

Okemos Athletic Department Parent - Athlete Handbook

(Revised 2019-2020)



- Okemos High School -
2800 Jolly Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517-706-4931

STUDENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

I. Athletic Philosophy

A. Statement of philosophy

The Okemos Athletic Program should provide a variety of experiences to aid students in the development of favorable habits and attitudes that will prepare them for a successful and productive adult life.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies, rules and regulations. While the Board of Education takes great pride in winning, it does not condone “winning at any cost.” At all times the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

B. Athletic objectives

The student athlete shall learn:

1. To work with others - In a democratic society a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.
2. To be successful - Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
3. To develop sportsmanship - To accept any defeat like a true sportsman, knowing we have done our best; we must learn to treat others, as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
4. To improve - Continual improvement is essential to success. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and you must constantly try to reach that goal. Try to better yourself in the skills involved and those characteristics set forth as being desirable.
5. To enjoy athletics - It is necessary for athletes to enjoy participation, to acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from athletics, and to give sufficiently of themselves in order to preserve and improve the program.
6. To develop desirable personal health habits - To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits, and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

C. The Capital Area Activities Conference (CAAC)

Okemos High School is a voluntary member of the Capital Area Activities Conference (CAAC). The Capital Area Activities Conference was established for the primary purpose of promoting selected interscholastic activities among member schools and the assurance of such advantages as may be gained by a union of effort.



The object of the Capital Area Activities Conference shall be to promote sportsmanship, to foster a spirit of wholesome rivalry, and to determine championships in high school sports or other activities in which member schools shall participate.

Member schools include:

| <u>Blue Division(7)</u> | <u>Red Division(6)</u> | <u>White Division(6)</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| DeWitt | Fowlerville | Charlotte |
| East Lansing | Haslett | Eaton Rapids |
| Grand Ledge | Lansing Eastern | Ionia |
| Holt | Mason | Lansing Catholic |
| Lansing Everett | St. Johns | Lansing Sexton |
| Okemos | Williamston | Portland |
| Waverly | | |

D. MHSAA Essential Eligibility Requirements for Senior High School Students

To be eligible for interscholastic athletics - a high school student must meet the following state regulations:

1. AGE - High school students become ineligible if they reach their nineteenth *(19) birthday before September 1 of a current school year.* As per MHSAA 2019-20 Handbook, PG 30, SECTION 2 (A) —The Executive Committee may consider an exception to the maximum age limitation for up to one year only (student not to exceed age 20 prior to Sept. 1) for students (1) who, following medical documentation sufficient to establish that they had a disability as defined by the Americans With Disabilities Act and/or the Persons With Disabilities Civil Rights Act, were delayed in their education progress prior to their initial enrollment in the 9th grade in any school solely by reason of such disability. See the MHSAA 2019-2020 Handbook for the complete wording on this age topic. A copy of the MHSAA Handbook is available to view in the athletic office.

2. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION - Students must have on file, in the school's office, a physician's statement for the current school year (after April 15) certifying that she/he is physically able to compete in athletic tryouts, practices and contests.

3. ENROLLMENT - Students must be enrolled in school prior to the fourth Friday after Labor Day (1st semester) or the fourth Friday of February (2nd semester). A student must be enrolled in the school for which he or she competes.

4. SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT - Students cannot be eligible in high school for more than eight semesters and the seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive.

5. SEMESTER RECORDS - Students must have passed at least 66% of full credit load subjects in the previous semester of enrollment, and must be passing 66% of full credit courses. Academic checks must take place at the 10 week mark of the semester to determine eligibility (per MHSAA handbook Reg. 1, Section 8) **(Note: All athletes must be enrolled in a minimum of four credit bearing courses in order to be eligible for participation.)** A copy of the MHSAA Handbook is available to view in the athletic office.

6. TRANSFER STUDENTS - A student in grades 9 through 12 who transfers to another high school is not eligible to participate in an interscholastic contest for one full semester unless the student qualifies for immediate eligibility under one or more of the fifteen published exceptions. Students and parents anticipating a change of schools should first seek advice from their high school administration.

7. UNDUE INFLUENCE - The use of undue influence by any person directly or indirectly associated with a school to secure or encourage the attendance of a student for athletic purposes, shall cause the student to become ineligible for a minimum of one semester.

8. LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP - After practicing with or participating with high school teams, students cannot participate in any athletic competition not sponsored by his or her school in the same sport during the same season. Exceptions include ice hockey and all individual sports which apply the rule from the point of a student's first participation in a contest or scrimmage, rather than practice. Students in individual sports may participate in a maximum of two (2) non-school individual meets or contests during the school season while not representing their school.

9. ALL-STAR COMPETITION - Students shall not compete at any time in any sport under MHSAA jurisdiction in all-star contests or national championships regardless of the method of selection. Participation in such a contest shall cause that student to become ineligible for a maximum period of one year of school enrollment.

