



North Reading High School

Athletic Department Handbook

2025 - 2026

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Please visit the website for North Reading High School at hs.north-reading.k12.ma.us for up-to-date athletic schedules and directions to the various athletic fields and complexes in the Cape Ann League

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The North Reading School Committee supports Title IX and Chapter 622, and its policy is not to discriminate either in employment or in educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

This handbook is revised annually. Input on its contents is welcomed. Please note that changes to the contents herein may be made as the need arises and may be made without advanced notice.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the North Reading High School Interscholastic Athletic Program. We will be competing at the Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Freshmen levels in the Cape Ann League.

We will continue to strive to have our facilities, equipment, and uniforms be first-rate and our coaching staff to be of the highest caliber.

Participation will be a driving principle within our school. Each and every student is encouraged to take part in the various athletic programs. Student involvement in athletics should be one of the most enjoyable and memorable parts of one's high school days. Being a member of a sports team will contribute to one's physical, mental, social, and emotional growth. Participation in interscholastic sports is, however, a privilege which requires from each athlete a high standard of behavior in practice sessions; before, during, and after games; and in the community. It also requires solid academic achievement and acceptable grades.

This Athletic Handbook has been compiled to inform athletes and their parents/guardian of these expectations. It states the philosophy and objectives of the Athletic Department and outlines the rules, regulations, and policies that guide our athletes and athletic programs.

We are proud of our school's athletic program and of you, for having decided to become a part it. As a participant you are establishing yourself as an individual who is willing to take a risk, make a commitment, and sacrifice for what you want. Remember, when athletes really try, they never lose; the worst that can happen in any game is that they achieve a partial victory.

The following manual, a compilation of the rules, regulations, and policies relative to the operation of the North Reading High School Athletic Department, is to be used as a reference by the school administration, staff, coaches, student-athletes, and parents.

Best wishes for a successful season!

NORTH READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The North Reading Public Schools provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment where students develop both their social-emotional and academic skills and abilities through an exploration of a wide range of content areas, the arts, athletics, and extra-curricular opportunities. With a dedication to excellence, service, and lifelong learning, our students will engage collaboratively, think critically, embrace diversity, and value equity in order to become productive global citizens.

NORTH READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT ON INCLUSION

The North Reading School District is an inclusive school district. As such, we are a collaborative culture that welcomes all members into our learning community. With the recognition that students share more similarities than differences, our learning community respects each individual's unique contributions. As an inclusive school district, it is expected that all adults share the responsibility to provide every student with access to and participation in high quality general education.

NORTH READING HIGH SCHOOL CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS *Adopted June 6, 2011; updated May, 2024*

Core Values and Beliefs

At the core of North Reading High School is the common belief that effective citizenship and leadership, as seen in civic engagement, begins with a commitment to lifelong learning that is fostered in an environment that includes all students. We are a dynamic community of students, teachers, parents, and administrators committed to developing capable, knowledgeable citizens. It is our mutual responsibility to be actively involved in a learning process that fosters equity, higher-order thinking, problem solving, risk-taking, creativity, and innovation combined with academic rigor. We believe that an environment of collaboration, mutual respect, caring, and trust is the foundation for establishing a commitment to lifelong learning. We believe that students learn best when they are stewards of their community and can share in the obligations and duties of citizenship. North Reading High School embraces its opportunity to reach beyond its walls and is dedicated to preparing its students to be successful contributors to their local and global communities.

Academic Learning Expectations

1: THE STUDENT READS ACTIVELY AND CRITICALLY.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to read and interpret varied materials with both literal and analytical comprehension for a variety of purposes.*

2: THE STUDENT COMMUNICATES CLEARLY IN SPEECH.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to verbally communicate ideas and information effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.*

3: THE STUDENT WRITES EFFECTIVELY.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to communicate ideas and information coherently in writing using standard English for a variety of purposes and audiences.*

4: THE STUDENT IDENTIFIES, ACCESSES, AND UTILIZES A VARIETY OF RESOURCES FOR OBTAINING INFORMATION.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to locate, analyze, and synthesize appropriate materials for a variety of purposes.*

5: THE STUDENT EMPLOYS MULTIPLE STRATEGIES IN REASONING AND PROBLEM SOLVING BOTH INDEPENDENTLY AND COLLABORATIVELY.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to effectively identify, evaluate, and creatively solve problems in addition to evaluating the process utilized.*

6: THE STUDENT LISTENS EFFECTIVELY AND CRITICALLY.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to interpret and listen with literal and analytical comprehension in a variety of situations and form their own opinions.*

7: THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATES KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN A VARIETY OF FORMS.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is actively engaged in their education. The student shows initiative, self-direction and productivity*

Civic and Social Learning Expectations:

8: THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATES RESPECT, KINDNESS, AND CONSIDERATION TOWARDS OTHERS.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student is able to interact effectively with others and work effectively in diverse teams, in both the local and global community.*

9: THE STUDENT ACTS RESPONSIBLY AND PRODUCTIVELY WITH REGARD TO THE LEARNING COMMUNITY.

LEARNER OUTCOME: *The student participates in the learning community both positively and ethically while finding constructive opportunities to move it forward.*

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The public schools, by law and tradition, are responsible for the provision of a complete curriculum for the children of the community. The athletic program is part of the total curriculum. School athletics constitute educationally desirable activities when kept within reasonable bounds, and in proper perspective can make a very valuable contribution to the character, personality, and health of those who participate and, in a measure, to the whole system.

In order that the masses rather than the few may be the beneficiaries of the athletic program, it is believed that the following principles should guide the administration of the athletic program:

1. There must be maintained at all times complete and effective control of all phases of the athletic program by appropriate school authorities.
2. A comprehensive program of intramural competition may be provided in addition to interscholastic competition.
3. Equal and equivalent programs shall be provided for all students regardless of gender.
4. All students will be provided the opportunity to participate in any athletic program that the school offers so long as they maintain standards of acceptable eligibility. (Rule 46) The "one sport per season rule" has been amended by the M.I.A.A. to permit a student to change to another sport if recommended and approved by a

licensed physician. Additionally, the student may change from one sport to another, but only in the first half of a season, provided written approval is given by the principal, athletic director, and both head coaches involved in the change.

5. A proper environment for participants and spectators must be provided at all times.
6. The safety and well-being of the student must be protected at all times.
7. Coaches, faculty managers and intramural sponsors shall be the best-trained persons available who are fitted to provide sound leadership for young adolescents.
8. The interscholastic athletic program is herein defined as any interscholastic competition between school districts without regard to gender.
9. The total athletic program for grades 9 through 12 shall be evaluated yearly by the athletic director and recommendations for additions or deletions in the program shall be submitted through proper channels.
10. All head coaches will be evaluated by the Athletic Director following the conclusion of the respective season.

The high school athletic program shall consist of two parts:

1. Interscholastic competition for both boys and girls in Cape Ann League activities approved by the School Committee and any other competition approved by the School Committee.
2. A comprehensive program of intramural athletic activities, under the direction of the Curriculum Director for Physical Education, with strong emphasis on recreational type activities. This program should not be limited to the types of activities that can only be provided in school facilities.

