



# **Austintown Local Schools**

## **Student – Parent Athletic Handbook**

**Approved by the Board of Education on January 28, 2019**

## Austintown Local Schools Mission Statement for Athletics

The Austintown Local Schools support the philosophy that a quality interscholastic athletic program is vital to the positive social, physical, and educational development of students. The interscholastic athletic program enhances and supports the academic mission of the school system. We are committed to promoting the proper ideal of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all athletic contests. We support high standards of good citizenship and propriety, along with regard for the rights of others. Furthermore, we support diversification over specialization regarding interscholastic participation by student-athletes.

For the purpose of this handbook, interscholastic activities/athletic program shall include the following:

Baseball	Cheerleading	Golf	Softball	Volleyball
Basketball	Cross Country	Football	Tennis	Wrestling
Bowling	Danceline	Soccer	Track	Indoor Track & Field
Swimming				

The Athletic Administration, coaches, and players will perpetually work together on a plan of continual improvement for playing excellence that will produce winning teams within the bounds of good sportsmanship.

Participation in interscholastic sports is a voluntary privilege. Such participation will always be based on healthy competition between team members for starting positions and playing time. An attitude of entitlement, on the part of any team member, has absolutely no place in any of our athletic programs.

All interscholastic sports in the Austintown Local Schools are team sports. Consequently, while our various programs will continually stress individual development, it will always be within the framework and emphasis on the **Team**. Each time participants step into a school or onto the practice field and anytime they participate in a contest they are expected to represent themselves, family, team, school, and community in a responsible, sportsmanlike manner.

Interscholastic sports in the Austintown Local Schools are meant to develop character, sportsmanship, self-confidence, teamwork, unselfishness, responsibility, leadership, competitive spirit, decision-making, and physical skills through the processes of hard work, commitment, and loyalty. Below is a brief synopsis of each of the aforementioned qualities:

**Character:** strong-minded, ability to deal with adversity, disciplined, a strong work ethic; portrays moral and ethical strength

**Sportsmanship:** being graceful in both victory and defeat, constantly mindful of team, school, and community representation

**Self-Confidence:** the side-effect of hard work, attentiveness, and learning; competence

**Teamwork:** the sense of togetherness, unity, acceptance, and trust

**Unselfishness:** to give of oneself, to sacrifice in an attempt to come to the aid of others

**Responsibility:** taking care of business; fulfilling one's duties and obligations while accepting the consequences of individual mistakes without blaming others; finishing what one starts

**Leadership:** being self-aware and acknowledging the fact that the very nature of interscholastic competition draws attention to oneself; the ability to set a positive example for others to follow

**Competitive Spirit:** relentlessness, resilience, faith, and a positive attitude; the drive to succeed

**Decision Making:** thinking before acting; weighing the consequences of actions before taking action; the awareness of right and wrong

**Physical Skills:** strength, power, agility, coordination, balance, speed, and endurance

**Respect  
THE  
GAME  
Respect  
YOURSELF**

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## FOREWORD

The Austintown Local Schools Athletic Handbook is an additional resource guide that coincides with the [Austintown Local Schools Student Handbook](#). In addition, the Athletic Handbook follows the guidelines and in times goes above the minimum guidelines set forth by the [Ohio High School Athletic Association](#).

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### 1.SCHOLARSHIP:

High school students (grades 9-12) must be currently enrolled and have received passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one credit courses, or the equivalent, in the immediately preceding grading period.

Furthermore, a student must have maintained a **minimum grade point average of 1.5 and receive no more than one failing grade for any course** in the district's graded course of study in the previous grade period. *Note: A physical education class does not count as one of the five required courses, but does count towards the student-athlete's grade point average and towards the number of failing grades.*

A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be

eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of five of those subjects in which the student received grades.

- You may not use summer school grades for failing grades received or lack of courses taken in the final grading period.
- Your semester and yearly grades have no effect on eligibility.
- Those taking postsecondary school courses must comply with OHSAA scholarship regulations.
- The eligibility or ineligibility of a student continues until the start of the fifth school day of the next grading period, at which time the grades from the immediately preceding grading period become effective.

## 2. RESIDENCE AND TRANSFER OF SCHOOLS:

- The following section is an excerpt directly from the [Ohio High School Athletic Association Website](#). Please click on the links for further information.

## Understanding the OHSAA Transfer Bylaws

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The OHSAA receives more inquiries about the **transfer bylaw** than any other aspect of eligibility. Unfortunately, we perhaps should receive more, as invariably an administrator has made his/her own call that later results in forfeiture or worse. Reach out when in doubt!

*A student is considered to have transferred whenever a.) enrollment is changed from one school to another school **and the student attends a new school**, or b.) the student participates in a practice, scrimmage or contest with a school-sponsored squad of a school in which the student has not been enrolled unless the non-enrolled student's participation is pursuant to O.R.C. §§ 3313.5311 (Ohio non-public school students), or 3313.537 (Ohio community/STEM school students).*

*If a student transfers at any time after the fifth day of the student's ninth grade year or after having established eligibility prior to the start of school by playing in a contest (scrimmage, preview/jamboree, Foundation game or regular season/tournament contest), the student shall be eligible, insofar as transfer is concerned, for **ONLY** the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests (including all scrimmages, preview/jamboree/Foundation games) **in those sports in which the student***

**participated** (participation being defined as playing in a contest) during the 12 months immediately preceding this transfer. This transfer consequence shall remain in effect until the one-year anniversary of the date of enrollment in the school to which the student transferred, at which time the student is no longer considered a transfer student.

After the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests have been competed, the student shall **then become INELIGIBLE for the remainder of the regular season contests**. Furthermore, the student **shall also remain ineligible to participate in the OHSAA sponsored tournament(s) in those respective sports** until the one-year anniversary of the student's date of enrollment. A student who did not participate in an OHSAA recognized sport in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer is not subject to the consequence of this transfer bylaw.

Notwithstanding the above, if a student transfers during the season of a sport in which he or she has participated in a regular season contest, and if Bylaw 4-7-3 requires that the student is ineligible for participation in the remainder of the contests in that sports season, the student shall remain ineligible for the remainder of all regular season contests, as well as the OHSAA tournament, in that sport at the school into which the student has transferred. Furthermore, the student shall **finish fulfilling his/her transfer consequence, for ONLY that sport in which the mid-season transfer occurred**, at the commencement of the sport season during the next school year. This consequence requires that the student shall remain ineligible for all pre-season contests (scrimmages, preview/jamboree, Foundation games) and all regular season contests until the total number of regular season contests missed (including those missed during the previous season) equals 50 percent of the maximum allowable regular season contests in that sport.

Note 1: For purposes of this bylaw, a student is considered to have participated in a sport if he/she has entered, if for only one play, a scrimmage or contests at any level of competition/contests (e.g. freshman, junior varsity and varsity).

Note 2: ORC 3313.5312 (Ohio home educated students) has been intentionally left out of the exclusions of subpart (b) addressing students participating in programs where they are not enrolled. Once a home-educated student participates with a school sponsored squad of a school in which the student is not enrolled, the student's eligibility is established at that school. Participating on any other schools' sponsored squad will be considered a transfer for which the balance of this bylaw and its exception(s) would be applicable.

Of course, in our society today, students do indeed change schools for various reasons. The member schools have identified a few transfer scenarios that they recognize should

be exempted from the general transfer bylaw. To deal with those limited scenarios our member schools have adopted **11 exceptions**, one of which MAY apply to a student who changes high schools.

