

**Solanco School District  
Athletic Department**

**STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK**



A reference guide for Solanco Student-Athletes participating on PIAA  
Interscholastic Sports

**GO MULES!!!!**

Being a member of any GOLDEN MULES athletic team is a privilege, not a right.  
Everything will be earned.

Thank you for your effort and dedication, on and off the Playing surface.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Solanco School District Student-Athlete Handbook is designed to inform our student-athletes and parents of the rules, regulations and information for participation in the interscholastic athletics is a privilege that carries with it honor, responsibility and commitment. Since participation is a privilege and not a right, those who choose to participate will be expected to follow the rules and regulations developed by their specific head coach and adhere to the Code of conduct established by the Solanco School District in collaboration with the Solanco Athletic Department. Students who participate in the SSD interscholastic athletic program are expected to represent the Solanco School District, their families and community with class and in a positive manner.

The Solanco School District is a member of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and therefore, are bound by the rules and regulations of that governing body. In addition, the Solanco School District and its Athletic teams are a member of the Lancaster-Lebanon League and PIAA District III

## **SOLANCO'S ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY**

The Athletic program is an integral part of the education program. It is designed to provide the student-athlete with opportunities to develop and advance their physical, mental, emotional and social capabilities through participation in interscholastic sports. It is recognized that the athletic program may provide as much positive influence in a student's development as an academic area.

Each sports program is dependent on the Head Coach to give purpose and direction for the entire program. Inherent in the leadership, the Head Coach should articulate: the need for an environment of competitiveness at all levels, while the Junior High program should emphasize skill development and participation, the Junior Varsity program to continue to emphasize skill development with focusing on specialize skills and positions, and the Varsity program to enhance the skill development while competing to develop a winning culture. At all grade levels, in all programs, it is essential to maintain consistent approaches to developing the competitive nature, while maintaining the integrity of the sport and emphasizing sportsmanship.

Our goal is to provide quality coaching, facilities and equipment in our quest to develop highly competitive athletes. The success of our program is dependent upon the on-going development of talent, the support of multiple sport participation, the expertise of our coaching staff, and the commitment of our school district of the realignment of leagues according to enrollment with an attempt to create a competitive balance.

Although competition is an inherent factor in our contest and winning is important, it is not the highest single goal; our ultimate goal is striving to win while exhibiting good sportsmanship and assisting with the overall development of the individual person.

See Solanco Board Policy #123 – Interscholastic Athletics

### **GOALS OF THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

- 1) To provide an athletic program for the student body that will be competitive in nature and will motivate students to strive to win the right way.
- 2) To facilitate the role of the head coach as the coordinator for his/her respective segment of the athletic program.
- 3) To encourage dialogue, rapport and support among coaches, athletic participants and the athletic department.
- 4) To provide district support for the entire athletic program including qualified staff, supplies, equipment, and facilities as deemed essential for the operation of the program.
- 5) To support, encourage and monitor the development and progress of our student-athletes with hopes of assisting them towards becoming the best version of themselves.

- 6) To provide administrative support for the realignment of the Lancaster-Lebanon Athletic League to accommodate the strengths of the Solanco Athletic Programs.

## **SOLANCO EXPECTATIONS**

**Responsibility:** Act Responsibly and take responsibility for one's actions

**Respect:** Treat themselves and each other with respect

**Kindness:** Act with Kindness when dealing with others

**Courage:** Act with courage every day

## **SOLANCO MISSION STATEMENT**

Three simple words!

CONNECTING – INSPIRING – EMPOWERING

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION (Board Policy #123, #211)**

Participation on an athletic team requires that a student meet the following conditions:

- Satisfy all Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and Solanco School District (SSD) eligibility standards.
- Adhere to the Codes of conduct of the SSD, the school building you attend, the athletic department and your individual sports teams.
- Submit ALL required forms and notifications are expected to be submitted by the announced deadlines.
- **Solanco Students MUST:**
  - Pass a Physical Examination by a Physician
  - Obtain his/her parents' consent on a form issued by the athletic director
  - Obtain a regular insurance policy or present evidence through an affidavit that parents have appropriate coverage
  - Sign and return a Solanco Interscholastic Athletic Contract
  - Sign and return drug testing participation form
  - Sign and Return Student-Athlete handbook meeting form.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- **AGE – (PIAA Constitution and by-Law: Article I)**

A student-athlete may not have reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday by the date of June 30<sup>th</sup> that immediately precedes the beginning of the school year.

In sports where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 through 9, the student-athlete may not have reached their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday by the date of June 30 that immediately precedes the beginning of the school year.

In sports where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 and 8, the student-athlete may not have reached their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday by the date of June 30 that immediately precedes the beginning of the school year.

- **AMATEUR STATUS – (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article II)**

To be eligible to participate in a sport, a student must be an amateur in that sport. A student loses amateur status in a sport if the student, or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), receive money or property for or related to the student's athletic ability, participation, performance, services, or training in a sport.

