

SAYFA - Souderton Area Youth Football & Cheerleading

Parent Information Handbook

Updated 5.10.16

Contact Information

- **website:** www.soudertonbraves.com
- **email:** braves@soudertonbraves.com
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/BravesSouderton



The site should be your first stop for ALL BRAVES INFORMATION (practices, field locations, rules & regulations and much more)!

General Information

SAYFA's Purpose

- SAYFA's objective is to inspire youth to practice the ideals of sportsmanship and physical fitness.
- SAYFA seeks to develop well-rounded young people who not only learn the fundamentals of football and cheerleading, but also the importance of education.
- SAYFA strives to provide a football/cheerleading program that will enhance each participant's qualities of **teamwork, character, self-reliance** and **concentration**.

About our Organization...

History - Founded in 1959. The organization has been providing service to the community for over 50 years!

SAYFA is a member of the BUX-MONT league, which is a member of the national Pop Warner Little Scholars Program. The Braves play flag and tackle football, and compete in cheerleading competitions against other area clubs. Our cheerleading squads entertain the crowds with their routines at every football game.

Quick Facts

- Geography - Serves the areas in and around the Souderton Area School District
- Age - Pop Warner Youth ages are 5 to 15
- Size - SAYFA averages approx. 300 - 400 participating boys & girls per year
- Number of teams – Varies based on participants
- Adults - SAYFA teams are coached by over 50 truly dedicated volunteers

Family Volunteer Commitment

The smooth operation of this organization relies on volunteers. Therefore, we require that each family work 4 hours per participating child in the organization. You may divide this time into two-2 hour sessions (practices or home games). Some examples are snack stand, game announcer, game spotter, chains, scoreboard, play counter, 50/50 ticket sales, or assisting with other fundraising activities.

We are an all-volunteer organization. The best way to find out what's going on and to get involved is to attend the monthly meetings at the Souderton American Legion Post 234 building on Main St. in Souderton. Meetings are held the 2nd Tues. of every month at 7:30 pm (Dec. to Jul.) & at 8:30 pm (Aug. to Nov.).

Things to know...

Awards Ceremony	A ceremony is held each December and/or January to celebrate the season. All players & cheerleaders receive awards and recognition.
Feedback	Our volunteers have the best interests of the children in mind. Feedback from parents (positive & negative) is always welcome. Comments, suggestions, and complaints regarding the organization should be brought to the attention of the executive board.
Halftime Snacks	Each parent will be asked to help provide halftime snacks for the players at least once during the season.
Pictures	Dates for team and individual pictures will be announced. Multiple photo packages will be offered to fit all parent's needs. The photographer is independent of SAYFA and sales are not part of our fund-raising
Braves Wear	Braves-logo items are usually available at various times during the season. This is a fundraiser.
Raffle Tickets (Mandatory Fundraiser)	For our fundraiser, we will be distributing raffle tickets (\$5.00 per ticket) that can be sold to family and friends. Various monetary prizes will be awarded throughout the season. This fundraiser is paid during your registration.
50/50's	Volunteers sell 50/50's chances at home games. The winner is announced at halftime and is awarded half the money collected.
Sponsorship	Businesses are asked to sponsor the Souderton Braves. Businesses can choose from various sponsorship levels.

Officers - Visit www.soudertonbraves.com for a current list of Executive & General Board Members.

Executive Board

Elected by the eligible members of the general membership at the December meeting. Terms are two years in length. These volunteers provide the leadership that runs the organization.

General Board

The General Board members, including League Rep., Legion Rep., and Head Coaches, are elected by the eligible members of the general membership at the Dec. mtg. Terms are two years in length, except for coaches, who serve one year terms.

Policies & Programs

SAYFA Travel Expense Subsidy Policy

*****IMPORTANT***** The organization will be granting \$5,000 total to teams moving to nationals, it is dependent on the amount of money raised for the team traveling and matches 1:1. Thus if two teams would go, a max per squad would be \$2,500 (of course if the squad raised \$2,500 or more). Documentation and clear evidence of funds raised for this specific purpose must be submitted to the Executive Board in order to receive the matching funds disbursement. It is required that a financial

institution account be opened to manage funds raised by the squad specifically for Pop Warner Finals travel expenses. Once documentation is submitted by the squad to the Executive Board, the subsidy amount will be divided equally among all actively rostered players who are making the trip.

Scholar Athlete Program

SAYFA sponsors a Scholar Athlete Program in conjunction with the BUX-MONT League & Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. There are several levels of recognition. **ALL CHILDREN ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT TWO COPIES OF THEIR COMPLETE FINAL REPORT CARD FROM JUNE.** We will recognize all applicants who meet the criteria (avg. grades of B, with no grade less than a C) as SAYFA Scholar Athletes. We will award a certificate at the Banquet-Awards Ceremony. The BUX-MONT League has a program for 12 yr-olds, with winners being honored at the BUX-MONT League Annual Scholars Banquet. All SAYFA participants with sufficient grade point averages will submit an application to the Pop Warner national office for the National Scholar Athlete Program.

