



Program Handbook

If you believe in yourself and have dedication and pride - and never quit, you'll be a winner. The price of victory is high, but so are the rewards." - Vince Lombardi

The Viking Mission

"The goal of the Southgate Junior Football Association, a non-profit organization, is to promote citizenship, fellowship, and physical development of boys and girls of the city of Southgate, and to sponsor and promote organized sport."

Whether you are a player, parent, volunteer, fan, or just curious about youth football and cheerleading, this program is designed to inform you and encourage your participation.

3 football teams - Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity
3 cheerleading teams - Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity

Freshmen (8 and 9-year old's*); weight limit 125 pounds
Junior Varsity (10 and 11-year old's*); weight limit 145 pounds
Varsity (12 and 13-year old's*); weight limit 170 pounds

*Ages as of September 1st

How does the organization run, who is in charge?

In short, "YOU" (we and us). We are here to ensure that our kids learn about football, cheerleading, dedication, hard work, and hopefully learn something about themselves and life in general. The Southgate Junior Football (and Cheer) Association is **operated and managed solely by volunteer parents**. This is your organization. It is as good as you are dedicated. To function to its highest potential, everyone needs to do their part to make this a great organization.

Annually, once each year, the organization nominates and elects' parents to be Board Members; the Executive Board and the other board members are selected from eligible parents by eligible parents.

The Executive Board: consists of the President, Vice President, Cheerleading Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, and the Concession Coordinator.

General membership in this association shall be held by any mother, father, stepparent or legal guardian of boys or girls participating in the athletic program. The only exception to this rule will be past participants who have continuous service with this organization.

For a member to be eligible to vote, he/she must attend no less than 3 association meetings. Members who are eligible to vote are permitted to vote for elected positions.

The Executive Board presides over monthly Board Meetings, which are held year-round. Meeting notices are posted on our website and our Facebook page. All parents are invited and highly encouraged to attend.

Contact information for the coaching staff and board members is available on our website:

www.SouthgateVikings.com

Volunteers

Your Vikings (your kids) need you. Our volunteer positions must be filled each game and each week in order to play the games and ensure everyone has a pleasurable experience and enjoys the day.

Each family is required to fulfill a set number of volunteer times on order to receive their banquet tickets.

(1) Viking = 2 volunteer times (2) Vikings or more = 3 volunteer times

Volunteer times will be at our 4 home games and during the cheer competition. You can sign up on our website; just click of the "Volunteer Sign Up" link.

If all volunteer times are not completed, parents will be required to purchase their banquet tickets at the cost of \$100 each. It is an all or nothing situation. You must volunteer and serve the stated amount of time to receive the tickets (1 volunteer time does not equal 1 ticket. ALL FOOTBALL PLAYERS AND CHEERLEADERS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT TO ATTEND THE BANQUET.

In the case of divorced families with stepparents, each family must serve time (if you are unable to share the 2 adult tickets that will received per family.) This means more volunteer time but for a few hours of time each parent and stepparent can attend.

The exact game time and game order has not been solidified at this point; the schedule reflects our best guess. The game order and time can change by the time the season starts. It is easier to volunteer for a game that your son and daughter is not participating in. Once you determine the date, game level and spot you would like to volunteer please use the sign up to select your slot(s).

FYI - The longer you wait to pick your spots the less likely you will have a position that you want to fill. Failure to fulfill your volunteer commitments **will** result in a \$25 fine. **Until the fine or fines are paid in full your player or cheerleader will not be permitted to participate in games or competitions.**

Keeping Informed and Up to Date on YOUR Program

Facebook, TeamApp, and our website: www.SouthgateVikings.com will provide you with the information you need throughout the season. Please visit us and see what it has to offer you. It is loaded with information, schedules, maps, etc.

