

STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK



HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Table of Contents

Overview.....	1
Organizational Chart of Interscholastic Athletics.....	2
Athletics Courtesy.....	4
Code of Ethics.....	5
Head/Assistant Coaches.....	6
Weight Room Policy.....	8
Guidelines for Supporting Athletes from Interscholastic Events.....	9
Ninth Grade Participants Rule.....	10
Season and Out Of Season Rules and Regulations.....	11
Athletic Insurance - Resolution and Coverage/Medical Forms.....	13
Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletic Activities.....	14
Transportation/Accommodations.....	15
Eligibility.....	16
Period of Participation.....	18
Safety Guidelines.....	20
Cancellation.....	22
Student Athletes Use of the Athletic Facilities.....	23
Letter Awards.....	24
Rules and Regulations.....	25
Acknowledgment of Insurance Policy.....	27

Overview

1. The Athletic Program is an integral part of the overall educational process, enabling students to develop competencies to meet the demands of everyday living. The coach, as a teacher, can assist the student-athlete in the development of proper attitudes towards sportsmanship, respect, responsibility, cooperation, self-sacrifice, honesty, and aid in promoting good overall school morale.
2. The High School Principal has authority to manage the interscholastic athletic program, which is consistent with the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the PIAA, the WPIAL, and any other leagues of responsibilities, therefore, finding it necessary to delegate many details of the administration of the athletic program to the Athletic Director.
3. The Athletic Director shall be responsible to the Principal, and be prepared to meet all demands of the position, which include administrative, supervisory, and coordinating responsibilities of the athletic program of the school.
4. The Coach, as an integral part of the athletic program, accepts the position, with the knowledge and understanding of the duties and responsibilities necessary. The coach will decide upon the coaching techniques, strategies, and program rules necessary to implement a successful program for his/her sport.
5. This handbook contains general information and procedures pertinent to the athletic program. The intent is to bring about the efficient operation of the interscholastic athletic program.

ALL COACHES AND STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE EXPECTED TO READ THIS HANDBOOK CAREFULLY

Organizational Chart of Interscholastic Athletics

- **Highlands School District Board of School Directors**
 - shall set policy with regard to athletic programs within the district, and make all decisions as required by law
- **Superintendent**
 - shall enforce all district policy and regulations
- **Secondary School Principals**
 - responsibilities include all matters pertaining to the interscholastic athletic relations of his/her school. He/she may delegate some of these powers, but such delegation shall not relieve him/her of responsibility, by his/her school, of the Constitution and By-Laws of the PIAA, for any infractions.
 - The Principal shall have the following powers and duties:
 - Sanction all contests in which his/her school participates, and notify the Executive Director of the PIAA, within ten days, if his/her school has entered a contest in which he/she has not sanctioned
 - Exclude any contestant who, because of violations, or improper conduct, would not represent the school in a favorable manner, and exclude any contestant who has suffered serious illness or injury until that contestant is pronounced physically fit by a licensed physician
 - Authorize the Athletic Director or his designee, to be the Faculty Manager of the team representing the school
 - Certify, in writing, the eligibility of all contestants in accordance with the By-Laws of the PIAA
 - Have other such powers concerning interscholastic athletics within the school, as are in keeping with the growth and needs of the school, and consistent with the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the PIAA
- **Athletic Director**
 - Responsibilities include:
 - Schedule and coordinate the activities of all the interscholastic sports in the Highlands School District
 - Maintain an accurate schedule of events for all sports in the calendar year
 - Observe the performance of all interscholastic coaches
 - Evaluate, with the appropriate secondary principal, all interscholastic coaches at the end of each season
 - Recommend to the Superintendent, new programs or modifications in existing interscholastic programs
 - Assure the availability and preparation of all facilities required for practice and games, of school and approved non-school organizations
 - Requisition and coordinate the ordering of equipment for all interscholastic sports within the appropriate budget, as designated by the Superintendent
 - Maintain an accurate inventory and provide for the maintenance and repair of all athletic equipment
 - Periodically check to ensure that proper care is taken of equipment, by both the coaches and players
 - Maintain a viable public relations profile for the athletic programs of the district

