

Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery CSD Athletic Department

Athletic Handbook

**Updated Aug. 2022
James I. O'Neill Athletic Department:
Bryan Wilson**

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Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery CSD Athletic Department

Athletic Handbook for Students

**Bryan Wilson
Athletic Director**

James I. O'Neill High School

STUDENT ATHLETIC CODE

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Interscholastic athletics in the Highland Falls ~ Fort Montgomery Central School District is a component of the Health and Physical Education program and therefore is an integral part of the district's total educational program. Athletics should be a broadening experience in which harmony of mind-body functions is created through striving for physical and mental excellence. This value-building experience should be offered to as many students as possible. A well-coordinated program is vitally important to the morale of our school and community.

Everyone involved in the delivery of athletics possesses a unique opportunity to teach positive life skills and values. Therefore, this educational experience requires coaches to project an image which exemplifies everything that athletics stand for. Desire, dedication, and self-discipline need to be developed in order to ensure the commitment and personal sacrifice required by athletes. Making such a commitment helps to nurture integrity, pride, loyalty, and overall character. The final outcome is a better citizen carrying these values throughout their life.

It is the nature of athletic competition to strive for victory. However, the number of victories is only one criterion when determining a season's success. Guiding the team to attain maximum potential is the ultimate goal. To this end, the coaching staff must teach student/athletes to prepare their minds and bodies in order to reach maximum potential, and then to be modest in victory and steadfast in defeat.

TITLE IX

The Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District hereby advises students, parents, employees and the general public that it offers employment and educational opportunities, including vocational education opportunities, without regard to gender, race, national origin or disability. Every effort is made to offer equal extracurricular opportunities for males and females at all levels of the program.

ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

The Athletic Placement Process allows the selection and classification of seventh and eighth grade students for athletic competition at the high school level. Only the very highly skilled athlete should be considered for this program. It is the responsibility of the coach to initiate the process to move a middle school student up to the JV or Varsity level. After discussing the student's skill level with the coach, it will be the Athletic Directors responsibility to determine if testing and screening should proceed. If it is decided that a student should be given the opportunity to be tested up; parental permission will be obtained by the Athletic Director. Medical clearance must be completed by the school district Medical Director before the physical fitness test is administered. The screening process must be repeated for each subsequent season if the student changes levels or sports.

GAMES – SCHEDULES - INFORMATION

For up to date team schedules, go on the OCIAA web page:

<http://roia.ouboces.org/oneillschedulepage.html>

Of course, there are many days that due to weather or other problems a game is rescheduled or cancelled. You can now sign up to subscribe to game change notifications. You will receive notifications via email or text from OCIAA/BOCES.

For Directions

Access the Orange County Interscholastic Athletics website (<http://ociaa.ouboces.org/>). Click on Site Directions and then the name of the school. Directions/addresses to most schools are posted. Directions for contests scheduled for out of area schools will be made available in the Athletic Office or through the coach.

SPORTSMANSHIP

In compliance with the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHAA) Code of Ethics, it is the duty of all concerned with student athletics to:

1. Emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. Eliminate all possibilities that tend to destroy the best values of the game.
3. Stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. Show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. Establish a happy relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. Respect the integrity and judgment of the sports officials.
7. Achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
8. Encourage leadership, use of initiative and good judgment by players on the team.
9. Recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well being of individual players.

Remember that an athletic contest is only a game--not a matter of life or death for a player, coach, school, fan or community.

RULES & REGULATIONS

Students are expected to display conduct and citizenship that reflects pride in the program and in the school at all times. Expected standards of behavior are high and a willingness to live up to them is part of being a member of a team or club. In return for the privilege of participating on a team or club, it is expected that the student will accept the necessary responsibilities and do their best to live up to them. In addition, all members and managers are expected to present a clean, neat appearance in personal grooming and dress and behave as young adults. Unbecoming conduct in or out of school may result in disciplinary action, including possible suspension from the team or club.

Any student who joins an extracurricular team or club is expected to remain with the organization until the season/event is completed and the coach or advisor releases the team/club. If a student wishes to transfer to another team/club during the season, he/she

must discuss the change with the current coach/advisor before requesting membership on the new team/club. A student who leaves a team/club without permission may be suspended from further extracurricular participation. This consequence is justified by the fact that the offender has deprived other students of practice, participation time and instruction.

