



Athletics Handbook 2023-24

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SFS ATHLETICS PROGRAM

The San Francisco School (SFS) is proud to offer competitive athletic opportunities for students to develop lifelong skills, personal growth and a strong sense of physical fitness and wellness. The Athletics program enhances and complements the overall SFS community by providing student athletes with positive learning experiences through challenges of athletic discipline and responsibility.

The success of the SFS Athletics program is based on the student athlete experience and how the Athletics program contributes to each child's development. Through guiding principles of **commitment, character, community, and leadership**, the Athletics program seeks to develop the student athlete physically, mentally, and socially to prepare them for their next stages in life.

The SFS Athletics handbook will provide further information on program operations, policies, and guiding principles. We are extremely proud of the SFS Athletics program; the student athletes who represent The School, the coaches who provide education and inspiration, and the SFS community of supporters who help achieve these goals.

SFS currently offers four interscholastic sports to students:

Cross Country (Fall)
Volleyball (Fall)
Basketball (Winter)
Futsal soccer (Spring)

SFS competes primarily in The San Francisco Athletic League (SFAL)*, which is comprised of the following schools:

Children's Day School (CDS)	Kittredge
Chinese American International School (CAIS)	Live Oak
Katherine Delmar Burke School (KDBS)	Presidio Hill
KIPP Bayview	SF Friends (SFFS)
KIPP SF	Synergy

**Please note: most of these schools do not have an onsite gymnasium; therefore, athletic competitions will most likely take place at offsite facilities.*

In addition, we have also participated in the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) Athletic Leagues or the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco (JCCSF) Basketball League.

Commitment

"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all." Dale Carnegie

Eligibility/Participation

As an environment that fosters and promotes physical fitness and wellness, SFS encourages all students to participate in interscholastic sports. All Middle School students are eligible to play interscholastic sports and 5th Graders are eligible to participate in Cross Country. Student athletes each play a pivotal role on their teams. With this role, the student athlete commits to the team experience, personal development, physical conditioning, developing friendships, and the overall spirit of the game.

Aligned with the School's mission, we welcome all student athletes to participate. Generally, teams are divided by grade level. All teams foster a developmentally appropriate approach and balance both participatory and competitive experiences.

Each season lasts approximately 11 weeks with at least two practices per week. Games schedules will vary based on each sport and the chosen competitive league. As we are educating life lessons of commitment, accountability, and responsibility, we stress regular attendance at practices and games (approximately half of the season). The student athlete must commit to attending one full practice per week and at least three games in order to participate. The student athlete's participation time in games will factor in preparedness (uniform requirements, tardiness, etc.), attendance, efforts toward progression, and overall attitude. Coaches and athletic staff will use their best discretion to assure the above factors are taken into account fairly. Parenting adults who organize their own teams, outside of the school's Athletics program are urged to follow these guidelines.

Student athletes with academic, attendance or behavior problems that become chronic will find their athletic eligibility subject to review. Student athletes who are suspended may not participate in practices and games during their suspension period. In addition, student athletes may not participate in games if they have not arrived at school by 12:05p and/or if they miss more than half of their classes.

Medical Clearance

We are required to distribute to all student athletes and their parents/guardians the following documents:

- "Concussion and Cardiac Arrest" info sheet published by California Interscholastic Federation (CIF)
- Parent/Guardian and Pupil Sudden Cardiac Arrest Warning Signs and Symptoms from the California Department of Education
- "Opioid Fact Sheet for Patients" published by the Centers for Disease Control

Schools are required to obtain an acknowledgment of receipt of these documents from each athlete and their parents/guardians before the athlete begins practice or competition. Please read the included fact sheets (pages 9-12) with your child. *By signing in the required place for this Handbook, you will acknowledge that you have received these Fact Sheets.*

We encourage all student athletes to be vocal with their injuries or ailments. Together, we can create a level of participation that is appropriate. If the student athlete sought medical treatment, we do ask for the diagnosis documentation as well as a medical clearance for returning to participate.

Playing Time – Junior Varsity and Varsity

Based on the SFS participating League, there may be League guidelines with regards to playing time. SFS teams are generally defined as "Junior Varsity" and "Varsity." In the primary League, SFAL, this entails the playing divisions and grade/competition level. The Athletics Director, along with the Head of Middle School, and the participating teams will decide what level is most appropriate for each team.

