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# **SSLI UPPER SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**



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## **Information:**

- **Athletic Department - 516-579-3700**
- **Website - [www.schechterli.org](http://www.schechterli.org)**
- **School RenWeb Parent Portal**

## **Welcome!**

Participation on an athletic team can be a rewarding and meaningful educational experience that enhances a child's education. It is important that students realize the time demands, responsibility, dedication and sacrifices required when making this kind of commitment. The following information defines the interscholastic policies and procedures for all students participating in our Upper School athletic programs. The Athletic Department hopes this document provides parents and students with a clear understanding of our philosophy, goals and policies. Please refer to the following information when a question about your child's athletic or physical education experience arises.

## **Philosophy of Athletics at SSLI Upper School:**

At SSLI Upper School we consider athletics an integral part of the educational experience. Athletics provides opportunities that will help students develop physically, mentally, and emotionally. We view the competition of athletics as a healthy educational and physiological activity because it challenges each student to excel, to discover his or her physical limits, and to work cooperatively with team members. While winning is a natural goal in the pursuit of excellence, the principles of good sportsmanship, safety, Jewish values and the enjoyment of competition take precedence at all times and enhance the educational value of contests.

## **Governing Bodies:**

SSLI is a member of the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) whose purpose is to organize, regulate and promote interscholastic athletics for independent schools in New York State. As a NYSAIS school, SSLI abides by the minimum standards set forth by this organization. Please note that these are minimal standards and members schools may enforce stricter standards, which SSLI Upper School does in many instances. Locally, SSLI belongs to the Private School Athletic Association (PSAA) and Metropolitan Yeshiva High School Athletic League (MYHSAL) and The Long Island Athletic Association of Independent Schools (LIAAIS). We also compete against teams from other leagues, and these are referred to as "non-league" opponents.

## **Program Goals:**

Though the unique nature of each sport dictates its specific objectives, all teams will attempt to:

- Emphasize the development of basic skills, appropriate attitudes, values and team concepts.
- Allow as many students as possible to participate and share the experience and benefits derived from team membership.
- Compete competitively with league and non-league opponents.

Participation at the Varsity level is generally limited to the most highly skilled players and those with the ability to interact constructively with other players for team success. The coaching staff will determine the level of play for each student-athlete (Varsity, Junior Varsity) based on what would be most beneficial to the development and progress of each player and team. It should be understood that playing time could be limited.

### **Procedures for Participation:**

- **Registration:**
  - Four weeks prior to the start of a sports season, student-athletes must be fully registered for school and for the sports team (registration form, health form, and payment in full) for the team or sport. Registration forms are available on the RenWeb parent portal.
  - There is a participation fee of \$125 per athlete, per season. Payment in full is required at the time of registration.
  - In the case of a student being cut from a team, the participation fee will be refunded in full prior to the start of the season.
  - If the athlete is medically unable to participate before the start of the season, the participation fee will be refunded.
  - Under all other circumstances, the participation fee is non-refundable.
- **Health and Medical:**
  - An up to date physical examination must be on file with the school nurse at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the season. ***If the physical examination expires in season, the student-athlete will need to provide an updated physical to the school nurse in order to resume participation. All physicals are valid for 12 months from the date of the physical.*** All physicals must be signed by a licensed health care provider.
  - Drug and Alcohol Policy is clearly defined in the Student-Parent handbook and it is expected that all student-athletes and parents review this policy.
  - SSLI satisfies all medical eligibility requirements and protocols of the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) and NYSAIS “Principles of

Best Practices for Athletics.”

- **Academic Performance:**

- Students must be receiving grades of C or higher in all courses in order to participate on a team.
- If, during the course of a season, an athlete’s grades drop below a C in one or more courses, the student will be put on academic probation. Return to team play will only be permitted with the permission of the classroom teacher(s) that the student has satisfied all requirements to resume a grade of C or higher.

**Comportment and Behavior:**

- Any student who is involved in a violation of SSLI rules and regulations resulting in a suspension from school will be disqualified from practice and play for the duration of the suspension. Multi-day suspensions may result in a violation of the attendance policy, and therefore, may result in dismissal from the team.
- Any student who is found to be involved with drugs, alcohol, cyber-bullying, harassment, hazing or any criminal activity inside or outside of school will result in dismissal from the team.

## SSLI Athletic Team Information

### **Athletic Offerings:**

#### **Fall Sports**

The fall season begins the last week of August and ends in late October. Varsity teams that qualify for the postseason tournament may participate into the month of November. Informational meetings will be held in June. The following sports compete in the Fall:

- Coed HS Soccer
- Girls Volleyball (Varsity)
- X-Country
- Coed MS Soccer
- Girls Tennis

#### **Winter Sports**

The winter season begins the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in November and ends in late February. Varsity teams that qualify for the post-season tournament may be participating into March. Informational meetings will be held in October.

