



**Orange
County
Schools**
NORTH CAROLINA

Orange County Schools
Athletic Handbook
2025-2026

OCS Disclaimer:

The information contained in Orange County Schools Athletic Handbook is intended to serve as a general source of information for OCS Administrators, Athletic Directors, Coaches, and Parents. The information in this handbook shall not alter, modify, or otherwise change NCHSAA requirements, State Board of Education policies, Orange County Board of Education policies, or the General Statutes of North Carolina.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Orange County Schools' Interscholastic Athletic Program is to provide equal and safe opportunities for all students to participate in competitive sports, while fostering academics, sportsmanship, teamwork, and individual improvement.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to communicate to athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators the philosophies, standards, rules and expectations applicable to participants in the ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOLS interscholastic athletic programs. The clear understanding and consistent application of these matters will help ensure that student athletes have the best possible experience in their respective athletic programs.

SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATOR

The Principals are authorized to handle any incident that is not covered or mentioned in this handbook in a timely and appropriate manner. This is not intended to restrict in any way the authority of the Principals to make such a rule, not inconsistent with this code, as they are authorized by law to make for the government and operation of their respective schools. The Principal is the final Authority for all site-based decisions.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics involves the risk of possible serious injury, including physical or mental impairments and even death, as well as the risk of transmission of infectious disease such as Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), HIV and Hepatitis B. Although serious injuries are not common and the risk of HIV transmission is almost nonexistent in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk.

Participants have a responsibility to help reduce that risk. Participants must obey all safety rules, report all physical and hygiene problems to their coaches, practice proper personal hygiene, inspect their own equipment daily, follow a proper conditioning program and refrain from the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances. Students, parents and guardians should be aware that Sudden Cardiac Arrest is the leading cause of death among student-athletes during exercise in the United States and can only be detected by cardiovascular screening.

While every student is required to have a medical exam by a licensed medical professional every 395 days in order to participate in Orange County Schools' (OCS) athletics programs, these medical exams do not typically include cardiovascular screenings. If a student experiences an injury/illness or change in his/her health status while participating on one of OCS sports teams, it is the responsibility of said student-athlete to inform his/her Head Coach/Athletic Director and/or a Licensed Athletic Trainer and adhere to the established injury management guidelines, which includes total rehabilitation and reassessments before being released to return to full participation.

Participation in any sport exposes the participant to the risk of concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. All concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Be aware that any student removed from a practice or competition due to a suspected concussion, will not return to participation that day. After that day, written authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.) on the required NCHSAA Return to Play form will be required in order for the student to return to participation.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Students must meet all requirements of athletic participation as established by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Orange County Schools Board of Education (OCS). These include, but may not be limited to, the following.

RESIDENCY/TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS

Students admitted to the Orange County Schools based on domicile pursuant to [Policy 4120](#) students will be assigned the school of the appropriate grade span within the attendance area of the student's domicile. For a definition of the term "domicile" and an explanation of how it applies to unemancipated minors and to the children of divorced and separated parents, see Policy 4120.2: Students who change domicile within the school district during the school year may enroll at the school in the attendance area of the new domicile or, at the option of the parents or guardians, may complete the school year at the previously assigned school without bus transportation. Such students will ordinarily be reassigned for the next school year but may request a transfer pursuant to this policy.

Under the North Carolina High School Athletic Association's rules and regulations, students participating in interscholastic athletics who transfer from one school to another in the same school district must generally sit out of interscholastic sports for 365 days unless the transfer is associated with a bona fide change in domicile. While school districts may develop eligibility criteria to allow for continued participation in interscholastic sports following a transfer, no student may participate in the same sport at a second school during the same season unless the transfer is associated with a bona fide change in domicile.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

High School

- The student passed at least seventy (70) percent of the courses taken in the preceding semester.
- Students must meet local promotion standards: According to [OCS Board Policy 3420](#).
- Students also MUST be enrolled in at least 3 courses during first semester to be eligible during the second semester.
- Be in attendance 85% of the previous semester and must attend at least half of the school day to be considered present.
- Students cannot turn 19 years of age on or before August 31 of current academic year.
- Students cannot participate in athletics after completing 8 semesters of high school.
- Students cannot have participated in more than 4 seasons of any particular sport after initial entry into 9th grade.
- Students cannot participate after graduating from high school.

Home School/Dual Enrollment

A 2019 rule change by the NCHSAA allows home school students who are dually enrolled in an OCS high school to participate in high school athletics. Home school students who are dually enrolled in accordance with the school system's enrollment and assignment policies and procedures are eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics if they comply with all of the following.

- a. The student must present a home school card from the Division of Nonpublic Education for the previous and current years, as well as a transcript, attendance record, and record immunizations.
- b. The student must submit proof that the student has been enrolled in a registered home school for 365 days prior to participation in athletics.
- c. Prior to the first date of practice, the student must provide the results of a nationally standardized achievement test, taken within the last year, that indicates the student was on grade level at the time the test was taken. This must be approved by a content specialist in OCS.
- d. The student must participate in 4 classes in an OCS high school. At least one class must be taken on an OCS campus each semester.
- e. The student must pass all classes in which the student is enrolled at the assigned school in order to maintain athletic eligibility.
- f. Once dually enrolled and deemed eligible to participate in athletics, the student must maintain continuous dual enrollment. Failure to maintain continuous dual enrollment would render the student ineligible for athletic participation for 365 days.
- g. The student must notify the principal of the assigned school in writing of the student's intent to try out for an athletic team at least 10 days prior to the first practice date of each sport season in which the student wishes to participate. Failure to comply with this requirement renders the student ineligible for that sport season.
- h. The student must comply with all other applicable NCHSAA rules and regulations regarding eligibility for athletic participation.

A dually enrolled student who transitions to full enrollment within the school system will then be governed by NCHSAA rules and regulations regarding fully enrolled students.

Middle School

- Student must be in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade (6th graders cannot participate in Tackle Football)
- Student must meet local promotion standards: According to Board Policy 3420,
- Seventh and eighth grade student's initial eligibility will be determined at the beginning of each school year. To establish initial eligibility, a student must have been promoted from the previous year's grade, meet all the state standards and have maintained an overall "C" average for the previous nine weeks with no more than one (1) failing mark. Students who are promoted have met the standard. Summer school and other programs do not affect the calculation of the average of the previous nine weeks' grades. Subsequent eligibility will be determined each nine weeks grading period. The student must maintain an

overall “C” (2.0 GPA) average for the nine weeks with no more than one failing mark. Refer to the state handbook for attendance requirements. A sixth-grade student will be determined eligible at the beginning of the school year as long as he or she meets state’s attendance rules and has been promoted from 5th grade. However, if during the fourth nine weeks in 6th grade he or she did not meet the above eligibility “C” average, he or she will be considered on academic probationary status as per the appeal process.

- Appeal Process: If at the end of the nine-week grading period a student does not meet the conference eligibility requirements, but receives no more than one failing mark; he or she may appeal to the principal to be allowed to continue in a probationary status. This appeal must be accompanied by an Academic Improvement Plan developed and signed by the student, the teachers and the parent/s or guardian/s. The plan will include careful monitoring of progress by the coach, AD, principal and school counselor. If at the next progress report period, which is the midpoint of the nine-week grading period, the student appears to be making satisfactory progress as determined by the principal and AD, he or she will be allowed to continue to participate until the next nine weeks grades are calculated. At that time, if the probationary student meets the eligibility grade requirements, he or she will no longer be on probation. If he or she does not meet the grade requirements, then he or she will be considered ineligible until the time as his or her nine-week grades meet the eligibility requirements. A student may not be on probation for 2 consecutive nine weeks.
- Exceptional Children Eligibility: If a student receives a letter grade, follow OPAC guidelines regarding eligibility. If a student is self-contained or receives special services and is graded pass/fail and is meeting IEP established goals, that student is eligible. If goals are not being met, they are not eligible.
- Student cannot turn 15 years of age on or before August 31 of the current academic year
- Student can only compete in athletics for (up to 6) semesters after first entry into 6th grade

ATTENDANCE

A student must have been in attendance for 85% or 13.5 of the school days from the previous semester [daily attendance not period attendance] in order to be eligible to compete on athletic teams during the current semester. (A waiver of the 85% policy can only be granted through the Superintendent’s Designee). A student must be in attendance at least one half of the school day to be eligible to practice with their team, take part in any team activity, or participate in an athletic event on that day. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in advance by the Superintendent’s Designee, in communication with the Athletic Director or Principal of the school. All absences count toward the 85% rule. This included excused and unexcused absences. There are no exemptions during exam periods.