The SFS Athletics philosophy focuses on skills and fundamental development. We understand the spirit and learning pieces of competition; however, the priority is the participants' growth as young adults and as players of the game. Below is an outline of developmentally appropriate guidelines for each division.

Junior Varsity (JV) division is competition against other 5th (some schools consider 5th as Middle School), 6th and 7th grade teams (or combination). This division is generally for younger grade levels. We do strive for equal playing time. Coaches are not mandated to account for the precise time played, but it is encouraged to provide equal opportunity.

Varsity division is the highest level and is generally against other 8th Grade and 7th Grade teams. Playing time will be based on the coaches' discretion with guidance from the Athletics Director. We will account for work ethic, positive attitude, commitment and attendance to practices/games, and skill level. We value every athlete's participation and we feel the above criteria are developmentally appropriate.

Uniform & Equipment

The School will provide uniforms and team equipment.* All student athletes will be issued a team uniform prior to the first date of competition. We expect all student athletes to take pride in the responsibility for their uniform and how they represent SFS. Uniforms and team equipment are property of the School and the following rules are mandated:

- Return the uniform/equipment clean and in good condition (way it was received)
- Return the uniform/equipment within one week of the last competition

**Student athletes who have damaged or misplaced their uniforms may be subject to penalty.*

Sports uniforms and personal player equipment* (knee pads and shin guards) are required to participate in competition. If the student athlete fails to prepare for competition (does not wear uniform or bring player equipment), the athlete may not be allowed to participate.

**Student athletes must provide their own player equipment. Any student athlete that is financially unable to purchase player equipment should contact the Athletic Director. SFS will not allow financial circumstance to prohibit any student athlete from participation.*

Character

"Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are." John Wooden

Sportsmanship

Through all facets of athletic participation, we ask coaches, student athletes, parents/guardians, and all spectators to practice SFS's community guidelines, specifically - Be Respectful.

- Demonstrate Respect for Opponents
- Demonstrate Respect for Officials
- Demonstrate Respect for the Game

Emotions will rise and it presents a healthy moment for athletes, coaches, parents/guardians, and spectators to choose how to respond. This is a valuable learning piece, and the goal is for all to

feel supported. We encourage any concerns to be communicated so parties involved can come to a healthy and positive resolution.

Achievement through Accountability and Teamwork

Participation in the School's Athletic program is a privilege that encompasses great lessons of responsibility and ownership. The SFS Athletic program's achievements are based on the student athletes' progressive athletic development, but more importantly on their individual self-empowerment. SFS student athletes learn that success is what they experienced in the game, what new skills they utilized, and what they felt throughout the experience. The sense of honor gained through their efforts and dedication provides them most importantly with the life lesson of accountability, which in essence is their personal achievement.

Community

"The strength of the team is each individual member...the strength of each member is the team."
Phil Jackson

With teamwork, the SFS Athletics program builds a sense of community. Student athletes unite with their peers and provide inspiration through their competitive spirit. The support from the SFS student body, staff, and parents/guardians are the foundation of SFS Athletic teams' successes. Through communication, assistance, and understanding, we are able to come together and assure student athletes are in a positive position to achieve their goals.

Communication

Communication between players, athletic staff and parents/guardians is imperative to build community and maintain organization in the Athletics program. Announcements, changes, and cancellations will be communicated to the appropriate parties as soon as possible. As athletic staff work with other schools and programs to schedule games and practices, anticipated changes could or will occur. Weather conditions will also play a part in possible changes and updates. Although it would be more ideal if changes did not occur in scheduling, athletic staff hope parents/guardians are supportive and understand the operational aspects that at times mandate a pivot from original plans.

Communication vehicles:

- ParentSquare
- Informing student athletes during the school day

Parent/Guardian Involvement

As student athletes dedicate their time to a sport, parents/guardians too actively engage in their support. Families play a vital role not only as the cheering section, but from a logistics perspective as well. Prior to each sport season, parents/guardians can volunteer and support teams. The following areas will be available:

- Carpool and carpool coordination (see Transportation section)
- Volunteer coaching (see Leadership - coaching section)
- Pre and post-game snacks

Transportation

For offsite practices/games, players will need to provide their own transportation. Because not all parents/guardians can make accommodations due to their work schedules, the community of parents/guardians for carpool assistance and coordination is crucial. Coaches are NOT allowed to transport the players; however, they take responsibility for their safety and assuring student athletes are picked up at the end of games/matches.