- Act as the official host to the visiting teams and ensure facilities are in proper order. Inspect locker rooms after all contests, to check for lost items and damages to the property
- Oversee a system of medical care for all injured athletes. Contact the doctor to verify attendance at all home football games, and make provisions for ambulance coverage
- Work closely with the high school principals to promote eligible athletes for post high school education
- Coordinate and plan practices and games to eliminate interference with the regular school program
- Refer all questions and/or problems beyond his/her authority to the high school principal
- Prepare and present a final budget to the Superintendent in accordance with the district timeline, including facilities improvements and equipment
- Represent the high school principal at all athletic contests, as well as at special meetings pertaining to athletics, as designated by the Superintendent
- Instruct all necessary personnel in responsibilities for each home event
- Prepare ticket price recommendations for events as required
- Ensure the deposit of all gate sales by the following school day
- Prepare printed schedules of games for interscholastic sports
- Provide students athletic forms as required by local policy and PIAA regulations
- Monitor and publish the eligibility of all participants, according to PIAA regulations
- Work with the school doctor to schedule athletic physicals
- Arrange the necessary transportation for away events
- Check and approve athletic awards
- Notify parties involved of a postponement of a scheduled athletic event
- Maintain knowledge of current research in the field of athletics, and communicate to the coaches as appropriate
- Perform other such duties as supervisor may assign

- **Head/Assistant Coaches**

Athletic Courtesy

(As described in the PIAA By-Laws)

Section I

- Athletics should foster clean sports. It is a privilege and duty of every person connected with athletics to exemplify these principles in his or her actions and earnestly advocate them before others.
 - The rules of the game are to be regarded as mutual agreements, the spirit of which no honorable person would break. The stealing of advantage in sport is theft.
 - No advantages are to be sought over others except those in which the game is understood to show superiority.
 - Unsportsmanlike or unfair means are not to be used even when they are used by opponents.
 - Visiting teams are to be honored guests of the home team and should be treated as such.
 - No action is to be taken nor course of conduct pursued, which would seem unsportsmanlike or dishonorable if known to one's opponent or the public.
 - Remember that a student spectator represents his school the same as does the athlete.
 - Any spectator who continually evidences poor sportsmanship should be requested not to attend future contests.
 - Decisions of officials are to be abided by.
 - Officials and opponents are to be regarded and treated as honest in intention. In games when opponents conduct themselves in an unbecoming manner, and when officials are manifestly dishonest or incompetent, future relationship with them should be avoided.
 - Good characteristics in others should be appreciated and suitable recognition given.
 - The practice of "booing" is regarded as discourteous and unsportsmanlike.

Code of Ethics

Section I

- The School should conduct itself in a sportsmanlike manner.

Section II

- The Coach should:
 - have a fair, unprejudiced relationship with players
 - teach athletes to win through legitimate means only, striving to win at any cost is unethical
 - never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character
 - give opponents full credit when they win
 - control his/her temper at all times
 - discourage profanity and obscene language at all times, and refrain from using inappropriate language or gestures
 - recommend the use of competent officials and support their decision(s)
 - not criticize the actions or decisions of officials before players or spectators
 - counteract unfounded rumors of questionable practices by opponents, refer them directly to the authorities of the school concerned
 - not solicit players from other schools
 - take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, and under any circumstances should not authorize their use
 - never exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration

Failure to comply with this Code of Ethics could lead to disciplinary action by the School District.

Head/Assistant Coaches

Responsibilities of the Head Coach

- Coach and instruct the team in proper fundamental skills, regularly upgrading to the fullest technical skill level, to enable the athlete to compete in the best manner possible. Expose every athlete to a progressive conditioning program. Be consistent, fair, and act in a non-prejudiced manner with every team member.
- Know, observe, and enforce the PIAA regulations regarding the scholastic eligibility requirements for students to participate.
- Familiarize him/herself with, and explain to athletes, the PIAA rules and regulations regarding amateur status, eligibility, competing on another similar team, and responsibilities.
- Arrange organizational meeting for sports candidates.
- Discuss, distribute, and enforce the rules - regulations on the following page. Any rules added to this list must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director.
- Return eligibility lists to the Athletic Director by the predetermined date.
- Ensure that team members behave in an appropriate, responsible manner at all events.
- Strive to help each participant develop self-discipline and appropriate behavior.
- Work cooperatively with Athletic Director on scheduling, departure times, and assignment of officials.
- Adhere to the schedule concerning conditioning and practice times.
- Distribute, care for, and maintain the equipment, and keep a complete inventory.
- Compile a team roster in a timely fashion for distribution.
- Work cooperatively with the trainer in completing the insurance form for all injuries that require a participant to be seen, and/or that require hospitalization or emergency room care.
- Maintain adequate supervision of all practices.
- Ride with the team to and from all athletic contests.
- Escort the team, as a group, from the locker room to the bus after games.
- Explain to the athletes, before the season, requirements for earning a varsity letter.
- Collect equipment at the end of the season, noting which equipment needs repaired or should be discarded.
- Submit budget requests (by Jan. 1) for complete list of equipment and supplies the team will need for the following year, to the Athletic Director.
- Complete Final Report and Payroll Form, and forward to Athletic Director in a timely fashion.
- Select student managers and instruct them in their responsibilities and conduct.
- Oversee distribution and use of first aid supplies cooperatively with the Athletic Trainer.
- Supervise locker room activities.
- Use discretion when considering the amount of practice time.
- Act in a reasonably prudent and careful manner. Show concern for health and welfare. Attempt to foresee the possibility of a hazardous situation and take action to correct it.
- Maintain the facilities (building or field) your team is using, in a proper manner. Turn off all showers. Do not allow athletes to walk on the floors in the building with cleated or muddy shoes. Never leave athletes unsupervised.
- Perform all other duties delegated by the School District Administration.

