



MERRYHILL MIDTOWN
2024-2025

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MERRYHILL MIDTOWN ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Merryhill Midtown participates in the Parochial Athletic League (PAL). The mission of the Parochial Athletic League is an integral part of the educational mission of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Sacramento. The PAL is dedicated to human development, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, example, and athletic competition.

Sports are typically played in the following seasons:

	Fall (August - November)	Winter (December - February)	Spring (March - May)
Boys	Cross country (5th - 8th) Flag football (6th - 8th)	Basketball (5th - 8th) Little Dribblers Basketball (1st - 4th)	Golf (5th - 8th) Track (5th - 8th) Volleyball (6th - 8th)
Girls	Cross country (5th - 8th) Volleyball (5th - 8th)	Basketball (5th - 8th) Little Dribblers Basketball (1st - 4th)	Flag football (6th - 8th) Golf (5th - 8th) Track (5th - 8th)

Playing Levels

- Junior Varsity teams are made up of 5th & 6th grade students.
- Varsity teams that can be made up of 6th, 7th & 8th grade students. The only exception is golf where 5th graders may participate on the school team at the Varsity level.
- 1st - 4th grade students may only participate in the Little Dribbler Program regardless of ability or experience.
- At the beginning of a season we will hold tryouts/skill assessment for basketball, volleyball, and flag football to determine the student assignment and the appropriate level of play for the teams, competitive or recreational.
- Cross-country, track & golf will not have tryouts/skill assessment as there only be will be one school team.



Required Paperwork

As is required for all sports players, athletes will need to fill out the PAL Medical & Emergency form. All students that plan to participate in PAL Sports will also need a new signed PAL Doctor's Medical Release form for the 2024 - 25 school year.

1st - 4th grade students are eligible to participate in the Little Dribblers basketball program which runs during January & February and also require the PAL Medical & Emergency form and a signed PAL Doctor's Medical Release form for the 2024 - 25 school year.

All required paperwork and fees should be turned in at the Merryhill Midtown front desk by the stated deadline. Complete paperwork and fee is required for participation.

- [PAL Medical & Emergency form](#) (completed by parents/guardians)
- [PAL Doctor's Medical Release form](#) (signed by Doctor)
- Signed Athletic Handbook form
- Complete electronic uniform order & fees form
- Select desired method of payment for uniform & PAL fees

PAL Medical & Emergency form (linked above)

Parents must complete this form which gives information about medical conditions, insurance and authorization for consent of treatment of a minor. This form is required to be with the coach at all practice and games in the event of a medical emergency. No games/matches may be played without a signed Athletics – PAL Medical & Emergency form.

PAL Doctor's Medical Release form (linked above)

Each school will be responsible for and monitor Doctor's Medical Release forms (not to be confused with the Athletics – PAL Medical & Emergency form) for each student participating in PAL sports. These must be verified and kept in school files.

Sports Uniforms

At the beginning of each sport season families will be sent an electronic order form. This form must be completed for every student, even if they are not purchasing any items, and indicated the desired method of payment for uniform & PAL fees. Players may use uniforms from participation in prior years given that they are unchanged and there are no duplicate numbers. In the sports where the school own uniforms these will be loaned out to the students at the beginning of the season and returned at the end of the season. Parents will sign a uniform loan form.



Eligibility Requirements

Academics:

1. At the end of each progress report or trimester report card, students below a cumulative GPA of 2.0, and/or a failing grade in any class (including specialty classes), may be placed on academic probation.
2. If player is on academic probation during a sports season, the student will not be allowed to participate in practice or games for a 1 week period. If student has improved their GPA to meet the minimum requirements at the end of the week period, the student will be allowed to resume participation in practices and games as long as the minimum GPA requirements are maintained.
3. If student does not meet the minimum GPA requirements on a trimester report card, the student will not be allowed to sign up for a sport for the following trimester.
4. Grade checks will be completed each Friday for eligibility on the Monday of the following week.
5. While on academic probation, a student should use practice and game times for homework completion.

Attendance:

1. Players may not participate in a game or practice on a day when they have been absent from school for more than half of the school day, or if they are ill. The same requirement for returning to school applies to attending sports: a student must be fever-free with improved symptoms for 24 hours without medication.
2. If a student is sent home early or suspended, whether “in-school” or “out of school,” they may not attend or participate in a game or practice on the day of the suspension.
3. The school reserves the right to remove students with behavioral issues from sports teams should the behaviors be severe, frequent, or ongoing.
4. Outside of these policies, regular and consistent practice attendance is expected.

Behavior Expectations:

1. For detailed behavior expectations, please reference the Student Code of Conduct in our [Family Guidebook](#).
2. Violations of student behavior expectations may have an impact on players participation in after school sports. Consequences will be at the discretion of the coach in partnership with school administration.
3. Please note that youth sports help students develop resilience and emotional regulation because they provide a structured environment where kids can experience both wins and losses, learn to cope with setbacks, develop a growth mindset, and manage their emotion



in a challenging setting, thereby building mental toughness and the ability to bounce back from adversity in various aspects of life. As such, students will be supported with the natural emotional challenges that arise during sports, but those behaviors that violate the student Code of Conduct will not be tolerated.

Requirements for Parents

- Parents are responsible for transportation for their children for all games and/or practices.
- Parent/guardians are encouraged to help at games/events with scorebook keeping as needed.