Forms

All forms (medical release, copy of birth certificate, physical-parental consent, insurance, and final report card) must be turned in before a child can begin to practice. This is a Pop Warner rule and there will be no exceptions. Before July 31st, you can mail all forms to SAYFA P.O. Box 64339, Souderton PA 18964 or email to braves@soudertonbraves.com.

Insurance

It is the responsibility of the parent to insure that their child is physically and mentally fit to participate. We require a signed medical form from an examining physician asserting that the child is physically fit and has no observable conditions that would prohibit the child from playing football or cheerleading.

We carry medical insurance on all participants. Coverage is of the “excess” type. This means that the plan is designed to provide benefits after your medical insurance has been used. If you do not have your own medical insurance, the plan may have a deductible. Any deductible that they may require will be the responsibility of the participant’s parents or guardian.

Check Return Policy

Beginning in 2011, SAYFA will assess a \$30 fee on any check that has been returned due to insufficient funds. Personal checks are accepted by the Braves. However, should the check be returned from the bank for whatever reason the issuer will be notified and informed they have ten (10) days to make restitution, including any related fees, to prevent any further collection activity. Payment for a return check must be received in the form of cash, cashier’s check or money order. A personal check will not be accepted as repayment for a returned check.

Refund Policy

All Souderton Braves participants are eligible for a refund up until August 1st of the current year. After August 1st, there will be NO refunds issued. The refund schedule is as follows:

- Through June 30th: 100% - Full Registration and Fundraising Amount Refunded.
- June 30th through July 31st: 75% Registration Refunded – Fundraiser will not be refunded
- After August 1st: No refund available

All refund requests must be emailed to braves@soudertonbraves.com utilizing the SAYFA Refund Request Form. The form can be located on our web site under Documents. If we don’t receive the request in writing, you will not receive a refund.

Football

Coaching Staff - Visit www.soudertonbraves.com for a current list of Coaches.

Each December the eligible members of SAYFA's General Board elects head coaches for the upcoming season. Each head coach selects his own staff of assistants.

Attendance

Your child's regular attendance is required. Each day of practice is a critical building block for each participant. If a child is absent, it impairs the whole squad.

We understand that emergencies do arise. If your child is unable to make practice, the coaches need to know so they can prepare to change their practice routine. If your child will be absent for medical or academic reasons please, call your Head Coach. This will count as an excused absence. Three (3) unexcused absences from practice (no notes or phone calls) during the season will result in the parent receiving, by mail, written notification of the violation. If the child misses another practice for a total of four (4) unexcused absences from practice and games during the season, the coach will contact the SAYFA Board for direction. According to Pop Warner Rules, 4 unexcused are considered a voluntary drop. All registration fees will be forfeited.

• **Flag Football**

The instructional flag football program is for players who are age 5 to 7 years old on July 31st. Flag football is designed to introduce young players to the game of football. Each Flag team competes against other area teams with an emphasis on learning & **FUN**.

Rules

Special rules are put in place for the flag level. These rules are included for safety of the players and to keep the games fair and fun for all.

Practices/Games

The coach will call players concerning the practice schedule. The first practice will be determined by BUX-MONT during the summer. It will be on, or around, August 1st at 6:00 pm, location to be determined. Practices in August are Monday through Thursday nights from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. After Labor Day, practices are usually two nights per week from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Games begin in September. An eight game schedule is played.

Equipment

Following are **mandatory** at every practice and game:

- **Mouth pieces, Athletic supporter/cup, Football Shoes**

A game jersey and pants will be supplied to each player. After the season is over each player may keep their game jersey, however **the pants must be returned**. Parents must supply an athletic cup/supporter, plastic or rubber cleats, and a mouth guard.

• **Tackle Football**

The Braves' tackle football teams follow Pop Warner rules and guidelines. The Tiny Mite, Jr Mitey Mite & Mitey Mite are instructional, non-competitive teams. The Jr. Pee Wee, Pee Wee, Jr. Midget and Midget teams are considered competitive football, with the top teams from each division going on to the league playoffs, as well as possible regional and national playoff games.

Practices

First practice will be determined by BUX-MONT during the summer. It will be on, or around, August 1st, location to be determined. Practices in August are Mon. through Thurs. nights from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. After Labor Day, practices are usually two nights per week, same times. There are some occasions when practice times/dates are changed due to school activities, weather, or other unforeseen conditions. Coaches will inform you of any changes for their team.

For the first few practices, players should wear shorts, T-shirts and football shoes. The head coach will inform the team when to arrive at practice in equipment.