INSURANCE

Group accident insurance programs will be made available to students each year. In arranging for this insurance, the Board will make every reasonable attempt to identify a company offering comprehensive insurance at economical rates. Dental insurance will also be made available to students. Information on these plans will be provided through school publications. Purchase of insurance constitutes an agreement between the student and/or parent and the insurance company. Please refer to [Board Policy 4220](#). The school system is not a party to this agreement. The school system does not assume any contractual responsibility for expenses not covered by insurance. Students who choose to participate in programs that may have a higher risk of physical injury than most school activities, including interscholastic athletic programs, intramural athletic programs, marching bands, cheerleading, and activity groups making overnight trips or excursions, are required to furnish

proof of accident insurance through the group plan or comparable coverage. For off-campus educational experiences, it is the responsibility of the principal to determine that each firm or business providing work-study experience for a student carries appropriate insurance coverage for the protection of the student or that the student is covered by student accident insurance or has furnished a waiver signed by his or her parent or guardian. The Superintendent may designate other activities, including certain school trips, as requiring accident insurance. Legal References: G.S. 115C-36

REQUIRED PRE-PARTICIPATION FORMS

No student will be allowed to participate in any tryout, practice, scrimmage or contest before all required participation forms are signed in all appropriate spaces and on file with the school. These forms include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- **OCS Athletic Participation Parental Permission Form** - this form can be found on the OCS Schools website. It contains a statement of the student's residence, emergency contact person and contact information, the insurance waiver agreement, the Concussion Awareness statement (Gfeller-Waller Act) and the assumption of risk agreement that both student and parent/ guardian must sign acknowledging the risk of injury
- **Medical Exam Form**- this form can also be found on the OCS website and /or the NCHSAA website. Every student is required to have a medical exam performed by a licensed medical professional every 395 days. This is the medical exam form the doctor or physician's assistant must complete, sign and stamp.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

Participation in athletics is completely voluntary. It is a privilege to be a member of a school's athletic team; a privilege which can only be earned when students abide by the rules of the state, the district, the school and of that specific team. Our student-athletes and coaches are expected to be models of good behavior and sportsmanship. They are representing the school and the community at athletic events throughout the area and across the state. A participating student athlete who engages in any conduct or behavior on or off campus, which is inconsistent with the student's position as a role model or representative of Orange County Schools, is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or removal from a team, as determined by the principal or school officials. The district and each individual school reserve the right to revoke or restrict the privilege of participating in athletics if a student fails to live up to expectations and/or violates school, district, state or team policies.

Providing false information about residence, domicile, home address or with whom the student actually resides is grounds for revoking the privilege of participating in athletics and can lead to a 365-day suspension from participation in athletics statewide by the NCHSAA.

STUDENT MANAGERS / STATISTICIANS / TRAINERS EXPECTATIONS

These individuals are considered participants of the sporting event and should follow the same guidelines as players and cheerleaders for their sport.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The NCHSAA defines sportsmanship as the quality of responsible behavior characterized by a spirit of generosity and a genuine concern for opponents, officials and teammates.

Student-athletes should:

- Students represent the school and therefore have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through your behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.

- Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory, therefore approve and applaud good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Respect the judgment and integrity of game officials at all times.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

All student-athletes and coaches are expected to exemplify and follow these guidelines. When an athlete exhibits behavior that is detrimental to these concepts of sportsmanship and fair play, he/she can be removed from a given practice or contest and disciplinary action taken, including possible removal from the team.

TAUNTING

Includes actions that are meant to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others. Any form of taunting is not in keeping with conduct or behaviors that promote sportsmanship. In all sports, taunting is considered a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul and is subject to immediate ejection from a contest.

EJECTION POLICY

The NCHSAA Ejection Policy applies to all persons involved in an athletic contest, including student-athletes, coaches, managers and game administrators. The NCHSAA may review video, when available, to invoke ejections or sanctions not reported by game officials. Video clips must be presented to the NCHSAA office for committee review within two (2) business days of the contest. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest:

- (a) Fighting, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - (1) An altercation between 2 or more parties that includes swinging, hitting, punching and/or kicking;
 - (2) An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, feet, or equipment;
 - (3) An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made;
 - (4) An attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate;
- (b) Leaving the bench area -- coming on to the playing area illegally;
- (c) Flagrant contact, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - (1) Maliciously running over the catcher/fielder without attempt to avoid contact
 - (2) Excessive contact out-of-bounds or away from playing action that is unwarranted and extreme in nature.
 - (3) Tackling/taking down a player dangerously in a malicious manner
 - (4) Illegally hitting or cross-checking an opponent in an excessive manner with the stick in lacrosse;
- (d) Biting observed or determined by an official;
- (e) Taunting, baiting or spitting toward an opponent or official;
- (f) Profanity, inappropriate language, racial/ethnic slurs, sexist, or homophobic language;
- (g) Obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate or instigate;
- (h) Disrespectfully addressing an official (physically contacting an official is subject to automatic expulsion and can result in ineligibility for remainder of career); or,
- (i) Use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or other controlled substances.

Penalties for an Ejection

- (a) Ejections during scrimmages
 - (1) Coach or student-athlete is suspended from the remainder of the scrimmage - this is inclusive

of multiple scrimmage events on the same day (jamboree).

- (2) Student-athletes must complete the NFHS “Sportsmanship” course before being eligible to compete in next scrimmage or contest.
- (3) Coach must complete the NFHS “Teaching and Modeling Behavior” course for any student-athlete or coach ejection during the scrimmage.

(b) Ejection Penalty - A membership entity shall impose at least the following penalties on a student, coach, or school official who is ejected from an interscholastic athletic contest:

- (1) For the first offense, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
- (2) For a second offense, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended for the next two games at that level of play (varsity or junior varsity);
- (3) For a third offense, the person shall be suspended for one calendar year; and
- (4) A coach who is suspended shall not coach any team for any grade level during the period of suspension.
- (5) Penalties are cumulative from sport to sport and from sport season to sport season. If a member of the school’s coaching staff is not present to assume an ejected coach’s duties, the contest shall be terminated by a forfeit.

(c) Penalties are not cumulative academic year to academic year.

(d) Ejected student-athletes may practice during their suspensions but may not play.

(e) Ejected coaches may not be on the premises for a contest. The coach must leave the premises (press box, bleachers, adjacent field, etc.) and must not have any type of contact with the team.

(f) Student-athletes who are disqualified or ejected during a contest will remain in the team area for supervision

(g) Anytime a student-athlete or coach is ejected from a contest, he or she does not participate or coach the remainder of that day.

(h) The coach is not permitted to be at the game site during his or her suspension, but the student-athlete is allowed at the game site.

(i) Any student-athlete or administrator who is ejected or disqualified from a contest is required to complete the NFHS [“Sportsmanship”](#) course before being eligible to return to competition. Any coach who is ejected from a contest must take the [NFHS “Teaching and Modeling Behavior”](#) course before being eligible to return to competition.

(j) If a team has student-athletes ejected due to fighting, the head coach must take the [NFHS Learning Course “Teaching and Modeling Behavior”](#). It must be completed before coaching in the next game.

(k) Clarification For Soccer Only

- (1) Coaches and athletic directors will be responsible for tracking yellow cards accumulated by their student-athletes.
- (2) Accumulated yellow cards by an individual student-athlete will result in the following:
 - (a) Five (5) yellow cards: post-game ejection.
 - (b) An additional five (5) yellow cards - second post-game ejection.
 - (c) An additional five (5) yellow cards - third post-game ejection.
- (3) A red card disqualification that is not an ejection is the equivalent of two yellow cards. (4) Penalties are enforced at the conclusion of the game, and an ejection report must also be filed at the appropriate time for accumulation of yellow cards.
- (5) Yellow cards are reset to zero once playoffs begin (all previous penalties must be served). (6) If a student-athlete accumulates three (3) yellow cards in the playoffs, that student-athlete is suspended for the next game. If also during the playoffs a student-athlete accumulates a total of five (5) yellow cards, the student-athlete is suspended for an additional game.

TRANSPORTATION

All transportation to and from athletic contests for team members (including managers and statisticians) is provided in OCS owned vehicles and all team members **MUST** travel in these vehicles. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that athletes behave responsibly and in accordance with the school district's bus safety guidelines. Athletes should be reminded that as team members they are representing Orange County Schools and their behavior and decorum will reflect on their team. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the school principal or his/her designee prior to the contest.

Eating on Trips

During athletic trips, coaches must communicate in advance if the team plans to stop and eat on the ride home.

HAZING

Students engaged in what is known as hazing or to aid or abet any other student in hazing. Hazing is to annoy any student by playing abusive or ridiculous tricks on him/her, to frighten, scold, beat or harass him/her or to subject him/her to personal indignity. Such actions violate North Carolina statute (G.S. 14.35), [OCS Board Policies 4300 RP](#)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Student-athletes are role models and leaders in their schools and communities. As a result, they are expected to adhere to high standards- physically and socially. OCS strongly discourages the use of any legal drugs, inhalants or medications contrary to the manner in which they were prescribed, as well as any use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco products by our students. By discouraging the use and/or abuse of these substances, OCS emphasizes its concern for the health of our students and of the long-term physical and emotional effects of chemical use on student's health and well-being. [OCS Board Policies 4325](#) reflect the District's support of existing state laws that restrict the use of, and/or possession of illegal substances and establishes standards of conduct for our students. OCS also does not support nor condone the use of any performance enhancing drugs. Any student-athletes found in possession of any illegal substances will face disciplinary actions mandated by Board policy

TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLE USE

The use of school system technological resources, including access to the Internet, is a privilege, not a right. Individual users of the school system's technological resources are responsible for their behavior and communications when using those resources. Responsible use of school system technological resources is use that is ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of student learning. Each user has the responsibility to respect others in the school community and on the Internet. General student and employee behavior standards, including those prescribed in applicable Board policies, the Employee Code of Ethics, the Code of Student Conduct, and other regulations and school rules, apply to use of the Internet and other school technological resources. Please refer to [OCS Board Policy 3225/7320](#), and [3225-P](#) for student internet acceptable use.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The use of social media is an integral part of communication and can connect people in various ways. Orange County Schools expects all of our student-athletes and coaches who use social media platforms to adhere to [OCS Board Policy 3225/7230 Technology Responsible Use](#). Additionally, student-athletes and coaches are expected to follow all social media expectations:

- Take responsibility for my online profile, including my posts and any photos, videos or other recordings posted by others in which I appear.
- Do not degrade my opponents before, during, or after games.
- Only post positive things about my teammates, coaches, opponents, and officials.

