and are subject to change. All helmets and bats are provided. Softball helmets must have a facemask. A jersey, hat/visor, and socks are provided by Castleton Schools, a jersey, pants, hat/visor, and socks are provided by Benson/Orwell Schools.
- ◇ **TRACK & FIELD** - Practices are held at Fair Haven Union High School. A jersey is provided.

Game and Practice Regulations (Cont'd)

Schedules

- ◇ Prior to the beginning of each sports season a practice and game schedule will be published and copies given to the coach. It will be the coaches responsibility to hand out these schedules to all student-athletes and parents. Additional copies can be obtained from the coach.
- ◇ Should the season schedule change significantly prior to or during the season new schedules will be published and distributed by the coach.
- ◇ Although every effort is made to minimize changes and cancellations, changes WILL happen. Weather, bus availability, availability of the coach, and opposing schools, as well as other factors, all have an impact on changes and cancellations.
- ◇ Season schedules are distributed to all athletes, posted on bulletin boards in the schools, and can be found on the school websites.
- ◇ If a parent or athlete has any questions as to whether their schedule is correct, they must contact the coach, the Athletic Director or the school.
- ◇ When a change or cancellation occurs on a school day, the Athletic Director informs the school secretary's and the coaches. The school will make an announcement to all student-athletes. Every effort is made to make decisions for changes or cancellations prior to 2:00pm, however sometimes those decisions are out of our control. If changes or cancellations occur after the school day, the coach is informed and it is his/her responsibility to inform the athletes and parents.
- ◇ Coaches are encouraged to create a process by which they can

effectively and quickly communicate with parents and/or student-athletes.

- ◇ All changes to the practice schedule and game schedule must be approved by the Athletic Director and principal.
- ◇ Cancelled practices are rarely made up. Every effort is made to reschedule cancelled games.

Tournaments

- ◇ Tournaments are an exciting and challenging addition to any sports season. Currently, only 7th and 8th grade soccer and all divisions of basketball have tournaments.
- ◇ Participation in tournaments will be scheduled as far in advance as possible.
- ◇ The initial games will be scheduled as soon as they are published by the tournament host. The date, times and locations of subsequent games in the tournament can only be determined when the team wins or loses.
- ◇ All codes of conducts for student-athletes, parents, and coaches are in effect for all tournaments.
- ◇ Transportation rules are in effect for all tournaments. Student-athletes are required to ride a school authorized bus to the tournament site for all games, including games that occur on weekends.
- ◇ Requirements for pick up of student-athletes is the same for away games.
- ◇ Teams may only wear their school approved uniforms and use school approved equipment for tournaments.
- ◇ All regular season athletic requirements are in effect for tournaments unless changed by the Athletic Director.

Playing Time Philosophy

Administration, coaches and athletic directors believe that each activity should be managed in a manner which will reflect the school's philosophy. Granting student-athletes the opportunity to enhance their skills while promoting the team concept will be emphasized.

Playing time received by each player shall be determined by the athletic philosophy. Within this framework, all team members will be given meaningful opportunities to play or participate. All tournament games will follow the same playing time philosophy as the regular season.

Transportation

Traveling to Away Games

The primary concern for the student's transportation is ensuring the safety of the students.

All student-athletes are required to travel to all away games on a school authorized bus. Student-athletes will board the school bus at the school.

At least one coach is required to ride the bus to and from all away games.

No student-athlete will be permitted to ride with any other adult, student, or to drive themselves to and from away games.

If any student-athlete is away from school for an approved reason and cannot ride the bus to the game, they must be given permission by the Athletic Director or the school principal in order to be driven to the away game by their parent/legal guardian. The student-athlete must be eligible to participate in that days game.

Picking Up Student-Athletes After an Event

At the conclusion of a practice or a *home* game, student-athletes should check in with the coach and let them know that they are leaving. The student-athlete should inform the coach who they are leaving with.

At the conclusion of an *away* game, student-athletes must be signed out by an authorized person listed on the Transportation Authorization form. Per school policy, only parents, legal guardians, or relatives are authorized to pick up student-athletes after an away game. The coach will have an approved list of names and only those individuals listed are allowed to sign out the student-athlete.

No student-athlete is allowed to leave the site of an away game until they have been properly signed out. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Student-athletes not picked up after an away game will ride the bus back to the school where they can be picked up.

Conduct

On bus trips, student-athletes must choose a seat and stay there. They may not switch seats while the bus is in motion. Talking *is* permitted, but the volume must be kept at a respectful level. The use of personal music is permitted as long as others are not disturbed and that it is appropriate. (Be aware that the school cannot be liable for lost equipment).

Student-athletes are responsible for keeping the bus clean.

Only members of the team(s) scheduled to play may ride the bus to an away event.

Bus riding is a privilege. Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior at all times.

Waive Rights for Transportation

The only other alternative to this policy would be for parents to *waive their rights* to utilize the transportation offered by the school district *to and from* events for the season. In other words, their child would not be allowed to ride on the bus to get to or from any away events for the entire season of that activity.

For a form to Waive Rights for Transportation parents should contact the school.

Personal Property

Student-athletes are responsible for all personal property when attending practices, games, or riding the bus. The schools are in no way responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property.

When attending practices and home games, student-athletes are encouraged to leave all personal property at home. When attending away games, and if feasible, student-athletes are encouraged to leave all personal property on the bus.