The student's participation in any extra/co-curricular activity, including but not limited to intra-mural or interscholastic athletics of any nature, and/or student club or organization, is conditioned on compliance with all applicable laws, district policies (including but not limited to policies relative to student conduct and discipline, bullying, hazing, harassment, and discrimination), all MIAA policies, and district values and behavioral expectations. In the interest of student safety and compliance with these laws, policies, values, and expectations, coaches, advisors, and/or other school staff will routinely monitor activities in locker rooms and/or other meeting spaces. Such monitoring may include physical presence by coaches or other staff in locker rooms or dressing rooms. While monitoring students in locker rooms and/or dressing rooms, all coaches and staff will give appropriate consideration to student privacy. Students seeking increased privacy when changing clothes/uniforms may utilize individual stalls and/or privacy curtains or screens where available, and are encouraged to address any privacy related concerns with the coach or building principal.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM GOALS

- Contribute to the development of physical, mental and social health.
- Promote the opportunity for students to participate in interscholastic athletics.
- Promote unity, social cohesion and spirit among the student body.
- Develop self-discipline, commitment and a sense of responsibility.
- Develop qualities of sportsmanship, honesty and integrity.
- Teach students to win and lose in a gracious fashion.
- Teach the value of teamwork and cooperation.
- Inspire athletes to function as a source of pride for the school community.
- Help athletes recognize both on and off the field of play, that they represent their team, their school, and their community.

FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

The development of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity is the foundation of our athletic program. To have a place in our educational system, athletics must be maintained with high ideals and even higher objectives. We expect all coaches and athletes to exemplify the following fundamentals of good sportsmanship:

1. **Show respect for the opponent at all times.** The opponent should be treated as a guest; greeted cordially on arriving; given the best accommodations; and accorded the tolerance, honesty, and generosity which all human beings deserve.
2. **Show respect for the officials.** The officials should be recognized as impartial arbitrators who are trained to do their job and who can be expected to do it to the best of their ability. Good sportsmanship implies the willingness to accept and abide by the decisions of the officials.
3. **Know, understand, and appreciate the rules of the contest and of the host school.** A familiarity with the current rules of the game and the recognition of their necessity for a fair contest is essential. Likewise, knowledge of, and compliance with, the host school's policies and regulations in conducting the contest are necessary. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit, as well as to the letter, of the rules.
4. **Maintain self-control at all times.** A prerequisite of good sportsmanship requires one to control any bias or prejudice. The desire to "win at any cost" should never become a substitute for rational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized. Good sportsmanship is concerned with the behavior of all involved in the game.

- 5. Recognize and appreciate skill in performance, regardless of affiliation.**
Applause for an opponent's good performance is a demonstration of generosity and goodwill that should not be looked upon as treason. The ability to recognize quality in performance and the willingness to acknowledge it without regard to team membership is one of the most commendable gestures of good sportsmanship.

With the fundamentals of sportsmanship as the point of departure, specific responsibilities and expected modes of behavior can be defined. Every coach and athlete is expected to participate at a high level of competitiveness while exemplifying the following qualities: (a) Self-control; (b) Discipline; (c) Positive Attitude; (d) Ethics; (e) Sportsmanship; (f) Respect for team members, opponents, coaches, officials, and fans.

GOVERNING BODIES

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.)

The M.I.A.A. is a governing body for all athletic teams sponsored by member schools. North Reading High School is a member of and in good standing with the M.I.A.A. With this membership, the Principal, in conjunction with the Athletic Director, is committed to ensuring that all coaches and teams abide by all rules, regulations and decisions of the M.I.A.A.

M.I.A.A. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is to serve member schools and the maximum number of their students by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic athletics which will enrich the educational experiences of all participants. The MIAA will promote activities that provide lifelong and life-quality learning experiences to students while enhancing their achievement of educational goals.

M.I.A.A. GOVERNANCE

Members of the Board of Directors are elected by MASC (Massachusetts Association of School Committees), MASS (Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents), MSSAA (Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators Association), and MSSADA (Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors Association). The Board has fiscal, legal, and corporate responsibilities for the Organization. It seems both appropriate and necessary for the Board to clarify the basic role and responsibilities of Association standing committees.

On occasion, standing committee actions (or inactions) have placed the Corporation in a compromising position. The purpose of this document is to address governance questions that have been raised by school leaders, constitutional committees, and the Board.

The role of Standing Committees is defined by the M.I.A.A. as follows:

“The powers and duties of any committee shall be those needed to regulate and control the activity it sponsors; however, these duties and powers may be designated in detail by the Board of Directors or by the Assembly.” (*from the M.I.A.A. Constitution*)

Further, “The Board of Directors delegates [to Standing Committees] responsibility for specific functions involved in the proper administration of the Association’s responsibilities.” (*see the M.I.A.A. Handbook*)

COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

Each high school coach is first a teacher. The student-athlete is participating within the school's activity program because he or she desires to do so. Consequently, that student is often more attentive to a coach's lessons than to those offered by teachers in required courses. The function of an interscholastic coach is to educate students in "life lessons," through their participation in educational athletics. Every student athlete should be treated as though they were the coach's own children. Their welfare must be uppermost at all times. The following abridged guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFICA Board of Directors.

1. The coach must be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, either for good or bad, in the education of the student athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.
2. In all personal contact with student athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
3. The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse, and under no circumstances should authorize their use.
4. The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.
5. The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with the contest rules and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The spirit and letter of rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. The coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
6. Coaches shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship in the broadest possible manner.
7. Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not indulge in conduct, which will incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

8. A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student athletes special consideration.
9. At no time should the commitment to athletics interfere with the student's academic classes or support programs.

M.I.A.A. LOYALTY TO THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM: BONA FIDE TEAM MEMBER RULE

A bona fide team member is a student who is regularly present for and actively participates in all team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the M.I.A.A.

A coach does not have the option to excuse team members from practice or a game so that he/she may play or practice for another team.

M.I.A.A. POSITION ON OUT-OF-SEASON ACTIVITY

The position on out-of-season activity is simple. Student athletes may do whatever they and their parents choose when they are not participating in interscholastic athletics during a specific high school sport season. In addition, high school coaches are not to have direct influence over those decisions.

The spirit of the M.I.A.A. out-of-season rules 40 and 41 is probably more important than the letter of the rules. The fundamental concept of these standards is fairness. All student athletes and their families across the state should feel free to make choices about the use of their out-of-season time without the fear of being placed at a disadvantage within their local school athletic program or in eventual in-season competition against high school opponents. It is the M.I.A.A. position that fairness to the student athletes in competing schools can only be ensured if all coaches and all school administrators are in compliance within the stipulations of these rules.

M.I.A.A. SPECIFIC INTERPRETATION OF OUT-OF-SEASON COACH/ATHLETE CONTACT

1. Coaches may offer general counsel to student-athletes and parents about credible and beneficial out-of-season activities via handouts or website postings.
2. Conditioning and weight lifting programs open to all students which include no sport specific activity may be sponsored by a school and supervised by members of the coaching staff.
3. Each school, through the administrators and coaches, must make it emphatically clear in all communications with student athletes and parents, including handouts and or website postings, that there are no requirements or expectations for student

- athletes involving participation in out-of-season activities, nor will there be any consequences if they chose not to participate.
4. High school coaches (paid or volunteer) of one sport may be involved in out-of-season activity of another sport during the summer.
 5. High school coaches may attend out-of-season sports activities of their student athletes during the summer only (such as summer leagues).

AGE REQUIREMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS

As per the MIAA, a student must be less than nineteen years of age on September 1 of the current school year to participate in interscholastic sports at North Reading High School. At times, a program may increase its membership to include students from North Reading Middle School. Any middle school child that is added to a high school athletic roster is entitled to participation in activities and events associated with that program only.

TIME ALLOWED FOR PARTICIPATION

A student has four consecutive years of eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics from the day that he/she begins the ninth grade. This means twelve consecutive athletic seasons of eligibility. A fifth year student is ineligible to play in his/her fifth year even if he/she has not played in one of the previous years.