A student may accept awards from the student's school or the student's school-affiliated booster club, the sponsor of an athletic event, a non-profit service organization approved by the student's school principal, or the news media. Permissible awards are items of apparel, a blanket, watch, ring, scroll, carry-on or warm-up bag, photograph, medal, plaque, or similar award, with appropriate institutional insignia or comparable identification. The fair market value of items provided to any such student may not exceed \$200.

- **ATTENDANCE – (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article III) (Policy #204)**

A pupil must be regularly enrolled in and in full-time attendance at a PIAA member school or a Charter or Cyber- Charter School, or be home-schooled. A pupil who has been absent from school for a total of twenty or more days in a semester shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he/she has attended school for a total of forty-five (45) school days following the twentieth day of absence. A PIAA district committee may consider an exception when there is an extended absence because of approved reasons.

Middle School student-athletes must be in attendance prior to 11:00 am in order to participate in interscholastic practice or competition on that day. High School student-athletes must comply with the 9:52 a.m. sign-in time in order to participate in interscholastic practice or competition on that day. Any lateness beyond the 9:52 am will require a note from an appointment to be considered excused. Hand written notes will not qualify to be excused. (SSD)

An attendance irregularity during the last day of classes of the school week will make student ineligible for activities during the weekend. Exceptions for absences for educational, religious and medical reasons will be made when prior approval from the student's assigned, secondary school office has been granted.

- **Consent of Parent / Guardian – (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws Article IV)**

A student shall be ineligible for participation in each sport only when there is on file with the principal a certificate of consent signed by a parent or guardian consenting to that student-athlete's participation in practices, inter-school practices, scrimmage, and/or contests in the particular sport involved.

● **Health – (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article V)**

- 1) Any student wishing to participate in practices, inter-school practices, scrimmages and contests for a PIAA-affiliated sports team for the first time during the school year must meet all the following requirements:

Complete the electronic PIAA physical application (**CIPPE**) found on the Student or Parent Portal on/after June 1. Print the completed forms and return them in person, by email or by US mail after signed by the physician to the SSD Athletics Office (**completed section 6**). All forms must be completed and returned to the High School Athletic Office at 585 Solanco Rd Quarryville, PA 17566. PIAA Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (**CIPPE**) can be found on the Solanco Website ([www.solanco.org](http://www.solanco.org) – click on the athletics tab) can be picked up at the high school / middle school office. Original's must be turned into the office.

- 2) Any student who fulfills the requirements to participate in a PIAA interscholastic sport during a school year and seeks to participate in subsequent sport (s) in the same school year, must complete and submit to the SSD Athletic Office his / her **PIAA Re-Certification by Parent / Guardian form (CIPPE, Section 5)** according to the schedules by the PIAA and SSD Departments of Athletics.
- 3) Finally, if the student-athlete is participating in wrestling, he/she must have established a minimum wrestling weight class utilizing the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NMCA) Optimal Performance Calculator as the mechanism to calculate the minimum wrestling weight. (The SSD certified assessor (Athletic Trainer) will perform all required testing.)

● **Period of Participation – (PIAA Constitution and By-laws: Article VIII)**

A student-athlete is eligible for practice or participation in interscholastic athletics upon entry in seventh grade. A student-athlete loses eligibility when the student-athlete has reached the end of the students fourth consecutive year beyond the eighth grade. If the student repeats a grade after eighth, the student will be ineligible as a senior. Played six seasons beyond the sixth grade or four seasons beyond the eighth grade in any sport. Completed the work of grades 9-12, inclusive.

**PARTICIPATION OF SECONDARY HOME-SCHOOLED STUDENTS IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

Home-schooled secondary students residing within the Solanco School District shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. Each student shall be required to follow the rules of the team and school, the policies of the Solanco School District and the rules and regulations of the PIAA.

Transportation to and from scheduled practices and events is the responsibility of the parents of the home-schooled students except where late bus transportation and team transportation are provided by the district.

### **Procedures:**

Parents of home-schooled students who wish to have their children participate in interscholastic athletics within the school district have the following responsibilities:

- 1) Register their children with the school districts central office by March 15<sup>th</sup> of the year previous to the one during which they wish to participate.
- 2) Submit a completed PIAA physical documents and related forms to the District's athletic trainer before participation in tryouts, practices or competitions.
- 3) Prior to participation, verify with the school's central office the following conditions:
  - a. a) That their child was enrolled in and passed a minimum of four (4) full-year subjects during the last school year. This is the equivalent to four (4) credits.
  - b. That their child was not absent from instruction more than twenty (20) days during the previous semester unless eligible for exemption as stated in Article III, Section 2 of the PIAA By-Laws
  - c. That their Child is enrolled in four (4) full-year, four (4) credit equivalent courses during the current school year.
- 4) After participation has begun, notify weekly or daily as directed the District's Athletic Director if the student does not meet SSD and PIAA eligibility requirements for academic or attendance reasons.
- 5) The Solanco School District will perform the following responsibilities:
  - a. Announce and supervise the registration process.
  - b. Announce physical exam information through the local media.
  - c. Contact parents of home-schooled students with information regarding SSD and PIAA academic and attendance requirements for interscholastic eligibility.
  - d. Furnish the name(s) and related information of any home-schooled students wishing to participate in interscholastic athletics for the school year to the appropriate coach(es).
  - e. Contact registered parent(s) / student(s) with information about orientation meeting, schedules, tryouts practices, etc. for the upcoming season.

