

# Waterford School District



## Interscholastic Athletic Code of Conduct

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## **Scope of Athletic Program**

The value of an athletic program cannot be measured simply in terms of wins and losses. A beneficial athletic program is one that provides athletes the opportunity to experience personal growth and development, both physically and mentally. The Waterford School District athletic program will allow athletes to learn to accept personal responsibility for success and failure, and to recognize the limitations and strengths of both. Each sports program will strive to teach motivation, self-discipline, self-confidence, loyalty, leadership sacrifice, extra effort and a positive attitude.

It is important for everyone, including the staff, students and parents in the Waterford School District, to realize that participation in an athletic program is not the right of all students. It is a privilege that is afforded to those individuals who possess the ability, attitude, disposition, cooperative spirit and desire to represent the school and community. Waterford School Districts Interscholastic Athletic Program will require special standards and expectations in the area of academics, citizenship, training rules, and sportsmanship.

# Waterford School District

The Waterford Interscholastic Athletic Code of Conduct for student athletes has been developed and implemented to provide a common set of rules for all students participating in athletics. A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and self-denial. It is our hope that this information will assist all athletes and parents of the Waterford School District. Student athletes are to comply with all aspects of the code if they desire continued eligibility status. The Waterford School District is a member of the MHSAA and abides by its rules and guidelines.

## DURATION OF ATHLETIC CODE

**Students shall be regarded to be under the rules of the Athletic Code of Conduct beginning with their first day of participation in interscholastic athletics and continuing through to the date of graduation or the last date of participation, whichever is later. Students entering 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> grade will be considered to have no previous violations.**

## SECTION 1: RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR ATHLETES

### A. ENROLLMENT

Students must meet all criteria for enrollment set forth by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. The student must be enrolled in the school for which he/she competes. If the student does not meet enrollment requirements, he/she may be ineligible for a period of time. Circumstances may present themselves as such the athletic director will work with the MHSAA to determine a student's eligibility.

### B. ELIGIBILITY: HIGH SCHOOL

#### *Academic Requirements*

The academic eligibility requirements of the Michigan High School Athletic Association require only that an athlete must have passed a minimum of 66% of their classes at the conclusion of the last semester of enrollment and continue to pass at least 66% of their classes during the season of competition.

Athletes set an example in many areas of school life... they are, in essence, highly visible ambassadors of the school. Because athletes serve as leaders in our schools, the Waterford School District expects our athletes to do more than meet the state requirements. Therefore, student-athletes must meet the following academic standards:

**Semester Eligibility: 1) Students must have passing grades in all classes for the previous semester OR 2) have no more than 1 E or F and at least a 2.0 in their other classes (for the previous semester).**

However, student athletes who did meet the MHSAA previous semester criteria (but did not meet the district requirements) may have their current grades checked at the 60<sup>th</sup> school day from the first day of the semester. If **on the 60<sup>th</sup> day** the student athlete is passing all classes OR has achieved the 2.0 Grade Point Average if failing one course, they will become immediately eligible.

**Current Grade Eligibility: Students must have passing grades in all classes OR have no more than 1 E or F and at least a 2.0 in the other classes.**

Student athletes who are failing no more than 1 class must have at least a 2.0 grade point average in their other classes during the present semester. Current grades will be checked on Fridays. If the student athlete does not meet this standard they must sit out a minimum of (1) week defined as Sunday through Saturday or until the minimum requirement is met. The student athlete may continue to practice during the ineligible period, but may not participate in competition during that time.

*\*Note: For purposes of determining grades and eligibility requirements for pass/fail courses, percentages will be considered. Academic Center is not considered in determining weekly athletic eligibility.*

**C. ELIGIBILITY: MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Athletic coaches will turn in complete rosters to the athletic manager one (1) week before the first competitive game. The athletic manager will check grades of athletes on the rosters on a weekly basis.

Coaches and students will be notified if student-athletes are ineligible to participate in sports for the current eligibility week due to not meeting the requirements in the previous grade check. The eligibility period is one week, and students can earn their eligibility back for the following weeks if marks are improved. This process will be completed weekly.

A student is ineligible when he/she is:

- failing two (2) or more classes academically
- failing one (1) class and has less than a 2.0 GPA in other classes
- earning a total of three (3) unsatisfactory citizenship marks or two (2) unsatisfactory citizenship marks and failing one (1) academic class.

*\*Note: For purposes of determining grades and eligibility requirements for pass/fail courses, percentages will be considered.*

***The building assistant athletic administrator, building administration or district athletic director, will decide all final eligibility decisions.***

**D. AGE REQUIREMENT: HIGH SCHOOL**

A student who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except that a student whose nineteenth (19<sup>th</sup>) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year.

