

ATHLETICS



Athletic Handbook 2026-2027



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Welcome to District 89 Athletics

Athletics plays an integral role in the overall educational experience of our students. Participation in sports fosters personal growth, teamwork, discipline, leadership, and a strong work ethic—skills that extend far beyond the field of play.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students, families, and coaches with a clear understanding of the expectations, policies, and procedures that guide our elementary and middle school athletic programs. District 89 is committed to offering a **safe, structured, and inclusive environment** that promotes both academic success and athletic development.

In alignment with District 89 [Board Policy 6:190](#), our athletic programs are designed so that **“the activity will contribute to leadership abilities, social well-being, self-realization, good citizenship, or general growth of members.”** We believe athletics should support the development of the whole child while building a strong sense of school pride and community.

Our programs are designed not only to compete but to teach valuable life lessons such as accountability, perseverance, respect, and resilience.

Whether your child is participating for the first time or continuing their athletic journey, we thank you for your partnership and support as we work together to build champions—both in character and in competition.

Directory of Schools

SCHOOL	PHONE
EMERSON SCHOOL 311 Washington Blvd. Maywood, IL 60153	708-450-2002
GARFIELD SCHOOL 1514 S. 9th Ave. Maywood, IL 60153	708-450-2009
JANE ADDAMS SCHOOL 910 Division St. Melrose Park, IL 60160	708-450-2023
LINCOLN SCHOOL 811 Chicago Ave. Maywood, IL 60153	708-450-2036
MELROSE PARK SCHOOL 1715 Lake St. Melrose Park, IL 60160	708-450-2042
ROOSEVELT SCHOOL 1927 S. 15th Ave. Broadview, IL 60155	708-450-2047
IRVING MIDDLE SCHOOL 805 S. 17th Ave. Maywood, IL 60153	708-450-2015
STEVENSON MIDDLE SCHOOL 1630 N. 20th Ave. Melrose Park, IL 60160	708-450-2053
WASHINGTON DUAL LANGUAGE ACADEMY 1111 Washington Blvd. Maywood, IL 60153	708-450-2065

Seasonal Sports Program Offerings

Below is a list of seasonal athletic programs offered across elementary and middle school levels. Some sports are adapted by level and may be offered as **futsal** or modified versions at the elementary level to align with age-appropriate development.

Fall Sports

- Boys Cross Country
- Girls Cross Country
- Girls Basketball
- Boys Soccer (*Futsal for Elementary Grades*)
- Sideline Cheerleading

Winter Sports

- Girls Volleyball
- Coed Wrestling
- Competitive Cheerleading
- Chess

Spring Sports

- Boys Volleyball
- Girls Soccer (*Futsal for Elementary Grades*)
- Coed Softball
- Boys Bowling
- Girls Bowling

Playing Time Philosophy

Elementary School (Grades K–5)

At the elementary level, our focus is on development, inclusion, and fostering a love for sport. As such, all participants are required to receive **equal playing time**, or as close to it as possible. Coaches are expected to create a positive learning environment where skill-building and teamwork take priority over competition.

Middle School (Grades 6–8)

At the middle school level, athletics become more competitive. Playing time is **earned** and based on the following:

- **Ability and skill level**
- **Academic eligibility**
- **Behavior and effort in practice and games**

While participation is still encouraged by all team members, coaches are not required to provide equal playing time. However, they are encouraged to communicate expectations clearly and provide every student-athlete with the opportunity to grow and contribute.

Code of Conduct

Student-Athletes

As a student-athlete in District 89, I will:

- Demonstrate **respect** for coaches, teammates, opponents, officials, and myself.
- Follow all school rules and maintain **academic eligibility**.
- Arrive on time and be prepared for practice and games.
- Display **good sportsmanship**, win or lose.
- Accept coaching and play my role for the good of the team.
- Use appropriate language and behavior on and off the field.
- Report injuries or concerns to coaches honestly and promptly.
- Refrain from any form of bullying, hazing, or harassment.

Violation of this code may result in reduced playing time, suspension, or removal from the team.

Coaches Code of Conduct

As a coach in District 89, you serve as a mentor, teacher, and role model. Your influence goes far beyond the scoreboard. To ensure a safe, developmentally appropriate, and legally compliant athletic environment, all coaches are expected to adhere to the following expectations:

Professional Expectations

As a coach, I will:

- Be a **positive role model**, leading with integrity, fairness, and respect.
- Promote the **safety, well-being, and development** of every student-athlete.
- Foster an inclusive environment that supports teamwork, sportsmanship, and confidence.
- Encourage a strong work ethic, academic accountability, and personal responsibility.
- Communicate clearly with athletes and families about schedules, expectations, and roles.
- Attend required trainings, meetings, and remain current with rules and certifications.

