

Mount Vernon Mountaineers



Athletic and Activity Handbook 2023-24

Introduction

Welcome to the Mount Vernon High School Athletic Program. We are excited that you have chosen to participate in one of our fine athletic programs. Statistics show that involvement in school programs increases a student's chances of academic success and social adjustment. This handbook should answer many of your questions concerning athletics. If you have other questions or comments, please contact your Head Coach or Athletic Director.

Philosophy

Interscholastic athletics are an integral part of the secondary educational program because they provide experiences that will help students acquire additional knowledge, skills, and help students develop the attributes of good citizenship.

We believe that student participation is a privilege which carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the activity, to the student body, to the community, and to the student participant. It is a year round commitment that will help to develop the student physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

Goals

1. Participation – Provide a variety of athletic opportunities that encourage and allow interested students to participate in physical activities.
2. Skills & Rules – Provide emphasis in development of fundamental skills and knowledge of each sport.

3. Citizenship & Sportsmanship – Cause students to achieve success fairly by demonstrating:
 - A. Respect for the rules of each sport.
 - B. Desirable traits of citizenship and sportsmanship.
 - C. Rules of society
4. School Spirit – Provide activities with which all students can identify.
5. Competition – Build teams that are competitive on the varsity level.
6. Leadership – Provide an opportunity to develop leadership skills necessary to make produce effective leaders.
7. Student Confidence – Provide a program which develops students’ sense of appreciation and enjoyment while building individual self-confidence and group rapport.

General Information

Mount Vernon High School is a member of the Big 8 Conference. Conference teams are:

West

- Cassville
- East Newton
- Lamar
- McDonald County
- Monett
- Nevada
- Seneca

East

- Aurora
- Hollister
- Marshfield
- Mt. Vernon
- Reeds Spring
- Rogersville
- Springfield Catholic

Conference sports we participate in:

Girls

Volleyball

Basketball

Track

Tennis

Golf

Cross Country

Softball

Boys

Football

Basketball

Baseball

Track

Golf

Tennis

Cross Country

Non-conference:

Girls

Cheerleading

Coquettes

Coaching Assignments:

Football	Tom Cox	B. Golf	Dusty Killingsworth
Volleyball	Bridgett Schmutz	B. Tennis	Tom Cox
Girls Golf	Dusty Killingsworth	Cheer	Laura Baugh
B. Basketball	Mike Ray	Baseball	Nick Swillum
G. Basketball	Dusty Killingsworth	Softball	Matt Schubert
B/G Track	Ethan Trokey		
G. Tennis	Kaylee Hood		
Coquettes	Jordan Barber		

Eligibility Statement

Eligibility is a privilege to be granted by the school to a student which allows that student to participate in interscholastic athletics. Eligibility is not a student's right by law.

Previous legal cases have determined that eligibility is a privilege to be granted only if the student meets all school adopted standards which enables the school to grant the student such a privilege. These guidelines and policies are in effect 365 day a year.

A. Eligibility Standards

1. Student-athletes must comply with all the eligibility rules of the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA).
2. A student must be a creditable high school citizen defined by the MSHSAA handbook.
3. Any student who is suspended from any class or school will be ineligible for athletic participation for the period of suspension.
4. Repeated violations of any school rules may result in the student being declared ineligible.
5. In any instance not specifically covered in the rules of eligibility, the Principal may rule a student ineligible.
6. A student must participate in the required number of practices established by MSHSAA in order to be eligible for the first contest, unless the student was member of a team during the preceding season.

B. Academic Standards

1. A student in grades 9-12 must currently be enrolled in courses that offer 3 units of credit per semester and must have earned 3 units of credit the previous semester of attendance (must pass 6 of 7 classes); or a student must be enrolled in a full course at his/her level in a special education program for the handicapped approved by the State Department of Education which, through upgrading, enrolls pupils of equivalent age.
2. Part-time students see School Board Policy IGD-AP(3) on the Mt. Vernon School website for eligibility requirements.

2. A student who receives more than one F at Progress Report 2 (mid-1st Semester), Semester Report 1 (Christmas Break), or Progress Report 5 (mid-2nd Semester) will be ineligible until the following Progress Report. At the next Progress Report if the student is not failing more than one class, he/she will become eligible on the day Progress Reports are sent out (Local Standards).
3. Summer courses may count toward maintaining senior high school academic eligibility for the first semester provided all MSHSAA requirements are met and classes are approved by the school administration and counselor's office.

C. Amateur and Award Standards

After entering a member school, you will become ineligible in the sport concerned if you receive cash or merchandise for participation in an athletic contest. This restriction applies to all sports in which MSHSAA member schools conduct interscholastic programs.

