



***Missisquoi Valley Union Middle/High School  
Athletic Department  
175 Thunderbird Drive  
Swanton, VT 05488***

Welcome Parents and Athletes,

Welcome to the interscholastic athletic program at Missisquoi Valley Union Middle and High School. This packet includes our mission statement, athletic philosophy, the parent/coach communication plan, a protocol for concerns, the required parent permission and medical release forms, athletic rules, academic eligibility, and the MVU Rules of Sportsmanship for players and spectators who attend our events. Please review this document carefully, and if you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

We desire to have everyone associated with the MVU athletic program; players, coaches, fans and parents to be positive examples and role models at all times. We want the student/athletes who represent us to be the BEST PEOPLE, BEST STUDENTS and the BEST ATHLETES possible. Sportsmanship and respect within the entire MVU athletic community will be a point of emphasis this year. Your support is needed and greatly appreciated by our athletes and our school. I believe Missisquoi Valley has some of the best fan support in the state. Please come out and watch your child and their team play whenever possible. Another way to support the athletes and our athletes program is to volunteer in the Booster Club. This is a great way to be involved and meet new people. It is my hope that you and your child will enjoy the opportunities and experiences provided by Missisquoi Valley Middle and High School Athletic Program. I wish the best of luck to the student-athletes in this upcoming academic and athletic school year.

Best wishes,

John Lumsden  
Director of Athletic and Activities  
868-7311 x232

## **MISSISQUOI VALLEY MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to provide opportunities for all students to achieve their individual potentials in a diverse and respectful environment where high standards of academics, ideas and people are valued.

MVU is committed to building an active learning community where all are accountable to ensure students develop the skills and knowledge to grow into responsible and productive citizens.

## **MVU ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY**

The athletic program at Missisquoi Valley Union is an integral part of the educational experience. As such it must confirm and contribute to the mission of a comprehensive middle/high school.

First, the athletic program is open to all students and provides an equal opportunity to compete for a place on any team. However, participation on a team at Missisquoi is not a right but a privilege and all privileges come with responsibilities. Participation in athletics at Missisquoi will contribute to the physical, emotional and social health of young adults.

Second, the athletic program promotes a sense of unity and cooperation among athletes, the student body and the larger community. The athletic experience at Missisquoi fosters leadership, discipline, commitment and a sense of responsibility to the entire school community. Our aim is to develop competitive student/athletes but not to lose sight of educational values such as citizenship, health and scholarship. Athletes must clearly understand that both on and off the field they represent their school and to a larger extent they define its standards of acceptable behavior. In order to offer an appropriate and safe experience for all team members it could be necessary to cap the number of students participating on an individual team.

At the varsity level, highly skilled student/athletes must compete at an advanced level and be dedicated to hard work, make sacrifices and strive for success. Winning is a natural goal but never at the expense of healthy attitudes or compromised values. Athletes need to learn to win graciously and to lose with dignity.

At the junior varsity or freshman levels, the focus should be on skill development participation and preparation to compete at the next level. At these levels the coaches will make every effort to give every player adequate playing time as long as the individual member is in good standing with respect to team rules, school and athletic department expectations.

## **GOALS OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

All of the goals listed below will be pursued according to the MVU Middle School Philosophy.

Goals of the Athletic Program will be to:

1. Provide for interaction outside of the academic setting that will help promote school spirit, positive self-esteem and mutual respect.
2. Offer an inclusive program that will provide physical exercise and include a variety of activities that will appeal to a broad spectrum of abilities and interests.
3. Develop and improve both athletic and social skills, recognizing that students may have varying abilities and/or goals.
4. Develop a system of communication among coaches, students and parents that is open, clear and specific.
5. Provide necessary training, supervision and support for coaches.

The middle school athletic program offers a wide variety of activities for both boys and girls. Every effort is made to give these athletes competitive schedules. Those athletes who follow all team rules and school and department policies will participate in competitions.