## **PARTICIPATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

Secondary students attending any charter school with in the Solanco School District would be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics, as long as the attending charter school did not offer the specific sport the student-athlete is interested in playing. The student would be required to follow the rules of the team, the policies of the Solanco School District and the rules and regulations of the PIAA in relation to their participation. The charter school would be assessed a fee for its student electing to participate on the SSD sponsored team, and transportation would be up to the student's family to provide.

## Procedures and Responsibilities

1. The SSD Athletics Department will announce physical exam information and tryout/practice information through the local media.
2. Charter school students who wish to participate in interscholastic athletics should submit a completed PIAA physical exam card and related forms to the Districts Athletic Trainer according to the announced time line. They may contact the athletic office for information about orientation meetings, schedules, tryouts, practices, etc. for the upcoming season.
3. The Athletic Office will inform the Learning Enrichment and Student Service Office of the names of any charter school students who have submitted a completed physical exam packet and the participation fee to be billed to the charter school.
4. The LE/SS Office will notify the charter school of the participation fee for their students and the procedure for prorated billing (Includes coaches' salaries, equipment, supplies, transportation, reconditioning, dues & fees, rental, official's compensation, meals & lodging.
5. The Athletic Office will send "interscholastic Eligibility" memorandum and the packet to the charter school at the beginning of each sports season. This packet details the SSD and PIAA academic and attendance requirements for interscholastic eligibility.
6. The Charter school will notify the Athletic Office in a timely manner of any of its students participating in interscholastic athletics who do not meet eligibility standards.
7. Charter school students must arrange for their own transportation to and from practices and competitions at sites from the charter school of home and to the departure site for any teams traveling to away competitions.

### ● **All-Star Contests (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article IX)**

A student will lose his/her PIAA eligibility in a sport for one year if he/she participates in an all-star contest in that sports. Your eligibility will not be affected if you participate in an event that (1) is not advertised or promoted

### ● **Curriculum (PIAA Constitution and By-Laws: Article X)**

A student must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the Principal as a full-time curriculum. This curriculum must be approved by and conform to the regulations of the State Board of Education, the PA School Coed, and any policies established by the local school board.

Eligibility is determined both weekly and by marking period:

#### **WEEKLY:**

A student must maintain a passing average in at least four, full credit subjects or the equivalent. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, and is reported by the teaching staff on a weekly basis. In the event a student-athlete does not meet this standard on the last school day of the week, He/she shall be ineligible for athletic competition from the Sunday immediately following the report of failure through the next Saturday.

#### **Marking Period:**

A student-athlete must have passed at least four, full-credit subjects, or the equivalent during the previous grading period in order to be eligible for athletic competition.

A Student declared ineligible due to failing grades in a preceding grading period shall be ineligible to participate for the first 15 school days of the next grading period. Eligibility for the first grading period is based on your final grades for the preceding school year.

Home-schooled, secondary students residing within the District shall be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. Parents must register their children with the District by March 15 of the school year preceding the one in which they wish to participate. Charter school students attending an SSD school are also eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics at the age-group school within their regular attendance area. (SSD)

- **Out-of-Season Participation**

All PIAA sports have a defined season. If your school team conducts practice and / or participates in inter-school practices, scrimmages and/or contests outside that PIAA defined season, your school will be penalized.

## **CODES OF CONDUCT**

A team coach may establish and publish, with the approval and consent of the Principal and/or Athletic Director, reasonable rules that complement those rules/policies that have been instituted by the District, individual schools, and the athletic department.

### **School Behavior and Citizenship**

Student-Athletes are expected to conform to the general code of behavior for the building they attend. Violations of that Code which result in a suspension (In-School or Out-of-School), will affect, the student-athlete's participation. When a student has been suspended out-of-school, the student may not visit and District campus for the duration of the suspension, nor may the student participate in any extracurricular activities, including athletic practices or competitions. Students may resume participation on the day that they resume regular, school attendance.

When a student is suspended in-school, participation in extracurricular activities is also restricted. The student may not participate in any extracurricular activities, including athletic practices of competitions. Students may resume participation on the day following the completion of the in-school suspension.

Additionally, a coach may set a more restrictive rule if missing practice due to any suspension which influences that student – athletes' preparation for competition.