Leadership

"Leaders aren't born, they are made. And they are made just like anything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal." Vince Lombardi

Through the SFS Athletics program, student athletes will strengthen traits associated with a commitment to sportsmanship and responsibility, taking on roles as leaders in the SFS community and in life. As they work towards these roles, the Athletics programs works to be a part of the resources to support their development into better leaders.

Coaches/Athletics Staff

The goals of SFS coaching staff are to provide positive, constructive, and memorable experiences for SFS teams and student athletes. SFS coaches are outside contractors/volunteers, SFS staff members, and/or parents/guardians. In addition, we may also have coaches-in-training (CIT) to assist with teams. All coaches (parent/guardian volunteers included) are directly supervised by the Athletics Director.

Coaches are directed to value every player and work towards providing positive experiences. Coaches are encouraged to be direct with their expectations and provide encouraging communication. Coaches have autonomy over decisions related to team positions, strategies, and tactics. With regards to playing time, coaches will use their best discretion and value every player. Please note playing time may be discerned based on the League's rules and/or insubordinate behavior. All coaches are essential in the overall student athlete and team experience; therefore, SFS appreciates the personal investment and sacrifice of their daily lives to create these rewarding experiences.

Conflict Resolution

Despite efforts to communicate and promote the SFS athletics philosophy, conflicts may still arise in a passionate community. Whether it be amongst players, parents/guardians, or coaches we hope to proceed to resolution with respect and professionalism.

By participating on sports teams, athletes hone their communication skills as they work toward achieving their goals. In the same breath, we encourage players to communicate any issues or concerns to their teammates and/or coaches so they can better their problem-solving skills through effective communication. We also encourage parents/guardians to have their child raise their concerns themselves and take ownership in the resolution. If players/parents/guardians feel compelled to engage, they should respectively communicate their concerns with the coach and follow the appropriate chain of authority in communication:

Players/Parents/Guardians > Coaches > Athletics Director > Head of Middle School > Head of School.

The Head of School (or in their absence the Acting Head of School) has final authority. All actions taken will be to support the growth of student athletes.

The School advises that parents/guardians, players, and coaches allow emotions to settle for a day and then assess the appropriate specifics to discuss. Through open and honest communication, conflicts are teaching points for student athletes, parents/guardians, and staff. These are all life lessons toward growth and learning from each other.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." Eleanor Roosevelt



CIF Concussion Information Sheet

Why am I getting this information sheet?

You are receiving this information sheet about concussions because of California state law AB 25 (effective January 1, 2012), now Education Code § 49475:

1. *The law requires a student-athlete who may have a concussion during a practice or game to be removed from the activity for the remainder of the day.*
2. *Any student-athlete removed for this reason must receive a written note from a physician trained in the management of concussion before returning to practice.*
3. *Before a student-athlete can start the season and begin practice in a sport, a concussion information sheet must be signed and returned to the school by the student-athlete and the parent or guardian.*

What is a concussion and how would I recognize one?

A concussion is a kind of brain injury. It can be caused by a bump or hit to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force that shakes the head. Concussions can appear in any sport, and can look differently in each person.

Most concussions get better with rest and over 90% of athletes fully recover. However, all concussions should be considered serious. If not recognized and managed the right way, they may result in problems including brain damage and even death.

Most concussions occur without being knocked out. Signs and symptoms of concussion (see back of this page) may show up right after the injury or can take hours to appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion or if you notice some symptoms and signs, seek medical evaluation from your team's athletic trainer and a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussion. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, or is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions, call 911 for immediate transport to the emergency department of your local hospital.

On the CIF website is a **Graded Concussion Symptom Checklist**. If your child fills this out after having had a concussion, it helps the physician, athletic trainer or coach understand how they are feeling and hopefully will show improvement over time. You may have your child fill out the checklist at the start of the season even before a concussion has occurred so that we can understand if some symptoms such as headache might be a part of their everyday life. We call this a "baseline" so that we know what symptoms are normal and common for your child. Keep a copy for your records, and turn in the original. If a concussion occurs, your child can fill out this checklist again. This Graded Symptom Checklist provides a list of symptoms to compare over time to follow your child's recovery from the concussion.