10. AWARDS AND AMATEURISM - Students cannot receive money or other valuable consideration for participating in MHSAA sponsored sports or officiating in interscholastic athletic contests, except as allowed by the HANDBOOK. Students may accept, for participation in MHSAA sponsored sports, a symbolic or merchandise award which does not have a value over \$40. Banquets, luncheons, dinners, trips and admissions to camps or events, are permitted if accepted "in kind." Awards in the form of cash, merchandise, certificates, or any other negotiable document are never allowed.

Note: Consult the MHSAA HANDBOOK for detailed regulations and/or interpretations. A copy of the MHSAA Handbook is available to view in the athletic office.

II. Okemos Requirements for Participation

The following are requirements that shall be completed prior to full participation on any Okemos athletic team:

A. Physical examination

A yearly physical examination is required. **THE PHYSICAL CARD MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE PHYSICIAN AND SUBMITTED TO THE COACH PRIOR TO ANY FORM OF PARTICIPATION.** The physical covers all sports for the entire school year provided the examination occurred after April 15 of the previous school year. The form will be kept on file in the athletic office.

B. Understanding Concussions – See Appendix

C. Athletic Registration Fee

Each student-athlete will be required to pay an annual one-time athletic registration fee (\$288 high school/\$448 family cap). This is a one-time registration fee that will be assessed for the first and only the first team of participation per school year. Students will then be registered to participate for the remainder of the school year at no additional cost. Students/families that self-disclose that they are receiving any form of financial assistance including but not limited to Free and Reduced school lunch program, Medicaid, Michigan temporary food assistance program (Bridge card) etc. will have the registration fee waived.

Students/families that self-disclose that they are experiencing financial hardships have the option of working collaboratively with the Director of Athletics to determine payment options, up to and including a fee waiver. No student will be ineligible to participate in athletic programs solely due to the inability to pay the registration fee. Parents/guardians may make application for the fee waiver or an alternative form of payment by contacting the athletic office directly. Fee waiver information and alternative payment arrangements shall be confidential in nature.

Payment of the registration fee does not guarantee membership on a team nor imply that a student-athlete will receive playing time. The registration fee for a student-athlete who is cut or resigns from a team will be refunded to the family under the following conditions:

CONDITIONS FOR ATHLETIC REGISTRATION FEE REFUND:

1. The athletic director at each school will approve all registration fee refunds for a student-athlete who has been cut and/or for a student-athlete who leaves a team.
2. Registration fee refunds will only be processed in the spring of each school year. The athletic director will forward a list of refunds due to the students to the business office in the spring of each school year (Tentative date: June 15). The business office will issue refund checks to the family of the student-athlete.
3. If the registration fee(s) have been waived for a student-athlete under the waiver guidelines outlined above, there will be no refund or partial refund payment due.
4. Students will be eligible for a full or partial refund of athletic fees due to being cut and/or leaving a team under the following conditions.

| <u>Condition for Refund</u> | <u>Amount of Refund</u> |
|--|-------------------------|
| a. Student-athlete is cut from the squad by the coach. | 100% |
| b. Student-athlete quits the squad: | |
| • First day through tenth day of practice | 100% |
| • Remainder of the season | 0% |
| c. Student-athlete is dropped for disciplinary reason and/or Code of Conduct Violation (Absolutely no exceptions). | 0% |

Students/parents may contact the athletic office for additional information or clarification.

D. Emergency care permission and release

Each athlete's parents shall complete an Emergency Care Permission and Release form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s) is not available. The form will be kept in the athletic office and a copy will be given to the coach.

E. Okemos Athletic Code of Conduct

Upon entering high school or at the time a student tries out for an athletic team, he/she will be presented with this handbook containing all the necessary information for participating in athletics and/or told where to view it on the athletic website.

F. Insurance

The school district does not carry insurance to cover student athletic injuries. Parents will need to sign the reverse side of the physical card stating they have purchased insurance, possess a family insurance plan or sign a waiver.

G. Scholastic eligibility

In order to participate on an Okemos athletic team, each athlete must have satisfied all of the scholastic eligibility requirements of the MHSAA prior to participation.

H. Informed consent

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury that may range in severity. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate the risk. Participants have the responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury. Players must obey all safety rules, report all physical problems to their coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect their own equipment daily.

I. Equipment and other financial obligations

1. School issued uniforms, warm-ups and equipment - All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School-furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests and practice. All equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to **a financial penalty**.
2. Athlete purchased uniforms - In some cases, athletes will be required to purchase a portion of the game uniform, which will become their property.
3. All athletes will be required to purchase various pieces of sport specific equipment. Examples include but are not limited to: shoes, cleats, socks, various gloves, practice jerseys, etc. All athlete-supplied equipment will become the property of the athlete.

Note: Okemos athletics are for everyone. If financial conditions exist that make it difficult for a team member to purchase mandatory equipment, uniforms or warm-ups, please contact the athletic office so that confidential arrangements can be made to supply such equipment, uniforms or warm-ups.