### **Sportsmanship**

As a PIAA-member school, we are committed to the goal that sportsmanship be recognized as an important part of interscholastic athletics. Sportsmanship is generally defined as the overt display of respect for the rules of the sport, as well as for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at any event. SSD student-athletes, when part of any team activity, are EXPECTED to behave in a way, which demonstrates fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. Any actions or comments which are intended to taunt, bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others in the athletic arena will not be tolerated. If any student-athlete should be ejected from a contest by and governing official due to unsportsmanlike behavior, PIAA rules state the student-athlete will also be suspended for the following calendar scheduled game. Should the

suspension occur on the final game of the season, it will carry over to the following season. The athletic department also reserves the right to add additional suspensions should they be warranted. Should the student-athlete exhibit such behavior during practice the individual will be addressed by the coach and may receive consequences of either (1) a reduction in participation, (2) suspension or (3) dismissal from the team.

### **Attendance and Tardiness**

Daily attendance is the expectation. Student-Athletes are expected to be present in school daily and on time. Should an athlete be absent, a doctor's note should be submitted to the main office on the day the student returns to school, following the absence. ALL student-athletes are expected to be on time daily. Should a student-athlete be late for any reason, they MUST be in school prior to 9:52 AM with a note. If they do not make the 9:52 time, a Doctor's note is required and a note from home will not be accepted. Any student-athlete arriving after 9:52 with no note shall be ruled ineligible for the day's events, including all PIAA scheduled contests. The following reasons are acceptable for an excused lateness:

- Doctor / dental appointment – signed form should be turned in following appointment
- Emergency at home (parents should call)
- General Power failure with in the district
- School bus late
- Several weather conditions
- Merit of other reasons will be determined on an individual basis. Parents should notify the school of an impending lateness. These items will be verified. Additional unexcused tardiest will result in further disciplinary actions.

### **Hazing (SSD Board Policy No. 247) (PA Statutes Title 24 P.S Education 5352)**

Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the intention of team initiation or membership; for our purposes, this refers to any sports team recognized by the Board of School Directors. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be forced activity, even if a student participates willingly.

The SSD does not condone any form of initiation (i.e., hazing) as part of any school-sponsored interscholastic sports-team activity. The District has adopted a policy prohibiting the involvement of students, volunteers and employees in any hazing activity; No student-athlete, coach, volunteer or District employee shall plan, encourage, assist or engage in any hazing activity.

Student-Athletes who attempt to engage in any style of hazing will be suspended indefinitely. Understanding that this could make for an uncomfortable situation for anyone involved directly or in-directly, the athletic department allows for individual team members to report events to their coaching staffs weekly. Coaching staffs will distribute communication cards to be reported back to the staff on a weekly basis. All cards will be returned to the athletic department with concerning comments brought to the athletic director's attention. Student-Athletes will have opportunities to express concerns in a timely and confident manner.

### **Tobacco (SSD Board Policy No 222)**

The objective of this policy is to provide a tobacco free environment. The policy bans the use of all forms of tobacco products on school property or at school activities. In keeping with this policy, the athletic department prohibits the use of tobacco products by coaches, student-athletes, and support personnel while taking part in school-sponsored activity, whether

or not on school district property. Violations of this policy will be dealt with first in accordance with the guidelines of the policy and secondly in accordance with the following athletic department procedure:

- First Offence – Suspension from practice and competition for one week from date of violation.
- Second Offence – Suspension for the remainder of the season.
- Third Offense – Suspension from all activities for the remainder of the school year.

Any suspension will be accompanied by a letter documenting the incidence in the student's file.

### **Drugs and Alcohol (SSD Board Policy 227.1)**

The objective of the school district's drug and alcohol policy is to eliminate the improper use of drugs, behavior-altering substances, and performance-enhancing substances in our schools, on school property, on school conveyances, and at school-sponsored events. In keeping with district objectives, the athletic department believes interscholastic athletics play a vital role in promoting and maintaining a drug-free environment. Student-athletes violating the policy will first be dealt with according to the general policy in which all controlled substance violations are level IV code of conduct violations.

### **Steroids (PA Act 93 of 1990)**

The use of steroids continues to be a problem that plagues athletics. Student-athletes must be aware of the dangers of steroids and the consequences of their use. Student-athletes and their parents may obtain specific information about steroid use from any member of our athletic-training staff.

The Pennsylvania legislature has passed legislation specifically prohibiting the use of steroids in athletics in the Commonwealth. The provisions of this Act and the consequences for violations supersede the SSD Board of School Directors policies on the use of drugs or alcohol.

- First Offense – Suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the current season.
- Second Offense – Suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the current season and following season.
- Third Offense – Permanent suspension from school athletics.

### **Drug Testing Policy / Violations SSD Board Policy 227.2**

The Purposes of this policy are:

- 1) To create and maintain a safe, drug-free environment for all students participating in interscholastic athletics and students with driving privileges.
- 2) To protect the health, safety and welfare of students.
- 3) To reduce the likelihood of accidents, injuries or property damage resulting from student drug use.
- 4) To prevent disruption that would negatively impact interscholastic athletics or student safety while on school grounds
- 5) To provide students with access to assistance and treatment for drug and alcohol problems.