- Use social media to purposefully promote abilities, team, and community.
- Consider "Is this the me, I want you to see?" before posting anything online.
- Ignore any negative comments and not retaliate.
- If a teammate posts something potentially negative online, bring it to the attention of a coach or Athletic Director.
- Represent my sport(s), school, team, family and community at all times, in a positive manner.
- It is prohibited to post information or comments using OCS proprietary and copyrighted logos on unauthorized social media sites or webpages.

Any violation of our social media policy may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and/or dismissal from the team.

QUITTING A TEAM

Commitment and dedication are two-character traits that participation in athletics help to promote. With that in mind, no student-athlete may quit one team in order to begin participating on another sports team at the school during the same sport season, unless by the mutual agreement of the athlete, the coach of the team the athlete is leaving and the school's athletic director. Quitting a sport is not to be viewed as a penalty that prevents an athlete from being allowed to participate on other sport teams. However, the athlete who quits a team cannot participate in another sport until the season of the team they quit has ended. No athlete may quit one sport and participate in off-season workouts or skill-development for another sport during that same season.

PLAYING TIME

The amount of playing time an athlete receives on any level team at OCS is a privilege, not a right. While we are committed to developing all our athletes, most of an athlete's development should take place during practice. Practice is where you prepare to play. Playing time is earned in practice and is not an entitlement. The seniority of an athlete is not a factor in determining if a player will start or how much they will play. Players will be evaluated by their coaches on their athletic ability, work ethic, attitude, and knowledge of the coach's strategy/strategies when determining playing time. We must teach our athletes that most things in life are not given to us and for our program/teams to be excellent, time must be spent developing those skills.

RETURN OF EQUIPMENT

All uniforms and equipment issued by the school to an athlete must be returned in good shape or must be paid for before an athlete can play another sport or in another season. Seniors will not be eligible to participate in graduation exercises until all school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for. Student athletes who transfer will have all records held until school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for.

WEIGHT ROOM USE

- The weight room is a common-use facility. Each team will have equal access to this facility, with priority given to in-season sports.
- Coaches will schedule the weight room through the athletic department.
- No student is permitted to use the weight room without direct supervision from an OCS coach.
- Students must have proper workout attire, consisting of a clean, dry T-shirt, athletic shorts, socks, and athletic shoes (no cleats). Students must remove all jewelry before entering the weight room.
- Students are responsible for re-racking and cleaning the weight room after each use.
- Violations of weight room rules or policies may result in a loss of privileges.

ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOLS STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Because an educated citizenry is essential to good government and can be attained only in an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning, the Orange County Board of Education requires the maintenance of good order in the schools. The purpose of this section of the handbook is to provide students, parents, guardians, school personnel, and the public with a comprehensive description of the expectations for the behavior of student-athletes enrolled in Orange County Schools. All students shall comply with the Code of Student Conduct, state and federal laws, School Board policies and local school rules governing student behavior and conduct. Please refer to [4300 OCS BP Student Code of Conduct](#).

*****Remember, participating in extracurricular/co-curricular activities is a privilege and not a right.*****

1. OBLIGATIONS AS A STUDENT:

In addition to the rules of this code of conduct, a participating student must at all times conform to the rules of conduct of the extra-curricular/co-curricular organization in which he/she is participating, as well as all school and school system rules. She/he shall not expect nor receive special privileges with regard to meeting his/her academic requirements or obligations to teachers and any other school personnel.

2. OBLIGATIONS AS AN EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPANT:

- a.) Each sport activity has certain individual requirements that lead to the development of specific skills requiring different types of training. Every high school student-athlete has an obligation to know the rules of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association and as well as those rules governing his/her sport. Students participating in clubs or co-curricular activities are responsible for learning and adhering to the by-laws of their respective organizations.
- b.) As an extracurricular participant, the student not only represents himself/herself, fellow team members, coaches, and teachers, but also the school and its student body. For these reasons, the participating student is expected to display the highest form of character and sportsmanship throughout the school year. If at any time a student's actions bring harm or discredit to the organization of which the student is a member or to the school or if a student's language or behavior reflects negatively on the organization or school the student may be subjected to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or removal from the extra-curricular/co-curricular organization.
- c.) As an extracurricular participant, the student not only represents himself/herself, fellow team members, coaches, and teachers, but also the school and its student body. For these reasons, the participating student is expected to display the highest form of character and sportsmanship throughout the school year. If at any time a student's actions bring harm or discredit to the organization of which the student is a member or to the school or if a student's language or behavior reflects negatively on the organization or school the student may be subjected to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or removal from the extra-curricular/co-curricular organization.

3.) OBLIGATIONS TO THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY:

A participating student is supported actively by the school and the community. Many volunteers work long hours to provide equipment and facilities for our extracurricular groups to have the opportunity to compete on an even basis with any established program in the state. Participating students are held accountable for the equipment/materials issued to them and shall reimburse the school for any equipment/materials not returned or damaged beyond normal wear and tear. Participating students are expected to exercise respect for and take care of the facilities and equipment provided by the school and booster club.

IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:

(ISS) ~ IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS:

If a student athlete is in ISS for the day, they will not be allowed to participate or be a spectator the day of their suspension.

(OSS) ~ OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS:

If a student athlete has OSS, he or she will not be allowed to participate or to be a spectator during the time of the suspension.

USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS/ALCOHOL IN OCS ATHLETICS

Unauthorized or illegal drugs and alcohol are a threat to safe and orderly schools and will not be tolerated. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that this policy is consistently applied throughout the school system. Students also are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting, distributing, selling, attempting to distribute or sell, or aiding or concealing another student's possession, use, purchase, or distribution of drug paraphernalia, counterfeit (fake) drugs, or non-alcoholic beer. Students may not participate in any way in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on school property. Possession or use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is not in violation of this policy if such drugs are possessed and used in accordance with Board policy. The principal may authorize other lawful uses of substances that are otherwise prohibited by this policy.

A.) USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS/ALCOHOL CONSEQUENCES:

1.) FIRST OFFENSE for Possession or Use:

Any student in violation of this policy for possession or use will be removed from athletic activities for 10 Calendar Days.

2.) SECOND OFFENSE for Possession or Use:

Any student with a second offense of this policy, during the calendar year for possession or use, shall be removed from athletic activities for 15 Calendar Days.

3.) THIRD OFFENSE for Possession or Use:

~ Removal from athletic activities for the remainder of that calendar year.

B.) TOBACCO USAGE:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** Two (2) School Days Suspension from athletic activities and recommended that a tobacco class be completed before they return. Conference with the Head Coach.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** Three (3) School Days Suspension from athletic activities, and, recommended that a tobacco class be completed before they return. Conference with Athletic Director.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** Five (5) School Days Suspension from athletic activities recommended that a tobacco class be completed before they return. Conference with School Administrator/ District Athletic Director.

C.) CRIMINAL CHARGES:

Any participating student charged with a criminal offense other than a traffic infraction will be suspended from extracurricular activities while the Principal/District Athletic Director investigates the underlying circumstances and assesses the impact of the matter on the school environment. The Principal along with the District Athletic Director will review each offense individually and determine what action will be taken.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

Any participating student in attendance and checking-out with parental permission will be excused to participate in extracurricular activities such as practices, games or events. Any participating student absent in the morning hours must be in attendance half of the school day to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. Any student-athlete who quits officially or dismissed from a team before the season is over (including the playoffs) may not practice or participate with any other athletic team until that season is completely over (including the playoffs). A student-athlete is considered a member of a team if he/she is listed on the Eligibility Sheet.

All participating students are required to turn in all uniforms and equipment that is issued to them.

A participating student may not participate in any other extra-curricular activity until he/she has turned in his/her uniform and equipment to the coach/faculty representative.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

The role that parents play in the life of a student-athlete has a tremendous impact on the student's athletic experience. Among the many responsibilities of a parent is to give their child roots and wings to soar. The roots come from a solid sense of security and protection, a clear sense of being unconditionally loved and a strong sense of self-worth, but not over inflated self-esteem or entitlement. The wings and the ability to fly both come from developing the right muscles, testing out the air currents through repeated trials and errors, and having the courage to eventually leave the nest. We encourage parents to support your student unconditionally. Making mistakes is part of learning.

Recognize what your student is trying to do, the effort he/she is giving, not necessarily the results. You can also help your student learn the importance of teamwork and sacrificing for the greater good of the team by modeling teamwork. If possible, get involved in your school's athletic booster club or find ways you can volunteer to help support your student's team. Be ever mindful that your student's teammates, coaches and game officials are not the enemy. Avoid being critical of other players, the coaches or officials. It is extremely conflicting for a student to demonstrate respect for those whom he/she is fully aware that his/her parents do not respect. With these thoughts in mind, here are a few guidelines:

- Attend the pre-season parents' meeting; sign and return all required participation forms. ▪
- Abide by all regulations, rules and procedures for our athletic programs.
- Attend as many of your child's events as possible.
 - Understand the ultimate purpose of athletics. It exists as an integral part of the total educational mission of the school, and is meant to teach life-long lessons. Recognize and help reinforce that this is interscholastic athletics and NOT professional sports. The goals of each are very different and should be remembered as such.
 - Appreciate the educational opportunity that your child is receiving in our athletic program. This includes the enormous time and effort provided by the coaches.
 - Understand that the goals of the team & athletic program are more important than the hopes & dreams you have for your child.
 - Support the coach in public around other parents, fans and particularly at home in front of your student.
 - Learn the rules of the game in order to be a better-informed spectator.

