



NASHUA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Student-Athlete-Parent Handbook



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Introduction

The material presented in this handbook has been compiled to acquaint you and your family with some of the policies, practices, and regulations that govern the athletic programs in the Nashua School District. By registering to participate in athletics in Nashua, you are agreeing to the contents of this handbook. Please keep this handbook and refer to it if questions and/or concerns about your son or daughter's athletic experience should arise. If your questions or concerns are not answered within this booklet, please feel free to contact us.

Vision

The Nashua Athletics program strives to be a program which excels in academics, sportsmanship, and athletics while building pride within the school and the community.

High school sports are an extension of the classroom learning experience. As such, athletics provide an opportunity to extend the values and ideals developed in the classroom, and constantly strive towards the development of a well-rounded individual.

As a member of the Nashua Athletic Program, students are expected to demonstrate proper respect for all coaches, teammates, officials, spectators, facilities, and equipment. Student-athletes are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct, both on and off the playing surface, as they are, at all times, representatives of themselves, their team, school, and community.

Core values

Accountability – Student-athletes are to follow the expectations set forth by the Nashua School District, their school, the Nashua Athletic department, and the sport-specific program in which they participate.

Commitment – In order to make our teams the best they can be, coaches and student-athletes must be fully committed. Family, faith, and academics should be the only priorities that come before interscholastic athletics.

Excellence – Every task, drill, practice, game, and homework assignment should be done with pride and excellence at all times; understanding that each individual's level of excellence may be different.

Responsibility – Student-athletes have a responsibility to be leaders amongst their peers. They have to demonstrate respect to their community, school, program, team, and self by behaving appropriately at all times. They are encouraged to excel in school and to make the right decisions in social settings and in peer groups.

Sportsmanship – Student-athletes represent themselves, schools, families, and city. Unsportsmanlike behavior by students will have consequences.

If these core values are instilled in our student-athletes, all of our programs will be successful. Our students will leave our programs prepared for college, career, military, and all aspects of life after interscholastic athletics.

Sports Offered

Tryouts for programs are open to all students provided they meet the standards of academic eligibility, school citizenship, completed permission, and liability information and basic physical/health qualifications including Impact testing (High schools only). Participation in the program, therefore, is a privilege earned by students who meet and maintain these standards.

High Schools:

FALL:	WINTER:	SPRING:
Bass Fishing	Alpine Skiing	Baseball
Cross Country	Basketball	Lacrosse
Field Hockey	Gymnastics	Outdoor Track
Football	Ice Hockey	Softball
Golf	Indoor Track	Tennis
Soccer	Spirit	Unified Track+
Spirit	Swimming/diving	
Unified Soccer+	Unified Basketball+	
Volleyball	Wrestling	

+High school Unified Sports provide an opportunity for students with and without intellectual disabilities to compete on the same team.

Governing Body

Nashua High Schools North and South are members of the **New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association** (NHIAA) and are therefore governed by all association by-laws, rules, and regulations. The NHIAA is a member of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and is bound by its set of rules, policies, and regulations. Rules governing individual sports vary depending on the sport. Copies of the complete set of NHIAA Rules and Regulations are available online at www.nhiala.org.

Additional policies, regulations and rules are set by the Nashua Board of Education and the Nashua Athletic Department. Local communities may set their own policy, rules, and/or regulations as long as they are more stringent than stipulated by the NHIAA.

Proper Conduct and Sportsmanship

Student-athletes represent themselves, their coaches, their teammates, their school, and the Nashua community. It is expected and encouraged that they maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement and citizenship, conducting themselves in a positive, courteous, and respectful manner at all times, whether in or out of season. Good sportsmanship will be displayed at all times with teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials. It is also expected that student-athletes will encourage this sportsmanship by spectators by leading by example.

Student-athletes will abide by all school, District, Athletic department, and team rules and expectations at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, proper dress and only using appropriate language at all times.

Smoking or use of any tobacco-like products (including e-cigarettes and vapors), drinking, and/or use of other drugs is prohibited. Violations of this will result in severe disciplinary actions up to and including immediate dismissal from a team.

The Principal, Athletic Director, or Athletic Coordinator reserves the right to remove a student from a team for poor academic performance, inappropriate behavior, and/or poor citizenship for any length of time. A student may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement as determined by the Principal and Athletic Director.

Commitment

Tryouts

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege; students try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet those expectations for the duration of the season. Students cut from one team may find opportunity with a non-cut sport providing there is space on that team.

Daily Team Attendance

It is expected that once a season begins (first day of practice or tryouts), a student will be in attendance at every tryout, practice, competition, and team event. This includes, but is not limited to, the two or three weeks of the fall season before school starts in August as well as school holidays and vacations. If this level of commitment is not possible, a student will most likely not be a member of the team. If a student is not going to be present at a practice or game, he/she must notify the coach. Students may be excused from team activities for illness, injury, academics, family or religious reasons with **prior** notification and approval whenever possible. Work is not an acceptable reason to miss practice or competition. Our coaches expect athletes to be present at all team-related activities and may suspend a student-athlete from contests for absences.

