

## **FOOTBALL SAFETY GUIDELINES**

Football is a highly competitive, fast action game in which physical contact plays a major role. Because of the speed and contact with which the game is played, squad members, their families, and the coaching staff should accept and share certain responsibilities to enhance safety and enjoyment for participants.

The high school has purchased protective helmets that are certified by the National Operating Commission for Safety and Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE). This certification indicates that research has been conducted to verify the protectiveness and shock absorption capabilities of the helmet. In addition, high quality padding has been purchased for protection of other body parts. However, careful fitting and proper wearing methods are imperative to gain maximum protection from any equipment. Each player will receive a demonstration of proper wearing and will be personally fitted by a coach or faculty equipment manager on the day equipment is issued. Proper wearing and use of all protective equipment is the exclusive responsibility of the player after the orientation has been completed.

### **PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE OR CONTEST**

1. Wear all protective equipment including mouth guards to every practice or contest unless otherwise indicated by the daily practice plan.
2. Be sure that all stabilizing straps and laces are properly worn and tightened and all fasteners secured so that equipment is properly positioned.
3. Wear outer and undergarments that are appropriate for humidity and temperature.
4. Participants with vision impairments must wear corrective, shatterproof glasses or contact lenses if the impairment affects judgment or perception. Eyeglasses should be held in place with an elastic strap.
5. In hot humid weather, players should consume 4-6 glasses of water between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., with the last consumption thirty minutes prior to competition.
6. Participants needing preventive or rehabilitative taping, padding or bracing must arrive early to complete needed procedures.
7. Avoid horseplay and rough-housing.
8. Remove all jewelry and metal hair fasteners.
9. Prospective participants with seizure or other neuromuscular disorders or diseases, chronic skeletal problems, cardiac or renal problems, insulin/diabetic problems, or medically controlled allergies need a physician's approval to participate.
10. If ill or dizzy, notify your coach. Do not practice.
11. Report all injuries to the coach immediately.

### **LOCKER ROOM**

1. Be alert to slippery floors.
2. Be alert to changes in floor texture and elevated thresholds between shower and locker rooms.
3. Keep floors free of litter. Place all personal belongings in assigned locker.
4. Close and lock locker door when away from your assigned locker.
5. Keep soap and shampoo in shower room.
6. Use foot powder in designated areas.
7. Refrain from rapid movements, rough-housing and horseplay in locker/shower areas.
8. Identify incidents of foot or skin infections to coach(es) immediately.

### **MOVEMENT TO CONTEST OR PRACTICE SITE**

1. Be alert to:
  - a. Ramps leading to practice or contest area
  - b. Variations in surfaces of locker rooms, ramps, natural or artificial turf
  - c. Location and activity in proximity to:
    - Goal posts
    - Charging sleds
    - Kicking/kick return drills
    - Passer/receiver drills

- Agility, sprinting, or other fast action drills
2. Stretch thoroughly and jog easy laps to warm up

**CAUTIONS SPECIFIC TO FOOTBALL**

Participants will be taught blocking and tackling techniques that are approved by the National Federation and our state WIAA Association. The following techniques are of **major** importance for participant safety:

1. **The Head and Helmet**
  - a. Tackle or block or break tackles with the should pad. NEVER USE THE HELMET TO STRIKE THE OPPONENT.
  - b. Keep the chin and eyes up when blocking, tackling, or running with the ball. Lowering the head/helmet jeopardized the neck and spinal cord.
2. **Blocking and Defensive Contact**
  - a. The forearm striking surface would be accelerated as a unit with the shoulder and extension of the trunk. DO NOT “wind up” to accelerate the forearm separately.
  - b. Block from the front, the side, and above the waist.
  - c. When pursuing an opponent ball carrier, DO NOT “pile on” when the opponent is down.
  - d. Do not chop or stash with a rigid arm when executing a tackle.
3. **General**
  - a. GET UP! When on the ground, you are vulnerable to being stepped on or receiving a leg, shoulder, or knee injury.
  - b. When falling, TUCK. Leave no extremity extended either to absorb the fall or while on the ground.
  - c. Participate fully in all neck strengthening exercises.
4. **Water**
  - a. Frequent drink breaks will be scheduled during practice and participants should hydrate themselves frequently during practice or games.
5. **Weight Room**
  - a. Maintenance strength training procedures will be utilized. Observe all weight room policies for progressions, spotting, and general safety.

**EMERGENCIES**

Because of the nature of football, some injuries may occur. Most will be minor and can be managed with basic first aid, but the possibility of a serious injury is always present. All injuries must be called to a coach’s attention. An occasional situation may require more intense management and may also necessitate involvement of participants as follows:

1. Stop all practices, scrimmages or drills.
2. Call the coach to manage the situation if the coach is not already at the site.
3. Sit or kneel in close proximity.
4. Assist by:
  - a. Calling for additional assistance
  - b. Bring the first aid equipment or supplies to the site
  - c. Keeping onlookers away
  - d. Directing rescue team members to the site
5. Fire or fire alarm:
  - a. Evacuate or remain outside the building
  - b. Move 100 feet from the building
  - c. Be prepared to implement the emergency procedures outlined in #4 above.

I understand the rules and procedures and the necessity of using the proper techniques while participating in football activities.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_