

# MOORE COUNTY SCHOOLS

# ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

In compliance with federal laws, Moore County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. All Moore County Schools facilities, both educational and athletic, are tobacco-free learning environments. The Moore County Schools Board of Education supports the values of sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity while striving to ensure a wholesome, equitable setting so student-athletes in our programs can enjoy the many positive benefits of participation in interscholastic activities.

**MISSION** - The athletic programs of Moore County Schools exist to provide positive and productive school experiences while teaching valuable life lessons, including the importance of hard work, dedication, ethics and teamwork. Student participation in athletics is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to self, to team, to school and to community. A commitment to athletic excellence is achieved through academic rigor, well-trained and committed coaches, discipline, and sportsmanship. Athletic success is measured by the development of young men and women into valuable members of the community and not solely by wins and losses. A successful athletic program can be achieved only with the steadfast support of parents, school staff members, coaches, administrators and community leaders.

**PURPOSE** - The purpose of this handbook is to communicate to athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators the philosophies, standards, rules and expectations applicable to participants in the District interscholastic athletic program. The clear understanding and consistent application of these matters will help ensure that student athletes have the best possible experience in their respective athletic programs.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission and Purpose	Page 1
Assumption of Risk	Page 4
Requirements for Athletic Participation	Page 4 - 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Residency/Transfer</li><li>• Hybrid Home-School</li><li>• Academic</li><li>• Attendance</li><li>• Insurance</li></ul>	
Arbiter Athlete (PlanetHS) Required Pre-Participation Forms	Page 5 – 6
Gender of Player	Page 6
Athletic Code of Conduct	Pages 6 - 7
Expectations of Student-Athletes	Pages 7 - 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sportsmanship</li><li>• Taunting</li><li>• Ejection Policy</li><li>• Hazing</li><li>• Substance Abuse</li><li>• School Suspensions</li><li>• Social Media</li><li>• Dual Sport Participation</li><li>• Quitting a Team</li><li>• Return of Equipment</li><li>• Transportation</li></ul>	
Expectations of Parents	Pages 10 - 11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appropriate Communication From Parents to Coaches</li><li>• Appropriate Concerns Parents Should Address With Coaches</li><li>• Issues NOT APPROPRIATE For Parents to Discuss With Coaches</li><li>• To Discuss an Appropriate Concern with Your Child’s Coach</li><li>• Chain of Communication</li><li>• Coach Communication to Parents</li></ul>	
Expectations of Coaches	Pages 11 - 16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criminal Background Check</li><li>• MCS coaching staff requirements (Head, assistant, lay/volunteer)</li><li>• Activity Bus Drivers</li><li>• Staff-Student Relations</li><li>• Acceptable Use of Technology and Electronic Media</li><li>• Team Selections</li><li>• Coaching Professional Development</li><li>• Summer Camps</li><li>• Middle School Dead Periods</li><li>• Number of Volunteer Coaches</li><li>• Coaching Vacancies</li><li>• Religion/Prayer</li></ul>	
Health and Safety Guidelines	Pages 17 – 29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concussion Awareness</li><li>• Heat and Humidity Guidelines – Fluids and Hydration</li><li>• Heat Guidelines for Athletic Games and Meets</li><li>• Heat Guidelines for Cross Country Practices and Meets</li><li>• Hot Weather Guidelines for Summer Practices</li><li>• Sports Nutrition</li><li>• Performance Enhancing Drugs</li><li>• MRSA, HIV, HEPATITIS B, Sickle Cell Disease, Commotia Cordis</li><li>• Guidelines for Off-Campus Running</li><li>• Emergency Action Plans</li><li>• Football Safety List</li><li>• Football – Daily Helmet Checklist and Weekly Helmet Checklist</li><li>• Lacrosse – Safety Checklist</li><li>• Lockdown Procedures</li></ul>	

- **Severe Weather/Lightening Plan**

**Job Performance Responsibilities**

**Pages 30 - 33**

- **Athletic Director**
- **Head Coach**
- **Assistant Coach**
- **Athletic Trainer and First Responder**
- **Cheerleading Coach**

**Appendices**

**Page 34 - 36**

- **Appendix A - Volunteer Coach Limits**
- **Appendix B – Coaching Professional Development Form**
- **Appendix C - NCHSAA Gender of Player Policy**

**ASSUMPTION OF RISK** – By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics involves the risk of possible serious injury, including physical or mental impairments and even death, as well as the risk of transmission of infectious disease such as Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), HIV and Hepatitis B. Although serious injuries are not common and the risk of HIV transmission is almost nonexistent in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk. Participants have a responsibility to help reduce that risk. Participants must obey all safety rules, report all physical and hygiene problems to their coaches, practice proper personal hygiene, inspect their own equipment daily, follow a proper conditioning program and refrain from the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances. Students, parents and guardians should be aware that Sudden Cardiac Arrest is the leading cause of death among student-athletes during exercise in the United States and can only be detected by cardiovascular screening. While every student is required to have a medical exam by a licensed medical professional every 395 days in order to participate in Moore County Schools (MCS) athletics programs, these medical exams do not typically include cardiovascular screenings. If a student experiences an injury/illness or change in his/her health status while participating on one of OCS sports teams, it is the responsibility of said student-athlete to inform his/her Head Coach and/or a Certified Athletic Trainer and adhere to the established injury management guidelines, which includes total rehabilitation and reassessments before being released to return to full participation.

**Participation in any sport exposes the participant to the risk of concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. All concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Be aware that any student removed from a practice or competition due to a suspected concussion, will be unable to return to participation that day. After that day, written authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.) on the required NCHSAA Return to Play form will be required in order for the student to return to participation.**

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION**

Students must meet all requirements of athletic participation as established by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Moore County Schools Board of Education (MCS). These include, but may not be limited to, the following.

**RESIDENCY/TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS** - Per Board Policy 6201, each student shall be assigned to the appropriate grade of the school serving the attendance area where he or she maintains his or her legal domicile. A student must reside with his/her parent or legal custodian within a school's attendance zone or be assigned to the school by the Board of Education. Additionally, a student must be legally enrolled as a full time student at the school and be in regular attendance at that school in order to be eligible to compete in athletics at that school. Per Board Policy 6210-R: Under the North Carolina High School Athletic Association's rules and regulations, students participating in interscholastic athletics who transfer from one school to another in the same school district must generally sit out of interscholastic sports for 365 days unless the transfer is associated with a bona fide change in domicile. While school districts may develop eligibility criteria to allow for continued participation in interscholastic sports following a transfer, no student may participate in the same sport at a second school during the same season unless the transfer is associated with a bona fide change in domicile. For more information, please visit [www.nchsaa.org/transfer-and-residency-requirements](http://www.nchsaa.org/transfer-and-residency-requirements).

### **HYBRID HOME-SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

- Documentation from the Division of Non-Public Education must be presented upon initial dual enrollment – attendance, immunization, transcript, school number, etc.
- Home-school students must communicate athletic intent at the member school in which they are domiciled and follow the enrollment and assignment procedures/policies established by the local Board of Education.
  - Notice to the principal must take place within 10 days prior to the first practice date of each sports season.
- Home-school students must have been enrolled in the registered home-school for 365 prior to being eligible in a NCHSAA member school.
- Once deemed eligible in a NCHSAA member school, the student must maintain continuous dual-enrollment.
  - Unenrollment would render the student ineligible for 365 days.
- Home-school students must participate in a class schedule that is at least one-half of the school's instructional day (3 hours).
  - For example, on a block schedule in high school two 90 minute classes; on a traditional calendar in middle school three 60 minute classes or the equivalent of three hours.
  - At least one class must be on campus each semester or meet LEA requirements (SCC courses could count)
  - At least one additional class, which the school determines would count for credit on a transcript, must be taken through the home-school, virtual school, etc.

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

### High School

- **Student must have passed a minimum course load from the previous semester (at least 3 courses on block schedule including any Sandhills Community College courses)**
- Student must meet local promotion standards: According to Board Policy 5530, requirements for Promotion to 10<sup>th</sup> grade – 6 credits two of which must include English 1, Math 1 or higher, Core Science Core Social Studies. Requirements for Promotion to 11<sup>th</sup> Grade – 13 credits, which must include two additional core credits from English 2, Math 2 or higher, Core Science or Core Social Studies, and English 2 and Math 1 End-of-Course tests must be taken by end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. Requirements for Promotion to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade – 18 credits, which must include two additional core credits from English 3, Math 3 or higher (or alternative math sequence aligned with student’s after high school plans), Biology or Core Social Studies, and the Biology End-of-Course test must be taken by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade year.
- **Student also MUST be enrolled in at least 3 courses during first semester to be eligible during the second semester (includes any Sandhills Community College courses)**
- Student cannot turn 19 years of age on or before August 31 of current academic year
- Student cannot participate in athletics after completing 8 semesters of high school
- Student cannot have participated in more than 4 seasons of any particular sport after initial entry into 9th grade
- Student cannot participate after graduating from high school

### Middle School

- Student must be in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade (6<sup>th</sup> graders are not allowed to play football).
- Student must meet local promotion standards: According to Board Policy 5530, students must earn a passing grade (70 or above for the year) in three of the four core classes (ELA, Math, Social Studies, Science). Students must attend at least 160 days of school. Students absent for more than 20 days (excused or unexcused) may be retained.
- Student must have passed a minimum of 4 classes (at least 3 of those must be core courses [Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts] from the previous semester
- Student cannot turn 15 years of age on or before August 31 of the current academic year
- Student can only compete in athletics for **six (6)** semesters after first entry into **6<sup>th</sup>** grade

### Hybrid Home-School

- Student must be on grade-level according to a nationally standardized achievement test indicating grade level.
- Student must pass all courses in which he/she is enrolled in (public school).
- If only enrolled in two courses in the public school must also pass a third course, which the public school has determined would count for credit on a transcript, through the home-school, virtual school, etc.

**ATTENDANCE** – A student must have been in attendance for 85% of the school days from the previous semester [daily attendance not period attendance] in order to be eligible to compete on athletic teams during the current semester. (A waiver of the 85% policy can only be granted through the Superintendent’s Designee). A student must be in attendance at least one half of the school day to be eligible to practice with their team, take part in any team activity, or participate in an athletic event on that day. Exceptions to this policy must be approved **in advance** by the Superintendent’s Designee in communication with the Athletic Director or Principal of the school.

**INSURANCE** – Moore County Schools provides **supplemental** coverage for all students while at school or when participating in school activities. **Students are required to have their own primary insurance coverage.** MCS provided coverage is subject to benefit maximums (excess over the maximum is the responsibility of the parent/guardian). All students are enrolled automatically. [Insurance - Schedule of Benefits](#) and [Insurance - Claim Form](#)

**ARBITERATHLETE (PlanetHS) – As of July 1, 2018 ALL required athletic participation forms, including athletic physical forms, must be completed and submitted online through ArbiterAthlete(PlanetHS). A Coach’s Guide, AD Guide, Parent/Student Guide, and Parent Welcome Letter with Quick Account instructions can be found on the “Athletics” page of the MCS website.**

**REQUIRED PRE-PARTICIPATION FORMS**– No student will be allowed to participate in any tryout, practice, scrimmage or contest before all required participation forms are signed in all appropriate spaces and on file with the school. These forms include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- **MCS Athletic Participation Parental Permission Form** - this form can be found on the MCS website. It contains a statement of the student’s residence, emergency contact person and contact information, the insurance waiver

agreement, the Concussion Awareness statement (Gfeller-Waller Act) and the assumption of risk agreement that both student and parent/ guardian must sign acknowledging the risk of injury. Student and parent/guardian's signature is required in three (3) different places on this form. (For middle school athletic participation only pages 1-4 must be completed)

- **Medical Exam Form**- this form can also be found on the MCS website. Every student is required to have a medical exam performed by a licensed medical professional every 395 days. This is the medical exam form the doctor or physician's assistant must complete, sign and stamp.
  - If a student has recently moved from out-of-state and has a non-NCHSAA athletic physical form confirmed to be signed by a licensed physician this form can be used to allow the student to begin participation. A parent has 30 days to schedule an appointment with a doctor for a physical documented on the required NCHSAA athletic physical form. Parents must also complete the medical history form.
- **MCS Athletic Code of Conduct** – Required for both high school and middle school student athletes.

**GENDER OF PLAYER** (Updated NCHSAA Policy) – Any questions or issues related to gender or gender identification should be directed to the AD and Principal. Refer to Appendix C for the complete updated NCHSAA policy.

### ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in any athletic activity is an important part of the educational experience in the Moore County Schools. A primary goal of such activities is to teach students character and self-discipline skills that will enable them to develop to their highest potential. As role models for their peers and younger students, students who participate in athletic activities (“participating students”) are held accountable for their actions at a higher standard than other students. Because of the public nature of the athletic programs sponsored by the Moore County Schools, participating students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect the high standards and ideals of their school and community. The participating student athlete becomes subject to this Code of Conduct upon the student's signature and date below and continues until graduation from high school. Participating student athletes are subject to this code at all times during the calendar year, including summer months, whether on or off campus. For summer month violations, any discipline or punishment imposed would go into effect at the next scheduled athletic activity by the student athlete. This Code of Conduct is, in addition to, any specific team/activity or regulations established by the individual programs.

#### **1. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL \***

The possession, use, distribution and/or sale of illegal or counterfeit drugs/alcohol, including possession of paraphernalia for ingestion of such substances by participating students is not acceptable and prohibited. If school officials receive credible evidence, such as a police report or criminal charges related to a drug or alcohol offense, or have a reasonable suspicion that a violation under this section has occurred, the school officials will investigate. If after investigation of the charges, school officials determine that the participating student committed the violation, he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action as outlined below.

Every effort will be made by the school and individual activity programs to make participating students aware of the detrimental effects of drugs and alcohol. Students and/or parents of students suspended under this section will receive information regarding counseling. Any participating student found in violation of this offense at any time while on any school premises, including activity buses or other school-approved transportation, will be suspended from further participation according to the Moore County Student Code of Conduct. All offenses occurring off campus will be determined as specified below:

**First Offense:** The principal will suspend the student athlete for a minimum of 20 days from athletic activities not including scrimmages. At the discretion of the principal in consultation with the athletic director and/or coach, the student athlete may/may not practice with the team during this suspended time frame and /or be allowed to travel with the team, as well as be on the sideline or bench with the team *in appropriate attire*.

With the first violation, the student athlete must be evaluated by a drug/alcohol counselor as recommended by the school, must comply with all recommendations and treatment programs, and must furnish a negative drug test (at the student athlete's cost) prior to resuming participation.