M.I.A.A./NRHS CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY

As a member of the M.I.A.A., North Reading High School enforces the following rule related to the abuse of drugs and alcohol by student athletes:

Interscholastic Athletic Eligibility Rules

The following intends to exceed the provisions of "Chemical Health Rule #62" as delineated by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.)

During the season of practice or play, no student shall, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy, sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol or any tobacco product, including chewing tobacco and/or the use of vapor/electronic cigarette devices, marijuana, steroids, or any other controlled substance. Prescription medication prescribed for the student's use is to be stored in the nurse's office, unless otherwise noted by a licensed physician, consistent with school committee policy.

This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer." This standard is not intended to render "guilt by association;" e.g. student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. However it is suggested the student athlete show leadership

and leave such a compromising situation. If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

PENALTIES:

FIRST VIOLATION: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. The student shall be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation but not be allowed to play in regular season games during the penalty period. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated; i.e., all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season as follows:

of Events/Season and # of Events/Penalty

1-7	1
8-11	2
12-15	3
16-19	4
20 or over	5

SECOND VIOLATION: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. The student shall be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation but not be allowed to play in regular season games during the penalty period. The student must participate in a chemical dependency educational program as approved by the principal. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated; i.e., all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season as follows:

of Events/Season and # of Events/Penalty

1-3	1
4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9	5
10-11	6
12-13	7
14	8
15-16	9
17-18	10
19	11

20 or over 12

SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS: The student will be ineligible to play any interscholastic athletics for a period of one calendar year. The student must participate in a chemical dependency educational program as approved by the principal.

OTHER PROVISIONS: Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

Further, all students who participate in athletics will be in attendance at school on the day of participation in any activity. For weekend or holiday activities, this requirement is waived. A student who is absent, dismissed or suspended (either internally or externally) on the day of an activity will not be allowed to participate in the activity. Students who are dismissed and return to school prior to the conclusion of the school day are not prevented from participating in an athletic practice, athletic contest, or other extra-curricular activity provided that they have attended at least 50 percent of the school day. (In exceptional cases, the Principal or his designee may waive these conditions). In the case of a multi-day suspension, a student will not be allowed to participate in any activity for the duration of the suspension including weekends.

FOR PURPOSES OF REFERENCE ONLY: Rule #62 of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association states:

Rule #62.1 of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) states: PART 1- Chemical Health Rule

The Chemical Health Rule has been extended to be inclusive of the period: "From the first allowable day of fall practice through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA [non-alcoholic] or near beer." It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements. This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render "guilt by association"; e.g. many student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

Minimum Penalties

First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next

consecutive interscholastic contest(s) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season [in which] the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated; i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Number of Events/Season and Number of Events/Penalty

1-7	1
8-11	2
12-15	3
16-19	4
20 or over	5

Second & Subsequent Violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contest(s) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season [in which] the violation occurs. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated; i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

Number of Events/Season and Number of Events/Penalty

1-3	1
4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9	5
10-11	6
12-13	7
14	8
15-16	9
17-18	10
19	11
20 or over	12

If after the second or subsequent violation the student, of his/her own volition, becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated; i.e., all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Number of Events/Season and Number of Events/Penalty

1-4	1
5-7	2
8-9	3
10-12	4
13-14	5
15-17	6
18-19	7
20 or over	8

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

It is expected that the penalty for an infraction of this policy will be served only through bona fide participation in an athletic program. Such determination will be made by the high school principal.

Steroid Use
M.I.A.A. Rule 62.3

Anabolic androgenic steroid use at the high school level is of grave concern. Steroids are used by some athletes, and the seriousness of the problem has been well documented. A recent study indicates that over 3% of high school seniors have tried steroids in their lifetime (NIDA, 2004). High school coaches may not be able to prevent the use of steroids altogether, but they can clearly and forcefully discourage their use. Coaches should take a proactive role, learning about steroids, and then providing this information to their athletes.

Steroids can, with proper diet and weight training, increase muscle development; however, as is typical with most "get-rich-quick" schemes, steroid use has serious short and long term consequences. Normal and equal musculature development can occur without steroid use. Although the natural process takes longer, muscle tone will last longer and does not carry the harmful side effects of steroids. Most coaches would not promote steroid use intentionally. Total silence by coaches however condones use in some young people's minds.

Even though steroids may not be mentioned when it is suggested to an athlete that his/her success is limited only by a lack of weight and/or strength, without a disclaimer the statement can be a motivation to use steroids. The pervasiveness of the drugs that allow for development of increased weight under the aforementioned circumstances is a coercive power that is difficult for young athletes to resist without knowing what the side effects of the drugs may be.

The issue goes beyond protecting the integrity of sport. The use of steroids in sports is cheating. We must oppose the use of steroids for both health and ethical reasons.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: TRANSFER STUDENTS

M.I.A.A. Rules 57.1 through 57.5 deal with school transfers that were not required due to the move of parents or transfers without the move of parents.

57.1 A student who transfers from any school to an MIAA member high school is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which that student participated at the varsity level or its equivalent during the one year period immediately preceding the transfer.

For the purpose of this rule, no transfer will be deemed to have taken place if a student returns to his/her former school on or before the eleventh school day from the date of last attendance there.

57.2 “Varsity participation” is defined as any appearance, as a competitor, in a varsity inter-school contest other than a scrimmage. The “equivalent” will be judged by the M.I.A.A. executive staff on the basis of the quality of non-school sport program participation.

57.3 Before a transfer student can be certified as eligible in a specific sport within the year of his/her transfer, the sending school principal and athletic director must certify on Form 100 or Form 200 by signature that the student did not participate at the varsity level or on a non-school team (see Rule 57.2) during the year prior to the actual transfer.

57.3.1 If it is later determined that the sending school falsely or erroneously certified eligibility, then the sending school will be subject to minimally a letter of censure, copies of which will be mailed to the school committee, superintendent, principal, athletic director, and reported on the MIAA website.

57.3.2 The MIAA certification Form 100 must be dated and filed at the receiving school before the student is declared eligible (as to the transfer rule only) by the receiving school principal.

57.4 The receiving High School Principal may utilize Form 200 to declare a transfer student eligible, providing it is prior to the start of the season and the student did not participate on a non-school team (see Rule 57.2), if the sending school Principal certifies the following:

- a. Recruitment was not involved in any way.
- b. At the time of transfer, the student was in good standing.
- c. The student would be academically eligible at the sending school.
- d. The transfer was in no way motivated by athletics.
- e. The student would have been eligible by MIAA and local rules at the sending school.

57.5 A student who transfers after the start of the practice season is ineligible in all sports during that sport season.