The use of the word MAY is instructive since not all transfer students can meet one of these exceptions and for each of these exceptions (unless no ruling is required as in exception 3), the transfer student is **ELIGIBLE, insofar as transfer is concerned, for all pre-season contests and up through the first 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests in that sport**. The period of **INELIGIBILITY** begins at the **second 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests and continues through the OHSAA tournament in that respective sport OR until ruled eligible by the Executive Director's Office**. For a student to avail herself/himself of one of these exceptions, action on the part of the member school administrator as well as the OHSAA staff is required. The purpose of this series on the Transfer Bylaw is to provide guidance as to the required action on each of the exceptions, if applicable.

**This bylaw requires the administrator to determine the following:**

1. **Is the student a transfer student?** In other words, did the student change schools after establishing eligibility by playing in a high school contest prior to the start of the 9th grade or after the 5th day of the 9th grade year? If the answer is NO, then the transfer consequence is not applicable, and the student is fully eligible insofar as this bylaw is concerned. If the answer is YES, proceed to step #2.
2. **Did the student play an OHSAA sport at ANY high school in the 12 months immediately preceding the date of transfer into the new high school?** Get this information in writing from an administrator at the previous school or schools. If the answer is NO, the student is fully eligible insofar as transfer is concerned for that respective sport at the new school and no paperwork or ruling is necessary. (Please note that if a student transfers back to a school in which they were previously enrolled, then their "lookback" review could include participation that took place at the same high school where they are now desiring a participation opportunity). If the answer is YES, then please proceed to step #3.
3. **If the answer to both #1 and #2 is YES, then does the student meet one of the 11 enumerated exceptions to this bylaw?** If the answer is YES, the student meets an exception, then paperwork will be required, and the school administrator must seek a formal ruling from the OHSAA. The student may commence participation and is eligible, insofar as transfer is concerned, for all contests until the second 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests begin. Once the student is ruled eligible in accordance with an exception, the transfer eligibility is restored for as long as the student maintains enrollment and attendance at that school. If the answer is NO, the student does

not meet the requirements of an exception, the student may commence participation and is eligible, insofar as transfer is concerned, for all contests until the second 50% of the maximum allowable regular season contests begin. At that point, the student becomes ineligible for the second 50% of those contests AND the OHSAA tournament in that respective sport. In such a situation, no paperwork or ruling is required from the OHSAA. The student simply participates until the ineligibility commences as prescribed within the transfer bylaw.

## OHSAA Transfer Consequence Chart

The following chart describes in detail the 50% consequence which shall be applied to any transfer student who has participated in a sport in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer and does not meet an exception to a transfer bylaw.

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Maximum # of Contests as per the OHSAA Board</b>	<b>Transfer Student BECOMES INELIGIBLE FOR:</b>
<b>Baseball</b>	27 Games	Game 14
<b>Basketball (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	22 Games	Game 12
<b>Bowling (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	24 Matches	Match 13
<b>Cross Country (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	16 Games	Meet 9
<b>Field Hockey</b>	16 Games	Game 9
<b>Football</b>	10 Games	Game 6
<b>Golf (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	20 Matches	Match 11
<b>Gymnastics</b>	14 Meets	Meet 8

<b>Ice Hockey</b>	35 Games	Game 18
<b>Lacrosse (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	18 Games	Game 10
<b>Soccer (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	16 Games	Game 9
<b>Softball</b>	27 Games	Game 14
<b>Swimming &amp; Diving (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	16 Meets	Meet 9
<b>Tennis (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	22 Matches	Match 12
<b>Track &amp; Field (Boys &amp; Girls)</b>	16 Meets	Meet 9
<b>Volleyball</b>	22 Matches	Match 12
<b>Wrestling</b>	20 Points/16 points (for those schools that do not field teams- 6 or fewer wrestlers)	Point 11/9

## **Bylaw 4-7-2 Inter-District Transfer Guidance**

- [Transfer Bylaw Exception Guide](#)
- [Exception 1 - Parents' Bona Fide Move into a New Public School District](#)
  - [Exception 1 Form \(ABFR\)](#)
  - [Exception 1 Checklist](#)
- [Exception 2 - Change of Legal Custody](#)
  - [Exception 2 Form](#)

- [Exception 3 - School Closes/Discontinues Program After Grade 9 or Annexation/Consolidation](#)
- [Exception 4 - Self-Supporting Student](#)
  - [Memo | Form](#)
- [Exception 5 - A student transferred to the State School for the Blind or State School for the Deaf shall be eligible upon enrollment.](#)
- [Exception 6 - Home Not Ready for Habitation](#)
- [Exception 7 - Anti-Intimidation, Anti-Harassment, Anti-Bullying](#)
- [Exception 8 - International Baccalaureate Program](#)
- [Exception 9 - Public High School in the District of Residence of Parents](#)
  - [Exception 9 Form](#)
- [Exception 10 - District Discontinues Entire Interscholastic Sports Program](#)
- [Exception 11 - Death in Immediate Family Necessitating Transfer](#)

## Intra-District Transfer Guidance

- [Bylaw 4-7-4 - Intra-District/System Transfer](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-6 - Intra-District Transfer](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-7 - Intra-System Transfer](#)
- [List of Sample Situations - Change in Educational Programs](#)

## Quick Reference Eligibility Forms

- [Bylaw 1-6-4, Combining Middle School Teams](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 1 \(Affidavit for Bona Fide Change of Legal Residence\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 2 \(Legal Change of Custody\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 9 Form \(One-time transfer back to district of residence\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 4 Form \(Self-Supporting Status\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-7-5, Poor Performing School Transfer Instructions](#)
- [Bylaw 4-6-3, Exception 8 Form \(Military Power of Attorney\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-6-3, Exception 11 Form \(Dual or US citizen whose non-US citizen parents reside outside the US\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-8-1, Exception 2 Form \(International Students- J1 Visa\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-8-1, Exception 4 Form \(International Students- F1 Visa\)](#)
- [Bylaw 4-10-2, Exception 1 \(Request for Retention of Amateur Status\)](#)

### 3. SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT:

**Eight Semesters - High School Bylaw 4-3-3** – After a student completes the eighth grade or is otherwise eligible for high school athletics participation (such as in the examples of a student who skips grade eight and enrolls in high school or is too old for 7-8 th grade participation), the student may be eligible for a period not to exceed eight semesters taken in order of attendance, regardless of whether the student participates or is even eligible to participate in accordance with these eligibility bylaws. A student in grade 7 or 8 who attains the age of 15 before August 1 shall be eligible only at the high school level for a period not to exceed eight semesters commencing with the semester of the student’s first participation at the high school level. Note: See Bylaw 4-3-5 for further definition of what constitutes “order of attendance” as it relates to these semester bylaws. EXCEPTION 1: The Executive Director’s Office may permit a student who completes the eighth semester of eligibility during the season of a sport to complete the sports season of the sport in which the student is participating provided the student is enrolled in school. If such extension is granted, the student is ineligible for further interscholastic participation when the sports season, regular and tournament, has ended. (See below for guidance on how to request exception 1) EXCEPTION 2: If the student is a “child with a disability” as that term is defined within the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Part B of the Federal IDEA requirements; and the student’s specific disability was diagnosed contemporaneous with the events which caused the student to be unable to meet the requirements of this bylaw; and whose disability is the primary reason for student’s inability to meet the requirements of this bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director’s office if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director’s office, the Executive Director’s office determines that: a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes; and c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and d) there is no evidence of “red-shirting” or other indicia of academic dishonesty. (See below for guidance on how to request exception 2) EXCEPTION 3: The Executive Director’s Office, in its sole discretion, may permit a student who began high school in another country to have up to eight semesters of high school eligibility in the United States when evidence can be presented that the student’s placement in high school outside the United States was inappropriate for the student’s age and academic capabilities.