Should any student test positive in a drug test under this policy they shall be subject to the following restrictions:

- 1) **FIRST VIOLATION** – the student will be suspended from participating in athletics for thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the confirmed positive test result.

- 2) **SECOND VIOLATION** – The student will be suspended from participating in athletics for one (1) calendar year from the date of the confirmed positive test.
- 3) **THIRD VIOLATION** – The student will be suspended from participating in athletics for the remainder of his/her enrollment as a student with the Solanco School District. If the student transfers during the time of the suspension, the suspension will be honored and followed at the student's new enrolled school.

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying (SSD Board Policy 252)**

The objective of the school district's Bullying and Cyberbullying policy is to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students within the schools. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and cyberbullying in any form are not tolerated. Anyone who engages in bullying and cyberbullying in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate discipline.

## **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES**

### **Squad Limits and Squad Selections**

Many sport teams have no squad limits; therefore, all students who meet eligibility requirements and participate in try-out activities/practice become part of the team. However, the nature of certain sports limits the number of team members who can be effectively managed by the coaching staff and/or facilities. Coaches, as the designated professionals in charge of these sports, will make student-athletes aware of the criteria for selection. The coaches will maintain records of tryout evaluations and will provide significant opportunity to fairly evaluate and rank student-athletes.

Students not selected for a squad may be permitted to try out for another sport during the same season provided the selection process for that team has not been completed and the head coach is agreeable to the tryout. Student athletes must obtain approval from the coach no later than 2 days after receiving notification that he/she was not selected for the first sport he/she attempted to join.

### **Uniforms and Equipment**

The district provides all uniform and equipment necessities within the athletic budget for its student-athletes except shoes. All items remain the property of Solanco School District. Student-athletes will be held accountable for the uniform and equipment issued to them and is responsible for using them in compliance with instructions as provided by the coaches and athletic training staff. Items are to be returned directly to the coach at a timely manner at the end of the season. No student-athlete is permitted to try out or participate in another sport until all uniform and equipment obligations have been fulfilled from any previous season.

All unreturned items are subject to collection through the Solanco School District business office and local magisterial procedure.

All codes of conducts above are also stated in the Solanco School District physical packet, which must be signed by student-athletes and parents/guardians as a requirement for participation prior to the beginning of any season.

### **Team Travel**

It is expected that all student-athletes will use transportation provided by the school district to travel TO and FROM athletic contests. There are several reasons for this procedure but foremost safety, security, and legal liability. The school district realizes that there are exceptions and extenuating circumstances that may be approved by the Athletic Director. Therefore, all students wishing to ride home with only a parent or legal guardian must submit a "Transportation Release Form" request to the Athletic Director. Requests should be made no later than one day prior to the competition in which the student-athlete is requesting travel home with their parent or legal guardian. Forms are available in the athletic office or on the Solanco School District website. Parents and guardians may assume that the request has been approved. If there are any questions or concerns by the Athletic Director, parents or guardians will be contacted.

Student-athletes who miss the bus and arrive at the contest are not permitted to participate unless coach gave prior approval to student athlete, parent or guardian.

Circumstances during post-season competition may warrant overnight travel to sporting events. In that case, all school district/athletic department/team policies, procedures, rules and regulations are in effect. Violations of these standards will result in disciplinary action according to the appropriate student handbook and school district code of conduct.

### **Practice and Competition Attendance Requirements**

A student-athlete should regard his/her attendance at all Solanco School District practices and competitions as a very high priority. This expectation is based upon:

One, given that the competition is extremely high among Solanco School District students to be selected for a position on a team's roster or to achieve a starting role on a Solanco School District team, it is expected that students who are successful in gaining these opportunities utilize their participation to its fullest capacity. Missing practice or competition may hinder a student-athlete's individual skill, attitude and knowledge development; weaken his/her role on the team; and affect the team's performance and chances for success.

Two, PIAA By-Laws base a student-athlete's post-season eligibility upon attendance at his/her school's practices and competitions: Article IX, Section 5 states, "A student who participates as an individual or as a member of a team in a sport in an athletic program other than that of the student's school, who is enrolled at a school having a team in that sport, shall be ineligible to participate in the District or Inter-District Championship contests in that sport unless the student has been in uniform and available to participate as a member of the student's school team in that sport for at least 75% of the regular season contests...and if a student's practice in an athletic program other than that of the student's school does not meet the practice requirements of the student's school as determined by the Principal, the student shall be ineligible to participate in the District or Inter-District Championship Contests in that sport."

### **Excused Absences**

A student-athlete's absence from a SSD practice or competition will be excused for the following three reasons:

1. Circumstances generally approved by the SSD for the absence from school (illness/injury, religious observance, educational trip, co-curricular field trip, special academic pursuit, family commitment or doctor's appointment).