What can happen if my child keeps playing with concussion symptoms or returns too soon after getting a concussion?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. There is NO same day return to play for a youth with a suspected concussion. Youth athletes may take more time to recover from concussion and are more prone to long-term serious problems from a concussion.

Even though a traditional brain scan (e.g., MRI or CT) may be "normal", the brain has still been injured. Animal and human research studies show that a second blow before the brain has recovered can result in serious damage to the brain. If your athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one, this can lead to prolonged recovery (weeks to months), or even to severe brain swelling (Second Impact Syndrome) with devastating consequences.

There is an increasing concern that head impact exposure and recurrent concussions may contribute to long-term neurological problems. One goal of concussion education is to prevent a too early return to play so that serious brain damage can be prevented.

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looks dizzy• Looks spaced out• Confused about plays• Forgets plays• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent• Moves clumsily or awkwardly• Answers questions slowly | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slurred speech• Shows a change in personality or way of acting• Can't recall events before or after the injury• Seizures or "has a fit"• Any change in typical behavior or personality• Passes out |
|--|---|

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headaches• "Pressure in head"• Nausea or throws up• Neck pain• Has trouble standing or walking• Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision• Bothered by light or noise• Feeling sluggish or slowed down• Feeling foggy or groggy• Drowsiness• Change in sleep patterns | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of memory• "Don't feel right"• Tired or low energy• Sadness• Nervousness or feeling on edge• Irritability• More emotional• Confused• Concentration or memory problems• Repeating the same question/comment |
|--|--|

What is Return to Learn?

Following a concussion, students may have difficulties with short- and long-term memory, concentration and organization. They may require rest while recovering from injury (e.g., limit texting, video games, loud movies, or reading), and may also need to limit school attendance for a few days. As they return to school, the schedule might need to start with a few classes or a half-day. If recovery from a concussion is taking longer than expected, they may also benefit from a reduced class schedule and/or limited homework; a formal school assessment may also be necessary. Your school or physician can help suggest and make these changes. Students should complete the Return to Learn guidelines, successfully returning to a full school day and normal academic activities, before returning to play (unless your physician makes other recommendations). Go to the CIF website (cifstate.org) for more information on Return to Learn.

How is Return to Play (RTP) determined?

Concussion symptoms should be completely gone before **returning to competition**. A RTP progression is a gradual, step-wise increase in physical effort, sports-specific activities and then finally unrestricted activities. If symptoms worsen with activity, the progression should be stopped. If there are no symptoms the next day, exercise can be restarted at the previous stage.

RTP after concussion should occur only with medical clearance from a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, and a step-wise progression program monitored by an athletic trainer, coach, or other identified school administrator. Please see cifstate.org for a graduated return to play plan. [AB 2127, a California state law effective 1/1/15, states that return to play (i.e., full competition) must be **no sooner** than 7 days after the concussion diagnosis has been made by a physician.]

Final Thoughts for Parents and Guardians:

It is well known that students will often not talk about signs of concussions, which is why this information sheet is so important to review with them. Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if they experience such symptoms, or if they suspect that a teammate has had a concussion. You should also feel comfortable talking to the coaches or athletic trainer about possible concussion signs and symptoms that you may be seeing in your child.

References:

- American Medical Society for Sports Medicine position statement: concussion in sport (2013)
- Consensus statement on concussion in sport: the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Berlin, October 2016
<https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/PediatricTBIGuideline.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html>

PARENT/GUARDIAN AND PUPIL SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Information and Acknowledgment Form

On July 1, 2017, Assembly Bill 1639, known as the Eric Paredes Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Prevention Act went into effect. This requires the pupil and their parent or guardian to read, sign, and return an SCA form of acknowledgment before the pupil participates in any athletic activity. Districts may use this form, a form located on the California Interscholastic Association (CIF) website, or design their own form. An SCA acknowledgment must be signed and returned to the school site each school year.

On August 30, 2019, Assembly Bill 379 also added sudden cardiac arrest prevention requirements to the Health and Safety Code for youth sports organizations. The amended Health and Safety Code, Division 106, Article 2.5: now includes, Youth Sports Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Protocols [124235-124236].

What Is SCA?

