

# **Athletic Handbook for Athletes and Parents**



**New Miami Local Schools  
600 Seven Mile Avenue  
Hamilton, Ohio 45011  
2023-2024 School Year**

# Introduction

New Miami High School is committed to promoting student athlete's excellent sportsmanship, ethical behavior and integrity. Participation in athletics teaches and requires respect for other teams, game officials, coaches and teammates. The New Miami Local School District believes that important learning takes place in athletics and has developed the athletic program with the student's interest and participation in mind. We believe that a student who is successful in the classroom and involved in school activities outside the classroom grows into a well-rounded person and contributes significantly to both the school and the community.

The New Miami Local School District values the skills gained through teamwork and sacrifice, as well as the lessons learned through winning and losing. At New Miami, these lifelong values are acquired in an atmosphere where competition is balanced by a concern for the well-being of each individual athlete. The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint student athletes, parents, and other interested individuals with the philosophy, rules and general operations of the athletic department. The student athletes are expected to conform to the "Student Code of Conduct" as adopted by the Board of Education as well as the regulations established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Miami Valley Conference, and the New Miami High School Athletic Department. Student athletes and parents/guardians must understand that it is a privilege to participate in New Miami interscholastic athletic programs. An athlete who abuses this privilege by not following the rules and regulations shall face disciplinary action.

## Philosophy of Athletics

Athletics in the New Miami Local School District are seen as an integral part of the total education process. Participation in athletics is a privilege that provides experiences that will help the student develop physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. The athletic program strives to build positive characteristics, which will enable our students to overcome adversity, lead by example, and realize the benefits of hard work and sacrifice in achieving a goal.

# The Role of Student-Athletes

An essential role in the development and maintenance of sportsmanship is that of the student-athlete. Because student-athletes are admired and respected, their behavior significantly influences the actions and behaviors of fans of all ages.

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility and the privilege of representing the school and community
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss with parents, fans, fellow students and elementary school students. This will assist them in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game
- Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated: as a guest or friend. Who better than yourselves can understand all the hard work and effort that is required of your sport? Never direct remarks at opponents in a taunting manner.
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner that you would like to be greeted following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote you and your sport. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and all people at the event.
- Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Refrain from taunting, trash talking or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial, or sexual nature. Refrain from intimidating behavior.
- Win with humility and lose with grace. Do both with dignity. Avoid excessive celebration after a play or at the end of a game.

# The Role of Parents in Interscholastic Sports

Athletic events are learning experiences for student-athletes. A ticket to a contest is a privilege to observe athletic tests of skills, not to verbally assault others or be obnoxious. Audiences may forget that high school athletes have not reached mature physical performance, so errors can be expected. Moreover, audiences who learn the rules of the sport are less likely to criticize officials, players or coaches

- Remember that you are at a contest to support and cheer for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition, not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans.
- Remember that interscholastic athletics are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are sometimes made. Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes and as people as you would praise a student working in the classroom.
- Remember that a ticket to an interscholastic athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious
- Learn the rules of the game so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, fans and support groups. Treat them as you would treat a guest in your own home.
- Refrain from taunting or making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before and during games and afterwards on or near the site of the event.
- Use only those cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- Recognize and complement the efforts of school and league administrators for their efforts in emphasizing the benefits of educational athletics and the role of good sportsmanship.
- Be a positive behavior role model through your own actions

## Final Forms and Required Documents

New Miami uses Final Forms as our means of enrolling and registering students. Each student who participates in athletics also has a Final Forms account dedicated to athletics. Prior to beginning a sports season, all student athletes need to have their required Final Forms documents completed and signed by BOTH the parent AND the student athlete. Examples of the required documents include a valid pre-participation physical, emergency medical forms, parent contact information, and acknowledgement of the student handbook and athletic handbook.

**Incomplete documentation as tracked by Final Forms may result in the student athlete being ineligible to participate in athletics until all required documentation has been received.**

# Parent/Coach Communication Guide

**Parent/Coach Relationship:** Children are best served in their athletic experiences by understanding and respecting the position of both coaches and parents. Clear communication between athletes, coaches and parents is an important element in any athletic program.