Legal Responsibilities: Fourteen Duties of Athletic Personnel

District 89 coaches are also required to fulfill the following **legal duties**, as established by case law and national coaching standards. Failure to uphold these responsibilities may result in disciplinary action or liability:

1. **Properly Plan the Activity**
Design practices and games to be developmentally appropriate, progressive, and purposeful.
2. **Provide Proper Instruction**
Use proven methods for teaching skills and strategies, stress safety and technique.
3. **Provide a Safe Physical Environment**
Inspect all playing areas and report or address hazards before practices or games.
4. **Provide Adequate and Proper Equipment**
Ensure athletes have safe, properly fitted, and sport-appropriate gear at all times.
5. **Match Athletes According to Size, Skill, and Experience**
Be especially mindful during drills and scrimmages to avoid unsafe pairings.
6. **Evaluate Athletes for Injury or Incapacity**
Monitor for signs of injury or illness and act immediately when concerns arise.
7. **Supervise the Activity Closely**
Provide direct supervision during practices, games, locker rooms, and travel.
8. **Warn of Inherent Risks**
Inform athletes and parents of sport-related risks, both verbally and in writing.
9. **Provide Appropriate Emergency Assistance**
Be CPR and First Aid certified and follow the district's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

10. Keep Proper Records

Maintain accurate records of attendance, injuries, incidents, and eligibility.

11. Know and Follow All Rules and Regulations

Abide by IESA rules, district policies, and sport-specific regulations.

12. Maintain Confidentiality

Protect student privacy, especially with health, academic, or behavioral matters.

13. Provide Safe Transportation

Adhere strictly to district travel protocols; never use personal vehicles to transport students.

14. Maintain Appropriate Professional Relationships

Set and maintain clear, professional boundaries with students and families.

By modeling these behaviors and fulfilling these legal duties, coaches help ensure that District 89 athletics remains a safe, educational, and enriching experience for every student-athlete.

Coach Appointment, Evaluation, and Retention

Coaching positions in District 89 are **seasonal appointments** and are **renewed on a season-by-season basis**. Appointment to a coaching position for one season does **not** guarantee appointment or continued employment in future seasons.

All coaching assignments are made at the discretion of District 89 and are contingent upon:

- The needs of the athletic program;
- Satisfactory job performance and fulfillment of coaching responsibilities;
- Compliance with District policies, procedures, and the Athletic Handbook;
- Maintaining all required certifications, clearances, and training;
- Demonstrating professionalism, effective communication, sportsmanship, and a commitment to student-athlete development.

District 89 reserves the right to reassign, not renew, or remove a coach from their coaching assignment at any time when it is determined to be in the best interest of the students, athletic program, or District. Such decisions may be based on, but are not limited to:

- Failure to follow District policies or Athletic Handbook expectations;
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision or maintain a safe environment;
- Inappropriate conduct or unprofessional behavior;
- Unsatisfactory job performance;
- Failure to complete required duties, certifications, or training.

The District Athletic Coordinator will provide support, guidance, and feedback to coaches throughout the season. Coaches are expected to continually model the values of District 89 by promoting integrity, respect, accountability, and positive experiences for all student athletes.

Coach Evaluation

At the conclusion of each season, coaches may participate in a post-season evaluation with the Athletic Coordinator and/or building administrator. Evaluations may consider:

- Compliance with District policies and procedures;
- Organization and management of the program;
- Communication with athletes, parents, and administrators;
- Sportsmanship and professionalism;
- Student-athlete development;
- Safety practices and supervision;
- Completion of required administrative responsibilities.

The evaluation process is intended to promote continuous improvement and help ensure that District 89 athletic programs provide a positive educational experience for all student-athletes.

Administrator Responsibilities and Event Supervision

As the District Athletic Coordinator, I oversee athletics across **all nine District 89 schools**. Because multiple athletic events often occur simultaneously, it is not possible for the coordinator to be physically present at every event.