**Four Semesters - Grades 7-8 Bylaw 4-3-4** – After a student completes the sixth grade or is otherwise eligible for 7-8 th grade athletics (an example would be a student who skips grade six and begins attending in grade 7) and before the student enters the ninth grade, the student may be eligible for a period not to exceed four semesters taken in order of attendance, whether the student participates or not. Note: See Bylaw 4-3-5 for further definition of what constitutes “order of attendance” as it relates to these semester bylaws. EXCEPTION: If the student is a “child with a disability” as that term is defined within the Ohio Operating Standards for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Part B of the Federal IDEA requirements and the student’s specific disability was diagnosed contemporaneous with the events which caused

the student to be unable to meet the requirements of this bylaw; and whose disability is the primary reason for student's inability to meet the requirements of this bylaw, that student may be declared eligible by the Executive Director's office if, in the sole discretion of the Executive Director's office, the Executive Director's office determines that: a) the student does not pose a safety risk to himself/herself or others; and b) the student does not enjoy any advantages in terms of physical maturity, mental maturity or athletic maturity over other student-athletes; and c) the student would not likely participate in any meaningful way in any contest or otherwise have any impact on the outcome of any contest in which the student does participate; and

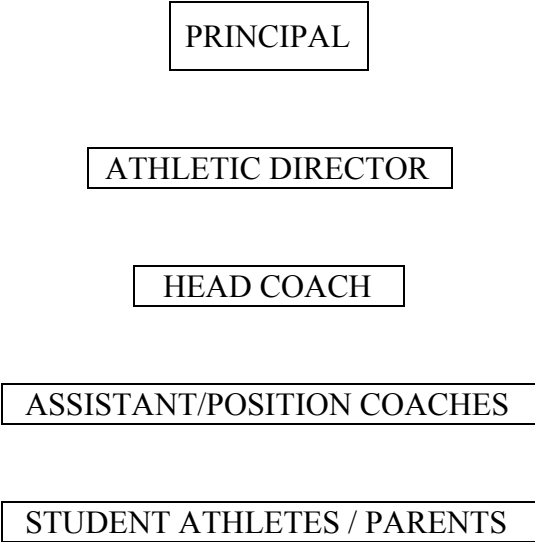
**4. ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES:**

Students are expected to attend school in order to participate in all practices and contests. Consequently, students must adhere to **each** of the following guidelines:

- 1. A student must arrive at school no later than 9:30 a.m.
- 2. A student must be present at the time of dismissal from school.
- 3. The above guidelines apply in reference to the final weekday when practices/contests are scheduled over the weekend.
- 4. Students who receive *advanced administrative approval* may not be subject to the above guidelines. (i.e. fieldtrips, funerals, college visits, etc.)

**5. ATHLETIC CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION:**

Within the Austintown Local Schools, the following chain of communication is in effect:



If there are any questions or concerns involving some aspect of our athletic program, the athlete should first contact the appropriate coach. If there is no resolution, he/she would then go to the head coach, etc.

## **6. EXPRESSING PARENTAL CONCERNS:**

When expressing an occasional concern with a coach, parents are asked to refer to and use the following guidelines:

1. Always follow the proper athletic chain of communication.
2. Never approach a coach at a time when the coach's responsibility is the supervision of his/her athletes (i.e. at practice or before or immediately after a contest. Neither is the proper time nor place for a discussion concerning your child or the team).
3. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches include the treatment of your child mentally and physically, ways to help your child improve, and concerns about your child's behavior.
4. Inappropriate concerns to discuss with coaches include playing time, team strategy, play calling, and other student-athletes.
5. Call the school the following day and make an appointment which is convenient for both you and the coach to meet.
6. Raise your concerns in a calm and civil manner. Yelling, being rude or using foul language is totally unacceptable and will bring an immediate end to the meeting.
7. Once you have stated your question or concern, listen to the explanation. Often a parent may be blinded by emotion and this overrides logic and reason. Listening receptively may really help you to understand any explanation which is given.

## **7. PRE-SEASON PARENT / ATHLETE MEETINGS:**

All coaches will conduct pre-season parent / athlete meetings. While 100% attendance by parents and athletes is our goal, we realize that said goal is not often attainable. All meetings will be held in advance of the official season starting date and prior to any team selections which may be made.

During such meetings, the following will be addressed by our coaches:

1. Austintown Local Schools Student & Parent Athletic Handbook.
2. The criteria by which teams may be selected.
3. The forms which must be completed in order for students to participate.
4. Practice and contest schedules.
5. Optional Student Insurance.
6. Questions from parents.

## **8. THE PLAYER'S PLEDGE:**

The Player's Pledge will serve as a code of conduct for students participating in interscholastic sports. The violation of any of these behavioral expectations will result in disciplinary action by the coaches, administration, or Board of Education.

This code is enforced during the entire school year, twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven days a week, while a participant is enrolled in high school or junior high school. The code is also in effect and enforced during school-supervised interscholastic activities and events occurring over the summer break.

The following infractions will also result in disciplinary action:

1. Theft or the willful destruction of school property
2. The chronic violation of school rules and regulations.
3. Hazing. This is an act, including physical, mental, or psychological, which subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that may abuse mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass, or intimidate him/her, or which may, in any fashion, compromise his/her inherent dignity as a person. Hazing can also be a form of initiation into a particular club or activity.

It is imperative that both student-athletes and parents understand that participants in interscholastic activities, within the Austintown Local School District, will adhere to the following **Hierarchy of Jurisdiction** when infractions of any kind occur:

- Ohio High School Athletic Association
- Student & Parent Athletic Handbook
- Student Handbook

*Note: Student-athletes may be disciplined under multiple levels of the above hierarchy.*

## **9. ALSD DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENT/ATHLETES**

**This section will outline the ALSD Drug and Alcohol Testing Policies in detail. Please read carefully.**

### **Statement of Purpose**

The Board believes that interscholastic athletics can be an important aspect of a student's overall educational experience. The Board believes that the experiences gained while involved in interscholastic athletics can have lifelong impact. Student participation in interscholastic athletics, however, is a privilege and not a right.

The Board is certainly aware of the pressure that the youth of today face especially in the area of drugs and alcohol. It also realizes that due to the nature of athletic activities the use of drugs and/ or alcohol can lead to added risks including injury to the student athlete and others.

In an effort to make this experience as positive as possible, the Board first adopted a mandatory and random drug testing policy for all student athletes at Fitch High School effective with the 1998/ 99 school year. That policy is hereby amended to address issues that have arisen since adopting the initial policy.

The following expectations and consequences are in effect for student/ athletes and are enforced for twelve (12) months of the year. The consequences in certain situations may carry over to the next season of participation.

## **Students Tested**

All students who wish to participate in the interscholastic athletic programs are subject to urine drug testing. This testing takes place at the beginning of each athletic season, fall, winter and spring. Student/athletes participating in multiple seasons within an academic year are not tested at the beginning of the successive seasons unless selected for random testing or testing based on reasonable suspicion.

Following the initial test, up to 10 percent of all student/athletes may be tested on a random selection basis. Random urine drug testing continues throughout the academic year.

Any student moving into the District or any student/athlete joining a team who was not previously tested by the district during the academic year is tested at the time they join a team.

[Adoption date:]

LEGAL REF: ORC 3313.20

CROSS REFS: IGD, Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities

IGDJ, Interscholastic Athletics

JFCH, Alcohol Use by Students

JFCI, Student Drug Abuse

JO, Student Records

IGDJA-E-1, Athletic Code of Conduct Consent Agreement (also on Forms CD)

IGDJA-E-2, Drug and Alcohol Testing Consent for Urinalysis (also on Forms CD)

IGDJA-E-3, Drug and Alcohol Policy Violation Consequences (also on Forms CD)

## **Consent**

Each student/athlete is provided a copy of the policy, a "Student Consent to Perform Testing for Drugs and Alcohol" form and a "Parent/ Guardian Consent to Perform Testing for Drugs and Alcohol" form. The Athletic Director/designee distributes these documents at the beginning of each season no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the official OHSAA starting date of the athletic season. Consent provided under this policy is valid through the shorter of

1. one year from the date of consent;
2. the date of graduation, or
3. the date of written notice of withdrawal from participation in all athletic programs for the current academic year.

