

**UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL  
ATHLETIC PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

**2009-2010**

**'Athletics as Practice for Life'**

**[www.uhsathletics.org](http://www.uhsathletics.org)**

## UHS Student-Athletes and Families:

We would like to welcome the Class of 2013 to the Red Devil athletic program. We would also like to welcome back all of our returning Red Devil student-athletes. We hope you all had a great summer and are looking forward to participating on one or more of our teams this year.

Athletics has been an important component of the education and development of UHS students ever since the school opened in 1975. The school's founders recognized that participation in competitive athletics helped develop more capable, fully rounded graduates. So, from the very beginning, UHS has made a concentrated effort to develop a first class athletic program in terms of competitive success and in terms of the values, habits and behaviors that will help Red Devil athletes in all aspects of life beyond UHS.

Today UHS is known for the high rate of participation of the student body on its athletic teams, the remarkable achievement of those teams in a wide variety of sports, and the way our players, coaches and fans conduct themselves. We are proud of our athletic program, the student-athletes who participate in it, the coaches who are the foundation of its success and the supportive University community that does so much to help the athletic program achieve its goals.

In this handbook there is information about our program philosophy, an overview of both our physical education and our interscholastic athletic program, information about how these programs work, explanations of our key policies, operational information and guidance on how to handle issues that may arise.

However, no handbook can provide all the information needed so we want to encourage students and parents to contact any of us with questions or concerns.

We look forward to supporting all Red Devil athletes and teams through another exciting season. Go Devils!

Jim Ketcham  
Athletic Director  
447-3114  
[jim.ketcham@sfuhs.org](mailto:jim.ketcham@sfuhs.org)

Diane Schroeder  
Associate AD  
447-3144  
[diane.schroeder@sfuhs.org](mailto:diane.schroeder@sfuhs.org)

Mary Beth Noel  
Assistant AD  
447-3143  
[marybeth.noel@sfuhs.org](mailto:marybeth.noel@sfuhs.org)

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## Mission & Philosophy

The mission of the athletic and physical education program at UHS is no different than any other department of the school: to help UHS students develop into young adults capable of succeeding in college and beyond. Therefore, we place student development at the very top of our priority list. We want program participants to develop as skilled athletes. We want our teams to be successful. We want every student to learn the benefits of physical fitness. Much more than that, though, we want our student-athletes to find that their participation in the Red Devil athletic program is **a positive, constructive and memorable experience** --- one that will help shape them in a useful way as they go forward with their lives.

To quote from the athletics website, 'The interscholastic athletic program seeks to help student-athletes grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially through the challenges of athletic discipline, team participation, and interscholastic competition. The mission is educational and designed to enrich and complement the UHS academic experience.'

The remainder of this handbook is divided into two parts addressing first the interscholastic program and then the physical education program.

## Overview of the Interscholastic Program

The current interscholastic program includes 14 programs (sports) with 22 varsity teams and an additional 13 sub-varsity teams (JV or Frosh). These sports are offered during one of three seasons (fall, winter and spring).

All of our varsity teams participate in leagues with the chance to compete for a league title. Seasons typically include a full schedule of non-league and league round robin games. If our teams qualify, they can then compete in league playoffs (all but two UHS teams qualified) and Section playoffs (14 out of 22 qualified). In most sports the season ends with the crowning of a Section champion. In some sports a State championship tournament follows the Section championship (cross country, volleyball, basketball, golf, track and field).

Section and State championships are organized by size of school with the number of size classifications dependent on the number of schools participating in that sport. University is usually in the classification for the schools with the smallest enrollments. However, in more than half of our sports (badminton, fencing, field hockey, golf, lacrosse, girls' soccer and swimming) there is no post-season separation: schools of all sizes compete together for in a single championship.

High school athletics in California are governed by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), a state chartered organization. The CIF subdivides the State into 11 geographic

Sections. Leagues (and by definition their member schools) are part of one of these Sections. Sections are the primary authority for most issues that transcend school or league decision making levels. University's primary league, the Bay Counties League-West, is a member of the North Coast Section.

## Objectives

We evaluate the success of our program, ultimately, by the experience of each and every student-athlete and by the way the athletic program contributes to their development. We find it helpful to focus most specifically on three key program objectives: participation, achievement and honor.

## Participation

We encourage every UHS student to take advantage of the high school athletic experience by participating on one or more of our teams. Each year over 70% of our students do participate. In 2008-2009 students participated on one or more teams as follows:

| <u>Class</u> | <u>Boys</u> | <u>Girls</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Freshmen     | 86%         | 81%          | 83%          |
| Sophomores   | 82%         | 75%          | 78%          |
| Juniors      | 71%         | 57%          | 63%          |
| Seniors      | 86%         | 60%          | 72%          |
| Total        | 84%         | 67%          | 74%          |

Not every student-athlete is a star contributor. But every student-athlete can be a meaningful part of the team. And every student-athlete who participates receives the team experience, the personal development, the conditioning, the friendships, and the sheer enjoyment of being out on the field of play.