## **ATHLETIC RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Drugs, Alcohol and Associated Paraphernalia:**

When individuals become members of athletic teams they must realize they have become official representatives of Missisquoi Valley Union and their respective communities. As a result, the student/athlete is expected to be a leader in promoting good citizenship and fostering a positive image for Missisquoi Valley and its Athletic Program. All players and managers are considered team members and must abide by the rules and responsibilities. These rules are a minimum guideline; individual coaches can institute team rules beyond these rules as long as all team members are made aware of the rules.

It is the overwhelming opinion of health educators and coaches that athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules, which include restrictions on tobacco, alcohol and drugs. The coaches and administration of Missisquoi Valley Union are concerned with the health habits of the students/athletes. Participation in Missisquoi athletics is a privilege and we feel a vital part of the student's educational experience.

The Athletic Department, in compliance with the school wide policy, therefore, prohibits the possession, use and/or abuse of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or vaping products of any form. In the event an athlete fails to comply with these rules, it will be interpreted by the Athletic Department as a flagrant violation of school policy. The training rules extend beyond school grounds and school functions. Should the violation occur on school grounds, the school's Substance Use Policy and Procedures will also be used.

A student-athlete's first offense will result in suspension of 20% of their team's remaining games, including playoffs. A student athlete's second offense in the same season will result in suspension of 50% of their team's remaining games, including playoffs. Any student who commits a third offense of the School District's policy may not represent the school and consequently the student will immediately be dismissed from their team for the remainder of that season.

## **2. In-School / Out of School Suspension:**

If an athlete is assigned a teacher or administrative detention it must be served when scheduled. If an athlete is suspended from school or serves a suspension in the In-school suspension room he/she may not attend practices or games during the period of suspension. In addition, any athlete who is suspended will sit out the next game he/she is eligible to play in. The athlete is considered ineligible for any games played during the period of suspension. Some examples of this penalty are; if an athlete is suspended either in- school or out-of-school on a Tuesday and there is a game on Tuesday he/she is not eligible to play Tuesday and must sit out the next game he/she is eligible to participate in, if the athlete is suspended either in-school or out-of school on Thursday, Friday and Monday and there are games on Thursday, Saturday and Monday he/she is not eligible to play in Thursday's, Saturday's or Monday's games and must sit out the next game he/she is eligible to participate in.

## **3. Bullying, Harassment or Hazing:**

Bullying, Harassment or Hazing in any form is not permitted at Missisquoi Valley Union Middle/High School. This may include, but not be limited to, any willful act occurring either on or off school grounds directed at a player or prospective player that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of a player or prospective player. These actions could be initiations, inappropriate or demeaning activities associated with or continued membership on a school sponsored athletic team or activity. Any athlete who participates in such activity will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include but not be limited to the possible suspension, removal from his/her team or in the worst case scenario the cancellation of a sports season depending upon the magnitude of the incident and the number of athletes involved. It is the responsibility of all coaches to inform all team members about the district hazing policy and the state hazing law. A hazing workshop will be offered at the start of each sports season. Athletes who do not attend the hazing workshop will not be eligible to participate in a game until they have attended a scheduled make-up workshop.

#### **4. Absences / Late Arrivals:**

**Student/athletes must follow their assigned daily academic schedule (assigned to a class in a class) or they are not eligible to participate in practice or games on that day.** If a student is absent on Friday, they could be eligible to participate in Saturday events at the discretion of the coach. All work releases must be registered in the Guidance office. Waivers to this rule can be granted by the Principal or the Director of Athletics, and all requests should be made well in advance. Morning practices are permitted during weekends and school vacations. Any morning practices during the week must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director or Principal.

**Student athletes who are frequently tardy either to school or classes may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director and/or Administration. Families will be notified and future conversation may result in loss of participation privileges.**

#### **5. Transportation:**

The school has the responsibility to provide transportation for our athletic teams to and from games. On away trips, all players must ride the bus to the event. A waiver may be granted by the Principal or Director of Athletics if the student has a valid reason. If the student has detention and misses the bus, this will not be considered a valid excuse. On the return trip, players must ride the bus back to school unless a parent picks them up at the game and provides the coach with a note.

**If you are transporting someone else from the team, written permission from both parties must be given to the Athletic Director 24 hours before the game.**

Participants riding the team bus must behave in a responsible and courteous manner and must remember that the coach has complete authority over their behavior.

