MENAHGA BRAVES

BOYS BASKETBALL HANDBOOK

MENAHGA
BASKETBALL

2026-2027

Head Coach: Cory Kapphahn
Assistant Coaches: John Hedstrom, Isaiah Usher

Introduction

This player handbook has been compiled to help you become better acquainted with our philosophies and procedures regarding the Menahga Braves Boys Basketball program. After reading the content of this handbook, you will know what is expected of you as a **member of our program.** We realize that you have individual rights and therefore you will always be given the opportunity to make your own decisions, however, you must also understand that you have responsibilities when it **comes to the team**. With this understood, you as a player must be willing to adjust your behavior to the policies of the coaches, and school district. This handbook guides you as a student-athlete representing **our team** and **Menahga High School.** Our hope is to build and maintain a long-lasting tradition in Menahga. You can be a part of this tradition as much, or as little as you want to be. **The in-season schedule will fully test you.** 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 Boys Basketball team automatically puts you in the spotlight. Fellow students, teachers, as well as those who may be antagonistic towards athletes will closely scrutinize your actions. You are not only expected to follow the guidelines set by the coaches, MSHSL, and school district, you are also expected to set a proper example always. **On and off the court, you are representatives of the Menahga Boys Basketball Program.**

Coach Kapphahn's Philosophy

Using the game of basketball as an extension of the classroom, to teach student-athletes the game of basketball, work ethic, discipline, teamwork, leadership, and developing a successful, consistent program at all levels. Creating a culture that student-athletes, school faculty, and the community are proud of, excited about, and want to be a part of. I am a firm believer in a strong and consistent elementary program to build the basic skills needed to be successful in the game. This includes introducing kids in kindergarten to the elementary basketball program, striving to create positive, impactful relationships where all players are valued at all levels. I want every athlete in the program to know that it is not the win-loss record that counts, but the dedication, heart, and effort put in to create a TEAM and be a part of something bigger than yourself, which will begin to translate to wins.

You are a student first, grades must be maintained at an acceptable level throughout the season! You not only lose playing/practice time, you hurt your team by not doing the work in the classroom!

Practices

Players are expected to be dressed, taped (If needed) warmed up and ready to go before ***3:30***. We will try to use our time wisely and get our work done to be out of the gym by 5:30 every night after the first two weeks.

GAME DAY

Players should be either dressed up, or in team travel suits (whichever is determined by the captains.)

Players are expected to **stay hydrated** throughout the day.

Players and coaches should always have a water bottle on them throughout the day- game and practice days!

C- Team members need to be dressed and ready by 4:35
JV- Team members go to locker room and dress at halftime of C game
Varsity- Team members will get dressed at halftime of JV game

During a game that a team member is not participating in (i.e. C-team player during Varsity game), players are sitting behind the bench and cell phones are NOT allowed. Watch the game, learn, and support teammates!

Cell Phones/Devices

- Home Games: keep them in your locker or backpack. If you need it for any (important) reason, you must ask your head coach first.
- Away Games: Keep your phone in your backpack. Talk to your teammates on the bus, keep your phone put away! If you need your phone for any (important) reason, you must inform one of the coaches (i.e. call/receive a call/message from parent).

**** Social Media****- No social media will be allowed on the bus, or locker room. Violations will result in consequences decided by Coach Kapphahn.

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, Coach Kapphahn will communicate with players and use the GroupMe app to communicate with all.

Academic Eligibility

All athletes must be passing all classes in order to play in an event.

Grade checks will be ***every-other Wednesday morning***. Any athlete that receives a failing grade on Wednesday morning grade check is then **ineligible for competition.**

In order to become eligible to play, athletes must get an eligibility card from Coach Kapphahn and the teacher for the failing class must sign off on the eligibility card to indicate good academic standing and the current grade. Once this signed card is turned in with a passing grade, the athlete will be **immediately eligible to compete in games again**.

*** All academic eligibility rules will follow the MHS Handbook ***

Attendance Policy

Attendance at practice and games is mandatory, and only extenuating circumstances will be counted as an excused absence. **Other school activities are excused.** Players must be in attendance for a full day of school to practice or play in a game. 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, etc. *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 in a game.*

Sickness

If a player is sick for any part of the school day it is strongly encouraged for them to stay home and get healthy, rather than introducing a bug to the team.

Riding Bus After Games

All players are expected and encouraged 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 (family emergency, other school activity, etc.), the player will be excused to leave with a parent only if a parent provides a ***written signature excusing the player to ride home with them.*** If a player is going to ride home with a parent of another player, there must be written permission from both sets of parents ***prior to 12:00pm on game day***. A player will NOT be allowed to ride home with anyone except a parent.

It is strongly encouraged that all athletes ride the bus.

24 Hour Rule

After games, please refrain from approaching or messaging/calling a coach to discuss an issue regarding your son, the game, or anything related to basketball. 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. Please do not call a coach at home, unless it is an emergency.

Chain of Command

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, C, JV, V)
*Player talks to the varsity coach
*Player and parent talks to the varsity coach
*Player and parent talks to the coach and athletic director

Non-Debatable Issues

Playing time, game strategy, scouting, and other personnel matters are decisions from the coaches, and these issues are not debatable.