An athlete may accept awards symbolic in nature, such as medal, ribbons, trophies, plaques, etc. for participating in a school athletic program. However, if an award is to be presented to you by a person or group other than the school, the school Principal must approve the presentation in advance and the retail value of the award can not exceed \$250.00.

An athlete may accept awards for participating in non-school sponsored athletic competition only if the awards are symbolic in nature as stated above.

D. Non-School Competition

An athlete may not practice for or participate with a non-school team or any organized non-school athletic competition and for your school team in the same sport during the same season.

An athlete may participate on a school team and a non school team in different sports during the same season; however, the student may not practice for the non school team or participate in organized non school athletic competition on the same day that the student practices or participates with the school team without advance approval of the Principal. The athlete must receive approval in advance from the school Principal in order to miss school time to practice for, travel to or compete in organized non-school athletic competition.

Before an athlete joins a non-school team or enter any non-school competitive athletic event, the school Principal or Athletic Administrator should be consulted to make certain these standards are met.

E. Sports Camp Eligibility Standards

A student may participate in a specialized camp, clinic, or other similar program involving coaching and instruction in a sport provided the program and the student's participation meet the following requirements:

1. During the summertime, an athlete may receive instruction or coaching from a member of the school's coaching staff for a maximum of twenty (20) contact days per sport per gender.
2. An athlete may attend a summer specialized camp for as long as he/she wishes where you do not receive instruction from a member of the school's coaching staff.
3. An athlete may attend a non school specialized sports camp during the school year provided it does not result in the loss of school time; it is not a team camp; no member of the coaching staff of the school he/she attends or will attend in the following year is involved in any way.

4. Any camp fee (tuition) shall be provided by the student or the student's parents.

5. A student shall not receive pay or expenses for working in a specialized sports camp or serving as an instructor or counselor involving a sport in which he/she participates.

Before attending any specialized camp, consult with your Athletic Director to make sure it meets MSHSAA criteria.

F. Dead Period

1. All member schools shall establish a summertime dead period for all MSHSAA-sponsored activities. The dead period shall be nine consecutive days in length, and must begin on Saturday and last through the following Sunday. Each school is responsible for setting its own dead period. The dead period is "no school activities time", no open gyms, competitions, practices, conditioning, weight training; no activity-related fundraisers or functions, camps or clinics at school facilities or sponsored elsewhere by the school; no coaches or students may have planned contact other than casual, normal community, non-activity contact. The school dead period must be the same for all sports . While there may be sports activities during this time, they must not involve the school coach, the school, or school facilities.
2. The seven days prior to the first allowable practice date for the season shall be a seasonable no contact period in which no "contact" takes place between school coaches/directors of MSHSAA-sponsored fall activities and students enrolled in the member school, or who will be enrolled in the member school during the upcoming school year. Athletes shall not attend any specialized sports camp involving an upcoming sport. (Fall, Winter, and Spring)

G. Athletic Policy Form

Prior to each year of interscholastic athletic participation, a student is required to turn in an athletic policy signed by the athlete and parent/guardian. This policy is a signed statement thereby agreeing to the eligibility guidelines.

H. Insurance and Physicals

A student athlete may not practice until the school has a physician's certificate on file stating that he/she is physically able to participate in athletic competition for the school. This must be signed by the student, student's parent/guardian and the physician. Physical exam is valid for 730 days from date of issue.

A student shall not be permitted to practice or compete for the school until it has verification on file that he/she has basic athletic insurance coverage.

I. Mount Vernon School Standards

The Mount Vernon High School extracurricular program is an integral part of the educational process. It is designed to help those who participate to develop skills beyond the ordinary. In addition, it is recognized that as representatives of the school, extracurricular participants will be an example by which the school will be judged. It is therefore, incumbent upon every participant to discipline him/herself in the following rules of conduct:

1. A participant suspended from school will be subject to disciplinary action as recommended by the Coach and the Principal. During the suspension the participant will not be allowed to participate in any scheduled activity. The period of time will depend upon the nature of the suspension. Other action may also be recommended by the Coach and the Principal
2. A participant removed from class for misbehavior on the day of a scheduled event may be ineligible to participate in the event, and will be counseled by the Principal as to his eligibility if other violations occur.