- Avoid putting pressure on your son/daughter to start, to score, or be the star of the team; emphasize team first. Dwelling on playing time or stats is a selfish act and not conducive to building the team-first concept.
- Be respectful of other players & their parents. You never know whose grandparents, aunt, uncle or family friend may be nearby.
- Serve as beacons of good sportsmanship, to your student and other parents as well. Show respect for opponents and game officials. Treat all visiting teams in a manner in which you would expect you and your child to be treated.
- Remain in spectator areas at all times during competition.
- Express concerns and questions in a courteous and civil manner and do it at the appropriate time and in the proper setting.

Appropriate Communication from Parents to Coaches

1. Notification of any specific medical abnormalities or medical needs of your child
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Notification (in advance) of any transportation plans that deviate from stated district and school policy
4. Specific concerns early in the season regarding a coach's expectations

Appropriate Concerns Parents Should Address with Coaches

1. The treatment of your child emotionally or physically
2. Safety and health concerns regarding your child
3. Concerns about your child's grades, behavior or disciplinary actions towards him/her
4. Ways to help your child mature and improve
5. Realistic evaluation of your child's opportunity to play collegiately and/or questions about the process of college recruitment
6. Team rules or policies that are unclear

Issues NOT APPROPRIATE for Parents to Discuss with Coaches

1. Game strategy
2. Playing time or positioning of team personnel
3. Play calling
4. Any other students besides your own child

To Discuss an Appropriate Concern with Your Child's Coach

1. Call the school and schedule a meeting with the coach
2. If you cannot reach the coach, contact the school's Athletic Director who will schedule the meeting with the coach

***NOTE:** under NO circumstances should parent/coach meetings occur immediately prior to or immediately after practice or contest. Please use the 24-hour rule. These tend to be emotional times and NOT productive.*

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

1. Meet with your child's coach
2. If no satisfactory resolution, meet with the school's Athletic Director
3. If still no satisfactory resolution, meet with the school's Administration
4. If there are still concerns, contact the District's Director of Athletics

EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES

The coach is responsible for setting an example for his or her players and setting the tone for the program. A coach who behaves professionally will encourage others around him or her to do the same. Coaches must exhibit proper leadership and conduct, be fair and consistent disciplinarians, show respect to opponents and officials, and instruct, train and encourage every player on their team. The coach must be a strong, positive,

respectful role model for his/her athletes by being a consistent ambassador of the game, his/her school and Orange County Schools. Coaches should conduct pre-season meetings with players and their parents/guardians in order to convey expectations and team rules and establish a line of communication. All coaches are expected to have an understanding of conference, district and state athletic policies, as well as the rules and regulations governing their respective sport.

Coaches /AD Educational Athletics Certifications & Courses

1. [Fundamentals of Coaching Course](#)- Mandatory
2. First-Aid, CPR, AED Course- Mandatory (Every two years)
3. [Concussion Course](#)- Mandatory (Annually)
4. [Heat related Illness Course](#)- Recommended
5. [Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course](#)- Recommended
6. [National Certified Athletic Administrator Certification \(CAA\)- AD's Only \(Recommended\)](#)
7. [Registered Athletic Administrator \(RAA\)- AD's Only \(Recommended\)](#)
8. [Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator \(RMAA\) Middle School AD's Only \(Recommended\)](#)

The National Federation of State Associations (NFHS) and the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) both recognize 14 legal duties of a coach:

1. **Duty to Plan** – A coach must demonstrate awareness of the maturity, physical development and readiness of athletes with appropriate plans for instruction, conditioning and supervision.
2. **Duty to Supervise** – A coach must be physically present, provide competent instruction, structure practices that are appropriate for the age and maturity of players, prevent foreseeable injuries and respond to injury or trauma in an approved manner. This also requires coaches to make sure facilities are locked and students denied access when a competent staff member cannot be present.
3. **Duty to Assess Athletes Readiness for Practice and Competition** – Athletics administrators and coaches are required to assess the health and physical or maturational readiness skills and physical condition of athletes. A progression of skill development and conditioning improvement should be apparent from practice plans. Athletes must also be medically screened in accordance with state association regulations before participating in practice or competition.
4. **Duty to Maintain Safe Playing Conditions** – Coaches are considered trained professionals who possess a higher level of knowledge and skill that permits them to identify foreseeable causes of injury inherent in defective indoor and outdoor facilities or hazardous environments.
5. **Duty to Provide Safe Equipment** – Courts have held athletic supervisors responsible to improve unsafe environments, repair or remove defective equipment or disallow athlete access.
6. **Duty to Instruct Properly** – Athletic practices must be characterized by instruction that accounts for a logical sequence of fundamentals that lead to an enhanced progression of player knowledge, skill, and capability.
7. **Duty to Match Athletes Appropriately** – Athletes should be matched with consideration for maturity skill, age, size and speed. To the degree possible, mismatches should be avoided in all categories.
8. **Duty to Condition Properly** – Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning regimens that prepare athletes sequentially for more challenging practices and competitive activities.
9. **Duty to Warn** – Coaches are required to warn parents and athletes of unsafe practices specific to a sport and the potential for injury or death. This warning should be issued in writing and both athletes and parents should be required to provide written certification of their comprehension.

10. **Duty to Ensure Athletes are Covered by Injury Insurance** – Athletics administrators and coaches must screen athletes to ensure that family and/or school insurance provides basic level of medical coverage. Athletes should not be allowed to participate without injury insurance.

11. **Duty to Provide Emergency Care** – Coaches are expected to be able to administer standard emergency care (first aid, CPR) in response to a range of traumatic injuries.

12. **Duty to Design a Proper Emergency Response Plan** – Coaches must design plans to ensure an expedited response by EMS and an effective transition to the care and supervision of emergency medical personnel.

13. **Duty to Provide Proper Transportation** – In general, bonded, commercial carriers should be used for out of town transportation. Self or family transportation for local competition may be allowed if parents have adequate insurance coverage for team members other than their family members.

14. **Duty to Select, Train, and Supervise Coaches** – Administrators have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate skill and knowledge levels exist among members of the coaching staff to ensure appropriate levels of safety & well-being among athletes.

Consequently, Orange County Schools expects that each athletic coach in our district, whether certified, classified, contracted or volunteer, who provides supervisory and instructional service in our interscholastic athletic programs shall:

1. Show respect for players, parents, other coaches and staff.
2. Respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials.
3. Establish and model fair play, sportsmanship, and proper conduct during practices/contests and in the community.
4. Never place winning above the value of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character and sportsmanship.
5. Ensure that all players follow all aspects of the Gfeller-Waller Act and that player safety and welfare is the highest priority.
6. Ensure that all required forms and documentation for participation are on file for every athlete under the coach's supervision before the athlete is allowed to participate in any athletic activities.
7. Provide proper supervision of student-athletes while under the coach's direction.
8. Use discretion and proper language when providing constructive criticism and when reprimanding players.
9. Have completed the NFHS "Fundamentals of Coaching" and the NFHS "Concussion in Sports" courses prior to the date of the first practice in the sport in which they are coaching (high school coaches only).
10. Understand the proper administrative chain of command and refer all requests or grievances through proper channels, equipment purchases, fundraising, program funding, eligibility, parental concerns, etc.
11. Consistently require all players to adhere to the established rules and standards of the game and demonstrate sportsmanship.
12. Properly instruct each player in the safe use and care of equipment and uniforms.
13. Maintain updated inventory of all team equipment, including uniforms, and secure all practice and play areas related to their respective teams, including locking all doors and gates, as well as turning off all lights after practices/contests.
14. Not show students sexually explicit pictures or materials, nor send excessively personal letters, cards, electronic messages or gifts to students, and should avoid giving students rides when it may result in a student being alone in the car with the adult.
15. Not recruit student-athletes from other schools.
16. Not exert undue influence on a student-athlete's decision to enroll in a particular athletic program at any public or private college, university or post-secondary educational institution.

17. Not suggest, provide, or encourage any athlete to use non-prescription drugs, anabolic steroids, or any substance to increase physical development or performance that is not approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, the Surgeon General, or the American Medical Association.

TEAM SELECTIONS

Students try out for sports teams voluntarily. For some of our athletic teams that limit the number of team members, students run the risk of being cut from that team. Choosing the members and captains of athletic teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches. The criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach. Additionally, coaches will inform student-athletes whether or not they were selected for the team and will be available to answer any student-athlete questions.

While selection of a team is a difficult process for all parties involved (coach, student-athlete and parents) some things should be remembered:

- Tryouts are open to all students who meet all prescribed rules of eligibility, including completion of all required pre-participation forms along with necessary parental signatures.
- Before tryouts begin, coaches will provide an explanation of the skills and abilities to be evaluated as well as the commitment necessary to make the team.
- Students should not try out for a team unless they are willing and able to make the emotional, physical and time commitments necessary should they make the team.
- The tryout period for each team should be of a sufficient duration to allow the coach to make a reasonable assessment of each candidate's ability and potential
- Students who are not present on the first day of tryouts due to lack of proper paperwork or without being excused by the coach in advance forfeit the minimum 2-day tryout period.
- Attendance is required at ALL practices/games/scrimmages scheduled including those on non-school days, unless the student-athlete has prior approval from the coach.
- Only the head coach, school Administration or Athletic Director can excuse a student-athlete from practices and contests. Failure of a student-athlete to attend practice or contests is grounds for removal from the team.
- Sunday practices or any required team gatherings are **ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED**.
- Orange County School Board policy prohibits athletic practices or contests on any day that school is canceled or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions (unless special permission is granted by the Superintendent or his/her designee).