Any student that is removed from, or quits an athletic team will not be eligible to participate on any other team during that season. Eligibility will be determined by the Athletic Director. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule an appointment with the Coach and Athletic Director before the start of the following season.

Students are required to attend all scheduled classes and complete all coursework and assignments. For student-athletes, proper attire and full participation in Physical Education, including on game days, is required and expected unless previously exempt. Extracurricular participation is an extension of the school day. A full effort must be made in the classroom as well as on the athletic field. All athletes must be in attendance for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the school day to be eligible for participation in practice/games. There are only three excused absences that are acceptable, funerals, Dr. /Dentist appointments and college visits.

Students that participate in extracurricular activities are found to be the leaders within a school. It is important that students representing our school do so at all times.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

Students are responsible for maintaining uniforms and equipment during the season. If an item becomes damaged or lost, the coach/advisor must be notified immediately. All equipment and/or uniform obligations must be fulfilled before a student can participate in another extracurricular activity. Missing or misused school equipment will be charged to the individual responsible for it and restitution will be required. Equipment issued to a student is to be used only for the purpose for which it is intended in practice or in contests/events. No part of any uniform or equipment is to be used in physical education classes or in any other way unless specific permission has been granted in advance for a school-sponsored program. All students are expected to refrain from willfully or carelessly damaging equipment, facilities or property whether at home or on trips. Students are responsible for all equipment, including his/her own belongings, and if it is lost or stolen the school will not be responsible. No athletic awards will be granted until all uniform and/or equipment accounts are cleared. The athletes will be required to make full restitution if uniforms/equipment is not turned in a timely fashion.

TRANSPORTATION

An athlete may only ride home from a contest with their own parent. The parent must see the coach to sign out the athlete on the Transportation Log after the contest. All coaches will use a transportation log and are responsible to turn logs in weekly to the school principal/athletic director. Athletes are not permitted to ride home with anyone else.

ATTENDANCE

Students that are involved in extra-curricular activities must be in school by 11:00 a.m. in order to participate in any after school activities. An exception can be made only if the student has an acceptable written excuse (such as educational trip or visit, family emergency, special appointments, etc. that are beyond the control of the student).

Any student receiving out-of-school suspension may not attend or resume participation of club or team activities until their suspension period has been completed. This includes activities on weekends and/or holiday periods.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

This policy applies to all extracurricular activities that meet more than three hours per week and includes all clubs and athletic teams (see Academic Eligibility Policy in Athletic Handbook). Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right; therefore, students are expected to maintain a certain level of academic performance in order to participate in extracurricular programs. Academic performance will be monitored during the entire school year and students must meet the following criteria in order to participate in extracurricular activities (including, but not limited to sports, certain field trips, dances, etc.).

Academic Standard

A student is expected to maintain a program of five (5) classes (or the equivalent) plus physical education. The student is expected to be in regular attendance and to perform regular course work in all of his/her classes for each marking period. Student performance will be reviewed at the end of each progress report and marking period (further known as Eligibility Period). An eligibility list will be published after each progress report or marking period report is finalized - approximately every five weeks. In order to remove themselves from any level of probation, a student must be passing all courses at the next quarter or mid-quarter report.

Eligibility Standards

Attendance at Expanded Day is required for all levels of eligibility. During Expanded Day, students must attend the class(es) they are failing for the entire period (1:54-2:24). Teachers will provide weekly documentation of attendance.

1. Level 1: Academic Probation

- a. If a student receives **one (1)** failure on the progress report or on the report card, he/she will be placed on academic probation. A student on academic probation:
 - i. may fully participate in all extracurricular activities and interscholastic sports
 - ii. must attend Expanded Day **at least one (1) day per week**.
- b. If after the next progress report or report card the student is still failing the same course, he/she will convert to a Level 2 or “Ineligible to Compete” status (see statement below).

Level 2: Ineligible to Compete

- a. If a student receives **two (2)** failures on the progress report or the report card, he/she will be deemed as **INELIGIBLE TO COMPETE**. A student on ineligible to compete status:
 - i. may only participate in **practices**, but may **not** participate in games, competitions or other activities.
 - ii. must attend Expanded Day **at least two (2) days per week** If the student’s situation improves after a minimum of two (2) weeks within the five week period, the student may request an “appeal” for reconsideration of his/her ineligible to compete status.
- b. If after the next progress report or report card the student is still failing two courses he/she will convert to Level 3 or “Ineligible” status (see statement below).

