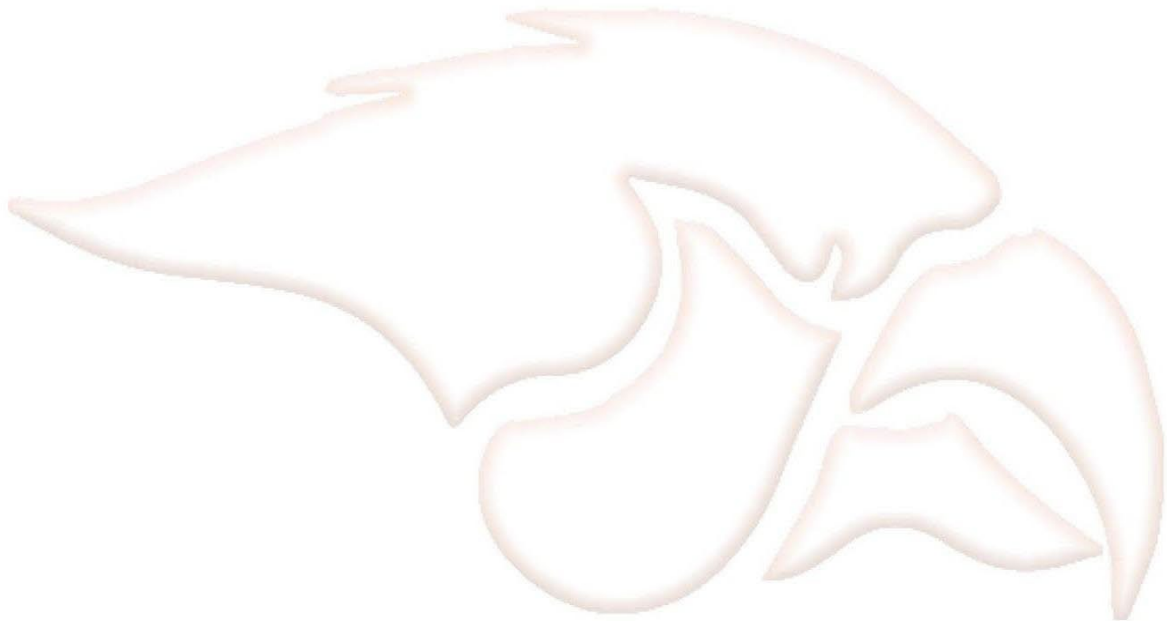




**CEDAR SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Athletic Department

# **Athletic Handbook and Code of Conduct**

2025-2026



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*WE CAN. WE WILL. WE ARE. TOGETHER.*



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## ATHLETIC OVERVIEW

### ABOUT CEDAR SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATHLETICS

Cedar Springs Public School Athletics plays an important role in helping our students develop in the aspects of teamwork, sportsmanship, competition, and dedication. Our athletes are held to the highest standards as they are a direct reflection of what it means to be a Red Hawk.

This handbook outlines the goals and standards our athletes agree to when they join and participate in Red Hawk Athletics at Cedar Springs Public Schools.

Our athletic handbook is here to help athletes and our community understand our:

1. Athletic Philosophy
2. Athletic Objectives
3. Athletic Regulations

As an athlete or parent representing Cedar Springs Public Schools and its communities, you must fully understand the responsibilities that accompany this privilege. Your actions, attitude, and desire will reflect first and foremost on you. Second, it will reflect on your family, your team, school, and community.

Your coaches and school athletic department want to help you be successful and make the most of your opportunities while in school.

Cedar Springs is a member of the River Cities Alliance – Schools: Allendale, Cedar Springs, Coopersville, Greenville, Kenowa Hills, Lowell, and Sparta.

### ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Matt Moffett, High School Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:matthew.moffett@csredhawks.org">matthew.moffett@csredhawks.org</a>	(616)696-9080 x7906
Dana Hilyer, High School Athletic Secretary	<a href="mailto:dana.hilyer@csredhawks.org">dana.hilyer@csredhawks.org</a>	(616)696-9080 x7907
Shelly Alvarez, Middle School Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:rachelle.alvarez@csredhawks.org">rachelle.alvarez@csredhawks.org</a>	(616)696-9100 x6901
Jodie Amell, Middle School Athletic Secretary	<a href="mailto:jodie.amell@csredhawks.org">jodie.amell@csredhawks.org</a>	(616)696-9100 x6909



## **ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS**

Athletics are part of the total educational program of the Cedar Springs Public Schools. We realize not everyone can be a team member, but we do realize everyone can benefit from the program. The criteria upon which our program is judged are as follows:

1. Interscholastic participation is a privilege, not a right, and must be earned.
2. Participation in interscholastic athletics is for those that have physical skills appropriate for the respective sport.
3. Success of the program is not determined by the win/loss record.
4. School and community values should be evident throughout the program.
5. The school community is identified by the publicity generated through the athletic program.
6. The coaching staff, athletes, student body, and adult followers should never act in a manner that would be detrimental to the name of Cedar Springs Public Schools.