Many of our students compete in sports in which they have no previous experience. We urge all students uncertain about their participation to come talk with a member of the athletic department staff. We can help you find the sport that is right for you.

## Achievement

We want our teams to be achievement-oriented. We know that the definition of meaningful achievement will differ widely between teams. We hope that all of our teams strive to be 'the best that they can be.' In doing so, they are sure to learn valuable lessons like the value of efficient and purposeful preparation, how to be a good teammate and the challenges in overcoming adversity.

We believe strongly in this process-oriented approach to team development as it allows each and every program to experience the challenge of improvement. We also observe that our teams do well when measured against the more traditional standards of team success:

- League titles: University teams have won about 43% of available league titles since 2000 (79/184)
- Section titles: Red Devil teams or individuals have captured 26 Section titles since 2000
- State/NorCal titles: Through the girls' cross country, girls' volleyball and boys' basketball teams, UHS has captured 4 State and 3 NorCal championships since 2000 (most sports do not offer a championship beyond the Section level)
- Other significant achievements over the recent past include:
  - The boys' and girls' lacrosse teams making it to the NCS championship game in 2005 (lacrosse is a sport where schools of all sizes compete in the same division). The boys' team that year was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in northern California and 4<sup>th</sup> in the West (LaxPower computer rankings)
  - The girls' soccer team was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the country in 2004 and 1<sup>st</sup> in the West by the National Soccer Coach's Association of America. The boys' soccer team has participated in the NCS championship game in five of the past six years.
- Program Recognition
  - California Division 5 Athletic Program of the Year 2002, 2003, 2004 (Cal-Hi Sports)
  - One of five best Bay Area Athletic Programs (SF Chronicle 2005)

The challenge of identifying and accepting aggressive goals is a key part of the experience for all of our teams. The drive to achieve those goals is a characteristic that we ask our coaches, captains and players to develop within the team construct. The pursuit of a high level of achievement is a tremendous educational and personal development opportunity for each of our student-athletes --- and totally consistent with the mission of our athletic program.

## **Honor**

The third objective of our program is the most important of all. We expect and demand that our student-athletes, coaches and fans develop a sense of honor that manifests itself in the following ways:

### Respect for Opponents

It is the competition from our opponents that enables our teams to be the best that they can be. So we appreciate and respect that competition in many ways. We NEVER cheer an opponent's misfortune. We want our fans to be loud and boisterous, but 100% focused on supporting our team, not denigrating our opponents. We always congratulate our opponents regardless of the outcome of a game. We celebrate our own successes, but only in ways that

are respectful of our opponents. We play hard, but don't run up the score. We always want our opponents to be respected, appreciated and congratulated.

### Respect for Officials

We expect our players and coaches to interact with officials with total respect. We expect our fans to do the same. In some cases this may be very difficult --- but it is a very clear expectation. Over many years UHS athletes, coaches and fans have established a great reputation in this area. This sort of reputation is much more difficult to build than it is to lose. We ask for your support as we seek to support high school officials.

### Respect for the Game

Our coaches and student-athletes have a genuine love and appreciation for their sports. That love shows itself in the way they follow the unwritten rules of sportsmanship that are imbedded in every sport. We don't fake injuries to draw an official's call. We don't trash talk. We don't engage in gamesmanship to put our opponent off his/her game. We don't steal a base or put on a full court press when we have built an insurmountable lead. We don't make distracting noise during a free throw or penalty kick. In short, we understand the right way to play our chosen sport and we govern our actions by both the letter and the spirit of the written and unwritten rules of that sport.

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We know that our way is not the way always chosen by others. Unfortunately, the professional sports world provides too many examples of the sort of behavior that we reject—so it shouldn't be surprising when we run into difficult behavior from time to time. When that happens to you --- as a player or fan --- we hope you will recognize it as a great opportunity NOT to reciprocate. We know that by refusing to lower our standards, we help others raise their own.

Honor for opponents, the officials, and the game---this is a core expectation of everyone associated with the UHS athletic program. And we are never prouder of our teams than when they maintain their honor in the face of adversity.

As of August 2009, UHS was in its **53rd consecutive month** of having no player, coach or fan ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike behavior, a string of almost 2000 interscholastic contests. This is a streak of which we are exceptionally proud.