Additionally, the student athlete must agree to be drug tested for a period of 365 calendar days following the violation of the drug and alcohol policy. He/she must agree to pay for any random drug tests selected by the school representatives.

**Second Offense:** The student athlete will be excluded from all athletic activities for the *remainder of his/her high school career* in the Moore County School. If the student athlete is in middle school he/she will be suspended from athletic participation for the remainder of his/her middle school career.

- #### **2. TOBACCO PRODUCT USE \* (Principal's decision is final)**
- For the purposes of this Code the term “tobacco product” means any product that contains, is made or derived from, or reasonable resembles tobacco or nicotine and is intended for human consumption. This includes but is not limited to “herbal” cigarettes, vaporizers and other substances or devices used for inhalation of smoke or vapor, whether or not they contain tobacco or nicotine. Participating students found to have used tobacco while subject to this Code will be suspended from participation as outlined:

**First Offense:** The student athlete will be suspended for a minimum to **20 days from athletic contests, not including scrimmages. To be allowed to participate again, the student athlete must have completed an approved tobacco cessation course.** At the discretion of the head coach, the student athlete may practice and athlete may be on the sideline or bench with the team *in appropriate attire*.

**Second Offense:** The student athlete will be suspended for a minimum of 40 days, not including scrimmages (if near the end of the season, the suspension could result in being served over two seasons). At the discretion of the head coach, the student athlete may practice with the team during the suspended time frame and be allowed to travel with the team. Also, at the head coach's discretion, the student athlete may be on the sideline or bench with the team *in appropriate attire*.

**Third Offense:** The principal will suspend the student athlete from all interscholastic activities for 90 days or the remainder of the season whichever comes first.

**\*NOTE: These rules are meant as minimum consequences. The principal, athletic director or coach has the discretion to increase the consequences as he/she feels is most beneficial to his/her athletic program or team.**

### **3. CRIMINAL CHARGES**

A participating student athlete charged with a criminal offense, misdemeanor or felony, other than a minor traffic offense, will be suspended from athletic participation until further review by the principal and director of student activities. A student convicted of a felony offense will be immediately suspended from all athletic participation according to the NCHSAA policy. The participating student athlete must inform his/her coach or appropriate staff of any criminal charges against them as soon as practicable, but no later than the student's next participation in any athletic event, to include practices, rehearsals, etc. Failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action. The coach will notify the athletic director immediately upon knowledge of the pending criminal charges.

### **4. SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS (Board Policy 6401)**

**In School:** A participating student serving a disciplinary in-school suspension for a full day or days will not participate in any athletic activity on the particular day(s) the student is serving the suspension.

**Out of School:** A participating student serving a short or long-term suspension for less than the remainder of the year will not participate in any athletic activity for that suspension period. A student serving a long-term suspension for the remainder of the school year, a 365-day suspension, or disciplinary assignment either with or without the option of attending the alternative school, will not be allowed to participate in any athletic activity.

### **5. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

A participating student athlete who engages in any conduct or behavior, which is inconsistent with the student's position as a role model or representative of the Moore County Schools, is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or dismissal from team as determined by the Principal. Coaches or school officials may also establish additional training regulations and rules of conduct.

### **6. REVIEW PROCEDURE (Due Process)**

- i. A participating student may request a review of the disciplinary action by providing written notice of the Superintendent, or his designee within two (2) school days of the date of the Principal's notification to the student and/or parent. The notice shall state the review reason for review.
- ii. The Superintendent, or his designee, will review the record of the disciplinary action and issue a decision within five (5) school days of receipt for review. The Superintendent or his designee will inform the student and parent of the decision of whether to uphold, modify, or overturn the disciplinary action. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.
- iii. Any disciplinary action, including suspension from participation, will remain in effect during the review process.
- iv. Failure by the participating student to adhere to appeal content requirements and timeless as set forth will result in immediate dismissal of the appeal.

**We, the parent/legal custodian and the student/athlete, have read and understand the Athletic Code of Conduct and agree to comply. We also understand that participation in athletic activities is a privilege and participating student athletes possess no property right to continued participation.** We also understand that the student athlete is a representative of the school and role model to others at all times, whether on or off campus. The parent/legal custodian and participating student/athlete further understands that inappropriate behavior, whether illegal or not, may result in suspension from athletic participation.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES**

Participation in athletics is completely voluntary. It is a privilege to be a member of a school's athletic team; a privilege which can only be earned when one abides by the rules of the state, the district, the school and of that specific team. Our student-athletes and coaches are expected to be models of good behavior and sportsmanship. They are representing the school and the community at athletic events throughout the area and across the state. We want to be proud of their efforts. MCS and our schools provide coaches, facilities, transportation and equipment to our athletic teams. The district and each individual school reserves the right to revoke or restrict the privilege of participating in athletics if a student fails to live up to expectations and/or violates school, district, state or team policies. Providing false information about residence, domicile, and home address or with whom the student actually resides is grounds for revoking the privilege of participating in athletics and can lead to a 365 day suspension from participation in athletics statewide by the NCHSAA.

**SPORTSMANSHIP-** The NCHSAA defines sportsmanship as *the quality of responsible behavior characterized by a spirit of generosity and a genuine concern for opponents, officials and teammates.*

Student-athletes should:

- Realize you represent the school and therefore have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through your behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory, therefore approve and applaud good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Respect the judgment and integrity of game officials at all times.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

All student-athletes and coaches are expected to exemplify and follow these guidelines. When an athlete exhibits behavior that is detrimental to these concepts of sportsmanship and fair play, he/she can be removed from a given practice or contest and disciplinary action taken, including possible removal from the team.

**TAUNTING** includes actions that are meant to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others. Any form of taunting is not in keeping with conduct or behaviors that promote sportsmanship. In all sports, taunting is considered a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul and is subject to immediate ejection from a contest.

**EJECTION POLICY-** The NCHSAA Ejection Policy applies to all persons involved in athletic contests, including student-athletes, coaches, managers and game administrators. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest: fighting, biting observed by an official, taunting, baiting or spitting toward an opponent, profanity, obscene gestures, or disrespectfully addressing an official, (making physical contact with an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of one's career). **The following ejection consequences apply to student-athletes, coaches, managers, and game administrators at both the high school and middle school levels.**

- Football- ejection from the contest, miss the next contest at that level and all contests in the interim (miss the next two contests for fighting)
- All other sports-ejection from the contest, miss the next two contests at that level and all contests in the interim (miss the next four contests for fighting)
- Players receiving two ejections for unacceptable behavior will be suspended from all sports for the remainder of that sports season.
- Receiving a third ejection in a school year will result in suspension from athletics for one calendar year (365 days) from the date of the third ejection.
- Ejections in the last game of the season carry over to the next sport in which the individual participates that year.
- For soccer, five yellow cards accumulated by the same player will result in a suspension. An additional five yellow cards accumulated by the same player will result in an ejection. The player will be suspended from all sports for the remainder of that season on the 15th yellow card. A red card disqualification that is not an ejection is the equivalent of two yellow cards.
- For wrestling, track, tennis, golf, cross-country, and swimming any individual ejected from an individual event or individual tournament may not participate for the remainder of the event from which he or she was ejected and from the next meet or match.
- Ejected players may practice during their suspensions but may not play.

**A coach who is suspended at any level of grades 6-12 may not coach at any other grade level 6-12 during the period of suspension.**

- Teams: in the following situations Teams will not be allowed to participate in the playoffs:
  - (1) A team whose players and coaches accumulate six or more individual ejections.
  - (2) A team whose players and coaches accumulate three or more individual ejections for fighting (note: if a situation occurs where three or more players on one team are ejected during one fighting incident, those three individual ejections will cause the team to lose its playoff privileges).
  - (3) If a team hits either threshold (total ejections or ejections for fighting) during the playoffs, it will be disqualified from further participation in the playoffs.
- If a team has players ejected due to fighting, the head coach must take the [NFHS Learning Course "Teaching and Modeling Behavior"](#) (\$20 fee). It must be completed before coaching in the next game.
- Any student-athlete who is ejected or disqualified from a contest is required to complete the NFHS Sportsmanship course before being eligible to return to competition. There is no fee for this program.
- Any student-athlete ejected from a contest is also subject to more severe disciplinary sanctions by his/her school administration.

**HAZING** – Per MCS Board Policy 6401, students shall not engage in hazing or aid or abet any other student in the commission of this offense. Hazing means subjecting another student to injury as part of an initiation, or as a prerequisite to membership in any organized school group, including any society, athletic team, or other similar group. Consequences are In-school disciplinary action up to 10 days OSS. Law enforcement may be contacted.

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE** - Student-athletes are role models and leaders in their schools and communities. As a result they are expected to adhere to high standards- physically and socially. MCS strongly discourages the use of any legal drugs, inhalants or medications contrary to the manner in which they were prescribed, as well as any use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco products by our students. Per MCS Board Policy 6401, no student shall possess, use, distribute, sell, possess with intent to distribute or sell, or conspire or attempt to distribute or sell, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, other controlled substance, any alcoholic or other intoxicating beverage, drug paraphernalia, counterfeit substance, any unauthorized prescription drug, or any other chemicals or products with the intention of bringing about a state of exhilaration, euphoria, or otherwise altering a student’s mood or behavior. Consequences are up to 10 days of out-of-school suspension or long-term suspension. Law enforcement may be contacted.

**SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS** - A student-athlete who is assigned In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension is subject to MCS Board Policy 6401, and the rules of his/her specific school and team’s policies.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**- Per Board Policy 3253/4253/5451.12, student use of personally owned devices is permitted during the school day for educational purposes in approved locations. All student use of personally owned devices is subject to this Acceptable Use of Technology and Electronic Media Policy, the Student Code of Conduct and all applicable Board policies and school rules. Moore County Schools reserves the right to restrict access of personally-owned devices to the network in order to maintain network performance for district devices. MCS recognizes and supports its student-athletes’ rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of online social networks. However, each student-athlete must remember that participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes represent their school and are expected to portray themselves, their team, their school and community in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with team policies, federal and state laws, as well as any rules, regulations and policies set forth by the MCS Board of Education and the NCHSAA. Any violations of the above listed rules, regulations and/or policies will result in disciplinary actions which can lead to removal from the team, suspension from school and possible criminal prosecution.

#### **DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION**

- Participation on two [2] school teams during the same sport season - Athletes may be permitted dual participation on two school teams in the same sport season provided the athletes and coaches involved can resolve all conflicts **in advance** regarding expectations, practices, and participation in games or contests. Furthermore, the athlete must agree that if they quit or are dismissed from one of the dual sports they will not be allowed to continue in the other dual sport for the remainder of that sport season. The school’s Athletic Director and Principal must approve in advance dual participation during the same sport season of any athlete.
- Participation on a school and non-school team during the same sport season: Non-school participation during the school team season must be approved by that team’s head coach. No school practice, contest, game, or team function can be missed for non-school team participation without advance approval of the school coach and school athletic director. All non-school athletic participation during the school team season is secondary to participation in MCS athletic teams and not to be encouraged or discouraged by the coaching staff at any school. Any athlete who, **without written prior approval**, misses a school athletic practice, contest, game, or function to participate in a non-school athletic event, will be disciplined as determined by the head coach/AD/principal.

**QUITTING A TEAM**- Commitment and dedication are two character traits that participation in athletics help to promote. With that in mind, no student-athlete may quit one team in order to begin participating on another sports team at the school during the same sport season, unless by the mutual agreement of the athlete, the coach of the team the athlete is leaving and the school’s athletic director. Quitting a sport is not to be viewed as a penalty that prevents an athlete from being allowed to participate on other sport teams. However, the athlete who quits a team cannot participate in another sport until the season of the team they quit has ended. No athlete may quit one sport and then participate in off-season workouts or skill-development for another sport during the same season that the athlete quit. Example: If an athlete quits the fall sport of football, they may not participate in any other sports off-season workouts, or in-season tryouts or practices until the football season has ended – including playoffs.

**RETURN OF EQUIPMENT**- All uniforms and equipment issued by the school to an athlete must be returned in good shape or must be paid for **before** an athlete can play another sport or in another season. Seniors will not be eligible to participate in graduation exercises until all school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for. Student-athletes who transfer will have all records held until school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for. Per Board

Policy 6805.1D, for students with an unpaid balance in excess of \$50 whose fees and charges have not been waived or reduced, the principal will have the authority to deny participation in extracurricular activities.

**TRANSPORTATION** - All transportation to and from athletic contests for team members (including managers and statisticians) is provided in MCS owned vehicles and all team members **MUST** travel in these vehicles. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the school principal or his/her designee **prior to** the contest.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS**

The role that parents play in the life of a student-athlete has a tremendous impact on the student's athletic experience. Among the many responsibilities of a parent is to give their child roots and wings to soar. The roots come from a solid sense of security and protection, a clear sense of being unconditionally loved and a strong sense of self-worth, but not overinflated self-esteem or entitlement. The wings and the ability to fly both come from developing the right muscles, testing out the air currents through repeated trials and errors, and having the courage to eventually leave the nest. We encourage parents to support your student unconditionally. Making mistakes is part of learning. Recognize what your student is trying to do, the effort he/she is giving, not necessarily the results. You can also help your student learn the importance of teamwork and sacrificing for the greater good of the team by modeling teamwork. If possible, get involved in your school's athletic booster club or find ways you can volunteer to help support your student's team. Be ever mindful that your student's teammates, coaches and game officials are not the enemy. We suggest and recommend avoiding being critical of other players, the coaches or officials. It is extremely conflicting for a student to demonstrate respect for those whom he/she is fully aware that his/her parents do not respect. With these thoughts in mind, here are a few guidelines:

#### Required

- Attend the pre-season parents' meeting; sign and return all required participation forms.
- Abide by all regulations, rules and procedures for our athletic programs.

#### Recommended

- Attend as many of your child's events as possible.
- Understand the ultimate purpose of athletics. It exists as an integral part of the total educational mission of the school, and is meant to teach life-long lessons.
- Appreciate the educational opportunity that your child is receiving in our athletic program. This includes the enormous time and effort provided by the coaches.
- Understand that the goals of the team & athletic program are more important than the hopes & dreams you have for your child.
- Support the coach in public around other parents, fans and particularly at home in front of your student.
- Avoid putting pressure on your son/daughter to start, to score, or be the star of the team; emphasize team first. Dwelling on playing time or stats is a selfish act and not conducive to building the team-first concept.
- Be respectful of other players & their parents. You never know whose grandparents, aunt, uncle or family friend may be nearby.
- Serve as beacons of good sportsmanship, to your student and other parents as well. Show respect for opponents and game officials.
- Express concerns and questions in a courteous and civil manner and do it at the appropriate time and in the proper setting.