Conduct on the Field or in the Gym

- Coaches must be an example of the good sportsmanship they are trying to teach. Defend the rights of your team at all times, while respecting rules of officials. Disagreements with officials should be conducted in a professional manner. This will prevent inciting both athletes and spectators, and will improve the chances of winning the dispute. Never engage in an exchange of words with spectators. Use discretion when reprimanding an athlete in front of his peers and spectators.
- In the event a fight breaks out, the coach “MUST” keep substitute players on the bench. Players leaving the bench to participate in a fight will be dealt with in accordance with both the PIAA and Highlands School District rules. Reiterate these rules with your players prior to the season.

Assistant Coach

- The fundamental responsibility of the assistant coach is to implement the program developed by the head coach. In order to do this effectively, the assistant coach should be well-versed in the basic fundamental skills of the sport he/she is coaching, and be capable of applying sound teaching techniques when giving instruction to the participants. They are to follow the same district rules that all head coaches adhere to.

Pre-Season Compliance

- Coach’s preparation prior to the start of the season:
 - Make an announcement via the school’s communication system for all students interested in going out for the sport.
 - During the pre-season meeting with the candidates the following should be explained:
 - Expectation of the athletes who plan to participate
 - Requirements for earning a varsity letter
 - The inherent dangers of the sport. (i.e. the possibility of being injured and the nature of these injuries)
 - Any damage done by a student-athlete to a bus, or any other type of school property will not be tolerated
 - Students represent the Highlands School District and their community. Any conduct that detracts from either, will result in a review by the Principal and Athletic Director, which could lead to a suspension or expulsion from the team.
 - Theft by the student-athlete will result in his/her expulsion from the team, with the very definite possibility that he/she will not be permitted to take part in any other sport for the balance of the year
 - The grade requirements to maintain athletic eligibility
 - Procedures to follow in the event of an injury
 - The attendance policy requirements as dictated by the PIAA and the Highlands School District
 - He/she must be in school by 11:00 a.m. in order to practice or play that day (See players’ rules and regulations)
 - A physical exam is required, and their physical cards completed

Weight Room Policy

1. No student is to use the weight room without supervision of a coach or faculty member.
2. The following safety measures should be observed while students are using the weight room:
 - Be considerate of others in the weight room and in the general gym area.
 - Warm up properly with light weights or the body's own resistance before attempting maximum or heavy lifts.
 - Avoid distracting an individual, in the act of lifting, through noise or movement.
 - Remain safely clear of an individual in the act of lifting.
 - Take care not to hold breath while lifting heavy weights. Holding one's breath will cause dizziness and black out may occur.
 - Avoid maximum efforts without spotters.
 - Secure collars before performing any exercise.
 - Put weights away after use. The lifting area should be neat, clean, and free from clutter.
 - Remove weights from the bar upon completion of a workout.
 - Return the bar upon completion of a workout.
 - Master proper form when doing exercises.
 - Avoid doing "bent-over rowing" or other exercises of this nature with heavy weights that place the body in an unsound position.

Guidelines for Supporting Athletes for Interscholastic Events

1. When a coach or building principal deems it necessary to suspend an athlete on a limited basis (less than 10 calendar days) from an interscholastic event(s), the coach shall notify the parents and Athletic Director immediately with reason for the suspension and the action taken by the coach.
2. A follow-up letter shall be sent to the parents/guardians and student, indicating the charges against the student and action taken.
3. When it is recommended that a student be suspended from interscholastic activities for 10 calendar days or more, the parents/guardians have the right to a conference to hear the charges against the athlete, and to present testimony on their behalf, as well as to cross-examine the person(s) making the charges.
4. The hearing conference shall be held as soon as possible, but no later than three school days following the alleged incident. The time and place of the informal hearing shall be mutually agreed upon by the parents/guardians and staff. The student and parents/guardians shall be notified that they have the right to be represented by counsel and, if desired, a stenographic record be made of the conference at the parents/guardians' expense.
5. A letter shall be sent to the student and parents/guardians, from the Athletic Director or principal, outlining the charges against the athlete, and the rights granted to the student and parents/guardians for due process.
6. A written report of the findings and recommendations of the hearing committee shall be sent to the parents/guardians, students, and administration.
 - The rules and penalties set forth are not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive, or in any way restrict or abrogate the right, duty, and authority of individual athletic coaches to promulgate reasonable rules and regulations. They are designed to promote the goals of the interscholastic athletic programs as stated herein. They are intended to impose upon participants the appropriate penalties for violation of those rules and regulations, and the Highlands School District hereby reaffirms the right, duty, and authority of the athletic coaches to do so.

