

# FOUNTAIN-FORT CARSON SCHOOL DISTRICT 8 ATHLETICS

## STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT HANDBOOK

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## FOUNTAIN-FORT CARSON SCHOOL DISTRICT 8 ATHLETICS

### STUDENT-ATHLETE-PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 Athletics. This handbook is designed to answer many of the questions that parents/guardians may encounter during their student-athlete's participation in extra-curricular athletics. Please use this document as a reference guide pertaining to the rules and regulations as well as policies and procedures for participation in extra-curricular athletics.

#### I. School District 8 – Athletics Philosophy:

- Mission of FFC8 Athletics:
  - Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 athletics programs are designed to support the needs of the district student population and community by maintaining a strong sense of pride, excellence, ethical values, and overall student development. Effective programming is executed through a balance of healthy competition, training, and educational excellence reflected in the classroom. In pursuit of this objective, we recognize the importance of academic accountability, community service, and the quintessential ideals of virtuous sportsmanship.
  - partnership with coaches, teachers, parents, and administrators, student-athletes strive for excellence in an environment that is safe, positive, and an integral pillar of the entire school culture. Lifelong values such as leadership development, empathy for others, and positive social interaction are results
  - participation in our school programs. We are wholly committed to providing our student-athletes with a wide variety of well-organized programs, which meet their needs for physical and emotional well-being

while developing constructive moral and social values in a highly competitive interscholastic arena.

- Participation in athletics is a privilege that will enable student-athletes to develop skills and experiences that will lead to lifelong growth and achievement.
- High School Varsity Athletics:
  - Varsity-level programs are the most competitive of district athletics programs, which include the most skilled and/or well-prepared student-athletes. The student-athlete earns the privilege to be placed on the team. It is the coach's responsibility to field the most competitive team available. Therefore, starting positions and athlete playing time remains at the discretion of the respective coach.
- High School Sub-Varsity Athletics:
  - Sub-varsity athletic programs are focused toward the development of skills necessary for participation at the varsity level of competition. Student-athletes earn the privilege to make the sub-varsity team. The coach of any sub-varsity program will emphasize areas of needed development for possible participation at the varsity level.
- Middle School Athletics:
  - The middle school athletics program shall serve as an essential component of the total middle school educational program. It shall seek to provide all students with equitable opportunities to explore a wide variety of athletic offerings at appropriate levels that will contribute to the student-athletes' emotional, physical, social, and intellectual development needed for high school athletics participation.
- Elementary School Athletics:
  - Elementary school level athletics activities exist to expose youth participants to a wide variety of offerings (e.g., sport-specific camps) which are purposed to engage interest and develop fundamental skills necessary to compete in middle school athletics, while teaching and promoting the values of fair play and sportsmanship.
- The following components contribute to the enhancement of the mission:
  - Vertical integration of feeder programs – youth and middle school programs that support the high school athletic programs. Middle school programs are expected to collaborate and align with the high school programs.
  - Development of fundamental sports skills.
  - Competitive high school athletic programs that promote and pursue academic and athletic excellence.

- Programs that allow for maximum opportunities for student participation and that are developmentally appropriate, tailored to the physical, mental and emotional maturity levels of the participants.
- Principles of fair play and sportsmanship, both for participants and supporting spectators.
- Hiring and evaluating qualified coaches and staff, and offering opportunities for professional growth and development aimed to achieve excellence.
- Competitive resources for programs at each level made available through operating funds and fundraising.
- Support of multi-sport student-athletes.