Level 3: Ineligible

- a. If a student receives **three (3) or more** failures on the progress report or report card **OR** has been failing two classes for ten or more weeks, he/she will be ineligible to participate in ANY extracurricular activity for the next five weeks. A student who is ineligible:
 - i. may not attend any extracurricular activities.
 - ii. must attend Expanded Day at least **three (3) days per week**.
- b. If the student’s situation improves after a minimum of two weeks within the five week period, the student may request an “appeal” (see below) for reconsideration of his/her ineligible status.

Appeals

In order for a student to appeal his/hers ineligibility status, he/she must be passing all courses. The decision regarding the student’s ineligibility status will be determined by the Academic Eligibility Committee.

NOTE: In order to appeal their status, a student must complete the [“Academic Ineligibility Status Change Request Form”](#) (see guidance counselor or the Athletics website for form) for each class he/she is failing and submit the appeal to the principal. An appeal cannot happen until at least two (2) weeks have passed since the end of the quarter or the mid-quarter date (official dates will be created by the administration), the student has actively worked toward improving his/her grades, and the student fulfilled the Expanded Day requirement required for his/her eligibility level. The only exception is if

there was a teacher error on the progress report. In those cases, an appeal can be granted immediately once the appeal form is completed.

It is the sole responsibility of the student or his/her parent/guardian to present specific facts and circumstances regarding the student's academic performance and provide proof that his/her academic performance has improved sufficiently. The student has met all the requirements for the Expanded Day program. The committee shall examine the specific facts of each case and render a decision within three school days of the appeal. During the appeal process, the student may not practice or play and/or participate in extracurricular activities beyond what is allowed by his/her eligibility status. The decision of the appeals committee is final. NOTE: A dropped class does not automatically reduce the number of failing courses for a student. If a student does drop a class, that failure will only be considered "resolved" at the next five-week check point. In order to demonstrate that the student is in good academic standing, he/she must maintain passing grades in all remaining classes for a sustained period of a time.

If a student is granted an appeal, he/she will be required to complete a weekly Academic Report for the remainder of their athletic/performance season. This form must show that the student is regularly completing his/her work and is maintaining passing grades in all classes. If the student is failing any of the appealed classes at any point during the remainder of the season, his/her original eligibility status will be reinstated and maintained until the next five (5) week report cycle.

Enforcement

Failure to adhere to one's academic probation status will result in an extended probation for that student or possible removal from the team/activity. In addition, once a student violates the policy, he/she loses the right to appeal his/her probationary status. NOTE: Students who are absent from one or more daily study sessions for unapproved reasons will lose eligibility to participate in any facet of extracurricular activities.

Tryout Period

Due to the brief and specific dates for athletic tryouts, auditions and certain extracurricular activities, students will be permitted to try out or audition, and will not be penalized due to their eligibility status. The ability to tryout and audition does not give the student the ability to participate if selected unless he/she meets the Academic Standard.

Fall Sports & Extracurricular Activities

The June report card final grades will determine Fall eligibility status. If proof of the student's successful completion of the courses in summer school is submitted to the high school principal, the student's eligibility status will be restored.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Health Educators and coaches strongly believe that students perform best when they follow intelligent training rules that prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Use of these materials will not be tolerated in the Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District. Any athlete found guilty of use or possession for sale or

distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco will be held accountable and disciplined. The following policy will be exercised:

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

USE OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL DRUGS

1ST Offense

Immediate suspension from participation in 25% of allowed competitions/co-curricular activities, served consecutively, for the athlete's current or next sport season/ club.

Athlete/student must receive counseling prior to returning to sports season/club.
School community service hours-20

2ND Offense

Suspension from all athletic/co-curricular activities for one calendar year.

Athlete must receive counseling to return to extracurricular activities.

*Recommendations at this level will include a referral to an outside substance abuse program. All costs of an outside referral will be the responsibility of the participant and their family.