## The Basics

### What We Play

| <u>Fall</u>                  | <u>Winter</u>                | <u>Spring</u>                  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Boys' Cross Country (V, JV)  | Boys' Basketball (V, JV, F)  | Coed Badminton (V)             |
| Girls' Cross Country (V, JV) | Girls' Basketball (V, JV, F) | Baseball (V)                   |
| Girls' Field Hockey (V, JV)  |                              | Boys'/Girls' Fencing (V)       |
| Boys' Soccer (V, JV)         |                              | Boys' Golf (V)                 |
| Girls' Tennis (V, JV)        |                              | Boys'/Girls' Lacrosse (V, JV)  |
| Girls' Volleyball (V, JV)    |                              | Girls' Soccer (V, JV)          |
|                              |                              | Girls' Softball (V)            |
|                              |                              | Boys'/Girls' Swimming (V)      |
|                              |                              | Boys' Tennis (V, JV)           |
|                              |                              | Boys'/Girls' Track & Field (V) |

UHS has a sailing team in some years that competes as a club sport. Ultimate Frisbee was close to club sport status last year as well. Currently there are students interested in launching boys' volleyball and water polo programs. We are open to establishing new programs when student interest is sufficient to build a sustainable program.

### What It Takes To Play

#### Eligibility

All currently enrolled students are eligible to play interscholastic sports assuming the following conditions are in place:

#### 1. Academic eligibility

Students who have earned less than a 2.0 GPA (straight C average) are not eligible to participate in interscholastic sports until the conclusion of the next formal grading period (end or mid-semester) when they have raised their GPA to that level. The school does have the option to allow one probationary period in which interscholastic eligibility is maintained, but is not obligated to grant this probationary status.

Students with academic, attendance or behavior problems that become chronic can also find their athletic eligibility subject to review.

#### 2. Transfer student eligibility

Transfer students (those entering UHS after the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year) must receive special clearance through the League and the Section prior to participating in team competition. The athletic department works directly with students, families and former schools to obtain this clearance, a process that can take 3-4 weeks.

### 3. Students in disciplinary status

Students in various states of disciplinary status (suspension, detention, etc.) are ineligible to participate in team activities.

### 4. Absent students

Students that miss school (defined as not being present for the start of the second period of the day or who leave school due to sickness during the day) are ineligible to participate in team activities the rest of that day. Approved non-illness related absences (like returning from a college trip) are exceptions to this policy.

### 5. Team specific requirements

Coaches, in consultation with the Athletic Director, can establish additional requirements for players interested in participating on their teams. Most often, these requirements would focus on behavior, attitude and attendance.

The attendance topic is one that can be complicated, especially for student-athletes with outside activities such as club teams or other outside non-athletic conflicts. Some UHS coaches insist on full 5-day per week availability. Other coaches are willing to consider some commitment short of that level. Coaches have latitude to set their own policy in this area, but must apply that policy uniformly. In all cases, the obligation is on the student-athlete to clearly explain the conflicts that do or are likely to exist so that the coach can make an informed decision that is in the best interest of the team.

### 6. Other prerequisites

Students must have a signed medical release form on file with the Dean of Students (part of the standard enrollment paperwork) prior to participating in team activities. Students also must sign the North Coast Ejection form which explains the importance of sportsmanship and explains the consequences for those athlete's ejected from any contest.

### Try-outs—Making a Team

All students must participate in team activities during the established try-out period, usually the first few days of official team practice. This information is posted on the UHS website and on the athletic department white board located outside the athletic office in lower campus.

Exception: any student participating on a UHS team that has not completed its season (a common occurrence) will be provided their own try-out period through arrangement with the

coach once their current season ends. The intent is to insure that no disadvantage accrues to a student who participates on multiple UHS teams.

In the vast majority of our programs, try-outs do not result in any student being cut from a program, only in the establishment of Varsity and JV (or Frosh) teams. This is our clear hope for all programs, consistent with the participation objective outlined above and it is the case most years. Additionally, when team numbers exceed team capacity and facilities exist, we add extra teams (e.g., a second BJV Soccer team).

However, because some teams cannot function with too many players and our access to practice facilities is not unlimited, it is possible that cuts may be necessary in some sports in some years. Looking back over the past few years, sports that have experienced cuts include volleyball, basketball and baseball. In a situation where cuts are required, we do our best to work with the student-athlete to find other athletic opportunities during that season of sport.

## Who We Play

UHS athletics is governed by three organizations. At the highest level, the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) establishes statewide policies and operates state tournaments in selected sports. At the regional level, the North Coast Section (NCS) sets policies and operates Section level tournaments for teams playing in leagues concentrated in the East Bay and north of the city up the California coast. Finally, UHS is a member of the Bay Area Conference (BAC) which consists of 4 leagues as described below.

