Millbrook School Dietary Supplements
Position Statement

Millbrook School strongly opposes the use of dietary supplements for the purpose of obtaining a competitive advantage. Research shows that there continues to be widespread use of dietary supplements by adolescent and high school athletes, despite considerable safety concerns. Dietary supplements are marketed as an easy way to enhance appearance and athletic performance, increase energy levels, lose weight, and feel better. Adolescents are more susceptible to peer pressure and these advertising messages, which may increase the incidence of dietary supplement usage and reinforce a culture more concerned about short-term performance rather than overall long-term athletic development and good health.

Millbrook School strongly opposes the use of supplements by high school athletes for performance enhancement, due to the lack of published, reproducible scientific research documenting the benefits of their use and confirming that there are no potential long-term adverse health effects with their use, particularly in the adolescent age group. Dietary supplements should be used only upon the advice of one’s health care provider for health-related reasons—not for the purpose of gaining a possible competitive advantage. School personnel and coaches should never recommend, endorse or encourage the use of any dietary supplement, drug, or medication for performance enhancement.

Strategies to address the prevalence and growing concerns of using dietary supplements may include conversations with athletes and their parents about the potential dangers of dietary supplement use. Athletes should be encouraged to pursue their athletic goals through hard work, appropriate rest and good nutrition, not unsubstantiated dietary shortcuts.

In order to discourage dietary supplement use for athletic performance:

- School personnel, coaches, and parents should allow for open discussion about dietary supplement use, and strongly encourage obtaining optimal nutrition through a well-balanced diet.
- Remind athletes that no supplement is harmless or free from consequences and that there are no short cuts to improve athletic performance.
- Because they are not strictly regulated, dietary supplements may contain impurities, additives that may produce allergenic response (in those with allergies) and banned substances no listed on the label.
- Remind athletes that energy drinks are not appropriate for hydration or as dietary supplements.