Ninth Grade Participants Rule

Ninth Grade Students are eligible to compete on varsity, junior varsity, or junior high athletic teams when a sport is not offered at the ninth-grade level. However, when a sport is offered at the ninth-grade level, regardless of the season, a ninth grader may be given a three-week trial period at the varsity level, to determine his/her ability to make the varsity team. (This rule is consistent with the PIAA “Super Frosh” rule.) At the conclusion of the trial period, the ninth grader will be added to the varsity roster, or will return to the ninth grade program, provided that he/she has not competed against another school, including scrimmages, during the trial period. Once this option is exercised, it may not be changed. The student is committed to that level of competition in the sport for the entire year. If the student does not make starting unit, or is not considered as a first back up at the varsity level, and cannot go back to the ninth-grade level, the student must sit out for the remainder of the season.

Season and Out Of Season Rules and Regulations

The PIAA Board of Control believes that compliance with the regulations listed below can best be accomplished with enforcement, direction, and supervision by principals. Principals can help to successfully manage or oversee interscholastic athletic programs, with the backing of Superintendents and the School Board. Thus, the PIAA Board of Control believes Superintendents and School Boards must provide strong support for principals who must obtain compliance from all parties concerned.

- The basic responsibility of all administrators and athletic coaches is to provide students, who are participating in interscholastic athletics, with a worthwhile, educational experience.
- All sports have a defined season, and no sport shall operate to the detriment of any other sport.
- Students should have the opportunity to participate in as many interscholastic athletic experiences as is reasonably possible, and anything that serves to prevent this opportunity is contrary to the philosophy of the PIAA. Rules and regulations, as stated above, each sport has a defined season which includes the first legal practice date, first legal scrimmage date, the first legal playing date, the last legal playing date for the regular season, the district deadline, the dates for the PIAA championships, the maximum number of contests for the regular season and the maximum number of scrimmages or inter-school practices for the regular season. All member schools must comply with the defined season for each sport. Within each defined season, member schools may sponsor teams who compete against other member schools or schools that follow all PIAA policies, rules, and regulations. Outside of the defined season for sports, member schools may not sponsor teams, but member schools and coaches and/or students of member schools may be involved with sports activities such as training programs, recreational activities, “open gyms,” clinics and camps, provided that the school does not sponsor teams, and provided that any participation by coaches and/or students acting as private citizens, and on a voluntary basis, may participate on teams that are not affiliated with their school or other member schools during the out of season period as described below.
- Any sports activity that occurs outside of the defined season for a sport is outside the jurisdiction of the PIAA except as set forth in the immediately preceding paragraph and as follows:
 - The coach or other personnel representing the school shall not require an athlete to participate in a sport or training program for a sport outside of the PIAA- defined sport’s season. The participation of students in any sport activity that occurs outside of its defined season must be voluntary.
 - In order to maintain eligibility to represent a member school in football, a student shall not participate in organized football camps, clinics, drills, practices, games, scrimmages or similar contact activities outside the PIAA-defined football season. The school’s blocking/tackling dummies and blocking/tackling sleds may not be used by schools, community organizations and groups, coaches, and students outside the PIAA-defined football season.
 - The school’s name, nickname, interscholastic athletic uniform, equipment, and health/first aid supplies may not be used by community organizations and groups,

- coaches and students outside the PIAA-defined football season, except as provided below. All activity in a sport, including practice, shall terminate by the last legal playing date for the regular season in that sport unless the team is entered into the PIAA playoffs or PIAA tournament. If the team is entered into the PIAA playoffs or PIAA tournament, all activity in the sport must terminate on the day of elimination from the PIAA event. With the approval of the District Committee, regular season contests, which have been postponed, may be rescheduled, and played between the last legal playing date for the regular season in that sport, and the district deadline in that sport. For purposes of the immediately preceding sentence, the date of playing of the last such postponed contest shall constitute the last legal playing date for the regular season in that sport. Contests that are required to be played in order to determine qualifiers to PIAA district playoffs and/or tournaments, or contests that are required to be played to determine a league champion, which are approved by the District Committee, shall not count toward the maximum number of team competitions for regular season, and shall be played by the district deadline in that sport.

Athletic Insurance - Resolution and Coverage

All students participating in Highlands School District sports activities must be covered by either family hospitalization/medical insurance or by student accident insurance. In the event family accident insurance is unavailable, student accident insurance may be purchased through the district approved carrier. It is essential that all participants be covered by insurance, since voluntary participation in extra-curricular activities entails an inherent risk of injury on the part of the participant.