The student/athlete reads, signs and dates the informed consent agreement as a condition of eligibility prior to participation in interscholastic athletic practices or competition. The student/athlete and the designated parents/ guardian shall also sign the "Student and Parent/ Guardian Consent to Perform Drug Testing for Drugs and Alcohol" before the student/athlete may participate in interscholastic athletic practices or competition.

The Athletic Director/designee is required to obtain the informed consent forms prior to the administration of the drug and alcohol tests under this policy. The consent forms are maintained in the student/athlete's permanent record.

## **Testing Frequency**

The urine drug and alcohol tests are administered:

1. at the **beginning** of each athletic season as described above;
2. when student/athletes are chosen due to reasonable suspicion and/or
3. when student/athletes are chosen by random selection.

## **Random Selection Guidelines**

Random selection of in-season and out-of-season student/athletes for additional testing is conducted during the school year. Student/athletes are randomly selected from a master list of identification numbers of all eligible athletes maintained by the Athletic Director. The student/athletes selected are notified by the Athletic Director/ designee and asked to report to the designated collection site and provide a urine sample for testing within the time parameters established by this policy

## **Reasonable Suspicion Testing Guidelines**

Reasonable Suspicion Testing occurs when the District has reason to suspect a student/athlete may be in violation of this policy. A reasonable suspicion test may occur based on:

1. observed behavior, such as direct observation of drug, Alcohol use or possession or physical symptoms of drug or alcohol use;
2. a pattern of abnormal conduct or erratic behavior
3. arrest or conviction for drug related offense;
4. information provided either by reliable and credible sources or independently corroborated regarding a student/athlete's substance or alcohol or tobacco use, or
5. newly discovered evidence that the student/athlete has tampered with a previous drug or alcohol test.

Any documentation used to support reasonable suspicion testing is documented in writing by the Athletic Director/designee and maintained in the student's record.

## **Confidentiality**

Because the selection and reporting process for the student/athlete is confidential, the selection, collection, chain-of-custody documentation and reporting of results are accomplished using identification number codes. The Athletic Director/designee establishes a master list of athlete's names and unique code numbers. The list is maintained in a secure and locked location. The

Superintendent and Athletic Director/designee are the only persons with access to the list. This code numbers are used to select the pool to be tested for random testing.

Health Center personnel coordinates the scheduling of student/athletes, as well as the collection of urine samples.

The Athletic Director/designee shall be present at the collection site for the purpose of coordinating the identification of the athlete and assignment of the code number master list. From that point on, the code number is utilized for specimen identification and reporting. The collection site master list is used to record prescription or over-the-counter medications that the athlete has identified as used in the five (5) days prior to the collection.

The collection site master list is then used by the Athletic Director/ designee to identify the student/ athlete's parents when positive, confirmed results or when inconclusive adulterated or suspect results are reported by identification number by the testing laboratory in accordance with this policy.

## **Collection Site**

Collection sites are chosen based on the location and physical layout of available bathroom facilities. Such facilities shall limit access to all persons, except authorized monitors and student/athletes during collection times. Facilities for male and female student/athletes shall have private stalls with working closures.

Adequate clerical space to process designated forms must be available at or closely adjacent to the collection area.

There should also be sufficient room to hold waiting athletes who must remain supervised at the collection site until collection is complete. Upon initially entering the collection site, athletes must remain at the test site until collection is complete or until excused by the Athletic Director/Building Principal.

## **Collection**

Upon reporting to the collection site, the athlete will shut off all electronic devices and store them in a safe location. Remove outer garments (coats, jackets, sweatshirts, etc); select a sealed, sterile specimen container; verify the assigned identification number by signing the collection site master list; and disclose in writing all medications, both prescription and non-prescription taken in the past five days.

One athlete shall enter a secure bathroom facility accompanied by a monitor; wash his/her hands, empty pockets to pants or jacket and proceed to the urinal or toilet stall and open the sealed specimen container.

Male and female athletes are allowed to close the door to an enclosed bathroom stall. The monitor stands and listens for normal sounds of urination.

If unable to provide a sample, the athlete must take the empty unsealed specimen container to the monitor pending a later attempt. The monitor maintains control of the specimen container until given to the student/athlete for the next attempt. The student/athlete must remain in the holding area until able to produce a specimen or until excused by the Athletic Director/designee

Students who are absent when scheduled or are otherwise unable to provide an acceptable sample when scheduled are not eligible in the athletic program until a retest can be scheduled and an acceptable sample obtained.

If partial but insufficient sample is collected, the original container is retained by the monitor who checks the temperature of the sample. The student/athlete shall remain in the holding area until able to produce an additional specimen in a second sample container. The monitor tests the temperature of the second sample. If the temperature of both samples are within the established testing parameters, the samples may be combined in the presence of the student/athlete.

Because temperature of a freshly voided sample may be used as criteria for suspected tampering and dilution, the student/athlete shall deliver the sample to the central processing area within **four minutes** of collection. If delayed for any reason, the student/athlete must verify the temperature on the indicator strip on the container with the monitor. If upon initial testing the urine temperature is outside the testing parameters, the sample is deemed invalid and the student is required to provide another sample. **If no sample can be provided that day, the student is not eligible for participation in athletic activities until a rescheduled test is completed by the student.**

The labeled samples are maintained under strict security by the collection monitors so as to maintain proper chain-of-custody and safeguard the rights of the student/athlete.

## **Testing**

The samples are sealed by the monitors and sent to a Department of Transportation certified laboratory where testing may include any or all of the following:

- Anabolic Steroids
- Alcohol
- Amphetamines
- Barbituates
- Benzodiazepines
- Cannabinoids
- Cocaine Metabolite
- LSD
- Methadone
- Methaqualone
- Nicotine
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine
- Propoxyphene

The urine sample is also tested for adulterants that may include examination for glutaraldehyde, nitrate, chromate chlorine bleach, pH, specific gravity and/or creatine.

The District upon recommendation by the Superintendent may ask the laboratory to test for additional drugs for an additional charge. Additional testing may take place without prior notice to the student/athlete or without written change to this policy.

Specimens must be initially screened using an Immunoassay and/ or Chromatographic method, with all presumptive positives then confirmed by the Gas Chromatography (GC), or Gas Chromatography/ Mass Spectroscopy (GC/ MS) methods.

No positive results are reported until screening results are confirmed.

The laboratory director certifies all urine drug screens as negative, positive, adulterated, inconclusive or suspect, reports all findings other than negative findings in a confidential manner to the Athletic Director/designee. This notification is followed by a confidential final written report to be mailed to the office of the Superintendent. No other person will have access to confidential reports.

The Athletic Director translates the identification code to establish the identity of any student/athlete that has tested positive, adulterated, inconclusive or suspect. The laboratory director and/ or a qualified medical review officer is then contacted by the Health Service Department designee to obtain an interpretation of the results after consideration of medications listed by the student/athlete on the collection master list as these medications may explain a positive, inconclusive, adulterated or suspect result. This additional review is concluded before a positive test result is reported.

### **Re-Testing Procedure**

Upon notice of inconclusive, adulterated or suspect results or results that reveal that testing acceptable criteria have not been met, a second urine test is obtained from the student/athlete. The athlete is required to provide a second urine sample for testing upon request by the Athletic Director. The student/athlete is not permitted to participate in the athletic program until the retest is scheduled and completed. Failure to submit to this additional test constitutes a policy violation.

