

# Fort Edward School



## Athletic & Extra-Curricular Handbook

Revised 2/2024  
BOE Approved 2/13/24

## **Extracurricular Activity and Interscholastic Athletic Guide**

The regulations and expectations contained in this document will be in effect from the first day of the fall season through June 30<sup>th</sup> for all students; any student who fails to return the signature page at the end of this handbook in the first week of school will be ineligible for all extracurricular events for the school year. Any transfer student will have one week from his/her enrollment to meet this requirement, but may not participate until doing so. Extracurricular penalties will carry over to the next school year if not served in the current school year.

Dear Parents and Student,

Participation in Fort Edward extracurricular programs are a privilege that should elicit great pride in both the students and their families. Accordingly, the Board of Education, administration, coaches of athletic teams, and advisors/sponsors of student activities believe that students who are selected for the privilege of membership on teams, squads, performing groups, clubs and other school organizations should conduct themselves as a responsible representative of the school.

Parents and school personnel must join forces to promote a common value system that develops the character in young adults that our society seeks. Advisors/coaches alone can't do it. Changing social patterns, modified value systems, and an emphasis on winning at all costs, affect so many of us that adult collaboration is now more important than ever if we want to steer our children in the right direction. Parents, coaches, teachers, and school administrators must communicate their expectations with one another, and present a united front that expects nothing less than acceptable personal and social behavior.

When your son/daughter enlists in one of our extracurricular programs, he/she has committed himself/herself to certain responsibilities and obligations. This publication will acquaint you with some of the specific policies that are necessary for a well organized extracurricular program.

The extracurricular program is governed by the regulations established by the Commissioner of Education's basic code for extracurricular participation. Fort Edward is a member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association competing in Section II as a member of the Adirondack League.

Sincerely,  
Erin Russo  
PK-12 Principal

## **Athletic Program**

### **Our goals are:**

1. To develop and maintain the highest level of sportsmanship.
2. To develop proper attitudes toward winning and losing, success and failure.
3. To encourage and develop respect for fellow athletes whether they are teammates, members of other Fort Edward teams, or members of opposing teams.
4. To assure that the amount of time required for athletic participation does not interfere with academic success.
5. To develop proper attitudes toward individual health habits, appearance on and off the field, and citizenship in and out of school.
6. To encourage competition not only for the tangible rewards but also for the development of positive attitudes that makes athletic competition valuable and worthwhile.
7. To orient all athletic staff members to abide by the rules, regulations, and officials' decisions that govern each sport.
8. To maintain the highest standard of ethics, recognize each participant as an individual who will conduct him/herself in a manner befitting his/her responsibilities, and develop the kind of rapport with the broader school community that will improve the total educational program.

### **Fort Edward High School Coaching**

Athletics and athletic competitions are learning environments for social and cultural understanding, assimilation of cultures, integration of races, and the breaking of sexual stereotypes. Team membership and athletic competitions cross those artificial lines caused by personal finances, religious beliefs, and family background.

In Fort Edward, coaching is defined as a teaching situation. This implies that teacher responsibility for supervision, preparation, and training is as essential in coaching as it is in the classroom, especially if we are to justify our interscholastic program on a sound educational philosophy. Therefore, we must assume that the individual coach will apply him/herself to athletic assignments in the same professional manner displayed in a formal classroom situation.

Of all educators, we feel that a coach has the greatest opportunity to influence young people. A coach, through his/her interaction with student athletes during practice and game situations is considered an extension of the school day. The "Classroom" becomes the football field, the softball field, basketball court or the yellow school bus carrying athlete's home after they've just suffered a heartbreaking loss. These are teaching opportunities a coach can use to help young people become better citizens and better human beings.

### **Code of Ethics for Coaches**

At Fort Edward High School each student-athlete should be treated as an individual whose welfare shall be primary at all times. The coach must be aware that he/she serves as a model in the education of the student-athlete and, therefore, shall never place the value of winning above the value of character building.