*A calendar year suspension appeal will be heard after 6 months. The athlete should have completed a substance abuse program prior to the appeal. The athlete will report to the student assistance program facilitators (Principal, Social Worker, and the Athletic Director)

USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO

1ST Offense

Immediate suspension from participation in 25% of allowed competitions/co-curricular activities, served consecutively, for the student's current or next sport/club.

Athlete/student must receive counseling prior to returning to sports season/club.
School community service hours-20

2ND Offense

Immediate suspension from participation in 40% of allowed competitions/co-curricular activities served consecutively, for athlete's current or next sport/club.

Athlete must receive counseling prior to return to sports season/club.
School community service hours-20

3RD Offense

Suspension from all athletic/co-curricular participation for one calendar year.

Athlete must attend a smoking cessation program.

*A meeting will be held with the student assistance program facilitators (Principal, Social Worker, and the Athletic Director) to discuss the enrollment and completion of a smoking

cessation program. The committee must approve the program attended. All costs of the smoking cessation program will be the responsibility of the participant.

SOCIAL MEDIA

As an organization with a commitment to quality of education and the safety of our students, the standards for appropriate online communication are equally as high. It is important that student-athletes recognize the power of public media domains and the potentially negative image that they can portray about other student-athletes, coaches, the athletic program and the school district. While we respect the right of student-athletes to utilize the variety of social media options available (Twitter, Snap Chat, Instagram, blogs, etc.). The following guidelines must be met by our student-athletes at all times:

- Refrain from posting material, including pictures, that is threatening; harassing; illegal; obscene; defamatory; slanderous; promoting illegal activities or hostility towards any individual, entity (including opponents, competitors, coaches, etc.); etc.
- When using social media for team- or group-level communication, all interactions should focus on relevant information to that group. At no time should such “group texts” or “group chats” be used to disseminate personal, obscene, bullying, taunting, harassing or any other kind of inappropriate information. Any use of peer pressure to elicit non-team relevant information is prohibited.

Be aware that college recruiters or future employers regularly access information placed online on social networking sites. The information you post is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image that you can be proud of years from now.

Student athletes must conduct themselves in a proper and sportsmanlike manner at all times. This includes but is not limited to home or away contest, practices, during the school day and in some cases through the use of social media (Twitter, Instagram, FB, etc.). To do otherwise will be considered “conduct unbecoming an athlete.”

Any inappropriate activity that is in violation of the above guidelines, including first time offenses, is subject to investigation by the school district as well as civil authorities and can be disciplined under the Code of Conduct.

1st Offense

25% suspension of the season and is cumulative for the year.

2nd Offense

40% suspension of the season and is cumulative for the year.

3rd Offense

Suspension from athletics for one calendar year.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

The Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District wishes to advise students and their parents/guardians that participation in an interscholastic sport or related activity may place the student at risk for injury. Such physical injury can occur in any type of sports activity and may vary in nature.

REPORTING ACCIDENTS OR INJURY

All injuries must be reported to the coach/advisor and the nurse's office for processing. Any injury that has been seen by a doctor requires physician clearance before the student can resume participation. A student missing five or more consecutive school days or five or more consecutive days of participation due to injury or illness must receive written permission from a physician before returning to active participation.

HAZING/INITIATION

The Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District takes a very strong stand in regard to hazing/initiation. Any student who is aware of hazing has the responsibility to report it to the coach or Athletic Director. The Athletic Department follows the District's Hazing of Students Policy listed on the next 2 pages.

Appendix D

Hazing of Students Policy
Highland Falls – Fort Montgomery Board of Education – Policy No. 7553

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, productive and positive learning environment within its schools. Hazing activities are demeaning, abusive and/or illegal behaviors that harm victims, and are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District by negatively impacting the school environment. Hazing of a student by another student or group of students is strictly prohibited on school property; in school buildings; on school buses; by school sponsored groups, clubs or teams; and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off-campus. Hazing of a student refers to soliciting, encouraging, aiding, or engaging in "hazing" behavior as defined pursuant to District policy, regulation and/or law. The Board of Education shall require the prohibition of hazing - along with the range of possible intervention activities and/or sanctions for such misconduct - to be included in the *District Code of Conduct* for all grade levels.