## II. Sportsmanship:

- The administration of Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 is committed to the practice of sporting conduct and ethical behavior during all interscholastic, middle school, and intramural athletics competition.
- To be successful, it is critical that everyone, whether participating, coaching, or spectating, consistently behaves in a manner that is respectful and reflective of the values of sporting conduct. Unfortunately, the failure on the part of one individual or any group can undermine the effort of all others.
- Sporting conduct is defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and a genuine concern for others, and that would include our own coaches, student-athletes and fellow fans; the opposing team, coaches and fans; the contest officials; and the administrators conducting the contests.
- There is nothing wrong with striving to be the best. However, school sports exist to help develop all participants to be their best — their best as individuals, as students, as teammates, as members of the community — not just their best as athletes.
- When our opponents visit our school, treat them as our guests. To you parents, please fill our stands in support of your sons and daughters. We encourage you to bring your friends and neighbors and attend what we believe is one of the best shows in town as well as an educational experience for our students.
- To both our parents and our students, please remember to show your team spirit in a way that reflects positively on our teams, our school, and our community.
- A spectator who is removed from an event and/or demonstrates habitually disruptive behaviors may forfeit his/her privilege of attending future contests/activities – either home or away. Per 5A CSML by-laws, an automatic prohibition is applied to the date of the next scheduled contest(s). This is not an appealable consequence (applies to high school only).

- If an athlete acts inappropriately (see guidelines presented in the Athlete's Code of Conduct, also CHSAA Sportsmanship Bylaw 2200), consequences for such behavior will be outlined in team rules and expectations handbooks and discussed prior to the competitive season that will align with the Athlete's Code of Conduct and CHSAA Sportsmanship Bylaws.
- If a coach acts inappropriately (see guidelines presented in the Coaches Code of Conduct, also CHSAA Sportsmanship Bylaw 2210), consequences may range from verbal reprimand, to written reprimand, to suspension, to dismissal.
- Coaches, student-athletes, and spectators are expected to set strong examples and model expected behavior at all times.

### III. Fundamentals of Sportsmanship:

- Gain an appreciation and understanding of the rules of the sports; please remember that they may change as athletes increase their level of play.
- Exercise exemplary conduct at all times.
- Recognize and appreciate skilled performance regardless of affiliation.
- Exhibit respect for contest officials.
- Openly display respect for opponents.
- Display pride in your actions.

### IV. Athlete Code of Conduct:

- As a student/athlete representing Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8, you carry a significant responsibility to behave in a manner that will bring pride to the school district, your school, your community, your team, and your family. In as such, the following are guidelines of expected behavior. After reading this code of conduct, you agree to abide by these standards of behavior set forth by the school district.
- I agree to respect and care for the equipment I am issued and agree to return all district-issued equipment at the end of the season in good condition. If equipment is not returned, fees will be applied.
- I agree to respect those in authority, including the coaches, administrators, custodians, teachers, and adult officials from other schools.
- I agree to practice good sportsmanship before, during and after contests, recognizing the talents and efforts of my opponents and the game officials.
- I agree to represent my team, coaches, and school in a respectful manner.
- I agree to respect the officials, as well as players, coaches, and spectators from the opposing school.

- I agree to leave the facility I am visiting in the same condition as when I arrived. This includes refraining from damaging or vandalizing school property, stealing, or littering.
- I agree to represent my team and my school with integrity and character when visiting opponent schools, restaurants, and places of lodging with the team.
- I agree to be a self-advocate (see parent/athlete/coach communication section).
- Athlete Suspensions - Controlled Substances, Alcohol and Tobacco (High School):
  - student-athlete will use or distribute controlled substances, alcohol and/or tobacco products.
  - accordance with school suspension, the training rules and consequences for non-compliance will be enforced for the duration of a student-athlete's competitive high school tenure. The following consequences for violation of the rules concerning controlled substances, alcohol, and tobacco are applicable to all FFCHS student-athletes throughout the period of enrollment from grades 9 through 12:
    - 1st Offense - Suspended for 30% of competitions in the current or following participating sport season, depending on the time of school suspension.
    - 2nd Offense – Suspended for 50% of competitions in the current or following participating sport season, depending on the time of school suspension.
    - 3rd Offense – Pending administrative review, possible removal from all athletic participation for the remainder of high school career.
  - 1st and 2nd offense suspensions can only be fulfilled when a student-athlete regularly attends practices and otherwise completes the respective athletic season in good standing in order to return to participation.
  - The athletic director reserves the right to automatically remove a student-athlete from the respective program.