The coach must, at all times uphold the honor and dignity of the coaching profession. In all personal contact with the student-athletes, parents, officials, athletic directors, school

administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media and the public, the coach will strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall support and enforce school rules for the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco use and abuse, and under no circumstances shall allow the use of these substances.

The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony within the total school program.

The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with contest, state, league, and local rules, and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The coach shall abide by the letter and spirit of these rules at all times.

Coaches shall actively use their influence to promote sportsmanship by working closely with parents, athletes, cheerleaders and administrators.

### **CPR, First Aid and Coaching Course Requirements**

ALL coaches must have current and valid first aid and CPR certification. Coaches who are not certified in physical education must complete the coaching course requirement within three years. The requirement consists of three courses: 1) Health Sciences; 2) Philosophy, Principles and Organization in Athletics; 3) Theory and Techniques of Coaching. In addition, coaches must complete online concussion training coursework

### **Expectations of Parents**

1. Be positive with your son/daughter. Let them know that they are accomplishing something by being part of the team.
2. Do not offer excuses to them if they are not playing. Encourage them to work hard and do their best.
3. Encourage athletes to follow the rules. Whether they are a first stringer or seventh stringer, players must follow rules pertaining to curfew, drinking, smoking, promptness and school.
4. As a fan, you are entitled to cheer enthusiastically for your team, but don't become belligerent. Coaches work with athletes and know their talents. Respect that!
5. Insist that the athletes respect team rules, school rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. Self-respect begins with self-control.
6. Encourage the athletes to improve their self-image by believing in themselves.
7. Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game.
8. Remember that the coach is involved as a coach because he/she is sincerely fond of children and is an experienced professional. Coaches have different ways of dealing with people and situations. Athlete's lives are enriched by interaction with different types of leaders.
9. Remember: at a competition you, the parent, represent your community, your school and your son/daughter. Please be a positive role model.

### **Parent/Coach Communication**

As your son/daughter becomes involved in the sports program at Fort Edward High School, they

will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. This is the opportunity for you or your child to talk with their respective coach and discuss the situation.

When your child handles the problem, it becomes part of the learning and maturation process. There may also be situations that require a conversation between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It's important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please follow the following procedures to help promote a resolution.

1. Parent/guardian speaks directly to the coach to discuss the concern.
2. If the concern is not resolved, call the Athletic Director to arrange a conference. A meeting will be arranged with the coach, parent and Athletic Director.
3. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
4. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice.
5. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolutions.

### **Athletic Code of Ethics**

- A. Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility as an athlete and the privilege of representing your school and community.
- B. Learn the rules of your sport thoroughly. This will assist you in achieving a better understanding and appreciation of the game and promote fair play.
- C. Cooperate fully with coaches and officials, always exercise good sportsmanship, abiding by the rules as they are stated.
- D. Only the captain may communicate with officials on the clarification of rules. It is his/her responsibility to communicate what was said back to his/her teammates and/or coach.
- E. Always respect the official's judgment and interpretation of the rules. Never argue or make non-verbal gestures that indicate disagreement. This type of immature activity may invite undesirable behavior on the part of teammates or spectators. Remember, you are an important role model for others.
- F. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat. This is a true measure of character and sportsmanship.

### **Athletic Code of Conduct**

- A. Abide by the Fort Edward Student Parent handbook, Athletic handbook, and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Guidelines.
- B. Detention: An athlete may not participate in any extracurricular activity until detention has been completed.