## **Communication athletes and parents should expect from the coach:**

- Expectations that the coach has for the team and your child for the season
- Philosophy of the coach
- Team rules and guidelines and consequences for infractions
- Times and locations of practices and games
- Injury procedures
- Lettering and awards policies for athletics

## **Communications that coaches expect from parents (the “24 Hour Rule”):**

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach, not before 24 hours have passed from the time of the initial concern. Athletic events tend to bring out a lot of emotion for coaches, athletes and parents. Communication tends to be more beneficial for all parties involved when concerns are expressed 24 hours removed from the game or practice.
- Notification of any injury or illness in a timely manner
- Notification of any scheduling conflicts in advance

As a student athlete in the New Miami Local Schools, your child may experience some of the most rewarding moments of his/her life. It is also important to understand that things may not always go as your child expects. At these times, discussion with the coach by the student-athlete is encouraged.

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

1. The coach's interaction with your child.
2. Any concerns about your child's interaction with others.
3. Ways to help your child improve athletically.

The primary role of every coach is that of an educator. As a parent it is sometimes difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you wish. Coaches make decisions on what is in the best interest of all student-athletes in their programs. Certain concerns such as those previously listed are appropriate to discuss with your child's coach. Other areas, such as those listed below, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

- Team strategy
- Playing Time
- Play Calling
- Other Student-Athletes

Conferences are generally best resolved at the lowest level, that between the player and the coach. Such conferences are encouraged. **When a parent-coach conference is necessary, please follow the procedure outlined below:**

1. If the coach-athlete conference does not resolve the situation, please call the main number at the school and ask for the coach's extension. You may also access their email address through the district web site or get it from the Athletic Office.
2. Request a time to meet with the coach.
3. If the coach cannot be reached, call the District Athletic Director and request that a meeting be arranged between the parent and the coach.
4. Please do not attempt to conference with a coach before or after a contest or practice. We ask that you respect the "24 Hour Rule."

### **The Next Steps:**

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. First, call the District Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
2. Next, if necessary, call the Principal and schedule a meeting to discuss the situation.
3. Last, the final step would be to speak with the Superintendent of Schools.

### **Parent Code of Conduct:**

- Help your child set realistic goals
- Encourage your child at home and in the stands by emphasizing "improved performance," not winning.
- Control your emotions at games and events.
- Respect your child's coaches, communicate with them in a positive way, and encourage others to do the same.
- Be a positive role model.
- Be responsible, sensible, and keep your priorities in order. Much more is at stake than a win or loss.

## Spectators Removed From an Athletic Event

New Miami Athletics promotes and encourages sportsmanship and respect for all coaches, officials, players, and fans. Inappropriate comments, language, and gestures will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from an event.

Spectators removed from an athletic event by school personnel, security personnel, or contest officials for inappropriate behavior and/or poor sportsmanship will lose the privilege of attending the next scheduled contest (home or away). If the next scheduled contest is postponed or otherwise canceled, the above consequence will be enforced for the subsequent scheduled event, and so on, until the consequence has been served. Those reported or ejected from an event involving New Miami Athletics will be required to complete an online "sportsmanship" class offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations prior to being admitted to any future New Miami or MVC League athletic events.

The following online courses are offered at [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com) (free of charge); for adults, "Positive Sports Parenting," and for students, "Sportsmanship." Once complete, the "Certificate of Completion" must be delivered to the Athletic Director before being admitted to any future New Miami Athletic events.

Any additional reports of inappropriate spectator behavior will result in subsequent actions being taken by New Miami Athletics. A second report made/or ejection would result in permanent exclusion from all New Miami Schools sponsored extracurricular or co-curricular events; whether they are on New Miami property or another property, for the remainder of the current school year.

Administrators, coaches, athletes, parents or spectators that are removed or ejected from any contest, home or away, will also be reported to the Miami Valley Conference league president. The league will then notify the schools' administrative team of the report/or ejection.

The administration and staff of New Miami encourage all of our parents to care for and support their children. We understand that as a parent you want your child to be safe and get the highest quality experience while at school and at school-sponsored events. However, we also expect our parents to model the behaviors we expect from our students; restraint from emotional outbursts, respect for all (even in stressful situations), and a willingness to calmly problem-solve with adults.