## V. Responsibilities of the Athlete:

- All athletes are students first and subject to the same rules as other district students:
  - Each athlete will be monitored for academic progress (see eligibility section).
  - Any athlete suspended from school will be ineligible to practice or play in a contest through the duration of the suspension. Building administration has the discretion to grant, appeal, or extend athletic suspension.
- All athletes should be aware of the policies, procedures, and rules that govern interscholastic participation as defined by CHSAA, the school district, and your respective school.

- All athletes are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior on and off the field.
- It is the responsibility of the athlete and parent to report a concussion and/or other medical needs that have been diagnosed by a healthcare professional to the school's academic team; including coach, athletic trainer, and school nurse. This includes concussions diagnosed outside of school activities, such as club sports or any other injury sustained and resulting in a concussion. The school academic team will start return to play/learn protocol in accordance with the Jake Snakenburg Colorado Law.
- Building administration has the authority to hold student-athletes accountable to proper representation of the school's ideals in matters of citizenship, conduct, and sportsmanship (see CHSAA Bylaws 1710). Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege not a right.
- No student-athlete will engage in hazing/bullying behaviors. Hazing/bullying is an abusive behavior, which also harms victims and negatively impacts a team and school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust, intolerance and intimidation. The school district is committed to providing a competitive environment that promotes respect, tolerance, and equality (see training expectations). If you suspect any misconduct of coaches, athletes, etc., report immediately to school administration.

#### VI. Parent/Legal Guardian Code of Conduct:

- As a parent of a student/athlete representing Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8, it is expected that you model behavior conducive to good sportsmanship and conduct that will not embarrass the school, your student, or yourself. After reading the expectation elements below, you agree to abide by these standards of behavior set forth by the school district.
- I agree to respect all student athletes, coaches, contest officials, and the school representatives and facilities.
- I agree to respect contest officials, opponents, and the opposing school representatives and facilities.
- I agree to the expectations of appropriate behavior before, during, and after all contests.
- Inappropriate behaviors include, but are not limited to, use of profanity, taunting players, coaches, and officials, approaching coaches and officials before, during, and after contests, use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs on public school property:
- Observance of the 24-Hour Rule, which states that a parent must wait a minimum of 24 hours following an incident (contest and/or practice) to contact a respective coach. Failure to abide by the 24-Hour Rule may result in denied attendance at future athletic contests/activities.



- I agree to observe the Closed Practice Rule, which states that practices are closed to the public, including parents, with the exception of permission granted by the respective coach and/or athletic director.
- I agree to support the goals of sportsmanship and help bring pride and respect to student athletes and the schools they represent.

#### VII. Responsibilities of the Parent/Legal Guardian:

- Parents/guardians are responsible for following and adhering to the school district parent/guardian code of conduct.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for all documentation, paperwork, and online registration that is required of the athletic office.
- All parents/guardians should be aware of the policies, procedures, and rules that govern interscholastic participation as defined by CHSAA, the school district, and your respective school.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring students are not left unsupervised on school property outside of designated practice and competition times.
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to report to the coach, school nurse and athletic trainer (if available, per school) if your student has a health condition that may require medical care or emergency medications (epi-pen, inhaler, seizure medication, glucagon) during school sponsored activities.

#### VIII. Communication Procedures:

- During the span of an athletic season, parental concerns arise and need to be expressed. Communication is the best solution to most problems. Therefore, the following protocol needs to be followed by administration, coaches, and parents:
  - Step 1- Athletes must discuss the problem with their coach. If a solution cannot be reached then proceed to step 2.
  - Step 2 –Parents must discuss the problem with the coach, in accordance with the 24-Hour Rule. If the concerning issue involves an assistant, the head coach must be involved. If a solution cannot be reached then proceed to step 3.
  - Step 3 –The athletic director will be notified and a meeting will be conducted involving the athlete, parent, and coach. If a solution cannot be reached then proceed to step 4.
  - Step 4 – An appeal can be made to the building principal. The athletic director and coach will also be involved. If a solution cannot be reached then proceed to step 5.
  - Step 5 – If the parent is not satisfied, the problem will be addressed by district administration personnel. All participants may be asked to be



present once a decision is rendered; at this level there are no more appeals.