### **Notification Chain for a Positive, Inconclusive, Adulterated or Suspect Result**

When the head Principal receives notice of a result that is inconclusive, adulterated or suspect, the Head Principal contacts the Athletic Director to obtain the athlete's identity. The Head Principal/designee attempts to contact the parent/ guardian of the athlete within 24 hours of notification that a re-test is required. The Athletic Director then contacts the student/athlete to schedule the re-test.

When the Head Principal receives notice of a positive result, the Head Principal contacts the Athletic Director to obtain the student/athlete's identity. The Head Principal/designee attempts to contact the parent/ guardian of the athlete within 24 hours. Following verbal notification or the failed attempt at verbal notification, the Athletic Director contacts the parent/guardian by letter within 24 hours to explain the student/athlete's due process rights under this policy.

Following the notification of the athlete and the parent/guardian, the Athletic Director notifies the head coach of the positive test.

### **Policy Violation**

The following actions of the student/athlete constitute policy violations

1. Failure to report to collection site after notification unless excused by the Athletic Director.
2. Refusal to submit a urine sample for testing.
3. Tampering with the sample for testing or attempting to subvert the collection/ identification process.

4. Confirmed positive test results for banned substance.
5. Aiding and/or abetting another student/athlete in violating this policy.
6. Refusal to submit to a re-test when required following an inconclusive adulterated or suspect result.

## **Due Process**

After notification of a positive test, the Principal/designee notifies the parent/ guardian by telephone or by certified mail of their right to a meeting with the Principal/designee and head coach to explain the athlete's rights under this policy.

If the parents fail to contact the Principal or his/her designee within 24 hours following receipt of said notice to schedule a meeting to review or appeal the test results , the results are deemed conclusive for purpose of further action under this policy and the parents/guardian and the student/athlete are deemed to have waived their right to challenge the test result.

If a meeting with the Principal/designee is conducted , the parent/ guardian and student/athlete may, at their own expense, elect to have a portion of the original sample re-tested by the District's laboratory, or a second independent certified laboratory of their choice. Upon receipt or payment in full for the re-test and a written request from the parent/guardian, the District's lab forwards the sample for further testing.

The student/athlete has the right to appeal the test result and the policy consequences to the building principal. In such cases the appeal must be delivered to the principal in writing within 72 hours of the first notice of a positive result. Failure to comply with this time limit shall bar further appeal under this policy.

Any penalties authorized under this policy are not imposed during the pendency of an appeal. The building principal issues a decision within 48 hours of receipt of the appeal. Notice of the decision is given by phone if possible and then by certified mail.

If not satisfied with the decision of the building principal, the student/athlete may appeal in writing to the Superintendent within 48 hours of the principal's decision. The Superintendent/designee issues a decision within 48 hours of receipt of the appeal. The Superintendent's decision will be in writing and final.

## **Policy Violation Consequences Resulting from a Positive Drug/Alcohol Test**

### **1. First Offense**

**A.** Loss of any leadership position in student/athletic programs for the remainder of the academic school year.

**B.** The student/athlete is denied participation for twenty-five percent (25%) of the scheduled athletic contests in which the school engages for the entire academic year (twenty-five percent of a game schedule is three games). Participation denotes competing in events against outside competition at all levels (Varsity, JV, Freshman) including dressing for contests. The athlete

may practice with the team and may sit with the team (out of uniform) for all contests for which they are suspended.

**C.** The denial of participation may be reduced to ten percent (10%) of the scheduled contests if the athlete commits to and participates in substance abuse assessment and the school sponsored - "I-Can" Program. This assessment must be conducted by a certified chemical dependency counselor or at an agency certified by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency. The student/athlete must set an appointment within four days of notification of the violation. The athlete must participate in the evaluation process to its completion and follow the counselor's recommendation. Verification of this evaluation must be received by the building principal from the program counselor. The student/athlete and parent/guardian must submit a written waiver of his/ her rights of confidentiality so that a written report can be provided to the District Health Services Department. Any cost for the assessment and follow-up program is the sole responsibility of the student/athlete or the parent/guardian. The principal/designee may reinstate the athlete upon evidence that the student/athlete has begun an assessment and follow-up program.

**D.** The District Health Services Department monitors the progress of the assessment program and reports any failure to comply to the principal. If the athlete fails to comply with the program or fails to complete the program, the full denial of participation of 25 percent of all contests is imposed.

**E.** If an athlete has a positive test for tobacco or nicotine, the denial of privilege may be reduced to 10 percent of the scheduled contests if the athlete enrolls in and participates in a tobacco intervention/ education program approved by the principal. The athlete must provide notice of enrollment to the principal within four days of notice of the violation. The cost of the program is the responsibility of the student/athlete or parent/guardian. The principal/ designee may reinstate the athlete upon evidence of participation in a tobacco intervention/ education program. The parent/guardian shall execute a written waiver of his/ her rights of confidentiality so that periodic reports can be provided to the Health Serviced Department. The student/athlete provides written notice to the principal on completion from the program director. The Health Service Department monitors the progress of the tobacco program and reports any deficiency to the principal. If the athlete fails to complete the program or comply with the program, the full denial of participation of 25 percent of all contests is imposed.

**F.** The denial of the privilege to compete begins following the last contest in which the student/athlete has been eligible to compete prior to the violation of any part of this policy. For clarification purposes, any percent of any denial resulting in partial game denial is rounded up to include an additional contest. Any denial occurring at the end of the season is carried over to the athlete's next eligible season.

**G.** A first positive drug and/ or alcohol violation shall result in additional testing through an assessment program or through the school drug testing vendor. The cost of this random testing is the responsibility of the student/athlete and parent(s)/ guardian(s).

## **2. Second Offense**

A second offense committed by a student/athlete under this policy shall result in the denial of the privilege to participate in athletics for the remainder of the school year and/ or the first athletic season in which the athlete has previously participated (Fall, Winter, Spring) the following year, whichever is greater.

## **3. Third Offense**

A third offense committed by a student/athlete under this policy shall result in the denial of participation in athletics for the remainder of the student athlete's high school career.

Student/Athletes who in any way aid or abet another athlete violating this policy will be disciplined as if they were the principal offender.

## **Financing**

Each athlete will be responsible for contributing \$10 towards testing costs. Athletes may obtain assistance in payment from a booster group contribution, a team fund raiser or any combination of these. The remainder of funding is generated through grants and/ or other non-general fund resources. Excess funds are carried over to the next year to help perpetuate the program or to be used to increase the number of testing dates or to increase the number of student/athletes tested. Grant money may also be used to reduce the cost to the athlete.

Once a student/athlete has had a positive test confirmed, any and all additional test or related costs incurred are the responsibility of the student/athlete and their parent(s)/ guardian(s).

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Alcohol** - Intoxicating liquor, liquor, alcohol, wine, beer, mixed beverages, malt liquor, and malt beverages as defined in Ohio Revised Code 4301.01. The term "alcoholic beverages" also means any liquid or substance, such as "near bear" intended for use as a beverage, used as a beverage, or capable of being used as a beverage, which contains alcohol in any proportion or percentage. The term "alcoholic beverage" does not include a substance used for medical purposes in accordance with directions for use provided in a prescription or by the manufacturer and in accordance with District policy and rules related to the use of prescriptions so long as the substance is authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and kept in the original container, which container shall state the student's name and directions for use.

**Assessment and Follow-up Program** - A program operated by a certified chemical dependency counselor or any agency certified by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency.

**Athlete** - Any student participating in high school athletic programs and/ or contests under the control and jurisdiction of the District and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA).

**Chain of Custody** - The methodology of tracking specified materials or substances for the purpose of maintaining control and accountability from initial collection to the final disposition for all such materials or substances and providing for accountability at each stage of handling, testing, and storing specimens and reporting test results.