Medical Forms

Physical examinations, as required by the PIAA, must be completed before the first official start date of the sport season in which the student-athlete is competing. The participant can utilize the sport physical day the school provides prior to each sport season, or go to his/her personal doctor. The PIAA CIPAA forms for physical examination are required to be signed by the parent/guardian, and then signed by the doctor after the examination is completed. This form will be kept on file by the trainer/athletic office. The forms can be located on the Highlands Athletics website @ (www.goldenramsathletics.org) homepage under the forms tab, or by contacting the Athletic Department.

Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletic Activities

Schedule of Games

The maximum number of games and scrimmages that can be scheduled, including all league and nonleague play (excluding playoff games), will be in compliance with the WPIAL guidelines for each season.

Reimbursement for Coaching

Payment of the supplemental contract will only be made after the Final Report is submitted. Generally, athletic reimbursements are paid the second check of the month following the conclusion to the season.

Dismissal Times

Times must be approved by the principal after the original scheduling of bus departure is completed by the Athletic Director. When athletic events are to be played in the afternoon, all home games will be scheduled no earlier than 3:30 p.m. When possible, away games are scheduled in the same time frame. Every effort should be made to keep athletes in class as much as possible. Coaches should emphasize the importance of the academic program to all athletes.

Transportation/Accommodations

The Athletic Director, or his/her secretary, will schedule buses. The Athletic Office will handle any cancellations or changes. Coaches are not permitted to arrange for bus times or travel arrangements. Coaches and sponsors are to discuss preferred times with the Athletic Director or his/her secretary. All overnight stays, due to playoffs or tournaments, require Board approval, and accommodations and travel must be handled by the Athletic Department. The coach is expected to discuss any preferences and times at least four weeks prior to needing them. The Athletic Director will take all requests under advisement and then make the necessary arrangements.

Bus Departures

Athletes will have a five minute grace period before the bus is scheduled to leave. All athletes must use team buses for transportation to events. They may not drive themselves or teammates to the game.

If an athlete is to travel from an away event by means other than scheduled bus transportation, the athlete must have written permission from his/her parents or guardians, given to the Athletic Director, and signed and dated by the coach.

Eligibility

Grades

Coaches are to submit the list of team members, on an eligibility sheet, to the Athletic Director, or his/her secretary, as soon as the roster is finalized at the beginning of the sport season.

These lists will be sent to all the other schools, and also be given to the faculty.

Eligibility reports will be run each Tuesday and Friday at 11 a.m. during the sport season, by the Athletic Director or his/her secretary. Tuesday's list will be sent to the coaches to share with the team so student-athletes know where they stand.

Friday's list will serve as the official list. If a student-athlete is failing two or more subjects, they are deemed academically ineligible. The Athletic Director will notify the coach, who will notify the student-athlete.

All students, whether in-person or online, will be held to the same grade standards on a weekly basis.

All coaches must adhere to the eligibility rules and regulations set down by the PIAA. All students must be passing four (4) major subjects. When the eligibility sheets indicate an athlete may be having a problem with his grades, the coach is to counsel the athlete and notify the Athletic Director and Principal. Students who are deemed academically ineligible will have a modified schedule for the week, that includes **required** tutoring and academic support to improve grades, and return to eligible status for the following week. This begins the week immediately following the Friday the ineligible list came out.

If a student-athlete questions a grade, he/she must do so before the eligibility sheet is posted on Friday, and must notify the coach, Athletic Director and/or Principal, before doing so.

Attendance

In order to be eligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest, a student must have been regularly enrolled in a secondary school, and in full-time attendance thereafter. The student is eligible only at the school in which he/she is enrolled.

Absence

A student who has been absent from school for a total of twenty or more school days (during a semester) is not eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he/she has been in attendance for a total of sixty school days following his twentieth day of absence, except where there is a consecutive absence of five or more school days, due to confirming injury, death in the immediate family as defined in Section 1154 of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, court subpoena, or quarantine, or to attend a religious function/activity which the church requires its members to attend, or an absence of five or more school days due to the same confining illness, such absence may be waived from the application of this rule by the District Committee. Attendance at summer school does not count toward the sixty days required. Absence from school for an entire semester, or for several semesters, shall disqualify a student for the same period as stated in this section. Fifteen days or more

of enrollment in a semester, in any secondary school, shall count as one semester of membership. Enrollment at summer school does not count as a semester or part of a semester.

Age

A student shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition upon attaining the age of nineteen years, with the following exception:

- If the age of 19 is attained on or after July 1, the student shall be eligible, age-wise, to compete through that school year.