**E. AGE REQUIREMENT: MIDDLE SCHOOL**

A seventh grade student who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under fourteen (14) years of age, except that a student whose (14<sup>th</sup>) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year is eligible for the balance of that school year. An eighth grade student who competes in any interscholastic athletic contest must be under fifteen (15) years of age, except that a student whose (15<sup>th</sup>) birthday occurs on or after September 1 of a current school year.

## **F. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION**

A student must have a physical examination form signed by the MD, D.O., Physician's Assistant, or Nurse Practitioner who administers the physical examination, certifying that the student is fully able to compete in athletics. This physical must take place April 15 or later to be used for the current school year. The student cannot participate in any practice sessions or contests until the completed form has been turned over to the team coach and filed in the school's main office.

## **G. CONCUSSION**

A student must have a Concussion Acknowledgement Form signed by the parent/guardian and student. The student cannot participate in practice or contests until the completed form has been turned in to the team coach and filed in the school's athletic office. Acknowledgment Forms are available online at the schools' athletic websites or in the schools' athletic offices.

## **H. CODE OF CONDUCT**

The student cannot practice or compete until the attached code of conduct form is signed and returned by the student and parent.

## **I. INDIVIDUAL TEAM RULES AND GUIDELINES**

Each coach has the authority to develop additional award requirements and team guidelines for his or her sport consistent with school wide rules and procedures. These rules will be subject to the approval of the building Athletic Director's office and presented to all team members at the beginning of the season.

## **J. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ON DAY OF CONTEST**

Students are expected to be in school at least 4 hours of the school-day on the same day of the contest. If the student misses any portion of the school-day, it must be excused in order to participate in the activity that day. The building principal or athletic director have the authority to prearrange exceptions to the attendance regulation. Examples include, but are not limited to: court appearances, death in the family, funeral arrangements, student activities, and other prearranged appointments.

## **K. EQUIPMENT USAGE**

Any participant who is issued athletic equipment or uses any athletic equipment owned by the school district will be held financially responsible for the use and care of the assigned or designated athletic equipment.

## SECTION II: MAINTAINING AMATEUR STATUS

Students must abide by all criteria for maintaining amateur status, as set forth by the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

### A. ELIGIBILITY

After once representing a MHSAA member school in competition in any sport, a student shall not be eligible to represent his or her high school if that student: (1) receives money or other valuable consideration from any source for participating in athletics, sports, or games listed below; (2) receives money or other valuable consideration for officiating in interscholastic athletic contests; or (3) signs a professional athletic contract.

A student shall be ineligible under this regulation if he or she violates its amateur provisions only in the following activities: baseball, basketball, bowling, girls competitive cheer, cross country, football, golf, ice hockey, lacrosse, alpine skiing, soccer, girls softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track and field, girls volleyball or wrestling.

### B. REINSTATEMENT

A student ineligible under this Regulation may not apply for reinstatement until the equivalent of one full school year of enrollment has elapsed following the date of his or her last violation.

Any questions regarding maintaining your amateur status should be directed to your building athletic director or the district Athletic Department.

## SECTION III: AWARDS

- A. A student will not accept from any source anything for participation in athletics other than an emblematic award. An emblematic award would include, but not be limited, to any medal, ribbon, badge, plaque, cup, trophy, banner, picture or regular letter awards.
- B. No acceptable award shall exceed twenty five (\$25.00) dollars in value. The price does not include engraving.
- C. No one, such as a parent, friend, or other person, may accept an award on behalf of the athlete at any time prior to graduating from high school.

Acceptance of such items as merchandise, memberships, privileges, services, sweaters, athletic equipment, wearing apparel, watches, etc. would be a violation.

## SECTION IV: NCAA - FOR COLLEGE BOUND SENIORS

If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman and you wish to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, you must be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. The Eligibility Center is an updated version of the NCAA Clearinghouse which was established as a separate organization by the NCAA member institutions in January 1993. The Eligibility Center ensures consistent interpretation of NCAA initial-eligibility requirements for all prospective athletes at all member institutions. If you want to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, plan to start the certification process early – usually the end of your junior year in high school. **SEE YOUR COUNSELOR FOR DETAILS.** Information can be obtained on the web site at: [https://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA\\_EMS/NCAA.jsp](https://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp) or by searching “NCAA Eligibility Center.”

## **SECTION V: GENERAL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

When a person (student-athlete or parent) has a question, or concern, or complaint regarding an athletic situation not involving the Athletic Code, the following lines of communication have been found to be most effective:

Start with the source – student-athlete should talk directly with the coach in private, face to face, away from the practice site. Contact from a parent to the coach would be an appropriate second step

1. Student-athlete speak with coach
2. Parent and student-athlete speak with coach
3. Contact athletic director
4. Contact principal

All concerns must be heard at the lowest possible level before intervention by a higher authority can occur.