### **OBJECTIVE OF ATHLETICS**

Cedar Springs Public Schools Athletics has high standards and clear goals. We hold our athletes accountable to ensure they grow, excel, and make a positive impact.

These objectives are applicable for all levels and consistent with the philosophy and education at Cedar Springs Public Schools.

The Cedar Springs Athletic Program is dedicated to the following objectives within available means:

1. Provide all athletes with the best teaching and coaching personnel possible.
2. Provide all athletes with the best facilities and equipment possible.
3. Provide the opportunity for all athletes to participate in the best interscholastic program possible.
4. Provide all spectators an opportunity to identify with and support the interscholastic teams of Cedar Springs.
5. Provide all athletes an opportunity to grow physically, mentally, and emotionally through participation in the athletic program.

### **GOALS OF ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

The ultimate goal of our athletes is to develop mentally and physically in athletics, academics, and our community. Below are the top goals we hold our coaches to help mentor our athletes in. When an athlete is ready to exit our program, we believe they will take away these 5 lifelong values.

### **TEAMWORK**

To work with others in society a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. You accomplish this by placing the team and its objectives higher than your personal desires.

### **SUCCESSFUL**

Our society is very competitive. You will not always win, but you will succeed when you continually strive to do so.



## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

You must learn to humbly accept success. You must also learn to accept defeat knowing that you've done your best. You must constantly strive to treat others as you would have them treat you. Through participation in athletics, you must develop positive social traits. Some of these traits worth mentioning are; emotional control, honesty, cooperativeness, and dependability.

## **ENJOY ATHLETICS**

Students are involved in athletics for many reasons, including the enjoyment derived from participating. It is hoped that you will learn to enjoy this period in your life and appreciate your personal rewards.

## **DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS**

To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain and maintain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits. Your participation in athletics should demonstrate to you the importance of good health habits. It is hoped that you will have developed a desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after the formal competition has been completed.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

We hold our spectators (students and adults) to high levels of sportsmanship as they represent our Red Hawk athletes and CSPA. Sportsmanship is represented by:

1. Representing CSPA as highly as our Athletes
2. Continue to represent CSPA positively in the event of a game won in unfair play by an opponent.
3. Show appreciation for opponents in their good play/sportsmanship efforts
4. Accept officials' decisions without dispute
5. Follow up with the Athletic Department in any situation where these standards are not being represented by spectators or athletes.

## **CONDUCT OF AN ATHLETE**

As a Cedar Springs Public School Athlete, you are representing the school, team, and yourself at all times (in school, training, competition, and in the community).

As an athlete at CSPA you are agreeing to take care of yourself as an athlete, but also represent yourself as a Red Hawk by following the guidelines set below at all times:

1. Referring to the Athletic Code of Conduct in addition to the information provided within the High School/Middle School Handbook.
2. Red Hawk Athletes should conduct to the highest standards on and off the field of competition. Athletes are expected to be role models in our community and are held to a high standard of conduct.
3. Athletes are expected to be leaders. Athletes will lead and guide other students to have positive actions on our campus.
4. Athletes are expected to respect the use of school equipment. Stealing or destroying equipment results in taking away from yourself and your teammates. Athletes will be held financially responsible for all equipment used.
5. Any athlete removed from a team for disciplinary reasons will not have the opportunity to join a different athletic team during the same season (Ex: wrestling to basketball).
6. Any athlete cut from a team can try out for another team during that season.
7. Athletes that choose not to fulfill their commitment to a team (missing practices, games, etc.) must meet with the athletic director and coach before trying out for another sport.