A student must be registered before registration closes (the first day of tryouts/practices) in order to be able to participate that season. No student may participate without being registered and completing all necessary requirements. Furthermore, a student who misses tryouts for a vacation or disciplinary reasons will not be given a late tryout and thus will not be permitted to participate in a cut sport for that season.

It is expected that all High School athletes will attend the preseason meeting and the end of season Awards' Night.

High school athletics is a 5 to 6 day a week commitment. It is to be expected that practices and events will take place on weekends and over school holidays and vacations (see page 5 for more information related to school vacations).

High School Varsity Letters

Student-athletes must complete an entire season to be recognized with a varsity letter. Criteria for earning a varsity letter is determined by the Head Coach and may vary by sport. Any student who does not complete a season due to disciplinary or academic eligibility reasons will not receive their letter or credit for that season.

12-Season Athlete Recognition

It is the philosophy of the Nashua Athletic department to promote and encourage multi-sport participation. At the conclusion of a student-athlete's senior year the NHIAA and the school district will recognize athletes who have competed in all 12 seasons of their high school career. For a season to count toward this recognition:

- A student must finish the season in good standing.
- He/she may not have quit, been removed from the team for disciplinary, academic, or attendance reasons.
- A student-athlete may use "team manager" as a qualifying season at most one season each year (according to the guidelines below).
- See also information below regarding unified partners

Team Managers

There are many responsibilities of a high school athletic team manager. It is important for team managers to understand that they too represent the Nashua Athletic Department and are held to the same expectations as those participating in uniform. Team managers must register and agree to the contents of the Student-Athlete Parent Handbook and meet all athletic eligibility requirements but are not required to pay the athletic user fee. Managers are expected to follow all team rules and perform the duties as expected by the coaching staff.

For team manager to count toward the 12 season athlete recognition

- No more than one season per year as manager will count.
- There must be a history of at least 2 years being a manager for the same sport for manager to count during senior year. (There may be exception to this statement in the instance of season and/or career ending injuries or illnesses.)

Dual Sport Athletes (2 sports in the same season)

In rare occasions students may wish to participate in two sports during the same season (for example: alpine ski racing and indoor track). Students may do so only with the approval of both head coaches and the Athletic Director. There is an application that must be completed **prior** to the season.

Students participating in two sports during the same season are only required to submit payment of the athletic user fee of the more expensive sport. Dual sport participation only counts as one season toward the 12-season athlete recognition.

Unified Partners

The Unified Sports program provides an opportunity for students with and without intellectual challenges to participate on an athletic team together. The student with intellectual challenges is considered a unified “athlete”. The student without such challenges is considered the unified “partner”. The popularity of unified sports has grown tremendously and for those reasons the following have been implemented:

- The number of unified partners on a team in any season may be limited.
- In the event that the number of partners participating needs to be limited, students with a positive history of unified participation will be given first consideration.
- An application process may be required for unified partners.
- Unified partner participation will only count toward the 12-season athlete recognition when there is significant history over the student’s high school career.
- A student who is a unified partner for the first time in his/her senior year will not receive credit toward the 12-season athlete award. (Extenuating circumstances such as season and/or career ending injuries or illnesses may be appealed to the Athletic Director.)

Daily School Attendance

A student's attendance record is final once daily attendance reports are published (based upon the NSD student database X2). It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to be sure to follow proper school procedures for absences and tardies at the beginning of each school day. The Athletic Office cannot override the official school attendance. There will be no changes once the report has been sent to coaches (exceptions to this will only be made if the absence was recorded in error).

Absences

- All students are to be in attendance for the entire school day in order to participate in practice or event.
- If a student-athlete is dismissed by the School Nurse due to illness; he/she is ineligible to participate in athletics that day.
- If a practice or contest is scheduled on a weekend or during school vacation, the student must be in attendance the preceding Friday (or last school day prior) in order to participate, regardless if the absence is excused or unexcused.
- A suspension (in-school or out) is considered an absence from school. Once notified of the suspension the student is ineligible for extracurricular activities until returning to a full day of school.
- Exceptions, such as school field trips, college visits, family emergencies, funerals, religious holidays, and scheduled appointments, must be cleared through the Athletic Office in **advance**.
- Unique or extenuating circumstances not listed above may be excused at the discretion of the Athletic Director or Athletic Coordinator.

Excused Tardies and Dismissals for appointments

- If a student has a legitimate appointment (for example: doctor, dentist, orthodontist), it is expected that the student attend school for as much of the day as possible.
- Even if the tardy or dismissal is excused, a student will not be eligible to participate in practice or an event on a given day if he/she is not in school for a minimum of 2 ½ class periods.

