



# Mahone Football



We welcome all players and parents to the Mahone Middle School Football Program. We are hopeful that this will be the most exciting and rewarding football season you've ever experienced. Our goal is to develop well-rounded young student-athletes. We will teach the fundamentals of football as well as the importance of education and teamwork. Our practice atmosphere will develop sound mind, body, and character while stressing the ideals of sportsmanship, scholarship, and physical fitness. Our program teaches lessons of value far beyond the playing days, such as self-discipline, teamwork, concentration, friendship, leadership, and good sportsmanship.

We, as coaches, will do our very best to ensure that each player is utilized to his or her utmost potential, and their talents are used to the team's best advantage. The team comes before the individual. Safety is our top concern. The exercises, drills, and team rules exist to help your child become physically and mentally fit for football. Each child is unique and will develop at his own pace. We will exercise their bodies and minds in an effort to develop the skills needed to play the game of football.

## **TEAM RULES**

1. Keep up with your school work. Poor grades in school will result in lost playing time.
2. Keep out of trouble. Inappropriate behavior will result in lost playing time and possible dismissal from the team.
3. Be at school and practice. If you don't practice, you don't play. If you're absent, the coaches will need communication from your parent. Missing practice will result in lost playing time.
4. What the coaches say goes. Back talk, profanity, or any form of disrespect will result in lost playing time and possible dismissal from the team.
5. Respect everyone. Your teammates are your teammates - they're doing their best. Any unnecessary aggression or violence towards a teammate, or an opponent, will result in lost playing time, possible dismissal from the team, and school consequences.
6. Take care of your equipment. Let the coaches know if your equipment needs repair. This is a safety issue.
7. Wear your mouthpiece when required and keep a spare. On game day, if a player draws a penalty for not having a mouthpiece in, that player will be benched.
8. Come to practice prepared to work hard - and play hard.
9. Learn the rules of the game - especially the safety rules. Players who draw flags for unsportsmanlike conduct, clipping, late hits, or other serious safety violations will be benched for the remainder of the game.
10. Know the names of the positions and their responsibilities. This will make you, and your teammates, better players.
11. Arrive on time for practices and games. Your responsibility is to be dressed and ready to go at the start time. Players arriving late will result in lost playing time.
12. Review the plays and formations before, during, and after practice. The short season makes it essential for each player to learn his/her responsibilities early and well.



## **GRADES**

Following the Mahone Football Team Rules, all athletes must be academically eligible to participate in the games. While we want all of our athletes to be able to play, athletes failing any class are ineligible and will not play. Grade reports (current quarter grade) will be run every Monday in advisory throughout the season. Players must be eligible on each Monday when the grade report is run to be able to play on Wednesday.

## **OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE**

Running is an everyday part of practice. On those few occasions when it is necessary to correct a player for a minor infraction, the player may have the opportunity to run additional laps, do pushups, up-downs, or similar exercise. This may be done at the end of practice or at the time of the infraction. For more serious incidents, a player may be removed from practice until picked up by a parent and may incur game suspension(s). We will follow the procedures outlined in the KUSD Athletic Code of Conduct.

## **FIELD POSITIONS**

During the first few weeks of practice, the coaches will decide the best position for each player. In general, the fastest kids play in the backfield on both offense and defense. The more heavily built kids tend to play on the line. Capabilities of the athletes will determine the positions they play.

A key thing to remember is the importance of the offensive line. Without a strong, motivated, and disciplined group of athletes, our offense will be ineffective. If we can't move the ball and score, we won't win games. It is important to understand that offensive lineman is a key position. More than any other athlete on the team, the offensive lineman is responsible for the success of the team, and only the best athletes will earn a spot on the line.

Defense is the key to winning football games. As Vince Lombardi said, "A good offense will win you games, but a good defense will win you championships." Playing defense requires a more aggressive mentality, and a desire to make an impact on the game. Our defense requires much more discipline than some others, so our defensive players must be ready to play their positions to the absolute best of their ability - every play.

An athlete's attitude is critical in determining what position they will play and how much playing time they will earn. An athlete who has a bad attitude, who is oversensitive, or who demonstrates any sort of difficulty with a position will not earn playing time. A negative attitude is costly. When selecting starting players, attitude and desire can win over ability. *Can't* has no place on this football team. If you want to play a particular position, make your best effort every day to learn the responsibilities of the position. We will give every player the opportunity to earn any position on the team.

## **WINNING**

Nothing in life, including football, is worthwhile unless you enjoy it and gain something from the experience. Sure, we're trying to win football games, and we will set our goals high, but it's not the end of the world to lose. All we ask is that our athletes do their best on every play. It is more important for the athletes to learn that their effort is the true victory, not the final score. By the same token, we believe that all our athletes who have shown good effort deserve playing



time. We may substitute often during games. We expect all our athletes to practice hard, play hard, and give 100%.

## COACHING

Coaches must have the freedom to develop three things in the athletes: pride, poise, and self-confidence. We will use the following steps to instruct the game of football:

1. Explain what is required.
2. Demonstrate the technique.
3. Have the player perform the technique.
4. Explain the consequences of not performing the technique properly.