- Each meeting will be documented. This documentation will allow for a complete set of protocols to be set forth if further problems arise of this nature or of a different nature concerning the same individuals. It is important that each of us work to improve relationships and maintain open lines of communications. All discussion should be approached from a positive perspective looking for a win-win solution.
- Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
  - Ways to help your student-athlete improve
  - The treatment of your student-athlete, mentally and physically
  - Concerns about your student-athlete's behavior
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
  - Playing time
  - Team strategy
- Coaches will have access to the new mass notification system implemented by the district and used at the district, school, and classroom levels. This means that Coaches will be able to contact parents and students via email, text, call, and posts to the FFC8 mobile app with information for their respective sport. Texts and phone calls will be one-way communication tools only, but parents and/or students may respond to email messages from coaches. Parents and students are encouraged to contact the coach in the ways they have listed on their sport websites: primarily in person, via an office phone at FFC8, or email.

#### IX. Fundraising Protocols and Disclaimer:

- Fundraisers requiring students to sell items door-to-door are not permitted.
- The purpose of fundraisers will be made fully known to parents/guardians and student-athletes (i.e., what proceeds will be used for).
- Parent and athlete participation in team fundraisers will not have any bearing on whether or not an athlete makes a team, regardless of level. In addition, fundraising monies will not be refunded if an athlete chooses to no longer participate or is removed for team handbook/contract violations and/or academic concerns (i.e., eligibility).
- Outstanding financial balances associated with program participation is the responsibility of student-athletes, regardless of full season completion or voluntary/involuntary program removal.

#### X. Eligibility Rules:

- There are several rules that govern participation in athletics. Several of these rules are state-regulated and others are local, instituted by the school district. All rules are for both the benefit of everyone who participates.
- Colorado High School Activities Association Rules:
  - Age – No one may participate in high school athletics if they turn 19 prior to August 1st of the upcoming school year without first being granted a waiver from the CHSAA office.
  - Semester of Attendance – Athletes are restricted to a specific number of consecutive semesters of attendance in which they must participate. There is no red-shirting in high school athletics. An individual has 8 consecutive semesters to complete their eligibility (no more than 4 seasons in one sport).
  - Semester expectations - If a student athlete has two or more failing and/or incomplete grades in a semester they will be ineligible until the predetermined CHSAA regain dates. See CHSAA Bylaws for dates at [www.chsaa.org](http://www.chsaa.org).
    - Fall Season Scenario: A student failed two classes at the close of the 2nd semester from the previous school year and did not make-up credits during summer school. The student is ineligible until the specified fall sports regain date in the respective sport of participation. The student regains eligibility if they are passing all classes on the given regain date.
    - Winter Season Scenario: A student passed all classes from the 2nd semester of the previous school year. That student is eligible for winter sports participation. If the student failed two or more classes at the close of the second semester from the previous school year, they may regain eligibility on the fall sports regain date or they can regain from first quarter grades if they did not play a fall sport. If the student was eligible at the close of the 2nd semester of the previous school year, but failing more than one class on the fall sports regain date and/or from the 1st quarter, they are still eligible.
    - Spring Season Scenario: A spring sport student failed two classes from the 1st semester. The student is ineligible to participate in any spring competitions until the specified March regain date, and becomes eligible if they are passing all classes on that date. If the student is failing more than one class on the regain date, they are ineligible for the remainder of the semester.
  - Transfer Rules and Requirements- see CHSAA Bylaws at [www.chsaa.org](http://www.chsaa.org) under 'Info & Tools' at 'Bylaws' (concerning all eligibility (full, restricted) determinations and statuses).
- Fountain-Fort Carson High School:
  - Every student must be enrolled in at least five classes:
  - Must be passing ALL classes – “No Pass, No Play” on weekly grade checks.
  - F grades = no contest participation the following week of competition.