# Sportsmanship

One of our goals is to develop athletes and support groups who demonstrate good sportsmanship. We believe that the basic rules of good sportsmanship consists of:

- Showing respect for opponents at all times.
- Showing respect for officials and their decisions.
- Knowing, understanding and following the rules of the contest.
- Maintaining self-control at all times.
- Recognizing and appreciating skill in performance regardless of affiliation

*Our athletic conference - the Miami Valley Conference, or MVC - is actively working toward improving the level of sportsmanship during athletic competitions between our member schools. A Sportsmanship Committee has been formed to document players, coaches, parents, fans, and schools who are repeat offenders in displaying poor sportsmanship. Please know that your behavior at games and the example you set has a ripple effect that extends far beyond your reaction to a bad play or a bad call.*

*Sportsmanship - both good and bad - impacts the reputation of our school in the eyes of other athletes, coaches, parents, administrators, and officials. Please try to ensure that the athletes and fans of New Miami are remembered for the positive things they do on the field, on the court, and in the stands.*

***We believe that being a spectator is a “privilege” and not a “right”. It is a privilege to watch an educational process where teams demonstrate what they have learned in the athletic classroom. Spectators will be held accountable for good sportsmanship.***

***Please, let the players play,  
Let the coaches coach,  
And let the fans be positive***

## Eligibility for Interscholastic Extracurricular Activities

1. In order to try out or participate you must have passed 5 one credit courses at the end of the quarter prior to the start of the season. In addition, all athletes must maintain passing grades in 5 one credit courses at the end of quarter grading periods during the season. Students who are ineligible during this time period, will be unable to participate in a game until they are declared eligible by the Athletic Director or Building Administrator (Athletes may practice but not play).
2. Summer school grades do not count for athletic eligibility.
3. Freshman fall athletes MUST have passed **four** courses in the fourth quarter of their 8th grade year to be eligible.
4. Middle School students must adhere to the same requirements as high school students.
5. The Athletic Director will check grades at midterm of each quarter. Any athlete failing two or more classes **may** be removed from practice until their grades have improved. Athletes may be assigned to study tables during scheduled practice time. During this time, the athlete would be allowed to participate in games.

Any student who has entered the school through the district's open enrollment policy is not automatically eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. A transfer student's eligibility must be established and confirmed before they will be permitted to participate.

### **Age Limitation:**

If a student enrolled in high school reaches the age of 19 before August 1st, that student shall be ineligible for the school year commencing in that calendar year.

If a student enrolled in grade 7 or 8 reaches the age of 15 before August 1st, the student shall be ineligible to participate in 7th/8th grade athletics for the school year commencing in that calendar year.

### **Attendance:**

A student must be in attendance by **11:00 a.m.** or have administrative approval in order to participate in extracurricular activities that day. For weekends or holidays, a student must be in attendance the last school day before the weekend or holiday or have special administrative approval. If a student is sent home from school because of illness, that student cannot return for practice or participation without previous administrative approval. **Students must adhere to the attendance expectations outlined in the student handbook. Students with five days or 35 hours of unexcused absences in a semester may be considered ineligible.**

**Unexcused Absences:**

Athletes are expected to attend all practices and games. Athletes may be excused due to illness, injury, or prior approval from the coach and/or administrator. In the event unexcused absences occur, the student athlete will be subject to their coach's rules regarding absences that was agreed upon at the beginning of the season.

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct:**

Any unsportsmanlike conduct incident will be specifically recorded, one-on-one counseling is used, and the parents and school administration are notified. If the situation warrants, the athlete may be suspended from participation and/or school. If the problem persists, the athlete may be removed from the team.

If any student athlete is ejected from a sporting contest, they must sit the state mandated contest(s), plus the school may match the state's mandated suspension. For example, if a player is ejected from a game and is state mandated to be suspended for two games, **the school may suspend this student athlete for an additional two games on top of the state mandate.** Any student who is ejected from two sporting events throughout the course of a school year may no longer be allowed to participate in New Miami athletic contests for the remainder of the school year.

**Individual Coach's Rules:**

Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the Athletic Director. These additional rules for each sport must be stipulated in writing and distributed to all team members and parents prior to the season. Penalties for violations of these rules must also be included. These penalties shall be administered by the coach. Copies of all additional team rules will be available on file in the Athletic Office.