NORTH READING HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS LIST

FALL SEASON

Starting Date: The start date for the fall season is in late August but the precise starting times may vary:

Boys' Soccer- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Girls' Soccer- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Volleyball- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen (if applicable)
Football- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Cheerleading- Varsity
Girls' Cross Country- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Boys' Cross Country- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Field Hockey- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Golf- Varsity

WINTER SEASON

Starting Date: The start date for the winter season is the Monday after Thanksgiving

Boys' Basketball- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Girls' Basketball- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Boys' Ice Hockey- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Girls' Ice Hockey- Varsity (Cooperative Team)
Gymnastics- Varsity (Cooperative Team)
Wrestling- Varsity, Junior Varsity (Cooperative Team)
Swimming- Varsity, Junior Varsity (Cooperative Team)
Girls' Winter Track- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Boys' Winter Track- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Cheerleading- Varsity

SPRING SEASON

Starting Date: The start date for the spring season is the third Monday in March

Baseball- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Softball- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Freshmen
Boys' Lacrosse- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Girls' Lacrosse- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Boys' Tennis- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Girls' Tennis- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Boys' Spring Track- Varsity, Junior Varsity
Girls' Spring Track- Varsity, Junior Varsity

*availability of levels (varsity, junior varsity, and freshmen) may vary as the result of student interest

USER FEES

A surcharge or user's fee is assessed to each student who chooses to participate in interscholastic athletics. This non-refundable yearly fee (amount determined by School Committee) is payable to the "TOWN OF NORTH READING" and is **due prior to the initial practice session**. The user fee schedule is a cost of \$425 for the first sport in which a student participates; \$300 for the second sport; and \$300 for the third sport. A "family cap" of \$1300 has been established. Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to review the Free and Reduced Lunch guidelines posted on the North Reading Public Schools district website. User's fees allow for membership on an athletic team and in no way guarantees a level of participation and/or play.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absence

The intent of the absence policy is to prepare students for the work environment where punctuality and good attendance are of the utmost importance. Attendance in school is mandated by the Massachusetts General Laws, specifically Chapter 76 Section 1, 2, 4 and 19.

Attendance at all school sessions is necessary for the academic and social growth of students. Studies indicate a high correlation between the number of days absent and academic achievement. Frequent absenteeism will most often contribute to unsatisfactory academic achievement. The administration will utilize the services of the local authorities when they deem such assistance is in the best interest of the student and/or school.

1. Any absence from school of more than five (5) consecutive school days will require a doctor's note.
2. Students who miss more than ten (10) classes, unexcused, in a full year course will receive no credit for that course. The Assistant Principal will notify parents/guardians as soon as practical after the sixth absence in a course that their son/daughter is in danger of not receiving credit for that course. Please note: If a student misses 5 minutes or more of any class due to unexcused tardiness, the student will be considered absent for that particular class.
3. Students who miss more than five (5) classes, unexcused, in a semester course will receive no credit for that course. The Assistant Principal will notify parents/guardians after the third absence in a course that their son/daughter is in danger of not receiving credit for the course.
4. Students absent from school for any reason will be required to submit a written excuse signed by their parent/guardian to the main office within 48 hours of the student's return to school after the period of absence. Absences will be recorded as UNEXCUSED unless and until the student submits a written excuse. Telephone calls to the Main Office notifying school personnel of student's tardiness or absence from school will not serve to excuse the tardiness or absence. All students who participate in any extra-curricular activities will be in attendance at school on the day of participation in any activity. For weekend or holiday activities, this requirement is waived.
5. Examples of excused absence with parental consent:

- a. Personal illness
- b. Serious illness or death in the family
- c. Unanticipated accident or family emergency
- d. Religious observance
- e. School-sponsored event
- f. Other (as determined by a school administrator)

School permission, in advance, is required for absences other than personal illness, serious illness or death in the family, unanticipated accident, religious observance, or school-sponsored event.

Parents are encouraged to provide accurate, detailed notes to excuse an absence/tardy. In addition, the cooperation of parents and students is required in an effort to ensure that students are on time to school each day in order to maximize learning.

Tardiness

Punctuality is considered an important element toward realizing academic success and can be a contributing factor toward one's success in college and in the working world. Even so, it is recognized that occasional circumstances may occur that may prevent a student from arriving to school on time.

The official start of the school day is 8:30 a.m. unless otherwise determined by the school administration as the result of inclement weather or other extreme circumstances. Daily attendance will be taken by each student's first block teacher at 8:30 a.m. Any student who arrives to school after 8:30 a.m. must first report to the Main Office to sign-in as tardy to school and obtain an admittance pass to class.

For the first three occasions during a semester that a student is tardy to school, for any reason, up to fifteen minutes after the official start of the school day, the student will be recorded as tardy, the tardiness will be considered "excused," the student will be provided an admittance pass to class, and the student's parent/guardian will be notified by recorded telephone message of the tardiness. Excused tardiness to school will not prevent a student from participating in an athletic practice or contest or other extra-curricular activity.

The fourth and subsequent tardiness to school within fifteen minutes after the official start of the school day in a semester, will be considered "unexcused" except in the case of an extenuating circumstance as determined by the school administration. In the case of an extenuating circumstance, written documentation noting the reason for the tardiness is to be provided by the student's parent/guardian. The following reasons for tardiness do not constitute an "extenuating circumstance": oversleeping; automobile mechanical problems; missing the school bus; any repetitive or chronic reason such as temporary illness, babysitting, transportation issues, or carpooling. This is not a complete list of the reasons that do not constitute an "extenuating circumstance" for tardiness but is intended to serve as an illustration only.

For all tardiness to school beyond fifteen minutes following the official start of the school day, the tardiness will be considered "unexcused" except in the case of an extenuating circumstance as determined by the school administration. In the case of an extenuating circumstance, written documentation noting the reason for the tardiness is to be provided by the student's parent/guardian. Unexcused tardiness to school beyond fifteen minutes following the official start of the school day will be considered an

“unexcused absence” from affected class or classes for the purpose of determining credit earned.

Unexcused tardiness to school will warrant the student being assigned a detention to be served on that day. Chronic tardiness will warrant additional disciplinary action and parent/administration communication.

Truancy/Unexcused Absence from Class

Attendance in school is mandated by Massachusetts General Law. When a student is absent from school, or class, for any period of time without the sanction of either the home or the school, such absence is truancy. Under the guidelines established by M.G.L Chapter 76, truancy may qualify a student for prosecution.

1. Class Truancy:

- a) First offense: Parents/guardians will be notified by the administration. The student may be subject to disciplinary action.
- b) Second offense: Parents/guardians will be notified by the administration. A mandatory meeting will be held with the student, administration and parent/guardian. The student will be assigned in-school suspension.
- c) Additional offense: Further administrative action will be forthcoming in compliance with M.G.L Chapter 76.

Dismissal

A student may be dismissed from school for illness with the permission of an administrator or the school nurse. Students requesting to be dismissed for any reason other than illness must notify the office before school by presenting a note signed by a parent/guardian that includes a telephone number where the parent may be reached for verification of dismissal. Students dismissed from school are prohibited from participating in an athletic contest or practice or other extra-curricular activity on that day except in the case of an extenuating circumstance as determined by a school administrator. Students who are dismissed and return to school prior to the conclusion of the school day are not prevented from participating in an athletic practice or contest or other extra-curricular activity provided that they have attended at least fifty-percent of the school day. (In exceptional cases, the principal or his designee may waive these conditions.) Every effort should be made to present an official verification (for example, a medical note or other professional verification) documenting the need for dismissal.

Every attempt should be made to schedule appointments after school hours. Except in emergencies, the student is responsible for all assignments he/she may have missed due to dismissal. In general, students will not be excused for dismissal to transport other students to appointments. Dismissals from school are to be kept to a minimum. Dismissals from school will not be granted on the day of prom, dance, or other similar school function except in the case of an extenuating circumstance as determined by the school administrator.

FAMILY VACATION AND PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS

It is the expectation of the Athletic Department that each team member will be at all scheduled practices, games, and meetings. It is important for parents and student-athletes to realize that athletic seasons encompass all school vacation weeks and that in the spring season the schedule may extend after the scheduled academic school year. Families who plan to be absent for extended periods of time due to vacations or family commitments should discuss this situation with the Head Coach of the team **prior** to the start of the season.

The Athletic Department realizes that certain circumstance will arise, but families need to understand that extended absences from team commitments may result in the suspension or removal from the athletic team or other sanctions as deemed by the coaching staff. Such actions are at the discretion of each individual coach in consult with the Athletic Director and/or the school administration

Specific team attendance obligations may be made by the individual Head Coach and supported by the Athletic Director and/or the school administration.

