



Braves Football Handbook 2026

Head Coach:	Coach Torma	Jr. High Coach:	Coach Usher
Assistant Coach:	Coach Ward	Jr. High Coach:	Coach Jantz
Assistant Coach:	Coach Davis	Elm. Coach:	Coach Squibs
Assistant Coach:	Coach Gonska	Elm. Coach:	Coach (Dean)Torma

Varsity Schedule 2025

Game 1	Thursday - September 3	Senior Night vs Maple Lake - 6 pm
Game 2	Friday - September 11	@ Frazee - 7 pm
Game 3	Friday - September 18	@ Lake Park-Audubon - 7 pm
Game 4	Friday - September 25	Home vs Parker Prairie - 7 pm
Game 5	Friday - October 2	@ Wadena Deer Creek - 7 pm
Game 6	Friday - October 9	Homecoming vs New York Mills - 7 pm
Game 7	Wednesday- October 14	Parents Night vs Otter-Tail County - 6 pm
Game 8	Tuesday- October 20	@ Breckenridge - 6 pm

Introduction

This handbook guides you as a student-athlete representing our team and Menahga High School. The in-season schedule will test you to the fullest extent. It will take loyalty, teamwork, discipline, and a tremendous amount of commitment to accomplish our goals. The fact that you are a member of the Menahga football team automatically puts you in the spotlight. Fellow students and teachers will closely watch your actions. You are expected to always be well-behaved, both on and off the field, as you are representatives of the Menahga Braves football program, players, and coaches.

Coaches Mission

Mission

The purpose for the team is to instill competition, accountability, learning commitment and teamwork skills to all of the athletes we work with. These athletes learn valuable lessons every day in practice and during games.

Our purpose is to develop responsible young adults. Our goal this season is to develop a winning, growth mindset that is focused on the process of getting better with every rep at practice and in games, rather than the outcome.

Practice Expectations:

The first two weeks of practice, August 17th-28th, will go from 5:00-7:15 pm.

Starting August 31st, practice will go from 3:30-5:45 Monday through Thursday. Players are expected to be dressed, taped(if needed), and at our determined starting location at or before practice start time.

Game Day:

Players will be appointed team-issued travel suits to wear on game days as well as on the bus to away games

Cell Phones/Devices

Away Games: Captains will decide if phones will be used on the bus

Cell phone use is NOT allowed in locker rooms.

*** Social Media***

Rule 1- Don't do stupid things

Rule 2- If you break Rule 1, don't record it.

Rule 3- If you break rules one and two, **absolutely do not post it**

Failure to abide by these rules will result in consequences deemed necessary by coaching staff and administration if needed

Communication:

We will do our best as coaches to communicate information to players and parents as soon as possible. Many times, dates and details are outlined on the schedule, but if there are changes, the coaches will let the players know about those changes as soon as possible. We will be using the "Teamreach" app. Please get on this, players and parents. Sign up with coaches as soon as possible!

Excused Absences:

Attendance at practice and games is mandatory, only extenuating circumstances will be counted as an excused absence. Other school activities are excused. If a player gets prior approval from a school administrator (principal, AD), they may miss part of the school day and still practice that evening. Reasons for missing a part of the day that would constitute an excused absence would be a funeral, appointment, emergency at home. If a player misses part of the school day and has not informed a coach or administrator of the absence in advance, the absence will be considered as unexcused, and they will not be able to practice or play that evening.

Absences/ Late to join

If a player plans to miss a practice Monday-Thursday, they must contact their head coach (Coach Torma or Coach Usher) in advance for it to be excused. If no contact is made, the practice will be deemed unexcused, and the player will miss a drive of the next game.

Any player coming out for football after the first 3 days must have 13 practices to play in their first game.

Late to practice: Any player who is going to be late to practice must communicate with a coach at least 30 minutes prior to practice start time. Anyone late without notice will do 100 Yards of bear crawls.

Suspensions:

If a player is suspended OOS or ISS from school, he will be suspended for the next Varsity football game.

No Secrets

If parents wish to discuss their son, he will be present. If an issue needs to be discussed, a parent and the player need to be present.

Riding the Bus Home After Away Games:

All JV and Varsity players are expected to ride the bus home after games. If there is a situation when a player needs to ride home with a parent from a game, it will be pre-approved (Before the bus leaves for the game) family emergency, other school activity, the player will be excused to leave with a parent only.

JH players may ride home with their parents.

24 Hour Rule:

After games, please refrain from approaching a coach to discuss an issue regarding your player, the game, or anything related to football. Instead, please wait until the next day to contact the coach. Often after games, the adrenaline is flowing for all involved, and discussing the situation the next day is more beneficial for everyone. Also, please contact a coach at school via phone or email. Do not call a coach at home, unless it is an emergency.