The age of the student is determined by the date of birth, as recorded in a State Bureau of Vital Statistics, within one year after the date of birth. If a birth record from a State Bureau of Vital Statistics is not available, proof of a student's age may be determined by requiring the submission of a birth certificate which was issued within one year after birth, or in lieu of a birth certificate, a passport, an affidavit by the parents or legal guardian filed not later than one year after the student had admission to the first grade of an elementary school. In the event of the non-existence of any of these records or evidence, the earliest date of birth as recorded in the records of the school or schools attended by the student shall be considered the date of birth.

Student Ineligible Who Competes on Another Similar Team

- Any member of a high school team, who participates in an athletic contest as a member of any other similar team during the same season, the season to begin with the school's first scheduled game and the season to include vacations, holidays, and periods of suspension, shall be ineligible to compete in that sport for the remainder of that season.
- Article VII, Section 1 (A) may be waived for all sports, providing that such waiver is first approved in writing by the Principal, and is placed in the school's permanent file in the PIAA office.

Eligibility of College Students for High School Athletics

No person who has been enrolled as a part-time or full time student in an institution of college standing, and who has participated in an intercollegiate athletics contest, shall be eligible for interscholastic athletics (as a member of any interscholastic athletic team either within or outside of the State of Pennsylvania).

Transfer/Residence

All transfer students and questions of residency will be thoroughly reviewed by the Athletic Director to ensure they are in accordance with all PIAA rules before they can be declared eligible to compete on an interscholastic sports team.

Period of Participation

Section I: Period of Participation

A student shall not represent his/her school in interscholastic athletics if he/she has:

- Been in attendance more than eight semesters beyond the eighth grade
- Played six seasons beyond sixth grade in any sport; or played four seasons beyond the eighth grade of any sport
- Completed the work of grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, inclusive

Section II: When A Student is Beyond Ninth Grade

When a student is beyond ninth grade, the satisfactory completion of three Carnegie units above the eighth grade, or the completion of a Junior High School course shall classify a student as being beyond the ninth grade.

Section III: When A Student Participates in A Game or Interscholastic Scrimmage

When a student participates in a game or interscholastic scrimmage, he/she is considered as representing his/her school during a particular season or sport, only if he/she has participated in a game or interscholastic scrimmage, or any part of a game or interscholastic scrimmage.

- Super Frosh Rule– If a ninth grader is allowed to participate at the varsity level, if there is such a sport for the ninth grader, he/she has until the first scrimmage or game to declare his/her intention. If he/she plays in a scrimmage or game, then he/she must continue at that level for the entire season.

Section IV: Student Entering A Mid-Year

A student who enters school in the second semester and plays two partial seasons in the same sport in separate schools, shall be considered as playing the equivalent of one season.

Section V: What Constitutes A Semester?

The first half of the total number of school days in a school term shall constitute the first semester; the second half shall constitute the second semester. Athletically, the first semester shall continue until such time as the second semester begins.

Section VI: Continuing Eligibility

A student who used all remaining eligibility, may retain eligibility for any portion of that athletic schedule not completed by the end of the semester in which he/she was eligible, provided he/she is eligible in all other aspects.

Section VII: Waiver of Eight Semester Rule

- The District committee may waive the eight-semester limit in the following cases:

1. Illness or injury that meets all of the following requirements:
 - causes at least 90 days of absence from school
 - causes the student to be confined to an institution and/or at home
 - necessitates repeating a grade or semester
2. A student has repeated a grade or semester for a reason beyond the student's control, which reason produced a condition equally as debilitation as a long-confining illness or injury
3. A student, as part of a recognized foreign exchange program, attended a school in a foreign country, that did not offer an interscholastic athletic program
4. The repetition of a grade or semester was in whole or in part for reasons of scholarship

Note: The principal shall notify the district committee, so that an informed decision can be made whenever a situation arises that dictates a possible request for additional eligibility

Safety Guidelines

The safety and welfare of athletes is always of prime importance, and it is the intent of the Highlands School District to reemphasize the responsibility of coaches to provide for the physical safety and

effective instruction of participants. To this end, coaches will be expected to conform to the following general guidelines, and to apply their own knowledge and skills in implementing them.

- Inform participants of the most serious types of injuries that can result from participation, the causes and practices which can lead to such injuries, and the ways that such injuries can be minimized or avoided.
- Instruct all participants in the rules of the sport, with an emphasis on those which have safety implications, and the reason for such rules.
- Require that participants report injuries to the coach or designated person.
- Utilize a variety of techniques and drills to condition athletes to perform in a manner which will be both effective and safe.
- Provide immediate corrective action when athletes perform incorrectly as it relates to safety.
- Inspect the facilities and equipment before each use for conditions, equipment, or apparatus which may be unsafe.
- Utilize visual aids, demonstrations, verbal instruction, and drills to reinforce the learning of safe and effective skills.
- Maintain a daily record of all injuries which cause a participant to miss one or more days of practice or games.

