

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletic Handbook/Philosophy

Introduction

The athletic program is an extension and integral part of the total educational curriculum of the Highland Central School District. The program is open to all students through voluntary participation. The student must recognize that participation is a privilege, not a right and this privilege can be forfeited. The privilege of participating in such activities shall be conditioned by behavioral and academic expectations. Athletes, as school representatives, are expected to display appropriate behavior at all times. Being a member of an athletic team is a large commitment and can require a great deal of time and effort.

Varsity competition is the highest level of the scholastic program. Squad size at this level may be limited. Practice schedules may include a six-day a week commitment and occur over vacation periods as well. Contest participation during the course of the season is desirable, but is never guaranteed. Athletes are expected to honor their commitment to the team, the program, and their self-development. **NYSPHSAA rules state “No student or team may be permitted to participate in school organized practice or play on seven consecutive days during the regular season.”**

Junior Varsity competition is available to those students that display potential for continued development. Squad size may be limited and comprised mostly of ninth and tenth graders. With approval of the Athletic Director, some eleventh grade students may participate at this level. Meaningful contest participation is expected over the course of the season, but specified amounts of playing time are not guaranteed. The outcome of the contest is a consideration at this level, but team and player development is a major concern. Once again, practices may be held on weekends or vacation periods.

Modified competition is available to students in the seventh and eighth grade. Squad size may be limited. The focus is on learning athletic skills, game rules, and fundamentals of team play. Practice sessions are vital to the development of these goals. Athletes are expected to attend these practice sessions on a daily basis. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each member will exist over the course of the season. The outcome of the contest should not be a major objective at this level.

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Participation Requirements

- **Attendance:** Attendance and good academic standing in school are priorities of the sports program. Athletes are expected to be in school on time in order to participate in athletics. A student with a legal tardy or early dismissal must be in attendance at least a half day to participate in athletics as defined by the District's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy. Full day absences caused by extenuating circumstances must be approved by the Athletic Director before contest participation. An unexcused absence or tardy on the day of a game or practice will have the following consequences:

1st Offense: Warning

2nd Offense: Denial of participation in that days practice or contest.

Attendance will be monitored on a daily basis through the Athletic Department. Coaches will have access to monitor student attendance as well. If a pattern is detected it will be subject to the decision of the coach and/or Athletic Director as to whether the student-athlete can continue participating.

- **Academic Eligibility:** Performance in the classroom is as important as performance in an athletic event. Athletes must continue to keep their academic work at passing levels. An ineligibility list will be published every five weeks by the building's guidance department. Any student who is listed as academically ineligible (failing two or more classes), will be suspended from practices and contests for five consecutive school days. If they have not raised their grades to passing all but one class by the 6th school day, they will remain ineligible for an additional five consecutive school days. They will continue to be ineligible in five-day increments until they are passing all except one class.

Any athlete failing Physical Education will automatically be considered ineligible from team participation for five consecutive school days. If they have not raised their grade to 65 or above by the 6th school day, they will remain ineligible until they raise their grade to passing.

- **Citizenship Eligibility:** Athletes must maintain a high behavioral standard. Athletes represent their school on and off the field. It cannot be over-emphasized that participation in sports is a privilege, not a right. Conduct in the classroom and the school is always important. Student/athletes may be declared ineligible for citizenship reasons at the discretion of the school principal. Depending on the circumstances, the principal may declare a student/athlete ineligible from one to five weeks because of inappropriate behavior, truancy, insubordination, or other

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serious offenses. The coach or Athletic Director may also impose sanctions on an athlete for violation of rules outlined in the District's Code of Conduct. **Students that are suspended (in school or out) may not participate in athletics during their time of suspension.**

- **Physicals:** The New York State Department of Education requires that all interscholastic sports participants have a sport's physical examination performed by a NYS Licensed Physician/PA prior to the start of the season. The Athletic Office will post days and times physicals will be held at the school here: <https://www.highland-k12.org/Page/78> for the winter and spring seasons only. Physical examinations are sufficient to allow participation in sports for up to one year from the date of the exam.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Use of Tobacco/Vaping/Marijuana/Prescription/Over the Counter Medications

The use, possession or providing of tobacco, vaping, marijuana, or alcohol will result in suspension from the team for the remainder of the season. The misuse or abuse of prescription and non-prescription medications will also result in suspension from the team for the remainder of the season. If the offense occurs at or after the midpoint of scheduled games for that season, the athlete will be suspended for the rest of that season AND will be suspended for up to one-half (50%) of the scheduled games of the next season they participate in. If the offense occurs in the last sports season of the year, the suspension carries over to the first sports season of the next school year that the athlete participates in.