**Confirmation Test, Confirmed Test, or Confirmed Drug Test** - A second analytical procedure used to identify the presence of a specific drug or metabolite in a specimen, which test must be different in scientific principle from that of the initial test procedure and must be capable of providing requisite specificity, sensitivity, and quantitative accuracy.

**Counterfeit Substance** - 1. Any drug that bears, or whose container or label bears, a trademark, trade name, or other identifying mark used without authorization of the owner or rights to such trademark, trade name or identifying mark. 2. Any unmarked or unlabeled substance that is represented to be controlled substance/ mood altering chemical, manufactured, possessed, packed or distributed by a person other than the person that manufactured, processed, packed or distributed it. 3. Any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance/ mood altering chemical, but is not a controlled substance/ mood altering chemical or is a different controlled substance/ mood altering chemical. 4. Any substance other than a controlled substance/ mood altering chemical that a reasonable person would believe to be a controlled substance/ mood altering chemical because of its similarity in shape, size, and color or its markings, labeling, packaging, distribution, or the price for which it was sold or offered for sale.

**Illegal Drugs or Drugs** - Any substance, as includes in schedules 1 through 5 of 21USC 802 (6), which an individual may not sell, offer to sell, exchange, give, possess, use, distribute, or purchase under State or Federal law. This definition also includes all prescription drugs obtained without authorization, and all prescribed and over the counter drugs being used in any way other than for medical purposes in accordance with the directions for use provided in the prescription or by the manufacturer. This definition includes nicotine.

**Initial Drug Test** - A sensitive, rapid and reliable procedure to identify negative and presumptive positive specimens, using an immunoassay procedure or an equivalent, or a more accurate scientifically accepted method approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

**Medical Review Officer** - A doctor, not necessarily a licensed medical review officer, who serves in that capacity on behalf of the District.

**Mood Altering Chemicals** - Includes, without limitation, narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, counterfeit drugs, marijuana, alcohol, and any common substance such as "white out", glue, gasoline, etc. used for its mood altering effect. Prescription drugs are included in this, unless authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and kept in the original container, which container shall state the student's name and directions for proper use.

**Positive result** - The presence of alcohol, nicotine or any drug of abuse in the test result received from a certified testing laboratory.

**Random Selection** - A mechanism for selecting athletes for drug/ alcohol testing in which each student/athlete has an equal chance for being selected for testing each time selections are made.

**Reasonable Suspicion Drug Testing** - Drug testing based on a belief that a student/athlete is using or has been using drugs and is drawn from specific objective and articulated facts and

reasonable inferences drawn from those facts in light of experience. Among other things, such facts and inferences may be based upon one or more of the following criteria:

1. Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use or of the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug; but not limited to appearance, speech, body odors, behavior, or other physical or observable traits of a student/athlete. In the context of performance enhancing drugs, reasonable suspicion specifically includes unusual increases in size, strength, weight or other athletic abilities.
2. Evidence that a student/athlete tampered with a drug test.
3. Evidence that a student athlete used, possessed, sold, solicited, or transferred drugs while at school or while participating in any interscholastic athletic program.
4. Inconclusive, adulterated or suspect test results or drug test results that report test acceptability criteria have not been met.

**Specimen** - Any urine sample provided by student/athletes for testing pursuant to this policy.

**Student** - Any student enrolled at Austintown-Fitch High School

**Tobacco** - All types of tobacco products, including smokeless.

## **10. SUBSTANCE USE/TOBACCO POLICY:**

This policy pertains to the possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription and non-prescription drugs and/or performance-enhancing drugs. Disciplinary action shall be based upon evidence and a police report or staff/administrative referral.

### **A. SELLING/PURCHASING/DISTRIBUTION OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES**

First Offense -Dismissal from the team(s) for one full year from the date of infraction.

Second Offense - Forfeit remaining eligibility to participate in all Austintown Athletics for the rest of their school career.

### **B. USE OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE/ALCOHOL**

First Offense

1. Student athlete shall be denied participation from ten percent (10%) of the scheduled events during the season when the infraction occurred.

Percentage of denial of privilege is calculated on the number of events within the sport/activity and may carry over into the next season of the same sport/activity or a different sport/activity.

2. The student shall be required to have a professional assessment and follow the recommendation of the assessment. Any cost of the program incurred is the responsibility of the athlete.
  - a. The student cannot participate in scheduled contests until the assessment is complete.

Failure to comply with the recommendation of the assessment will result in dismissal from the team.

3. Students may participate in schedule practice sessions during the denial of participation period; at the discretion of the coach.

#### Second Offense

The student will be denied participation in all athletic participation for one calendar year of the from infraction date. The student must participate and complete a professional education program to correct the abuse problem before reinstatement to any athletic team. Any cost of the program incurred is the responsibility of the athlete.

### **C. STUDENT IS IN ATTENDANCE BUT NOT USING**

Athletes hosting or attending a party or other gathering where alcohol or other illegal controlled substances are being unlawfully consumed shall be considered in violation. An athlete is required to leave the party or gathering immediately. Any violation occurring which involves law enforcement officials and have pending legal action, the administration shall issue the disciplinary action.

First Offense	Written Warning
Second Offense	One game suspension
Third Offense	Dismissal from the team

## D. TOBACCO USE

The possession or use of tobacco in any form, as well as look-alikes, is a violation of the athletic policy and subject to the consequences.

First Offense	Written Warning
Second Offense	One game suspension
Third Offense	Dismissal from the team

## E. SELF REFERRAL POLICY

This self-referral option is only available to students on the *first* infraction.

If a student or parent comes to the coach, principal or athletic director seeking help because of a drug, alcohol, or tobacco problem, the athlete will not be found in violation provided he/she follows the recommendations of a school-approved counseling agency. Any cost of the program incurred is the responsibility of the athlete. Self-referrals which result in no removal from participation are still considered first violations in the event of a subsequent second violation. Self-referral can occur only one time for an athlete.

## 11. SELECTING THE TEAM:

While our ultimate goal is to promote the greatest athletic participation possible at all levels of Austintown Local Schools' athletics, it may be necessary in some sports to "cut" a squad. This may occur due to any number of reasons, but usually the nature and limitations specific to some sports.

Every coach has the ultimate responsibility and authority for selecting his/her team. Approved criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach.

It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees. Players from the previous year's team, for example, do not automatically make the upcoming team, nor does being a senior ensure that an athlete will make the squad.

Both parents and prospective team members should expect that every candidate is treated fairly and given every opportunity and consideration. Coaches will be sensitive to feelings of disappointment, will handle the task as positively as possible, and will be available to answer athletes' questions.

While we understand that being cut is disappointing for many athletes and even for their parents, the possibility of not making a team will have been made clear at the pre-season parent / athlete meeting. Anyone cut from a team is welcome to try out again next season or try another sport.

When parents and athletes understand and support the coach's decision, this difficult process becomes a less painful experience for all.

8.

## **12. SUB-VARSITY ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION:**

We regard athletic participation at the sub-varsity levels (junior varsity, freshman, and middle school) as integral to the success of our varsity programs. These teams exist to provide athletes an introduction to the ten key qualities, and the processes necessary to acquire them (*see Mission Statement*), which are at the heart of our athletic programs.

While we will always strive to be successful in all of our athletic programs, participation at these levels, in particular, is a key to maintaining student interest, fostering growth, and providing the foundation for future successes.

Invariably, student involvement at these levels may be limited due to the nature of the sport and the varying skill levels of its participants. However, coaches will put forth a concerted effort in trying to put aside short-term goals in lieu of the long-term progress of his/her team members.

A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a sub-varsity team does not guarantee that an athlete will automatically be a member of successive teams nor will his/her role at one level be guaranteed at the next level. The athletes best suited for competition at each level of participation will make the squad each year.