III. Okemos Athletic Department Procedure and Guidelines

A. Parent/Coach Communication: Both parenting and coaching are laborious and complicated roles that adults assume in the successful functioning of the Okemos High School athletic program. By establishing an acceptance and an understanding of each role, as well as a vehicle for positive communication, we are better able to create a healthy athletic environment and provide greater benefit to the student-athlete. When your children choose to become involved in the Okemos athletic program, as parents, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's team.

1. Communication a parent can expect from the coach.
 - a. Basic philosophy of the coach.
 - b. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team.
 - c. Locations and times of all required practices, bus departures, scrimmages and contests.

- d. Conditions that result in the denial of your child's participation.
- 2. Communication that a coach should expect from parents.
 - a. Personal notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
 - b. Special concerns that involve your child expressed directly to the coach at an appropriate time.
- 3. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches.
 - a. Concerns about your child's educational progress as related to athletic participation.
 - b. Ways to help your child improve.
 - c. Concerns about your child's behavior, on and off the field or court.
 - d. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- 4. **Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches.**
 - a. **Playing time.**
 - b. **Team strategy.**
 - c. **Play calling.**
 - d. **Other student-athletes.**
- 5. Procedure for parent-coach discussions.
 - a. Call the coach to set up an appointment. All coaches may be reached through the athletic office by calling 517-706-4931. If the coach cannot be immediately contacted, a message will be delivered and your phone call will be returned in a timely fashion.
 - b. **Please do not attempt to confront a coach just prior to, during or immediately after a contest or practice session.** These are emotional and stressful times for the parent, athlete, coach and team.
Confrontations of this nature do not promote healthy resolutions.
- 6. Procedure for unsatisfactory parent-coach discussions.
 - a. If after meeting with the coach of your child's team, you still have unresolved concerns, call and set up an appointment with the athletic director to further discuss the situation. (517-706-4930)
 - b. At this meeting the appropriate responses to all concerns can be determined.

As your daughter and/or son become actively involved in the athletic programs at Okemos High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. They will also undergo some of the most difficult learning circumstances as well. Coaches and parents play a significant part in helping student-athletes successfully contend with these experiences in that the students will take their cues from the adults in all situations. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly the same as those that will promote a successful life after high school. Since research indicates a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, the athletic programs at Okemos High School strive to make each student's experience a successful one.

- B. Participation:** An athlete may participate in two sports in the same season provided that coaches of each sport, the athletic director and parents are in agreement. In such cases, one sport will be designated the athlete's primary sport. This means the athlete must attend all practices and contests of the designated primary sport before being allowed to participate in the secondary sport unless the coach of the primary sport grants prior approval. This process must be started prior to the beginning of the season and all team members must be aware of

expectations. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligations of the primary sport or that by limited participation in the secondary sport a question of the ability to safely participate is raised, the student may find himself or herself in a position of having to withdraw from one of the activities.

- C. Dropping or transferring sports:** Quitting is a less than desirable habit to acquire. On occasion however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for good reason. If this is the case, the athlete will be responsible for informing the coach in person and to check in all equipment issued within 24 hours of the decision.
If an athlete wishes to change sports after having won a letter or award in one sport, he/she should consult with both head coaches concerned. This procedure assures a smooth transfer that is in the best interest of all parties involved.
- D. Equipment:** School equipment assigned to the student/athlete is her/his responsibility. She/he is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss and/or the destruction of any school issued equipment are the athlete's financial obligation.
- E. Missing practice:** Perfect attendance for all practices is the expectation for all Okemos athletes. If it is necessary for an athlete to miss a practice, the coach of that team shall be notified prior to the absence. Unexcused absences are unacceptable and can lead to consequences related to the athletes' status on the team.
- F. Travel:** In general, Okemos athletes travel to and from athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department. There will be times and/or situations however when athletes will have to provide their own transportation either to practices or contests. Parents will be encouraged to monitor self-provided transportation situations for their athlete.
- G. College recruitment:** College recruitment information is available in the both the guidance and athletic office. Current NCAA qualifications and standards for recruitment are located in the section VII of this handbook. Athletes should make the head coach aware of their situation in regards to being recruited.
- H. Conflicts in extracurricular activities:** We believe that the opportunity for participation in a wide variety of student-selected activities is a vital part of the student's educational experience. A comprehensive and balanced activities program is an essential complement to the basic program of instruction offered at Okemos High School and will enable the student to take maximum advantage of his/her education. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the activity, to the student body, to the community and to the student. Participation in these activities will provide students with the opportunity to develop personal values, skills and a positive attitude toward work and leisure time activities.