Insurance

All students that participate in the interscholastic program are covered by school sponsored medical insurance. The insurance is secondary or excess coverage insurance. The parent/guardian's insurance provides the primary coverage. If the parent/guardian does not have medical coverage for the student, then the school's insurance will provide coverage. However, it will be less than full coverage. All paperwork related to subject claims is available in the Athletic Office.

Team Selection and Team Rules

Choosing the members of the athletic team is the sole responsibility of the coach of that team. All qualified participants shall be given equal opportunity to compete for membership on the team. New York State law requires a minimum number of team and individual practices prior to entering into competition. Attendance at tryout sessions can be a factor in roster selection.

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All athletes must abide by rules and regulations as established by the Athletic Director. Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the Athletic Director. These rules and their penalties for violation should be explained fully to team members at the beginning of the season. The Athletic Director shall be informed of all penalties levied to athletes for team rule violations.

Any athlete that quits a team has forty-eight (48) hours to reconsider that decision. After that period, the athlete may not return to the team and may not join another team for that season. If the student desires to return to the team during the 48-hour period, the coach, student and a parent must meet to settle this issue. The Athletic Director shall also be present at this meeting.

An athlete that quits or is removed from a sports team prior to the end of the season is not entitled to any recognition associated with that team.

Transportation

It is expected that all athletes travel to and from away games by the transportation supplied by the Highland Central School District. This is done for the purpose of insurance, attendance, and team unity. All athletes are required to abide by all district transportation rules and regulations while on board the bus. The Coach and Athletic Director will deal with any infractions of this policy. Exceptions may be granted for compelling reasons and only in advance by the coach and the Athletic Director. A "Travel Release" form is signed online at the time of registration on FamilyID.com that is valid for the duration of that season. ***A note to the coach is required if a person in a non-parental relationship is removing the student from a competition.*** Sign out sheets must be completed with the coach prior to departure.

Equipment/Uniforms

All equipment and uniforms issued by the school district are the responsibility of the individual athlete. These items should be cared for as if they were the personal property of the athlete. Equipment and uniforms are to be returned at the end of the season. ***The athlete must pay for any equipment and/or uniforms not returned.*** Failure to satisfy this provision could result in suspension from further participation in the athletic program. Team uniforms or parts of the uniform (ex: shorts) are not acceptable attire for Physical Education class, therefore are not to be worn during Physical Education class.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship reveals character and should be emphasized at all times. As a representative of the school and the community, it is important to remember the fundamentals of sportsmanship.

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The fundamentals of Sportsmanship are:

1. Gaining an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the contest.
2. Exercising representative behavior at all times.
3. Exhibiting respect for the officials.
4. Displaying respect for your opponent.
5. Displaying pride in your actions at all times.

It is the responsibility of the athlete and coach to follow these fundamentals.

The use of profanity will NOT be tolerated.

Hazing

Hazing of students will not be tolerated. Hazing is defined as:

“Any activity expected of someone joining a team that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person, regardless of their willingness to participate”

Such activities should be reported to the Athletic Director and will be dealt with accordingly.

Dignity for ALL Students in Highland Central School District

HCSD is committed to providing an environment free from harassment, bullying, cyberbullying and/or discrimination against any student by employees or students that creates a hostile school environment based on a person’s actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex. If you witness a bullying or harassing act, please contact a Dignity Act Coordinator (listed below) or Building Principal.

Dignity Act Coordinators:

Elementary School: Tulani Samuel or Dawn Palmer
691-1070

Middle School: Andrew Carnright, Vanessa Sheldon, Lisa Neer
691-1080

High School: Brandon Opitz, Dr. Mike Paff, Peter Markman
691-1020

Please visit our district website, www.highland-k12.org and click on the “Dignity for All Students” link for additional information about the Dignity for All Students Act or to access a digital complaint form.

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Disciplinary measures may be enforced for intimidation, harassment, menacing, bullying or hazing violations that occur in physical, written, verbal or electronic form. In some cases, off-school conduct (such as cyberbullying that originates on or off campus after school hours) can result in disciplinary consequences at school.

Social Media

The Athletic Department of the Highland Central School District wants to make you aware of the social networking guidelines. The District recognizes and supports the student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of social media.

Each student-athlete must remember that playing and competing for the Highland Central School District is a privilege. As a student-athlete, you represent the school district and our community and you are expected to present yourself, your team, and the School District in a positive manner.

Every text or photo placed online or on any other digital content placed online becomes public information. It is completely out of your control the moment it is placed on online. What you post may affect how people may perceive you.

The online social network sites are not a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. Your behavior on line may be used against you. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image that you are proud of and positive for the Highland Central School District.

Awards

Team members will qualify to receive a letter or service bar and a certificate of recognition provided:

- The athlete is a member of the team at the end of the season.
- The athlete is recommended by the coach and has fulfilled all requirements associated with the team. (The athlete has returned all equipment and uniforms).