Athletic Injuries Management – Universal Precautions

No distinction is made between body fluids from students with a known disease, or those from students without symptoms, or with an undiagnosed disease. Body fluids of all people should be considered to contain potentially infectious agents. The term “body fluids” includes blood, semen, drainage from scrapes and cuts, feces, urine, vomit, and saliva. Contact with body fluids always presents a risk of infection with a variety of germs. The following guidelines are meant to provide simple and effective precaution against transmission of disease for all people, and are to be followed by athletic trainers, coaches, student athletic trainers, managers, and participants:

- Avoid direct skin contact with body fluids. Disposable gloves should be readily available in the athletic training room, the medical kit, the equipment kit, and the coach’s office.
- Make certain the gloves have no tears or punctures. Remember gloves are disposable and not to be washed or reused.
- Put gloves on carefully and slowly to avoid tearing. When removing gloves, use a skin-to-skin and glove-to-glove method, and turn the last one removed inside out to contain the contaminated surfaces.
- Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
- Dispose of waste contaminated with body fluids to include gauze pads, band aids, dressings, and protective gloves, by placing in a plastic bag, sealing, and depositing in the hazardous waste receptacle.

Use disposable paper towels rather than cloth towels when wiping blood or fluid from an injured area. If a cloth towel is used, and becomes contaminated, dispose of immediately.

- Clean surfaces contaminated with body fluids with a chlorine-water solution (1 part chlorine bleach to 10 parts water), or a commercial disinfectant. The chlorine /water mix should be made fresh each day.
- Remind athletes to avoid contact with blood and body fluids from wounds or injuries of another athlete.

- Use a Pocket Mask in the event CPR must be administered.
- Reinforce Universal Precautions as indicated by the situation.
- Check to see if there are Universal Precautions in practice at the host school for away athletic events. If not, the contaminated material will need to be double bagged (placed in a plastic bag, then in the red infectious waste bag) and transported to home school for proper disposal.

Sports Specifics

- Wrestling mats must be cleaned prior to each use with a commercial product designed to inactivate most viruses, including HIV.
- Wrestlers should be encouraged to render first aid to him/herself when blood or body fluids are present.
- Saliva boxes are to be lined, tied off, and disposed of immediately after use.
- Avoid using community towel.
- Open wounds, cuts, scrapes, and sores should be bandaged and/or covered with cloth.
- Some sports have specific situational guidelines as indicated in the rule book. The Universal Precautions should be followed.

Cancellation

If school is cancelled, there are to be no activities in school or outside. The only exception would be for those teams that are involved in playoffs. If travel to and from school will not pose a safety hazard to the athletes, then and only then will those playoff teams practice. This decision will be made by the Principal and Athletic Director and cleared with the Superintendent.

Student Athletes Use of the Athletic Facilities

1. Practice activities are to be held only when overseen by a coach.
2. Under no circumstances should students be in the pool area or use the pool without written, prior approval. A certified lifeguard must be on duty.

3. Athletes should not arrive at the building before the time assigned by their coach. If they arrive early, they are to wait quietly until the coach opens the door for the group.
4. Athletes will leave the building by the assigned exit after practice and showering. They are not to enter the hall lobby or other areas of the building unless accompanied by a coach.
5. Money or valuables should not be left in the locker room. Athletes should take personal items with them or lock them up.
6. Athletic equipment will be used only in the manner for which it was intended.
7. Shoes with cleats are not to be worn in the building, except in the locker room.
8. Vandalism or theft of any kind will not be tolerated. Student athletes have a responsibility to report any observed destructive act(s).
9. Only the areas designated on the practice schedule distributed each week will be used by an athletic team, and only at the time designated on that schedule.
10. Athletes will enter and exit the building by the main entrance doors unless their coach has authorized another exit.

Letter Awards

Varsity letters will be awarded when the student has met requirements set forth by the coach. Each head coach shall annually submit the requirements participants must meet, to the Athletic Director for approval prior to the start of the season. These approved criteria must be communicated to the participants prior to the first event, so that each member is aware of what is required to earn a varsity letter. Head coaches have the right to withhold awards if necessary. The principal and the Athletic Director are to be made aware of any withholding of letters.