- C. Out-of-School Suspension: An athlete may not participate in any extracurricular activity until the suspension period has concluded and the student has been formally readmitted to school.
- D. School Absences: Athletes should make every effort to be present in school for a full day of attendance. The only exceptions to this are legal excuses such as doctor/dentist appointments. The high school Principal shall have prior notice of such appointments. If an athlete is late to school, they must arrive by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> period, with a legal excuse that coincides with the code of conduct (i.e, parent note, doctor's note), in order to participate in extracurricular activities. An athlete will be permitted to participate without the presence of a legal excuse for their tardiness 3 times. After 3 unexcused tardies, per season, the athlete will not be allowed to participate that day. These rules apply to Saturday games if an athlete is absent or receives a 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused tardy on a Friday.
- E. Physical Education Participation: Athletes must participate in their regularly scheduled Physical Education class to be eligible to participate in after school practice or contests.
- F. Vacation: Practices held over school scheduled vacations will be optional and athletes who attend vacation and miss practices will not be penalized. Coaches, however, may have athletes sit for one or more games until they feel that athletes are in proper condition to participate safely.
- G. Dismissal/Quitting Team: Any student who quits or is dismissed from an athletic team will not be allowed to participate in that activity or attend that particular activity until that sport season has concluded. A two-week tryout period will be allowed at the beginning of each sports season, after which point rosters will be set and all team rules will apply. Any exceptions to this rule are subject to review by the High School Principal, Director of Athletics, and coach.

*Any student who quits or is dismissed will not be allowed to participate in their next sport season. Upon the decision to discontinue participation in a sport, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student-athlete will be contacted and a letter will be provided that outlines the quitting policy. As part of such, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given an opportunity to discuss their concerns.*

- H. Sportsmanship: Any athlete who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior shall minimally be ineligible to participate in the next regularly scheduled contest. Repeat offenders may be removed for the entire season. The Athletic Director and Principal will be involved in extenuating circumstances.
- I. Transportation: All athletes are expected to travel to and from athletic contests, with their teammates, on the school bus. If an athlete requires an exception to this expectation for an individual athletic contest, a written request should be made to the Director of Athletics/Administration 24 hours prior to the athletic contest. The Director of Athletics/Administration reserves the right to refuse that an exception be made.
- J. Alcohol and Substance Abuse: Substance Abuse defined: The use/possession of tobacco,

tobacco products, vape, or vaping products, alcohol, or any illegal drug. This also includes loitering in the vicinity of such use or possession on or off school campus.

Any alcohol or substance abuse during the school year, vacations, or over the summer constitutes a violation of the athletic code; consequently, penalties listed in the code of conduct will be applied: as follows:

a. First Impropropriety:

For suspension purposes, a scrimmage is counted as a practice. Tournament play is considered a game. The suspension from participation in interscholastic athletics:

- i. Football = 2 games
- ii. Volleyball = 4 games
- iii. Golf = 2 matches
- iv. Soccer = 4 games
- v. Cross-Country = 2 events
- vi. Basketball = 4 games
- vii. Bowling = 4 matches
- viii. Baseball = 4 games
- ix. Softball = 4 games
- x. Tennis = 3 matches

b. Second Impropropriety:

The suspension from participation in interscholastic athletics:

- i. Football = 4 games
- ii. Volleyball = 8 games
- iii. Golf = 4 matches
- iv. Soccer = 8 games
- v. Cross-Country = 4 events
- vi. Basketball = 8 games
- vii. Bowling = 8 matches
- viii. Baseball = 8 games
- ix. Softball = 8 games
- x. Tennis = 6 matches

c. **Third Impropropriety: No further participation or attendance at any extra curricular activity for the remainder of that student's years in the Fort Edward School system.**

K. Participation is defined as the competing in interscholastic competitions. The athlete will continue to practice with his or her team and participate in scrimmages, as these are a means to prepare the athlete for scheduled competitions. The suspended athlete will be required to attend all games dressed in appropriate street clothes.

L. Hazing is prohibited in all forms on school grounds, buses, school sponsored programs and activities, including school events that take place at locations outside of the school district. Offenders shall be subject to discipline per the Student Handbook.

M. Community Representation: Athletes are role models who should represent their team, school, and community in a positive manner. Consequently, any inappropriate or unlawful action committed by an athlete on or off school property is subject to penalty. Such penalties may include suspension from the athletic team.