- Eligibility Enforcement:
- A preliminary eligibility pull will occur every Monday to warn coaches of near failing/failing student-athletes. Official grade postings are due every Thursday.
- Incoming 9th grade student-athletes – Automatically eligible to compete in first semester interscholastic competition.
- Student-athletes may be dismissed from an activity at any time due to academic concerns.
- Student-athletes must be in attendance for all scheduled classes on competition days in order to participate in that day/evening activity; exemptions include a documented medical and/or legal appointment.
- Summer school – Courses taken after the close of the second semester may be used to replace any credits failed. Equivalent courses taken must be accepted by the school toward graduation. The equivalent credits must be completed by the Thursday prior to Labor Day. Credits regained through summer school must be in the same curricular area, and be accepted to meet graduation requirements of classes previously failed and be record on the student's transcript.
- Fountain Middle School:
  - Eligibility will be posted weekly and provided to head coaches.
  - Student-athletes must be passing ALL classes – “No Pass, No Play”:
    - grades = no contest participation.
    - Individual coaches maintain the discretion to enforce more stringent eligibility rules.
  - Student-athletes must be in attendance for 50% of the school day of scheduled classes on game days in order to participate in that day/evening activity.
- Carson Middle School:
  - Eligibility will be posted weekly and provided to head coaches.
  - Student-athletes must be passing ALL classes – “No Pass, No Play”
    - grades = no contest participation.
    - Individual coaches maintain the discretion to enforce more stringent eligibility rules.
  - Student-athletes must be in attendance for 50% of the school day of scheduled classes on game days to participate in that day/evening activity.
- School District 8 Appeals Process:
- All eligibility appeals will be directed to the respective school athletic director. The athletic director will gather information and render a decision based on the input of the athlete, coach and teacher.

## XI. Off-Season vs In-Season Training (High School Only):

- In pursuit of adhering to our philosophy, continuous engagement in sport training throughout the calendar year is essential to athlete development and a high expectation of all programs:
  - The frequency and level of training intensity must vary in accordance with the sport season and team goals set by each respective head coach.
- In-season sports (followed by pre-season, then off-season) have priority in athletes, scheduling events, practices, and facility usage:
  - Head coaches are expected to support and collaborate with one another for the best interests of all student-athletes to minimize training overlap.
  - All coaches must carry a unified message of priority support for in-season sports programs:
    - Athletes cannot be pressured or required to attend voluntary practices/training during the pre-season and/or off-season periods (CHSAA requirement).
    - Off-season and pre-season coaches must be mindful in how they communicate to athletes and parents to mitigate confusion and false perceptions of expectations in how voluntary training/practices are implemented.
- Athletes who choose to no longer participate in their in-season sport cannot participate in programs that are in their pre-season or off-season periods until the conclusion of their previous in-season sport:
  - Scenario: 'Student A' decides to quit the basketball program to commit more time to baseball off-season training. 'Student A' cannot join baseball until the conclusion of the school's basketball season.
- Multi-sport athletes are more prone to injury and academic challenges when they are practicing and training for multiple sports at the same time:
  - All coaches must collaborate and consult with the strength & conditioning coaches and athletic trainers regarding training management concerns.
  - Off-season and pre-season coaches must make conscientious decisions in how and when to engage athletes in activities of high physical exertion, to avoid injury, and thus, not jeopardize performance opportunities for their in-season sport program.
  - Multi-sport athletes must be led by all coaches according to the best interests of the athletes. They cannot be left to feel as though they are failing their off-season program if they are competing for another sport that is in-season; coaches do not have "ownership" over athletes.
  - Differentiated instruction must always be a priority approach to coaching, where re-teaching throughout all seasons occurs on a regular basis.

## XII. Paperwork Requirements (High School Only):

- Certain forms must be on file with the school, prior to the participation of any athlete in a practice, scrimmage, or contest.
- Athletic Participation Form
- CHSAA Arbiter Athlete registration completed
- Athlete Information
- Student Eligibility/Anti-Hazing policy
- Insurance Waiver Section
- Emergency Contact Information (online)
- CHSAA Statement for participation by Physician (high school)
- Assumption of Risk
- Read Parent-Athlete Handbook online
- Wrestling Weight Card (for wrestlers only)
- Complete all of the above sections online at <https://fountainfortcarsonhs.rschoorteams.com/>