#### **Appropriate Communication From Parents to Coaches**

- Notification of any specific medical abnormalities or medical needs of your child
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Notification (in advance) of any transportation plans that deviate from stated district and school policy
- Specific concerns early in the season regarding a coach's expectations

#### **Appropriate Concerns Parents Should Address With Coaches**

- The treatment of your child emotionally or physically
- Safety and health concerns regarding your child
- Concerns about your child's grades, behavior or disciplinary actions towards him/her
- Ways to help your child mature and improve
- Realistic evaluation of your child's opportunity to play collegiately and/or questions about the process of college recruitment
- 

#### **Issues NOT APPROPRIATE For Parents to Discuss With Coaches**

- Game strategy
- Playing time or positioning of team personnel

- Play calling
- Any other students besides your own child

### **To Discuss an Appropriate Concern with Your Child's Coach**

- Contact the athletic director to schedule a meeting with the coach

**NOTE:** *under NO circumstances should a parent/coach meeting occur immediately prior to or immediately after a practice or contest as these tend to be emotional times and NOT conducive to resolution*

### **CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION**

1. Meet with your child's coach and athletic director
2. If still no satisfactory resolution, meet with the school's Administration
3. If there are still concerns, contact the School District's Athletics Coordinator/Director of Student Support Services.

### **COMMUNICATIONS PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM COACHES**

1. Expectations the coach has for your student and other players on the team
2. Locations and times of all practices and games/contests
3. Any additional team requirements- i.e., fees, special equipment, overnight trips, off-season conditioning programs
4. Procedure for dealing with injuries should they occur during practice or at away contests
5. List of team rules and consequences including discipline that results in denial of a student's participation

### **EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES**

The coach is responsible for setting an example for his or her players and setting the tone for the program. A coach who behaves professionally will encourage others around him or her to do the same. Coaches must exhibit proper leadership and conduct, be fair and consistent disciplinarians, show respect to opponents and officials, and instruct, train and encourage every player on their team. The coach must be a strong, positive, respectful role model for his/her athletes by being a consistent ambassador of the game, his/her school and MCS. Coaches should conduct pre-season meetings with players and their parents/guardians in order to convey expectations and team rules and establish a line of communication. All coaches are expected to have an understanding of conference, district and state athletic policies, as well as the rules and regulations governing their respective sport.

Consequently, MCS expects that each athletic coach in our district, whether certified, classified, contracted or volunteer, who provides supervisory and instructional service in our interscholastic athletic programs shall:

- Show respect for players, parents, other coaches and staff.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials.
- Establish and model fair play, sportsmanship, and proper conduct during practices/contests and in the community.
- Never place winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character and sportsmanship.
- Ensure that all players are in compliance with all aspects of the Gfeller-Waller Act and that player safety and welfare is the highest priority.
- Ensure that all required forms and documentation for participation are on file for every athlete under the coach's supervision before athlete is allowed to participate in any athletic activities.
- Provide proper supervision of student-athletes while under the coach's direction.
- Use discretion and proper language when providing constructive criticism and when reprimanding players.
- Have completed the NFHS "Fundamentals of Coaching" and the NFHS "Concussion in Sports" courses prior to the date of the first practice in the sport in which they are coaching ("Fundamentals of Coaching" applies to high school coaches only).
- Understand the proper administrative chain of command and refer all request or grievances through proper channels, i.e. equipment purchase, fundraising, program funding, eligibility, parental concerns, etc.
- Consistently require all players to adhere to the established rules and standards of the game and demonstrate sportsmanship.
- Properly instruct player in the safe use and care of equipment and uniforms.
- Maintain updated inventory of all team equipment, including uniforms, and secure all practice and play areas related to their respective teams, including locking all doors and gates, as well as turning off all lights after practices/contests.
- Not show students sexually explicit pictures or materials, nor send excessively personal letters, cards, electronic messages or gifts to students, and should avoid giving students rides when it may result in a student being alone in the car with the adult.
- Not recruit student-athletes from other schools.
- Not exert undue influence on a student-athlete's decision to enroll in a particular athletic program at any public or private college, university or post-secondary educational institution.

- Not suggest provide, or encourage any athlete to use non-prescriptive drugs, anabolic steroids, or any substance to increase physical development or performance that is not approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, the Surgeon General, or the American Medical Association.
- If coaching an additional outside team during the season, the coach's first priority and commitment is to the school team. If coaching an outside team the coach must remain in compliance with all NCHSAA guidelines including restrictions to the number of players from the school team allowed on the outside team. **If coaching an outside team during the off-season, if players from his/her high school are involved, all NCHSAA off-season guidelines including "dead periods" must be followed.**
- **As public school employees, uphold all expected standards for confidentiality of student-athletes related to student records, student information, disabilities, etc.**

**MCS coaching staff requirements (Head, assistant, lay/volunteer):**

- **Must be approved by the MCS BOE and on the approved MCS coaches' list BEFORE working with student-athletes.**
- Must complete online concussion course annually (required by the NCHSAA)
- Must complete Fundamentals of Coaching course (required by the NCHSAA) (applies to high school only)
- All paid/head coaches must complete CPR/AED certification
- All coaches, paid or volunteer, must complete Sudden Cardiac Arrest certification
- **Middle school football staff must have one coach who is CPR/AED certified**
- Volunteer/lay coaches must complete the following steps:
  - Online application
  - Sub training session – performed either by on-site SRO or MCS staff
- Statement of declaration – must be completed for any staff with less than 3 or more than 27 years of experience. This must be done annually and on file with the AD.
- **At no time do coaches solicit the services of other coaches, whether employee or volunteer, without the consent/approval of the athletic director and/or principal.**
- **Employees or volunteers may not act as coaches without specific approval of the school principal and in compliance with all applicable policies, regulations, protocols, and other requirements. All coaches MUST be approved by MCS BOE**

**ACTIVITY BUS DRIVERS** – All activity bus drivers **MUST** be on the Transportation/HR approved driver list. This includes any coaches who also drive an activity bus.

**STAFF-STUDENTS RELATIONS** - Board policies 3035/4035/6630/8335 as well as 3036/4036/8336 expressly prohibit all employees of MCS, including volunteer coaches, from dating, courting or entering into a romantic or sexual relationship with any student while the student is enrolled in the Moore County Schools, regardless of the student's age. Employees, including volunteer coaches, engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and may be subject to criminal action as provided in NCGS 14-202.4 and 14-27.7. Furthermore, employees, including volunteer coaches, shall not show students any sexually explicit pictures or materials and must not send excessively personal letters, cards, digital or electronic messages, or gifts to students. Any MCS employee, including volunteer coach, who has reason to believe that another employee or coach is inappropriately involved with a student, as described above, shall report this information to the Executive Director for Human Resources. An employee who fails to inform the Executive Director for Human Resources of a reported or suspected inappropriate relationship between an employee and a student may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. **Board Policies 3036/4036/8336 has been recently revised for the 2017-2018 school year related to employee/student communication. All coaches should review this policy paying particular attention to the section "Restrictions on Electronic Communications".**

**ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA:** Per Board Policy 3253/4253, the Moore County Schools intranet and the Internet, and devices that connect to the network offers an abundance of educational material as well as opportunities for collaboration and the exchange of ideas and information. The Board of Education recognizes the educational value of the network and connected devices, and strongly encourages the responsible use of these resources by all students and staff. Board Policy 3253/4253 describes the acceptable use of network and devices capable of connecting to the network. The use of the network, any district-owned devices or equipment and any personally owned devices on school property is a privilege, not a right. In the event there is an allegation that a student or employee has violated the Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement, the student or employee will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation and an opportunity to present an explanation before an administrator. Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and to assist the student or employee in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on a computer network. The Director for Technology Support Services or the Administration has authority to disable any account where there is a violation of this policy.

**TEAM SELECTIONS** - Students try out for sports teams voluntarily. For some of our athletic teams which limit the number of team members, students run the risk of being cut from that team. While selection of a team is a difficult process for all parties involved (coach, student-athlete and parents) some things should be remembered:

- Try-outs are open to all students who meet all prescribed rules of eligibility, including completion of all required pre-participation forms along with necessary parental signatures.
- Coaches must have an established evaluation process in place including documentation of the assessment of each student trying out.
- The tryout period for each team should be of a sufficient duration to allow the coach to make a reasonable assessment of each candidates ability and potential (minimum of 3 days)
- Students who are not present on the first day of tryouts due to lack of proper paperwork or without being excused by the coach in advance forfeit the minimum 3 day tryout period.
- Students coming from previous season sports will have a minimum 3 day tryout period.
- High school juniors and seniors are not allowed to try out directly for Junior Varsity teams.
- Attendance is required at ALL practices/games/scrimmages scheduled including those on non-school days, unless the student-athlete has prior approval from the coach.
- Only the head coach, school Administration or Athletic Director can excuse a student-athlete from practices and contests. Failure of a student-athlete to attend practice or contests is grounds for removal from the team.
- Sunday practices or any required team gatherings **are ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED.**
- MCS Board policy prohibits athletic practices or contests on any day that school is cancelled or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions (unless special permission is granted by the Superintendent or his/her designee).

**COACHING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – In order to be approved to attend a coaching related professional development opportunity the Professional Development for Athletics form (Appendix B at back of this handbook) must be completed and submitted to the athletic director at minimum 30 prior to the professional development.

**SUMMER CAMPS** – The purpose of summer athletic camps should be to build skills and enthusiasm for participation in the school athletic program and to raise funds to support the program. Summer camps are not intended to be “summer jobs” for coaches and all camp funds should be accounted for through the school bookkeeper. Plans for any summer camps **MUST** be approved by the athletic director and/or principal. Based on the number of camp participants and funds raised the principal and athletic director will determine the amount of funds that can be used to compensate coaches and other staff working the camp.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL DEAD PERIODS** – A dead period will last for one month from the beginning of each individual sport try-out period. There shall be no skill development in other sports during these dead periods.

**NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER COACHES** – MCS has established a maximum number of volunteer coaches allowed for each sport. Please refer to Appendix A at the back of this handbook for information related to the maximum number of volunteer coaches allowed for each sport.

**COACHING VACANCIES** – ALL coaching vacancies will be posted on the MCS website for 10 calendar days before hiring. This includes vacancies that might potentially be filled by an internal candidate.

### **EXPECTATIONS REGARDING RELIGION/PRAYER**

#### **MCS BOARD POLICY**

#### **5900 RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS**

Teachers and other staff members shall incorporate the highest standards of honesty, integrity and morality in all of their teaching, counseling and other contacts with students. Because there are students of many religious faiths, convictions and beliefs enrolled in the Moore County Schools, it is especially important that all school staff members be sensitive to the freedom of religion and other constitutional rights of all students.

In considering the role or the absence of the role of religion in the Moore County Schools, it is important to remember that the [First Amendment of the United States Constitution](#) does not forbid all mention of religion in public schools. It is the advancement or inhibition of religion that is prohibited. Nor are the public schools required to delete from curriculum all materials that may offend any religious sensitivity. For instance, studying music without sacred music, architecture minus cathedrals, or painting without scriptural themes would be incomplete from any point of view. There is nothing unconstitutional about the use of religious subjects or materials in public schools as long as they are presented as part of a religiously neutral program of education. Teaching against religion is as intolerable as teaching specific religious beliefs.

In order to ensure that Moore County Schools uphold constitutional standards within the religiously neutral role assigned the public schools, the following questions established by the United States Supreme Court should be asked of each school sponsored observance, program, instructional or other activity involving religious content, ceremony, or celebration:

1. What is the purpose of the activity? Is the purpose secular in nature?
2. What is the primary effect of the activity? Is it the celebration of religion? Does the activity either advance or inhibit religion?
3. Does the activity involve an excessive entanglement with a religion, religious group, or between the schools and a religious organization? Are funds of a religious origin being used for a school activity? Does either the school or religious activity require the consent or approval of the other?

If the purpose of the activity is not secular, if the effect of the activity is to advance or inhibit religion, or if the activity involves an excessive entanglement, then the activity is unconstitutional and will not be permitted in the Moore County Schools.

The following guidelines on religion and religious practices in the schools are provided in order to avoid infringement of individual rights and to set forth the Board's position concerning certain religious issues:

1. Teachers may include religion's role in appropriate subjects in the curriculum, such as literature, history, the humanities and the arts. When teaching about religion, teachers shall not promote a particular religion, but shall use fairness and objectivity.
2. School personnel will take into account the possible effects of religious holidays on school attendance when planning school calendars. When possible, examinations and other major events will not be scheduled on such holidays.
3. Students who miss school because of religious reasons that are approved systemwide or have the approval of the principal will be given an opportunity to make up school work.
4. School personnel will give careful consideration to written requests from parents that students be excused from activities that the parents deem objectionable on religious grounds. If such a request is approved by the principal, an alternative activity will be provided for the student.
5. The use of religious symbols and music as part of a religious holiday, such as Christmas or Hanukkah, is permitted as a teaching aid or resource. Symbols that are displayed as an example of the cultural and religious heritage of the holiday are to be used on a temporary basis.
6. Music, art, literature, and drama related to religious holidays may be studied and performed in programs if they are presented in an objective and neutral manner as a tradition of the cultural heritage of the particular holiday. Such programs should be a part of a curricular unit and should be simply staged and costumed.
7. Student groups sponsored by the school system shall not perform as part of a religious worship service.
8. The secular teaching about religions and about the history and practice of religions is permitted. The teaching of patriotic, historic, and literary documents having religious references embedded in them is permitted. Students shall be permitted to express religious themes through their natural artistic talents. Religion classes that are historical survey courses and offer an elective credit in social studies are permitted as part of the high school curriculum.
9. Religious books, including Bibles, or religious symbols may not be given to students as an award for achievement and may not be generally distributed by religious groups to students at school.
10. Students may read religious materials, including the Bible, during the school day, except when they are involved with their classroom work or other school activities, as long as it does not infringe on the rights of others or interfere in any way with the school program.
11. School personnel may read religious materials, including the Bible, and pray on their free time and may carry or wear religious symbols when on duty at school as long as it does not interfere with their work. Principals and other administrative personnel should be sensitive to and show respect for religious beliefs held by other employees and students. In dealing with religious issues, they should do so in a manner that will not show or imply favor or disfavor with an employee's or student's religious beliefs.
12. Counseling of students or informal discussions with students by school personnel shall neither infringe on the students' religious beliefs nor seek to indoctrinate students in the particular religious beliefs of the individual.
13. In scheduling speakers for classes and school assembly programs, schools may schedule motivational speakers; however, speakers should not advocate a particular religious creed.
14. At school functions, such as graduation exercises, PTA meetings and other school programs, individuals should be sensitive to the religious beliefs of others. At no time shall any religious belief, or any system denying or objecting to religious beliefs, be advanced or disparaged, nor shall any form of religious indoctrination or exercise, including prayer, be conducted by the school system or its employees. A moment of silence may be observed at school-controlled functions, activities or events.