#### CONSIDERATIONS:

Student-athletes should always communicate an upcoming absence as far in advance as possible to the head coach.

Because of the broad scope of district activities, conflicts may occur between an athletic event and another SSD-sponsored activity. When a conflict occurs, the student-athlete and coach should work out a solution that will be in the best interest of the student-athlete utilizing these criteria:

- The relative importance of each event
- The importance of each event to the student
- The contribution the student can make to each activity
- When the events were scheduled

Once the decision has been made, the student-athlete will not be penalized by the Coach or sponsor of the event not chosen; however, playing time or starting restrictions may be imposed as appropriate to the situation.

2. Missing any beginning-of-the-season try-out or practice sessions because of family vacation only when the student-athlete provides written notice of his/her plans to the head coach as least one week prior to the first day of official practice/try-out. In addition, the student-athlete must be in attendance for his/her tryout sessions for teams that make cuts before the final squad selection has been made.
3. Participation in the practice, inter-school practice, scrimmage or competition of another program in the same sport during the same season when these requirements have been met:
  - The Principal, with the agreement of the head coach, waives the requirement of Article IX, Section 5 because of the student's failure to the 75% requirement results from illness, injury or the student's failure to meet another PIAA eligibility rule.
  - The Principal, with agreement of the head coach, determines that practice in the athletic program other than that of the student's school meets the practice requirement of the school.

#### **Consequences for Unexcused Absences**

Failure to follow these rules, or any additional team-specific rules publicized by the coach, will result in consequences being charged to the student-athlete. Action may include, but is not limited to, suspension from team activities or dismissal from the squad.

It is intended that compliance with these attendance requirements' will help each student-athlete to best develop his/her own talents and to the best contribute to the development of the strongest possible interscholastic athletics program.

#### **Playing Time**

The interscholastic athletics philosophy of the SSD identifies the standards for participation and playing time at each level of sport activity. (SSD Board Policy No. 123)

#### **MIDDLE SCHOOL / JUNIOR HIGH**

At the Middle school / Junior High level, student-athlete participation and development of skills in a sport are valued above the winning of contests.

## **JUNIOR VARSITY**

At the Junior Varsity level, instruction and the development of individual skills for all student-athletes continues to be emphasized. However, team success in interschool competition is also valued.

## **VARSITY**

At the Varsity level, Coaches have the dual responsibility of fostering individual skill development and achieving team success. To achieve this end, the most effective student-athletes, regardless of grade level, will be given the opportunity to further develop their athletic abilities and to work together to develop a strong desire to attain the highest possible levels of team success.

It is the charge of each sports team's coaches solely to make determinations regarding playing time based upon their observation and evaluation of athletes during try-outs, practices and competitions in accord with the principles of the SSD philosophy of interscholastic athletics.

## **Multiple Sport Participation**

Students are encouraged to participate on as many different sports teams as possible during their school careers. However, for a student to participate on more than one team per season is extraordinarily difficult, and most often not in the best interest of the student or the teams. Exceptions to this policy require the approval from the Athletic Director.

## **"Playing Up"**

There may be a circumstance in which the skill level of a student enrolled at a particular grade level of a sport and the nature of the team/sport/competition warrant the student participating on a team that is offered for students of a higher grade. (For example – 9<sup>th</sup> grade wrestler participating at the varsity level-comprised of the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders-rather than at the junior high level-made up of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders.) Program coaches or students-athletes and their parents may initiate the process; however, when an initiative to do so is made, PIAA By-laws and SSD athletics department protocol must be followed. Coaches, parents, the student and administrators must be in agreement that this move is in the best interest of the student and beneficial to the team/program; final approval rest with the athletic administration. This option is never available to students below the entry grade level at which a particular sport is offered. (for example-an eighth grader is not eligible to participate on the girl's tennis team since it is offered for only the 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade student-athletes.)

## **Injury Management**

Participation in interscholastic athletics comes with inherent risks. Unfortunately, despite attention to, instruction of and adherence to principles of safe sport play, injuries may occur. Parent and student-athletes must acknowledge this risk.

The SSD is committed to the belief that proper care for injuries is critical to the students in the athletics program. A National Athletic Trainers Association and Pennsylvania State Level Licensed certified trainer is provided by the school district to furnish care and rehabilitation of athletic injuries. Additional SSD student trainers assist the head certified trainer. However, given the size of the athletic program, it may be impossible to provide coverage at every scheduled event. The athletic trainer will make every effort to see that your sport receives attention based on the available personnel. Sports judged to be high injury-risk sports will receive primary coverage. In the event a certified trainer is not present, the Coach in charge of the activity will assume responsibility.