Unexcused Tardies

- Student-athletes will be allowed three unexcused tardies without athletic consequence (we understand that "life happens").
- On the 4th unexcused tardy: the student-athlete will not be permitted to practice or compete that day. The student is expected to attend practice or event but may not be in uniform or participate.
- On the 5th through 9th unexcused tardy: the student-athlete will not be permitted to practice or compete that day AND will not be permitted to participate in the next scheduled contest (if the 5th through 9th unexcused tardy occurs on a game day, the student sits that game and the next).
- On the 10th unexcused tardy the student will be excused from the team.
- The unexcused tardy count begins on the first day of the season and continues for the duration of that season.

Any coach who allows a student to practice or compete when he/she should not have will be suspended from coaching the next contest.

School/Family Vacations, Extended Absences

Every student-athlete is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Because of scheduling demands of high school interscholastic athletics, many of our high school teams practice and/or compete during scheduled school vacations and holidays.

Student-athletes who take school sponsored trips during the scheduled season should not be penalized. However, it must be understood that time away from practice and games will impact one's ability to immediately return to competition. Student-athletes will be evaluated upon their return, if participation in a game or practice may be considered a health or safety concern, the Head Coach will not allow them to compete. This is to make certain they are not putting the student-athlete at risk for injury or that they are a detriment to the team.

If the student-athlete takes any other type of vacation, the student-athlete will be suspended for the same number of contests he or she missed while on vacation. Additional consequences may be imposed for missed practices at the coach's discretion. Any issues or problems arising from this policy should be addressed to the Athletic Director.

Playing Time

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Student-athletes learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being, and striving towards excellence. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is “playing time” during contests. If a student has questions as to his/her “playing time” he/she is encouraged to discuss it with the coach. In the Nashua Athletic Department, being a member of a team does not guarantee an equitable amount of “playing time.”

Sub-Varsity & Middle School Teams

At the sub-varsity level (junior varsity, freshman, and middle school), members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual’s playing time, but overall, students must be “positive contributing team members”, attend practices, show effort, have a positive attitude, and exhibit a full commitment to the school team. Another factor that must always be considered is athletic skill. If these factors are present at the sub-varsity levels, students may expect to enjoy their share of playing time, but it may not be every event and it will most likely not be equal.

Varsity Teams

At the varsity level, the guidelines for the coaching staff are similar to those stated about with an added factor of competing at the highest possible level. Varsity teams are striving for a spot in post-season tournaments and a chance at the Division 1 Championship. Players, coaches, parents, and staff members all want the Nashua varsity teams to be successful on the field, court, track, pool, rink, etc. To reach that goal, teams must compete to win as many contests as possible. In order to do this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive and most skilled team members; however, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes and role players. These athletes have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden when needed. They have to practice as hard as they can to help make the teams as competitive as they can be. They also have to constantly strive to move up to a “starting” role. By no means are our varsity programs “win-at-all-costs” programs, but winning is one goal of every competition.

Disqualification/Ejection from an Event

Any player who is disqualified before, during or after any sanctioned event at the sub-varsity or varsity level shall not participate in any scheduled interscholastic athletic events until sitting out the next **two** scheduled events at the level at which the suspension occurred. This includes NHIAA tournament contests, invitational events, or regular season contests. The NHIAA imposes a one game suspension, Nashua imposes a second. A student who is ejected must also watch a NFHS sportsmanship video under the supervision of an athletic department staff member.

Any player involved in a fight shall receive a **four** game suspension for the first offense (2 games from the NHIAA, doubled from Nashua).

A second disqualification of any kind will lead to a disqualification in that sport for the balance of the sports season.

Any coach who is disqualified before, during or after a game at the sub-varsity or varsity level shall not participate in the next **four** scheduled interscholastic athletic event, including NHIAA tournament contests, invitational events, or regular season contests. The NHIAA imposes a two game suspension, Nashua doubles that.

Additional event suspensions may be imposed by the Athletic Director based on the nature and severity of the incident that caused the disqualification.

An ejection or disqualification from an event is a subjective decision by the officials and cannot be protested or appealed. The above suspensions are in place regardless of the reason for the ejection/disqualification.

School Athletic Equipment

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Proper care, retention, and return of all equipment and uniform parts is a requirement. Students failing to turn in all issued equipment, uniforms, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment or uniforms. Payment is required at the time of the loss, prior to the next season of athletic involvement, or graduation, whichever comes first. In the event that the equipment or uniform is found and/or returned after payment, a refund will be made.

Students will not be issued an athletic uniform if there are any fees owed to the school. Once the fees are paid, the student will receive his/her uniform.

Students are to wear the school issued uniform at all interscholastic events.

Locker Rooms and Facilities

Student Lockers

Once team rosters are set each team member will be issued an athletic locker. If a locker is not issued, students should request one from their coach or from the Athletic Office. Students are expected to lock all personal items and team equipment in their locker at all times. Students should never give their locker combination to anyone else. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers being left open or unlocked. On road trips, when lockers are not available, it is highly recommended that students leave valuables at home or give them to parents for safekeeping at the game site. Cash should never be carried or left at the school. **The Nashua Athletic Department is not responsible for items left unlocked and/or unattended.**

Building and Facility Access

At the conclusion of each school day, student-athletes should bring all items that they need until the next school day to the locker room area. For safety reasons students are not allowed access to other areas of the building after practice, games, or on non-school days. No students will be allowed access to any of our athletic facilities and/or equipment without proper supervision by a school staff member.