#### **6. Physicals:**

All students participating in interscholastic athletics must undergo a physical examination by a family physician every two years. A copy of this examination **must be given to the school nurse** and updated every two years. Physicals can be faxed to the Health office at 868-5364. It is the student/athlete's responsibility to contact the nurse to see if their physical needs are updated. **In addition, athletes and parents must complete the PARENT PERMISSION FORM and MEDICAL RELEASE FORM which is found on the MVU Athletic website. These documents must be on file prior to an athlete being able to participate.**

#### **7. Attendance:**

If an athlete is unable to attend practice or a game, they must notify the coach in advance. Coaches will inform players of this process at the beginning of the season. Practice times will be posted on our website (subject to change) and adhered to by the coaches.

### **8. Personal Property:**

There is a strong emphasis to secure all those items considered valuable. All lockers should be locked at all times and athletes are asked not to bring large amounts of money or valuables to games or practices.

### **9. Equipment / Uniforms:**

At the end of the season, all equipment must be returned. **If any equipment is not returned, the athlete may not be a candidate for another sport or receive any award for participation until the equipment is returned or paid for.** The Athletic Department may also make a referral to the Middle School Principal or the High School Principal if such action is deemed necessary.

### **10. Coaches' Requirements/Expectations:**

Each coach may include additional requirements and expectations for his/her sport. The Director of Athletics must approve all team rules.

### **11. CODE OF CONDUCT:**

All members of the Athletic Department (ie: coaches, players, managers) have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that demonstrates respect for all individuals, their rights, and their property during all events, both on and off campus. Violation of conduct may result in suspension or removal from the team.

### **12. Athletic Eligibility:**

Any student/athlete who loses athletic eligibility to participate for any reason will not be eligible for any end of season/year recognition including postseason all-star events.

### **13. Student Participation in Co-curricular Programs:**

Students and parents should recognize that, when exercising the privilege to participate in any co-curricular activity, some additional time and effort is necessary. When participating in co-curricular programs, students must conduct themselves in a manner which is beyond question both in and out of school. Students in these programs have greater responsibilities as school citizens.

**Please understand that these rules are to be used as a general outline. Situations will arise that are not specifically outlined in these rules. It will be the administration and coach's responsibility to interpret each situation and decide the final outcome.**

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

At Missisquoi Valley Union we consider participating in co-extracurricular activities a privilege. Any time someone receives a privilege; there are certain responsibilities that come with it. We expect our students to perform academically and exhibit desirable behaviors. In an effort to make the transition from middle school to high school easier, the School Board has adopted an academic eligibility policy.

Student athletes in grades 7-12 must understand that academics come first followed by athletics. Together, they are powerful for the student/athlete's growth. We want to encourage every athlete to work hard in both academics and athletics. Athletic eligibility will be based on the Habits of Work.

### Habits of Work

	1 Beginning	2 Progressing	3 Proficient	4 Proficient with Distinction
<p><b>Personal Responsibility for Learning</b> <i>I demonstrate initiative and responsibility for learning.</i> TS: Self Direction (D) SEL: Self Management 2c PoG: Independence and Initiative</p>	<p>I identify my learning goals. I develop a plan to meet my learning goals. I am present in class.</p>	<p>I monitor my progress toward my learning goals. I am engaged in class.</p>	<p>I self-start, actively engage in class, and manage my time by organizing and prioritizing my tasks.</p> <p>I monitor and make decisions around my learning goals, identify my strengths and needs, and employ strategies that allow me to achieve my goals.</p>	<p>I reflect, revise, and adjust my learning goals. I can self-advocate based on my learning needs and the resources available. Or I provide alternative evidence that expands upon proficiency.</p>
<p><b>Persistence</b> <i>I persist in solving challenging problems and learn from</i></p>	<p>I make an attempt to solve a challenging problem.</p>	<p>I learn from trial and error how to improve my efforts over time, stay engaged, and see tasks to completion.</p>	<p>I learn from experience and continue to put forth effort even after trying several times and see tasks to</p>	<p>I apply my learning and adapt new challenges/ Or I provide alternative</p>