The image is a screenshot of the Southgate Vikings website. It features a dark header with the team's logo (a Viking head) and the text "FOOTBALL AND CHEER SOUTHGATE VIKINGS". Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, About, Info for New Vikings, Camps, 2015 Registration, 2015 Schedule, Maps, Practice Information, Volunteer Sign Up, Calendar, Coaches, Contacts, Email Us, Subscribe Now!, Sponsorships, and Merchandise. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a "UPCOMING EVENTS" section with a list of events: Saturday, April 25 (2015 Veteran Registration, 9:00 AM at The Equipment Shed), Wednesday, April 29 (2015 Veteran Registration, 6:00 PM at The Equipment Shed), Tuesday, May 12 (Association Meeting, 7:00 PM at The Equipment Shed), 2015 Open Registration (7:00 PM at The Equipment Shed), and Tuesday, June 9 (Association Meeting, 7:00 PM at The Equipment Shed). A yellow arrow labeled "Dates" points to this section. In the center, there is a large section titled "First and goal, SOUTHGATE VIKINGS" with sub-sections for "Veterans Registration" and "Open Registration", each detailing who, when, and where. A yellow oval labeled "When and where are game; How to get there" points to the "2015 Schedule" link in the navigation menu. Another yellow oval labeled "Get on the schedule early" points to the "Volunteer Sign Up" link. On the right, there is a "SPONSORS" section with logos for The Depot, Arrived Vintage, Buffalo Wild Wings, EPT PHOTO.NET, FAIRLANE, Ford, Logan's Roadhouse, and Logan's Roadhouse. Below the sponsors is a "SOUTHGATE WEATHER" section showing the current weather as Fair, 54° F, with a forecast for Friday: High 56° F, Low 35° F, Sunny. At the bottom, there is a "KEEP CALM" graphic with the team's logo.

Costs of the Program

All costs associated with running the program are primarily covered by registration fees, one mandatory fundraiser per season, other voluntary fundraisers and sponsorship by local business and individuals.

Registration costs are as follows: 1st child @ \$150.00; each additional SIBLING @ \$85.00; Mascot/Water Boy - \$50.00
Approximate replacement cost of uniforms & equipment: Football \$800 Cheer \$400. **Please take care of them.**

Due to the increasing costs to operate the program, we have implemented a “NO REFUND” policy.

Program expenses include field usage fees, field maintenance, equipment maintenance, game day official fees, DJFL membership, insurance, equipment repairs, equipment replacement, uniforms, cheer competition shoes, warm-ups, the banquet, awards, etc.

Mandatory Fundraiser

Each season, players and cheerleaders are required to participate and complete one mandatory fund-raiser. Due to the high costs involved with running a junior football program, the DJFL allows for one fund-raiser to be MANDATORY. This means that each player and cheerleader must participate as required in order to maintain their position on the team.

The fund-raiser is a Lottery Ticket Program based on the State of Michigan's evening 3-digit drawing in the month of September. Each raffle/lottery ticket is \$10; every participant must sell 15 tickets (i.e. a \$150 fundraiser for each football player, cheerleader, and mascot). Generally, the tickets are distributed at registration.

Incentive Fundraiser

There is also an incentive fundraiser program for varsity jackets, warm-ups, equipment, gym bags, etc. The offerings change from year to year. Details will be made available as they are finalized.

Equipment Issue

It is important that all paperwork, physicals, required fees, etc. be turned in by equipment issue. Please remember that players and cheerleaders are not permitted to go on the field for practice until all paperwork and raffle ticket money is turned in. There will be NO exceptions to this rule. Equipment issue is held at The Shed. It will be sometime in June or early July. Again, watch the website and sign up for an email subscription on the website, Facebook (Vikings private page), and Team app.

Uniform Etiquette and Care

We all love to see the pride and excitement surrounding equipment and uniform hand-out. Ensuring proper fit, function, and of course some pictures are all required.

However, after that initial excitement, it is important, actually imperative, to remember that everyone who wears the Viking uniform wants to take pride in it; ***past, present, and future Vikings***. This means they must be available, clean, and undamaged.

Please *remember that the uniforms are:*

1. Irreplaceable - *they are all custom, there are no more available!* A lost or damaged uniform will prevent your child from taking the field; the teams must all look the same and wear the same uniform.
2. Relied upon for future generations of Vikings; they will also want to be excited about wearing the uniform.
3. The public face and image of the organization (that is why everyone wants to wear them!). We must keep them pristine (other than the wear and tear from our DJFL games, it is football and cheer after all...).

This requires that uniforms only be worn:

1. Game days, and if desired during school, the Friday before game day
2. Picture day, for pictures only
3. On occasions directed by the head coaching staff

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE RULES ON UNIFORM ETIQUETTE TO ENSURE WE HAVE PRIDE IN THE PROGRAM TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE. THANK YOU!!

Uniform Requirements

Jewelry and make-up may **NOT** be worn by any football player or cheerleader during any practice or game. Medical alert jewelry is permitted, but it must be taped.

Football Players

A complete uniform will include the following items provided for use (to be returned at the end of the season in the condition you received them) by the Vikings: Helmet, shoulder pads, game jerseys, practice jersey, game pants, practice pants, belt, knee pads (if given), game socks and mouth guards (yours to keep). The following items provided by you: Protective athletic cup, girdle, and football shoes/cleats.