Team Captains

Team captains are leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to not only be aware of team rules and student responsibilities but also to help their teammates abide by them. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program. Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, department, school, District or state rules.

The coach determines how team captains are selected, if at all. Captains may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis. There is no requirement that teams must have captains nor that captains must be seniors.

College/Career Guidance

One of the most important decisions facing high school students is what to do with their lives after high school. The Nashua Athletic Department staff and coaching staff are willing and eager to assist all students with this extremely important decision. Staff members fully understand the importance of this assistance. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videos tapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. As appropriate they will guide students to more knowledgeable staff members who can help with post-high school decisions.

If a student's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level, it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA regulations. Copies of the latest regulations are available in the Guidance Office, the Athletic Office, and online at www.ncaa.org. Student-athletes wishing to pursue collegiate athletes should register through the NCAA Eligibility Center early in their high school career. Please be familiar with these regulations and seek assistance if clarification is needed.

National Letter of Intent Signings

As we encourage students to be multi-sport athletes in high school, we also encourage them to pursue athletics at the collegiate level. There are many opportunities at a variety of different levels of play for all student-athletes. A National Letter of Intent (NLI) is a binding agreement between a student-athlete and a Division I or II four-year institution. By signing the NLI, the student-athlete agrees to attend the institution full-time for one academic year and the institution agrees to provide athletic financial aid for one academic year. Students receiving NLIs who wish to be recognized at their high school must contact the athletic department and provide a copy of the NLI to be signed.

Communication

While interscholastic athletics can provide some of the most rewarding and inspiring moments in students' lives, there can also be times when things may not go the way a parent or child had hoped. If a conflict or issue arises during a season, it is imperative that it be addressed in a timely and appropriate manner so that the concern can be resolved promptly. Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult jobs. Open communication and clear expectations will enable both groups to work together to provide a greater benefit to the student-athletes.

In many instances, a conversation between a **parent and the student-athlete** can resolve most questions or concerns. The student-athlete is in attendance daily at practices and games and should be able to address rules and roles of the program.

If this conversation does not resolve the problem or answer the question, the next step is for the **student-athlete and coach** to discuss the concern. Many times a misunderstanding can easily be resolved with this direct conversation.

If it is necessary for a **parent and coach** to meet to discuss a concern, the parent should contact the coach to schedule a meeting. Please do not attempt to confront the coach before, after, or during a practice or game. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach and would not promote a positive resolution. It should be understood that playing time, team strategy, play calling, and other student-athletes are not appropriate topics of discussion.

If none of the above avenues resolve the concern, then a meeting between the student, parent, coach, and Athletic Director will be scheduled.

Contact the Athletic Director immediately at any time in the case of an emergency or a severe violation of safety or any rules or regulations.

The Role of Parents in High School Sports

(Adapted from a variety of sources)

Accept the demands and time commitment of high school sports.

Do everything possible to have your child at every practice, team event, and competition.

Attend as many games as possible.

Support the entire team, not just your child.

Support the coach and let him/her be the single instructional voice before and during competition.

View the game with team and program goals in mind.

Accept the goals and roles of your child.

Model appropriate behavior before, during, and after the game. Be poised, confident, and calm.

Model and demand positive sportsmanship.

Cheer positively for your team only.

Relieve competitive pressure, do not increase it.

Accept the judgement of the officials and remain in control.

Do everything possible to make the athletic experience a positive one for the players, yourself, and those around you.

Be an encourager, keep both victory and defeat in perspective.

As is read prior to many of our athletic events ... we would ask that parents help make the event a meaningful one for the athletes by showing respect for your team, the opposing team, the coaches, and the officials.

Let the players play, the coaches coach, and the officials officiate.

Registration Process/Eligibility

Students wishing to participate in high school interscholastic athletics must complete the following in order to be eligible. A student MAY NOT participate until all items are completed and verified.

1. Online registration through FamilyID for each season of participation

During this registration process, the parent/guardian will

- give permission for participation and provide emergency and medical information
- provide proof of health insurance.
- accept policies, procedures, and expectations as outlined in this handbook.

Opportunities will be provided for families to use a school computer if other internet access is not available.

2. Proof of medical examination clearing student for athletic participation

This is required once in the student's high school career. It is required prior to participation at any level. For students new to high school athletics, the physical must be dated on or after July 1 of the previous year.

For example: for the 2022-23 school year the physical must be dated on or after July 1, 2021 (last summer).

If necessary, please see the Athletic Department for information regarding locations of free or affordable athletic physicals.