The athletic and fine arts programs will be available to all students who demonstrate an interest in participating, regardless of their individual abilities. Accordingly, appropriate skill levels will be established within activities, when feasible, so those students may participate as fully as possible regardless of their ability levels. However, an individual student who attempts to participate in several co-curricular activities simultaneously might on occasion, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity without continuously inviting scheduling conflicts, that student might find himself or herself in a position of having to withdraw from one or more of the conflicting activities.

Since the athletic and fine arts departments recognize that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of co-curricular activities, they will attempt to schedule events in a manner that minimizes conflicts.

The student should exercise caution when gaining membership on teams and in activities where conflicts are likely to exist. **Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to minimize obligations where obvious conflicts in practice and performance times will occur. When a conflict does arise THE STUDENT must notify the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately.**

When a conflict occurs the sponsors/coaches will work out a solution that minimizes pressure on the student who feels allegiance to more than one activity. If a solution cannot be found, an appeals committee consisting of the two sponsors/coaches of the activities involved, the athletic director and the assistant principal in charge of student activities will make the decision based on the following criteria:

- The relative importance of each event. (Performance vs. Practice)
- The importance of each event to the student.
- The relative contribution the student can make.
- The length of time the events have been scheduled.
- Discussion between the school and the parents.
- Any other contributing factors.

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either faculty sponsor or coach.

- I. Attendance:** *All athletes are expected to be in attendance the entire school day in order to participate in that day's practice or contests.* Parents are expected not to excuse students from school for non-emergency situations during a student's athletic season. Students absent from school on Friday with a contest the following day (Saturday) will be eligible to participate provided the absence is an excused absence in the eyes of the attendance office. Exceptions to the attendance requirement must be approved in advance by the athletic office and prior to the absence and/or participation.
- J. Grooming and dress:** Appearance, expression and actions always influence person's opinions of athletes, the team and the school. Once you have volunteered to be a member of a team, you have made a choice to uphold certain standards.
- K. Vacations/Trips policy:** Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. Parents/athletes wishing to do so may wish to reassess their commitment to being a member of an athletic team. In the event that an absence due to a vacation is unavoidable, an athlete should:
 1. Be accompanied by her/his parents while on vacation.
 2. Contact the head coach **prior** to the vacation, preferably before try-outs.
 3. **Be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on that squad as a starter, 2nd string, etc.**
- L. Restricted Practice Days:** In developing interscholastic athletic schedules for both practices and contests, the athletic department gathers information from a variety of sources including the MHSAA, the Capital Area Activities Conference, like school districts,

religious leaders, community organizations and parent groups. Even with this, no arrangement can guarantee that any one schedule will satisfy everyone because of all the factors that need to be included. Participants in the athletic program will at times be expected to participate when school is not in session, on a break or during a holiday. The department will make every attempt to keep these conflicts to a minimum.

1. Weekend practices

a. All practices are to be held on school days if at all possible. Saturday practices are to be minimal in number and duration. Sunday practices will be permitted only:

1. By varsity level teams upon permission of the athletic director and, or;
2. When a varsity contest has been scheduled the following day and, or,
3. When a tournament or play-off contest falls on the following day.

2. Holiday practices

a. Holiday practices are to be discouraged, especially by non-varsity level teams.

Holiday practices will be permitted only:

1. By teams upon permission of the athletic director and, or;
2. When a contest has been scheduled the following day and, or;
3. When a tournament or play-off contest falls on the following day and, or;
4. When a non-varsity practice is optional with no penalty for an absence from

practice.

M. Squad selection: In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Okemos High School, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as possible within the framework of high school interscholastic competition. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport.

Prior to trying out, the following information will be made available to all candidates for the team:

1. Extent of try-out period (a minimum number of practice sessions)
2. Criteria used to select the team
3. Number to be selected
4. Practice commitment if they make the team (including possible holiday conflicts and/or commitments)
5. Game commitments
6. Season commitments

N. Cutting policies: Choosing the members of athletic squads are the sole responsibility of the coaches of those teams. When a squad cut becomes a necessity, the process will include three important elements. Each candidate shall:

1. Have a predetermined minimum number of practice sessions.
2. Have performed in at least one game-like setting (unless extenuating circumstances prevent such a setting, e.g. - Weather and spring sports).
3. Be personally informed of the cut by the coach.

Coaches will discuss specific alternative possibilities for continued participation in the sport, or in other areas of participation within the athletic program with the athletes.

- O. Reporting of injury:** All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the trainer/coach. Once a physician treats athletes, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity. If the athlete is removed from competition, a MHSAA Return to Competition Form must be completed and signed by a MD or DO and returned to the Team Coach, Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director **before** the athlete may return to any activity. See Appendix X for MHSAA Return to Competition Form.
- P. Out-of-State Travel:** The Okemos High School Athletic Department will apply and adhere to the Michigan High School Athletic Association policy on interscholastic athletic program travel for practices and competition. Okemos teams may travel to states adjoining Michigan, which are Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio as well as Ontario, Canada. Each request to travel will be approved on its own merit.