Legal Reference: [U.S. Constitution, Amendment I](#); [G.S. 115C-36, -47](#); N.C.A.G. Reports, Vol. 41, No. 4, p. 802 Adopted: November 26, 1990; Revised: January 7, 2010

**LEGAL MEMORANDUM**  
**THARRINGTON SMITH, LLP**  
**EDUCATION LAW SECTION**

To: Robert P. Grimesey, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent  
From: Neal A. Ramee, Board Attorney  
Date: March 25, 2015  
Re: School Employee Participation in Prayers and Other Religious Activities

This memorandum summarizes the law governing participation by teachers, coaches, and other school officials in prayers or other religious activities at school and at on and off-campus events such as school assemblies, athletic events, awards ceremonies, and the like. In preparing this memorandum, we consulted state and federal statutes, leading opinions of the United States Supreme Court and lower federal courts, and the United States Department of Education's United States Department of Education's 2003 Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools. While the application of First Amendment rules to specific facts can be nuanced and complex, the following general principles emerge from these materials and should be followed by all employees of the Moore County Schools:

**FIRST GENERAL RULE – NEUTRALITY**

The Supreme Court has said that religious belief is “too precious” to be dictated by the government and that prayer and other religious matters are “committed to the private sphere.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the First Amendment demands strict religious “neutrality” on the part of public school systems and their employees.<sup>2</sup> Whenever they are acting in their official capacities, either on or off campus, school employees should neither favor nor disfavor religion. Particularly when interacting with students, school employees should remain strictly neutral with regard to prayer and other religious issues, recognizing that these are “private” matters best taught at home.

**SECOND GENERAL RULE – NO COERCION**

The Supreme Court has also explained that school systems and their employees may not “coerce anyone to support or participate in religion or its exercise.”<sup>3</sup> In one case, the Supreme Court held that a school violated the First Amendment by allowing a student-led and student-initiated prayer over the school's public address system at a high school football game. The Court reasoned that

<sup>1</sup> *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992).

<sup>2</sup> *School Dist. of Abington v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203, 216 (1963).

<sup>3</sup> *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992).

students opposed to the prayer would feel “immense social pressure” to bow their heads or otherwise join the exercise. By officially endorsing a student-led prayer, the school had unconstitutionally “coerced” other students to participate.<sup>4</sup>

**THIRD GENERAL RULE – NO ENDORSEMENT**

The Supreme Court has also held that it is unconstitutional for public employees acting in their official capacities to “endorse” religious activities. The Court reasoned that government endorsement “sends a message to nonadherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community.”<sup>5</sup> To determine whether there is an endorsement, courts ask whether a reasonable person, familiar with the relevant history, would believe that government employees have promoted religion. For example, one federal court found an unconstitutional endorsement based on an athletic coach's long history of participating in and facilitating prayers before team meals and games. Over the years, the coach had selected students to say prayers, led three prayers himself, and knelt and bowed his head in solidarity while students initiated prayers.<sup>6</sup>

**FOURTH GENERAL RULE – NO WAIVER OF RIGHTS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

Finally, courts have recognized that when school employees are acting in a purely *personal* capacity in a way that *could not reasonably be attributed to the school*, they have the same religious liberties as any citizen. For example, the United States Department of Education has said that school employees do not violate the Constitution by attending privately-sponsored religious baccalaureate services in their personal, rather than official, capacities.<sup>7</sup>

## DO'S AND DON'TS

In light of these principles, school employees **MAY** do any of the following without violating constitutional rules:

Privately pray, read scripture, or engage in other non-disruptive religious practice during “down time” in the work day to the same extent they may engage in comparable nonreligious activities (not while working with students or in a manner that disrupts workplace harmony or the educational environment).

Meet with other employees for prayer, Bible study, or other religious activities during lunch or before or after school to the same extent they may engage in comparable non-religious activities (not while working with students or in a manner that disrupts workplace harmony or the educational environment).

Allow students to pray, read scripture, or otherwise exercise their religions in non-disruptive ways during lunch, recess, or before or after the school day to the same extent they may engage in comparable non-religious activities.

4 *Santa Fe Indep. School Dist. v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290 (2000).

5 *County of Allegheny v. Am. Civil Liberties Union*, 492 U.S. 573 (1989).

6 *Borden v. School Dist. of the Township of East Brunswick*, 523 F.3d 153 (3d Cir. 2008).

7 *Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools* (February 7, 2003).

Attend meetings of student-initiated, non-curricular religious clubs (such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes) in a “non-participatory” capacity for “custodial oversight” only.<sup>8</sup>

Wear crosses, Stars of David, or other religiously-themed jewelry to work, so long as the items are non-disruptive and consistent with applicable dress codes.

Teach about the role of religion in history, art, culture, or politics as part of the *prescribed curriculum* (this does *not* include sharing personal views or injecting content that is not part of the official curriculum).

Adopt a respectful posture if students choose to pray entirely of their own accord.

Join students and parents in prayer, church activities, or other religious exercises *outside of school* and while acting in a *purely personal capacity* (not during work hours, at schoolsponsored events or activities, or as a teacher, coach, or other representative of the school).

School employees **MAY NOT** do any of the following during work hours, at school-sponsored events or activities, or when acting in their capacities as teachers, coaches, or other representatives of the school:

**Proselytize to students or pressure them to participate in any religious exercise.**

**Lead, join, or otherwise participate in prayers or other religious activities with students.**

**Sponsor, organize, or encourage religious events or activities involving students, including prayer, Bible study, or church attendance.**

**Criticize or denigrate religion to students.**

**Post religious materials in classrooms, locker rooms, or other school premises accessed by students.**

**Distribute religious materials to students or parents, including the use of religious “taglines” on school system email accounts.**

**Punish or stigmatize students for their faith or lack of faith.**

**Force religious views on others, including adults, in a way that disrupts workplace harmony or the educational environment.**

**Take any actions intended to influence students in their religious convictions or actions.**

To summarize, courts have recognized that religion is a private matter in which the government should remain strictly neutral. Courts have also recognized that school children are impressionable and easily influenced by adults in positions of authority. Knowing that students come from a variety of backgrounds and belief systems, public schools and their employees should exercise great care to avoid promoting or denigrating religion, non-religion, or any faith particular tradition.

Following the “do’s and don’ts” outlined above will help avoid conflicts and litigation and promote compliance with these important legal principles.

<sup>8</sup> This requirement comes from the federal Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. 4071.

## HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

Participation in High School and Middle School athletics is a privilege involving both responsibilities, risks and rights. The athlete’s responsibilities are to play fair, to give his/her best, to keep in training, and to conduct himself/herself with sportsmanship in a manner that will bring credit to the sport and school. Participation in athletics carries with it an inherent risk of accident and serious injury which can be reduced by obeying all safety rules, reporting all physical and hygiene problems to

coaches, practicing proper personal hygiene, inspecting one's own equipment daily, following a proper conditioning program and refraining from the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances. The student-athlete has the right to optimal protection against injury which may be secured through good conditioning and technical instruction, proper regulation and conditions of play, and adequate health supervision. Periodic evaluation of each of these factors will help assure a safe and healthful athletic experience for our students.

Link to: [NCHSAA - Health and Safety Guidelines](#)

**CONCUSSION AWARENESS** - The Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act was drafted and implemented to protect the safety of student-athletes in North Carolina and was signed into law on June 16, 2011 by Governor Beverly Purdue.

There are three major areas of focus in the law and these include: education, emergency action and post-concussion protocol implementation, and clearance/return to play or practice following a suspected concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. It results in the brain not working as it should. It may or may not cause a person to black out or pass out. It can happen from a fall, a hit to the head, or a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Every student-athlete and his/her parent or legal custodian is required by the Gfeller-Waller Act to review a concussion information sheet explaining the causes and symptoms of a concussion, and then sign a form stating that they have read the sheet and are now aware of the serious nature of concussions and will make the coaches aware if they notice any symptoms of a concussion. If a middle or high school student-athlete is suspected of suffering a concussion, he/she must be seen by a doctor and go through a series of return-to-play protocols before being cleared by a doctor to resume participation in sports. **In middle school, a coach can supervise activity as a part of the return to play protocol but the high school athletic trainer is the designee to have the final sign-off on return to play.**

Link to: [NCHSAA Gfeller-Waller Concussion \(All Information\)](#)

**HEAT and HUMIDITY GUIDELINES** - High temperatures and high humidity are potentially dangerous for athletes. Exertional Heat Stroke is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics. Exertional Heat Stroke also results in thousands of emergency room visits and hospitalizations throughout the nation each year. The National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research reports that 35 high school football players died of heat stroke between 1995 and 2010. Coaches and athletes should be aware of the signs and symptoms of exertional heat illness and distress; such as weakness, nausea/vomiting, paleness, headache, lightheadedness, clumsiness, confusion, stumbling, collapse, obvious behavioral changes and /or other central nervous system problems. To prevent heat related illnesses and ensure the safety of student-athletes the following precautions should be taken in extremely hot or humid situations:

- Avoid any outdoor practices between 11am – 5pm during high heat and humidity conditions.
- Be sure athletes are well hydrated. Plenty of water should be consumed before physical activity begins and there must be frequent water breaks.
- Use heat acclimatization techniques in developing practice plans. Heat acclimatization is the process of allowing the body to progressively adapt to exercising in the heat, so it can cool itself effectively and one can then better and more safely tolerate physical activity in the heat. Full heat acclimatization can take up to 10-14 days for the most important adaptations to occur.
- To the extent feasible, avoid physical activity in direct sunlight.
- Carefully monitor at-risk athletes - those who are obese, unfit, have been recently ill [particularly gastrointestinal illness], have a previous history of exertional heat illness, have the Sick Cell Trait, or using certain medications.
- Recognize early signs of distress and developing heat illness, immediately remove athlete from activity and begin first aid.

Link to: [NCHSAA Heat and Humidity Guidelines](#) (Practice Situations)

**FLUIDS & HYDRATION** - Over 60% of a typical human's body weight comes from fluids. Being properly hydrated is one of the easiest ways for athletes to ensure optimal performance and lower the risk of heat illness. Dehydration is a condition that occurs when the loss of body fluids, mostly water, exceeds the amount that is taken in. When this mismatch occurs, the body overheats and it becomes more difficult to function properly. This results in impaired performance and leads to early fatigue and increased risk for heat illness, heat cramping, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. The signs and symptoms of dehydration range from minor to severe and include:

- Increased thirst
- Dry mouth and swollen tongue
- Weakness
- Dizziness and/or fainting
- Confusion
- Palpitations (feeling that the heart is jumping or pounding)
- Inability to sweat
- Sluggishness
- Decreased urine output
- Goose bumps and/or chills

Urine color may indicate dehydration. If urine is concentrated and deeply yellow or amber, it may indicate dehydration. Not all fluids that a person can consume will help to replenish the water and nutrients necessary. Water or sports drinks, which are specially designed to contain enough carbohydrates to boost energy during workouts, but not so much that they are hard to

digest, are generally the best option for hydrating the body before and during physical activity. The longer the duration of exercise and physical activity, the more important it becomes to rely on sports drinks, with their higher concentrations of sodium and carbohydrates, for fluid replacement. Sports drinks can be especially helpful in heat and humidity since they replace electrolytes lost in sweat. Sports drinks may be the best option for individuals with poor caloric intake prior to participation.

**Keep the 3-H RULE in mind.** Sports drinks trump water for performance and safety when exercise is **Hard**, **Hot**, and lasts more than an **Hour**.

The Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the NFHS has put forth the following position statement:

- Appropriate hydration before, during, and after exercise is an important ingredient to healthy and successful sports participation.
- Rapid weight loss represents a loss of body water. A loss of just 1-2% of body weight (1.5 to 3 pounds for a 150 pound athlete) can negatively impact performance. A loss of 3% or more of body weight can increase the risk for exertional heat related illness.
- Athletes should be weighed before and after warm weather practice sessions and contests to assess fluid losses.
- Athletes with high body fat percentages can become dehydrated faster than athletes with lower body fat percentages while working out under the same environmental conditions.
- All athletes have different sweating rates and some lose much more salt through their sweat than others.
- Poor acclimatization/fitness levels can greatly contribute to an athlete's dehydration problems.
- Medications and fevers can each greatly contribute to an athlete's dehydration problems and risk for heat illness.
- Environmental temperatures and humidity both contribute to dehydration and heat illness.
- Clothing, such as dark, bulky, or rubber protective equipment can drastically increase the chance of dehydration and heat illness.
- Even dry climates can have high humidity if sprinkler systems are scheduled to run before early morning practices start. This collection of water does not evaporate until environmental temperatures increase and dew points lower.

#### **WHAT NOT TO DRINK DURING EXERCISE:**

- Fruit juices with greater than 8 percent carbohydrate content a soda can both result in a bloated feeling and abdominal cramping.
- Beverages containing caffeine, alcohol, and carbonation are not to be used because of the high risk of dehydration associated with excess urine production, or decreased voluntary fluid intake.
- Athletes should be aware that nutritional supplements are not limited to pills and powders; many of these new fluids contain stimulants such as caffeine and/or ephedrine.
  - These stimulants may increase the risk of heart or heat illness problems when exercising.
  - Many of these drinks are being produced by traditional water, soft drink, and sports drink companies and may provide confusion to the sports community. As is true with other forms of supplements, these "power drinks or fluid supplements" are not regulated by the FDA. Thus, the purity and accuracy of contents on the label are not guaranteed.
  - Many of these beverages, which claim to provide additional power, energy, etc., have additional ingredients that are not necessary, some that are potentially harmful, and some that actually include substances banned by such governing bodies as the NCAA and the USOC.