SCA occurs suddenly and often without warning. It is triggered by an electrical malfunction in the heart that causes an irregular heartbeat. With the heart's pumping action disrupted, the heart cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs, and other organs. Seconds later, a person loses consciousness and has no pulse. Death occurs within minutes if the victim does not receive treatment.

Who Is at Risk for SCA?

Thousands of sudden cardiac arrests occur among youth each year, as it contributes to the #2 medical cause of death of youth under the age of 25 and is the #1 cause of death of student athletes during exercise. While a heart condition may have no warning signs, studies show that many young people do have warning signs or symptoms but neglect to tell an adult. This may be because they are embarrassed, they do not want to jeopardize their playing time, they mistakenly think that they are out of shape and need to train harder, or they simply ignore the symptoms, hoping the signs will go away.

Possible Warning Signs and Risk Factors:

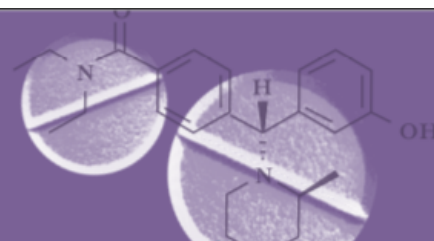
- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise
- Fainting repeatedly or with excitement or startle
- Excessive shortness of breath during exercise
- Racing or fluttering heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- Repeated dizziness or lightheadedness
- Chest pain or discomfort with exercise
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

Removal from Activity

A pupil who faints during or following participation in an athletic activity must be removed from play and may not return to play until they are evaluated and cleared by a physician and surgeon, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant. I have reviewed and understand the symptoms, warning signs, and risk factors associated with SCA.

The CDE used information from the following sources: American Heart Association, Parent Heart Watch (<https://parentheartwatch.org/>), *Eric Paredes Save a Life Foundation: Keep Their Heart in the Game* (<https://epsavealife.org/>), and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation (<http://www.sca-aware.org/>).

PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Prescription opioids can be used to help relieve moderate-to-severe pain and are often prescribed following a surgery or injury, or for certain health conditions. These medications can be an important part of treatment but also come with serious risks. It is important to work with your health care provider to make sure you are getting the safest, most effective care.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS OF OPIOID USE?

Prescription opioids carry serious risks of addiction and overdose, especially with prolonged use. An opioid overdose, often marked by slowed breathing, can cause sudden death. The use of prescription opioids can have a number of side effects as well, even when taken as directed:

- Tolerance—meaning you might need to take more of a medication for the same pain relief
- Physical dependence—meaning you have symptoms of withdrawal when a medication is stopped
- Increased sensitivity to pain
- Constipation
- Nausea, vomiting, and dry mouth
- Sleepiness and dizziness
- Confusion
- Depression
- Low levels of testosterone that can result in lower sex drive, energy, and strength
- Itching and sweating

As many as
1 in 4
PEOPLE*



receiving prescription opioids long term in a primary care setting struggles with addiction.

* Findings from one study

RISKS ARE GREATER WITH:

- History of drug misuse, substance use disorder, or overdose
- Mental health conditions (such as depression or anxiety)
- Sleep apnea
- Older age (65 years or older)
- Pregnancy

Avoid alcohol while taking prescription opioids. Also, unless specifically advised by your health care provider, medications to avoid include:

- Benzodiazepines (such as Xanax or Valium)
- Muscle relaxants (such as Soma or Flexeril)
- Hypnotics (such as Ambien or Lunesta)
- Other prescription opioids



U.S. Department of
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STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

Please acknowledge and check all of the items below. Sign the Agreement and return to the SFS Athletics Director prior to participation.

We have carefully read and discussed:

- ☐ The SFS Athletics Handbook. We understand the mission and fully support the SFS Athletics Program.
- ☐ “Concussion and Cardiac Arrest” info sheet published by California Interscholastic Federation (CIF)
- ☐ Parent/Guardian and Pupil Sudden Cardiac Arrest Warning Signs and Symptoms from the California Department of Education
- ☐ “Opioid Fact Sheet for Patients” published by the Centers for Disease Control

Student Athlete’s Name: (please print)	Student Athlete Signature:	Date:
_____	_____	_____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name: (please print)	Parent(s)/Guardian Signature:	Date:
_____	_____	_____