Students electing to attend school-sponsored trips that result in their missing athletic practices and/or contests must understand that they are subject to decisions as outlined in paragraph three above.

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PLAYING TIME

Being part of an athletic team is a privilege, and playing time is a variable of being part of an athletic team. It is inevitable that some student-athletes are going to play more on some teams than other student-athletes.

Factors that impact playing time include commitment, attitude, attendance, and of course, the specific athlete's skill in a particular sport. This may mean that some student-athletes may experience greater playing time than others. Also, playing time for student-athletes can change from year-to-year due to new athletes in the school, changes in student-athletes' abilities, or other reasons. Coaches are afforded the opportunity to decide which student-athletes play in each contest.

TEAM CAPTAINS & THEIR ROLE

North Reading High School holds its student-athletes to a high standard. Student athletes have chosen to be a part of student leaders, and as such, are expected to be role models and representatives of the school and community.

It follows, then, that captains of North Reading High School teams are responsible for this elite group. We expect captains to show leadership, not only on the fields of play,

but in the classroom and in the community as well. We expect captains to practice good decision-making skills and relay these skills to their teammates.

The head coach of each sport decides how captains are chosen for the team. Some teams determine captains by a team vote, and some coaches may select captains based on past performance, experience, or other factors. Also, a coach may select captains on a game-by-game basis. A captain is expected to be a leader of his/her team in the locker room, athletic venue, in the classroom, and en route to all contests. Captains are expected to be students in good standing at all times in terms of their academic, behavioral, and social conduct.

Being a captain is a major responsibility and should not be taken lightly. The leadership skills one learns as captain will give the student an advantage in later life. A captain may be relieved from this position if a coach believes that he/she is not fulfilling the expectation of being a team captain. The high school principal reserves the right to remove a captain from his/her leadership position if it is determined, in the opinion of the high school principal, that the student is not a member in good standing within the school community or the community at large. A student in good standing meets both the definition as documented on page 23 of the North Reading High School Handbook for Students and Parents and all applicable MIAA Codes of Conduct.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is provided by the school to most away athletic contests. Students are expected to ride to and from these athletic contests in transportation provided by the school. There may be times when a parent must drive a student athlete to a contest or pick them up at the conclusion of this contest. In this situation, the parent would notify the coach of the team at least a day in advance to give written notice of this situation.

TRAVEL

Game Transportation:

All team members must travel to and from away games by means of transportation provided or organized by North Reading High School. No athlete may travel to a contest in his/her own vehicle or provide transportation for another athlete in his/her own vehicle without special permission from the Athletic Director and the Principal.

Bus/Van Rules:

1. A coach or other designated agent of the Athletic Director must ride in the bus/van and is responsible for the actions of the team.
2. The coach will inspect the interior of the vehicle for cleanliness at the start and the end of the trip.
3. All riders must be seated.
4. No spikes or cleated shoes may be worn on the bus/van.
5. Team members may not throw objects from the bus/van.
6. Voices are to be restrained.

7. Non-team personnel may not ride the bus/van except by permission of the Athletic Director or the school administration.

If the coach receives a direct oral request from a parent or legal guardian to provide transportation personally for his/her child, it is at the coach's discretion to accept or reject such a request. Under no circumstances will a coach release a student to anyone other than his/her parent or legal guardian, unless so directed by an administrator. In a case of emergency, such as the transportation of a student for emergency medical attention, the coach will determine the procedure.

In cases of major delay, the coach is to call one parent to start a telephone chain to inform all parents of the delay.

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

Any North Reading High School student athlete participating voluntarily in interscholastic athletics, and understanding that such participation is a privilege, must agree to abide by the following. Copies of all forms for participation in athletics at North Reading High School are available on the high school's website and in the office of the Athletic Director.

1. **Parental Permission:** Prior to the start of practice, a participating North Reading High School student athlete and his/her parent/guardian must read and understand the "Sports Participation Agreement," and must read, complete, and sign the "Parental Consent Release from Liability & Indemnity Agreement" and the "Permission to Authorize Emergency Medical Treatment" form. These forms allow participation in sports at North Reading High School and authorizes emergency medical treatment, if necessary. All of these forms are accessible when completing the registration process through ArbiterSports (formerly FamilyID); the link is located on the high school website.
2. **Physical Exam:** All Athletes must successfully pass an annual physical examination by a licensed physician either by the school or contracted privately (MIAA 56.1) A copy of the examination results must be on file in the Office of the School Nurse or Athletic Director, prior to an athlete's participation in any school scheduled physical practice session or game. It is important that the physical examination includes a clear determination from the physician that the student may participate in sports. Effective with the 2012-2013 school year and in subsequent school years, the Department of Public Health requires that students have an up-to-date physical examination for their continued participation in athletics. This change mandates that upon the expiration of a student's physical examination, which is valid for thirteen months, the student is immediately not eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics until such time that a valid physical examination report is filed with the office of Athletic Director. *It is the parent's/student's responsibility to ensure that each student-athlete's physical examination is up-to-date to ensure athletic eligibility.*

3. **Academic Eligibility:** In order to compete, a student athlete must meet both MIAA eligibility requirements (see “Athletic Eligibility Rules and Penalties” section).
4. **Insurance:** All athletes should be enrolled in an HMO or similar health insurance plan. North Reading High School provides at a nominal cost a policy that will cover some medical expenses. This policy can be used by itself or in coordination with another medical plan after that plan has contributed its maximum allowable benefits.
5. **Code of Conduct/Behavior:** Each North Reading High School student athlete must:
 - Abide by the North Reading High School Code of Conduct as stated in the Student Handbook, and Team Rules set by the coach, and MIAA rules governing sports participation.
 - Conduct oneself in an exemplary manner at all times, both on and off the field.
 - Dress presentably at all times and adhere to any team athletic dress code on game days.
 - Understand that the coach may establish additional rules and regulations for his/her sport.
 - Understand that one must avoid physical or verbal confrontations with fellow teammates, members of the opposing team, and/or spectators.
 - Understand that one is responsible for controlling one’s emotions, and, accordingly, shall refrain from displaying discontent or outrage at an official’s call and shall refrain from making any display of bad sportsmanlike conduct.
 - Understand that detrimental conduct resulting in dishonor to the athlete, the team, or the school will not be tolerated.
 - Understand that a violation of the North Reading High School Code of Conduct is grounds for a game/team suspension or permanent expulsion from the program. Determination of such shall be made by the coach involved, the Athletic Director, and the Principal in accordance with the nature and/or degree of the infraction.

6. **Team Commitments:**

Tryouts: Participation in athletics is a privilege. Students try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student’s responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet them. After the tryouts begin, no athlete may voluntarily

leave one team and try out for another without the consent of both coaches involved and the Athletic Director as well.

Daily/Weekend Commitments: Members of North Reading High School athletic teams are expected to make at least a five-day, two to three hour daily commitment to the team each week. Normally, practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day. Preparation times before and after practices or games bring the usual total time to three hours. There is an expectation that practices or weekend team activities may exist at any level; as such, individual student/family schedules may be impacted. Because many of our teams share facilities, practice and game hours may vary considerably. Contact the coach or the Athletic Director for more specific information concerning practice and game times.

Absence from Practice or Game: Full participation in all team activities, including all practices and games, is expected from every student-athlete. It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or a game if the student is not absent from school. The coaches in our programs expect their athletes to be present at all team related activities and may suspend a team member from contests for absences. Students are excused from team activities for illness, academic, family, or religious reasons. However, prior notification is expected whenever possible. It is expected that students will be in attendance at practices on the day preceding an athletic contest. Failure to do so may result in an ineligibility to participate in the athletic contest.