Weigh-In For Games

Players are weighed, with equipment on (excluding helmet), before each game. Players exceeding max weight for a weight class will not be able to play that game. To allow for growth, the max weight level at each weight class is increased by one pound for each week.

A special “older/lighter” category allows light players to exceed the age limit by one year, but weight limitations are significantly below those of younger players.

Equipment

Following are **mandatory** at every practice and game:

- ***Mouth piece, Athletic supporter/cup, Football Shoes/Cleats & Tackle Equipment***

All tackle equipment is on loan. It costs SAYFA \$300.00 to equip one tackle player. You are required to keep the equipment in good condition and to turn it in at the end of the season. Equipment will be handed out at Romanoski on a date specified by the head coach. At time of equipment pick up a deposit of \$50 will be collected from each football player. After completion of the season this \$50 will be returned to each player as long as all equipment is returned in good condition.

A game jersey and pants will be supplied to each player. After the season is over each player may keep their game jersey, however **the pants must be returned.**

Cheerleading

Similar to football, the Braves’ cheerleading program follows Pop Warner rules and guidelines. The Flag, Tiny Mite, Jr. Mitey Mite & Mitey Mite squads are instructional, and non-competitive. The Jr. Pee Wee, Pee Wee, Jr. Midget & Midget squads are considered the competitive levels, with the top squads going on to compete at the league/state/region and possibly national levels.

Coaching Staff - Visit www.soudertonbraves.com for a current list of Coaches.

Each December, the eligible members of SAYFA’s General Board elects head coaches for the upcoming season. Each head coach selects her own staff of assistants.

Attendance

Your child’s regular attendance is required. Each day of practice is a critical building block for each participant. If a child is absent, it impairs the whole squad. We understand that emergencies do arise. If your child is unable to make practice, the coaches need to know so they can prepare to change their practice routine. If your child will be absent for medical or academic reasons please, call your Head Coach. This will count as an excused absence. Three (3) unexcused absences from practice (no notes or phone calls) during the season will result in the parent receiving, by mail, written notification of the violation. If the child misses another practice for a total of four (4) unexcused absences from practice

and games during the season, the coach will contact the SAYFA Board for direction. According to Pop Warner Rules, 4 unexcused are considered a voluntary drop. All registration fees will be forfeited.

Practices

First practice will be determined by BUX-MONT during the summer. It will be on, or around, August 1st, location to be determined. Practices in August are Mon. through Thurs. night from 6:00-8:00 PM.

After Labor Day, practices for non-competitive levels are usually two nights per weeks, same times, for competitive levels the practices will be 3 nights/week. Cheerleading practice may be held at locations other than Romanoski Field. The head coach will announce the alternative locations.

There are some occasions when practice times/dates are changed due to school activities, weather, or other unforeseen conditions. Coaches will inform you of any changes for their team.

Equipment

In August, shorts and tee shirts are recommended.

For all Cheerleading squads **MANDATORY** Equipment includes:

- All white supportive sneaker (cheer, aerobic, cross trainer)
- Cheer Socks*, Bloomers*, Crop Top*

Additional **MANDATORY** equipment for competition squads includes:

- Competition cheer sneaker*

* THESE ITEMS WILL BE ORDERED THRU THE CHEER EQUIP. MGR.

Cheer skirt, shell, and pom-poms are on loan. It costs SAYFA approximately \$200 to equip one cheerleader. At the time of equipment pick up a \$50 deposit will be collected from each cheerleader. This money will be returned upon completion of the end of the season at equipment turn in. You are required to keep the equipment in good condition.

Expectations

You Can Expect the Braves & its Coaches to...

- Provide a positive environment that will foster character growth and development in your child.
- Encourage each player to contribute to the team, placing emphasis on the team above the individual.
- Clearly outline and require from all players the discipline required to safely and successfully play the game.
- Teach respect for all players, coaches, and officials of both our club and the clubs we face.
- Teach by example the qualities of good sportsmanship.
- Recognize observations, suggestions, concerns through the following resolution chain:

Coach → Athletic Director/Cheer Coordinator → President

The Braves and its Coaches expect you to...

- Drop off and pick up your son/daughter on time if you are leaving them at practice.
- Be positive with all players and cheerleaders. Let them know they are accomplishing something by simply being part of the team.
- Refrain from using obscene language at all times.
- Keep all pets off of the field.
- Keep bikes or other motorized vehicles off the field.

- Emphasize school first - football and cheerleading are secondary to a good education.
- Not smoke, consume alcoholic beverages or use illegal drugs on field property at any time. No weapons or look-alike weapons on the field.
- Refrain from sideline coaching.
- Set a good example for your son or daughter by providing respect for Coaches and Officials as authority figures.
- Accept the decisions of the game officials as being fair and called to the best of their ability.