3. Academic Eligibility – Please see the “Guide to Athletic Academic Eligibility and Waiver Process” (page 14)

To be eligible for high school athletics a student must be enrolled in a minimum of three courses and have earned an overall C- average and no more than one non-passing grade for the previous grading period. Non-passing grades include F, Fail, Incomplete, No Credit. All athletic seasons have an initial eligibility and an in-season eligibility. Each student-athlete must meet the academic standards at each grading period to participate in interscholastic athletics. All students are deemed academically eligible for the fall season of their freshman year.

The official date for eligibility is established as the date report cards are issued. Students who do not meet these academic requirements at the beginning of a season may apply for an academic waiver through the athletic office. Waivers are not granted once a season has begun. Students may only be awarded one academic waiver in a high school career. The waiver application can be found on your school's athletic website (www.NashuaNorthAthletics.com or www.NashuaSouthAthletics.com). Please refer to NHIAA By-Law Article II Section 2 and Nashua School District Policy JJJ and JJJ-R for further information.

4. Impact Testing for contact sports

All freshmen, juniors, and students new to high school athletics in Nashua who wish to participate in a contact sport will need to take the computerized Impact test. This test will provide baseline data which will aid in the return to participation in the event of a head injury. High school sports which do not require Impact testing: bass fishing, cross country, golf, swim (except divers), tennis, track (except pole vaulters), and unified sports.

5. Athletic User Fee Payment

Athletic user fees can be paid online during the registration process or by cash or check delivered to the athletic office in the respective high school. Checks should be made payable to “Nashua School District”. There will be a \$35 charge for all checks returned due to insufficient funds. Students may tryout prior to this fee being paid but students will not be issued a uniform until the fee is settled (ie: paid, free/reduced lunch or financial hardship granted, family cap, 3-season athlete verified, or payment plan agreed to). Dual sport athletes (two sports in one season) are required to only pay the higher of the two fees.

Fee Waivers

- Students who qualify for free or reduced meals through the Food Services Program are exempt from athletic fees and should indicate this at the time of registration. To apply for free or reduced meals please visit <https://www.myschoolapps.com/Application>.
- Any student-athlete who is a three-season participant in good standing in the same school year will not be charged the user fee for the spring season.
- No family will be required to pay more than \$1,500 in any single school year.

A fee waiver or payment plan may be requested if there are extenuating circumstances regarding financial hardship. This request can be made during the online registration process or by contacting the Athletic Director.

Fee structure:

\$65 FEE Bass Fishing Cross Country Indoor Track & Field Outdoor Track & Field Spirit (each season) Tennis Unified Soccer Unified Basketball Unified Track	\$175 FEE Baseball Basketball Field Hockey Lacrosse Soccer Softball Volleyball Wrestling	\$200 FEE Football Golf Gymnastics Swim/Dive	\$250 FEE Alpine Ski
			\$450 FEE Ice Hockey

Refunds

Full refunds will be issued if a student submits payment and then does not make a team.

A 50% refund will be given if a student is injured in the first half of the season and will not be able to play due to medical conditions. The Athletic Office must be notified of such injuries

No refunds will be given if a student quits, is removed from the team for disciplinary or attendance reasons, or fails to meet the academic eligibility standards during the season.

Additional NHIAA Policies for High School Athletics

In addition to Academic Eligibility stated above, there are other NHIAA policies which have been summarized below in an attempt to highlight the most important rules and regulations. If the following information does not answer specific questions, or if there is a concern, please refer to the NHIAA Handbook (which can be viewed at www.nhiala.org) or contact the Nashua School District Athletic Office.

Age (NHIAA By-Law Article II Section 1)

A student must be less than 19 years of age prior to September 1 of the current school year.

Eight Semester Rule (NHIAA By-Law Article II Section 3)

A student shall be eligible for interscholastic high school competition for no more than eight consecutive semesters beyond the eighth grade. This rule applies regardless of participation in athletics during that time.

Transfer Students (NHIAA By-Law Article II Section 4)

The rules governing transfer students entering the Nashua School District from another school are governed by the NHIAA. Students who transfer into the Nashua School District **must be declared eligible** prior to participating in an interscholastic contest. Information regarding the athletic eligibility of all students transferring to the Nashua School District should be requested from the Athletic Department Office.

Non-School Competition (NHIAA By-Law Article II Section 7)

Members of a school team are prevented from missing any portion of a high school practice or competition to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. This includes non-school tournaments, showcases, combines, or other athletic events. Whenever a conflict arises between the high school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the high school team practice/competition must be honored by the student-athlete. **Priority must be given at all times to the high school team, its practices, and its contests** unless a waiver has been granted by the principal and athletic director. It is expressly understood that waivers shall not be granted on a regular basis and shall only be granted in extraordinary circumstances.

Penalties: Any student-athlete who violates this rule, unless a waiver has been granted, for the first time shall be declared ineligible for the next four (4) consecutive interscholastic events or three (3) weeks of a season in which the student-athlete is a participant, whichever is greater. This Penalty is effective from the date of his or her last participation in a high school sport. Any student-athlete who violates this rule a second or subsequent time shall be declared ineligible for participation in any high school sport for the balance of the school year.