## **Insurance Options**

The Solanco School District Does NOT provide free accident insurance coverage for its student-athletes. Medical Expenses incurred while participating on a SSD interscholastic sports teams or in SSD intramural activities may be covered through the following options:

- Private insurance plans
- Voluntary SSD Student Accident Insurance Plan
- Pennsylvania's Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance Program (MAP)

## **Return to Play Criteria**

Following a complete physical assessment, the certified athletic trainers may, at his or her discretion and in accordance with approved protocols, return a student-athlete to practice or competition unless the student-athlete is under the current (proximate) care of a licensed physician. When the student-athlete is under the care of a licensed physician, the certified athletic trainer must have written documentation for consideration of return to play. Final return to play decisions will be made in cooperation and agreement with the treating licensed physician, certified athletic trainer and in accordance with approved protocols, policies, and procedures. If a student-athlete is not being seen by a licensed physician following an injury, the certified athletic trainer will determine when the student-athlete returns to practice or competition.

### **RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM**

- The Athletic Training room is a Medical facility; ACT APPROPRIATELY
- Use universal precautions to protect yourself and others from infectious diseases
- Be respectful of the Athletic Trainer's time and efforts to assist you.
- Be courteous and polite to all Athletic Training Staff, Athletic Training students and All visiting Athletic Medical staff; anything less may be grounds for removal from the facility.
- The Athletic Training Room is coeducational facility; dress accordingly
- Only Student-athletes receiving treatment or waiting to see the Athletic Trainer's should be in the Athletic Training Room.
- Student-Athletes receiving treatment or PT for rehab of an injury will be scheduled through the head Athletic trainer. Any student-athlete receiving treatment during scheduled class time will be scheduled and given a note from the trainer one day prior to the appointment. Note should be given to teacher at the start of class, before leaving to treatment.

## **Suspension from a Team**

The coach of the sport, athletic director or building administrator, may make suspensions from a team. The Coach, athletics director and/or the building principal will confer with one another before such action is taken. Causes for suspension include violations of team, athletics department, and school and District rules and / or policies.

If a student-athlete is under investigation for dismissal from a team, the Coach, Athletics Director, or Administrator may invoke a suspension until the investigation is complete as per Due Process procedure.

## **Dismissal from a Team**

Removal of a student-athlete from a team may be made by the Coach of the sport, Athletic Director, or Building Administrator for severe or repeated violations of team, department, school or district rules and/or policies. The Coach, Athletic Director and/or Administrator will confer with each other before such action is taken.

If a student-athlete is under consideration for suspension from a team, he/she has the right to due process.

Any student-athletes dismissed from a team will not be permitted to participate on another team during that sport's season. School board policy may further restrict a student's participation during that school year.

### **Due Process**

The following procedure has been developed by the Athletics Department to provide due process in the event a student is Under Consideration for suspension or dismissal from a team:

- The Coach, Athletic Director or Administrator will notify the student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent/guardian of the Possibility of suspension or dismissal, its Proposed date/time of effect, and the infraction that prompted the consideration of this consequence. This notification may take place in person or by phone call.
- The Student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian will then be afforded the opportunity to reply to the charge and present evidence.
- If requested, such conference will be held immediately or as soon as possible to be mutually agreed upon by the school district official, the student-athlete and his /her parent/guardian.

Nothing contained in this section denies a student or parent/guardian of his/her right to then appeal to the SSD Superintendent, school board, or the courts or to be represented by counsel at any stage of the process.

### **Declaration of Ineligibility**

When declared ineligible for competition because of inability to meet PIAA academic or attendance standards, a student-athlete may (with the approval of the head coach) attend and participate in practices or team meetings. An ineligible student-athlete may accompany the team to competitions; however, he/she may not do so in uniform. When declared ineligible for practice, meeting or competition because of inability to meet the Solanco School District daily attendance requirement, academic standards or conduct codes, a student-athlete may not participate in practices or team meetings, nor may he/she accompany the team to any competition (home or away events and scrimmages).

Academic standards are as followed: Students must maintain passing grades in all classes and be on pace to graduate. Should a student-athlete have two F's on their weekly grade report, that student-athlete will be ineligible for competition during that week but be permitted to practice. (A grading week is considered Monday – Saturday) If the same student-athlete is failing two or more classes for two consecutive weeks, that student will be ineligible for practice and competition for the remainder of that week. Three consecutive weeks can result in a remove from all team related activities

### **Coach / Athlete / Parent Relationships**

An effective working relationship among the "athletic triangle" of Coach, Student-Athlete and Parent benefits the quality of each person's experience and contributes

significantly to the success of the entire team. Establishing this relationship requires that each of the three individuals understands his / her role in the process and communicates openly and honestly with the other persons.

To open the communication channels, the coaching staff is responsible for holding a pre-season orientation meeting at which time the following topics may be addressed:

- Introduction and related background experiences of the coaching staff
- General plans for the upcoming season
- PIAA, District, school, department and team philosophies, procedures, rules and expectations as covered in the student-athlete's handbook and team handouts.
- Locations and times of practices and competitions
- Helpful tips on how parents/guardians can best support their child during the season.
- How best to reach the coach (by phone or email) and a confirmation on how best to reach each parent / guardian.
- Coaches office hours or availability to meet if necessary.