- Girls Basketball (Varsity)
- Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV)
- Boys Floor Hockey (Varsity)
- MS Boys Basketball
- MS Girls Basketball

#### **Spring Sports**

The spring season begins the third Monday of March and ends in late May. Varsity teams that qualify for the post-season tournament may be participating into June. Informational meetings will be held in February.

- Girls Softball (Varsity)
- Boys Tennis (Varsity)
- Coed Golf (Varsity)
- Ultimate Frisbee
- MS Girls Softball
- Boys Volleyball

## **Levels of Play:**

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

At the entry level for Upper School athletics, athletes and their parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Developing fundamental skills
- Providing equal practice opportunities for all participants
- Having the coach's evaluation of an athlete's attitude, skills, and team role determine game time, working toward equitable playing time for all participants
- Learning the rules of the game
- Developing an orientation toward and appreciation for team effort in each athlete
- Demonstrating sportsmanship and fair play
- Developing the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition
- Prioritizing skill and character development over winning

### JUNIOR VARSITY:

This is a transitional level for high school athletics, and athletes and parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Reinforcing and refining fundamental skills.
- Having the coach's evaluation of an athlete's attitude, skills, and team role determine game time
- Demonstrating sportsmanship and fair play
- Developing more sophisticated athletic strategies
- Specifically defining an individual athlete's role within the team concept
- Refining and reinforcing the concepts of commitment and team play
- Focusing on physical conditioning and development
- Developing the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition
- Prioritizing skill and character development over winning

### VARSIITY

At the highest level of athletic competition in high school athletics, athletes and parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized

- Developing a high level of proficiency in the physical skills of the sport
- Having the coach's evaluation of an athlete's attitude, skills, and team role determine playing time
- Developing sophisticated strategy, situation analysis, and other mental aspects of the sport
- Specifically defining an individual athlete's role within the team concept
- Fostering maximum commitment to the athletic team
- Understanding and valuing the physical conditioning components of one's sport
- Understanding the importance of individual sacrifice for the good of the team
- Winning within the rules of sportsmanship and fair play.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by members of our coaching staff that may include which athletes should start a contest, which athlete should play at what position, and the amount of playing time an athlete will be given. Only members of our coaching staff make these very difficult coaching decisions after weighing a considerable number of factors. Generally, the most competitive, skilled team members will play the major portion of contests; however, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes. These athletes must work as hard as they can to help make their respective teams as competitive as possible and be ready at all times to step forward to compete. They must also demonstrate the perseverance and commitment to strive to advance to a starting role.

### **Player Selection and Tryout Procedures:**

Here at SSLI we strive to include every student who wishes to play a sport. We will try to accommodate all students but because of safety concerns and coach to student ratio we may need to hold tryouts and cut players for teams that exceed the minimum number of players (see list below). Every coach will have and clarify his/her expectations for their players at the start of each sport season. It is the duty of the student to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can fulfill these expectations. Please note that a student athlete participating in any sport must have at least 8 days of practice before competing in an official game. For this reason, an athlete will not be allowed to join a team after its third official practice without the approval of the Athletic Director and Coach. Switching sports is also not allowed after the first contest.

The coaching staff of each sport has the sole responsibility for selecting members of the team, determining the level of play, and apportioning the amount of playing time for each student athlete. **SSLI will not field teams if there is not a minimum number of fully registered players needed for that particular sport.** Here is the following minimum and maximum number of fully registered players needed for each sport offered at SSLI:

Soccer	15 minimum	18 maximum
Tennis	9 minimum	11 maximum
Golf	5 minimum	8 maximum
Basketball	10 minimum	14 maximum
Softball	12 minimum	15 maximum
Ultimate	11 minimum	14 maximum
X- Country	5 minimum	10 maximum

Volleyball 9 minimum 14 maximum  
Floor Hockey 11 minimum 16 maximum

### **Commitment:**

Each member of an athletic team MUST:

- Commit to being present at all team activities, including try-outs, practices, meetings, awards night and contests/games with other schools.
- Dedicate himself/herself to becoming an excellent team member and school citizen.
- Strive to continually improve as an athlete.
- Demonstrate pride in team performance and in himself/herself as members of a team.

### **Game/Practice Sessions:**

Game and Practice schedules for each season will be published at least one month prior to the start of each season. Participation in all practices and games is mandatory. Practices are held daily for approximately 1.5 to 2.5 hours, or as appropriate to the activity. Some practices may be held on Sundays. Most weekly practice sessions do not begin before 3:30 PM. Practice and game schedules include the days immediately before and after school vacations. Plan to participate at least 4 days a week during the season.