To ensure all athletic contests are properly supervised and reflect the district's commitment to safety, sportsmanship, and professionalism, the following expectations apply:

- **Each building Administrator** is responsible for providing direct supervision at all **home athletic events** hosted by their school.
- If an Administrator **cannot attend** a scheduled event, it is **their responsibility** to arrange for appropriate supervision (e.g., an assistant principal, dean, or designated staff member).
- The Administrator must **communicate any supervision changes** to the District Athletic Coordinator **in advance** of the event.
- Supervising Administrators are expected to:
 - Be visible and approachable to spectators, coaches, and officials.
 - Address behavioral concerns promptly and professionally.
 - Ensure that district policies, including the Code of Conduct and FAN Pledge, are upheld.
 - Confirm that facilities are safe, clean, and properly secured before and after events.
 - Notify Athletic Coordinator if there is any concern regarding spectators while visiting our schools and athletic competitions.

This shared supervision model ensures every event is adequately supported and that our athletic programs maintain the highest standards of safety, organization, and sportsmanship.

Parents/Guardians

As a parent/guardian in District 89, I will:

- Support my child and the team through **positive encouragement**.
- Let coaches coach and refrain from coaching from the sidelines.
- Communicate respectfully with coaches, following the **24-hour rule** for concerns.
- Ensure my child attends practices and games and arrives on time.
- Model **respectful behavior** toward officials, opponents, and other fans.
- Encourage my child to take responsibility for their actions and growth.

Parents who disrupt the learning environment or violate expectations may be asked to leave events or meet with school administration.

Spectator Guidelines

District 89 welcomes and encourages family, friends, and community members to attend athletic events. Spectators play an important role in supporting student-athletes and contributing to a positive sports environment. To ensure that games remain safe, respectful, and enjoyable for all participants, the following guidelines apply at all District 89 athletic events.

Expected Conduct

All spectators are expected to:

- **Demonstrate good sportsmanship** by cheering positively and respectfully for all athletes.
- Show **respect to officials**, opposing teams, coaches, and fellow fans.
- Allow coaches to coach and officials to officiate—focus on **encouragement, not criticism**.
- Refrain from coaching or directing players during the game.
- Follow all **school and facility rules**, including supervision of young children.
- Always stay in designated spectator areas and off the playing surface.

Unacceptable Behavior

The following behaviors will not be tolerated:

- Confronting officials, coaches, players, or other spectators.
- Use of profanity or aggressive language.
- Disruptive conduct or interfering with the flow of the game.
- Criticizing athletes, including your own child.
- Use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products on school grounds.
- Use of artificial noisemakers (e.g., air horns) unless explicitly permitted.

District Policy on Ejections

Spectators who violate these guidelines may be:

1. **Verbally warned**
2. **Asked to leave** the facility immediately
3. **Prohibited from attending future events** depending on the severity or frequency of behavior

Repeat violations or serious incidents may result in a **district-wide suspension** from all athletic contests for the remainder of the season or school year.

Our Shared Goal

We are here to support student-athletes' development through healthy competition. Every fan has the power to positively impact a young person's athletic experience. Please help us **"Build Champions ON and Off the Field"** by showing what it means to be a supportive, respectful member of our community.

Eligibility Requirements (Middle School)

District 89 is committed to promoting academic success, responsible behavior, and consistent attendance among our student-athletes. Weekly eligibility checks are conducted to ensure each student meets the following expectations:

Academic Requirements

- **Academics: 50% of all assigned work** for each class per week.
- **Attendance:** Must attend **at least 80%** of scheduled class sessions.
 - This means being present for **4 out of 5 class sessions** each week.
- **Tardiness:** Students must be **on time to class at least 80%** of the time.
 - This allows for **no more than one tardy per class per week**.

Behavioral Expectations

Student-athletes must adhere to district-wide behavioral expectations. Weekly behavioral reviews are based on **Log Entries (interventions)** and **Incident Reports**:

Ineligibility Triggers:

- **4 or more Log Entries** (Tier 1 or 2 interventions)
- **1 or more Incidents** (Tier 2, 3, or 4)

Tiered Behavioral Infractions

Tier	Examples	Consequences
Tier 1	Minor dress code, off-task behavior	Verbal redirection, warning
Tier 2	Disrespect, skipping class, and tardiness	Parent contact, reflection, removal from class
Tier 3	Bullying, harassment, disruption, threats	In-school suspension, behavior contract
Tier 4	Assault, drugs, weapons	Out-of-school suspension, law enforcement

Roles in the Eligibility Process

Teachers

- Track weekly attendance, work completion, and behavior.
- Notify students by **Wednesday** if they are at risk of ineligibility.
- Inform coaches of academic or behavioral ineligibility by **Friday**.
- Log all incidents and interventions into PowerSchool.
- Contact parents for behavioral concerns (Tier 1).
- Work with administrators for higher-level incidents (Tiers 2–4).