At no time should personal property be left unattended in locker rooms, or other areas of the school that is not monitored.



Expressing a Concern

On occasion the question is sometimes asked, "How can I express a concern or problem?"

We encourage students and parents to make us aware of any concern they may have. We cannot address an issue if we are unaware that it is taking place. While we would expect to hear immediately if children were to be placed in any kind of danger, the following outline may help in reaching a positive resolution to any concern.

1. The first step is to contact the coach. He or she can usually address most issues. **We encourage you not to try and speak to the coach immediately following a game.** It's very difficult for a coach to provide closure to the game, maintain control of students, gather equipment, sort out transportation and give you the appropriate attention and time to consider and respond to your concern.
2. If speaking with the coach still leaves you with questions or concerns, please contact the Athletic Director.
3. Lastly, if you are still left feeling your questions have not been answered, contact your schools principal.
4. If your concerns cannot be resolved after following the resolution path at the school level, you can contact the Superintendent of Schools.
5. If no resolution can be reached, the final step in the chain is the appropriate School Board of Directors.

We want students and parents to feel comfortable, and confident that their concerns will be heard and appropriate action will be taken. Our ultimate goal is to always do what will benefit each child and the children as a team or a group.

Sportsmanship

Unsportsmanlike conduct is not tolerated. Period. This includes unsportsmanlike conduct from student-athletes, coaches, officials, and especially parents and other adults/siblings.



As adults, it is your responsibility to set an example, and lead by that example, while at sporting events.

Behaviors/actions that are specifically prohibited by all participants and spectators while at a practice or game:

- ◇ Using foul language
- ◇ Issuing threats
- ◇ Touching another person without permission
- ◇ Making degrading or insulting remarks to any person
- ◇ Throwing objects of any kind onto the court/field
- ◇ Booing any player, coach, or official
- ◇ Cat-calling, harassing, or arguing with a coach or an official
- ◇ *ANY* conduct or behavior that can be construed as unsportsmanlike

Only the coaches are allowed to speak to an official before, during and after a game. Players and coaches are expected to thank the officials after the game, despite the outcome.

All participants should keep their remarks and comments positive and supportive at all times.

Any coach or parent who has an issue with an official should contact the Athletic Director.

Reminders from Your Child

I'm a Kid

It's just a game

My coach is a volunteer

The officials are human

No college scholarships will be handed out today



Chemical Health Policy

During the season of practice and play, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol, marijuana or any controlled substance. This includes the use of tobacco and smokeless tobacco as well. Violation of this policy results in forfeiting the remainder of the sports season.

School Locations

Barstow Memorial School
223 Chittenden Road
Chittenden, VT 05737
(802) 773-6926

Benson Village School
32 School Street
Benson, VT 05731
(802) 537-2491

Castleton Elementary School
263 Elementary School Rd
Castleton, VT 05753
(802) 468-5624

Castleton Village School
47 Mechanic Street
Castleton, VT 05735
(802) 468-2203

Christ the King School
60 S Main St.
Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 773-0500

Clarendon Elementary School
84 Grange Hall Road
North Clarendon, VT 05759
(802) 775-5379

Fair Haven Grade School
115 N Main St.
Fair Haven, VT 05743
(802) 265-3883
(park in the back)

Killington Recreation Center
2929 River Rd.
Killington, VT 05751
(802) 422-3932

Lothrop Elementary School (Pittsford)
3447 US-7
Pittsford, VT 05763
(802) 483-2242

Middlebury Jr. High School
48 Deerfield Ln.
Middlebury, VT 05753
(802) 382-1600
(Behind McDonalds)

Mill River High School
2321 Middle Rd.
North Clarendon, VT 05759
(802) 775-1925

Neshobe School (Brandon)
17 Neshobe Cir.
Brandon, VT 05733
(802) 247-3721

Otter Valley High School
2997 Franklin Street
Brandon, VT 05733
(802) 247-6833

Poultney Elementary School
96 School Cir.
Poultney, VT 05764
(802) 287-5212

Poultney High School
E. Main Street (Route 140)
Poultney, VT 05764
(802) 287-5861

Proctor Jr./Sr. High School
4 Park St.
Proctor, VT 05765
(802) 459-3353

Rutland Recreation
Played at Christ the King School

Rutland Town School
1612 Post Rd.
Rutland, VT 05701
(802) 775-0566

West Rutland School
713 Main St.
West Rutland, VT 05777
(802) 438-2288



Useful Websites

National Federation of High School Sports

nfhs.com

Vermont Principals Association

vpaonline.org

Addison-Rutland Supervisory Union

arsu.org

Benson Village School

benson.arsu.org

Castleton Village & Elementary School

chusd.arsu.org

Fair Haven Grade School

fhgs.arsu.org

Orwell Village School

orwell.arsu.org

Civil Rights Compliance non-Discrimination Policy

In accordance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972, Section 504 of the **Rehabilitation Act of 1973**, the **Americans with Disabilities Act**, the laws of the State of Vermont, and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Secretary of Education, it is the policy of these schools that no person will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, creed, disability or handicap in the admission to, access to, treatment in or employment of their programs and activities. It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are handicapped or disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services. The principals of each school is responsible for compliance with these statutes. They can be reached by contacting the school directly.