COMMUNICATIONS PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM COACHES

1. Expectations the coach has for your student and other players on the team
2. Philosophy of the coach (general and sport-specific)
3. Team requirements (i.e. special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.)
4. Locations and times of all practices and games/contests
5. Any additional team requirements- i.e., fees, special equipment, overnight trips, off-season conditioning programs
6. Procedure for dealing with injuries should they occur during practice or at away contests
7. List of team rules and consequences including discipline that results in denial of a student's participation
8. Primary Methods of Communication (Emails, DragonFly, Website, Etc.)

GAME ADMISSION - TICKETS

Orange County Schools charges admission for the entry of athletic events. Tickets can be purchased electronically through the digital ticketing service, *GoFan*, or with cash at the designated game day ticketing entrance.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPECTATORS

- Spectators should comply with all School Board policies regarding the use of alcohol, tobacco products, or any controlled substances while on school property and/or attending athletic events.
- Non-compliance of any 'Code of Conduct' obligation can lead to the removal of a spectator from a game.
- Spectators should be a role model for positive behavior while attending athletic events.
- Spectators should support their team while enjoying the skill and competition.
- Spectators should remember that school athletics are an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for the students.
 - Spectators should learn the rules of the game in order to understand and appreciate every game situation.
 - Spectators should show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups. Spectators should recognize and show appreciation for outstanding plays by either team.
 - Spectators should only participate in cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
 - Taunting, foul and abusive language, inflammatory remarks, and disrespectful signs and behavior are not acceptable.
 - Spectators should respect the judgment of game officials, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
 - Spectators should complement and participate in school and community efforts to promote good sportsmanship at athletic contests.
 - Spectators should never openly criticize players on their own team or on the opposing team.
 - Spectators should never approach the team bench area or a Coach before, during or after an athletic event. – There is a 24-hour rule for Parent Conferences, with the Coach, after an event. [If a parent/spectator is removed from the game, the Principal should trespass them and the Principal will meet with the parent before they can return to an athletic event on campus (&/or away sporting events).]
 - Parents should be reminded that they are role models for our student-athletes.

SENIOR NIGHT/DAY RECOGNITION

Senior Night/Day is designed to acknowledge and celebrate senior student-athletes who have been a part of the athletic program. In an effort to maintain a level of consistency throughout OCS athletic programs, senior student-athletes will be recognized in a similar manner for all sports. Each season, senior student-athletes and their escorts will typically be recognized with a small ceremony before, after, or during halftime of each sport's last regular-season home contest. Senior Night/Day celebrations do not include an expectation of playing time for seniors on the team. Playing time and game strategy decisions are always left to the discretion of the coach.

As Senior Night/Day celebrations are planned, the following should occur:

- Each season's Senior Night/Day is organized under the direction of the Head Coach.
 - Head coaches will notify the Athletic Director of the date/competition of planned Senior Night/Day activities.
 - Senior student-athletes and parents should receive in writing, the date, time and place of the Senior Night/Day celebration.
 - After the date and time has been confirmed, senior night should be announced and advertised appropriately.
 - Any awards (plaques, flowers, banners/signs, pictures etc.) or recognition given, must include each senior team member.
 - Banners/Signage – Upon approval of the Head Coach, Athletic Director and Principal, a banner/sign recognizing each senior team member can be displayed within OCS athletic facilities up to ten days prior to the Senior Night/Day celebration. All banners/signs should be removed at the

conclusion of the season.

HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

Participation in High School and Middle School athletics is a privilege involving both responsibilities, risks and rights. The athlete's responsibilities are to play fair, to give his/her best, to keep in training, and to conduct himself/herself with sportsmanship in a manner that will bring credit to the sport and school. Participation in athletics carries with it an inherent risk of accident and serious injury which can be reduced by obeying all safety rules, reporting all physical and hygiene problems to coaches, practicing proper personal hygiene, inspecting one's own equipment daily, following a proper conditioning program and refraining from the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances. The student-athlete has the right to optimal protection against injury which may be secured through good conditioning, technical instruction, proper regulation, conditions of play, and adequate health supervision. Periodic evaluation of each of these factors will help assure a safe and healthful athletic experience for our students.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

The Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act was drafted and implemented to protect the safety of student athletes in North Carolina and was signed into law on June 16, 2011 by Governor Beverly Perdue. There are three major areas of focus in the law and these include: education, emergency action and post-concussion protocol implementation, and clearance/return to play or practice following a suspected concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. It results in the brain not working, as it should. It may or may not cause a person to black out or pass out. It can happen from a fall, a hit to the head, or a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Every student-athlete and his/her parent or legal custodian is required by the Gfeller-Waller Act to review a concussion information sheet explaining the causes and symptoms of a concussion, and then sign a form stating that they have read the sheet and are now aware of the serious nature of concussions and will make the coaches aware if they notice any symptoms of a concussion. If a student-athlete is suspected of suffering a concussion, he/she must be seen by a doctor and go through a series of return-to-play protocols before being cleared by a doctor to resume participation in sports.

CONCUSSION, SECOND IMPACT SYNDROME, & RETURN TO PLAY CRITERIA

Concussion and second impact syndrome are two potentially life-threatening conditions to which student-athletes, especially those involved in contact sports, are exposed. Concussion is a complex injury that is often one of the most difficult to evaluate and manage. Concussion is defined as a traumatic injury to the brain, which can range in severity from mild to severe. These injuries usually result due to a direct blow to the head. They may also result due to rapid acceleration/deceleration of the head, thus causing jarring of the brain within the skull.

Second impact syndrome is a sequel that results when an athlete suffers a second, often minor, head injury after returning to activity before the symptoms of a previous concussion have resolved. This secondary injury leads to engorgement of the cranial veins causing severe swelling of the brain. Most cases of second impact syndrome occur in individuals under the age of 18. Second impact syndrome is a serious condition that can be potentially fatal (50% mortality rate). Concussions usually result in a common set of symptoms which may include headache, nausea, dizziness, blurred vision, excessive fatigue, and possible loss of consciousness. Concussions may also cause an alteration of cognitive functions including difficulty concentrating or remembering, and alterations in mood or emotions. These symptoms may be short-lived (lasting less than 30 minutes) or may linger for several days or weeks.

Orange County Schools considers concussions and second impact syndrome to be significant medical conditions. Therefore, any athlete who suffers a head injury during a practice or game which results in symptoms consistent with those of a concussion, he/she will not be allowed to return to play for the remainder of that game. The injured athlete should be evaluated by the Athletic Trainer to determine the severity of the concussion. If necessary, the athlete will be referred to other medical personnel for further evaluation. No student-athlete will be allowed to return to activity until all post-concussive symptoms have resolved. In

3. **Wind Chill Factor**

- o Monitor wind chill closely as it significantly affects perceived coldness and increases the risk of frostbite. Use wind chill charts to determine safe exposure times.

4. **Dress Code Recommendations**

- o Students must wear winter coats, hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, and insulated boots when temperatures are below 32°F.
- o Encourage layers to allow students to adjust for comfort.

5. **Hydration and Nutrition**

- o Cold weather can dehydrate the body. Ensure students stay hydrated and encourage eating before physical activities.

Activity Guidelines by Age Group

1. **Elementary School (Grades K–5)**

- o Recess: Provide alternative indoor options when temperatures drop below 20°F (-6°C) or if wind chill is below 0°F.
- o Physical Education: Transition to indoor activities when weather is unsafe.

2. **Middle and High School (Grades 6–12)**

- o Sports: Athletic practices and events should adhere to the OCS cold weather plan for cold weather safety.
- o General Activities: Allow outdoor participation only if properly dressed and weather conditions permit safe exposure.

Signs of Cold Stress to Watch For

Staff should be trained to identify early signs of cold-related conditions:

- **Frostbite:** Numbness, tingling, or discoloration (white, gray, or blue) of the skin, especially on fingers, toes, ears, and nose.
- **Hypothermia:** Shivering, confusion, slurred speech, and drowsiness.

Parent and Guardian Communication

1. Notify parents of the school's cold weather guidelines at the start of winter.
2. Encourage parents to dress children appropriately for cold weather.
3. Provide assistance to families in need of winter clothing through school resources or community programs.

Contingency Plans

1. Indoor Options: Prepare gymnasiums, classrooms, or other large indoor spaces for alternative activities.
2. Transportation: Ensure timely updates about delays or cancellations due to extreme cold.

These guidelines should be tailored to local climate conditions, school policies, and community needs.

HEAT and HUMIDITY GUIDELINES

High temperatures and high humidity are potentially dangerous for athletes. Exertional Heat Stroke is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics. Exertional Heat Stroke also results in thousands of emergency room visits and hospitalizations throughout the nation each year. The National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research reports that 35 high school football players died of heat stroke between 1995 and 2010. Coaches and athletes should be aware of the signs and symptoms of exertional heat illness and distress; such as weakness, nausea/vomiting, paleness, headache, lightheadedness, clumsiness, confusion,

stumbling, collapse, obvious behavioral changes and /or other central nervous system problems. To prevent heat related illnesses and ensure the safety of student-athletes the following precautions should be taken in extremely hot or humid situations:

- Avoid any outdoor practices between 11am – 5pm during high heat and humidity conditions.
- Be sure athletes are well hydrated. Plenty of water should be consumed before physical activity begins and there must be frequent water breaks.
- Use heat acclimatization techniques in developing practice plans. Heat acclimatization is the process of allowing the body to progressively adapt to exercising in the heat, so it can cool itself effectively and one can then better and more safely tolerate physical activity in the heat. Full heat acclimatization can take up to 10-14 days for the most important adaptations to occur.
- To the extent feasible, avoid physical activity in direct sunlight.
- Carefully monitor at-risk athletes - those who are obese, unfit, have been recently ill [particularly gastrointestinal illness], have a previous history of exertional heat illness, have the Sickle Cell Trait, or using certain medications.
- Recognize early signs of distress and developing heat illness, immediately remove athletes from activity and begin first aid.