Link to: [NCHSAA Heat and Humidity Guidelines](#) (Practice Situations)

#### **Heat Guidelines for Athletic Games and Meets**

The [NCHSAA Heat Guidelines](#) specifically address **practice situations**. This does not mean that these guidelines cannot be used for athletic games and meets. Most athletic games/meets have "built in" breaks for hydration purposes (end of quarter, halftime, change in possession, time outs, changeovers, substitutions, etc). Cross country is one sport without "built in" breaks,

so we are providing separate Heat Guidelines for Practices and Meets. Below are Heat Guidelines for Athletic Games and Meets, except cross country. **WBGT should be used when possible. If not, then determine the heat index.**

<b>WBGT and Heat Index - Physical Exercise Chart</b>		
<b>WBGT Index (F)</b>	<b>Heat Index</b>	<b>Athletic Activity Guidelines</b>
Less than 80	Less than 80	Unlimited activity with primary cautions for new or unconditioned athletes or extreme exertion; schedule mandatory rest / water breaks (5 min water / rest break every 30 min)
<b>80 - 84.9</b>	<b>80 - 90</b>	Normal activity for athletes; closely monitor new or unconditioned athletes and all athletes during extreme exertion. Schedule mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 25 min)
<b>85 - 87.9</b>	<b>91 - 103</b>	New or unconditioned athletes should not play. Well conditioned athletes should have more frequent rest breaks and hydration as well as cautious monitoring for symptoms of heat illness. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 20 min) Have immersion pool on site for practice.
<b>88 and Above</b>	<b>104 and Above</b>	New or unconditioned athletes should not play. All athletes must be under constant observation and supervision. Remove pads and equipment when appropriate, including removing helmets unless active in a game. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 15 min) Have immersion pool on site. May need to withhold athletes with a medical history of heat illness or have reported symptoms of heat illness to the athletic trainer during the season. Coaches and athletic directors should work with officials to include extra time for water breaks (heat time outs), and/or lengthen half time. Tennis coaches should allow for more time between changeovers and sets. Schools may consider changing the time of the game or postponing the game.

**Note: The WetBulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight, which takes into account: temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle and cloud cover (solar radiation).**

#### **Heat Guidelines for Cross Country Practices and Meets**

- **Education** – Cover Heat Guidelines and Information (prevention, proper hydration, recognizing symptoms, treatment) with all runners and parents. We will put as much information as possible on the WCPSS website.
- **Acclimatization** – After official start of the fall sports season, all runners must have 6 practices prior to the first meet.
- **Coach/Runner communication** is a necessity. Runners need to let the coach and/or athletic trainer know of any problems that they are experiencing.
- **Be adaptable to weather:** shorten practice, change practice times, modify practice, change meet times, shorten meets
- **For fall season practice prior to the start of school,** do not practice between the times of 11:00 and 5:00 unless wet bulb globe temperature or heat index is code green or below. Note: WBGT should be used when possible. If not, then determine the heat index.
- **Recommend Buddy System:** Pair up individuals for practice and meets. “Buddy” duties would include checking attendance at practice or meets, checking attendance prior to and after the run, and checking for any problems.
- **Use your seniors** to help at practices and meets.
- **Cross Country Meets**
  - **For acclimatization purposes, prior to Labor Day, shorten week day meets to 3K unless wet bulb globe temperature is below 85 degrees, which is code green or below.**

- After Labor Day, week day meets are 5K unless wet bulb globe temperature is 88 degrees or higher (code red). If wet bulb globe temperature is 88 degrees or higher (code red), the week day meet will be reduced to 3K.
- Saturday meets are usually scheduled earlier in the day, and include numerous schools participating from different parts of the state. Hot weather conditions should be monitored by the coach, and the coach should have an emergency action plan.
- **Start weekday cross country meets** one hour later through **Labor Day**: Example 5:00 walk the course, 6:00 girl's meet, 6:30 boy's meet
- **Put helpers/monitors/spotters on the course** directing traffic (especially the more confusing areas) and monitoring the runners – have ways that you can communicate.
- Have a **water/ice station on the course** to be used as needed.
- **Coaches are accountable for all runners beginning the run and ending the run.** This will occur prior to runners doing cool down run after the race.
- **Have assistant athletic trainer/first responder at meets you are hosting.** Alert EMS in your area of the cross country meet. Note: Athletic trainers/first responders are spread thin during the fall sports season and must attend football practices/games according to State Board of Education Guidelines, but have them available or on call for meets that you are hosting.
- **Water, ice, shade must be available at the end of the meet route.**
- **The cross country coach is the initial care giver** in most situations (practice or meets). They must have an emergency action plan in place.
- **Guidelines for Off-Campus Running** must be followed.

### Hot Weather Guidelines for Summer Practices

#### Definition of Summer Practice:

Summer Practice is from the time the school year ends until the first day of fall practice set by the NCHSAA. Most of our athletic programs offer opportunities for practice during this time period. Coaches are in charge of the practices, and athletic trainers are not usually available. Hot weather conditions are a concern.

#### For Summer Practice (June 13, until first day of fall practice set by NCHSAA – August 1). Summer practice may begin June 13<sup>th</sup>.

- Education – Cover Hot Weather Guidelines and Information (prevention, proper hydration, recognizing symptoms, treatment) with all athletes and parents.
- Acclimatization – Consider all participants and their level of conditioning when developing your practice plan.
- Coach/athlete communication is a necessity. Athletes need to let the coach know of any problems that they are experiencing.
- Be adaptable to weather: shorten practice, change practice times, modify practice
- Do not practice outside between the times of 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM.
- Have water available at all practices.
- The coach has a duty to evaluate injury and provide emergency care (see # 3 below).
- Coaches must follow all “Hot Weather Guidelines for Summer Athletic Practice.” This includes recording Pre and Post Weigh-Ins (Football only). **Head football coaches or designee must supervise “weigh-ins” of football players for all summer practices. Supervise means making sure that pre and post weigh-ins are properly taken, recorded, and evaluated for 3% weight loss.**
- **The coach or designee will check hot weather conditions prior to practice using the Heat Index chart.**

The following chart will be used by middle and high school athletic programs in determining the procedure and hydration schedule during summer practice hot weather conditions. Heat Index readings are to be monitored by the coach, and readings should be taken and recorded prior to the start of practice.

WBGT Index F	Heat Index	Procedure for Athletic Practices
Less than 80	Less than 80	Unlimited activity with primary cautions for new or unconditioned athletes or extreme exertion; schedule mandatory rest / water breaks (5 min water / rest break every 30 min)
80-84.9 Caution (Green)	80-90	Normal practice for athletes; closely monitor new or unconditioned athletes and all athletes during extreme exertion. Schedule mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 25 min)
85-87.9 Extreme Caution (Yellow)	91-103	New or unconditioned athletes should not practice. Well-conditioned athletes should have more frequent rest breaks and hydration as well as cautious monitoring for symptoms of heat illness. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 20 min) Have immersion pool on site for practice.
88-89.9 (Red)	104-124	All athletes must be under constant observation and supervision. Remove pads and equipment. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 15 min) Have immersion pool on site for practice.
90 or above (Black)	125 and up	SUSPEND PRACTICE

### Measuring Heat Index

1. There are many devices that can measure heat index (Precision Heat Index Instrument, Heat and Humidity Monitor, SkyScan Ti-Plus Weather Monitor and Heat Index Warning System).
2. Heat Index can be determined by entering the zip code at your location at these websites: <http://www.osaa.org/heatindex/> or <http://www.ihsaa.net/HeatIndex/Default.aspx>.
3. Heat index can also be found by entering air temperature and relative humidity at this website: <http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/html/heatindex.shtml>.
4. Heat index can be found at most weather websites, and most local television weather stations and websites.

### Athletic Participation Form

- Board Policy 6860 requires that all athletes receive a medical examination once every 395 days.
- The coach shall insure that no athlete participate without fully completing the athletic participation form and being cleared to participate by authorized medical personnel.
- If an athlete's medical history shows that the athlete has suffered from a heat-related illness, the athlete shall receive one-on-one instruction from the coach, athletic trainer or designee about symptoms of heat illness and the importance of hydration.

### Pre and Post Weigh-Ins (Football Only)

1. Daily pre and post practice weigh-ins should be taken and any athlete who is not within 3% of the previous days pre-practice weight should be withheld from practice. Athletes who lose more than 3% of their weight during a practice should also be counseled on the importance of pre-hydrating, drinking more fluids during the practice session, and post practice re-hydration. Note: Supervision means making sure that pre and post weigh-ins are properly taken, recorded, and evaluated for 3% weight loss. The football coach will help set provisions for weigh-ins for players (must include no weigh-in./no practice rule and weigh-ins for players late to practice).
2. A list of athletes most susceptible to heat illness must be maintained by the athletic trainer and communicated to the coaching staff. This list should include, but not be limited to, athletes with a medical history of heat illness, athletes losing more than 3% of their weight during a practice, and athletes that have reported symptoms of heat illness during the season to the athletic trainer. Others more susceptible to heat illness are febrile illness (current or recent fever), taking medications (especially ones with a diuretic effect or that act as a stimulant), and sickle cell trait.
3. The athletes most susceptible to heat illness should receive one-on-one instruction from the coach, athletic trainer or designee about symptoms of heat illness and the importance of hydration.

4. The coach, athletic trainer or designee should recommend to athletes most susceptible to heat illness that they consult with their doctor for additional guidance. If an athlete's doctor informs the coaching staff or athletic trainer that the athlete has suffered a heat-related illness during the season, the athlete may not participate until cleared in writing by the doctor.

### **Coaches and Athletes Education**

- The athletic trainer will provide the coaches with information on heat illness including heat illness symptoms and proper hydration. In case a middle school does not have a person filling the athletic trainer position, the athletic director will provide this information.
- Athletes should be informed of the importance of hydration, the symptoms of heat illness, and their personal responsibility to inform the athletic trainer or coaching staff if they suffer any symptoms of heat illness.
- Teams should use the "buddy" system (two players who play the same position are assigned to "keep an eye on" each other).
- Any coach notified or aware of any athlete exhibiting a symptom of heat illness shall notify the athletic trainer.

**SPORTS NUTRITION** – Just as hydration is important to student's health and well-being, caloric intake is also important to ensuring optimal athletic performance. Student-athletes should focus on eating lean proteins, fruits and vegetables and whole grains to ensure the body is prepared for training. Avoid going into any training session with an empty fuel tank. A high carb & protein meal (such as whole grain in breads, rice, pasta, fruits, vegetables, chicken, turkey, or low-fat yogurt) should be consumed 3-4 hours before practice or competition and an easily digestible snack 60-90 minutes before activity. Avoid eating a diet high in saturated or trans fats, as these are unhealthy and may limit athletic capacity. These types of fat are found in higher fat dairy products, meats, fried food and processed foods/snacks. Primarily unsaturated fats such as olives, avocados, nuts, seeds and salmon should be chosen instead. Carbohydrates are the most rapid source of energy for muscles and protein plays a major role in helping the body recover after exercise. When students eat a combination of carbohydrates and protein, the carbs are used to fuel the muscles during activity, while the protein is used to help build and repair muscle tissue. It can take up to 36 hours to reload the muscles of students who delay refueling their bodies. To aid the body in faster recovery after exercise or competition, choose carbohydrate-rich foods with some protein within 30 min of finishing a training session or competition (e.g., chocolate milk, protein shakes or bars). Be careful to limit the intake of these pre-packaged sports products. While they can be used effectively in an athlete's diet, whole foods should be consumed when possible. Great recovery foods include: granola, bagels with peanut butter, sub sandwiches with lean meats like chicken or turkey, as well as crackers and cheese. Making healthy food choices by students requires encouragement and commitment.

**PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS (PEDs)** – Often dietary supplements and performance enhancing drugs are seen as an easy way to enhance athletic performance, increase energy levels, lose or gain weight and feel better. If taken to an extreme, this can create a culture more concerned about "quick fixes," rather than hard work, development of good nutrition practices and overall long term health. The number of middle school, high school and college students that illegally use and abuse anabolic, over-the-counter dietary supplements, human growth hormones (HGH) and other PEDs appears to be growing. In a 2011 survey, over 1.5 million high school students in the U.S. admitted to using anabolic steroids, not including those unknowingly ingested through spiked dietary supplements, and 35% of middle school and high school athletes admitted to using protein supplements. At the same time 85% of youth report never having a parent, teacher, or coach talk with them about the dangers of using PEDs. It is important to realize that dietary supplements are not subject to the same strict regulations as prescription or over-the-counter medications. Therefore, parents and students should closely examine the ingredients in any dietary supplement prior to ingestion. A recent study by Informed Choice Labs, which randomly selected 58 protein powders off the shelves of well-known supplement stores, found that 25% of those powders contained anabolic steroids. An additional 11% of the products tested positive for stimulants not indicated on the label. Young athletes often take the advice of the supplement store representative on what products are effective to gain muscle, drop body fat, and enhance performance. Warning to parents: speak with your son or daughter's physician and/or a board certified sports dietitian before they partake in a dietary supplement regimen. To learn if a specific dietary supplement has been certified as safe, visit <http://www.nsfspport.com/>. For more information about the dangers of PEDs go to <http://taylorhooton.org/>

**MRSA, HIV, HEPATITIS B** - By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes the risk of possible transmission of infectious disease such as MRSA, HIV and Hepatitis B. This risk can be diminished with the practice of proper safety and hygiene measures.

**Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)** is a type of staph bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics. In the community, most MRSA infections are skin infections. In medical facilities, MRSA causes life-threatening bloodstream infections, pneumonia and surgical site infections. Anyone can get MRSA through direct contact with an infected wound or by sharing personal items, such as towels or razors that have touched infected skin. MRSA infection risk can be increased when a person is in certain activities or places that involve crowding, skin-to-skin contact, and shared equipment or supplies, such as athletes during competition. There are the personal hygiene steps that can reduce the risk of MRSA infection:

- Maintain good hand and body hygiene. Wash hands often, and clean body regularly, especially after exercise.
- Keep cuts, scrapes, and wounds clean and covered until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels and razors.

- Get care early if you think you might have an infection.

**Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)**

MRSA (mer-sa) is a type of infection caused by *Staph* bacteria that is resistant to some common antibiotics such as penicillin.

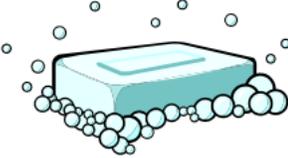
Staph and MRSA are spread by direct physical contact with an infected individual or by touching objects contaminated with the bacteria such as towels, uniforms, or sports equipment.




The infected area usually starts out as a small bump resembling a pimple, which becomes redder and can develop pus drainage.



Report any suspicious skin sores to your parents, coach, trainer or school nurse. See your health care provider!





**To prevent this infection, athletes should:**

- wash hands frequently
- shower immediately after physical activity
- never share personal hygiene items
- cover any open sore on skin when involved in contact sports.
- clean and disinfect all shared athletic equipment after each use (mats, pads, helmets, etc.)



**Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)** weakens a person's immune system by destroying important cells that fight disease and infection. Only certain body fluids from a person who has HIV can transmit the virus to others. These fluids must come in contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue or be directly injected into the bloodstream (from a needle or syringe) for transmission to occur. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in only extremely rare cases, has HIV been transmitted by:

- 1) Being bitten by a person with HIV. Each of the very small number of documented cases has involved severe trauma with extensive tissue damage and the presence of blood. There is no risk of transmission if the skin is not broken.
- 2) Contact between broken skin, wounds, or mucous membranes and HIV-infected blood or blood-contaminated body fluids.
- 3) Eating food that has been pre-chewed by an HIV-infected person. The contamination occurs when infected blood from a caregiver's mouth mixes with food while chewing. The only known cases are among infants.

HIV does not survive long outside the human body (such as on surfaces), and it cannot reproduce outside a human host.

HIV is **not** spread by:

- Mosquitoes, ticks, or other insects.
- Saliva, tears, or sweat that is not mixed with the blood of an HIV-positive person.
- Hugging, shaking hands, sharing toilets, sharing dishes, or closed-mouth or "social" kissing with someone who is HIV-positive.
- Other sexual activities that don't involve the exchange of body fluids (for example, touching).

As a result, in the athletic setting the risk of spreading HIV can be all but eliminated by following simple personal hygiene steps.

**HEPATITIS B** is a liver disease that results from infection with the Hepatitis B virus. Severity can vary from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Hepatitis B is usually spread when blood or another body fluid from a person infected with the hepatitis B virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen through sexual contact with an infected person or sharing needles, syringes, or other drug-injection equipment. Hepatitis B can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth. Therefore, in the athletic setting the transmission of Hepatitis B from one person to another is extremely rare.

Signs and symptoms of Hepatitis B include:

- abdominal pain
- dark urine
- fever
- joint pain
- loss of appetite
- nausea and vomiting
- weakness and fatigue
- yellowing skin and eyes (jaundice)

**SICKLE CELL DISEASE** - Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects red blood cells and is not uncommon in the African-American community. One of the questions that is on the current pre-participation medical form has to do with sickle cell disease, so it is important that everyone involved in interscholastic athletics has some awareness and understanding about the disease.

People with sickle cell disease have red blood cells that contain mostly hemoglobin\* S, an abnormal type of hemoglobin. Sometimes these red blood cells become sickle-shaped (crescent shaped) and have difficulty passing through small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease. There is currently no universal cure for sickle cell disease. Hemoglobin – is the main substance of the red blood cell. It helps red blood cells carry oxygen from the air in our lungs to all parts of the body. Normal red blood cells contain hemoglobin A. Hemoglobin S and hemoglobin C are abnormal types of hemoglobin. Normal red blood cells are soft and round and can squeeze through tiny blood tubes (vessels). Normally, red blood cells live for about 120 days before new ones replace them. People with sickle cell conditions make a different form of hemoglobin A called hemoglobin S (S stands for sickle). Red blood cells containing mostly hemoglobin S do not live as long as normal red blood cells (normally about 16 days). They also become stiff, distorted in shape and have difficulty passing through the body's small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease.

**There are several types of sickle cell disease.** The most common are: Sickle Cell Anemia (SS), Sickle-Hemoglobin C Disease (SC), Sickle Beta-Plus Thalassemia and Sickle BetaZero Thalassemia. Sickle Cell trait (AS) is an inherited condition in which both hemoglobin A and S are produced in the red blood cells, always more A than S. Sickle cell trait is not a type of sickle cell disease. People with sickle cell trait are generally healthy. Sickle cell conditions are inherited from parents in much the same way as blood type, hair color and texture, eye color and other physical traits. The types of hemoglobin a person makes in the red blood cells depend upon what hemoglobin genes the person inherits from his or her parents. Like most genes, hemoglobin genes are inherited in two sets...one from each parent. Examples: If one parent has Sickle Cell Anemia and the other is Normal, all of the children will have sickle cell trait. If one parent has Sickle Cell Anemia and the other has Sickle Cell Trait, there is a 50% chance (or 1 out of 2) of having a baby with either sickle cell disease or sickle cell trait with each pregnancy. When both parents have Sickle Cell Trait, they have a 25% chance (1 of 4) of having a baby with sickle cell disease with each pregnancy.

In the United States people are often surprised when they learn that a person who is not African American has sickle cell disease. The disease originated in at least 4 places in Africa and in the Indian/Saudi Arabian subcontinent. It exists in all countries of Africa and in areas where Africans have migrated. It is most common in West and Central Africa where as many as 25% of the people have sickle cell trait and 1-2% of all babies are born with a form of the disease. In the United States with an estimated population of over 270 million, about 1,000 babies are born with sickle cell disease each year. In contrast, Nigeria, with an estimated 1997 population of 90 million, 45,000-90,000 babies with sickle cell disease are born each year. The transatlantic slave trade was largely responsible for introducing the sickle cell gene into the Americas and the Caribbean. However, sickle cell disease had already spread from Africa to Southern Europe by the time of the slave trade, so it is present in Portuguese, Spaniards, French Corsicans, Sardinians, Sicilians, mainland Italians, Greeks, Turks and Cypriots. Sickle cell disease appears in most of the Near and Middle East countries including Lebanon, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Yemen. The condition has also been reported in India and Sri Lanka. Sickle cell disease is an international health problem and truly a global challenge.

For more information on Sickle cell, go to [NCHSAA - Sickle Cell Information](#)

**COMMOTIO CORDIS** - is sudden death that results from a lethal disruption of heart rhythm that occurs as a result of a blow to the area directly over the heart (the precordial region), at a critical time during the cycle of a heart beat causing cardiac arrest. It is a form of ventricular fibrillation (V-Fib), not mechanical damage to the heart muscle or surrounding organs, and not the result of heart disease. It most often occurs during participation in sports, most often baseball, often despite a chest protector. It is most often caused by a projectile, but can also be caused by the blow of an elbow or other body part, striking the precordial region over the heart. The thorax of an adolescent, being less developed, is more prone to this injury given the circumstances. The USA National Commotio Cordis Registry reported 188 cases between 1996 and 2007, with about half occurring during organized sports.

- It is the leading cause of death for youth baseball players averaging 2 to 3 deaths per year.
- 96% of the victims were male and averaged 14.7 years old
- Most cases were fatal, but the survival rate increased to 35% when automated external defibrillators were used within three minutes of the impact.
- Chest protectors are designed to reduce trauma from blunt bodily injury, but they do not offer protection from commotio cordis.
- Almost 20% of the victims in football, baseball, lacrosse and hockey were wearing chest protectors.

**NFHS Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances (Revised and Approved October 2014):** These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service. Proactive Planning:

- (a) Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
  - (b) Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
  - (c) Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
    - (1) When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty (30) minutes and take shelter immediately.
    - (2) Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
    - (3) Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
  - (d) Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
  - (e) Inform student-athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.
- Note: For more detailed information, refer to the "Lightning Safety" section contained in the NFHS ~~Medicine~~ Handbook.

### GUIDELINES FOR OFF-CAMPUS RUNNING

**The following guidelines are recommendations for all interscholastic teams who incorporate off-campus running as part of their conditioning. Coaches will provide the athletic director with the courses used for practices and/or meets. Prior to the start of the season, the coach and athletic director will approve the courses. Athletes and parents will be notified of these guidelines and are expected to comply with the following:**

- Always run the school approved course as designated by the coach.
- Run on sidewalks or shoulders where available, not on the street.
- Run on the street only when another approved course is unavailable; then, run FACING oncoming traffic and run single file except when passing another runner.
- Wait and cross with the traffic light green at all intersections. If there is a caution light or no traffic light, cross only when it is clear to do so. DO NOT assume a driver has seen you. Every runner must stop and look; do not cross as a group.
- Make eye contact with the driver of any car that is in your running path. This is particularly important when a car is turning right. In this situation, drivers frequently look only to their left. They may not see you approaching from their right.
- NEVER push, shove, or “horseplay with” another runner.
- NEVER run with headphones.
- Acknowledge your presence with a command, such as “runner approaching.” when you approach another runner or pedestrian.
- Watch for bicyclists and in-line skaters; use the same precautions as you would with a vehicle.
- Avoid confrontation with others you encounter on the course. Never comment or gesture inappropriately. Report any incidents to your coach, immediately.
- NEVER run alone.

**EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS-** Every high school is required to have venue specific Emergency Action Plans (EAP). Emergency situations may arise at any time during athletic events and practices. Expedient action must be taken in order to provide the best possible care to the sport participant or spectator if emergency and/or life threatening conditions arise. The development and implementation of an emergency plan will help ensure that the best care will be provided. As emergencies may occur at any time and during any activity, all coaches and those working at athletic events must be prepared. School athletic departments have a duty to develop an emergency plan that may be implemented immediately when necessary and to provide appropriate standards of emergency care. As athletic injuries may occur at any time and during any activity, the coaching staff must be prepared. This preparation involves formulation of an emergency plan, proper coverage of events, maintenance of appropriate emergency equipment and supplies, utilization of appropriate emergency medical personnel, and continuing education in the area of emergency medicine and planning. Hopefully, through careful pre-participation physical screenings, adequate medical coverage, safe practice and training techniques and other safety avenues, some potential emergencies may be averted. However, accidents and injuries are inherent with sports participation, and proper preparation should enable each emergency situation to be managed appropriately. The following are the requirements for an EAP.

1. The EAP MUST be reviewed by an licensed athletic trainer
2. The EAP MUST include a delineation of roles, methods of communication, available emergency equipment, and access to and plan for emergency transport.
3. The EAP MUST be in writing.
4. The EAP MUST be provided to all coaches, administrators, volunteers, etc. involved in interscholastic athletics.
5. The EAP MUST be posted conspicuously at all venues.
6. The EAP MUST be annually reviewed and rehearsed by all licensed athletic trainers, first responders, coaches, school nurses, athletic directors, and volunteers for interscholastic athletics.
7. The EAP MUST be approved by the school principal.

Link to: [NCHSAA - Emergency Action Plan Information](#)

## **SAFETY LIST FOR FOOTBALL PLAYERS**

Football is a contact sport and injuries will occur. The coaches working in our program are well qualified, professional people. Fundamentals related to playing football will continually and repeatedly be emphasized on and off the field. The information contained within this list of rules and procedures is to inform the young men in our football program of the proper techniques to practice for maximum safety in the contact phase of the game.

### **Tackling, Blocking and Running the Ball**

By the rule, the helmet is not to be used as a “ram.” Initial contact is not to be made with the helmet. It is not possible to play the game safely or correctly without making contact with the helmet when properly blocking and tackling an opponent. Therefore, technique is most important to prevent of injuries.

Tackling and blocking techniques are basically the same. Contact is to be made above the waist but not initially with the helmet. The player should always be in a position of balance, knees bent, back straight, body slightly bent forward, HEAD UP, target area as near to the body as possible with the main contact being made with the shoulder.

Blocking and tackling by not putting the helmet as close to the body as possible could result in shoulder injury such as a separation or a pinched nerve in the neck area. The dangers of not following the proper techniques can be from minor to disabling to even death. The reason for following the safety rules in making contact with the upper body and helmet is that improper body alignment can put the spinal column in a vulnerable position for injury.

If the head is bent downward, the cervical (neck) vertebrae are in a bind and contact on the TOP OF THE HELMET could result in a dislocation, nerve damage, paralysis, or even death. If the back is not straight, the thoracic (mid back) and lumbar vertebra are also vulnerable to injury with similar results if contact again is made to the TOP OF THE HELMET. Each daily workout includes isometric-type exercises; the development of strength in the neck muscles is one of the best methods of preventing head injury and enabling an individual to hold his head up even after getting tired during a workout or contest.

### **Basic Hitting (Contact) Position and Fundamental Technique**

If the knees are not bent, the chance of knee injury is greatly increased. Fundamentally a player should be in the proper hitting position at all times during live ball play and this point will be repeated continually during practice. The danger is anything from strained muscles to ankle injuries to serious knee injuries requiring surgery. The rules have made blocking below the waist (outside a two-yard by four-yard area next to the football) illegal. Cleats have been restricted to no more than ½ inch to further help in preventing knee injuries. A runner with the ball, however, may be tackled around the legs.

In tackling, the rules prohibit initial contact with the helmet or grabbing the facemask or edge of the helmet. These restrictions were placed in the rules because of serious injuries resulting from non-compliance to these safety precautions. Initial helmet contact could result in a bruise, dislocation, broken bone, head injury, internal injury, such as kidneys, spleen, bladder, etc. Grabbing the face mask or helmet edge could result in a neck injury, which could be anything from a muscle strain to a dislocation, nerve injury, spinal column damage causing paralysis or death.

The illegal play by participating athletes will not be tolerated and all players are repeatedly reminded of the dangers of unsportsmanlike acts.

### **Fitting and Use of Equipment**

Shoulder pads, helmets, hip pads, pants including thigh pads and kneepads must have proper fitting and use.

Shoulder pads which are too small will leave the shoulder point vulnerable to bruises or separations; it could also be too tight in the neck area resulting in a possible pinched nerve. Shoulder pads which are too large will leave the neck area poorly protected and will slide on the shoulders making them vulnerable to bruises or separations.

Helmets must fit snugly at the contact points: front, back and top of head. The helmet must be safety “NOCSAE” branded, the chinstraps must be fastened, and the cheek pads must be of the proper thickness. On contact, too tight a helmet could result in a headache. Too loose a fit could result in headaches, a concussion, a face injury such as a broken nose or cheek bone, a blow to the back of the neck causing a neck injury, possibly quite serious such as paralysis or even death.

The report does not cover all potential injury possibilities in playing football, but is an attempt to make the players aware that fundamentals, coaching and proper fitting equipment is important to their safety and enjoyment in playing football in Moore County Schools.

The above information has been explained to me and I understand the list of rules and procedures. I also understand the necessity of using the proper techniques while participating in the football program.

## Daily Football Helmet Inspection Checklist

### Players

#### Check Your Helmet Before

#### Each Usage As Follows:

1. Check foam padding for proper placement and any deterioration.
2. Check for cracks in vinyl / rubber covering of air, foam, liquid padded helmets.
3. Check that protective system or foam padding has not been altered or removed.
4. Check for proper inflation of air helmets. Follow manufacturer guidelines. Air pressure adjustments are to be made by coaches, trainer or faculty equipment manager.
5. Check all rivets, screws, Velcro and snaps to assure they are properly fastened and holding protective parts.