### **Absence Policy:**

Attendance for practices and games is mandatory. Athletes may not miss more than 1 game or 2 practices over the course of a season.

Unexcused absences from practices may jeopardize retaining a position on the team, an opportunity to earn an award, participation certificate and/or playing time at the coaches' discretion.

Excused absences from practices may impact position on the team and playing time, not as a punitive measure, but for the safety of that individual, fairness to the rest of the team, and strategic reasons.

### **Team Captains:**

Captains are elected by team members and/or appointed by coaches. Prior to the selection, coaches will inform the team members of the selection criteria and obligations of the position. The position of team captain or officer is one of honor, leadership, and responsibility. As a result, students serving in that capacity are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school. Any student who is involved in a violation of SSLI rules and regulations resulting in a suspension from school, or any student who is found to be involved with drugs, alcohol, cyber-bullying, harassment, hazing or any criminal activity outside of school will lose the ability to serve as captain or to be appointed or elected to the position of captain of any school sponsored team for

the period of one calendar year. Any sitting captain of the SSLI team will have that position rescinded and will be ineligible to serve for a period of one calendar year.

## **SSLI Criteria for Athletic Honors and Awards:**

To be considered for a team award presented by the coach, a student must:

- Display upright conduct and a spirit of fair play at all times.
- Exhibit respect for school personnel, coaches, game officials, and opponents.
- Abide by the rules and regulations set forth in the SSLI Student Handbook.
- Return all equipment at the completion of the season
- Meet criteria established by the coach.
- Finish the season as a member in good standing on his/her team, which includes being academically eligible.

Honors such as ALL-STAR selection are awarded to SSLI students from time to time by the PSAA and other organizations outside of the school. It must be understood that while coaches may nominate students for some of these awards, they have no control over the final selection.

### **Annual Sports Awards Night.**

**Player Awards** - SSLI selects 2 student-athletes per team to receive the *MVP Award* and *Coaches Award*, which are presented at an end of year ceremony. Receiving these two awards is an honor reserved for those student athletes who have demonstrated excellence in performance and the commitment and sacrifice appropriate for membership on a school athletic team.

**Manager Awards** - As an integral, non-playing member of a team, managers may also be recognized for the valuable role they play. In order to be considered, managers must:

- Adhere to all general rules and regulations of athletes.
- Fulfill all the duties as outlined by the coach.

## **Conflict Resolution:**

Athletic involvement can be highly emotional and issues about playing time, team selection, honors and awards can arise. It is very important that these issues be addressed as soon as possible, and as directly as possible, so that they can be resolved promptly. The following model will be used when a problem arises.

### **STEP ONE: Personal Contact between Student-Athlete and Coach**

As a general rule, the issue should be presented as soon as possible to the coach by the *individual* student-athlete. If personal contact is not practical, a student-athlete may ask his/her team captain to talk with the coach. If these recommended routes are not *successful*, the coach should be contacted by the student-athlete's parent(s) at an appropriate time. Times to be avoided are:



- Either prior to or immediately after a competition
- During a practice session
- During a time when other students may be present or when it may be readily apparent to others that a discussion is taking place
- At a time when it is apparent that there would not be sufficient time to provide for a complete discussion

Usually the best solution is to ask the coach either over the phone, via email or in person if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. A parent or student-athlete could also contact the coach via the Athletic Office. **It is strongly recommended that the student-athlete join their parent(s) at this meeting to ensure that all sides of the issue can be thoroughly discussed.**

### **STEP TWO: Personal Contact Between Coach, Student-Athlete and Athletic Director**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the student-athlete and/or parent(s) should contact the Athletic Director. As a courtesy, the coach should be informed that this contact is being made. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all concerning parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. It is very important for all student-athletes and their parent(s) to know that any comments, concerns, or **issues raised to the athletic director will be addressed with the coach.** Issues concerning coaching personnel may or may not be communicated to others.

### **STEP THREE: Student-Athlete – Administration Contact**

If there is not a satisfactory resolution, the student-athlete and/or parent(s) should contact the High School Principal. As a courtesy, the Athletic Director should be informed that this contact is being made. While there is no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

## **Sportsmanship Policy:**

SSLI expects all parties present at a contest to display the highest level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect at all times. SSLI reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation or suspend (for up to one calendar year) any player, team, coach, or school official determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. Spectators who do not adhere to standards of good sportsmanship may be asked to leave the contest and/or be prohibited from future contests. If you are not sure what details good sportsmanship, please follow this simple rule: Cheer for your own team, but do not belittle opposing teams and officials.