3. A participant who drops out of an athletic activity cannot participate in another activity until the athletic activity in which the drop occurred finishes its scheduled season unless approved by the Coaches and Athletic Director. May also result in a failing grade in athletics.
4. A participant being removed from any activity for disciplinary reasons will be brought under advisement of the Athletic Director (athletic activities only), Coach in charge and building Principal; and appropriate action will be taken which may result in exclusion from other activities.
5. A participant must meet the academic eligibility standard established by MSHSAA to be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity. In addition, the district will abide by all rules and regulations controlling competition established by MSHSAA for its sanctioned activities.
6. The management of an athletic activity, while the activity is in progress, is the responsibility of the Coach, who is responsible for the selection of participants and their participation within the limits of school district policies and regulations.
7. Any student consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or illegal drugs will be considered a violation of the citizenship standard. Verification of the above offense must be made by: a proper legal authority, member of the school coaching staff, faculty member, member of the school administration, or an admission of guilt by the athlete themselves.

If an athlete violates this policy, his/her violation will be reviewed by the Head Coach and the Principal. Following the review, the athlete

and his/her parents will be notified.

1st Offense for Drugs, Alcohol, Electronic Cigarettes, Vape Devices (with or without tobacco), and/or paraphernalia Violation: The athlete will be suspended from participation for a minimum of 50% of the scheduled contests to a maximum of dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season. The athlete must agree to meet all other conditions and requirements specified by the head coach. **2nd Offense:** The athlete will be suspended from participation in any sport for 365 days from the date of the infraction.

1st Offense for Tobacco products violation: ie: Cigarettes, Smokeless Tobacco, Snuff, Dip, Snus, or any other Tobacco product not listed above. The athlete will be suspended from participation for a minimum of 25% of the scheduled contents to a maximum of dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season. The athlete must agree to meet all other conditions and requirements specified by the head coach. **2nd Offense:** The athlete will be suspended from participation in any sport for 182 days from the date of the infraction.

If the violation occurs with less than 50% of the contests in that sport remaining, the suspension will carry over to the next sport the athlete participates in until the entire suspension has been served. (Example: If an athlete is suspended with 30% of that sport season remaining, the other 20% will be served during the next sport season that athlete participates in.)

- a. The athlete must complete the next sport season in good standing in order to receive credit for serving the remainder of a suspension from a previous sport .
- b. If the athlete does not participate in another sport during that year, the rest of the suspension will be served during the next year's schedule.
- c. If the violation occurs during the summer, the athlete will serve the suspension during the first sport that the athlete participates during the next school year.

d. This policy is in effect year round from the time the student begins his/her freshmen year and/or practice for a high school sport and ends upon completion of his/her high school participation and eligibility.

e. Additional disciplinary actions may be taken by the head coach.

3rd Offense: The athlete is banned from further participation in athletics at Mount Vernon High School.

8. A student who commits an act which charges may be or have been filed by law enforcement authorities under any municipal ordinance, misdemeanor, or felony statute shall not be eligible until all proceedings with the legal system has been concluded and any penalty has been satisfied. If law enforcement authorities determine that charges will not be filed, eligibility will be contingent upon local school policies. Minor moving traffic offenses shall not affect eligibility, unless they involve drugs, alcohol, accidents, or injuries. After a student has completed all court appearances and penalties, and has satisfied all special conditions of probation and remains under general probation only, local school authorities shall determine eligibility.

Additional disciplinary action may be taken by individual coaches that possibly include exclusion from contests.

J. Citizenship Standards

Students who represent a school in interscholastic activities must be "credible citizens" and judged so by the high school Principal certifying a list of students for competition shall be satisfactory in accord with the standards of good discipline.

These students whose character of conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon themselves or their school are not considered “credible citizens”. Conduct involving law enforcement should be reported to the Principal immediately as conduct may affect eligibility or contest outcomes.

K. Sportsmanship

If an athlete should commit an unsportsmanlike act while participating in an event, he/she could become ineligible. If conduct as a spectator is found to be unsportsmanlike, the student could be barred from attending any high school athletic contests. The unsportsmanlike conduct of any spectator-regardless of age- could cause that spectator to be barred from attending school athletic contests.

L. Participation

Students must enter school within the first 11 days of the semester in order to be eligible. If he/she reaches 19 years of age prior to July 1, he/she will be ineligible the next school year. In order to participate on teams made up of only ninth graders, the student must have reached 15 years of age prior to July 1 preceding the opening of school.

Students are encouraged to be involved in as many activities and sports as you wish. Students are eligible to participate in any sport for a maximum of four seasons. Any part of a contest played during a season counts as a season of participation. Eligibility to participate in high school activities begins when an athlete first enters the ninth grade and lasts for the succeeding four years.

A student absent the day of the contest may not participate unless the absence was excused by the building Principal. Further, the student cannot be certified eligible to participate on any subsequent date until the student attends a full day of classes.