**Candidates Reporting Late:**

The coach may disqualify a candidate for any sports activity when the student reports late if:

1. The sport has been in session for two weeks or more
2. Final team cuts have been made
3. The first scheduled competition has been completed

In the case of special circumstances such as student transfer, student illness or injury, etc., the good judgment of the coach and the best interest of the athlete must be the determining factors in waiving these guidelines. The Athletic Director must approve any such waiving of these guidelines.

**Suspension:**

An athlete is not permitted to participate while suspended. If an athlete receives a second suspension during his/her sport season, the athlete will be removed from the team. The suspension from athletic participation will begin on the day that the athlete receives notification of his/her suspension from school. An athlete will not be reinstated for participation until the end of the school day following his/her return to New Miami Local Schools.

**Strength Training/Weight Room Use:**

All athletes are encouraged to utilize the strength training facilities, however, no students are permitted to use the facilities unless they are under the direct supervision of a coach or approved staff member.

## Substance Abuse Policy

It is the belief of the New Miami Local School District and its Athletic Department that there is no such thing as responsible use of controlled substances, alcohol, or tobacco by any student. Adolescent use and possession is not only against the law, but also creates dangerous scenarios for the student and others. Therefore, any use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol shall not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct.

It is further believed that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, not a right. Students who choose to participate in interscholastic athletics are making a conscious decision to abide by a higher set of standards and expectations than other students who do not participate. As a result, student athletes shall be expected to maintain a higher standard of conduct and personal responsibility.

The following guidelines will apply to all participants:

- A. The policy is in effect 24 hours a day from the first date that a student joins a team until the end of the student's high school career.
- B. The policy applies to alcohol, tobacco, or any controlled substances.
- C. First Offense- The student is suspended from team activities indefinitely. The student may reduce the suspension to 20% of the contests upon successful completion of a substance abuse assessment program.
- D. Second Offense- The student is suspended from team contests indefinitely. The suspension may be reduced to 50% of the contests upon completion of an

assessment program.

- E. Third Offense- The student is denied participation in the interscholastic sports program for one calendar year from the date of the offense.

**Self-Referral-** Any student who feels that they have a substance abuse problem and seeks assistance prior to any documented violation of the policy shall receive no consequence, but shall be expected to seek and complete professional assessment.

Any and all violations of the Substance Abuse Policy shall also be subject to the provisions outlined in the New Miami Local School District Student Code of Conduct.

## Personal Misconduct

Any student whose conduct is judged to reflect discredit upon themselves, the team, or the school shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include being denied the privilege of participating in interscholastic athletics for the New Miami Local Schools. Specific areas include, but are not limited to:

1. Violations of the Substance Abuse Policy
2. Missing team practices or team meetings
3. Insubordination to school or game officials
4. Violations of OHSA Bylaws and Policies
5. Violations of the New Miami Local School Student Code of Conduct
6. Criminal violations of the Ohio Revised Code resulting in charges other than a minor misdemeanor
7. Violations of individual team rules and policies

## Quit Policy

Athletes who quit during any sports season (which includes attendance issues) may be prohibited from participating in the next sport season. When a student athlete quits during a sporting season, the coach must provide documentation with the Athletic Director, as well as set up a meeting with the student athlete, as well as their parents/guardians, to discuss the student athlete quitting and inform them of this consequence.

# Athletic Medical Procedures

It is your responsibility as a student athlete competing in interscholastic athletics to understand and comply with the following medical and injury procedures:

1. Before you may compete or practice, you must have all forms completed and submitted to your coach. Specifically, these forms are: a completed physical examination form, an emergency medical authorization form, a release form, and an Ohio Department of Health Concussion information sheet for Interscholastic Athletics.
2. In the case of an athletic injury, it is your responsibility to notify your coach of the situation immediately so the best course of care can be undertaken as soon as possible. If there is any question as to whether you are injured or not, take the time to see the Trainer for an evaluation. Don't attempt to continue to compete or practice with an injury of an undetermined severity and/or extent. Doing so could possibly cause further injury and considerably lengthen recovery.
3. If your injury requires a visit to an emergency room or a doctor's office, the athletic trainer must receive a written release from the doctor in order for you to return to competition.
4. You have a personal responsibility to follow through on prescribed rehabilitation. You must make a commitment to complete the rehabilitation instructions faithfully.
5. While injured you are expected to attend school as well as all practices and contests unless excused by your coach. You will still be able to pick up on new strategies and techniques by observing practice sessions. It is very important that you do not let an injury adversely affect your attitude in the classroom.