Football Uniform Rules: Molded and Screw in Cleats are both permitted. Screw in Cleats must be ½" size and must be replaced if any metal is showing, METAL CLEATS ARE NOT PERMITTED. Tennis shoes, running shoes and/or turf shoes are NOT allowed. Gloves, hand warmers, neck rolls, forearm pads, and other optional protective devices will be allowed if they meet the guidelines of the Michigan High School Athletic Association and meet the approval of the officials. Mouthpieces are to be solid in color (not clear). Mouthpieces can be purchased at any sporting goods store. Mouthpieces must have a lanyard. Additional clothing may be worn for warmth for cold weather. Additionally, any prescription glasses, eye shield or visor attached to any player's helmet must be clear in color TRANSITION LENSES ARE NOT PERMITTED. Please consult with your Head Coach if you are unsure about an item's legality.

Cheerleaders

A complete uniform will include the following items provided for use (to be returned at the end of the season in the condition you received them) by the Vikings: Cheer shell (vest), long sleeve under shirt, skirt, socks, warm-up jacket and pants. We will provide the girls comp shoes (you will be able to keep these at the end of the season but will not be given out until closer to the comp). The following items provided by you: Practice shoes, practice outfit (just shorts and T-shirt) game shoes (must be white), and cheerleading briefs.

Practice Information

Reminders

- Absolutely NO jewelry can be worn during practice.
- Please make sure your child removes all jewelry including earrings, rings, bracelets, barrettes, and necklaces.
- Cheerleaders are required to wear shoes (not sandals and not flip flops).
- Please remember to bring a water bottle.
- Please note the end times of practice and be on time to pick up your Viking(s).
- Voluntary organized workouts are may begin as early as May.
- Mandatory practices BEFORE Labor Day is **tentatively** M – F 5:00pm to 7:30pm & Saturday 9:00am to 11:30am.
- Mandatory practice AFTER Labor Day is **tentatively** M - Th 5:00pm to 7:00pm. Friday's will be reserved for weather related make up dates.
- Before school starts, football & cheer practice is held at Gerisch Middle School: 12601 McCann.
- After school starts, football remains at Gerisch & cheer practice is held at Anderson High School: 15475 Leroy St.

Important Notes

- For all parents and/or spectators of the football players and cheerleaders: Please note that vehicles CANNOT be parked on the grass. You are more than welcome (i.e. encouraged) to watch, but please utilize the parking spaces. If you parallel park along the grass you must make sure there is ample room for vehicles to pass through by the school. Please make sure you are in a painted parking spot.
- All Southgate Schools are Drug Free Zones. This simply means that all consumption of alcoholic beverages and the smoking of cigarettes is prohibited. This means you can not smoke anywhere on school property including the parking lot.
- We are guests of the Southgate Schools and can be removed from their property at any time. It is very important that we pick up after ourselves, this includes all our trash.

- The Vikings are not affiliated with the Southgate Schools. Any concerns or questions are to be directed to the Vikings board members. Please do not call the schools if you should have a concern/problem/question, they are not equipped to handle these issues.
- There is a 100-foot rule in place for all Vikings practices and games. This simply means that parents and or spectator must always remain at least 100 feet from the practice field. At no time is a parent to approach their player on the field unless they have been summoned by a board member or coach. If your child needs to be picked up early let their coach know before practice or let a board member know and they will get your child from the field.

Parents Please Note

- The coaches have limited time to work with and prepare your children for competition, so please do not approach your child's coach during scheduled practice time. If you have questions or concerns, please speak with the coach either prior to or after practice.
- If your child is ill and cannot attend practice you must contact their coach as soon as possible. The only excuses which are acceptable for missing practice are illness, death in the family, or school/religious related absences. Participation in another sport does not qualify as an excused absence. Coaches have the authority to bench your child if they regularly and consistently miss practice.
- At no time are parents/guardians allowed on the practice field. Aside from players and coaches, the only people allowed on the field are Board Members. If there is an emergency during practice and you need to speak to your child, approach a Board Member and they will get your child for you. If your child is injured during practice and needs medical attention beyond first aid, you will be summoned to the field by a Coach or Board Member.
- The "24 Hour" rule will again be in effect this year. This simply means that during the season, parents must wait 24 hours to discuss issues with their child's coach. If a parent feels the issue cannot wait 24 hours, then they may approach a Board Member with their issue, and that person will deal with it in an appropriate manner. Remember, it's always best to sleep on things and approach them with a clear head and calm demeanor the next day. Physical and or verbal threats will be dealt with harshly.

Solving a Problem

If a problem arises during the season, please follow these steps. This applies to ALL participants in the program; board members, coaches, parents, and players. Proceeding directly to steps 3 & 4 will not resolve the problem faster.