### Bay Counties League West

Convent of the Sacred Heart  
Drew College Preparatory School  
Lick-Wilmerding High School  
Marin Academy  
**San Francisco University High School**  
Stuart Hall High School  
Urban School of San Francisco

### Bay Counties League East

Athenian School  
Bentley School  
College Preparatory School  
Head Royce School  
Redwood Christian  
St Elizabeth's  
Valley Christian

### Bay Counties League Central

Bay School  
Gateway High School  
International High School  
Leadership High School  
Pescadero High School  
San Domenico School  
San Francisco Waldorf

### Bay Counties League

California School for the Deaf  
Chinese Christian School  
Contra Costa Christian High School  
Cornerstone Christian  
Emery High School  
Fremont Christian  
Oakland Military Institute

Because the BAC does not offer competition in all the sports that UHS participates in and because the NCS does not offer some sports either, UHS teams in the following sports have the following special circumstances:

Field Hockey—participates in the Blossom Valley Athletic League, a member of the Central Coast Section

Fencing—participates in the Academic Athletic Association, a member of the San Francisco Section

Girls' Lacrosse—participates in the Marin County Athletic League, a member of the NCS

Teams also play a schedule of non-league games and tournaments. Many of the teams schedule games against leading schools from other leagues with student populations much larger than UHS. We encourage this with our coaches. We know that a tough non-league schedule will hurt our overall record. However, the higher level of competition provided can make a more exciting and challenging experience for the players and should accelerate a team's development.

The number of games a team can play is established by the Section. UHS varsity teams typically schedule their full limit of games. Sub-varsity teams typically play fewer games.

Varsity teams normally compete in league playoffs (all UHS teams qualified last year) and in Section tournaments if they qualify (about half did last year). JV teams, by league policy, only play their regular season schedule. There are no post-season tournaments for JV teams, although we are increasingly ending JV seasons with Jamborees.

## **Team Leadership**

### Coaches

We are very fortunate to have a roster of close to 60 coaches who **create positive, constructive and memorable experiences** for our student-athletes. Many of our graduating seniors will speak about how one of their coaches materially influenced their life.

Most varsity teams have a head and an assistant coach. Some have additional volunteer assistant coaches. JV teams typically have a single head coach. Our varsity head coaches have an average of more than 7 years of experience coaching at UHS. Our JV and varsity assistants average about 2-3 years of experience with their UHS team.

We encourage each coach to value every player from the all-league player to the last player on the bench. The goal is for every student-athlete at UHS to have **a positive experience**. While this is not always possible, when a coach does communicate what each player can do to help a team and provides positive feedback when the player is successful against that defined role, a positive experience usually does result.

Our coaches are encouraged to be clear about their expectations for team, player and parent behavior. Some do so through written team rules. Most do so through verbal

discussions during practice or through an early season team meeting (including parents). Coaches are encouraged to be clear with players who do not meet coach expectations for behavior or attitude and to impose consequences when useful or necessary. This is a key part of the **constructive part of the coach's mission**.

Most involved in athletics equate **memorable team experiences** with on-the-field results, and, of course, team championships are among the most exciting aspects of interscholastic competition. However, we encourage our coaches to remember that teams that establish great chemistry through consistent support of each other, team bonding activities, the commitment to common goals and the personal investment of hard work in pursuit of that goal usually find that the season is highly satisfying and memorable regardless of the final team outcome. We hope that every team has the opportunity to experience a memorable season and that is a goal in which the athletic department and our coaching staff take pride in seeking for each and every team.

UHS coaches have broad latitude and authority to set team policies, practice times, player expectations and game schedules. Coaches also have full authority over decisions related to team organization (positions, tactics/strategy) and playing time. While coaches are encouraged to provide playing time for all team members when situations allow, there are no minimum playing time requirements either at the Varsity or sub-varsity level. Most sub-varsity teams do adopt the custom of having each player play at least some in each game.

About 20% of our coaches are internal to UHS (teachers/staff) and this percentage is increasing. The majority are outside coaches who have full-time employment in addition to their UHS coaching role. We work with our outside coaches to make sure that their work and coaching schedules are compatible.

A coach's role can extend beyond practice and game situations. Many of our coaches offer ideas for players interested in out-of-season development. Some of our coaches become directly involved with the process of their players finding a college that offers the opportunity for them to continue their athletic career. Many of our coaches provide support and advice to their players on issues unrelated to the team. These roles are all outside the normal job duties of our coaching staff, but are consistently cited by our players as reasons that they appreciate their coach.

### Captains

Each year players and coaches elect one or more captains to help lead their teams. This year, 41 athletes (34 seniors, more than a third of that class) have been chosen to take on this role. For many, it will be the first significant leadership position of their lives.

The first Saturday of each school year, all captains attend leadership training at the Captains' Retreat. Captains can play many roles including organizer of pre-season or off-season practices, spearheading off-field team activities or team clothing purchases, acting as a liason between conflicted players or between players and the coaching staff, providers of constructive feedback to the coaching staff or to the athletic director among others.

## Logistics

There are no fields, pools, courts or tracks on the UHS campus and the gym is, shall we say, fully utilized with the 10 teams that share it throughout the year. Each year UHS teams play in over 500 contests at over 2 dozen home venues and more than 100 away venues. UHS is responsible for hiring more than 300 officials, reserving more than 100 rented facilities, transporting 4500 student-athletes to games (not to mention the 250+ off-site practices that also require facility rental and player transportation). The presence of rain for most of the first two months of the spring season further adds to the potential chaotic operation of the athletic program.