Coaches

- Review academic and behavioral data weekly in collaboration with school MTSS/Behavior teams.
- Notify students and families by **Monday** if a student is ineligible.
- Support students through goal setting and follow-up.
- Encourage improvement through communication and resources.

Parents/Guardians

- Encourage consistent attendance, academic effort, and positive behavior.
- Stay informed through teacher and coach communication.
- Attend meetings to support improvement plans when needed.

Administrators

- Monitor the eligibility system.
- Facilitate meetings for students with repeated eligibility concerns.
- Make final decisions regarding **removal from a team** after proper documentation and due process.

Team Removal Process

1. **Documentation:** Ongoing records of missed expectations and support strategies.
2. **Meeting:** Convene with students, parents, teachers, coach, and admin.
3. **Action Plan:** Establish clear goals and timelines for improvement.

4. **Final Decision:** If expectations are not met, student may be removed from the team. Parents will receive written notice with any options for future participation.

Special Education Considerations

For athletes with IEPs or 504 Plans:

- Eligibility expectations will be reviewed and adjusted in accordance with accommodation.
- Teachers, coaches, and special education staff will collaborate to ensure fairness.
- Students will be supported in ways consistent with their unique educational goals.

Communication Protocol

Clear, respectful, and timely communication is essential to the success of our athletic program. District 89 encourages all stakeholders to follow a structured process when sharing concerns, giving feedback, or seeking clarification.

Communication Chain of Command

When a concern arises, it should be addressed in the following order:

1. **Student-Athlete → Coach**
Athletes are encouraged to advocate for themselves first when appropriate.
2. **Parent/Guardian → Coach**
If additional clarity is needed, parents may reach out to the coach respectfully.
3. **Parent/Guardian → Athletic Coordinator or School Administrator**
If a concern remains unresolved, contact the athletic coordinator or building administrator.
4. **District Office (if needed)**
Only after all steps have been followed should concerns be escalated to the district level.

24-Hour Rule

Out of respect for all parties, we ask that parents/guardians wait at least **24 hours after a game or competition** before contacting a coach regarding concerns. This cooling-off period allows for more productive and professional conversations.

Coach Responsibilities for Communication

Coaches are expected to:

- Provide weekly updates on practices, games, and important dates
- Clearly communicate team expectations and rules at the start of the season
- Notify families promptly if a student is at risk of ineligibility
- Return emails or phone calls within **48 hours** (excluding weekends and holidays)

Utilize [FinalForms](#) to communicate important updates, concerns, or team information depending on the situation and/or severity

[FinalForms](#) is the district's official platform for athletic communication. All emergency alerts, eligibility concerns, and key updates must be shared through this platform when applicable.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are encouraged to:

- Support their student-athlete's efforts to speak directly with the coach
- Use respectful language in all communication
- Refrain from approaching coaches during or immediately after games
- Keep their [FinalForms](#) account up to date to ensure accurate and timely notifications

Concussion and Return-to-Play Policy

District 89 is committed to the safety and well-being of all student athletes. In alignment with Board Policy and the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act (YSCSA), the District has established procedures for the identification, management, and recovery of student-athletes who may suffer a concussion or head injury.

Immediate Removal from Play

A student-athlete will be **immediately removed** from practice or competition if a concussion is suspected by a coach, official, healthcare provider, parent/guardian, the student, or other designated personnel. When in doubt, the athlete will **sit out**.

Return-to-Play Requirements

A student-athlete who is removed from participation due to a suspected concussion:

- **May not return to play the same day** unless cleared by an approved medical professional during that event
- Must receive **written medical clearance** before returning to practice or competition
- Must complete the District's **Return-to-Play (RTP) protocol**
- **Coaches may NOT authorize return to play**

Approved medical clearance must come from a licensed physician, APRN, PA, or a certified athletic trainer (in coordination with a physician).

Return-to-Learn Protocol

Student-athletes must follow a **Return-to-Learn (RTL)** process to gradually resume academic activities with appropriate support.

Parent Notification & Documentation

- Parents/guardians will be **notified immediately** if a concussion is suspected
- Concussion education materials will be provided
- Annual **Concussion Information Acknowledgment** is required prior to participation

Education & Training

- Coaches and applicable staff complete **annual concussion training**
- Student-athletes receive **concussion awareness education**
- Protocols align with CDC and IHSA/IESA guidance

Emergency Preparedness

All athletic sites follow established **Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)** to respond to serious injuries or medical emergencies.