For purposes of this policy, the term "*hazing*" among students is defined as any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to join a group, regardless of their willingness to participate. Hazing behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following general categories:

- a) Humiliation: socially offensive, isolating or uncooperative behaviors.
- b) Substance abuse: abuse of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- c) Dangerous hazing: hurtful, aggressive, destructive, and disruptive behaviors.

Incorporated within this definition are various forms of physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse which may range in severity from teasing/embarrassing activities to life threatening actions.

Even if the hazing victim participated "willingly" in the activity, or there was no "intent" by the hazer to harm or injure another individual, hazing is still hazing and against District policy, the *District Code of Conduct* and may be in violation of New York State Law. However, hazing of students does not need to rise to the level of criminal activity for such conduct to be in violation of District rules and subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed a forced activity and in violation of Board policy, regardless of the "willingness" of the student to participate.

Any student who believes that he/she is being subjected to hazing behavior, as well as students, school employees or third parties who have knowledge of or witness any possible occurrence of hazing, shall report the incident to any staff member or the Building Principal. Anonymous student complaints of hazing behavior will also be investigated by the District. The staff member/Building Principal to whom the report is made (or the staff member/Building Principal who witnesses hazing behavior) shall investigate the complaint/incident and take appropriate action to include, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority and/or other official designated by the District to investigate allegations of hazing. Investigations of allegations of hazing shall follow the procedures utilized for complaints of harassment within the School District. Allegations of hazing shall

be promptly investigated and will be treated as confidential and private to the extent possible within legal constraints.

Prohibition of Retaliation

The Board of Education prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of allegations of hazing. Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged hazer(s) and victim(s) shall be made to ensure that hazing behavior has not resumed and that all those involved in the investigation of allegations of hazing have not suffered retaliation. Any act of retaliation is subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the District.

Knowingly Makes False Accusations

Students who *knowingly* make false accusations against another individual as to allegations of hazing may also face appropriate disciplinary action.

District Responsibility/Training

Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent hazing behavior of which they have been made aware at School District sites; by school sponsored groups, clubs or teams; and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off-campus. Further, as may be applicable, personnel are to report such hazing behavior to their immediate supervisor. Staff training shall be provided to raise awareness of the problem of hazing within the schools and to facilitate staff identification of, and response to, such hazing behavior among students.

Prevention and intervention techniques within the District to help prevent hazing behavior and to support and protect victims shall include building-level and classroom-level strategies and activities as determined by administration. Individual intervention will be provided by appropriate staff members to hazers, victims and their parents to help ensure that the hazing stops.

Rules against hazing shall be publicized District-wide and shall be disseminated as appropriate to staff, students and parents. Disciplinary sanctions for violation of this policy shall be outlined in the *District Code of Conduct* and may also be incorporated in staff and student handbooks. In addition, allegations of hazing behavior may result in referral to law enforcement officials as necessary.

Education Law Sections 1709-a, 2503-a, 2554-a and 2801

Penal Law Sections 120.16 and 120.17

8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 100.2(l)(2)

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #3410 -- Code of Conduct on School Property
 #3420 -- Anti-Harassment in the School District
 #7551 -- Sexual Harassment of Students
 #7552 -- Bullying: Peer Abuse in the Schools
District Code of Conduct



Section IX Athletics

Robert Thabet, Executive Director

Spectator Code of Conduct

Section IX Athletics recognizes the importance of behavior and personal character in our student athletes. As such, we ask our spectators to:

1. Demonstrate a high degree of sportsmanship.
2. Show team support by making only positive comments.
3. Show respect for the judgment of coaches, officials, and referees.
4. Acknowledge fields, courts and equipment as the player's domain during contests.
5. Monitor the safety of children in the bleachers and stands.
6. Respect the law. All public schools and Section IX venues are smoke-free, substance free environment.
7. Athletic contests home, away or at a neutral site are an extension of the classroom. Therefore, all school rules are in effect.
8. Spectators will respect and obey all school officials, supervisors and site personnel at contests.
9. There will be no ringing of bells, sounding of horns, or other noise makers at indoor contests.* Outdoor use will be at the discretion of the site personnel.
*This does not apply to spirit groups including school approved pep bands or cheerleaders.
10. The throwing of debris, confetti, or other objects from the stands is prohibited. Offending individuals will be asked to leave the premises.
11. Exceptions to this behavior will lead to ejection from the event.