8. **HAZING:** Athletes shall not participate in any induction ceremony, initiation, or other activity that involves risk of physical harm, coercion, intimidation, or other activity that involves risk of physical harm, coercion, intimidation or embarrassment to others. Hazing is a violation of State law, and school policy. Any athlete or parent of an athlete who feels the student has been a victim of such practices should contact any school administrator immediately.
9. **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Social networking websites (i.e., Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) are a representation of the student-athlete, along with Cedar Springs Public Schools. The administrators and coaches have the right to monitor these sites and student-athletes will face discipline depending on the scope of the infraction.
10. Administration along with coaches will determine if the violation is unbecoming of an athlete. Disclosure It is mandated that student-athletes or coaches do not post information about specific student-athletes, unless it is related to an award, honor or game performance (in a positive way). Please follow the guidelines of FERPA and good taste.

Being a student-athlete comes with great responsibility. As an athlete at CSPS, you are expected to follow these guidelines while participating in our athletic programs.



## ELIGIBILITY

### ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

1. As an athlete, you will learn time management skills. We understand there can be conflict on how to value your time and responsibilities. We encourage you to know your prime responsibilities:
  - a) Home and family
  - b) Academics
  - c) Athletics
  - d) Other: job, school, social responsibilities
2. Athletes who fail to turn in all equipment from a sport, will have the cost of their equipment added to their school account.
3. To participate in an athletic contest/practice or performance, an athlete must be in school for the entire day. Any deviations to this rule (i.e. doctor's appt. /college visit) must be cleared by the principal or athletic director prior to the absence. Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with by the administration on a case-by-case basis. Failure to pre-excuse your absence could result in missed practice/competition on that day.
4. Athletes who are suspended (ISS or OSS) from school for disciplinary reasons (example: skipping school, fighting, smoking, etc.) are not to practice or participate in an athletic competition of any kind until they return and attend a school day.
5. Athletes must have created a FinalForms account, have an updated physical (after April 15 of the previous year) uploaded, have all parent and student forms electronically signed, and all pay-to-play fees submitted.
6. Any athlete who has been treated by a medical professional for an injury is unable to return to practice or competition until they have a written release signed by a medical professional.
7. Athletes may begin practice or tryouts for a sport after fulfilling their financial commitments to the athletic office for the previous year (Athletic Fee).
8. Athletes are expected to abide by Board Policy 2431D as it relates to banned drugs based on bylaw 31.2.3 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association.
9. Athletes are expected to depart and/or return on the team bus for all away contests if it is provided by the district. Events where transportation is not provided, athletes/parents are responsible to make arrangements to get to the contest.
10. Honest and open communication leads to stronger training, personal growth, and athletic progress. We advise our athletes to communicate with their coach when issues arise following the communication flow.
  - a) Player to Coach
  - b) Parent to Coach
  - c) Player/Parent to coach to athletic director

Communication should always be conducted in a mature and productive manner.

Timing is everything – communication should always be avoided immediately after a contest. Emotions are usually running high and communication is often nonproductive. Parents must wait 24 hours after games to contact the coaches.



## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

### Weekly Eligibility

Grade monitoring of Athletes is conducted by the athletic department on Friday every other week.

- A student must pass four classes.
- Two (2) D grades (D+, D, D-) will equal one failure for the purpose of athletic eligibility. A student will be ineligible if they have two (2) F's, one (1) F, and two (2) D's or four (4) D's.
- If a student is deemed ineligible they will sit out the following two weeks (a week is defined as Sunday to Sunday).
- Ineligible student grades will then be rechecked one week later to determine if the student-athlete is meeting the minimum standard to become eligible. Any student with an IEP or an AP class will be discussed with the teachers and the Athletic Director.
- Athletes are always encouraged to arrange extra study sessions with teachers/staff before school, at lunch, or after school.

### Semester Requirements

Cedar Springs Public requires that all students must have earned credit in four (4) out of six (6) classes from the previous semester to be eligible for the current semester. If a student fails to meet these requirements they will become ineligible for the next 60 days of the semester.

