

## SOFTBALL – AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE

Softball is a relatively safe sport for students/athletes as long as certain guidelines are followed. Softball involves running, sprinting, fast starting and stopping, lateral movements, throwing and catching a ball, hitting, diving, sliding, pitching, fielding batted and thrown balls, hand-eye coordination, possible contact with opponents when sliding, running or stealing bases, or playing defense.

As part of school policy, all athletes are required to obtain a physical prior to participation. If you have any physical limitations which the school and coaching staff should be aware of, please obtain a physician's consent for you to participate.

Serious injuries are relatively rare in softball. However, the possibility of injury does exist. The most common injuries associated with softball include broken bones, mild concussions, severe ankle sprains, muscle soreness and injuries, knee injuries, scrapes and bruises from sliding and diving, being struck in the face, head, or body with a thrown or batted ball, colliding with teammates or opponents, and injuries resulting from sliding into bases. The dangers and risks involved in practicing or participating in softball include, but are not limited to death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in partial or complete paralysis, concussions, serious injuries to bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other areas of the muscular-skeletal system. In addition to serious injury, the risks and dangers may result in an impairment of future abilities to earn a living or to engage in business, social, and recreational activities. Other less serious risks include mild concussions, broken bones, sprains and strains (knee, ankle, lower back), blisters, muscle soreness and stiffness, bruised knees, arms and hands, and the possibility of being struck by a thrown or batted ball.

Proper equipment can help reduce injury, but is not an absolute guarantee. Players should wear spikes and athletic socks. Plastic spikes provide good traction and are legal equipment. Catchers are required to wear a mask and skull cap, chest protector, throat guard, protective cup and shin guards in game competition. All players warming up a pitcher in either practice or a game will be required to wear a mask. All batters, base runners, on-deck hitters, and student coaches are required to wear NOCSAE-approved helmets. Helmets will be required in practices and in batting cage. In cold weather, players should wear a shirt under their uniform and have a sweatshirt or jacket to keep muscles warm and prevent muscle and arm soreness. Throwing helmets, bats, or other equipment is prohibited as it presents a danger to teammates and opponents can result in ejection from the game. Players will be instructed in the proper use of equipment and use of the pitching machine. During live batting practice or when using the pitching machine, players should make sure all participants are ready for the pitched and/or batted ball. Because of the dangers involved in softball, I understand the importance of following and obeying the coaches' instructions regarding proper fundamentals and playing techniques, use of equipment, and other team rules.

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_