Yet, game cancellations are extremely rare. Players get where they need to be. Officials show up. Opponents show up. Somehow, it all happens through the efforts of players, coaches, parents, officials' association, and facility providers who are critical to the whole process. Should any official get their calendar wrong, a parent lose track of a driving responsibility, a coach get a flat tire, an opposing team not go to the right venue --- a game could be delayed or cancelled. But that happens less than 1% of the time, knock on wood.

Those of you reading this are now insiders to the UHS athletic program. We hope you will come to understand the operational aspects of our athletic program that are relevant to you. We hope that you will look for ways to help. We hope that you will be tolerant on the rare occasion that things don't happen as they should. And we hope you will be in touch with us when you are confused or concerned about any aspect of the operational flow of the program.

Here are the important core processes that players/parents need to understand.

### Early Dismissal

Occasionally, teams need to leave school early to be on time for an away game. When this happens, early dismissal is required. The athletic department posts early dismissal times on the team schedule section of the website under the 'more info' link next to each game. When early dismissal is posted, players need to **request** permission from their respective teachers to leave class early or to miss class altogether. Teachers are not required to grant this permission, but usually do. If permission is not granted, players should let their coaches know immediately. For urgent situations, the coach may then ask the athletic director to get involved.

There is paperwork involved with early dismissal. The pink 'UHS activities conflict form', available from the Dean of Students or the Athletic Department, needs to be completed and delivered to the Dean of Student's office. The form requires the signature of parent, advisor and teacher. Experienced UHS athletes often list or attach ALL early dismissal dates for the full season to minimize the paperwork for all involved.

Students are then solely responsible for contacting teachers or fellow students to learn about what was missed in class.

### **Transportation**

Team parents work with coaches and the athletic department to make sure that all players have transportation to each off-site team activity. The exceptions are weekend games and evening games when coaches may ask players to arrange their own transportation—something that is often easily done through parents or coordinating with teammates. For some games, buses are hired. For most games though, transportation is through a combination of school Suburbans that coaches drive with parent drivers handling players not accounted for through the coaches.

Students are not allowed to drive other students to any game located outside of city limits without the specific approval of the athletic director.

Pick-up and drop-off is always in the Washington Street area. Because of vehicle congestion right after school, parent drivers are urged to wait on Lyon Street for players to be directed to their vehicle.

Often players leave games directly with parents who did not drive them to the game. In those situations, players should let coach and driver know to avoid the stress of an unaccounted for player.

The school is indebted to the many, many parents that rearrange schedules, leave work early, etc. to help out with team transportation. For most teams, if a majority of parents can help out 2-3 times per season, the load is not overly heavy on any one parent.

### **Communication**

Communication between players, coaches, parents and the athletic office is an important task. Here are the primary vehicles and their core uses:

1. [www.uhsathletics.org](http://www.uhsathletics.org)

The athletics website has official game schedules, directions to fields, school vehicle assignment to coaches, practice times and locations and game results. Game cancellations due to weather or any factor are also noted on the team schedule section of the website. Most players and parents bookmark this site and use it frequently.

2. Email distribution lists

Coaches use these to communicate directly with players and/or parents. Team parents use these to provide information or to request help from other parents. This is a primary vehicle for announcements and most players get in the habit of checking for emails once or twice each day.

### 3. Athletics White Board

Located outside the athletics office in lower campus, daily changes in team logistics are listed here by 1pm each day. This board gets especially active in Feb/March when closed fields/rain make practice an often-changing activity. All players should get in the habit of checking the board or with another player who has checked the board each day.

### 4. Phone trees

The athletic department will start phone tree announcements when things change with very short notice. For example, a pipe leak in the gym at an opposing school may cause a basketball game set for San Rafael to move to our gym. A phone tree would be set in motion to try and avoid wasted trips to central Marin by parents seeking to attend the game.

### 5. Cell phone calls between players and parents

When things change, players are informed in a variety of ways and all seem to be looped in shortly after the ending of school if not before. If each player remembers to make a quick call to his/her parents to inform them of changes in practice (or game) time or location, wasted trips or frustrating waits can be avoided.

## **Uniforms/Equipment**

All players are issued uniforms early in the season. These uniforms are the property of the school and players promise three things upon uniform issuance:

1. To return the uniform issued (not someone else's)
2. To return the uniform in clean condition
3. To return the uniform within one week of the last team contest

Because it can be impossible to order replacement uniforms, we rely on all players to return (not keep and pay for) their uniform. Students that don't return their uniforms in a timely manner will see their PE grade reduced one full letter grade. For students that can't locate their uniforms, the mailing of grades home to parents is delayed until it is clear that all efforts to locate a uniform have been exhausted.

To some, these last two policies can seem harsh. But we do expect that players learn to take care of property that is being loaned to them and, in that light, we do have high expectations that uniforms will be returned in full, clean and on time.

Elements of the team uniform that are not expected to be returned are purchased by players. Examples would include soccer socks, baseball hats or softball visors, swim suits, practice jerseys. The school orders these items and sells them to players through the athletic office or through the coach in some situations.