### **Fort Edward Union Free School District's Eligibility Policy**

Students who are failing one (1) or more subjects with a class average of less than 50% at the end of each two-week period are academically ineligible and must attend an after school Academic Support with the teacher for which class(es) they are failing. Students not making a consistent, honest effort to improve their grade(s) during the Academic Support Lab and who are ineligible multiple times during a sports season will not be allowed to participate until they are off of the ineligibility list.

A student may be failing one (1) class with an average of 50% - 64% and not be subject to the district's eligibility policy. However, it is the expectation that the student will work with his/her teacher to make the necessary improvements going forward. If no improvements are made, the student may be subject to the eligibility policy.

Any student failing two (2) or more classes will be subject to the eligibility policy regardless of class averages and is required to attend support lab on a daily basis.

This will be applied by season as follows:

- If a student is on the Ineligibility List two (2) consecutive times: Student will not be allowed to attend games, but can still practice.
- If a student is on the Ineligibility List three (3) consecutive times: Student will not be allowed to participate at all until back to full status.

All students and parents will be notified in writing of their ineligibility status. Academic Support will be provided from 2:35-3:00 pm each day.

Student-athletes are responsible for keeping a record of their meetings with teachers by using an Ineligibility Pass Card. The teacher(s) must initial the student's card each day in order for the athlete to participate in practices and/or games. Any student not complying with this will not be allowed to participate that day.

At the discretion of the Principal, students not making a consistent, honest effort to improve their grades and are repeatedly placed on the ineligibility list could be declared ineligible for a determined period of time.

### **Early Removal from Ineligibility List**

In an effort to keep student-athletes academically eligible, students will be given the opportunity to return to games and practices if the assigning teacher(s) agree that sufficient effort has been put forth. Ineligible students will need to get documentation (letter, email, etc.) from their



teacher(s) stating that they have made the necessary improvements.

\*This process is entirely at the discretion of the assigning teacher, athletic director, and principal. This is not a right, it is an opportunity.

\*Students will continue to attend after-school support throughout the remainder of the two-week period.

\*This will be viewed as a temporary status, meaning that if the student reappears on the following ineligibility list, they will be bumped up to the next stage.

### **Formal Appeal Process**

If a parent/guardian disagrees with a penalty placed upon their child the following are the guidelines for appealing the judgment:

- a. The Superintendent of Schools must be apprised in writing, within (five) days of the high school Principal's and/or director of athletics decision, requesting an appeal of the athletic penalty.
- b. The Superintendent may request the grievant and other relevant parties present a written statement to him setting forth any information such individuals may have relative to the appeal and the facts surrounding it.
- c. The Superintendent shall notify all parties concerned as to the time and place when the Formal Hearing will be held, where such parties may appear and present oral and written statements supplementing their position in the case. Such hearing shall commence within 10 (ten) school days of the receipt of the appeal by the Superintendent.
- d. Within 10 (ten) days of the hearing, the Superintendent shall render his decision in writing. Such determination shall include a finding as to whether there has been a violation of the Student Handbook, Code of Conduct and/or the Athletic Handbook and render a decision concerning the resolution of the appeal.
- e. If the grievant is not satisfied with the determination of the Superintendent, he/she may, within 10 (ten) days after receipt of the Superintendent's decision, file with the Clerk of the Board of Education, a written request for an appeal to the Board of Education.
- f. When a request for an appeal to the Board of Education has been made, the Superintendent shall submit all written statements and other relevant materials to the President of the Board.
- g. The Board of Education shall in writing notify all parties concerned of the time and place of such hearing. The hearing will be held within 15 (fifteen) school days of the receipt of the request by the grievant. All parties concerned shall have the right to present further statements and testimony in an executive session at a Board of Education meeting.
- h. The Board shall render a decision in writing within 15 (fifteen) days after the hearing has

been concluded.