## **13. CO-PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES:**

All students are encouraged to participate in as many extra-curricular activities as they desire. Some may wish to participate in sports simultaneously within a single season. While such situations will automatically create conflicts, every effort, on the part of the student athlete and his/her coaches, will be made to accommodate the student's wishes. Below are suggested guidelines to follow:

- The student will inform coaches of his/her desires prior to the start of the seasons in question.
- The student and his/her coaches will work out a plan regarding practices/contests to accommodate the requirements of co-participation. As a part of said plan, the student shall declare which sport shall be primary when conflicts arise regarding actual contests. All participants in the formulation of the **Co-Participation Plan** will sign said plan and a copy will be sent to the student's parent(s) guardian(s).

- Any conflicts arising from the **Co-Participation Plan** will be brought to the attention of the Athletic Director who will act as a mediator.
- When conflicts arise as a result of membership/participation in non-athletic extracurricular activities, students are required to inform their coaches in advance.

#### **14. OFF / PRE SEASON PROGRAMS (open gym, strength and conditioning):**

1. Participants must have a physical on file as well as a completed Student Athletic Handbook Sign-off Form, Waiver Form / Insurance, HIPPA Form, and two Emergency Medical Authorization Forms also on file.
2. Participants must adhere to all established OHSAA policies.
3. Participants must adhere to all guidelines established by sponsoring coach(es) with regards to behavior, dress, care of facilities, and equipment.
4. Participants must adhere to adopted school policies with regards to school attendance and eligibility.
5. ***While participating in weight training at the Austintown Community Fitness Center, all athletes must be supervised by their respective coach, have a prescribed workout plan, and adhere to all rules, regulations and posted work out schedules.***
6. While quitting is an unacceptable habit, it is a common occurrence. Those student athletes who quit an in-season sport and wish to participate in a pre-season activity of an upcoming sport, must adhere to the following procedures:
  - Consult immediately with in-season head coach.
  - In-season head coach will report situation to the Athletic Director who will set up a meeting between the student-athlete and the coaches involved.
  - Return all equipment to in-season coach
  - Complete all necessary paperwork regarding pre-season activity.

Student-athletes who wish to participate in a pre-season activity of an upcoming sport (open gym, weight training, conditioning, etc.) while currently a participant of an in-season sport, should communicate with his/her in-season coach to established guidelines for that participation.

#### **15. PRACTICE SESSIONS:**

Practice sessions are normally closed to spectators and there is a very sound reason for this. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom and there is real, quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete's concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. Education in any setting cannot be compromised.

It is the coach and Athletic Director who are responsible for scheduling practice time. Between the two, every effort will be made to ensure that student athletes are provided ample opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful within the framework of common sense.

In the event that school is cancelled due to weather conditions, athletic practices may occur after regular school hours provided that the Superintendent or his/her designee (Athletic Director) has approved the practice based on the fact that weather and/or road conditions are safe.

## **16. TRAVEL:**

1. All student-athletes must travel to and from all scheduled scrimmages and contests in transportation provided by the athletic department when warranted unless the parent(s) make previous written arrangements for an exceptional situation with the head coach.
2. Student-athletes must adhere to all transportation guidelines as established by the Board of Education.
3. A student-athlete who misses a scheduled bus trip to an out-of-town scrimmage or contest will not be permitted to participate in said contest unless there are extenuating circumstances.
4. Student-athletes must adhere to all behavioral expectations set forth in the Student Handbook.
5. In the event a bus/van is not available or the group is too small to warrant the use of a bus/van, consideration may be given to using private automobiles under the following stipulations:
  - Under no circumstances will student-athletes drive.
  - A permission slip will be signed by the parent/guardian of all student-athletes who are affected.
  - Driving will be limited to an instructor, coach, staff member, parent, or a representative from the Austintown Local School District.

## **17. EQUIPMENT ISSUE AND RETURN:**

Students who are issued equipment/uniforms for the purpose of interscholastic participation will have that equipment recorded on a standard sport specific **Equipment Issue Form**. Each student will sign said form at the time of equipment issue. From that moment on, responsibility for the care, safeguarding, and return of any issued equipment falls on the shoulders of the student. Should the student fail to return any issued equipment at the conclusion of participation in any sport, the student is financially responsible for the replacement of any missing equipment. Should such a situation arise, the student in question shall be reported to the Athletic Director and will have his/her name placed on the Debt List until the situation is rectified.

## **18. SENIOR NIGHT POLICY:**

Sport specific Senior Night Recognition Ceremonies will be limited to 15 (fifteen) minutes prior to varsity contests. Head coaches will distribute the standard **Senior Night Bio Form** to all senior athletes in advance of the ceremony and public address remarks will be limited to the information provided on the standard form.

Mass Senior Night Recognition Ceremonies may extend beyond 15 (fifteen) minutes and may be limited to student and parent recognition by the public address announcer.

## **19. ADDITIONAL STUDENT INSURANCE:**

Annually, the Austintown Local Schools make available low cost Student Insurance in case of accident or injury. Traditionally, these plans provide cash benefits to help meet the cost of medical and hospital expense. If you have other insurance, these plans will help meet the deductibles and coinsurance gaps in those plans. If you have no other insurance, these plans will provide low cost, basic coverage. Furthermore, these plans will cover your child for the entire school year and throughout the summer months – right up to the day school re-opens.

*Students who participate in interscholastic sports are required to have insurance coverage.* Injuries occur, and it is the recommendation of the Athletic Department that all parents be advised as to the opportunity to purchase these plans.

## **AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

### **20. CAMERA USE AT EVENTS POLICY**

The Board welcomes the attendance of parents and other members of the community at athletic and other student activities and events, but, at the same time, the Board desires to take all reasonable action to ensure that such activities are conducted in an atmosphere that preserves and protects the health, safety and welfare of the student participants.

Therefore, individuals using any type of camera equipment including, but not limited to, video, film, digital or phone cameras can expect to be questioned by school personnel. If there does not appear to be a legitimate or appropriate reasons for the use of camera equipment, the equipment is confiscated, the individual is removed from the premises or the event and law enforcement authorities are contacted.

Persons using camera equipment are expected to be courteous and not a disturbance to other persons or a disruption of the activity or event. Camera equipment may not be used at activities protected by copyright.

The Superintendent/designee posts appropriate notice to all athletic and other events where it is expected that camera equipment might be used.

## **OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

### **21. ATHLETES INVOLVED IN UNSPORTING BEHAVIOR WITH FANS**

Given the recent incidents of irresponsible fan and player behavior in professional, collegiate and high school contests that have drawn national headlines, the Ohio High School Athletic Association Board of Control adopted the following policies on August 1, 2017

No member of any school-sponsored interscholastic athletics squad shall leave the ‘playing area’ in which a contest is being conducted and enter the spectator area of the facility to engage in any type of conflict – verbal or physical. If a student-athlete leaves the ‘playing area’ and enters the spectator area of a facility to so engage a person, the *minimum* penalties shall be:

1. The student-athlete’s privileges to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be revoked and the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year.
2. The school shall be immediately placed on probation pending an investigation (and report) into what happened, what caused it to happen, what was done by the school to diffuse what happened and what ‘safeguards’ have been implemented by the school to prevent future happenings.

## **AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY**

### **22. PUBLIC CONDUCT ON DISTRICT PROPERTY**

All persons on district grounds are expected to abide by all applicable laws, local ordinances, Board policies and District building regulations.

No person on district property may assault, strike, threaten, menace or use improper, indecent or obscene language toward a teacher, instructor, other District employees or students. This prohibition is extended to all athletic officials, coaches and athletes in the District and all visiting teams.