School/family vacations and/or extended absences: Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Due to scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations. A student who is planning to be absent for an extended period of time due to vacation or planned extended absence from school must make this known to the coach as soon as plans are made. Upon his/her return, a varsity team student may be suspended from play for a number of contests not to exceed the number of contests missed due to the absence. If the absence involves only practice time, students may be required to make-up an equivalent number of practice sessions before being allowed to return to contest competition. Advanced conversations with coaches are recommended to as to avoid conflict regarding individual coaches' expectations.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

It is the responsibility of each student athlete to show proper care for all school issued athletic uniforms and equipment. Equipment/uniforms are to be cleaned and properly maintained for the duration of the season. All uniforms are to be stored in a secure locker at all times. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to return all equipment and uniforms promptly at the conclusion of the athletic season. Students who lose school equipment or uniforms or fail to return them to the athletic department, are responsible for paying current replacement costs of these items. If a student athlete terminates his/her participation in a given sport at some time during the season due to

quitting, injury, academic ineligibility, etc., it is his/her responsibility to return equipment and uniforms promptly to the athletic department.

The student athletes at North Reading High School are expected to respect all athletic facilities and locker room areas at all times. School and personal belongings are to be secured in the locker room area at all times. It is expected that all students respect the lockers of other student athletes at all times. Failure to show this respect to the facilities and other student athletes at North Reading High School may result in termination from the squad and/or suspension and/or expulsion from North Reading High School.

FACILITY AND GROUNDS USE AND ACCESS

It is the intent of the school department that grounds and facilities are available to student athletes for all scheduled practices and contests for each team as scheduled by the head coach. It is expected that all student athletes will show respect for facilities and grounds at all times and help maintain the cleanliness of these areas. Student athletes should show pride for the campus of North Reading High School as well as all other home facilities and those facilities at which they are guests.

HAZING/INITIATIONS

To haze means “to initiate by exacting humiliating performances from or playing rough practical jokes upon.” Therefore, any initiation that interferes in any way with the proper functioning of a school program is considered hazing and is forbidden by the North Reading School Committee. Each student will be notified in a class meeting that the practice of hazing is prohibited, and will be asked to sign a statement of agreement.

Any member of a student organization involved in hazing will be suspended from the student organization. The length of the suspension and the determination as to whether there will be additional school discipline will be decided by the principal.

STUDENT MANAGERS

Each head coach will be in charge of the selection of a student manager if he/she desires. Student managers must conform to all of the school and athletic requirements and expectations during their time as a team manager. The head coach reserves the right to suspend or replace the team manager if he/she feel believes that the student manager is not fulfilling his/her job or representing the team in a positive manner.

MEDIA CONTACTS AND TEAM PUBLICITY

Each coach is responsible for reporting scores to the local and regional newspapers. The head coach will give weekly suggestions to the Athletic Director for nominations for “Hornet of the Week

ATHLETE DRESS CODE

All student athletes are expected to conform with the individual coach’s regulations regarding dress for the particular sport. Uniforms issued by the school are considered the property of the school and are to be worn only by North Reading High School athletes and only at North Reading High School contests unless otherwise requested by or endorsed by a coach.

GAME/PRACTICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The school administration is responsible for all decisions regarding the cancellation of a team practice or contest due to the inclement weather or other circumstances that may warrant such an action. If school is cancelled or closed early due to inclement weather, practices and contests scheduled for that day will be canceled. The Athletic Director will cancel all contest management personnel and the head coach will make sure all assistant coaches and players are aware of the cancelled event. In situations where the superintendent either cancels school or shuts down the district with an early release, all athletic practices and games are cancelled for both home and away contests.

VARSITY LETTERS

In order for a student athlete to earn a varsity letter the student must be a member of a varsity team. The student must be in “good standing’ on the team up to and including the last day of the season. The student must have met and abided by all of the school, team, and M.I.A.A. rules throughout the duration of the season. It is ultimately a collective decision of the coaching staff to award students with varsity letters whom they believe contributed to being a part of a varsity team. The head coach will present students with varsity letters at their team’s appropriate sports awards night.

EFFECTS OF SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

Any student who is suspended from school, either internally or externally, for any reason, will be unable to practice or play in any contests during the days of the suspension.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The North Reading Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of sex. The North Reading Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on sex, including harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status. The North Reading Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of North Reading Public Schools or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex.

How to Report Sexual Harassment: Individuals are encouraged to report allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator(s) identified below or the Principal. Any report of sexual harassment, as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be responded to promptly in accordance with the *District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures*, available at:

<https://www.north-reading.k12.ma.us/district/pages/title-ix>. Reports of discriminatory harassment not constituting sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be initially addressed through the *District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure* and may, if dismissed under that procedure, be investigated in accordance with the *District's Civil Rights Grievance Procedures*, available at: <https://www.north-reading.k12.ma.us/district/pages/title-ix>.

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will: (1) promptly and confidentially contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures; (2) inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint; (3) consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures; (4) if the school district does not provide the complainant with supportive measures, document the reasons why such response was reasonable; and (5) explain to the complainant the process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

The District's Title IX Coordinator(s) are:

Sean Killeen,
Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning
North Reading Public Schools
189 Park Street
North Reading, MA 01864
skilleen@nrpsk12.org
978-664-7810

Cynthia Conant, Director of Student Services
North Reading Public Schools
189 Park Street
North Reading, MA 01864
cconant@nrpsk12.org
(978) 664-7810

PRE-SEASON MEETINGS WITH PARENTS AND STUDENT ATHLETES

It is the responsibility of each head coach to conduct a preseason meeting with all prospective candidates for their upcoming season. During this meeting the coach will make aware to all candidates the rules and expectations of their program. These rules will include district policies as well as individual sport-related rules.

The head coach will also conduct a preseason meeting for all parents involved with the sport. This meeting is to inform parents about practice/game schedule as well as district/team rules and expectations.

CAPTAINS' PRACTICES

Various sports may engage in "Captain's Practices," which are organized in their entirety by the designated student captains of those sports. It is the policy of the North Reading Athletic Department to abide by the M.I.A.A. rule on "Out-of-Season Coaching" as outlined in this handbook.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising efforts conducted by student-athletes, under the direction of their respective coach(es) must receive prior, written approval for fundraising activities from the high school principal. Forms for this purpose are available in the Athletic Office and the Main Office at North Reading High School.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

The North Reading School Committee prohibits the practice of gift giving by or to employees. The policy should not be interpreted as an effort to discourage acts of generosity in unusual circumstances. The School Committee endorses the writing of letters to staff members expressing gratitude and appreciation for services performed.

Gifts and donations to the athletic programs at North Reading High School are welcomed. Such gifts and donations must be submitted to the School Committee for their approval.

CONDUCT AT ATHLETIC CONTESTS

It is the expectation of the North Reading School District for all students to conduct themselves in a gentlemanly and ladylike manner while in the presence of a school related function. This conduct is expected at all home as well as away contests. Remember, you represent North Reading High School and are to treat your teammates as well as opponents with respectful and courteous behavior at all times. Anyone not acting

courteously and with consideration for others will be asked to leave immediately. Students not meeting the expectations for proper conduct at school functions may be prevented from attending school functions for a period of time determined by the school administration.