*IF ANY OF THE ABOVE INSPECTIONS INDICATE NEED FOR REPAIR AND/OR REPLACEMENT, NOTIFY A COACH OR FACULTY EQUIPMENT MANAGER.*

AS A PLAYER, THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!!! NEVER WEAR A DAMAGED HELMET

## Weekly Football Helmet Inspection Checklist

### Coaches, Trainer or Faculty Equipment Manager

(Compare this checklist to the manufacturer's guidelines)

Players don helmet and buckle chinstrap

Trained Professional(s) Check:

1. Chinstrap cup centered on the chin, anchoring straps flat and taut, passing under the facemask. Chinstrap buckles with teeth facing up. Straps not loose, stretched or broken. Replace as needed. Snaps in good repair
2. Bottom of forehead padding - 1 inch above the eyebrow. Adjust padding or air in the bladder.
3. Helmet ear openings aligned approximately with ear canals. Adjust padding or air in the bladder.
4. Facemask 3 finger widths from tip of nose. Check facemask for chipped paint, loose attachments, movement, denting or flattening. Repair attachments, replace dented or chipped masks as needed.
5. Rear padding covers the bony prominence of the skull. Adjust padding or air in bladder.
6. Front to back torsion – forehead skin should wrinkle. Helmet should NOT slide forward and down on the nose or backwards on to the neck. Adjust chinstrap, padding or air in bladder
7. Side torsion – grasp face mask with both hands and attempt to rotate sideways. Forehead and skin near jaw pads should wrinkle. Player's nose should remain between the anchoring screws that hold the facemask in place on the forehead. Adjust padding, chinstrap or air in bladder
8. Examine shell for cracks; examine mounting rivets, screws, velcro and snaps for breakage, distortion or looseness. Replace as needed
9. Replace damaged or worn forehead, rear skull and jaw pads.

## Lacrosse Helmet Checklist

### Helmet Fitting

1. **The frontal rim** of the helmet should be 1 inch above the eyebrow. Once the correct height has been established, the chin strap must be correctly fastened. This will keep the helmet in the proper position while you check and adjust the fit of the helmet. To adjust the chin strap, hold the chin cup squarely on the chin, and then adjust and fasten the front straps and finally the back. Make sure the tension is equal on all four straps and that none is pulled out of alignment.
2. **Back of Head:** Use your fingers to feel just under the back rim of the helmet. The padding should be in firm, but comfortable contact with the head. If there are any gaps or if the helmet is too tight, try another size helmet.
3. **Back to Front:** The fit of the front and back should be checked at the same time, because they affect each other. First, grip the helmet firmly on each side and rotate it gently from side to side, then up and down. The skin of the forehead should move with the helmet. If the helmet moves without moving the skin, try another size helmet. Second, lock your fingers behind your head and pull firmly toward you. If a gap appears between the front liner and the forehead, try another size helmet.
4. **Facemask:** The clearance between the end of the nose and the inside of the mask should be at least two to three finger widths. Also, ensure that your vision has not been impaired by the placement of the horizontal bars.
5. **Final Grip Check:** The final goal is to obtain a firm, yet comfortable grip on the head.
6. **Top of Head Check:** Lock your fingers on the very top of the helmet and firmly pull straight down on your head. Ask yourself where the pressure is felt. If the pressure is felt evenly distributed all over then you have a good fit on top. If pressure is felt on top, this is still acceptable. However, if you feel pressure minimally in front and back, then the helmet is too tight.

7. **Side to Side Movement:** Place your hands on each side of the helmet and hold your head still. Gently force the helmet from side to side, watching the skin on the forehead. It should move with the helmet. There should be firm resistance to the helmet. The liner should bunch the cheeks, but not slide around to the nose. If there is too much movement, try another size helmet.
8. **Vertical Movement:** Place your hands on each side of the helmet and hold your head still. Gently force the helmet up and down. The skin on the forehead should move with the helmet, and with enough force it will eventually slip a little, but it should catch on the eyebrow without coming down on the nose.

#### **Weekly Checklist**

1. Check each helmet for fit using the above criteria (1-8). Change any helmet that does not meet the fitting requirements.
2. Visually inspect shell for cracks.
3. Visually check the mask for cracks and distortion. Any mask distorted by 1/8 of an inch or more from the standard form should be replaced.
4. Check snaps and hardware and make sure they are free of distortion and function properly.
5. Helmet liners should be checked for deterioration.
6. Check chin straps for deterioration and general wear and tear.
7. Remove any helmet immediately that fails to meet the above quality standards.

### **SAFETY AND SECURITY AT PRACTICES/GAMES**

#### **Lockdown Procedures**

In the event of an emergency situation requiring the “lockdown” of the school all coaches should be familiar with MCS lockdown procedures and protocols relevant to the venue(s) in which they practice or play. For example, in the gym all doors would be locked, lights off, and student-athletes moved to an inner locked room away from all doors and windows. On a field, if appropriate, student-athletes could be moved to a nearby facility which could be locked and offer protection such as a field house. If no nearby building is available or if it is unsafe to attempt to move to a building a designated area in the woods where student-athletes can hide should be identified and communicated. Coaches are expected to cover the appropriate lockdown procedure for the venue in which they coach with student-athletes at the beginning of the season.

#### **Severe Weather/Lightning Action Plan**

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of the student-athletes, coaches and spectators at practices and athletic events, it is necessary to establish a comprehensive action plan for lightning and other weather related emergencies. The following plan has been adapted from the National Athletic Trainer’s Association (NATA) Position Statement: Lightning Safety for Athletics and Recreation. This plan includes the chain of command, designated weather watcher, means of monitoring local weather, specific safe locations for each site, criteria for suspension and resumption of activity, and use of recommended lightning-safety strategies.

#### **Chain of Command:**

1. If present, the principal, assistant principal, or athletic director is the ultimate authority and has the duty of suspension of the practice or game if the weather conditions become unsafe.
2. If administrators are not present, the athletic trainer has the authority and duty of suspension of the practice or game if the weather conditions become unsafe.
3. If none of the above is present, the head coach of the team (or his/her designee) has the authority and duty of suspension of the practice or game if the weather conditions become unsafe.
4. If the game is already underway and the officials of the game are responsible for suspension of the game, it is the responsibility of the school officials listed above to inform the officials of the weather conditions and request suspension of the game. If the school officials feel that the weather conditions are unsafe, the field should be evacuated to a safe location immediately.

#### **Designated Weather Watcher:**

1. The designated weather watcher is the athletic director if present at the practice or games.
2. If the athletic director is not available, the athletic trainer or his designee shall be the designated weather watcher.
3. If none of the above is present, the head coach or his designated assistant coach shall be the weather watcher. It is the ultimate responsibility of the head coach to be aware of unsafe weather conditions.

#### **Means of Monitoring the Weather:**

Before practices and games, athletic trainer, coaches, and athletic director should monitor the weather by weather reports and forecasts on television and on the internet. On the internet, intellicast.com and National Weather Station composite loop radar can be monitored for inclement weather. It is also recommended that some type of appropriate wireless application be used for monitoring purposes. Examples may include:

- <http://inws.wrh.noaa.gov>
- <http://mobile.weather.gov>

- <http://emergencyemail.org>

### **Specific Safe Sites for Each Location:**

1. The primary choice for a safe location from the lightning hazard is in any substantial structure that is frequently inhabited. These buildings should have electrical wiring, telephone wiring, and plumbing pathways because these fixtures aid in grounding the building. Breezeways, overhangs of concession stand, dugouts, and covered entrances are not safe structures. It is important that everyone is away from doorways and windows and not in contact with plumbing or wiring during thunderstorms.
2. The secondary choice for a safe location from the lightning hazard is an enclosed vehicle. Cars or buses with metal roofs and windows closed afford protection from thunderstorms. Golf carts and convertibles do not provide protection from lightning. Individuals must not be in contact with the metal framework of the vehicle.
3. During home events and practices at Moore County Schools, the following areas should be considered primary evacuation sites:
  - a. The football/soccer game fields: student-athletes and coaches involved with any football/soccer event should evacuate to the field house and/or adjacent building hallways. This location would also be the evacuation site for the visiting team.
  - b. The softball and baseball fields: student-athletes and coaches should evacuate to the nearest designated building.
  - c. The golf team: student-athletes should evacuate to the clubhouse, to the lightning shelters on the course or to the school bus or cars.
  - d. Band and Drill team: Band and drill team members should evacuate to the band room.
  - e. Coaches should have appropriate access to these safety sites.
  - f. Spectators should be directed to their vehicles or should be evacuated to the appropriate location under the supervision of the administrator in charge of the event.
4. During away events, student-athletes and coaches should evacuate to the closest safe structure as directed by the host team. If no safe structure is available, the student-athletes and coaches shall evacuate to the team bus.

### **Criteria for Suspension and Resumption of Activity:**

1. Teams should seek a safe structure or location at the first sign of lightning or thunder activity. Postponement or suspension of an activity or contest (regardless of whether lightning is seen or thunder is heard) should occur if signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are observed. These signs include darkening clouds, high winds, and thunder or lightning activity.
2. Once activities are suspended, the activity can not resume until 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder or lightning flash. (NCHSAA policy)
3. A message over the public address system to the spectators about evacuation to safer locations such as cars and/or gymnasium should be made. Also, lightning safety tips should be included in game programs alerting the spectators about what to do and where to go for a safer location during thunderstorm activity.

### **Use of the Recommended Lightning Safety Strategies:**

Coaches and athletic trainers should educate the student-athletes and spectators of the lightning safety policy and strategies. The dangers of lightning should be explained and the plan of action should be understood by all coaches and student-athletes. Each student-athlete must know the nearest evacuation point and the importance of checking in with the appropriate coach.

Additional safety measures that coaches and student-athletes must understand are:

1. Avoid being in contact with or near the highest point of an open field or on the open water. Do not take shelter under or near trees, flag poles, or light poles. Do take shelter in a structure that has electricity, plumbing and/or phone lines because this structure will be a grounded structure.
2. Avoid taking showers or using plumbing facilities and land-line telephones during a thunderstorm. Cordless or cell phones are safer to use when emergency help is needed.
3. Individuals who feel their hair stand on end, skin tingle, or hear crackling noises should assume the lightning-safety position (i.e., crouched on the ground, weight on the balls of the feet, feet together, head lowered and ears covered). Do not lie flat on the ground.
4. If someone is struck by lightning, follow normal first aid procedures. However, survey the conditions because an ongoing thunderstorm can pose a threat to the emergency personnel. If possible, evacuate the injured person to a safe location as soon as possible.
5. Appropriate personnel should be CPR and first aid trained.
6. All individuals should have the right to leave an athletic site or activity, without fear of repercussion or penalty, in order to seek a safe structure or location if they feel they are in danger from impending lightning activity.

### **Job Performance Responsibilities**

## **Athletic Director**

1. Responsible to and work under the direction of the High School Principal and the overall athletic program.
2. Responsible for administrating all interscholastic policies and procedures working within the confines of the Rules and By-Laws of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.
3. Observe coaches sufficiently in order to make future recommendations of job expectancies and job assignments to the School Principal.
4. Assist the Principal in evaluating all new candidates for original appointments.
5. Responsible for all recommending facility improvements to Principal consideration and referral.
6. Responsible for the development of all interscholastic game schedules (supported by a filed contract form) and approval schedule publication.
7. Responsible for contracting all game officials.
8. Provide guidance on athletics and athletic program requirements for staff under his or her supervision as well as recommendations to the school principal.”
9. Resolve conflicts that may develop within the Athletic Department.
10. Discover ways for appropriately supporting and financing the athletic program.
11. Submit a year-end financial report to the Principal annually.
12. Arrange for transportation, lodging, and meals for all interscholastic events, when required.
13. Receive and evaluate equipment quotations and approve appropriate orders from authorized coaches.
14. Attend all home athletic contests and/or arrange for proper supervision of home athletic contests by administrative personnel.
15. Responsible with the Principal, after consulting the Head Coach, for the cancellation or postponement of contests because of non-playing conditions.
16. Supervise all radio broadcasts, as well as public address system operation at the various games.
17. Maintain a permanent file of players, medical examinations, insurance forms, records, parent consent forms, payment, etc.
18. Maintain permanent records for each sport, such as wins and losses, outstanding records, letterpersons, etc.
19. Maintain a file of all athletic suspensions and expulsions from teams in regard to giving each athlete “Due Process.”
20. Responsible for determining scholastic eligibility of all candidates for athletic teams on semester basis and for certifying their eligibility on the proper state forms.
21. Coordinate with the Principal and coaches’ request to attend coaching clinics.
22. Work in conjunction with the principal in developing the yearly budget for the athletic program, as requested by the head coaches.
23. Work with the Principal, cheerleading advisors, and coaches involved in scheduling all athletic assemblies and pep rallies.
24. Coordinate the use of all athletic facilities in the school with the Principal by groups outside the school.
25. Responsible for game management at all home interscholastic contests and, when admission is charged, is responsible for the safekeeping and deposit of gate receipts if so directed by the school principal.
26. Provide for the cleaning, repairing, and storing of all athletic equipment and maintaining a perpetual inventory of all equipment.
27. Establish procedures for the control of the training room.
28. Arrange for medical doctors at all home varsity football games and larger athletic events.
29. Supervise the physical equipment and schedule facilities for all interscholastic athletic contests.
30. Plan, organize, and supervise all athletic awards programs with the Booster Club, with the approval of the Principal.
31. Promote publicity for all interscholastic sports, such as sports brochures, press, and radio for all schools and shall assist the Booster Club in the organization of the game programs.
32. Coordinate with the Principal the repair and maintenance of varsity athletic field, track, baseball field, and gymnasiums, including physical education facilities.
33. Manage athletic facilities and control their use by band, football team, track squad, etc. Hire or make necessary arrangements to provide ushers, parking, security and other services required by the athletic operation.
34. Assume responsibility for assignment of keys to athletic facilities and gymnasiums, including physical education facilities.
35. Represent the school in all athletic business at Conference, State, and National meetings.
36. Design a reasonable and equitable program for the utilization of the concession stands.
37. Responsible for scheduling physical examinations in accordance with the requirements of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.
38. Responsible for the operation and organization of the press boxes.
39. Attend and serve as school liaison at all Athletic Booster Club meetings.
40. Liaises between the coaches and the Athletic Booster Club.
41. Responsible for the sales of any athletic supplies and jackets to qualified athletes through the athletic office.
42. Maintain an active program that promotes sportsmanship and welcomes the competing teams and guests.
43. Responsible for the annual review of the Athletic Policy and Staff Handbook.
44. Constantly evaluate the program, always seeking ways of improving interscholastic athletics.