5-Step Return-to-Play Progression

A student-athlete must be **symptom-free at each stage for at least 24 hours** before progressing. If symptoms return, the athlete must stop activity and return to the previous step after medical guidance.

Step	Activity Level	Description
1. Light Activity	Walking, light jogging	No resistance training; gradual reintroduction
2. Moderate Activity	Running drills	Increased movement; no contact
3. Non-Contact Practice	Full practice (no contact)	Complex drills; light resistance
4. Full Contact Practice	Normal practice	After medical clearance, controlled contact
5. Return to Competition	Game play	Full participation

Note: Progression must be supervised and approved according to District 89 concussion protocols.

Expectations While Traveling on District Transportation

Athletes represent their school and District 89 from the moment they leave campus until they return. Appropriate behavior on buses is always required.

- Athletes must remain seated and follow all directions given by the bus driver, coach, or supervising adults.
- Voices should remain at an appropriate level; disruptive behavior is not permitted.
- Food, drinks, and gum are prohibited unless explicitly approved by the coach.
- Athletes must keep the bus clean and respect district property.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Use

- Cell phones and electronic devices may be used on the bus **only if behavior remains appropriate and respectful**.
- Recording audio or video of teammates, staff, drivers, or members of the public is **strictly prohibited**.
- Posting on social media while traveling to or from contests is discouraged and may result in disciplinary action if content violates team or district expectations.
- Coaches reserve the right to restrict or prohibit phone use at any time to ensure safety, focus, and team accountability.

Failure to meet transportation and bus behavior expectations may result in loss of playing time, suspension from contests, or removal from the team.

Social Media Guidelines for Athletes

- Student athletes are representatives of District 89 on and off the field.
- Inappropriate or disrespectful posts may result in suspension from the team.
- Athletes should:
 - Avoid negative comments about teammates, coaches, or opponents.
 - Never post during games or practice.
 - Use social media to positively support their team and school.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Vaping Policy

District 89 is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all student-athletes. The use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, vaping devices, tobacco products, or any controlled substances is strictly prohibited for all student-athletes.

Expectations

Student athletes must:

- Refrain from the use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, vaping devices, tobacco products, or any illegal substances.
- Avoid being in environments where illegal substance use is occurring.
- Understand that their behavior both in and out of school reflects on their team and District 89 athletics.

Consequences

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Immediate removal from practice or competition
- Suspension from games or team activities
- Referral to school administration for disciplinary action
- Possible removal from the team depending on the severity of the violation

District administration may also require participation in counseling, educational programs, or restorative interventions before a student-athlete may return to participation.

Uniform and Equipment Responsibilities

Student athletes are responsible for the care and return of all school-issued uniforms and equipment.

Expectations

- Uniforms are the property of District 89 and are issued to student-athletes for the duration of the season.
- Athletes must return all uniforms and equipment in the **same condition** as they received (normal wear and tears accepted).
- Uniforms should be cleaned, stored properly, and not altered in any way.

Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to ensure all issued items are returned at the end of the season.
- Coaches will conduct a uniform and equipment check prior to the conclusion of each season.

Lost or Damaged Items

- Any lost, stolen, or damaged uniforms/equipment (beyond normal wear and tear) may result in a **replacement fee**.

- Students may be **withheld from future athletic participation** or school-related activities until items are returned or fees are resolved.

Proper care and return of uniforms reflect accountability and respect for the athletic program and future participants.

Modesty, Religious, and Cultural Accommodations (105 ILCS 5/10-20.73)

A student-athlete is permitted to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire in accordance with their **religion, cultural values, or personal modesty preferences**.

- Such modifications must not compromise the **safety of the student-athlete or others** and must comply with applicable sport rules where required.
- A student-athlete **is not required to receive prior approval from the school board** for these modifications.
- Coaches should work with the student athlete to ensure the modification is implemented in a manner that is safe and consistent with competition guidelines.

District FAN PLEDGE

As a representative of District 89, I have a responsibility to uphold the sportsmanship code of conduct for my school, my team, my coach, my family, and my opponents.

Your role as a fan is to show respect for opposing players, all coaches, and spectators.

We will respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials and accept their decisions graciously.

We will cheer positively for each team and remember to display modesty during victory and graciousness in defeat.