IV. Okemos Athletic Program

A. Fall Sports and Teams

1. Cheerleading (Girls') - Varsity
2. Cross Country* (Boys') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
3. Cross Country* (Girls') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
4. Dance (Coed) - Varsity
5. Football* (Boys') - Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman
6. Golf* (Girls') – Varsity, Junior Varsity
7. Soccer* (Boys') – Varsity, Junior Varsity, Junior Varsity B
8. Swimming and Diving* (Girls') - Varsity
9. Tennis* (Boys') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
10. Volleyball* (Girls') - Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman
11. Water Polo (Boys') – Varsity and Junior Varsity

B. Winter Sports and Teams

1. Basketball* (Boys') - Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman
2. Basketball* (Girls') - Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman
3. Cheerleading (Girls') – Varsity
4. Dance (Coed) - Varsity
5. Hockey*** (Boys') - Varsity
6. Skiing** (Boys') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
7. Skiing** (Girls') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
8. Swimming* (Boys') - Varsity
9. Wrestling* (Boys') - Varsity

C. Spring Sports and Teams

1. Baseball* (Boys') - Varsity, Junior Varsity
2. Golf* (Boys') – Varsity, Junior Varsity
3. Lacrosse* (Boys') – Varsity, Junior Varsity
4. Lacrosse* (Girls') – Varsity and Junior Varsity
5. Soccer* (Girls') – Varsity, Junior Varsity
6. Softball* (Girls') - Varsity, Junior Varsity
7. Tennis* (Girls') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
8. Track* (Boys') - Varsity and Junior Varsity
9. Track* (Girls') - Varsity and Junior Varsity

10. Water Polo (Girls') – Varsity and Junior Varsity

- Note: * - Denotes competition in the Capital Area Activities Conference
 ** - Denotes competition in the Mount Brighton Interscholastic Ski Association
 *** - Denotes competition in the South Central Hockey League

V. Code of Conduct

OKEMOS HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE/STUDENT LEADER CODE OF CONDUCT

Representing OHS in interscholastic athletic competition/a leadership role is a privilege and not a right. Students who participate in interscholastic athletics/leadership roles are expected to **represent the highest ideals of character** by exemplifying good conduct, citizenship, sportsmanship and training. The student's conduct and citizenship reflect on the student athlete/student leader, his or her club/group/team, our school, and our community.

When a student participates in interscholastic athletics/school based leadership roles, he/she agrees to abide by the Student Athlete/Leader Code of Conduct throughout his/her high school career. A student may not attend tryouts or practice with a team/run for office/serve in a leadership role/be assigned a role in the play or musical until he/she has submitted a signed acknowledgment form agreeing to comply with the Student Athlete/Leader Code. The Student Athlete/Leader Code applies to candidates, members, and managers of all athletic teams/Student Council, ACTION presidents and captains and those students participating in theatre.

1. Calendar Application of the Athletic Code

The Athletic Code will be enforced as to *all students* from the first day of practice (including tryouts) for *any* Fall sports team until the conclusion of the 6th hour final examination period of the Spring semester. For teams or individual athletes who compete beyond the conclusion of the academic year, the Athletic Code will extend through the season, post-season and awards night for that team. A student who violates the Athletic Code will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Code.

A. Time/Place Application of the Athletic Code

The Athletic Code is *not* limited to student conduct at school-sponsored activities or on school property. Rather, the Athletic Code applies on a 24 hour basis and has no limitation as to the place of conduct.

B. "In-Season" and "Off-Season" Penalty

- 1) Any time period between the first day of practice (including tryouts) for any Fall sports team and the conclusion of the 6th hour final examination period of the Spring semester. For teams or individual athletes who compete beyond the conclusion of the academic year, the Athletic Code will extend through the season, post-season and awards night for that team.
- 2) Overlapping Seasons: If two sports overlap (e.g., fall/winter or winter/spring), an athlete who is participating on a team during the current sports season shall also

be a participant on the first day of tryouts or practice for the upcoming sports season. A violation of the Athletic Code which occurs during the overlap of two seasons will have the penalty apply to the upcoming sports season. "Overlap" only applies to where all competition for the current sports season has been completed, but the athletic awards banquet has not been held. "Overlap" does not apply if the current sports team continues competition. Although the athlete will be eligible to receive any athletic award(s) for the preceding sports season, the athlete will not be permitted to attend the athletic awards banquet for that sports team.

Example: An athlete who participates in winter basketball and spring baseball violates the Athletic Code at a time when the basketball season (a winter sport) has been extended due to tournament play and baseball (a spring sport) is similarly "in season" for tryouts or practices. In an "overlapping season" the penalty would apply to the baseball season. The athlete is eligible to receive any athletic award(s) based on the basketball but will not be permitted to attend the basketball athletic awards banquet.

2. Offenses

The following list of offenses and disciplinary penalties is not all-inclusive. Other misconduct may give rise to discipline.