45. Perform other duties as assigned by the superintendent or school principal in keeping with the Moore County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

### **Head Coach**

1. Thorough knowledge of all the Athletic Policy approved by the Moore County Schools Board of Education and is responsible for its implementation by the entire staff of the sports program.
2. Knowledge of existing system, state, and conference regulations; implement them consistently and interprets them for staff.
3. Understand the proper administrative line of command and refer all requests of grievances through proper channels. Awareness of all public/staff/departmental meetings that require attendance.
4. Establish the fundamental philosophy, skills, and techniques to be taught by staff. Design conferences, clinics and staff meetings to insure staff awareness of overall program.
5. Train and inform staff, encourage professional growth by encouraging clinic attendance according to local clinic policy.
6. Delegate specific duty, supervise implementation, and at season's end, analyze staff effectiveness and evaluate all assistants.
7. Maintain discipline, adjust grievances, and work to increase morale and cooperation.
8. Assist the Athletic Director in scheduling, providing transportation, and requirements for tournament and special sport events.
9. Assist in the necessary preparation to hold scheduled sport events or practices and adhere to scheduled facility times. Coordinate program with maintenance and school employees.
10. Provide documentation to fulfill state and system requirements concerning physical examinations, parental consent, and eligibility.
11. Provide proper safeguards for maintenance and protection of assigned equipment sites.
12. Advise the Athletic Director and recommend policy, method or procedural changes.
13. Provide training rules and any other unique regulations of the sport to each athlete who is considered a participant.
14. Give constant attention to a student athlete's grades and conduct.
15. Presence at all practices and games. Provide assistance, guidance, and safeguards for each participant.
16. Initiate programs and policies concerning injuries, medical attention, and emergencies.
17. Complete and submit proper paperwork on all disabling athletic injuries to athletic office within 24 hours.
18. Direct student managers, assistants, and statisticians.
19. Determine discipline, delineate procedures concerning due process when the enforcement of discipline is necessary and contact parents when a student is dropped or becomes ineligible.
20. Assist athletes in their college or advanced educational selection.
21. Participate in the budgeting function with the Athletic Director by establishing requirements for the next season. Recommend guidelines as to type, style, color, or technical specifications of equipment. Responsible for operating within budget appropriations.
22. Accountable for all equipment and/or collection of fees for any lost or unreturned equipment. Arrange for issuing, storing, and reconditioning of equipment and submit annual inventory and current records.
23. Properly mark and identify all equipment before issuing or storing.
24. Monitor equipment rooms and coaches' offices, authorize who may enter, issue or requisition equipment.
25. Permit the athletes to only be in authorized areas of the building at the appropriate times.
26. Examine locker rooms before and after practices and games, checking on general cleanliness of the facility. Be responsible for cleanliness and maintenance of specific sport equipment.
27. Secure all doors, lights, windows, and locks before leaving building if custodians are not on duty.
28. Instill in each player a respect for equipment and school property, its care and proper use.
29. Organize parents, coaches, players, and guests for pre-season meetings.
30. Promote the sport within the school through recruiting athletes who are not in another sports program. Promote the sport outside the school through news media, Little League programs, or in any other feasible manner.
31. Responsible for the quality, effectiveness and validity of any oral or written release to local media.
32. Responsible for maintaining good public relations with news media, Booster Club, parents, officials, volunteers, and fans.
33. Present information to news media concerning schedules, tournaments, and results.
34. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or the school Principal in keeping with Moore County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

### **Assistant Coach**

1. Thorough knowledge of all the athletic policies approved by the Moore County Schools Board of Education and is responsible for their implementation.
2. Knowledge of the existing system, state, and conference regulations; implements them consistently.

3. Understand the proper administrative line of command and refer all student and parent requests of grievances through proper channels. Awareness of all public/staff/departmental meetings that require attendance.
4. Maintain discipline and work to increase morale and cooperation within the school sports program.
5. Assist the Head Coach in scheduling, providing transportation to tournaments and special sport events.
6. Assist in the necessary preparation to hold scheduled sport events or practices and adhere to scheduled facility times. Coordinate program with maintenance and school employees.
7. Provide documentation to the Athletic Director to fulfill state and system requirements concerning physical examinations, parental consent, and eligibility.
8. Provide proper safeguard for maintenance and protection of assigned equipment sites.
9. Provide training rules and any other unique regulations of the sport to each athlete who is considered a participant.
10. Presence at all practices and games. Provide assistance, guidance, and safeguards for each participant while traveling.
11. Direct student managers and statisticians on respective teams.
12. Determine discipline, delineate procedure concerning due process when the enforcement of discipline is necessary contact parents when a student is dropped or becomes ineligible.
13. Accountable to the Head Coach for all equipment. Collect the cost of any equipment lost or not returned. Arrange for issuing and storing of equipment and submit an annual inventory and current records to the Head Coach.
14. Recommend program area budgetary items for subsequent year to the Head Coach.
15. Monitor and authorize entrance to equipment rooms and coaches' offices.
16. Authorize approved areas and times for athletes to enter building.
17. Examine locker rooms for general cleanliness before and after practices and games. Responsible for cleanliness and maintenance of specific sport equipment.
18. Secure all doors, lights, windows, and locks before leaving building if custodians are not on duty.
19. Instill in each player a respect for equipment and school property, its care, and proper use.
20. Assist the Head Coach in carrying out his responsibilities.
21. Make press releases and school announcements.
22. Instruct team members as to changes in the rules and teach fundamentals of the sport as outlined by the Head Coach.
23. Maintain a record of team statistics and requirements for lettering (for both Head Coach and Athletic Director).
24. Work within the basic framework and philosophy of the Head Coach of that sport.
25. Attend all staff meetings and carry out scouting assignments as outlined by the Head Coach.
26. Arrive early enough before practice, contests, and meetings to adequately prepare and remain long enough afterwards to help players with problems and/or be involved in staff discussions.
27. Help in the planning and implementation of both in-season and out-of-season conditioning and weight programs.
28. Never criticizes, admonishes, or argues with Head Coach or any staff member within ears or eyes of players or parents.
29. Strive to improve skills by attending clinics and using resources made available by the Head Coach.
30. Attend most of the contests, when possible, of other teams in the program.
31. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or the School Principal in keeping with Moore County Schools Board of Education Policies and North Carolina Administrative Code of Statutes.

### **Athletic Trainer**

1. Provide "Athletic Training Services"\* to student-athletes under the direction of a physician or by written referral from a physician, and in accordance with the state Athletic Training Practice Act.
2. Is responsible for giving basic instruction to athletic staff members in the prevention and care of injuries.
3. Is responsible for referring athletic injuries to physicians for diagnosis and/or treatment.
4. Carry out appropriate instructions and treatment as directed by the (athlete's) physician.
5. Develop and supervise appropriate rehabilitation programs for athletes under the direction of the (athlete's) physician.
6. Act as a liaison between family physicians and specialists, the school district, athletes, and their parents.
7. Assist and advise the athletic staff regarding conditioning programs and the selection, care and fitting of protective equipment.
8. Determine if a player is capable of continued participation in a game and/or practice if the player is injured.
9. Is responsible for the treatment and supervision of treatment for all athletic injuries and conditions.
10. Is responsible for the organization, inventory and requisition of all training room supplies with the advisement and approval of the athletic director.
11. Should be present at all school sponsored home athletic events and away Varsity and JV football games. If a conflict arises between an away football game and another home contest the away football game will supersede. Coordinate an extension of sports medicine services when appropriate in the event of multiple home athletic events on the same day.
12. Is responsible for providing sports medicine supervision for the duration of all other major school sponsored home athletic events (involve a number of teams and a significant amount of time i.e. volleyball invitational, wrestling tournaments, track invitational, etc.).
13. Shall make and/or assist with proper arrangements for scheduling athletic physicals for student athletes.
14. Shall remain on campus and/or be available unless otherwise having communicated with the athletic director/principal.

15. Is responsible for the care and cleanliness of the athletic training room and maintaining an appropriate professional environment within the training room.
16. Is responsible for the maintenance of all student athlete injury related and other records in the online ArbiterAthlete system, which may include physicals, injury reports, treatment logs, etc.
17. In the absence of school administration and the athletic director, the athletic trainer has the authority and duty of suspension of practices or games if weather conditions become unsafe.
18. Must annually review each athletic venue specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
19. May not have coaching responsibilities.
20. Perform other duties as assigned by the athletic director and/or principal.

\*Athletic Training Services: The management and provision of care of injuries to a physically active person as defined in the state practice act with the direction of a licensed physician. The term includes the rendering of emergency care, development of injury prevention programs and providing appropriate preventative and devices for the physically active person. The term also includes the assessment, management, treatment, rehabilitation and recondition of the physically active person whose conditions are within the professional preparation and education of a certified athletic trainer. The term also includes the use of modalities such as mechanical stimulation, heat, cold, light, air, water, electricity, sound, massage and the use of therapeutic exercises, reconditioning exercise and fitness programs.

### **Cheerleading Coach**

1. Responsible for the directing, supervising, and training of the cheerleaders.
2. Responsible for completing the requirements of the NCHSAA and Moore County Schools.
3. Responsible for the conduct of the cheerleaders at practice sessions and at all contests.
4. Schedule, attend, and supervise cheerleader practice sessions.
5. Lead and direct the cheerleaders in such a way as to encourage good sportsmanship by example and leadership.
6. Conduct himself/herself before the students and the community so as to instill respect and good sportsmanship.
7. Assume responsibility for an energetic public relations program for the cheerleaders and their activities.
8. Responsible for uniforms and supplies.
9. Assure cheerleaders carry out all the duties set forth in their guidelines.
10. Serve as the liaison between cheerleaders and the school administration.
11. Ensure that Board Policy and sound business practices are followed in planning school trips, fundraisers, and other activities.
12. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or school Principal in keeping with Moore County Schools Board of Education policies and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

**Maximum Number of Volunteer Coaches  
Allowed For Each Sport**

**High School**

Football – 10  
Basketball – 1 (JV), 1 (varsity), 1 (freshman)  
Baseball – 4  
Softball - 4  
Track – 3 per team (indoor, outdoor)  
Wrestling – 2  
Volleyball – 1  
Cross-Country – 2  
Soccer – 2 (men), 2 (women)  
Lacrosse – 2 (men), 2 (women)  
Tennis – 1 (men), 1 (women)  
Golf – 1 (men), 1 (women)  
Swimming – 1 (men), 1 (women)  
Cheerleading – 1 (JV), 1 (varsity)

**Middle School**

Football – 3  
Basketball – 2 (boys), 2 (girls)  
Baseball – 2  
Softball – 2  
Volleyball – 2  
Tennis – 1  
Soccer – 1 (boys), 1 (girls)  
Cross-County – 1  
Wrestling – 1  
Cheerleading - 1

**Coaching/Athletics Professional Development Form**

Professional learning is an important aspect of a coach’s growth. To ensure that program needs are understood, this form must be completed and submitted to the athletic director to request permission to attend a professional development activity. **This form MUST be submitted 30 days prior to the requested activity date.**

Today’s date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Have you spoken with the athletic director regarding you request?            Yes            No

Is the professional development provided by a certified association?            Yes            No

What is the date of the professional development? \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

What is the name of the professional development?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the location of the professional development?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the professional development topic?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Content description of the professional development (please describe the content of the PD below and/or attach any related materials describing the PD)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe how this professional development can help you reach your program’s goals.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Approved** \_\_\_\_\_                      **Denied** \_\_\_\_\_

**Athletic Director’s signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Principal’s signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**1.2.4 Gender of Player:** The NCHSAA allows participation in interscholastic athletics for all students, regardless of gender or gender identification. It is the intent that all students are able to compete on a level playing field in a safe, competitive and friendly environment, free of discrimination. The following rules and regulations are intended to provide every student athlete with equal opportunities to participate in athletics.

- a) A student may participate based on the gender noted on the student's certificate of birth.
  - I. Women shall not participate on a men's interscholastic athletic team where the school has a women's team in the same sport or where a school sends an entry to the women's state playoffs in the same sport.
    - a) In cases where women are permitted on a men's team, the school forfeits all participation in the women's playoffs in the same sport.
    - b) Men's rules will be used where women play on men's teams.
- b) When a student's gender identity differs from the gender listed on the student's certificate of birth, the Gender Identity Request Form must be submitted by the member school to the NCHSAA prior to any participation by the student under circumstances that would constitute ineligibility. The Request should be based on the gender identification of that student in current school records and daily life activities in the school and community.
  - I. The following information should be submitted with the Request:
    - a) Documentation from individuals such as, but not limited to, parents/legal guardians appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction, friends, and/or teachers, which affirm that the actions, attitudes, and manner demonstrate the student's consistent gender identification.
    - b) A complete list of all the student's prescribed, non-prescribed, or over the counter treatments or medications relative to gender identity.
    - c) A complete list of interventions that have happened related to the gender identity of the student.
    - d) Written verification from an appropriate healthcare professional (e.g. physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, school nurse, etc.) of the student's consistent gender identification. Include any other social/emotional information from health-care professionals that would help the Committee make a decision about the student. This information must be submitted on office letterhead of the healthcare professional who provides verification with contact information and professional title of the individual.
    - e) Any other pertinent documentation or information which the student or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) appointed by a court of competent jurisdiction believe relevant and appropriate.
- c) The NCHSAA will refer the Gender Identity Request to the NCHSAA Gender Identity Committee for consideration. The Committee will approve the Request if it finds that the student genuinely identifies as the gender indicated in the Request.
  - I. The NCHSAA Gender Identity Committee will consist of the following:
    - a) Current member of the Board of Directors;
    - b) LEA or school administrator;
    - c) Physician with experience in gender identity health care and/or World Professional Association of Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care;
    - d) Psychiatrist, psychologist, or licensed mental health professional familiar with the WPATH.
  - II. The Committee will require that the member school has verified that the student is eligible in all other aspects.
  - III. The Committee will respect and promote the student's privacy and confidentiality rights under HIPPA and FERPA in the process of considering a Gender Identity Request. Information provided to the Committee will be shared only to the extent necessary to decide the Gender Identity Request; provided that, if a Gender Identity Request is approved, the student's school may share the student's gender identity with other schools as necessary to ensure appropriate accommodations when competing at another school.
- d) In cases where a Gender Identity Request has been approved:
  - I. The student will be declared eligible to participate based on the student's gender identity.
    - a) 1.2.4.a is not in effect.
  - II. It shall be the responsibility of the school to comply with all state and federal mandates/laws.