*Three important NYS AIS Rules pertaining to student-athletes should be noted:*

1. A player “thrown out” of a game shall, at a minimum, miss the next game.
2. A player “thrown out” of two games during the same season is disqualified for one full calendar yr.
3. Striking or assaulting an official results in disqualification for one full year.

## **School Athletic Equipment Policy:**

Students are responsible for and expected to maintain proper care of all equipment issued to them. Students are responsible for payment of any lost, stolen or damaged items. Each item not returned will be assessed at a rate comparable to the current replacement cost. All equipment is to be returned at the completion of the season. Grades will be withheld for those who do not return or pay for lost/damaged equipment. Additionally, those student athletes will not be allowed to participate in another sport. Student-athletes are not to wear uniforms, either practice or game, at any time other than those allowed by specified team regulations.

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## **Transportation Policy:**

When SSLI provides transportation to and from athletic events, student-athletes are *encouraged* to ride that transportation. The members of the athletic staff feel it is in the best interest of team unity that everyone travel together and share the game experience. As the “guardian” during these trips, the athletic staff must be able to account for the whereabouts of all student-athletes and ensure their safety. It is expected that our student-athletes will conduct themselves appropriately while on bus transportation. Any misconduct will result in a penalty including and up to dismissal if warranted. Student-athletes will be responsible for any damages to bus property and subsequent costs to repair or replace.

In the event that parents wish to pick up their child or have their child picked up by another parent, it is required, barring unforeseen circumstances, that the parent/guardian provide written notice to the coach requesting the exception 24 hours in advance. A parent/guardian must also present himself/herself to a member of the coaching staff informing the coach that his/her child is leaving with him/her. Student-athletes may then ride with their parent/guardian. Student-athletes may drive to games or practices only with permission from the AD and with written permission from parents. Student-athletes may not ride with other student-athletes unless they have permission from the AD and written permission from all parents involved.

## **Athletic Code of Conduct:**

### Daily Attendance:

Any student-athlete absent from school the day of a scheduled game or practice session will not be allowed to participate in that game or practice. A student must be in school for a minimum of 3 ½ hours in order to participate. Students who cut class or do not fulfill their school responsibilities will also be ruled ineligible for participation.

### Students in “Good Standing”:

All athletes must be a student in “good standing” in order to participate in athletics. “Good standing” is defined but not limited to:

- Adherence to school rules that regulate behavior and attendance
- Respectful behavior towards all members of the school community

A student is considered not to be in good standing during the season of play/activity if he/she has a suspension, or class cuts. A student found not to be in good standing may be denied the privilege of participating in an interscholastic sport or extracurricular activity.

#### Academic Duty:

Students will plan their time so that they will devote sufficient energy to their studies to ensure grades representing their true abilities.

#### Taunting:

Taunting, either as an active team member or as a spectator, at a sporting event is forbidden and may lead to suspension or elimination from the team.

#### Honesty and Integrity:

Honesty is expected at all times. Stealing and lying will not be tolerated and, subject to due process, will result in immediate dismissal from the team. Any individual who is found in possession of another individual’s personal property will forfeit their privilege to participate on any athletic team for at least one full year. Participation on an athletic team after the one-year suspension will be contingent upon the outcome of a hearing comprised of administration and the Athletic Director.

#### Representation:

Student Athletes are considered representatives of the school at all practices and contests and events. Students will conduct themselves properly when traveling as they represent the community, school and team. Profanity will be discouraged.

#### Respecting the Spirit of the Game:

Students will realize that officials do not lose a game, but are there for the purpose of ensuring the game they are playing is a fair and safe contest for all participants. The officials will be shown courteous respect at all times. Student-athletes will also not employ illegal tactics to gain an advantage.

#### Respect for the Coaching Staff:

Students will understand that their coaches have their best interests in mind as they plan and guide the athletic team. They will obey the specific rules of the coach.

Respect for school buildings and grounds:

Students will understand that damage to the school building, grounds, or school equipment will result in immediate suspension from the team. The length of such suspension will depend on the severity of the damage as determined by the Athletic Director and Coach. Please note, cleats are not to be worn in the building.

**FINAL MESSAGE TO ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES, SPECTATORS AND PARENTS:**

We urge you to support SSLI Athletics by:

- Attending sporting events.
- Lending positive support to our teams and coaches.
- Encouraging all players without regard to their role on the team.
- Helping other spectators and parents to maintain an appropriate sportsmanlike attitude.
- Showing respect for the authority of the game officials.
- Enjoying the SSLI athletic experience

***GO LIONS!***