General Requirements for Varsity Awards

- Attendance is required at all meetings and events unless excused by the coach
- Participation in at least one-half the total number of quarters, innings, games, etc., is required
- Letters are not to be given for practice time
- Junior Varsity contests do not count toward earning a letter
- If the head coach determines that the student has made a significant contribution to the team
- The participant must finish a complete season in good standing
- Managers and statistician awards will parallel the regular award system
- If an athlete earns a letter for a fall sport, then earns a letter in any subsequent sport in that school year, he/she will receive a pin of that sport to be added to their letter

Rules and Regulations

This set of rules, along with any additions that individual coaches have, are to be given to each athlete at the beginning of each season. They are to be taken home, discussed with parents or guardians, and returned, signed by both the athlete and his/her parents/guardians. These rules and regulations are an extension of school policy or of proper behavior and are expected to be followed without exception.

- Absolutely no disrespect will be tolerated toward any coach, sport official, fan, teammate, or opposing player.
- Attendance at practice is required as scheduled. Arriving late or leaving early requires a note. If a student is in school and misses practice, a note must be provided giving the reason before

he/she can play or practice again. If a student athlete is not in school, or arrives after 11:00 a.m., he/she may not play or practice that day. The exceptions to this are: if he/she was at a doctor's appointment, on a school related trip, a college visit, family matters, vo-tech, or a work study program. In all of these instances, a written excuse is required. If student is absent in the morning and returns to school in the afternoon or vice-versa, he/she must produce an excuse (for the above reasons) in order to participate that day. If student is out sick, he/she cannot practice or play that day.

- Athletes who are injured to the extent that it requires a doctor or hospital visit must have a signed release from the doctor or hospital before he/she is permitted to play or practice again.
 - A student who is suspended from school (receives an in or out of school suspension) will also be suspended from the team for an equal number of days, starting on the day the suspension begins.
 - Players who are assigned detention may not play or practice on the day(s) they are serving
 - The coach must be present before activities begin. If a student arrives early, he/she must sit and wait for a coach to arrive.
 - Use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs will result in the student's suspension, or possible dismissal from the team. This applies to in or out of school.
 - An athlete who is sick or injured must inform the coach/trainer and may not play or practice.
 - Do not damage equipment or school property at either home or away events.
 - Uniforms are the responsibility of the athlete and should be kept clean and in good condition, and returned clean and undamaged at the end of the season. The athlete is responsible for payment to replace his/her uniform if lost.
 - Improper bus behavior will not be tolerated. Observe all bus rules and obey the bus driver. Profanity will not be tolerated.
 - Jewelry or large sums of money, etc. are not to be brought to practices or games. Coaches, managers, or the trainer are not responsible for athlete's personal items. Bring a lock to secure items if you must bring these to practices or home or away events.
 - Failure to follow team and school rules can result in suspension or dismissal from the team. If a rule is violated, the coach will make every effort to meet with you to discuss the violation and penalty. The school administrator and coach's decision is final.
-
- I/We have read the Student-Athlete Handbook, including the above Rules and Regulations, and agree to follow them in accordance with the Highlands School District guidelines.

Athlete Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Coach's Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgement of Insurance Policy

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child has indicated an interest in participating in the Highlands High School Athletic Program. We know it is your wish, as well as ours, that every possible precaution be taken to protect our students from injury. We do our best to promote this by proper training, the use of good protective equipment, supervising all activities, and encouraging good safety habits. Despite all our efforts, accidents do occasionally happen. The school district is not legally liable for medical or hospital expenses, damages related to pain and suffering, loss of earning capacity or any other expenses or damages resulting from athletic injuries incurred in interscholastic sports. All students participating in Highlands School District sports activities must be covered by either family hospitalization, medical insurance, or by student accident insurance. If needed, any team member may purchase optional student accident insurance. Since voluntary participation in extracurricular activities entails an inherent risk of injury on the part of the participants, it is essential that all participants be covered by insurance. Please complete the following information and return this letter to the athletic trainer's office immediately.

Sincerely,

Katie Jo Stobert
Athletic Director

NAME OF STUDENT _____

SPORT/SPORTS _____

Family Insurance

NAME OF COMPANY _____

AGREEMENT NUMBERS _____

GROUP NUMBERS _____

In case of injury, depending upon the nature of severity of the injury, the attending physician, or in his/her absence, the coach, is authorized by you (parent/guardian) to send the player listed on the form to the closest medical facility.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

Warning and Notification of Risk.

Playing, practicing, or participating in a sport can be a dangerous activity involving risk of injury. There is no limitation to the nature or severity of the possible injuries in some sports. Some sport injuries can result in serious permanent impairment or be life threatening. Unfortunately, injury may occur simply due to the nature of the sport, without the occurrence

of any unusual event and without fault. I have read the above WARNING. I am aware and understand the risks of practicing, participating in and playing interscholastic activities. I recognize the importance of following the coaches' instructions regarding the activity.

STUDENT NAME _____

SPORT/SPORTS _____

STUDENT/GUARDIAN _____ **DATE** _____

Family Insurance not available—student accident insurance requested. _____