## MICHIGAN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY

Below is a summary of the MHSAA handbook in regard to eligibility. You may view the full handbook online at: <https://www.mhsaa.com/portals/0/documents/ad%20forms/eligibility%20summary.pdf>

1. **Enrollment** – The first rule of school sports is that a student may only play for the school they are enrolled in. Enrolled means the student is:
  - a. on the school records receiving active credit
  - b. in attendance (in person or online as defined previously)
2. **Age** – Students must be under 19 years old to play school sports except that if students turn 19 on or after Sept. 1 of a current school year, they can finish that school year.
  - a. 6th graders must be under 13 years of age
  - b. 7th-graders must be under 14 years of age
  - c. 8th-graders must be under 15 years old. Those who turn this age on or after Sept. 1 can finish that year.
3. **Physical Exams** – Before participation in a tryout or practice every student must submit a statement from an MD, DO, Nurse Practitioner, or Physician Assistant that they are physically able to compete in athletic tryouts, practices, and contests. Parents and students must also sign an assumption of risk and acknowledgment to receive concussion awareness material.
4. **Maximum Enrollment and Maximum Competition** – Once a student begins the 9th grade, they are allowed eight semesters, or 12 trimesters of enrollment regardless of any participation in athletics (definition above).
5. **Undergraduate Standing** – Students who have graduated from high school are not eligible for sports.
6. **Previous Academic Credit Record** – A student must have received credit for at least 66% of the full credit load potential for a full-time student in the previous academic term in which they were enrolled.



7. **Current Academic Credit Record** - The same minimum standard, passing 66% of full credit load potential for a full-time student must be checked periodically by the school before the end of the semester or trimester.
8. **Sport Specific Transfer Regulation** – This rule states that the sports a student played in the most recent previous high school year (any level) determines eligibility in the coming school year should the student transfer and not meet one of the 15 stated exceptions (refer to full handbook online).
  - a. International Students: F-1 or J-1 visa students including incoming 9th-graders, are only eligible if they meet a residency exception or if they are placed by an Approved International Student Program (AISP).
9. **Undue Influence** – Also known as the anti-recruiting regulation. This rule renders a student who is recruited by a person directly or indirectly associated with a school or athletic program ineligible for up to four years.
10. **Amateur Status and Awards** – Participation in school sports is limited to students who are amateurs – to those who have not received money or valuable consideration for involvement with one of the sports that the MHSAA sponsors a tournament in.
11. **Limited Team Membership** – There are three parts to this rule.
  - a. Part A, also known as the Loyalty Rule, states that in MHSAA sports, a student can only compete for the school team once the season starts.
  - b. Part B indicates that students would be ineligible for one school year if after participating in an MHSAA sport they compete in any event which is or purports to be a National High School Championships or All-Star Event.
  - c. Part C involves participation in U.S. Olympic Development Programs and National Governing Body teams which both involve special advance allowances that involve school administration.

### **NCAA/NAIA ELIGIBILITY**

Athletes who are looking to play at the collegiate level must register with the NCAA to be NAIA eligible. Visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> to create an account.



## ATHLETIC RULES AND VIOLATIONS

The Athletic Code of Conduct applies for one calendar year (including summer) from the date of the student's most recent year of athletic competition (from the first date a student attends a tryout and/or practice). The code of conduct is in effect at all times, in all locations, and will include all school-sponsored and non-school activities. The Athletic Code of Conduct applies to all student athletics from middle school through high school.

### GENERAL CONDUCT REGULATIONS

Any cases of general misconduct by an athlete on or off the athletic field not deemed conduct unbecoming will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and decisions regarding athletic suspensions will rest with the athletic director and building principal.

### DISQUALIFICATION GUIDELINES

Any athlete who is ejected/disqualified from an athletic contest will be subject to the following penalties:

Offense	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense and any subsequent offenses
Penalty	Suspended from the next date of competition (per MHSAA).	Suspended from the next two (2) dates of competition.	Violation for Conduct Unbecoming an Athlete.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE REGULATIONS

An athlete shall not be in possession of, use, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of illicit controlled substances. The possession, use, sale, or distribution of substance abuse paraphernalia is also prohibited. Illicit controlled substances include alcohol in any form; illegal drugs, including but not limited to those substances defined as "controlled substances" under Federal or Michigan law; tobacco in any form; drugs that are not lawfully prescribed, including steroids or imitation controlled substances or "look-alike" drugs. For the purpose of this policy, vapes are treated the same as tobacco.

Possession by an athlete is defined as the student-athlete becoming part of a situation where alcohol or drugs are illegally present or being used. If a student-athlete recognizes they are present in this type of environment, they are expected to leave the situation immediately or face the consequences of their actions.

### CONDUCT UNBECOMING AN ATHLETE

Conduct in and out of school shall be such that it brings no discredit to the athletes, parents, school, or team. Any conduct considered unbecoming an athlete will fall under the same training rule violations as the substance abuse policy. Examples of conduct unbecoming an athlete are as follows, the list not being inclusive: stealing, retail fraud, abusing/destroying/defacing school property, any felony convictions, disrespect for authority, and persistent classroom misconduct.