HEAT GUIDELINES for ATHLETIC GAMES, MEETS and PRACTICES

The NCHSAA Heat Guidelines specifically address **practice situations**. This does not mean that these guidelines cannot be used for athletic games and meets. Most athletic games/meets have “built in” breaks for hydration purposes (end of quarter, halftime, change in possession, timeouts, changeovers, substitutions, etc.). Cross country is one sport without “built in” breaks, so we are providing separate Heat Guidelines for Practices and Meets. Below are Heat Guidelines for Athletic Games and Meets, except cross country. **WBGT should be used when possible. If not, then determine the heat index.** This chart will be used by middle and high school athletic programs in determining the procedure and hydration schedule during summer practice in hot weather conditions. Heat Index readings are to be monitored by the coach, and readings should be taken and recorded

prior to the start of practice.

WBGT Index F	Heat Index	Procedure for Athletic Events
Less than 80	Less than 80	Unlimited activity with primary cautions for new or unconditioned athletes or extreme exertion; schedule mandatory rest / water breaks (5 min water / rest break every 30 min)
80-84.9 Caution (Green)	80-90	Normal practice for athletes; closely monitor new or unconditioned athletes and all athletes during extreme exertion. Schedule mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 25 min)
85-87.9 Extreme Caution (Yellow)	91-103	New or unconditioned athletes should not practice. Well-conditioned athletes should have more frequent rest breaks and hydration as well as cautious monitoring for symptoms of heat illness. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 20 min) Have an immersion pool on site for practices if available.

88-89.9 (Red)	104-124	Practice: All athletes must be under constant observation and supervision. Remove pads and equipment. Schedule frequent mandatory rest / water breaks. (5 min water / rest break every 15 min) Have an immersion pool on site for practice if available. Game: Game day administrators should work with officials to include extra time for water breaks (heat timeouts), and/or lengthen half time. Tennis coaches should allow for more time between changeovers and sets. Schools may consider changing the time of the game or postponing the game.
90 or above (Black)	125 and up	SUSPEND PRACTICE Game: Contests may continue but must include mandatory breaks as directed by gameday administrator

MEASURING HEAT INDEX

1. The WeatherBug app can be downloaded to your phone for access to heat index and lightning. 2. There are many devices that can measure heat index (Precision Heat Index Instrument, Heat and Humidity Monitor, SkyScan Ti-Plus Weather Monitor and Heat Index Warning System).
3. Heat Index can be determined by entering the zip code at your location at these websites: <http://www.osaa.org/heatindex/> or <http://www.ihsaa.net/HeatIndex/Default.aspx>.
4. Heat index can also be found by entering air temperature and relative humidity at this website: <http://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/html/heatindex.shtml>.
5. Heat index can be found at most weather websites, and most local television weather stations and websites.

HEAT GUIDELINES for CROSS COUNTRY MEETS and PRACTICES

- **Education** – Cover Heat Guidelines and Information (prevention, proper hydration, recognizing symptoms, treatment) with all runners and parents. We will put as much information as possible on the OCS website.
- **Acclimatization** – After the official start of the fall sports season, all runners must have 6 practices prior to the first meet.
- **Coach/Runner communication** is a necessity. Runners need to let the coach and/or athletic trainer know of any problems that they are experiencing.
 - **Be adaptable to weather:** shorten practice, change practice times, modify practice, change meet times,

shorten meets

- **For fall season practice prior to the start of school**, do not practice between the times of **11:00 and 5:00** unless the wet bulb globe temperature or heat index is code green or below. Note: WBGT should be used when possible. If not, then determine the heat index.
- If WBGT/Heat index is level red, runners must remain on campus. If level black, suspend practice.
- **Recommend Buddy System:** Pair up individuals for practice and meets. “Buddy” duties would include checking attendance at practice or meets, checking attendance prior to and after the run, and checking for any problems.
- **Use your seniors** to help at practices and meets.
- **Cross Country Meets**
 - **For acclimatization purposes, prior to Labor Day, shorten week day meets to 3K unless wet bulb globe temperature is below 85 degrees, which is code green or below.**
 - **After Labor Day, week day meets are 5K unless wet bulb globe temperature is 88 degrees or higher (code red). If the wet bulb globe temperature is 88 degrees or higher (code red), the week day meet will be reduced to 3K.**
 - **Saturday meets are usually scheduled earlier in the day, and include numerous schools participating from different parts of the state. Hot weather conditions should be monitored by the coach, and the coach should have an emergency action plan.**
- **Start weekday cross country meets** one hour later through **Labor Day**: Example 5:00 walk the course, 6:00 girl’s meet, 6:30 boy’s meet
- **Put helpers/monitors/spotters on the course** directing traffic (especially the more confusing areas) and monitoring the runners – have ways that you can communicate.
- Have a **water/ice station on the course** to be used as needed.
- **Coaches are accountable for all runners beginning the run and ending the run.** This will occur prior to runners doing a cool down run after the race.
- **Have an Athletic trainer/first responder at meets you are hosting.** Alert EMS in your area of the cross country meet. Note: Athletic trainers/first responders are spread thin during the fall sports season and must attend football practices/games according to State Board of Education Guidelines, but have them available or on call for meets that you are hosting.
- **Water, ice, and shade must be available at the end of the meet route.**
- **The cross-country coach is the initial caregiver** in most situations (practice or meets). They must have an emergency action plan in place.
- **Guidelines for Off-Campus Running** must be followed.

GUIDELINES FOR OFF-CAMPUS RUNNING

The following guidelines are recommendations for all interscholastic teams who incorporate off-campus running as part of their conditioning. Coaches will provide the athletic director with the courses used for practices and/or meets. Prior to the start of the season, the coach and athletic director will approve the courses. Athletes and parents will be notified of these guidelines and are expected to comply with the following:

- Always run the school approved course as designated by the coach.
- Run on sidewalks or shoulders where available, not on the street.
- Run on the street only when another approved course is unavailable; then, run **FACING** oncoming traffic and run single file except when passing another runner.
- Wait and cross with the traffic light green at all intersections. If there is a caution light or no traffic light, cross only when it is clear to do so. **DO NOT** assume a driver has seen you. Every runner must stop and look; do not cross as a group.
- Make eye contact with the driver of any car that is in your running path. This is particularly important

when a car is turning right. In this situation, drivers frequently look only to their left. They may not see you approaching from their right.

- NEVER push, shove, or “horseplay with” another runner.
- NEVER run with headphones.
- Acknowledge your presence with a command, such as “runner approaching.” when you approach another runner or pedestrian.
- Watch for bicyclists and in-line skaters; use the same precautions as you would with a vehicle.
- Avoid confrontation with others you encounter on the course. Never comment or gesture inappropriately. Report any incidents to your coach, immediately.
- NEVER run alone.
- If WBGT/Heat Index is level red, runners must remain on campus. If level black, suspend practice.

HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES for SUMMER PRACTICES

Definition of Summer Practice:

Summer Practice is from the time the school year ends until the first day of fall practice set by the NCHSAA. Most of our athletic programs offer opportunities for practice during this time period. Coaches are in charge of the practices, and athletic trainers are not usually available. Hot weather conditions is a concern.

For Summer Practice Summer practice may begin the first Monday after the last day of school. The first two weeks in July are dead periods Per NCHSAA board policy.

- Education – Cover Hot Weather Guidelines and Information (prevention, proper hydration, recognizing symptoms, treatment) with all athletes and parents.
- Acclimatization – Consider all participants and their level of conditioning when developing your practice plan.
- Coach/athlete communication is a necessity. Athletes need to let the coach know of any problems that they are experiencing.
- Be adaptable to weather: shorten practice, change practice times, modify practice
- Do not practice outside between the times of 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM.
- Have water available at all practices.
- The coach has a duty to evaluate injury and provide emergency care.
- Coaches must follow all “Hot Weather Guidelines for Summer Athletic Practice.”
- This includes recording Pre and Post Weigh-Ins (Football only).

Head football coaches or designee must supervise “weigh-ins” of football players for all summer practices. Supervise means making sure that pre and post weigh-ins are properly taken, recorded, and evaluated for 3% weight loss. ● The coach or designee will check and follow hot weather conditions prior to practice using the Heat Index chart.

Pre and Post Weigh-Ins (Football Only)

1. Daily pre and post practice weigh-ins should be taken and any athlete who is not within 3% of the previous day’s pre-practice weight should be withheld from practice. Athletes who lose more than 3% of their weight during a practice should also be counseled on the importance of pre-hydrating, drinking more fluids during the practice session, and post practice re-hydration. Note: Supervision means making sure that pre and post weigh-ins are properly taken, recorded, and evaluated for 3% weight loss. The football coach will help set provisions for weigh-ins for players (must include no weigh-in, /no practice rule and weigh-ins for players late to practice).
2. A list of athletes most susceptible to heat illness must be maintained by the athletic trainer and communicated

to the coaching staff. This list should include, but not be limited to, athletes with a medical history of heat illness, athletes losing more than 3% of their weight during a practice, and athletes that have reported symptoms of heat illness during the season to the athletic trainer. Others more susceptible to heat illness are febrile illness (current or recent fever), taking medications (especially ones with a diuretic effect or that act as a stimulant), and sickle cell trait.

3. The athletes most susceptible to heat illness should receive one-on-one instruction from the coach, athletic trainer or designee about symptoms of heat illness and the importance of hydration.
4. The coach, athletic trainer or designee should recommend to athletes most susceptible to heat illness that they consult with their doctor for additional guidance. If an athlete's doctor informs the coaching staff or athletic trainer that the athlete has suffered a heat-related illness during the season, the athlete may not participate until cleared in writing by the doctor.