Additional Nashua School District Guidelines and Policies

Transportation To and From Contests

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to and from most “away” contests. All team members are expected to travel to these contests using the school provided transportation in order to compete in the event. Exceptions are made to this rule in only the most extreme cases. A student-athlete who does not ride the bus with the team without prior approval will not participate in the event.

Parents wishing to transport their child home from an away event must notify the athletic office before the end of school (2:00pm) the previous school day. For example – for a Friday game notification must be given by 2:00pm on Thursday. For a Saturday, Sunday or Monday event, notification must be given by 2:00pm on Friday. Please note that some coaches may require all team members to be on the bus on the way home regardless of this department procedure.

Sportsmanship for Student-Athletes

Nashua student-athletes must honor the responsibility that accompanies the privilege of representing their school by behaving with dignity and class on and off the field or court. Student-athletes participating in NHIAA sponsored events are expected to treat opponents and officials with respect. There will be no tolerance for trash-talking, taunting, heckling, or baiting of opponents. Nashua student-athletes must appreciate and understand that they are perhaps the most visible representatives of their school.

If any student in any sport willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent, he/she may be withheld from participation in athletics in the future.

The NHIAA suspends any student from participation in a sport if ejected from athletic contests for unsportsmanlike behavior or what may be considered dangerous play. The Nashua School District imposes additional penalties as well. The District also reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any contests, both home and away.

Physical Education

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students being medically excused from physical education may not participate in their team practice or game for that day.

School Disciplinary Actions

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The Athletic Department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they should set an example for all students.

Hazing: (See NSD Policy JICFA for full details)

Hazing activities are contrary to the Nashua School District's educational goals and objectives and will not be tolerated in our Schools. Hazing activities are prohibited at all times. Hazing is also a violation of the NH Criminal Code section 631:7, Student Hazing. Hazing is defined as:

Doing an act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into, admission into, continued membership in or association with any organization that causes or creates substantial risks of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent, or assumption of the risk by an individual subjected to hazing is not a defense to the prohibitions contained in this Policy. Examples of behavior that could be considered hazing include being forced to:

1. Destroy or steal property
2. Be tied up, taped, or confined in a small space
3. Be paddled, whipped, beaten, kicked or beat up by others
4. Do embarrassing, painful, or dangerous acts
5. Be kidnapped or transported and abandoned
6. Consume spicy or disgusting concoctions
7. Be deprived of sleep, food, or hygiene
8. Participate in drinking contests
9. Engage in or simulate sexual acts
10. Be tattooed or pierced

No school board member, administrator, faculty member, school employee, or volunteer of the Nashua School District will encourage, commit, condone, or tolerate hazing activities. No student will plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Behavioral Expectations for Student-Athletes (See NSD Policy JJB and JJB-R for full details)

Students who participate in Nashua High School extracurricular programs are expected to adhere to high standards of conduct. Any Class I, Class II or Class III violation of the Student Behavior Standards policy (NSD Policy JIC) resulting in a suspension will cause a student to be suspended from extracurricular activities. The following behaviors are examples of Class I, Class II, or Class III violations:

- Illegal use or possession of alcoholic beverages, regardless of where such use or possession occurs;
- Illegal use, manufacture, possession, having under control, sale, purchase, prescription, administering, transportation, dispensation, or compounding of any controlled drug, controlled drug analog, or any preparation containing a controlled drug, as any of the above terms are defined in N. H. RSA 318-B:1, regardless of where such behavior occurs;
- A finding of guilt, delinquency, probable cause, or indictment for violation of a criminal statute in any jurisdiction.
- Student Hazing as defined in N.H. RSA 631:7(d), and in POPPS 3244.2, regardless of where such student hazing occurs;
- Illegal gambling, assaultive or threatening conduct, stealing, vandalism, and destruction of property – if any of these behaviors occurs while on school grounds, or otherwise while participating or attending a scholastic or interscholastic event;
- Gross misconduct, including but not limited to assault or on advisor, coach, judge, official, participant, opponent or spectator; inappropriate behavior and/or obscene language; cheating; directing threats or obscene gestures at an advisor, coach, judge, official participant, opponent or spectator – if any of these behaviors occur while participating in or attending a scholastic interscholastic event.

Any student suspended from school, in or out of school, will also be suspended from participating in and/or attending any school extracurricular activities or functions. At minimum, the length of the extracurricular suspension is equal to the number of days of the school suspension. The suspension from extracurricular activities begins on the date of notice of suspension and concludes no earlier than the first day the student returns to his/her regular class schedule.

NOTE: If a student is on suspension during a try-out period of an extracurricular activity, it will be at the discretion of administration if the student may participate in a try-out period. This exception may only be made on a student's first violation.