Please note that individual schools may have more stringent policies.



Concussions: The Invisible Injury

Student and Parent Information Sheet

CONCUSSION DEFINITION

A concussion is a reaction by the brain to a jolt or force that can be transmitted to the head by an impact or blow occurring anywhere on the body. Essentially a concussion results from the brain moving back and forth or twisting rapidly inside the skull.

FACTS ABOUT CONCUSSIONS ACCORDING TO THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC)

- An estimated 4 million people under age 19 sustain a head injury annually. Of these approximately 52,000 die and 275,000 are hospitalized.
- An estimated 300,000 sports and recreation related concussions occur each year.
- Students who have had at least one concussion are at increased risk for another concussion.

In New York State in 2009, approximately 50,500 children under the age of 19 visited the emergency room for a traumatic brain injury and of those approximately 3,000 were hospitalized.

REQUIREMENTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Education:

- Each school coach, physical education teacher, nurse, and athletic trainer will have to complete an approved course on concussion management on a biennial basis, starting with the 2012-2013 school year.
 - * School coaches and physical education teachers must complete the CDC course. (www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html)
 - * School nurses and certified athletic trainers must complete the concussion course. (<http://preventingconcussions.org>)

Information:

- Provide concussion management information and sign off with any parental permission form.
- The concussion management and awareness information or the State Education Department's web site must be made available on the school web site, if one exists.

Removal from athletics:

- Require the immediate removal from athletic activities of any pupil that has or is believed to have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury.
- No pupils will be allowed to resume athletic activity until they have been symptom free for 24 hours and have been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician. For interscholastic athletics, clearance must come from the school medical director.
 - * Such authorization must be kept in the pupil's permanent health record.
 - * Schools shall follow directives issued by the pupil's treating physician.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of a concussion are the result of a temporary change in the brain's function. In most cases, the symptoms of a concussion generally resolve over a short period of time; however, in some cases, symptoms will last for weeks or longer. Children and adolescents are more susceptible to concussions and take longer than adults to recover.

It is imperative that any student who is suspected of having a concussion is removed from athletic activity (e.g. recess, PE class, sports) and remains out of such activities until evaluated and cleared to return to activity by a physician.

Symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Decreased or absent memory of events prior to or immediately after the injury, or difficulty retaining new information
- Confusion or appears dazed
- Headache or head pressure
- Loss of consciousness
- Balance difficulties, dizziness, or clumsy movements
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or sound
- Nausea, vomiting and/or loss of appetite
- Irritability, sadness or other changes in personality
- Feeling sluggish, foggy or light-headed
- Concentration or focusing problems
- Drowsiness
- Fatigue and/or sleep issues – sleeping more or less than usual

Students who develop any of the following signs, or if signs and symptoms worsen, should be seen and evaluated immediately at the nearest hospital emergency room.

- Headaches that worsen
- Seizures
- Looks drowsy and/or cannot be awakened
- Repeated vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Unable to recognize people or places
- Weakness or numbing in arms or legs, facial drooping
- Unsteady gait
- Change in pupil size in one eye
- Significant irritability
- Any loss of consciousness
- Suspicion for skull fracture: blood draining from ear or clear fluid from the nose

STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE FOR CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

Schools are advised to develop a written concussion management policy. A sample policy is available on the NYSPHSAA web site at www.nysphsaa.org. The policy should include:

- A commitment to reduce the risk of head injuries.
- A procedure and treatment plan developed by the district medical director.
- A procedure to ensure proper education for school nurses, certified athletic trainers, physical education teachers, and coaches.
- A procedure for a coordinated communication plan among appropriate staff.
- A procedure for periodic review of the concussion management program.

RETURN TO LEARN and RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOLS

Cognitive Rest: Activities students should avoid include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Computers and video games
- Television viewing
- Texting
- Reading or writing
- Studying or homework
- Taking a test or completing significant projects
- Loud music
- Bright lights

Students may only be able to attend school for short periods of time. Accommodations may have to be made for missed tests and assignments.

Physical Rest: Activities students should avoid include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Contact and collision
- High speed, intense exercise and/or sports
- High risk for re-injury or impacts
- Any activity that results in an increased heart rate or increased head pressure

Return to Play Protocol once symptom free for 24 hours and cleared by School Medical Director:

Day 1: Low impact, non strenuous, light aerobic activity.