No person is permitted to bring deadly weapons or dangerous ordinances into a school safety zone.

No person may disrupt, disturb or interfere with the teaching of any class of students or any other activity conducted in a school building or upon the campus or grounds.

Whoever violates the above policy and building regulations will be asked to leave the property by whoever is in charge. Should that person refuse, law enforcements officials will be called. If the offender should be a student, the person in charge should report the student to the appropriate principal. The administration cooperates in any prosecution pursuant to the criminal laws of the State and local ordinances.

### **23. INELIGIBLE STUDENT-ATHLETES:**

A student who is declared academically ineligible **may** participate in in-season practices, off-season conditioning, and pre-season conditioning if:

1. The student and coach meet with the subject teacher(s) in the class(es) the student is presently failing.
2. An **Academic Action Plan** is created and agreed upon by the parties involved which should include periodic academic reports on the student's classroom performance and academic progress as well *as participation in tutoring offered by the National Honor Society after school.*
3. The **Academic Action Plan** is signed by the parties involved as well as the student's parent(s).
4. The coach is willing to monitor the student's performance and progress and communicate openly with the teacher(s) involved.

*Note: The Athletic Department strongly encourages all of its coaches to monitor the academic status of their student-athletes through the use of Weekly Progress Reports and participation in the Fitch High School Study Table.*

## **24. DUE PROCESS AND RIGHT OF APPEAL FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPANTS:**

The following are the procedures for due process and right of appeal for athletic participants:

SECTION 1. When an infraction of the Players Pledge code of athletic conduct occurs, the coach has the right and the responsibility to discipline the participant.

SECTION 2. If the initial disciplinary action results in denial of the right to participate for twenty-four (24) hours or less, no written notification is required. However, if the disciplinary action results in denial of the right to participate for more than twenty-four (24) hours, or is the result of a second infraction, the student shall be informed in writing by the coach of the intended removal and the reasons for the proposed action.

### SECTION 3: FIRST LEVEL OF APPEAL

- a. Any member of an athletic team who has been dismissed or suspended from that team for more than twenty-four (24) hours has the right to appeal this disciplinary action. Any such appeal must be made in writing to the Athletic Director within five (5) days and be heard within one week from receipt of this written appeal by an Appeal Board.
- b. During the appeal process, the participant shall not be permitted to participate in the activity.
- c. The Appeal Board shall consist of the Athletic director, and two impartial Athletic Council Members.
- d. The Appeal Board shall be responsible to make a recommendation relative to the appeal to the Building Principal.
- e. The final authority to accept or deny the appeal at the first level shall be the responsibility of the Building Principal.

### SECTION 4: SECOND LEVEL OF APPEAL

- a. If a student or parent wishes to appeal the decision of the Building Principal, this action must be initiated by the student or parent in writing to the Building Principal within five (5) days of the decision.
- b. The Superintendent shall hear this appeal within five (5) days from receipt.
- c. This decision of the Superintendent is final and represents the last avenue of appeal within the school district.
- d. The coach will be present at all appeals.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

For further information on State Mandated Rules & Procedures, and for information on specific sports, please visit the - [Ohio High School Athletic Association](#)



## THE AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS

### **PLAYER'S PLEDGE**

The Player's Pledge extends beyond mere participation in an athletic endeavor. It requires a full commitment from the participant as an athlete, student, and school citizen. Mutual respect and team membership are to be expected equally of player and coach and, for the player, involve the following promises:

#### **As a player in my school, I promise:**

1. To be a model of appropriate language and behavior as an ambassador of good sportsmanship.
2. To be accountable and responsible in a trustworthy manner.
3. To respect and dignify each of my teammates and coaches as an individual.
4. To place the team's goals, welfare, and success above my own.
5. To consistently attend all practices.
6. To play and practice safely and to ask of myself as much I ask of my teammates in practices and games.
7. To be coachable and to push myself in an attempt to reach my full potential.
8. To be receptive to constructive criticism from my coaches.
9. To accept time demands with respect to my academic, athletic, and family responsibilities.
10. To promote among all my teammates and coaches a solid sense of team membership.
11. To demonstrate a genuine concern and respect for my sport, my teammates and coaches, the opposing teams, coaches, and officials.
12. To hold myself in high regard.
13. To demonstrate honesty, loyalty, integrity, and respect on a consistent basis.
14. To keep my focus and composure at all times.
15. To work, whenever appropriate, as a role model of citizenship, sportsmanship, and scholarship with younger students in our school system.
16. To communicate openly and honestly with my parents and coaches regarding my status on the team.
17. To adhere to all team and school rules.

18. To abide by the ALSD Substance Abuse Policy

19. To represent my family, my school, and my community in a positive way.

20. To play like a champion.

# THE AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS

## PARENT'S PLEDGE

In your role as a parent, you obviously love your child and are concerned about your child's welfare. You want the best for him or her. But an athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial. A positive parent/coach relationship will require the following promises:

### **As a parent of an athlete, I promise:**

1. To acknowledge the authority of my child's coach to make decisions that he/she determines are in the best interest of the team and/or the athletic program.
2. To emphasize that "team" must take precedence over the individual.
3. To make sure my children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, I love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them.
4. To try my best to be completely honest about my child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
5. To be helpful but don't coach them. i.e. To not compete with the coach.
6. To teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve their skills and attitudes.
7. To emphasize the importance of academics and understand the academic requirements necessary for participation in interscholastic athletic activities.
8. To not compare the skill, courage or attitude of my child with other members of the team.
9. To make every effort to communicate honestly, openly and objectively with coaches ***within the guidelines established in this handbook.***
10. To remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and criticized.
11. To remember that most student athletes do not receive athletic scholarships. Their future as an active, contributing citizen is determined by their ***academic*** abilities, not their high school athletic abilities.
12. To remember that a ticket to an interscholastic athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others or enter the playing area at anytime.
13. To encourage and support my student athlete's efforts to follow the team rules and athletic code. Remember that you sign a parent athletic pledge stating your support of the

athletic code, its enforcement and penalties. This is a year-round responsibility and not limited to the athletic season.

## **THE AUSTINTOWN LOCAL SCHOOLS**

### **COACH'S PLEDGE**

The Coach's Pledge extends beyond knowledge of athletics and reaches into the life of each of his/her players. It is one of the most important responsibilities in the school and involves at least the same level of commitment that coaches expect of their players. Mutual respect and team membership is to be expected equally of player and coach and, for the coach, involve the following promises:

#### **As a coach in my school, I promise:**

1. To uphold the dignity, honor, and integrity of the coaching profession.
2. To be a model of appropriate language and behavior.
3. To be accountable and responsible in a trustworthy manner.
4. To respect and dignify each of my athletes as an individual.
5. To be totally honest and objective in determining roles for team members.
6. To help my athletes develop the 10 Qualities as defined in the Austintown Local Schools Mission Statement for Athletics.
7. To promote the safety of each athlete and to ask no more in practice or competition than each is capable of delivering.
8. To promote the conditions and circumstances that encourages each athlete to realize his/her full potential.
9. To enlighten my athletes about the primary importance of each athlete's family and academic responsibilities while imposing time demands that acknowledge these priorities.
10. To promote among all athletes and coaches a sense of team membership.
11. To encourage and promote sportsmanship among both the home and visiting teams, the coaching staff, officials, and spectators.
12. To reflect in my coaching the best and most recent thinking / strategy in my sport.
13. To develop goals and the strategies necessary to achieve said goals.
14. To work, whenever appropriate, with school personnel to guarantee the best interests of each of my student athletes.
15. To aid all athletes in their athletic interests following high school.

16. To take an active role in the prevention and use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
17. To be available to parents at times that are mutually convenient to discuss appropriate topics.
18. To be knowledgeable of and adhere to the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Rules and Bylaws.