Playing Time

One of the hardest jobs of a coach is determining playing time. All our players 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. Even though we do not promise playing time, here are three promises that we will make concerning players:

1. **We will not quit on any player.** It does not matter if a player plays every minute of the game, or no minutes in a game, we will not quit working to help that player improve.

2. **We will be honest with each player in our assessments of their skills**. The coaches will determine strengths and weaknesses of each player, and we will attempt to help the player improve weaknesses, while helping strengths to flourish.

3. **We will communicate as clearly as we can.** It is our job to communicate roles and information

According to the ISD #821 *Menahga High School Coaches Handbook:*

Playing Policies:

- Junior High Teams – At this level 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.

- C-Team – At this level each player will have an opportunity to play but playing time will ***not*** be equal. Players with better skills will be first to participate. Players need to work on improving their skills. 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 playing time. Players with the best skills will be the first to participate. Younger players will play in front of older players if their skills are better. Ultimately, it is based on the participants' attitude, work ethic, attendance/participation, and skill level.

Team Morale

There are going to be days and events throughout the season that you are not necessarily going to agree with each other. 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 team. Please leave the floor immediately after the game. Leave talking with friends until afterwards. We will have a team discussion after every game immediately!

Captains

I believe in having captains and feel they are a crucial part of the team. There will be 1-4 captains depending on the season. ***Criteria includes having varsity experience from the year before and be willing to assist in all team activities, including the elementary program. Captains are not only leaders of the team, but of the program. Captains will be athletes that are respected by the team and work extremely hard. Captains will be athletes that show their commitment to improvement by showing up in the off-season and leading by example. The coach has the right to remove any captain from their role if they are NOT living up to captain responsibilities.***

Captains Responsibilities:

- Helping younger players learn the plays and drills and leading by example.
- Relaying coaches' information on and off the court.
- Assisting in the elementary program
- Help to bring the team together/set up team building activities.
- Communicate with coaches concerns that may arise.

Stand up to and for your teammates. If a teammate is doing something that wouldn't follow the team expectations the captain needs to stand up to the person on the team and tell them that this is not acceptable and hurting the team. If a teammate needs help the captain should be the one there to give them a hand. Stand up and protect each other.

Team Managers

Managers must be approved by the coaching staff prior to the start of the season. We may add more managers for the playoffs. These managers will be athletes from the Menahga Boys Basketball Program.

Managers must check in with the coaching staff every day during the season.

Joining Late

A player may not join the team any later than **10 calendar days** from the first day of practice. The only exception will be a student/athlete moving into the district will be able to join.

Team Rules

Get along with teammates on and off the court. ***We are a FAMILY!*** Not everyone is best friends, but we get along and work together for the betterment of the TEAM!

- School comes FIRST. Everyone is expected to be a great Student-Athlete- In that order!
- Have a **POSITIVE** attitude!
- Practice is MANDATORY! If you are late or not present, it will be reflected in your playing time. The coach reserves the right to determine consequences for late/missed practice and playing time.
- **POSTITIVE BODY LAUNGUAGE! – (No eye rolls, shoulder shrugs.)**
- No Drama. Any drama that could affect the team must be dealt **with immediately**. Bus rides should be spent bonding with teammates before and after games.
- Follow all Minnesota State High School League Conduct rules
- Follow all School Conduct rules
- All players and coaches must have a water bottle with them throughout the day on ***game days*** and practice days.
- BE ON TIME! -- If you're not early, you're late! (Please be dressed/stretched and warmed up and ready to go by the designated time. **Example shoot around at 10:00, you should be stretched and ready to go by 10:00, not just pulling into the parking lot! *)*

IF YOU ARE LATE- YOU WILL NEED TO APOLOGIZE TO THE ENTIRE TEAM

- Players on the bench always need to have energy and be cheering on their teammates.
- All players on the bench will stand up when a player comes out of the game. The player coming out must give a high five **to every coach and player** before they have a seat.
- All Players must place their hand on their heart and respect the flag during the national anthem.

Failure to follow team rules will result in consequences determined by the coaching staff

Failure to follow MHS or MSHSL league rules will result in consequences determined by the Menahga High School Administration.

Summer Basketball

We will have many opportunities to better the team in the summer. I strongly believe that great teams are made during the offseason. If we are not practicing and improving our game our opponents are gaining ground on us and/or pulling away from us. Summer basketball is not mandatory but is highly recommended for team and skill development. I understand that there are summer vacations and other sport commitments, but to have a highly competitive basketball program we need to put in work in the summer.

MENAHGA BRAVES PLAYER/PARENT CONTRACT

2026-2027

I acknowledge that I have accepted the invitation to be part of the Menahga Braves Boys Basketball 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 Boys Basketball Program,
I agree to the following:

1. I will always do my very best during 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 always put the goals of **my team** ahead of my personal or statistical basketball goals.
3. I will encourage and support my teammates and underclassmen. I will refrain from being vocally critical or demeaning.
4. 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.*
5. I will always be honest with my coaches and teammates.
6. **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.)
7. **I will not engage or do anything that is detrimental to myself, my teammates, my basketball program, or my school.**
8. I will always be on time. (Ten minutes early is on time!)
9. 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 these rules and understand that there will be consequences if I do not follow them.

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____