Day 2: Higher impact, higher exertion, moderate aerobic activity. No resistance training.

Day 3: Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter.

Day 4: Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter.

Day 5: Full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity.

Day 6: Return to full activities with clearance from School Medical Director.

Any return of symptoms during the return to play protocol, the student will return to previous day's activities until symptom free.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT TEAM

Schools may, at their discretion, form a concussion management team to implement and monitor the concussion management policy and program. The team could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Students
- Parents/Guardians
- School Administrators
- Medical Director
- Private Medical Provider
- School Nurse
- Director of Physical Education and/or Athletic Director
- Certified Athletic Trainer
- Physical Education Teacher and/or Coaches
- Classroom Teachers

OTHER RESOURCES

- New York State Education Department
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices>
- New York State Department of Health
http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/concussion/htm
- New York State Public High School Athletic Association
www.nysphsaa.org/safety/
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury>
- National Federation of High Schools
www.nfhslearn.com – The FREE Concussion Management course does not meet education requirement.
- Child Health Plus
http://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/managed_care/consumer_guide/about_child_health_plus.htm
- Local Department of Social Services – New York State Department of Health
http://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/ldss/htm
- Brain Injury Association of New York State
<http://www.bianys.org>
- Nationwide Children's Hospital – Concussions in the Classroom
<http://www.nationwidechildrens.org/concussions-in-the-classroom>
- Upstate University Hospital – Concussions in the Classroom
<http://www.upstate.edu/pmr/healthcare/programs/concussion/classroom.php>
- ESPN Video – Life Changed by Concussion
<http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=7525526&categoryId=5595394>
- SportsConcussions.org
<http://www.sportsconcussions.org/ibaseline/>
- American Association of Neurological Surgeons
<http://www.aans.org/Patient%20Information/Conditions%20and%20Treatment/Concussion.aspx>
- Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport – Zurich
<http://sportconcussions.com/html/Zurich%20Statement.pdf>

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act

The Dominic Murray Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act, Chapter 500 of the Laws of 2021, and Commissioner's regulation §136.9 are effective July 1, 2022. The Act was written to ensure that schools, students, and parents are provided with critical, lifesaving information on sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) risks, signs and symptoms, to ensure students at risk are evaluated prior to participation in athletics, and that SCA is immediately recognized and treated to prevent death. The Act requires:

- The Commissioner of Health to develop information, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Education, relating to pupils exhibiting signs or symptoms of pending or increased risk of sudden cardiac arrest;
- Directs the Commissioner of Education to post the information on the Department's website;
- All schools must include such information¹ in any permission form, consent form, or similar document that may be required for a student's participation in interscholastic athletics or reference how to obtain such information from the Department and Department of Health's websites, or on the school's website, if one exists;
- The Commissioner of Education to promulgate regulations requiring that any student displaying signs or symptoms of pending or increased risk of sudden cardiac arrest shall be immediately removed from athletic activities, and shall not resume athletic activity until he or she has been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician; and retain the authorization on file in the student's permanent health record.

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is defined as the abrupt and unexpected loss of heart function. SCA can be fatal if not treated within minutes, and even with treatment death may occur. Immediate treatment is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED). Public schools, BOCES and charter schools are reminded that they are required, pursuant to Education Law Article 19 §917, to have at least one staff person who has undergone the training mandated in Public Health Law for CPR and AED use, assure that AED equipment is provided in an instructional facility where students are present and during any school-sponsored athletic contest or school-sponsored competitive athletic event held at any location. Schools are encouraged to plan for these emergencies and develop protocols and communication plans recommended in *Managing Emergency Health Care and Communicable Diseases in the School Setting 2019* (nysed.gov).

Although SCA is rare² -- the incidence of sudden cardiac death (SCD) on the playing field is 0.61 in 100,000 -- there are steps parents/guardians and school personnel can take to identify students who may be at risk and help to identify students exhibiting signs or symptoms. These signs or symptoms may be misinterpreted or disregarded by the student or others, but are an important indication that a student should be seen by a healthcare provider for an evaluation. Additionally, a student may have personal risk factors or family history risk factors that indicate they are potentially at increased risk for SCA and should be evaluated by a healthcare provider prior to participating in athletics.