ATHLETIC LOCKER ROOM GUIDELINES

Student-Athletes at North Reading High School are allowed use to these facilities before school and after the dismissal bell at the end of the day. Please note that these facilities are shared by the Physical Education Department during the course of a regular school day. The student-athletes are responsible for all school owned and personal items in their lockers. It is strongly recommended that students secure their belongings in a locker while participating in team activities; locks are not provided. Vandalism and/or any lost items from a locker are to be reported to the Director of Athletics on the day of the incident. The care of school uniforms, lockers and other equipment are the responsibility of the student-athletes.

GENERAL RULES AND INFORMATION

In addition to Massachusetts General Laws and the MIAA policies, student athletes at North Reading High School are also subject to the rules and regulations governing student behavior as cited in the Student Handbook, these local rules and policies have been created by the School Committee in order to ensure the smoother management and integrity of the athletic program:

- 1. Responsibility for Athletic Equipment:** Students are required to return in acceptable condition all equipment issued to them or to reimburse the school at current replacement cost of said equipment. Athletes who do not return equipment or pay for replacement costs will be prohibited from participation in any other sport until the debt is paid. If necessary, outstanding obligations could result in the withholding of a student's diploma. Uniforms may not be defaced or altered in any way and they may be worn or used only for sanctioned events.
- 2. Attendance in School:** Any student who is absent from school is not eligible to take part in any practice session or game, which is scheduled for that same day. Students participating in extra-curricular activities must be in school all day unless documentation is presented which is acceptable by the Administration. Any student who leaves the school grounds during the day without permission may not participate in any athletic activity. A student who is absent on the last school day of the week is ineligible for any athletic activity on the following day. The Principal or Athletic Director may waive this rule in individual cases if in that person's judgment the absences were for a good reason and not a willful disregard of responsibility. A student dismissed from school to home by the school nurse for medical reasons should not participate in athletics that day.

3. **Suspension from School:** Any student suspended from school for any reason, whether it be in-school or out-of- school, will not be allowed to practice or participate in any athletic activity for the day(s) of suspension.
4. **Late Reporting:** No student may try out for a team after final cuts have been made, unless prior approval for extenuating circumstances is received (i.e., injury). In such cases, no displacement from the team of any squad member may occur. A student cut from one team may participate on another team and the two-week rule may be waived.
5. **Change of Sports:** A student may not go from one sport in a season to another until the original sport season has been completed. A student may not change from one sport to another once the first game of either sport has been played (exceptions shall be decided by the Athletic Director and/or Principal). No student who has been suspended or dismissed from a team may transfer to another during the season.
6. **Injuries and Accidents:** Athletes should report all injuries to the coach immediately. In the case of a game or practice accident, the Coach should be prepared to:
 - Apply immediate first aid in the absence of an Athletic Trainer, EMT, or School Nurse.
 - If the Athletic Trainer, EMT, or School Nurse is present, that particular individual will immediately assume responsibility.
 - If no medical or trainer personnel are available, immediately apply First Aid (stem flow of blood, apply ice pack, etc.). Contact the parent to come to area and assume responsibility. If it is evident an emergency exists, contact the emergency number (911) and request ambulance transportation to the hospital. Notify the parent that student has been taken to the hospital. If the parent is not available, arrange for a member of school personnel to remain with the student until a parent is present.
 - If the accident required hospital treatment, contact your building Principal and/or the Athletic Director at the first opportunity.
 - Submit a properly completed Accident Report form to the School Nurse by noon of the first school day following the accident. Forms may be obtained from the Nurse or Athletic Director.
 - Under no circumstance is an injured student to be left alone or transported without a competent adult accompanying him/her. IF NECESSARY, THE COACH AND THE TEAM WILL ACCOMPANY THE INJURED STUDENT FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, AND THE CONTEST WILL BE FORFEITED.

- In cases where injury required medical attention, a statement from the athlete's physician certifying eligibility to return to sports must be filed in Nurse's Office.
9. **Responsibility:** Responsibility for reporting any and all rule violations rests with the Principal, Athletic director, Coaches, and athletes themselves.
 10. **Due Process Procedure:** All suspensions from teams for eligibility violations, rule infractions, or disciplinary reasons will be communicated immediately and directly to the athlete's parent/guardian. Some eligibility rules are appealable to the MIAA through a waiver process, but must be done by the Athletic Director in accordance with specified dates for filing. Final adjudication in all matters related to athletics rests with the Principal of North Reading High School.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS CUT POLICY

It is the policy of the North Reading High School Athletic Department to encourage students to participate in athletics at all levels; interscholastically, with intramurals, and in one's personal time. Accordingly, the cutting of an interested athlete from interscholastic sports teams **will not occur** unless it is necessitated by one of the following constraints:

1. The prospective athlete's ability to play is, in the opinion of the coach, at a level far below the level of any of the other members of the team and to the point that such play could endanger the player or other players.
2. The availability of school transportation falls below the number of athletes trying out for a team. However, a travel squad may be determined at the discretion of the coach.

In the event that cutting needs to be used to maintain a workable number for the program, the following guidelines will be used:

1. A minimum of a three-day tryout will be given to all candidates in the overall program. Within that tryout period, the coach will have the latitude to reassign candidates to different levels within the program.
2. Each head coach will establish specific, written criteria for the evaluation of all players. These criteria will include the following elements: (a) Attendance during the tryout period; (b) Positive and cooperative attitude; (c) Effort related to, and during practice; (d) Relative skill within the particular sport. This information should be reviewed with the Athletic Director prior to dissemination.
3. The head coach shall notify any student designed to be cut from any team via a personal, individual meeting.
4. If the student wishes to discuss his/her being cut, that student will make an appointment with the head coach by seeing the head coach directly. If the head coach

is not available at the time, the student may contact the Athletic Director's office to assist in setting up an appointment between the head coach and the student.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Participation

Participation in athletic events should be an enjoyable experience for all parties involved: student, coach and parent. Undoubtedly, participation tends to be emotionally charged, and dealing constructively with these emotions can be an excellent learning experience. In most cases, athletic competition is extremely positive and complements the educational experience enjoyed by students at North Reading High School. Occasionally, because of the high emotional level present during athletic competition, conflicts must be addressed and resolved in order that the many benefits of athletic involvement may continue to contribute to the emotional and the physical growth of North Reading High School students. It is vital that any conflict or issue be addressed as immediately and as directly as possible in order to resolve it promptly.

When seeking resolution to conflicts or issues between a coach and an athlete, students and their parents are to use the following procedure:

Step One (1): Personal Student-Coach Contact

The conflict/issue is to be presented as soon as possible to the coach by the athlete. If personal communication is impractical, a student may ask his/her team captain to approach the coach. If the personal or captain route is not possible, communication may be made by the athlete's parent at an appropriate time. In order for the communication to be as productive as possible, the times to be avoided by the athlete, captain or parent are as follows:

- Either prior to, or immediately following, a contest;
- During an active practice session;
- During a time when other students are present, or when it would be readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place;
- A time when it is apparent that there is insufficient time to allow for a complete discussion.

Usually the best solution is to ask the coach, either over the phone or in person, if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. The coach will inform the Athletic Director that a meeting to review the concern has been arranged. The attendance of the student-athlete raising the concern is required at the meeting.

Step Two (2): Student-Athletic Director Contact

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through a meeting with the coach, the student and/or parent should contact the Athletic Director, and if necessary, schedule an appointment to discuss the issue. Students and/or parents are to have notified the coach beforehand that this contact is going to be made. The attendance of the student-athlete raising the concern is required if a meeting is scheduled. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory resolution, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all concerned parties in an attempt to resolve the matter. The attendance of the student-athlete raising the concern is required if a meeting is scheduled.