Additional Extracurricular Consequences

First out-of-school suspension or accumulation of five (5) total days suspension in a school year:

The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular programs for up to two calendar weeks (14 days). The building principal or his/her designee shall provide written notice of any such suspension to the student and to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Second out-of-school suspension or accumulation of ten (10) total days suspension in a school year:

The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular programs for not less than three calendar weeks (21 days). The building principal or his/her designee shall provide written notice of any such suspension to the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Third out-of-school suspension or accumulation of fifteen (15) total days suspension in a school year:

The student shall be suspended from all extracurricular programs for the remainder of the school year. The building principal or his/her designee shall provide written notice of any such suspension to the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

NOTE: A principal may remove a student from extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year for any single egregious act.

Guide to Athletic Academic Eligibility and Waiver Process

To be eligible to compete in interscholastic athletics a student must be enrolled in a minimum of three classes and earn no more than one non-passing grade and an overall C- average for all classes the previous grading term. (see Nashua School District policy JJJA for more details.)

EVERY REPORT CARD MATTERS

Season	Initial eligibility to begin the season is based on	Eligibility to complete the season is based on
Fall (begins in August)	Q4/S2 (June of previous year)	Q1
Winter (begins in Nov/Dec)	Q1	Q2/S1
Spring (begins in March)	Q2/S1	Q3

An NC earned for a course that has ended will be considered an F for the purpose of athletic eligibility.

Academic Eligibility to Begin a New Season

The following students are **NOT eligible to apply** for an academic waiver:

- A student who has earned more than two Fs (including end of course NCs). This violates not only the Nashua School District Policy but also the NHIAA policy (Article II section 2 part A).
- A student who has been previously granted an academic waiver in high school. Only one academic waiver is permitted per student during a high school career.

If a student is eligible to apply for a waiver:

- Applying does not guarantee approval.
- Application must be submitted to the athletic office no later than 2:00pm on the 2nd day of tryouts/practice. **Waiver applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered.**
- Student may participate in a maximum of 3 days of tryouts in a cut sport but then may not participate until the final decision regarding the waiver is made.

If the student is ineligible based on NCs earned in a course that is **ongoing** (Q1 & Q3 in a semester class and Q1, Q2, & Q3 in a year-long course)

- A waiver application must be submitted to the athletic office no later than 2:00pm on the 2nd day of tryouts/practice. **Waiver applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered.**
- **If a student does not submit a waiver application, he/she forfeits the opportunity to regain eligibility after recovering the NCs.**
- The student has **10 calendar days** (day 1 is the first day of that sport's practices or tryouts) to improve/recover the grades and then eligibility will be re-evaluated.
- Recovery/improvement beyond the 10 calendar days will not be re-evaluated.

Academic Eligibility During a Season

Waivers and waiver extensions will not be granted after a season has begun.

If a student becomes academically ineligible after the start of a season, he/she is immediately removed from the team and may not participate.

If the student is ineligible based on NCs earned in a course that is **ongoing** (Q1 & Q3 in a semester class and Q1, Q2, & Q3 in a year-long course)

- He/she has **10 calendar days** (day 1 is the day report cards are issued) to recover.
- During this recovery period, he/she is not participating as a member of the team.
- He/she must notify the athletic office, in writing, the intent to recover.
- If grades are not improved/recovered in the 10 day time period, he/she is removed from the team for the remainder of the season.

A student who is not academically eligible at the beginning of an athletic season will not be eligible for the entirety of the season.

Injuries

The Athletic Director or Athletic Coordinator in consultation with the Athletic Trainer reserves the right to withhold any student from participating in any school sponsored practices and/or contests, if it is determined that student is not in full health.

Return to Play from Injury

The Nashua School District contracts the services of Performance Rehab Inc. to provide Athletic Trainer services for each of the high school athletic programs. The Athletic Trainers are trained and certified to provide the very best care for our student-athletes. All high school student-athletes who suffer an injury or who feel discomfort must be evaluated by the Athletic Trainer prior to returning to their sport. Any time a student-athlete (middle school or high school) visits the emergency room or a doctor due to potential injury, that student must provide documentation from the doctor they visited, or their primary care physician stating they are safe to return to said sport or activity.

Treatment for Head Injuries

The Nashua School District and Athletic Department are keenly aware of the nature and concern regarding the topic of head injuries. Significant progress has been made the last several years to ensure that students do not return to participate in athletic endeavors prior to reaching a full recovery. In recent history research has shown that participating in athletics while suffering from a concussion can result in lifelong injuries and complicated health issues. The Athletic Department and Performance Rehab, Inc. in partnership with St. Joseph's Hospital utilize the ImPACT Program to evaluate head injuries. Students at the high school level participating in high risk head injury sports will be required to take an online ImPACT Baseline Test prior to the start of their season in both their Freshman and Junior years. The Athletic Trainer, Athletic Director, or the director's designee will administer the test.