1. Obey the 24-Hour rule.
2. Speak directly to the head coach first, do not approach the assistant coaches.
3. If speaking to the head coach does not resolve the issue, then approach the president or vice-president of the organization.
4. If the issue persists the last step would be to bring the issue to the board of the Downriver Junior Football League (DJFL). Remember, the DJFL is not the enforcer of the Vikings own "in-house" rules.

The DJFL

It is comprised of 13 teams, 2 Conferences:

Southgate – Vikings
 Allen Park – Bulldogs
 Dearborn Heights – Raiders
 Grosse Ile – Jr. Devils
 Huron River - Yellow Jackets
 Lincoln Park – Jr. Rails
 Melvindale – Cardinals
 Riverview – Pirates
 Romulus – Flyers
 Taylor - Seahawks
 Washtenaw - Wolverines (Maize)
 Woodhaven – Elite
 Wyandotte – Indians

The DJFL has a board that governs Rules and Eligibility of all member teams. Strict guidelines have been established with the primary focus on the safety and wellbeing of the children. Fines are imposed on teams who violate the rules and guidelines of the DJFL. The DJFL by-laws can be found at www.downriverjuniorfootball.org

Football Season

The DJFL requires every player to complete 4 days of "conditioning" their first 4 days of mandatory practice. *There are NO exceptions to this rule.* Football players will begin contact drills on their 5th day of practice providing they have completed required conditioning requirements.

Players will have pre-season scrimmages. Scrimmage details will be made available as possible.

There are 8 regular season games; 4 home and 4 away. Playoffs could add up to 3 weeks to our schedule.

Generally, the 1st home game and 1st away game will have an entry fee for anyone 16 years of age and older.

The Vikings home field is Southgate Anderson High School; home of the Southgate Titans. Please support the Titans as your Vikings will become Titans.

Away game information and maps will be available on the Vikings website.

Parents that choose to stay and watch practices will be required to stay within the permitted area.

Cheerleading Competition

Cheerleaders will complete 4 days of conditioning the 1st 4 days of practice. Our cheer philosophy is to treat Cheerleading as the sport it is. Conditioning and discipline are important elements in our cheer program.

The DJFL sponsors a cheerleading competition each season. Cheerleaders work hard all season to prepare and are expected to attend. Football players are encouraged to support their teammates and attend the cheer competition to support the cheerleaders. Further information will be available later in the season.

Code of Conduct

Coaches are expected to:

- Follow the rules of the Viking organization and the DJFL, keeping safety the #1 priority.
- Be consistent with regard to SJFA discipline and respect.
- Stress the fundamentals on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to:

- Respect and understand the rules of the SJFA and the DJFL.
- Support the efforts of our coaches (who volunteer their time on a daily basis for our children). Refrain from using foul language at any time on the practice or game field.
- Parents should positively support the fundraising and volunteer policies of the SJFA.
- Parents are expected to advise the head coach should any medical conditions change with your child once the season starts.

Vikings are expected to: HAVE FUN!!

- Be respectful of others always. Foul language will not be permitted at any time.
- Always demonstrate sportsmanship and citizenship
- Be GREAT TEAMMATES
- Be respectful to coaches. They volunteer their time for our players and cheerleaders 5-6 days per week.
- Give 100% at all practices and games.

MOST OF ALL HAVE FUN!!

The Southgate Viking Board reserves the right to remove any player, cheerleader, parent, coach, or board member from a game, practice, or the roster should behavior or safety become a concern.

Equipment Turn In

It is imperative that your child turns in their equipment on the scheduled turn in date. All equipment must be inventoried and stored at our storage facility for the off-season. Equipment turn in will be announced towards the end of the season. Turn in will be at "The Shed." Please make sure all equipment is clean when you turn it in. Failure to return equipment on the scheduled day will result in loss of veteran status for your family and you will not be able to receive banquet tickets! The cost of any equipment damaged outside of scheduled football and cheer activities will be your responsibility. Additionally, you will be held financially responsible for the cost of any missing equipment.

Year End Banquet

Our banquet is scheduled for the Tuesday before Thanksgiving at Crystal Gardens in Southgate. Each Viking football player, cheerleader and mascot and parents will receive tickets according to the volunteer guidelines provided their family's volunteer obligation has been met for the season. Parents and family members may be able to purchase additional tickets if ALL volunteer obligations have been met; details to follow. Tickets will be distributed / sold later in the season and at equipment turn in. Our banquet offers a wonderful buffet dinner and each Viking who has completed the season and family has met their volunteer obligation will receive a keepsake.

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I believe!!

I believe that we!!!

I believe that we will win!!!!

I believe that we will win!!!!

GO VIKINGS!