## **ATHLETE VIOLATION AND PENALTIES**

### **1st Offense**

30% of the regularly scheduled games or contest dates of that sport(s).

Self-reporting clause: In an attempt to encourage honesty, any student athlete who self-reports an athletic code violation prior to an investigation and is helpful with any follow-up to that incident, will have their first offense penalty reduced to 20% of the regularly scheduled games or contest dates of that sport(s).

### **2nd Offense**

60% of the regularly scheduled games or contest dates of that sport. Student must complete a cessation program.

### **3rd Offense**

Dismissal from participating in any athletic program for one calendar year. Student must complete an additional cessation program at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

### **4th Offense**

Dismissal from the athletic program for the remainder of that student's high school career.

## **TRAINING AND DISCIPLINARY VIOLATION PROCEDURE**

1. School employees such as school board members, administration, teachers and coaches, who witness an offense, shall have power to inform the athletic director in writing so that disciplinary action in accordance with the established procedure can take place on the violation. Police notification, police reports, and court records may also be utilized.
2. All acts of violation of training rules and disciplinary action shall be given to the athletic director in writing and dated by the person witnessing the violation. Violations must be reported to the athletic director within 30 days (exception: police notification) after the violation occurs and all penalties served within 365 days of the reported date or the penalty is dropped. The athletic director will then have 30 days to act following notification. The order of appeal for disciplinary action will be as follows: athletic director, high school principal, superintendent, school board and follow due process (see page 14).
3. Court convictions for violation of the training rules and conduct not becoming an athlete will serve as justification for suspension in accordance with the athletic handbook. The athletic director will have 30 days after publication of the court notice.
4. The athletic director, principal, and superintendent reserves the right to review the record of any athlete who consistently violates training rules for more drastic and far reaching disciplinary action.
5. The athletic director, principal, and superintendent has power of suspension for reasons not specifically identified.
6. All the above training rules have a carry-over from year to year. Training rules also apply during summer months. The training rules are the minimal standards which are to be adhered to by Cedar Springs Public School athletes. But, any coach may implement his/her own training rules and regulations which go above and beyond the minimum standards previously stated. These rules must be approved by the athletic director and given in writing to the athletes and their parents.

All training rule violations must be served as consecutive athletic contests which will include any and all post season competition as defined in Regulation 1, Section 12, of the M.H.S.A.A. Handbook.



## **VIOLATION (APPENDIX)**

- If less than the required percentage of games is left during the season in which the infraction occurs, the remainder of the penalty will carry over to the next season in which the student participates.
- In the event of a violation, Athletes (unless suspended from school) are required to attend all practices and contests. The athlete will remain on the bench as a spectator not dressed in uniform and/or given a task assigned by the coach.
- If an athlete is in violation of possession or used alcohol or drugs, in addition to serving penalties, it is advised the athlete seeks counseling.
- The number of contest dates to be missed by an athlete in violation of the training rules is calculated by taking the number of contest dates or meets scheduled and multiplying by the percentage factor of the violation. Calculations which end in .4 or below are rounded down, .5 are rounded up.
- Any athlete that does not complete the season in good standing will forfeit all rights and privileges to be part of the team (including served suspension time) and rights to any previously earned awards. (Letter, Certificates, etc.)
- Regularly scheduled games are defined as contests during that sport season and do not include any post-season MHSAA Tournament games.

Any student-athlete with a pending felony charge is ineligible from participation in all sport contests until the legal matter is settled.

When the issue has been resolved in the courts, further disciplinary action will be taken if needed. If it is found that a student-athlete is guilty of a felony, that student-athlete is ineligible from Cedar Springs Athletics for the next three sport seasons (fall, winter, spring) from the date of the conviction.

## **TITLE IX**

1. The Cedar Springs Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its programs or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination process: Dan Scoville, Director of Human and Community Services, 204 E. Muskegon Street, Cedar Springs, MI 49319, (616) 696-1204 x1042.
2. Annual Title IX reports are available on the District website.



## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ATHLETIC INSURANCE**

The Board of Education recognizes the need for insurance coverage for injuries to students caused by accidents occurring in the course of attendance at school and participation in the athletic and co-curricular programs of the schools. Therefore, at the beginning of each school year, the Board shall offer parents the opportunity to participate in group accident insurance at the expense of the parents.