- A. Violation of any team/club/group conduct or training rule established by the coach/advisor and approved by the Athletic Director/Assistant Principal.
- B. Violation of the Student Code of Conduct which results in a school suspension.
- C. Cumulative or gross misconduct, or conduct unbecoming an athlete and/or student leader.
 - 1) Substance Abuse
 - a. Possession, concealment, sale/purchase, bartering, delivery or intent to do so, use or under the influence of:
 - Tobacco or tobacco products in any form including but not limited to e-cigarettes, vaporizers, chewing tobacco, cigars;
 - Alcohol or alcoholic beverages in any form;
 - Illegal drugs, including but not limited to those substances defined as "controlled substances" pursuant to federal and/or state statute;
 - Use, possession, concealment, distribution, manufacture or sale of devices designed for and/or associated with the use of controlled substances, e.g., to include but not be limited to a marijuana pipe, "roach" clip, rolling papers, or devices used to smoke, inhale, inject, or otherwise consume controlled substances.
 - Steroids, human growth hormones or other performance-enhancing drugs;
 - Substances represented as illegal or performance-enhancing drugs, i.e., "look-alike" drugs; mind altering substances.

- Misused prescription drugs.
- b. “Distribution” includes the “hosting” of a party at which the host is aware that any of the substances listed above are provided at the site by any person.
 - c. It shall not be a violation for an athlete/student leader to use or possess a prescription or patent drug pursuant to a doctor’s legal prescription which the student has permission to use in school pursuant to Board Policy. An athlete/student leader shall notify his/her coach/advisor if he/she is taking a prescription medicine, which could alter or affect the student’s behavior or ability to participate in physical activity.
- 2) Violations defined by the Okemos High School Student-Parent Handbook which include but are not limited to: fighting, physical assault, hazing, sexual misconduct, theft, weapons and bullying including cyber-bullying.
 - 3) Violation of federal, state or local law/ordinance, including felony or misdemeanor acts other than minor traffic offenses. Conviction is not necessary to establish a violation of the Athletic Code, but will be determined through an independent school investigation and may result in a penalty.

If the Athletic/Student Leader Code of Conduct or other school policies or procedures do not cover situations that arise, the administration reserves the right to establish such rules, conditions, and penalties to respond effectively to unanticipated or unique circumstances.

3. Penalties

The same penalties apply for in-season and off-season violations. Likewise, once a student is elected to a leadership position, penalties apply for violations from the elected date (typically in the spring of the prior school year) until the end of the term. Once a student is assigned a role in a play/musical, penalties apply from that date until the end of the school year. Specific to student-athletes, if a student-athlete is not currently participating in a sport when the violation occurs, the penalty will be applied to the next athletic season in which the student participates. Also, the severity of the offense, a continuation of misconduct, and/or persistent disobedience, may result in more severe consequences than those outlined below.

- A. Code of Conduct and Team Rules Offenses: Violation of Conduct Standards A-B above and the venue is either on or off the athletic field or court.
 - 1) First Offense: Violations will be addressed as set forth in the Okemos High School Student-Parent Handbook and by team/club/group rules established by the coach/advisor and approved by the Athletic Director/Assistant Principal.
 - 2) Second and Subsequent Offenses: Violations will result in disciplinary action as determined by the coach/advisor and the Athletic Director/Assistant Principal.

B. Cumulative or Gross Misconduct, or Conduct Unbecoming an Athlete Offenses:
Violation of Conduct Standards C1, C2 and C3.

1) Violations by a Student Athlete

- a. First Offense (student athlete): Suspended from 25% of season's competition or activities. Suspension from games/activities could impact two sport seasons. If the violation occurs when less than 25% of the contests remaining the suspension will be prorated into the next sport in which the athlete participates even though it may carry over into the next school year. Student will lose captaincy or leadership positions for remainder of current school year (this may carry over to multiple sports/activities). Athlete may be allowed to participate in practice for conditioning purposes during the suspension. The suspended athlete may not wear the team uniform during the athletic suspension. Athlete may also be required to participate in mediation/conflict resolution (restorative practices), attend educational classes or counseling.
- b. Second Offense (student athlete): Termination of participation in that sport for the remainder of that sport's season and forfeiture of all school athletic awards for that sport. The student will be ineligible to participate on any other athletic school team during that season. Athlete may also be required to participate in mediation/conflict resolution (restorative practices), attend educational classes or counseling. If the second offense occurs within the last 25% of the season, the penalty will carry over to the first 25% of the next sports season in which the student participates.
- c. Third Offense (student athlete): Termination of participation in the athletic program and forfeiture of all school athletic awards for one full calendar year from date of infraction. Athlete may also be required to participate in mediation/conflict resolution (restorative practices), attend educational classes or counseling.