Realizing that both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations, the list below presents communication guidelines both for parents and coaches:

### **Communication parents expect from their child's coach**

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for their child as well as the team
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements as well as special equipment, out-of-season conditioning
5. Discipline that may result in the denial of their child's participation

### **Communication coaches expect from parents**

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification to the coach of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concerns regarding the coach's philosophy and/or expectations

### **Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coach**

1. The treatment of their child both mentally and physically
2. Ways to help their child improve
3. Concerns about their child's behavior

### **Inappropriate concerns to discuss with the coach**

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

## SECTION VI: CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Participation on an interscholastic team is a privilege, not a right, therefore there are expectations beyond what is required of a non-athlete. As outlined in the Waterford School District Student Code of Conduct, an athlete will be suspended from school if he/she breaks a rule and the discipline guideline calls for suspension.

**A. CONDUCT OF PARENTS/SPECTATORS:** The Waterford School District believes that the educational value of interscholastic athletics is far more important than the outcome. We expect all parents and spectators to positively support, and be respectful to all involved in our interscholastic athletic programs. Displays of unsportsmanlike behavior will likely lead to removal from events and possible suspensions from future events.

**B. SCHOOL BEHAVIOR/SUSPENSIONS:**

If an athlete receives either an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension for any reason, the athlete **will not** practice or compete until the suspension has been served. This includes the entire day the suspension is served. The athletic department and coaching staff may impose an additional athletic suspension for such violations.

**C. CONDUCT OF THE ATHLETE:** Any civil law infraction, arrest, vandalism associated with athletic equipment and facilities; taking and/or wearing unauthorized athletic apparel from our school or rival school; or conduct by a student athlete that is determined by the coach and school administration to be detrimental to the athletic program, school, or school district can result in disciplinary action similar to the penalties outlined in the tobacco/drug/alcohol offenses, and may result in dismissal from the team.

**D. SOCIAL MEDIA:** When using social media of any kind, student-athletes are encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media, or online communications both within the Waterford School District and beyond. Any content posted that is made public is expected to follow acceptable social behaviors and also to comply with federal government, state of Michigan, and Waterford School District regulations. Student-athletes that portray conduct unbecoming of a Waterford School District student-athlete, may be penalized for their actions and this penalty may be as severe as dismissal from the athletic program.

**E. HAZING ACTIVITIES:** Hazing of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times. Hazing is defined as any willful act done by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, to another student for the purpose of subjecting such student to humiliation, physical abuse or threats of abuse, social or other ostracism, shame or disgrace. If knowledge of any type of hazing activity, a conference involving coach, parents, athlete, and building administration will take place. Depending on the severity of the incident, the penalty could result in disciplinary action as severe as dismissal form the athletic program.

**F. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT OR PROFANITY:** A display of unsportsmanlike conduct toward an opponent, official or teammate or the use of profanity during a practice or contest can result in penalties issued by MHSAA officials. Also, may result in counseling by the coach, athletic director, and/or possible suspension.



**G. TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND DRUGS:** Smoking, use of vapes/e-cigarettes/similar devices, chewing of tobacco, drinking of alcoholic beverages, drug abuse, steroids, and/or human growth hormones have been proven to be detrimental to an athlete's performance and/or health. Therefore, possession and/or use of any of these substances, or paraphernalia associated with these substances, including e-cigarettes, vape pipes, or similar devices, regardless of their contents, is prohibited among athletes. These rules apply regardless of age. If an athlete breaks these training rules on or off campus the discipline guidelines for suspension will be applied to their participation in sports.

**FIRST OFFENSE:** The athlete will be suspended from the team for 30% of the total scheduled games for the season. The suspension from the team can include post-season games. If the violation occurs when less than 30% of the contests remain the suspension will be carried over to the athlete's next season of competition.

**SECOND OFFENSE:** The athlete will be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the current season and possibly into their next season of participation so that the second offense equates to a full season of competition. He/she must show proof of rehabilitation if alcohol or drug related. This could be an in-school group or professional counseling. The athlete must meet with the building athletic administrator and school administration before reinstatement to any athletic program.

**THIRD OFFENSE:** The athlete will not be allowed to participate in any interscholastic program for one year from the time of offense. This means three athletic seasons. He/she must show proof of counseling before appearing before the building athletic administrator and school administration for reinstatement.

**PREVIOUS SCHOOL OFFENSE:** The Waterford School District Athletic Department will determine the enforcement upon a new student any period of ineligibility to which that student would have been subject as a result of a student or athletic code of conduct violation at the student's most recent previously attended school. A student who transfers to the Waterford School District, after becoming ineligible because of a conduct violation at the previously attended school may remain ineligible for not less than the period of ineligibility imposed by that previously attended school.

**REMINDER:** *As an athlete you are representing the Waterford School District. Your conduct and behavior is a direct reflection on yourself, your parents, team and school.*

**PROMOTE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP!**