The Superintendent shall recommend suitable and qualified insurance carriers and notify all parents of their availability. This information is available on the school website ([www.csredhawks.org](http://www.csredhawks.org)). Should you need assistance in getting, or locating this information, please contact the Athletic Department at 696- 9080.

The school district will provide parents the opportunity to purchase athletic insurance coverage. Sign up forms are available at the athletic office, or the school office. The policy is designed for parents with no insurance protection or those that wish to use it as a supplement to their family insurance. Registration and payment must be made during the first week of the fall season.

### **POTENTIAL DANGERS IN ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

Parents and student athletes should fully understand and appreciate the risk of serious personal injury associated with participation in the educational sports' program provided by the Cedar Springs Public Schools. Participation in school athletics involves flying objects, swift movement of bodies which many times are airborne, and unavoidable collisions.

Athletic activities are hazardous and taking part in such activities is calculated risk-taking on the part of the student athlete and parents. It is also understandable, that to many young adults, the potential benefits exceed participation and offer stimulating adventure that satisfies the student athlete's desires for competition, strenuous effort, and creative activity. Reducing injuries to a minimum without subtracting from this adventure is a continuous goal of our coaching and administration staff.

### **SPECTATOR GUIDELINES**

All spectators are expected to behave in a proper manner when attending athletic events. Any student, parent, or fan who behaves in a manner not acceptable to the administration of the event will be removed from that contest and is subject to denied entry to any Cedar Springs Athletic events for a period of up to one year.

### **PARTICIPATION FEES**

Since 2003, the Board of Education has supported a participation fee for students to be involved in the athletic program. This fee is expected to be paid prior to the first contest date of the school year for each student. This fee allows students to participate in as many athletic activities as they desire. These fees are subject to change on a year-to-year basis pending recommendations from the athletic office and support from the Board of Education.



## CEDAR SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES AND CLUBS

The Cedar Springs Public Schools provides a well-rounded program of athletic activities. For the 2025-2026 school year, the athletic department will offer varsity participation and athletic competition in 25 sports, as well as numerous lower-level activities. These activities (and their respective levels) are as follows:

### Fall

Football (V/JV/FR/MS)  
Girls Volleyball (V/JV/FR/MS)  
Boys Soccer (V/JV)  
Boys X-Country (V/JV/MS)  
Girls X-Country (V/JV/MS)  
Boys Tennis (V/JV)  
Girls Golf (V/JV)  
Sideline Cheer (V/JV/MS)  
Equestrian Club (HS/MS)

### Winter

Boys Basketball (V/JV/FR/MS)  
Girls Basketball (V/JV/FR/MS)  
Wrestling (V/JV/MS)  
Competitive Cheer (V/JV/MS)  
Boys Bowling (V/JV)  
Girls Bowling (V/JV)  
Hockey Co-Op (V)  
Alpine Ski Co-Op Club (V)

### Spring

Baseball (V/JV)  
Softball (V/JV)  
Boys Track (V/JV/MS)  
Girls Track (V/JV/MS)  
Girls Tennis (V/JV)  
Co-Ed Tennis (MS)  
Boys Golf (V/JV)  
Girls Soccer (V/JV)

The main difference between a varsity sport and club sport is that club sports are non-funded and/or non-MHSAA sponsored sports. These programs are offered only if an approved adult volunteer can be found to oversee and run the program in conjunction with the athletic department and there are enough student athletes to field a competitive squad.

Fundraisers may be done to help offset costs in the sport, but these must be approved by the athletic department prior to commencement. Club sport participants do not have to pay the athletic participation fee for their sport; these athletes will be sharing in the costs of their sport already. Club sport participants will still need to pay the school's Athletic Fee if they participate in a school sport in addition to a club.

All student-athletes, whether on a varsity (or lower level) sport team or club sport must still adhere to our athletic department guidelines and athletic code of conduct. This includes:

1. No student may participate on any athletic team/club until they have created a FinalForms account, uploaded an updated physical, and have all parent and student forms electronically signed.
2. No student may participate on any athletic team/club until they have met the academic requirements of the MHSAA and the Cedar Springs Public Schools.
3. All student-athletes must adhere to the training rules of the athletic code adopted by the Cedar Springs Public Schools or serve the penalties for each violation.
4. Participation awards and letters will be provided to all varsity, lower level, and club sports from the athletic department. Coaches must supply a list to the athletic department at the end of the season for all athletes who qualified for an award.