2) Violations by a Student Leader

- a. First Offense (leadership role): Student will lose leadership position for remainder of the school year. Students who violate this policy after club or school government elections in the spring will be removed from office, captaincy, or leadership positions for the next school year. Student may be allowed to participate in meetings/activities after 9 weeks (25%) of suspension, but not in a leadership role. Student may also be required to participate in mediation/conflict resolution (restorative practices), attend educational classes or counseling.
- b. Second Offense (leadership role): Student will lose leadership position for remainder of the school year and forfeiture of all awards for that position. Students who violate this policy after club or school government elections in the spring will be removed from office, captaincy, or leadership positions for the next school year. Student will be ineligible to participate in any meetings/activities or serve in any

leadership capacity during suspension. Student may also be required to participate in mediation/conflict resolution (restorative practices), attend educational classes or counseling.

- c. Third Offense (leadership role): The student will be terminated from the leadership position, participation in meetings/activities, and all awards for that position for the remainder of the student's high school career. Student may also be required to participate in mediation/conflict resolution (restorative practices), attend educational classes or counseling.

If a student chooses to quit the team/club/group rather than accept the consequences, said consequence shall carry over to the next season/year/sport/activity in which the student chooses to participate. The athletic director or administrator in charge of activities has the ability to make discretionary decisions if major, significant or unique situations are identified.

4. Self-Disclosure

An athlete/leader who voluntarily discloses to an Okemos school official or employee a need for assistance for alcohol or substance abuse prior to any report, charge, or complaint under the Athletic/Student Leader Code of Conduct shall be required to follow the chemical assessment/treatment procedures outlined below. Reporting after an incident that might give rise to discipline shall not be "self-disclosure". The athlete/leader will not be charged with a violation of the Athletic/Student Leader Code of Conduct, unless it is determined that the athlete/leader has used this self-disclosure primarily to avoid a penalty under the Athletic/Student Leader Code of Conduct. This self-disclosure exemption is available to an athlete/leader only once during his/her high school career.

- A. Satisfaction of the assessment/treatment requirements must be verified in writing by the licensed agency.
- B. Any expense incurred for the chemical assessment /treatment program will be the responsibility of the student and not the Okemos Public Schools.

5. Chemical Assessment

- A. For the first offense of alcohol, illicit substances, steroids or performance-enhancing drugs, the athlete/leader shall be urged to complete a chemical assessment through a licensed agency.
- B. For the second violation of alcohol, illicit substances, steroids or performance-enhancing drugs, the athlete/leader may be required to complete a chemical assessment and a treatment program through a licensed agency. The athlete/leader and his/her parents may be required to meet at least once with a licensed substance abuse counselor to explain the results and recommendations of the chemical assessment. The athlete/leader may be required to present evidence of good faith participation in the treatment program.

6. Application of Penalties

- A. Penalties will not be considered to have been served unless the athlete/leader fully completes the season/year. Quitting the team/club/group is not considered "serving the penalty".
- B. The suspended athlete may not wear the team uniform during the athletic suspension.
- C. If a subsequent offense is committed while a previous penalty is being served, the penalty for the subsequent offense will not begin until the first penalty has been served.
- D. The offenses will be cumulative during a student's high school career, rather than on a yearly basis.

Disciplinary Process and Appeal Process

Before any suspension takes effect, the student shall be verbally advised by either the coach/adviser or Athletic Director/Assistant Principal of the alleged violation and the student shall have an opportunity to respond.

All suspension periods shall begin from the date of the written notice of the Code violation. The athlete/student leader shall be excluded from participation in practices and contests during the pendency of all appeals. The decision to permit the athlete/student leader to attend practices and contests during the pendency of the appeal is discretionary with the team coach.

1. Level I Appeal- Executive Appeal Committee:

An athlete/student leader may only appeal the circumstances of his/her violation of the Code, and not the discipline. An appeal shall be submitted to the Executive Appeal Committee within three school days of the written notice of violation. The appeal shall be submitted to the high school principal. The Executive Appeal Committee is comprised of the principal or his/her designee, the athletic director/assistant principal, and one head coach/adviser (for student-athletes, the head coach will be selected from the off-season coaches who are on the high school teaching staff. Head coaches from the sport(s) in which the athlete participates shall not be eligible to hear the athlete's appeal).

The Executive Appeal Committee shall meet and issue a determination within five school days of the student's appeal. Written notice of the decision shall be presented to the athlete/student leader, parents/guardians, and Athletic Director/Assistant Principal.

2. Level II Appeal- Athletic/Student Leader Appeal Board:

An athlete/student leader may appeal to the Athletic/Student Leader Appeal Board within three

school days of the Executive Appeal Committee’s decision and submitted to the superintendent. The Athletic/Student Leader Appeal Board shall consist of the superintendent or his/her designee and two members of the Board of Education, as designated by the President of the Board of Education.

The Athletic Appeal Board shall meet and issue a determination within five school days of the student’s appeal. Written notice of the Athletic Appeal Board’s decision shall be made to the athlete/student leader, parents/guardians, and Athletic Director/Assistant Principal. The decision of the Athletic/Student Leader Appeal Board is final.