### XIII. Athletic Department Protocols:

- There are several protocols that both athlete and parent should be aware of prior to participation. These protocols allow for successful functioning of the athletic department:
  - Practice Protocol – Each student-athlete is expected to attend all scheduled practices and team meetings. This may include Saturdays. Holiday practices are voluntary. There are no Sunday practices and/or competitions, ever. If any athlete is in school, they are expected to be at practice. Individual coaches will manage excused and unexcused practices.
  - Dual Participation – No student-athlete can participate in two sports simultaneously without coach and administrative approval.
  - Rejoining a Program – Pending extraordinary circumstances, student-athletes who choose to no longer participate in an athletic/activity program and then seek to re-join the same program are prohibited from doing so until the following school year.
  - Equipment/Uniform Liability – All equipment/uniforms issued to the student-athlete is the property of the respective district school. Any issued equipment/uniforms that are lost is the responsibility of that individual. The student-athlete and their parents/guardians will be billed. If the bill is not paid, the school district reserves the right to prevent future participation.
  - Transportation - All participants are expected to ride district transportation to school sponsored events and contests, unless the parent/guardian has signed and returned a travel release to the athletic department.
  - When the district provides return trips, parents may sign for their child at the conclusion of the event or contest using a checkout sheet provide by the coach.
  - When the district does not provide a return trip, parents will be responsible for arranging a ride home for their child.

- Athletic Training:
- Fountain-Fort Carson High School has secured the services of licensed athletic trainers who are responsible for the prevention and treatment of athletic injuries. At least one trainer will be available at selected athletic events, during school days and practices for consultations, evaluations and treatments of athletic injuries. Students, coaches, and parents must communicate with the athletic trainer concerning injuries and any other medical needs. Decisions made by the athletic trainer are final, and will be respected by students, parents, and coaches.
- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to report to the school nurse, coach, and athletic trainer if your student has a health condition that may require medical care or emergency medications (epi-pen, inhaler, seizure medication, glucagon) during school sponsored activities.
- Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 strictly adheres to the Return-to-Play protocols: (<http://www2.chsaa.org/home/pdf/CHSAAConcussionPolicy.pdf>) enforced by the Colorado High School Activities Association per Colorado Concussion Law SB 11-040 as described in the following link: [https://www2.chsaa.org/sports/medicine/Concussion\\_%20Management.pdf](https://www2.chsaa.org/sports/medicine/Concussion_%20Management.pdf)
  - Step 1: No moderate to intense physical activity or noisy environments. Appropriate rest until symptom free, which may include the need for mental rest if symptoms are severe. (School, Video Games, etc.)
  - Step 2: When asymptomatic, begin low level/light aerobic activities such as stationary bike or walking (keep intensity <70% of max heart rate) (Day 1-2)
  - Step 3: Moderate exertion, sport-specific training without pads (running, agility fundamentals, jump rope, etc.) No head impact activities. (Day 3-4)
  - Step 4: Heavy exertion, non-contact drills specific to sport. May begin resistance activities. (Day 5)
  - Step 5: Full contact in practice setting: scrimmage.
  - Step 6: Game-level play/Activity

#### BEGINNING OF THE 5 DAY RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

- Athletes must remain asymptomatic to progress to the next level. If symptoms recur, the athlete must return to the previous level. Each step generally requires at least one day, but could take longer.
- Athletes need written clearance from an approved health care provider (MD, DP, PA, NP, PsyD), AND clearance from a Fountain-Fort Carson High School Staff ATC upon completion of a return to play protocol.

#### XIV: Assumption of Risk:

- Participating in any athletic activity may involve risks of injury. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk.
- It remains the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to obtain any medical, accident, or other insurance deemed appropriate. The school district does provide 3rd party coverage, if needed.
- The school district and its employees may have certain legal protections and immunities from liability with respect to any property damage or personal injury that may occur during activity. The school district and its employees have not waived these protections and immunities. In addition, the school district and its employees may also have certain legal obligations with respect to the athletics programs.
- Athletic participants must obey all rules, report all physical problems to their respective coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect their own equipment on a daily basis.