M. Practices and Game Expectations

Any student participating on an athletic team is representing not only him/herself, but also their family, their school and community. Therefore, each coach will demand that certain expectation and responsibilities in regard to games and practices be met in order for an individual to be considered a member of an athletic team. These responsibilities and expectations will vary with each sport and will be left to the coach's discretion. It is the athlete's responsibility to see that they are met.

N. Lettering

Each sport may have different guidelines for varsity letters, but generally, they include participation, attitude and work habits. Each Head Coach determines the lettering policy for that sport. Students that quit or are dismissed before the conclusion of the season are ineligible to letter.

O. Equipment

An athlete must pay for lost or stolen uniforms. All equipment should be cleaned and turned in immediately at the conclusion of the season.

P. Transportation from games and to practices.

An athlete must ride the bus to the event with the team. Following the event the athlete may ride home with parent/guardian once they have signed out with the Coach. The request for special circumstances should be made by the parent in writing to the Administration prior to the event.

Driving is allowed to practices at off campus facilities with proper paperwork. If an athlete does not have a vehicle, he/she will ride the bus. Exception: Athlete may ride to practice with a sibling or parent.

Q. Transfer Students

A student who has transferred to the Mount Vernon School District from another school within the last 365 days must notify his/her coach and complete the transfer of eligibility form in the athletic office. If you transfer schools and your parents do not move into the district of your new school, you will be ineligible for 365 days unless you meet one of the exceptions listed by the MSHSAA hardship standards.

R. College Auditions/Try-outs

1. An athlete shall not participate in any college tryout, audition, or evaluation event during the school sports season for the sport concerned under any circumstances.
2. An athlete may participate in any college tryout, audition, or evaluation event during a season in which he/she is competing in a different school sport. Approval by a school administrator must be granted in advance.
3. An athlete shall not miss an MSHSAA-sponsored post season athletic event in any sport to travel to and participate in the event.

S. All-Star Games

An athlete may not compete in an all star game or contest before you complete your eligibility in all high school sports. Participation in an all star game or contest will result in a student becoming ineligible to participate in any high school sport.

Before participating in any all star event, contact the Athletic Director, or Principal to make sure the event meets the MSHSAA criteria.

T. Recruiting of Athletes

You will be ineligible for 365 days if you are influenced by a person or persons to attend upon promotion or transfer schools for athletic purposes.

General Guidelines for Athletic Participation

1. All participants are expected to all attend practices.
2. Athlete will abide by the rules set forth in the athletic handbook.
3. We want our players to be students first, players second.
4. We want our players to be good citizens in our community.
5. Player's actions should reflect positively on their family, themselves, our school, and our community.
6. Action taken on discipline problems will vary according to the seriousness of the offense. The Head Coach will be responsible for handling situations with penalties. The High School Principal will be informed of situations and penalties.
7. Tardiness
 - A. Will not be tolerated
 - B. Athlete will immediately notify coach as to reason
 - C. Unexcused tardy – extra conditioning
 - D. Excessive unexcused tardiness – suspension
8. Drinking, Smoking, and Drugs
Refer to section in this handbook.
(Mount Vernon Standards H-7)
9. No foul language during practices or games.
10. Show respect for others and practice good sportsmanship.

Random Drug Testing

The Mt. Vernon R-5 Board of Education recognizes the importance of protecting the health and safety of students from the use of illegal drugs, performance-enhancing drugs and alcohol. The purpose of this policy is to help prevent substance abuse among students, to encourage treatment for students with substance abuse problems and to ensure that students have the opportunity to attend school and participate in activities in a fair, safe and healthy environment.

Participation in extracurricular activities and parking privileges are privileges and carry the responsibility to adhere to high standards of conduct, including refraining from the use of illegal drugs, performance-enhancing drugs and alcohol. To assist students in making healthy and safe choices, the district will conduct random drug testing of students in grades 9–12 as a condition of participation in covered activities. Covered activities are activities regulated by the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA), excluding all activities in which students receive an academic grade for participation and parking privileges. District employees shall not have the authority to waive the testing of any student selected using the random selection process.

Students who test positive through this random testing program will be excluded from participation in covered activities as follows:

First Offense – Exclusion from all covered activities for a minimum of 30 calendar days and must pass a drug test administered by the district prior to participating in covered activities again.

Second Offense – Exclusion from all covered activities for a minimum of 90 calendar days and must pass a drug test administered by the district prior to participating in covered activities again.

Third Offense – Excluded from all covered activities for the rest of the students' enrollment in the district.

The consequences may be reduced if the student participates in drug or alcohol counseling and additional testing in accordance with procedures developed by the superintendent or designee. A positive test through this random testing program will not result in suspension from school or academic sanctions. The district will not report results to law enforcement.

For more information on this policy, please see BOE Policy JFCI and JFCI-AP(1) on our district website.