VII. NCAA Qualifications

Please Note: The NCAA does accept credit (no letter grade) courses for core course requirements, but computes the grade as the lowest academic grade possible, “D-“. Any specific questions regarding NCAA qualifications should be directed to either the guidance office or the athletic office.

Understanding Concussion

Beginning on July 1, 2013 Public Acts 342 and 343 (Concussion Laws) will go into effect in the State of Michigan. These laws require all levels of schools and youth sports organizations to educate and train staff, notify parents/guardians of the law, and monitor all possible youth concussions or head injuries. As acknowledgement that you have been provided this information, a signature will be required on the OHS Registration Card.

Some Common Symptoms

Sensitive to Noise

Headache
Pressure in the Head
Nausea/Vomiting
Dizziness

Balance Problems
Double Vision
Blurry Vision
Sensitive to Light

Sluggishness
Haziness
Fogginess
Grogginess

Poor Concentration
Memory Problems
Confusion
“Feeling Down”

Not “Feeling Right”
Feeling Irritable
Slow Reaction Time
Sleep Problems

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A concussion can be caused by a shaking, spinning or a sudden stopping and starting of the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven’t been knocked out.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussions can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If the student reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you

notice symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. A student who may have had a concussion should not return to play on the day of the injury and until a health care professional says they are okay to return to play.

IF YOU SUSPECT A CONCUSSION:

- 1. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY** – A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to regular activities, including sports. Don't hide it, report it. Ignoring symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes it worse.
- 2. KEEP YOUR STUDENT OUT OF PLAY** – Concussions take time to heal. Don't let the student return to play the day of injury and until a health care professional says it's okay. A student who returns to play too soon, while the brain is still healing, risks a greater chance of having a second concussion. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. Repeat or second concussions increase the time it takes to recover and can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting the student for a lifetime. They can be fatal. It is better to miss one game than the whole season.
- 3. TELL THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION** – Schools should know if a student had a previous concussion. A student's school may not know about a concussion received in another sport or activity unless you notify them.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. A student should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body s/he exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
 - Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
 - A headache that gets worse
 - Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
 - Repeated vomiting or nausea
 - Slurred speech
 - Convulsions or seizures
 - Cannot recognize people/places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless or agitated
 - Has unusual behavior
 - Loses consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.)

HOW TO RESPOND TO A REPORT OF A CONCUSSION:

If a student reports one or more symptoms of a concussion after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, s/he should be kept out of athletic play the day of the injury. The student should only return to play with permission from a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion. During recovery, rest is key. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration (such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Students who return to school after a concussion may need to spend fewer hours at school, take rests breaks, be given extra help and time, spend less time reading, writing or on a computer. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be monitored by a health care professional.

Remember: Concussion affects people differently. While most students with a concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have symptoms that last for days, or even weeks. A more serious concussion can last for months or longer.

To learn more, go to www.cdc.gov/concussion.

SCHOOL CONCUSSION REPORTING

Schools must report concussion events online while logged into MHSAA.com. Report any concussion event in all levels of all MHSAA sports where a student is withheld from activity. This is a separate process from the Return to Activity and Post-Concussion Consent Form on the reverse side.

MHSAA CONCUSSION CARE INSURANCE

The Michigan High School Athletic Association is providing athletic participants at each MHSAA member junior high/middle school and high school with additional insurance that is intended to pay accident medical expense benefits resulting from a suspected concussion. The injury must be sustained while the athlete is participating in-season at an MHSAA covered activity. Policy limit is \$25,000 for each accident. Covered students, sports and situations follow the catastrophic accident medical insurance.

This new program intends to assure that all eligible student-athletes in MHSAA member schools in grades 6 through 12, male and female, in all levels of all sports under the jurisdiction of the MHSAA, receive prompt and professional attention for head injury events even if the child is uninsured or under-insured. Accident medical deductibles and co-pays left unpaid by other policies are reimbursed under this program to the limits of the policy.

The Concussion Care Insurance corresponds with the MHSAA Catastrophic Accident Medical Insurance Policy which pays up to \$500,000 for medical expenses left unpaid by other insurance after a deductible of \$25,000 per claim in paid medical expenses has been met. All students enrolled in grades 6 through 12 at MHSAA member schools who are eligible under MHSAA rules and participating in practices or competition in sports under the MHSAA's jurisdiction are covered by this policy for injuries related to their athletic participation.

CONCUSSION INSURANCE CLAIMS ADMINISTRATOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ms. Terri Bruner
K & K Insurance Group
1712 Magnavox Way
Fort Wayne, IN 46801
Phone: 800-237-2917 Fax: 312-381-9077
Email: Terri.Bruner@kandkinsurance.com

Claim Forms can be found on MHSAA.com, Health & Safety (upper right corner).
See Concussion Insurance Benefits Information and Forms