If a student-athlete is suspected of suffering any head trauma, he/she will be evaluated by the Athletic Trainer. The Athletic Trainer will determine if the trauma suffered requires the student to take a "Post Injury" ImPACT Test. The first "Post Injury" Test should be taken within three days of suffered trauma. Upon completion of the "Post Injury" Test the Athletic Trainer in consultation with the Certified ImPACT Test Doctor from St. Joseph's Hospital will determine if the student is healthy and can take the next step to return to play, or determine if the student must remain out of competition until they are symptom free. The term symptom free is defined in this context as a student who does not experience any of the symptoms associated with a concussion, including: headaches, dizziness, nausea, exhaustion, sensitivity to light, difficulty with concentration, etc.

- (1) If determined that a student-athlete can move to the second step in return to play, they will take a second "Post Injury" test, this time after 30 minutes of physical exertion. Students will be asked to ride a stationary bike, or go on a treadmill. After the second "Post Injury" Test and Athletic Trainer's evaluation, it may be deemed that the student is healthy and may return to participation. This step may also require a note from the student's primary care physician, if requested.
- (2) If it is determined that the student continues to suffer concussive symptoms, they will be scheduled to take his/her second "Post Injury" test when symptom free, and typically 7-10 days after injury. Once again the student will be evaluated, and may return to participate once deemed he/she in full health.
- (3) Students experiencing symptoms through the 7-10 day period will not be allowed to return to participate because the student's health is the priority.

Concussion Information

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury resulting from an impact to the body causing the brain to strike the inside of the skull. A direct hit to the head is not required for a concussion to occur. Students suffering from concussions may experience symptoms for a few days, weeks, or in severe cases even months. Because the brain is very complex, every brain injury is different. Some symptoms may appear right away, while others may not show up or days or weeks after the concussion. Sometimes the injury makes it hard for people to recognize or admit that they are having problems.

The signs of concussion are subtle. Early on, problems may be missed. People may look fine even though they are acting or feeling differently.

Concussion Symptoms

A concussion can affect a student in a variety of different ways: physically, cognitively, emotionally, and with sleep. Each student's symptoms are different in both occurrence and severity. Symptoms for a student should only be compared to how he/she felt, acted, slept, and performed prior to the concussion. One student's symptoms and recovery should never be compared to another student's.

Physical	Cognitive	Emotion	Sleep
Headache	Slow processing	Irritability	Trouble falling asleep
Dizziness	Mental fog	Sadness	Trouble waking
Balance difficulties	Trouble focusing	Nervousness	Sleeping more than usual
Nausea/vomiting	Memory problems	Embarrassment	Sleeping less than usual
Fatigue	Concentration problems	Anger	Drowsy
Sensitivity to light	Feeling confused	More or less emotional than normal	Altered sleep schedule
Sensitivity to sound	Shortened attention span	Anxiety	
Change in vision	Difficulty planning	Paranoia	
Feeling sluggish	Difficulty organizing		
Speech problems	Slower reading		
	Difficulty with comprehension		
	Easily distracted		

Who can diagnose a concussion?

Only a licensed health care professional who has experience managing concussions, including Certified Athletic Trainers, can officially diagnose a student with a concussion.

Danger Signs

If any of the following are observed in an individual with a concussion, he/she should be taken to the doctor or Emergency Department immediately:

- Cannot be awakened
- Have one pupil (the black dot of your eye) larger than the other
- Have convulsions or seizures
- Have slurred speech
- Are getting more confused, restless, or agitated

Recovery

How fast people recover from a concussion varies from person to person. Although most people have a good recovery, how quickly depends on many factors. These factors include how severe the concussion was, what part of the brain was injured, their age, and how healthy they were before the concussion.

Rest is very important after a concussion because it helps the brain to heal. You will need to be extremely patient because healing takes time. As the days go by, you can expect to gradually feel better.

While you are healing, you should be very careful to avoid doing anything that could cause a blow to your head. On rare occasions, receiving another blow before a concussion has healed can be very dangerous and possible fatal. Here are some tips for healing:

- Get plenty of sleep at night and rest during the day
- Return to activities gradually, not all at once
- Avoid activities that could lead to a 2nd brain injury until cleared by the doctor
- Take only those drugs that your doctor has approved
- Rest your brain – limit cognitive stimulation: cell phones, TV, computer, video games

The Nashua School District has implemented a Return to Learn Protocol for students with concussions. Be sure to notify the school nurse immediately if your child has been diagnosed with a concussion.

Resources:

NFHS Guidelines for Management of Concussions in Sports

- https://www.nfhs.org/media/1018446/suggested_guidelines_management_concussion_april_2017.pdf

NFHS Learn Courses

- <https://www.nfhslearn.com/courses?searchText=Concussion>
- Concussion in Sports
- Concussion for Students

REAPsm the Benefits of Good Concussion Management

- <https://www.nfhs.org/media/1015690/reapaugust2015.pdf>

Nashua School District Return to Learn Protocol

- <http://www.nashua.edu/Nashua/Media/PDF-files/For%20Students/Concussion-Awareness-for-Parents-and-School-Staff-Flyer.pdf>