Any player that finds that any purchase of a required team item is financially difficult is asked to talk to a member of the athletic staff who accesses the **University Funds** policy to provide the item for free. This policy applies to any aspect of full team participation that comes with a cost.

Player equipment is typically the responsibility of the player to provide. Examples would include baseball gloves, lacrosse sticks, gloves helmets or goggles, tennis racquets, or athletic shoes. Again, students with financial need are encouraged to talk to the athletic staff to access the University Funds policy.

For sports like field hockey or lacrosse, the school maintains an inventory of sticks to help players new to the sport participate prior to the acquisition of their own equipment.

## **Resources**

**Athletic department staff** (see welcome letter at front of handbook) handle the vast majority of the behind scenes tasks that help the UHS program operate. One of our most important tasks is to be available to answer questions from any player or parent. We want to encourage all players to stop in at any time to ask a question, share a problem or just say hi. Parents too are encouraged to call, email or stop by whenever the need exists.

New UHS parents are invited to Athletic Department Orientation held usually on the first day of 9<sup>th</sup> grade orientation (August 26, 2009). This 90 minute program will not only introduce you to many of the basics outlined in this handbook, but jump start your introduction into the UHS athletic community---a community that we hope will provide many friends and hours of enjoyment to you over the course of your years here.

**UHS Boosters** is an organization headed by 3-4 parents that focuses on supporting the athletic program through the volunteer help of parents. Unlike many Booster organizations, fund-raising is not a primary activity. The Boosters' primary goals are to:

1. Recruit/select team parents for each varsity and JV team and provide those parents with support and guidance, especially those new to the role.
2. Organize and administer two Sports Nights each year to celebrate UHS teams. One night is in early December and focuses on Fall teams and the other is the night of the last day of spring exams and focuses on Winter and Spring teams.
3. Publish an electronic sports newsletter called e-Sportsline 6-8 times per year. This is distributed electronically to all parents, students, coaches and faculty and includes articles and pictures provided by parents or players.
4. Support other special UHS athletic events like Big Red Fridays, basketball games at Oracle Arena or other special contests.

The primary entry point to the Boosters is through volunteering to be a team parent, taking on a role in support of a team parent, or volunteering to help with a Sports Night celebration.

**Team Parents** recruit other parents to help them accomplish three primary tasks: 1. Arranging team drivers 2. Organizing season opening and ending player/coach/parent events 3. Submitting team articles/pictures to the e-Sportsline. Team parents work directly with the coaching staff as team needs are identified. Team parents make a material difference in the overall experience of each of our team's and those who can take on this role are greatly appreciated.

**University Funds** are available to assist any student-athlete with the acquisition of equipment, clothing or any cost of team participation when family finances direct payment difficult. Players or parents are asked to contact the Athletic Director directly and confidentially so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

## **Issue Resolution**

Despite all the best efforts of coaches and department staff, we know that issues will arise from time to time given the scale of our program and the passion of the participants. It is important to lay out effective (and ineffective) methods to effectively surface and resolve issues when/if they arise.

**Player issues:** An important goal for all high school students is to learn how to talk to adults about issues that are confusing or bothersome. Why am I playing midfield? How come I didn't play more in yesterday's game? Why do you talk to other players but not to me? Even though my leg hurts, should I be practicing or resting? The list is endless and one that most players will experience at some point. So the problem of how to deal with concerns that are truly bothersome is one that all players need to learn how to handle. Our advice is as follows:

1. Sleep on it. Sometimes, something that seems horrible in the moment seems totally different the next day. Let your emotions cool down. Then assess if something needs to be addressed.
2. Assess if your concern is major. If you are losing sleep, falling into a bad attitude or the issue is in your thoughts for days on end, it is major. If you are not sure if it is a legitimate issue talk to someone you trust to get their opinion. This could include a friend, a captain, a parent, a teacher, one of us in the athletic office or an assistant coach.
3. Find the right way/time to talk to the coach. Right when practice is about to begin is not a good time. During or right after a game is not a good time. Email is often a great way to get your thoughts down clearly and to the coach when the coach is in a listening mode. For some issues, you might want to schedule a time to meet with the coach.
4. Find a way to pose your concern in a constructive manner. There is huge difference between telling a coach that 'Your playing time decisions are unfair' rather than 'Coach, what can I do in practice to earn more playing time in the games?'
5. Be ready to listen to the answer. It may not be what you want to hear, but, if you listen carefully and ask questions when you don't understand what a coach is saying, there is almost always useful information for you.

A final note: if you find that you are talking to your coach about issues on a weekly basis, go back to item #2 above. But if you find that you are genuinely unhappy (not safe, want to quit the team, not looking forward to team activities), then you need to muster up the courage to surface the issue as best you can. Our coaches do want to make this a good experience for you---but they can't always solve for problems that they don't know about or understand.