Student-Athletes and their parents are responsible for asking questions to clarify their understanding of any topics discussed at the meeting or published in any other printed material (such as the "Student-Athletes Handbook"). Student – Athletes and parents are also responsible for confirming mailing addresses, phone numbers, e-mails addresses and must inform coaches of any anticipated conflicts in the proposed practice / competition schedule.

With this foundation in place, it is anticipated that communication between any of the parties can easily and respectfully be conducted throughout the season. However, the most critical time for the working relationship to be employed is when a concern or conflict arises about an expectation or comprehension of a policy / procedure.

**Topics that are accepted as appropriate for discussion are:**

- The student-athlete's academic performance
- The student-athlete's behavior in school, with the team or in the general public as it pertains to the team's reputation
- The Student-athlete's role on the team
- The Application of PIAA, District, department and team philosophies, procedures, rules and expectations for SSD Student-athletes
- Suggestions to improve a student-athlete's skill acquisition, knowledge and attitudes relevant to the sport
- Information about the recruiting process and recommendations about a student-athlete's suitability for play at collegiate levels.
- Management of injuries incurred by the student-athlete.
- The general well-being of the student-athlete as it pertains to their role with the team.

However, there are also **topics which are NOT appropriate for discussion.** These include certain prerogatives for which the coach alone has jurisdiction with the bounds of school district philosophies, regulations and policies:

- Other player's roles on the team.
- Selection, placement and determination of playing time
- Establishment and enforcement of all travel arrangements for the team.
- Creation and implementation of competition strategies
- Management / determination of all awards.

In a time of question of conflict concerning an appropriate topic, the following procedures are to be followed in the attempt to solve the problem:

- Avoid telephone and e-mail discussions if possible. Request a face-to-face meeting with the other individuals so that most complete communication takes place.
- The first level of contact should always be between the student-athlete and Coach; however, this contact should be made at a time other than during a practice or competition. Speaking privately with the coach or in a place away from other team members is preferred.
- If the problem is not resolved at this primary-level meeting, a conference which includes the Coach, student-athlete and parent/guardian may take place. However, none of these persons should be confronted immediately before or after a practice / competition to discuss the matter; always call or e-mail to set up an appointment. If the coach cannot be reached in this manner, the parent / guardian should contact the athletic office in order to obtain assistance in reaching the coach.
- If a resolution still is not gained after this conference, contact the athletic Director in for input as to how to proceed. The Athletic Director will give due process and consideration to all of the involved parties while attempting to bring the matter to a reasonable conclusion. SSD Policy #906 ("Public Complaints") may be initiated at this point if dissatisfaction with the Athletic Director's ruling occurs.
- Please keep in mind, if the athletic director is contacted, the AD will ask if all prior steps have been attempted before scheduling a meeting with all parties. If they have not been attempted, the AD at that time would request that the parent / guardian contact the coach directly before this meeting would occur.

### **Student-Athlete Feedback Survey:**

A student-athlete feedback survey is offered at the completion for each team's competitive season. The surveys will be conducted by the athletic director, during the last schedule week of regular season practice. The Student-Athletes are invited to comment ANONYMOUSLY about the following topics:

- Practice Structure
- Feedback from coaches
- Team improvements
- Coaches expectations
- Coaches communication
- Coaching staff behavior
- Facilities and equipment
- General over all concerns

Results are analyzed by the athletic department and communicated with lead administration as well as members of the district school board. All results will be discussed with the head coach at the yearend evaluation meeting, and shared with all board members on the athletic-advisory committee.

Making the choice to participate in PIAA interscholastic athletics is a great choice and can be one of the most rewarding experiences of a student's middle and high school years. Students can look forward to opportunities for developing their knowledge, skills and attitude in an educationally-based athletic setting well as acquiring life-long attributes and friendships.

The Solanco School District Administration congratulates all students who make the choice to participate in interscholastic athletics and wishes all student a great experience.

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR HEAD COACH**

The Student-Athlete handbook is prepared in an effort to keep students and parents informed regarding academic, behavior, attendance procedures, as well as team and athletic expectations at Solanco High School. The District Athletic department and Administration wants to be sure every student fully understands the contents of the handbook. We are asking parents and student-athletes to review the entire handbook carefully. Your signature below does not denote approval of the handbook contents rather that you and your student- athlete have read and understand the handbook.

PLEASE SIGN THIS FORM AND HAVE YOUR STUDENT ATHLETE RETURN IT TO THEIR HEAD COACH WITH IN 24 HOURS OF RECEIVING THE HANDBOOK. THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES YOUR EFFORTS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THIS MATERIAL.

**SOLANCO STUDENT – ATHLETE RECOGNITION AND  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**Print** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Date)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Date)** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENTS RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**Print** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Date)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Date)** \_\_\_\_\_