As coaches, we owe it to the team to do our best. Coaching is a huge responsibility, and we take it seriously. Our responsibilities include:

1. Get the players in top physical shape.
2. Understand each player's potential.
3. Work on individual skills for each position.
4. Work on team execution of plays.
5. Motivation.
6. Communicate effectively.
7. Lead by example.
8. Teach players the skills they need to play football safely.

## ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

Each player is required to supply the following equipment in order to play football for Mahone.

- Padded Girdle
- Mouth piece (having a spare is a great idea). Custom mouth guards, if used, must attach to the helmet face guard.
- Athletic supporter with protective cup.
- Socks.
- Water bottle for water or sports drink (Gatorade, Powerade).
- Shoes with molded cleats - not detachable cleats.

Players will be issued the following equipment: **(Replacement Cost If Lost – Not a Fee)**

• Helmet with face mask and chin strap.	\$275.00
• Shoulder pads.	200.00
• Practice pants.	50.00
• Practice jersey.	30.00
• Thigh and knee pads.	50.00
• Game jersey and pants.	<u>275.00</u>
	<u>\$880.00</u>



This equipment must be returned at the end of the season. Equipment not returned will be billed to the parents at the replacement costs listed above. Lost equipment will be billed to the parents at the replacement costs listed above. Take care of all your equipment!

## **PARENTS**

Parents are as important to the success of the team as the players. Coaches and parents will need to work together. Please keep the coaches informed of issues that may affect your student-athlete. Parents and coaches must communicate with respect and trust. We are on the same side, trying to help your child become the best athlete (and person) possible. With that in mind, we ask parents to be accepting of our methods both on and off the field. This is middle school football, not the NFL. At this level we stress teamwork and will focus our efforts on building the best team possible.

Parents are also important when it comes to practice and game days. With the large number of athletes we have, we can frequently use additional eyes and assistance on the practice field. On game days, we need help running the chains on the sidelines or yelling really loudly (and appropriately) for our team. **Important** - please do not yell at the officials. Parents willing to help should contact the coaches. Remember, we're in this together.

## **PRACTICES**

Practice will vary weekly. New skills are learned, problem areas corrected, and new plays taught. Athletes who miss practice will be at a disadvantage, which in turn hurts our team. Practices will be Monday through Friday from 8:00 - 11:30 a.m. before school begins, and 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. after school starts. When our games begin, we may shorten the practice time, but that will be determined by the needs and abilities of the team. Varsity (A Squad) games are usually played on Wednesday and begin at 5:15 unless noted differently on the schedule. Our Junior Varsity (B Squad) plays on Wednesday immediately following the Varsity game.

Again, practice is critical to the success of our team. Weather is no excuse for not attending practice. If we can't be outside (due to lightning or extreme conditions), we will practice inside. Plan on very warm temperatures at the beginning of the season, but very cool temperatures by the end of the season.

## **HOME CONDITIONING**

Proper nutrition and hydration is essential to athletes undergoing intense conditioning. Players should drink lots of water (not soda, and certainly not energy drinks) throughout the day to stay properly hydrated. It is recommended that players wear a T-shirt under their pads and jersey. While not required, the new performance fabrics available (Under Armour) do a great job of helping regulate the body temperature by wicking sweat to the surface. Players should always dress for the weather.

Players will benefit from a healthy diet that includes plenty of fruits and vegetables. Avoid sugar-laden and high-fat snacks (candy bars, potato chips). As coaches we will condition the



outside of your body to be a football machine. You will need to condition your body from the inside.

## **INJURIES**

Football is a contact sport. We will teach techniques and skills that will reduce the possibility of injury. For the athletes, parents, and coaches, it is important to understand the difference between being sore and being injured. Players will be sore, especially the first weeks of practice and after games. This is to be expected. However, any pain that is severe, persistent, or accompanied by swelling should be taken seriously. As coaches, we can make our best guess about the nature of an injury, but we are not doctors. Always err on the side of caution. An X-ray or visit to the walk-in or ER will confirm an injury or eliminate worry.

## **CONCUSSIONS**

### **Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) Return-to-Play Guidelines following a head injury**

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association rules require a minimum of a five-day return-to-play progression. This progression begins when the individual is symptom free and cleared by a licensed health care professional. Each step requires a 24-hour window to ensure that the athlete is ready for the next level. **If the athlete experiences a return of symptoms, activity should be stopped and his/her health care provider should be notified.**

Step 1: About 15 minutes of stationary biking or jogging

Step 2: More strenuous running and sprinting in the gym or on field without equipment

Step 3: Begin **non-contact** drills in uniform; may resume weightlifting

Step 4: Full practice with contact

**Step 5: Full game clearance**

**Contact your health provider to set up a base line concussion test today!**

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, or ideas during the season, please contact the coaches.

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Note: We are not in the building over the summer and will not have access to school telephones. Email is the best contact option for communication.