Chain of Command:

Per Menahga Public School policy - players and parents are expected to follow the proper chain of command when dealing with a problem or concern:

- *Player talks to the coach at their level (JH, JV, V)
- *Player talks to the varsity coach
- *Player and parent talk to the varsity coach
- *Player and parent and coach talk to the athletic director

Playing Time:

One of the challenging tasks for a coach is determining playing time. All players should work hard at improving their skills, trying to earn playing time to help the team win. As players progress through each level, the competition improves, and some players find it hard to keep

up. We do not promise playing time, but rather we believe that playing time should be earned through hard work and consistent effort.

Playing Policies:

Junior High Teams – all participants will receive playing time. However, *equal* playing time is **not** a guarantee. Ultimately, it is based on the participant's attitude, work ethic, attendance/participation, and skill level.

Junior Varsity and Varsity – At this level, playing time is **not** guaranteed. All participants need to earn their spots, and then continue working hard to keep them

Team Morale

As a member of this team, we expect you to go along with what is best for the team. If anyone has a problem with anything related to the team, please address it directly to the coach so that we can correct it. Nobody will be allowed into the locker room before or after a game unless the invitation comes directly from the coach or they are directly associated with the school or the team. We will meet as a team after every game. After we meet as a team, players can talk with family and friends.

Captains:

We coaches believe that captains should be people who go above and beyond the normal standard not just as players, but as individuals as well. There will be 1-4 varsity captains depending on the season. Captain eligibility begins at the start of June as players will need to have participated in at least 30 of our offseason events to accumulate offseason points, which include workouts, volunteer events, and practices/scrimmages. However, obtaining 30 points does not automatically make you a captain. Coaches will choose at least one captain at the end of summer, and the others will be chosen after the first two weeks of the season. They will be chosen at the coaching staff's discretion, but criteria include playing significant varsity time the year before and being willing to assist in all team activities. Captains are leaders of the team and should be looked up to. Captains will be athletes who are respected by the team, the school, and work extremely hard. Captains may have their role removed if they do not keep up with these expectations throughout the year.

Equipment:

This is the first year of using our offseason accountability to determine equipment handout. Along with going towards captain eligibility, offseason points also allow you to pick your equipment before other teammates. Ex. - If a freshman comes in with 10 points from summer activities and a senior comes in with 9, the freshman will be picking out his equipment (Jersey #, helmet, shoulder pads, etc.) before that senior. If a senior and a freshman both come into

August with 3 points each, then seniority will be used as the tiebreaker, allowing the senior to pick ahead of the freshman.

Team Rules:

- Follow all Minnesota State High School League Conduct
- Follow all School rules
- BE ON TIME. For example, the bus leaves at 3:30. You should be on the bus at 3:29, not in the locker room.

Failure to follow team rules will result in consequences determined by the coach. Extra running and/or loss of playing time. Failure to follow School and MSHSL conduct will result in discipline determined by the Menahga Public Schools and the Minnesota State High School League.



Lettering - coaches will evaluate 2 things for players on the Varsity team

1. Student athlete:

Did you start and finish the season in good standing with the team?
You didn't quit, no substance violations, no sitting due to bad grades.

2. Community member:

A player must accumulate 5 in-season commitment points. You get a commitment point for going above and beyond for the betterment of the football team and/or community. The timeline to gain points is from August 17th until the end of the season. Examples below include but are not limited to-

Cleaning road ditch, Salt delivery, Volunteering at K-6 grade football, Volunteering at concession stand, volunteering for split the pot, getting pre-approval for any other community service project helping a neighbor, volunteering to help the elderly, the list goes on and on.



**MENAHGA BRAVES FOOTBALL
PLAYER/PARENT CONTRACT**

2026



I acknowledge that I have accepted the invitation to be part of the Menahga Braves Football program. By accepting this invitation, I agree to abide by all rules that my coach puts in effect. I acknowledge that if I choose not to follow all rules of the program, that my membership in this program can be revoked.

As a member of the Menahga Braves Football Program,

I agree to the following:

1. I will do my very best at all times, in practice and games, to make myself and my teammates the best that we can possibly be. Nothing less than my best is acceptable.
2. I will encourage and support my teammates and underclassmen. I will refrain from being vocally critical or demeaning.
3. I will accept my role on this team and do my best to fulfill the expectations of my role to its fullest. If I am unhappy about my role on this team, then I will work harder to improve
4. I will communicate my problems or concerns with my coach. I will do this in a mature and appropriate manner at an appropriate time. (Never during any practice or team meeting, never immediately before or after a game.)
5. I will follow all the team rules/procedures listed in the handbook.

I agree to these as well as any other rules that my coaches put in place. I agree that I am aware of all of these rules and understand that there will be consequences if I do not follow them.

Players Name (print): _____
Player Signature (sign) _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____
Parent/Guardian Signature (sign) _____ Date: _____