Parent issues: It is always better to encourage your child to raise issues themselves. In some cases, that may not happen or it may happen but the situation may not improve. You may feel compelled to take action. Here are some guidelines:

1. Never talk to a coach before or after a game.
2. Always wait a day after something bothersome happens before raising it.
3. When you do talk to the coach, remember that he/she may not have seen what you saw or understand the situation as you do --- so take care to explain yourself carefully and then listen to the coach to see if you have a common understanding of the situation.
4. Separate out appropriate parent concerns from inappropriate concerns. For example:
  - no matter how strong your background in a sport, it is always inappropriate to talk to a coach about tactics or strategy
  - it is always inappropriate to talk to a coach about a player other than your child unless that player's behavior is affecting your child
  - it is never very helpful to threaten a coach (i.e., if you don't do this, my player will quit or if you don't do this my next step is to talk to the AD/Head/Board Member)
  - it is appropriate to share your concerns about your player's lack of happiness and to provide any ideas you have for what is causing that unhappiness. But remember that some solutions (like playing time), no matter how important to your child, have to be subjugated to the needs of the team
5. Think carefully about the wishes of your player prior to raising issues. Many players are horrified when they learn that their parent talked to a coach or member of the athletic staff. If a player doesn't want you to intervene, but you feel that intervention is necessary, a call to the Athletic Director can help identify the best path to follow. Confidential conversations are always possible, but avoiding that condition usually helps get to a solution more directly.

If you are not sure how to handle an issue, you can always get confidential advice from one of us in the athletic office. Just call.

Chain of Authority: Sometimes you will find that you can't resolve an issue with a coach. In those cases you can escalate the issue to the next level (Coach>AD>Head). But please respect the chain of authority by not bypassing a step along the way. That means that a player or parent should attempt to talk an issue through with a coach prior to taking it to the athletic office. Similarly, the athletic director should always be contacted prior to an issue making its way to the Head of School's office.

## Overview of the Physical Education Program

The PE program at UHS reflects the school's desire to develop the whole child. To this end, all students are required to meet program requirements throughout each of their 4 years. Our goal is to have each and every UHS student leave here with an appreciation for the benefits to mind and body of a program of regular physical activity and with a love for one or more types of activities that they look forward to continuing with beyond their high school years.

Most UHS students experienced middle school PE as a class that met during the school day several times per week. This traditional model of PE is still the norm in many high schools.

At UHS, we place a higher priority on academic class, arts program and open period time for the core school day time period. As a result, our PE program is almost entirely an after school based program. Our focus is on accomplishing the end result, a student who is physically active with an appreciation for the role that physical fitness will play in their life in college and beyond.

### **Requirements**

For purposes of PE, UHS divides the school year into trimesters to match the athletic seasons. The first trimester lasts from the start of school to the beginning of November. The second trimester is from November through January. The final trimester begins in February and extends into May.

Each student must meet the PE requirement each of their 12 trimesters at UHS. The PE requirement can be met in one of three ways:

1. Participate on a UHS interscholastic team
2. Attend a PE class (typically, two days per week after school)
3. Arrange an alternate activity (see description below)

Students that are injured or encounter a significant sickness are exempt from the PE requirement, but do need to provide written evidence from their doctor and/or document their rehabilitation activities.

Students on a UHS team or in a PE class have no documentation requirements as their attendance is reported to the PE Director by the coach or PE class instructor.

Students in an alternate activity must complete both:

1. A contract—a piece of paper that explains what the activity is, where it will take place, when it will take place, who the supervising adult is (it cannot be a parent) and how to contact that individual. The supervising adult must sign the contract along with the student.

2. An activity log---a list of the days that the activity was completed along with the initials of the supervising adult.

These documents are available in the athletic office and due dates for these items are posted on the PE bulletin board (or available in a hand-out).

The following provisions apply to alternate activities:

1. Must have supervised instruction
2. Must meet at least two times per week
3. Must meet for at least one hour for each session
4. Weekend activity does not qualify

For unusual alternate activity proposals, the PE Director may approve requests for exceptions to the above provisions.

## PE Options

Here is a brief description of the 4 basic PE options:

1. Interscholastic team---the above section on interscholastic athletics provides detail on this option. Participation on a UHS team fully meets the PE requirement in any trimester. A student that discontinues participation on a team (excepting injury related situations) is then obligated to initiate a replacement PE activity for the remainder of that trimester.