<i>failure.</i> TS: Creative and Practical Problem Solving (H) SEL: Self Management 2b PoG: Independence and Initiative			quality completion within a timeline.	evidence that expands upon proficiency.
<b>Responsible Citizenship</b> <i>I take responsibility for personal decisions and actions.</i> Responsible and Involved Citizenship (B) SEL: Responsible and Ethical Decision-Making 5a PoG: Responsible Citizenship	I identify personal decisions and actions.	I identify the effects of my personal decisions and actions on my progress.	I explain how my choices affect myself and others. I repair situations and resume learning.	I demonstrate that I have learned from my experiences and made positive changes in my decisions and actions. Or I provide alternative evidence that expands upon proficiency.

The MVU Thunderbirds Habits of Work are based on the Vermont Transferable Skills

**Students will be assessed several times throughout the season. Any student who does not meet or exceed the following requirements may face ineligibility before or during the season.**

- 1. Eligible:** If a student has received a **3 (Proficient) or 4 (Proficient with Distinction)** for their scores, they may participate and play on the team.
- 2. On Warning:** If a student has received a score of a **1 to 2.499** from **one** teacher, they are eligible to continue to participate but are required to follow up with the teacher that week to determine a plan for growth and progress.
- 3. Probation:** If a student receives a score of **a 1 to 2.499** from **two** or more of their teachers, they are on athletic probation and will meet with the Athletic Director to create a plan for improvement.
- 4. Not Eligible:** If the student has not demonstrated appropriate growth following the meeting with the Athletic Director they will be considered ineligible and may not return

to that team during that season. Students who regain eligibility may participate in the next season and must comply with all eligibility standards.

Any exception to this policy is at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Administration.

All incoming 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> graders will be eligible to participate in all activities during the first marking period. After this period of time they must comply with all eligibility standards.

### **PROTOCOL FOR REGISTERING ATHLETIC CONCERNS**

This section has been added to improve communication between parents, coaches, administrators and school board directors. Please follow the process in its correct order. As a concerned parent please contact the following people in the order that they are listed. If you are not completely satisfied with the answers that you receive, contact the next person in the process.

1. Talk to your son or daughter about your concerns.
2. Contact the coach.
3. Contact the Director of Athletics: Mr. Lumsden..... 868-7311 ext. 232
4. Contact the appropriate administrator:
  - Middle School: Ms Martin...868-7311 ext. 196
  - High School: Mr. Palmer...868-7311 ext. 133

**We would appreciate parents not approaching coaches, administrators or board members with concerns prior to or immediately following the game. Please begin the process listed above the following day. Thank you.**

#### **NCAA and Collegiate Eligibility:**

Students may wish to participate in intercollegiate athletic activities upon completion of high school. In order to be academically eligible the NCAA requires certain minimums on high school core courses, grades and SAT/ACT standardized test scores. It is also necessary for the high school student to complete NCAA Eligibility forms from the Guidance Office or from the Athletic Director if interested in participating at the collegiate level.

It is the responsibility of the student to monitor his/her status with regard to meeting NCAA requirements.

#### **Miscellaneous Athletic Information:**

Two sport athletes: Student athletes may participate in more than one sport at a time. The Director of Athletics must give consent along with both coaches involved. By the nature of the sports, this may not be physically possible. If both coaches do not agree or the Director of Athletics does not give his consent, a student may be denied their request to play more than one sport. If permitted, coaches will develop and enforce their own attendance policy concerning practices and games for these athletes.

**MVU Rules of Sportsmanship for Fans/Spectators:**

1. Cheer loud and long for your team but keep the cheering positive.
2. Refrain from language or behavior that would be disrespectful towards another spectator in the stands.
3. Support the players and coaches from both schools.
4. Respect the decisions and calls made by the officials.
5. Show appreciation for good plays and performances regardless of the team.
6. Remember to win with CLASS and lose with DIGNITY. Wins and losses are a natural part of sports.
7. SPORTS ARE FUN- Enjoy the game and set a good example for YOUNG AND OLD alike.