COACHES and ATHLETES EDUCATION

- The athletic trainer will provide the coaches with information on heat illness including heat illness symptoms and proper hydration. In case a middle school does not have a person filling the athletic trainer position, the athletic director will provide this information.
- Athletes should be informed of the importance of hydration, the symptoms of heat illness, and their personal responsibility to inform the athletic trainer or coaching staff if they suffer any symptoms of heat illness.
- Teams should use the "buddy" system (two players who play the same position are assigned to "keep an eye on" each other).
- Any coach notified or aware of any athlete exhibiting a symptom of heat illness shall notify the athletic trainer/Athletic Director. (weakness, nausea/vomiting, paleness, headache, lightheadedness)

FLUIDS & HYDRATION

Over 60% of a typical human's body weight comes from fluids. Being properly hydrated is one of the easiest ways for athletes to ensure optimal performance and lower the risk of heat illness. Dehydration is a condition that occurs when the loss of body fluids, mostly water, exceeds the amount that is taken in. When this mismatch occurs, the body overheats and it becomes more difficult to function properly. This results in impaired performance and leads to early fatigue and increased risk for heat illness, heat cramping, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. The signs and symptoms of dehydration range from minor to severe and include:

- Increased thirst • Palpitations (feeling that the heart is jumping or pounding) • Dry mouth and swollen tongue • Inability to sweat
- Weakness • Sluggishness
- Dizziness and/or fainting • Decreased urine output
- Confusion • Goosebumps and/or chills

Urine color may indicate dehydration. If your urine is concentrated and deeply yellow/ amber, it may indicate dehydration. Not all fluids that a person can consume will help to replenish the water and nutrients necessary. Water or sports drinks, which are specially designed to contain enough carbohydrates to boost energy during workouts, but not so much that they are hard to digest, are generally the best option for hydrating the body before and during physical activity. The longer the duration of exercise and physical activity, the more important it becomes to rely on sports drinks, with their higher concentrations of sodium and carbohydrates, for fluid replacement. Sports drinks can be especially helpful in heat and humidity since they replace electrolytes lost in sweat. Sports drinks may be the best option for individuals with poor caloric intake prior to participation.

Keep the 3-H RULE in mind. Sports drinks trump water for performance and safety when exercise is **H**ard, **H**ot, and lasts more than an **H**our.

The Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the NFHS has put forth the following position statement:

- Appropriate hydration before, during, and after exercise is an important ingredient to healthy and successful sports participation.
- Rapid weight loss represents a loss of body water. A loss of just 1-2% of body weight (1.5 to 3 pounds for a 150-pound athlete) can negatively impact performance. A loss of 3% or more of body weight can increase the risk for exertional heat related illness.
- Athletes should be weighed before and after warm weather practice sessions and contests to assess fluid losses.
- Athletes with high body fat percentages can become dehydrated faster than athletes with lower body fat percentages while working out under the same environmental conditions.
- All athletes have different sweating rates and some lose much more salt through their sweat than others.
- Poor acclimatization/fitness levels can greatly contribute to an athlete's dehydration problems.
- Medications and fevers can each greatly contribute to an athlete's dehydration problems and risk for heat illness.
- Environmental temperatures and humidity both contribute to dehydration and heat illness.
- Clothing, such as dark, bulky, or rubber protective equipment can drastically increase the chance of dehydration and heat illness.
- Even dry climates can have high humidity if sprinkler systems are scheduled to run before early morning practices start. This collection of water does not evaporate until environmental temperatures increase and dew points lower.

WHAT NOT TO DRINK DURING EXERCISE

- Fruit juices with greater than 8 percent carbohydrate content a soda can both result in a bloated feeling and abdominal cramping.
- Beverages containing caffeine, alcohol, and carbonation are not to be used because of the high risk of dehydration associated with excess urine production, or decreased voluntary fluid intake.
- Athletes should be aware that nutritional supplements are not limited to pills and powders; many of these new fluids contain stimulants such as caffeine and/or ephedrine.
 - These stimulants may increase the risk of heart or heat illness problems when exercising.
 - Many of these drinks are being produced by traditional water, soft drink, and sports drink companies and may provide confusion to the sports community. As is true with other forms of supplements, these "power drinks or fluid supplements" are not regulated by the FDA. Thus, the purity and accuracy of contents on the label are not guaranteed. Many of these beverages, which claim to provide additional power, energy, etc., have additional ingredients that are not necessary, some that are potentially harmful, and some that actually include substances banned by such governing bodies as the NCAA and the USOC.

MEDICAL REFERRAL

If the Athletic Trainer or other medical professional is of the opinion that a particular injury requires referral to a medical specialist for further evaluation or treatment, the medical professional will contact the parents of the injured athlete via telephone or in person in order to decide for that athlete to be seen by the proper medical professional. The Athletic Trainer will also send an Orange County School Physician Referral Form with the athlete to the medical specialist, when feasible. This form should be completed and signed by the treating physician and then returned to the Athletic Trainer.

The physicians at Duke Sports Medicine serve as our official team physicians. Therefore, this orthopedic group will usually be our first choice should the injury involve the musculoskeletal system (bones, joints, muscles). Parents have the option to take their son/daughter to either their family physician or an orthopedist service other than Duke Sports Medicine.

Should a referral be made, the injured athlete will be unable to participate in any athletic activity until written clearance regarding the injury is received and reviewed by the Athletic Trainer. It is the responsibility of the athlete and his/her parents to ensure that the physician forwards all requested information. Coaches do not have the authority to make referrals to any physician without the approval of the Athletic Trainer, except in cases where emergency care is indicated.

Medical Clearance to Participate from MD, DO, PA, PA-C

If at any time an athlete needs to be seen by a physician (MD, DO, PA, PA-C) the athlete is not cleared to participate in practice or competitions until he/she returns a medical clearance note to the athletic trainer releasing them for clearance in physical activity. The preferred method is the Physician Referral Form.

Asthma

Asthma is a common respiratory disease that is characterized by intermittent episodes of constriction of the airways (bronchi and bronchioles) in the lungs. This airway constriction is often referred to as bronchial spasm. This bronchial spasm is often accompanied by an increase in bronchial secretions, thus further restricting air flow. When an asthma attack occurs, the athlete may experience coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Asthma attacks may be brought on by a variety of triggers, including dust, pollen, smoke, strong odors, or cold air. Some asthma attacks may be triggered by strenuous exercise. In these cases, the athlete is classified as having exercise induced asthma (IEA).

Student-athletes who have been diagnosed with asthma should have an Asthma Action Plan on file with the school nurse. If the student-athlete requires the use of an inhaler, they must keep their inhaler with them at all practices and games. Student-athletes must not share their inhalers with other student-athletes or teammates. [OCS Board Policy 6125](#)

Diabetes

Diabetes is a metabolic disease that results due to the absolute or relative lack of insulin. Diabetes can be divided into two types: Type I (insulin dependent) and Type II (non-insulin dependent). With Type I diabetes, the body is unable to produce insulin, therefore the cells of the body are unable to absorb sugar (glucose) from the blood. This leads to high levels of glucose in the blood. Type I diabetes can be controlled through regular monitoring of blood sugar levels and thru the introduction of insulin. Insulin can either be injected or administered through an insulin pump. Type II diabetes occurs when the body is still able to produce insulin, but either does so in insufficient amounts or produces insulin that does not function properly. This type of diabetes does not require insulin injections and can be controlled through oral medications combined with proper diet and exercise. Student-athletes who have been diagnosed with diabetes should have a Diabetes Action Plan on file with the school nurse. Student-athletes with diabetes should regularly monitor their blood glucose levels, especially during and following periods of exercise. [OCS Board Policy 6125](#)

MEDICATION POLICY

The following information is a condensed version of the Orange County Schools Medication Policy which addresses student use and/or possession of any type of prescription medication AND over-the-counter medication (such as Tylenol and ibuprofen). This also includes any kind of creams, ointments, cough drops and eye/ear drops at school. Students are allowed to use medication at school for the following reasons:

1. To sustain attendance
2. To manage a chronic health problem
3. To meet a special health care need
4. To treat an emergency health condition

Medication Check-in Procedures

- Parents are required to bring medication directly to the school nurse.
- Medication will be counted (if applicable) and checked in by the school nurse.
- Medication must be in a properly labeled container from the pharmacy OR in the original container for over-the-counter medications.
- A completed Physician Request for Medication to Be Given Form must accompany the medication and have signatures of the parent/guardian AND doctor on it.

Self-Administered Medication

Students with severe asthma, diabetes or allergies may be allowed, (with approval of doctor, parent/guardian and school nurse) to keep medication in their possession. The Self-Medication Authorization Form must be completed and signed by the physician, parent/guardian and student. Athletic trainer, coaches, and other staff cannot give medications to students. This includes common over-the-counter medications. If a student athlete has prescription medication that they need or may need to take during athletic participation, they must make the coaching staff aware of it. Student athletes should not store medications in the team first aid kit. The only exception is inhalers for student athletes with asthma. [OCS Board Policy 6125](#)

SPORTS NUTRITION

Just as hydration is important to a student's health and well-being, caloric intake is also important to ensuring optimal athletic performance. Student-athletes should focus on eating lean proteins, fruits and vegetables and whole grains to ensure the body is prepared for training. Avoid going into any training session with an empty fuel tank. A high carb & protein meal (such as whole grain in breads, rice, pasta, fruits, vegetables, chicken, turkey, or low-fat yogurt) should be consumed 3-4 hours before practice or competition and an easily digestible snack 60-90 minutes before activity. Avoid eating a diet high in saturated or trans fats, as these are unhealthy and may limit athletic capacity. These types of fat are found in higher fat dairy products, meats, fried food and processed foods/snacks. Primarily unsaturated fats such as olives, avocados, nuts, seeds and salmon should be chosen instead. Carbohydrates are the most rapid source of energy for muscles and protein plays a major role in helping the body recover after exercise.