2. PE Class: most PE classes meet two times per week after school. UHS faculty or staff or outside instructors supervise these classes. Most PE classes don't require a fee, but some that involve the use of special facilities or advanced instruction do have that requirement. Students who have financial need can access the University Funds program to have the school absorb that fee. Here is a list of PE classes that are expected to be offered in the 2009-2010 school year:

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Advanced Sports Conditioning      | Golf             |
| Archery                           | Rock Climbing*   |
| Badminton (Beginner and Advanced) | Rooftop Tennis*  |
| Fitness Training                  | Squash*          |
| Folk Dancing                      | Swimming         |
| Fast Pitch Softball               | Ultimate Frisbee |
| Fencing*                          | Yoga             |

\*Fee involved

3. Alternate Activity: this option provides for students to receive PE credit for activities they are engaged in (such as club teams or dance programs) or allows for students to pursue athletic activities outside the scope of the interscholastic program (horseback riding,

hockey, gymnastics). Basically, any activity that requires physical exertion can qualify as an alternate activity. Here are examples of alternate activities selected by UHS kids recently:

- |                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Archery         | Gymnastics            |
| Ballet          | Horseback Riding      |
| Club Basketball | Ice Hockey            |
| Club Soccer     | Martial Arts          |
| Club Volleyball | Pilates               |
| Crew            | Synchronized Swimming |
| Figure Skating  | Tennis                |

#### 4. UHS plays

Because play practice occurs after school causing conflicts with PE schedules and because most members of a play do engage in a range of activities requiring physical exertion, we provide PE credit to the cast and crew of a UHS play. Students in a play that have a desire to pursue fitness activities outside of their time commitment to the play are welcome to consult with the PE Director.

Here is the typical breakdown of how UHS students meet their PE requirement each trimester:

| PE Option          | Fall | Winter | Spring |
|--------------------|------|--------|--------|
| UHS teams          | 38%  | 15%    | 55%    |
| PE Classes         | 30%  | 40%    | 18%    |
| Alternate Activity | 26%  | 40%    | 19%    |
| UHS Play           | 6%   | 5%     | 8%     |

Through this broad range of PE options, we hope that every student reaches the goal of leaving UHS with a belief in the importance of physical fitness and passion for at least one activity that they plan to continue beyond UHS.

## PE Registration

Students make their PE election at the beginning of each trimester through their advisor/cluster. A sheet is distributed and each student checks off their option. If the student elects an alternate activity, they are given a contract and a sheet with the dates by which the contract must be submitted.

Entering 9<sup>th</sup> graders go through this process during a special full class meeting during orientation that explains the PE program in full.

Students can change their PE election simply by informing the PE Director. There are no deadlines on changing PE choices (as there are for academic class changes).

## PE Grading

PE is graded on a standard A-F scale. PE grades are not used in the calculation of a student's GPA, but are listed on the student's transcript.

PE grades are based on a student's PE activities over the normal academic semester. So the Fall semester PE grade is based on the Fall PE trimester activity and half the Winter PE trimester activity for example. The spring grade is based on the second half of the Winter PE trimester and the Spring PE trimester.

Students are graded on attendance, attitude and timely completion of required tasks---not on athletic ability. Generally, students for whom coaches, class instructors, alternate activity supervisors or the theatre director provide good reports will receive an A in PE provided that they meet all deadlines and attendance requirements. Students that miss a PE class can make that class up through consultation with the PE Director. Students must meet the objective of two activities and two hours per week for alternate activities. When that is not possible, consultation with the PE Director may identify ways to make up the lost time. Short weeks of school (3 days or less) reduce the PE requirement to one activity and one hour. Alternate activity participation requirements begin when the PE trimester begins, not when the contract is due or submitted.

The following scale applies to students in PE classes or alternate activities:

|              |                                |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| 0-2 absences | No grade reduction             |
| 3-4 absences | 1 letter grade (i.e. A to a B) |
| 5-6 absences | 2 letter grades                |
| 7-8 absences | 3 letter grades                |
| 9+ absences  | 4 letter grades (an F)         |

Note: this scale applies to the full academic semester grading period which consists of one and a half PE trimesters.

Additionally, PE grades can be lowered for failure to meet deadlines in three areas:

1. Submittal of an alternate activity contract
2. Submittal of alternate activity logs
3. Return of a team uniform in clean condition within one week of the end of the team's last game.

In all of these situations, if a deadline cannot be met, the PE Director can grant extensions. The obligation is on the student to know about these deadlines and to request an extension on or before the deadline date.

Students are required to pass PE to graduate from UHS. Some colleges will retract offers of admission for students that earn a grade lower than a C during the senior spring semester.

Finally, and importantly, all rules pertaining to Academic Integrity apply to the PE program. The PE Director does contact alternate activity supervisors to confirm that they have verified the activities on the student's log. In a situation where the supervisor does not confirm that they have approved the activities, the situation is referred to the Academic Dean for investigation. Obviously, serious consequences can ensue in any case of Academic Integrity.

## **Issue Resolution**

Any issues that students experience with the PE program should be discussed directly with the PE Director. Generally, prompt attention to almost any issue will result in the identification of a solution that is workable.

The most common situation of unsatisfactory PE outcomes involve PE absences or missed deadlines and the failure to bring these issues to the PE Director's attention promptly.

For issues that cannot be resolved through the PE Director, appeals can be made to the Athletic Director or to the Academic Dean.