# Student Athlete Equipment and Uniform Responsibilities

As an athlete participating in interscholastic athletics at New Miami, you have the following responsibilities concerning school issued uniform and equipment items:

1. It is extremely important that your equipment provides you the protection for which it was designed. It is your responsibility to periodically examine your equipment for damage. Damaged equipment must be repaired before you compete or practice. You cannot be adequately protected with defective equipment. Bring all your equipment problems immediately to the attention of your coach for resolution.
2. Your equipment and uniform are issued to you alone. You are responsible for the security of these items. Do not loan your equipment or uniform to others. Keep all items under lock. All school issued items will be numbered for inventory purposes. **Equipment or uniform items that are lost or stolen are your financial responsibility.**
3. Care should be exercised in laundering uniforms. Read manufacturer's labels for washing instructions. At the completion of your season, please launder all school issued practice and game uniforms prior to the off-season storage.
4. Any athlete who knowingly defaces or alters equipment or whose careless or irresponsible actions result in the loss of equipment, is required to make restitution at the replacement cost of the equipment that is defaced, altered, or lost.

# Transportation Guidelines

Athletes must travel to and from competitions via transportation arranged by the Athletic Department. Prior permission must be obtained on the appropriate form before alternate transportation may be used. Under no circumstance may a student athlete transport another student athlete to or from any activity or competition.

1. Noise is a definite safety factor. Keep all conversations, radios and victory celebrations to reasonable, safe levels.
2. Athletes should remain in their seats at all times.
3. State law dictates that there is no food to be eaten on school buses.
4. Make sure the bus is in the same condition as when the trip began. Please take your trash with you at the conclusion of the trip.
5. Littering is a fineable offense. It reflects poorly on our entire program. Do not throw anything from the windows of your bus.
6. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and his/her directions must be followed the same as any teacher or coach. The driver is solely concerned with your safe transportation to and from the contest.
7. Insubordination toward a school bus driver will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the misconduct section of the Code of Conduct.
8. As an Athletic Department, we are dependent upon the cooperation of our Transportation Department if we are to meet our various scheduling demands. We definitely want to foster a positive working relationship with the Transportation Department by making every effort to be cooperative and courteous.

# Locker Room Rules

1. Activities by individuals or teams that are meant to humiliate, degrade, intimidate, or employ physical force to other individual team members or coaches will not be tolerated. Participation in any form of hazing, or having knowledge about hazing taking place and doing nothing, will not be tolerated and could result in dismissal from the team.
2. No glass containers should be used in the locker room.
3. All spiked or cleated shoes must be put on and taken off outside the locker room in extreme or muddy conditions. No metal or hard plastic spikes or cleats are allowed in any other part of the school building.
4. Make sure that any valuables are locked up at all times. The Athletic Department is not responsible for lost or stolen objects.
5. Do not borrow anyone else's equipment.
6. Make sure you check all of your protective equipment every day before practice or a game. If your equipment is damaged or you have any problems with it at all, please notify your coach immediately. Do not use damaged or faulty equipment.
7. Equipment must be removed from all lockers by the end of the first school day following the conclusion of each sports season.
8. All equipment, uniforms, warm-ups, etc. that belong to the school must be returned as soon as the season ends.
9. The neatness and cleanliness of locker rooms are the joint responsibility of athletes, coaches and appropriate school personnel.
10. Students are not to be in locker rooms at any time without the supervision of a coach.

# Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received an Athletic Handbook, which outlines the Athletic policies that I am expected to abide by, and I agree to abide by these policies. In addition, I have received a Student Handbook which outlines School District policies I am expected to abide by as well. I understand that the administration at New Miami may use discretion in situations when student athletes and families are facing unique or unusual circumstances.

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Parent / Guardian Signature  
Date

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Student/Athlete Signature  
Date