

Northshore School District No. 417

Football Safety Guidelines

This school strives to protect each student from possible injury while engaging in school activities. The guidelines and/or practices identified below have been established for this activity in order to protect the student and others from injury and/or illness. Participants and their parents should recognize that conditioning, nutrition, proper techniques, safety procedures, and well-fitting equipment are important aspects of this training program. Each participant is expected to follow the directions/standards of the coach.

Transportation will not be provided except as specifically identified by the school. Use of non-district provided transportation will be needed to access off-campus sites for practices and some contests. Providing or arranging appropriate transportation to these practices or contests is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Guidelines are as follows:

1. Make certain that you wear all equipment that is issued by the coach. Advise the coach of any poorly-fitted or defective equipment.
2. Advise the coach if you are ill or have any prolonged symptoms of illness.
3. Advise the coach if you have been injured.
4. Engage in warm-up activities prior to strenuous participation.
5. Be alert for any physical hazards in the locker room or in and around the participation area. Advise the coach of any hazard.
6. Be alert to risks associated with exposure to bodily fluids such as blood. Familiarize yourself with preventive procedures established to protect against communicable diseases transmitted through bodily fluids.
7. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if in contact with blood or bodily fluids. Uniforms must be properly disinfected or changed before participation may resume.

(please read other side)

I am aware that tackle football is a **high risk sport** and that participating or competing in tackle football will be a dangerous activity involving **many risks of injury**. I understand that the dangers and risks of practicing and competing in tackle football include, but are not limited to, death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, serious injury to virtually all internal organs, serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other aspects of my body, general health and well-being. I understand that the dangers and risks of practicing or competing in tackle football may result not only in serious injury, but in a serious impairment of my future abilities to earn a living, engage in other business, social and recreational activities, and generally to enjoy life.

Because of the dangers of tackle football, I recognize the importance of following coaches' instructions regarding techniques, training, and other team rules, etc., and to agree to obey such instructions.

I have read this document in its entirety (**front & back**), the information has been explained to me, and I understand and agree to abide by the list of Football Safety Guidelines, rules and procedures and items 1 to 4 of the Football Equipment Loan Agreement, if applicable. I also understand the necessity of using the proper techniques while participating in the football program.

Print Full Name

Grade

Athlete's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

TACKLING, BLOCKING, AND RUNNING THE BALL

Tackling and blocking techniques are basically the same. Contact is to be made above the belt, **but not initially with the helmet**. The player should always be in a position of balance, knees bent, back straight, body slightly bent forward, head up and the target area as near to the body as possible with the main contact being made with the shoulder. When properly blocking or tackling an opponent, contact with your helmet will naturally result. Therefore, technique is most important in order to prevent or reduce the likelihood of injury.

Blocking and tackling by not keeping the helmet as close to the body as possible may result in a shoulder injury and a separation or a pinched nerve in the neck area. Injuries as a result of improper techniques can range from minor to disabling or even death. Improper body alignment can put the spinal column in a vulnerable position for injury. The development of strength in the neck muscles through isometric-type exercises will enable the participant to hold his/her head up even after getting tired during a workout or contest.

BASIC HITTING (CONTACT) POSITION AND FUNDAMENTAL TECHNIQUE

Strained muscle injuries can range from ankle injuries to serious knee injuries requiring surgery. The rules have made blocking below the waist (outside a two-yard by four-yard area next to the football) illegal.

Cleats are restricted to no more than one-half inch to further help prevent knee injuries. A runner with the ball, however may be tackled around the legs.

In tackling, the rules prohibit initial contact with the helmet or grabbing the face mask on the edge of the helmet. Initial helmet contact may result in a bruise; dislocation; broken bone; head injury; or internal injury such as kidneys, spleen, bladder, etc. Grabbing the face mask or helmet edge may result in a neck injury which could result in injuries ranging from a muscle strain to a dislocation, nerve injury, or spinal column damage which could cause paralysis or death.

EQUIPMENT

An athlete is required to wear all issued equipment. If equipment is damaged or does not fit correctly, the athlete must inform his coach immediately before use. Shoulder pads, helmets, hip pads, and pants (including thigh pads and knee pads) must have proper fitting and use.

A shoulder pad which is too small will leave the shoulder point vulnerable to bruises or separations. A shoulder pad that is too tight in the neck area may result in a possible pinched nerve. A shoulder pad which is too large will leave the neck area poorly protected and will slide on the shoulders making them vulnerable to bruises or separations. Helmets must fit snugly at the contact points: front, back, and top of head. The helmet must be safety "NOCSAE" branded, the chin straps must be fastened, and the cheek pads must be of the proper thickness. A fit which is too loose could result in headaches, a concussion, a face injury such as a broken nose or cheekbone, or a neck injury that is possibly quite serious such as paralysis or even death.

FOOTBALL EQUIPMENT LOAN AGREEMENT

The student hereby borrows from the school and school district the identified property named below:

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1. **Liability for Risk/Indemnification:** Parent, Guardian and Student agree to indemnify, defend and hold school and school district, and its officials, agents and employees harmless from all claims, liability, loss and expense (including reasonable attorney's fees) incurred by reason of injury arising from using the aforementioned equipment.
 2. **Use of Equipment:** The student shall use the equipment in a reasonable and safe manner and in accordance with all instructions. The student shall wear appropriate safety equipment at all times when participating in the activity.
 3. **Responsibility for Equipment:** The parent, guardian and student accept full responsibility for all equipment and understand that a fee will be charged commensurate with the cost of repair or replacement for any equipment lost or damaged.
 4. **Return of Equipment:** The parent, guardian and student agree to return the equipment at the end of the loan period, or upon the request of the school district, if any of the rules or guidelines are violated or the equipment is used in an unsafe manner.