The PAL exists to provide the students in our member schools with the opportunity to participate in athletics as part of the whole educational experience within the school curriculum. As such, we expect the parents to be positive role models of support while they are involved in PAL athletics. As members of the Play Like A Champion Today, we ask that parents support their children role modeling positive behaviors using the **GROW Approach**:

- **Goals** Encourage individual goals and provide opportunities to try new things.
- **Relationships** Provide unconditional love and model positive relationships and respect for others.
- **Ownership** Allow children to play, have fun and have opportunities for responsible decision making.
- **Winning** Support children win or lose, emphasizing good play over winning.

Conflict Resolution Policy

In the event a player or parent has a concern with a coach, the player and parent(s) will take the following steps after an initial “**24 Hour Cooling Off**” period.

1. The player and the parent(s) will contact the coach, who will make an appointment to meet with the player and parent(s) to discuss the concern. This meeting will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time for both parties involved.
2. If the concern is not resolved at this meeting, the player and the parent(s) will ask the Athletic Director to facilitate a resolution.
3. Should additional support be necessary, an administrator will meet with the parties involved and this will be scheduled by the Athletic Director.

Requirements for Coaches - Code of Conduct

We believe athletic programs should promote life skills and good character, emphasizing trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. As a Coach and/or volunteer, you are expected to support these core values and act in accordance with the following:



1. **Trustworthiness:** Be honest and reliable in all commitments. Act with integrity and model ethical behavior for students.
2. **Respect:** Treat everyone respectfully, including athletes, coaches, officials, and other parents. Refrain from taunting, profanity, or any disrespectful conduct.
3. **Responsibility:** Support the educational and character-development goals of the program. Help create a safe and positive environment for all athletes.
4. **Fairness:** Ensure fair treatment of all participants and maintain an open mind.
5. **Caring:** Prioritize the safety, health, and well-being of all student-athletes.
6. **Citizenship:** Encourage good sportsmanship and adherence to the spirit of the rules.

In addition to the items listed above, all parents and coaches are required to follow the Parent Code of Conduct outlined in our [Family Guidebook](#).

Additional Expectations - Volunteer Handbook:

Coaches and/or volunteers are expected to be punctual and dependable, respecting and supporting the decisions of coaches and officials. They should foster teamwork and discourage selfish or reckless behavior while promoting a positive, drug and alcohol free, and healthy environment for student-athletes. Concerns should be addressed constructively through appropriate school channels, avoiding any actions that could reflect poorly on the school. Volunteers must maintain proper boundaries, ensuring their conduct always upholds the values of integrity and respect. **All parent volunteers and coaches are required to review and sign the Volunteer and Athletic Handbooks as part of their commitment.** The **handbook** will be sent to you (coaches/volunteers) by email and outlines detailed policies and guidelines.

Additional Requirements - Trainings and Certifications

- **NFHS Fundamental of Coaching course:** This NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course provides a unique student-centered curriculum for interscholastic teacher/coaches, assisting them in creating a healthy and age-appropriate athletic experience that supports the educational mission of our nation's schools.
- **OR Play Like a Champion Today:** *Play Like a Champion* coaching philosophy involves protecting the joyful dimension of sports as competitive play and the educational dimension of sports as fostering children's physical, social, emotional and moral development
- **Concussion in Sports:** This course highlights the impact of sports-related concussion on athletes, teaches how to recognize a suspected concussion, and provides protocols to manage a suspected concussion with steps to help players return to play safely after a concussion
- **Sudden Cardiac Arrest:** This course will help you learn and recognize the warning signs and symptoms of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.
- **SAFE Environment:** Details of SAFE Environment certificate can be found **here**



- **Bloodborne Pathogens:** This comprehensive course covers information on bloodborne pathogens and other highly contagious skin infections and infectious diseases.
- **Fingerprint clearance:** All PAL athletic directors and coaches are required to be fingerprinted to the DOJ level. Results are sent directly to the PAL Diocese of Sacramento.

To strengthen our community, we welcome parents to become actively involved in our athletics program as volunteer coaches, assistant coaches, or in other supporting roles. All lead coaches are required to complete comprehensive training before taking on the responsibility of coaching a team. This ensures that our student-athletes receive guidance from well-prepared and knowledgeable mentors.

In our commitment to providing a high-quality and enriching athletic experience, coaching assignments are determined based on a combination of factors, including prior experience as an educator or coach, as well as feedback from students and families.

We value the contributions of our parent volunteers and are grateful for their dedication to fostering a supportive and dynamic athletic environment.

More information can be found at the following websites

- **PAL website:** <https://sites.google.com/view/palscd/home>
- **Merryhill Midtown website:** <https://www.merryhillschool.com/elementary/sacramento/midtown/>
- **Student/Parent handbook:** <https://www.merryhillschool.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/07/Merryhill-Midtown-2024-2025-Family-Handbook.pdf>
- **Midtown Family Resources:** <https://www.merryhillschool.com/elementary/sacramento/midtown/parents/family-resources/>

Questions? Please contact Midtown Athletic Director, Paul Kennedy, at paul.kennedy@merryhillschool.com



**MERRYHILL MIDTOWN
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

I have read and understand the guidelines/policies stated in the Merryhill Midtown Athletic Handbook. I agree to follow the guidelines/policies as outlined.

Student Name (Printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Coach/Volunteer Signature: _____

Date: _____