Preventing SCA before it happens is the best way to save a life.³ The Interval Health History for Athletics must be completed prior to each sports season unless a physical examination has been conducted within 30 days before the start of the season. The updated form contains questions to elicit potential risk for cardiac conditions and to identify students who need to see a healthcare provider for further evaluation. A sample letter for parents/guardians is

available on the NYSED Health Services webpage to explain the purpose of completing the form. Schools and directors of school health services (a.k.a. medical directors) are strongly encouraged to require the parent/guardian to return this form with the signed consent. See School Health Examination Guidelines (nysed.gov) for more information on requirements for participation in interscholastic athletics.

The lists of signs and symptoms, and risk factors listed below, developed in collaboration with the Department of Health and pediatric cardiologists, indicate when a student may be at risk for SCA4.

1. Signs or symptoms

- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise or with excitement or startle
- Racing heart, palpitations, or irregular heartbeat
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, or extreme fatigue with exercise
- Chest pain or discomfort with exercise
- Excessive shortness of breath during exercise
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

2. Risk Factors

- Personal Risk Factors:
 - o Use of diet pills, performance-enhancing supplements, energy drinks, or drugs such as cocaine, inhalants, or “recreational” drugs.
 - o Elevated blood pressure or cholesterol
 - o History of health care provider ordered test(s) for heart related issues
- Family History Risk Factors:
 - o Family history of known heart abnormalities or sudden death before 50 years of age
 - o Family members with unexplained fainting, seizures, drowning, near drowning or car accidents before 50 years of age
 - o Structural heart abnormality, repaired or unrepaired
 - o Any relative diagnosed with the following conditions:
 - Enlarged Heart/ Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy/Dilated Cardiomyopathy
 - Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy
 - Heart rhythm problems, long or short QT interval
 - Brugada Syndrome
 - Catecholaminergic Ventricular Tachycardia
 - Marfan Syndrome- aortic rupture
 - Heart attack at 50 years or younger
 - Pacemaker or implanted cardiac defibrillator (ICD)

Any student with such signs or symptoms, family history or personal risk factors should be evaluated by a healthcare provider before participating in athletics. This is important since SCA can be triggered by athletic activities in students at risk.

It is imperative that students are educated on the risks and symptoms of SCA and encouraged to report any of the signs or symptoms to their coach or athletic trainer, and parent/guardian. Administration, coaches, and athletic trainers will want to foster a culture of acceptance, where the health and safety of the athletes is foremost as early identification and treatment of a student at risk for SCA may save their life.

Any student displaying signs or symptoms of pending SCA must be immediately removed from athletic activities and not resume athletic activities until they have been evaluated by and received written signed authorization to do so from a licensed physician. This authorization must be kept on file in the student's cumulative health record maintained by the school.

Finally, the law requires that coaches of extra class athletic activities in both public and nonpublic schools complete a course in first aid knowledge and skills from a nationally recognized organization, as defined in paragraph (D) of section 3000-B of Public Health Law. Such course must include instruction in recognizing signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest or sudden cardiac arrest. The first aid Courses Accepted as Meeting the Coaches First Aid and CPR/AED Requirement (nysed.gov) for coaches include this mandatory content.

For questions, please contact the Office of Student Support Services at studentsupportservices@nysed.gov or 518-486-6090.

HIGHLAND FALLS-FORT MONTGOMERY
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

STUDENT-ATHLETE CONTRACT

*By signing this policy, both the student and his or her parent acknowledges receipt of the **Student Athletic Handbook, Concussion Management information, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention**. This also acknowledges their awareness and understanding of the potential for accident or injury which is involved in interscholastic activities. Student athletes and parents agree to abide by the code of conduct.*

Player Regulations/Code of Conduct Signature Page

Sport _____ Coach _____

Student _____ Date _____

(Please print name)

I have read the regulations and am aware of them as a condition of my son/daughter's participation in interscholastic athletics.

Parent's Signature _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature _____ Date: _____

This form **MUST** be returned by the student-athlete to the coach of the particular interscholastic sport. All signed regulations are to be held by the Athletic Director. Official rosters are also to be forwarded to the Athletic Director's Office