This process could prove to be time consuming, and since athletic seasons are relatively short, there should be no time delay in airing any and all concerns. It is important for all students and their parents to know that any comments, concerns, or issues raised to the Athletic Director will be addressed. Parents and students may also expect to hear from the Athletic Director as to the disposition of their concerns. Issues concerning coaching personnel may or may not be communicated to others. While there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of the differing perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

Step Three (3): Student-Administration Contact

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through direct contact with the Athletic director, the student and/or parent should contact the High School Principal, but must notify the Athletic Director beforehand that such contact is intended to be made. The protocols defined above will apply to meetings at this level.

AWARDS

All athletes participating on a Varsity Team at North Reading High School are eligible for Varsity Letter certificates, and All Stars in accordance with the following criteria:

Varsity Letter Certificates:

Varsity coaches award student-athletes a varsity/participation certificate at their discretion.

League All Star Selection:

League All Star selections are made by the league coaches in each sport at the post-season meeting. A published list will be provided by the league Athletic Director in charge of that sport, and All Star games may be played at various sites within the league.

Forfeiture of Awards:

If an athlete is suspended from a team for the season due to disciplinary or academic reasons or because of an infringement of any North Reading High School, Cape Ann League, or M.I.A.A. rule, he or she may forfeit any claim to any awards/Varsity Letter, Cape Ann League or All-Star recognition for that season.

The high school principal reserves the right to render a student ineligible to receive an award or other similar accolade if it is determined, in the opinion of the high school principal, that the student is not a member in good standing within the school community or the community at large.

VOLUNTEER COACHES

Volunteer coaches are a welcome addition to the North Reading High School Athletic Program. It is required that requests for volunteer coaches be processed through the Athletic Office well in advance of the start date of an athletic program's given season. Volunteer coaches are subject to a Criminal Offender Record of Information (CORI) background check.

STUDENT-ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to complete the necessary paperwork to become eligible to participate on the first day of try-outs. Your coach will expect two things from you on the first day: **(1) academic eligibility (2) completed paperwork**. Athletes who are serious about making a team will be prepared for the first day of try-outs.

ACADEMICS:

Academic achievement is the priority at North Reading High School. To be eligible for membership in any athletic program, one must be in good standing in one's academic work and one's school citizenship. Beyond meeting all requirements in Section X, Letter D, "Interscholastic Athletic Eligibility Rules," as noted in the North Reading High School Handbook for Students and Parents, students must pass the equivalent of seven academic courses to remain eligible for participation in athletics. Final grades earned during the previous school year determine eligibility for the fall; first quarter grades determine eligibility for the winter; and second quarter grades determine eligibility for the spring. Students may become eligible for participation during a season upon meeting academic eligibility requirements through the issuance of the second quarter (for winter season) and/or third quarter (for spring season) report cards.

BEFORE YOU REGISTER FOR SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Physical Exams: A physical exam must be current within the past 13 months and signed by the physician. If the student's physical expires during the season, he/she will not be able to participate in practices or games until a new physical exam is received.

On-line Concussion Course: State law requires that student/athletes take an ImPACT Concussion Test during their freshmen and junior years. Instructions for taking the test can be found on the NRHS Athletics website.

Additional Information Required to Register: It will be helpful to have the following information handy to allow for accurate completion of your online registration:

Primary Care physician information
Health Insurance information

Dentist information
Emergency contact information

A parent/guardian may register by clicking on this link and following the steps below:
<https://students.arbitersports.com/organizations/north-reading-high-school-athletics>

1. Click on the link for the season's registration form. Scroll to the bottom of page and click on "***Sign Up as a Family or Individual***".
2. Sign Up for your secure **ArbiterSports (formerly FamilyID)** account by entering your family name, e-mail address and password. You will receive an e-mail with a link to confirm your new account. (If you don't see the email, please check your spam or junk folder)
3. Click on the link in your e-mail confirmation, and then fill out the information requested on the registration form. Payment will be handled separately from on-line registration.

Support: You can always access the school's main page by clicking "**Find Programs**" in the top blue bar, searching our school, and clicking on the school link. If you need assistance, **please call ArbiterSports (formerly FamilyID) at 800-311-4060** or email support@arbitersports.com.

ODDS & ENDS:

- If you played a sport last season, check with the Athletic Office to see if the physical is still valid.
- If you see a doctor for a sports-related injury, you must return with a note from the doctor to be given to your coach before you may participate.
- Appropriately maintain equipment, facilities, and uniform.

HEAD INJURIES AND CONCUSSIONS

Interscholastic athletic head injury safety training program; written authorization required for participation in extracurricular athletic activity following unconsciousness or diagnosis of concussion; maintenance of records showing compliance with section; liability [Text of section added by 2010, 166, Sec. 1 effective July 19, 2010. See also, Section 222 added by 2010, 197, Sec. 6 effective October 28, 2010 and Section 222 added by 2010, 288, Sec. 9 effective August 10, 2010, below.]

Section 222. (a) The department shall direct the division of violence and injury prevention to develop an interscholastic athletic head injury safety training program in which all public schools and any school subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association rules shall participate. Participation in the program shall be required annually of coaches, trainers and parent volunteers for any extracurricular athletic activity; physicians and nurses who are employed by a school or school district or who volunteer to assist with an extracurricular athletic activity; school athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; and a parent or legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity.

In developing the program, the division may use any of the materials readily available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program shall include, but not be limited to: (1) current training in recognizing the symptoms of potentially catastrophic head injuries, concussions and injuries related to second impact syndrome; and (2) providing students

that participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, including membership in a marching band, the following information annually: a summary of department rules and regulations relative to safety regulations for students' participation in extracurricular athletic activities, including the medical protocol for post-concussion participation or participation in an extracurricular athletic activity; written information related to the recognition of symptoms of head injuries, the biology and the short-term and long-term consequences of a concussion.

(b) The department shall develop forms on which students shall be instructed to provide information relative to any sports head injury history at the start of each sports season. These forms shall require the signature of both the student and the parent or legal guardian thereof. Once complete, the forms shall be forwarded to all coaches prior to allowing any student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity so as to provide coaches with up-to-date information relative to an athlete's head injury history and to enable coaches to identify students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.

(c) If a student participating in an extracurricular athletic activity becomes unconscious during a practice or competition, the student shall not return to the practice or competition during which the student became unconscious or participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until the student provides written authorization for such participation, from a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, certified athletic trainer or other appropriately trained or licensed health care professional as determined by the department of public health, to the school's athletic director. If a student suffers a concussion as diagnosed by a medical professional, or is suspected to have suffered a concussion while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the student shall not return to the practice or competition during which the student suffered, or is suspected to have suffered, a concussion and shall not participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until the student provides written authorization for such participation, from a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, certified athletic trainer or other appropriately trained or licensed health care professional as determined by the department of public health, to the school's athletic director.

(d) A coach, trainer or volunteer for an extracurricular athletic activity shall not encourage or permit a student participating in the activity to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of a student, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

(e) The superintendent of the school district or the director of a school shall maintain complete and accurate records of the district's or school's compliance with the requirements of this section. A school that fails to comply with this section, as determined by the department, shall be subject to penalties as determined by the department.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be construed to waive liability or immunity of a school district or its officers or employees. This section shall not create any liability for a course of legal action against a school district, its officers or employees.

(g) A person who volunteers to assist with an extracurricular athletic activity shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of this section, unless such person is willfully or wantonly negligent in his act or omission.

(h) The division shall adopt regulations to carry out this section.

All students participating in athletic programs must participate in a head-injury concussion awareness program conducted under the direction of school personnel.