When students eat a combination of carbohydrates and protein, the carbs are used to fuel the muscles during activity, while the protein is used to help build and repair muscle tissue. It can take up to 36 hours to reload the muscles of students who delay refueling their bodies. To aid the body in faster recovery after exercise or competition, choose carbohydrate-rich foods with some protein within 30 min of finishing a training session or competition (e.g., chocolate milk, protein shakes or bars). Be careful to limit the intake of these pre-packaged sports products. While they can be

used effectively in an athlete's diet, whole foods should be consumed when possible. Great recovery foods include: granola, bagels with peanut butter, sub sandwiches with lean meats like chicken or turkey, as well as crackers and cheese. Making healthy food choices by students requires encouragement and commitment.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS (PEDs)

Often dietary supplements and performance enhancing drugs are seen as an easy way to enhance athletic performance, increase energy levels, lose or gain weight and feel better. If taken to an extreme, this can create a culture more concerned about "quick fixes," rather than hard work, development of good nutrition practices and overall long-term health. Orange County Schools supports and endorses the stance of the NFHS in terms of performance-enhancing substances: "In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes. "speak with your son or daughter's physician and/or a board-certified sports dietitian before they partake in a dietary

supplement regimen. To learn if a specific dietary supplement has been certified as safe, visit <http://www.nsfport.com/>. For more information about the dangers of PEDs go to <http://taylorhooton.org/>.

MRSA, HIV, HEPATITIS B

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes the risk of possible transmission of infectious diseases such as MRSA, HIV and Hepatitis B. This risk can be diminished with the practice of proper safety and hygiene measures.

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)



Is a type of staph bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics? In the community, most MRSA infections are skin infections. In medical facilities, MRSA causes life-threatening bloodstream infections, pneumonia and surgical site infections. Anyone can get MRSA through direct contact with an infected wound or by sharing personal items, such as towels or razors that have touched infected skin. MRSA infection risk can be increased when a person is in certain activities or places that involve crowding, skin-to-skin contact, and shared equipment or supplies, such as athletes during competition. There are the personal hygiene steps that can reduce the risk of MRSA infection:

- Maintain good hand and body hygiene. Wash hands often, and clean the body regularly, especially after exercise.
- Keep cuts, scrapes, and wounds clean and covered until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels and razors.
- Get care early if you think you might have an infection.


Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

MRSA (mer-sa) is a type of infection caused by Staph bacteria that is resistant to some common antibiotics such as penicillin.

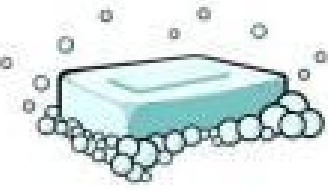
Staph and MRSA are spread by direct physical contact with an infected individual or by touching objects contaminated with the bacteria such as towels, uniforms, or sports equipment.




The infected area usually starts out as a small bump resembling a pimple, which becomes redder and can develop pus drainage.




Report any suspicious skin sores to your parents, coach, trainer or school nurse. See your health care provider!





To prevent this infection, athletes should:

- wash hands frequently
- shower immediately after physical activity
- never share personal hygiene items
- cover any open sore on skin when involved in contact sports.
- clean and disinfect all shared athletic equipment after each use (mats, pads, helmets, etc.)



Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

It weakens a person's immune system by destroying important cells that fight disease and infection. Only certain body fluids from a person who has HIV can transmit the virus to others. These fluids must come in contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue or be directly injected into the bloodstream (from a needle or syringe) for transmission to occur. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in only extremely rare cases, has HIV been transmitted by:

- 1) Being bitten by a person with HIV. Each of the very small number of documented cases has involved severe trauma with extensive tissue damage and the presence of blood. There is no risk of transmission if the skin is not broken.
- 2) Contact between broken skin, wounds, or mucous membranes and HIV-infected blood or blood-contaminated body fluids.
- 3) Eating food that has been pre-chewed by an HIV-infected person. The contamination occurs when infected blood from a caregiver's mouth mixes with food while chewing. The only known cases are among infants.

HIV does not survive long outside the human body (such as on surfaces), and it cannot reproduce outside a human host.

HIV is **not** spread by:

- Mosquitoes, ticks, or other insects.
- Saliva, tears, or sweat that is not mixed with the blood of an HIV-positive person.
- Hugging, shaking hands, sharing toilets, sharing dishes, or closed-mouth or "social" kissing with someone who is HIV-positive.
- Other sexual activities that don't involve the exchange of body fluids (for example, touching).
- As a result, in the athletic setting the risk of spreading HIV can be all but eliminated by following simple personal hygiene steps

HEPATITIS B

Is a liver disease that results from infection with the Hepatitis B virus? Severity can vary from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Hepatitis B is usually spread when blood or other body fluid from a person infected with the hepatitis B virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen through sexual contact with an infected person or sharing needles, syringes, or another drug-injection equipment. Hepatitis B can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth. Therefore, in the athletic setting the transmission of Hepatitis B from one person to another is extremely rare.

Signs and symptoms of Hepatitis B include:

- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Fever
- Joint pain
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Weakness and fatigue
- Yellowing skin and eyes (jaundice)

Skin Infections

Skin conditions are a common, yet preventable occurrence among athletes. Perhaps the most serious of these conditions are various skin infections caused by bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Skin infections can be transmitted by both direct (skin-to-skin) and indirect (person to inanimate object to person) contact. Proper infection control can help to minimize the development and spread of skin infections. Besides identification and treatment of infected individuals, prevention can be aided by improving student-athlete hygiene practices and through proper routine cleaning and disinfection of all equipment. Current knowledge indicates that many fungal and viral infections are easily transmitted by skin-to-skin contact. In most cases, these skin conditions can be covered with a securely attached bandage or non-permeable patch to allow participation. Open wounds and infectious skin conditions that cannot be adequately protected to prevent their exposure to others will be considered cause for medical disqualification from practice and competition. Any suspicious looking skin lesion will be required to be evaluated by the Athletic Trainer and possibly referred to a physician or dermatologist. If an athlete is examined for a lesion(s), the athlete must have that physician complete and sign a NFHS Physician Release for Wrestler to Participate with Skin Lesions (Appendix I) or NFHS Physician Release to Participate with Skin Lesions – Non-Wrestler (Appendix J). This completed form will be placed in the athlete's file. A copy will be given to the coach to present to officials during wrestling meets.

BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS AND UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

The Orange County Schools Athletic Training Staff complies with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 29 CFR, Part 1910.1030 set forth in 1992. Universal precautions are strictly followed in both the athletic training room and on the field. Coaches should also practice universal precautions when dealing with injury situations involving blood. These universal precautions include the following:

1. When treating an injury involving open skin, mucus membranes, blood, or body fluids be sure to wear disposable gloves. Gloves must be changed after contact with each athlete. This protective equipment should be discarded in a biohazard bag after use.
2. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water immediately after exposure to blood or body fluids, even if protective gloves have been used.
3. Clean all surfaces that have been exposed to blood or body fluids with a solution consisting of one-part chlorine bleach to 10 parts water (1:10) or an approved antimicrobial disinfectant.

4. All existing wounds, abrasions, or cuts that can serve as a source of bleeding, or as a port of entry for blood borne pathogens, must be covered with an occlusive dressing that can withstand the demands of competition.
5. Dispose of any sharp objects such as needles or scalpel blades in a specially designed sharps container. This container should be red and clearly marked as biohazard material.
6. Dispose of all contaminated materials (bandages, gauze, gloves, etc.) in a specially marked biohazard waste can.
7. During competition and practice, if an athlete is bleeding, he/she must be removed from the practice or game as quickly as possible. Once the athlete has been removed, the bleeding should be stopped and the open wound covered with an occlusive dressing that can withstand the rigors of competition. Athletes with blood on their uniform must be removed from competition until the uniform can be disinfected. Uniforms that have been saturated with blood should be removed and changed before the athlete can return to competition. [OCS Board Policy 7260](#)

SICKLE CELL DISEASE

Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects red blood cells. One of the questions that is on the current pre-participation medical form has to do with sickle cell disease, so it is important that everyone involved in interscholastic athletics has some awareness and understanding about the disease.

People with sickle cell disease have red blood cells that contain mostly hemoglobin* S, an abnormal type of hemoglobin. Sometimes these red blood cells become sickle-shaped (crescent shaped) and have difficulty passing through small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease. There is currently no universal cure for sickle cell disease. Hemoglobin – is the main substance of the red blood cell. It helps red blood cells carry oxygen from the air in our lungs to all parts of the body. Normal red blood cells contain hemoglobin A.

Hemoglobin S and hemoglobin C are abnormal types of hemoglobin. Normal red blood cells are soft and round and can squeeze through tiny blood tubes (vessels). Normally, red blood cells live for about 120 days before new ones replace them. People with sickle cell conditions make a different form of hemoglobin A called hemoglobin S (S stands for sickle). Red blood cells containing mostly hemoglobin S do not live as long as normal red blood cells (normally about 16 days). They also become stiff, distorted in shape and have difficulty passing through the body's small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease.

There are several types of sickle cell disease. The most common are: Sickle Cell Anemia (SS), Sickle Hemoglobin C Disease (SC), Sickle Beta-Plus Thalassemia and Sickle Beta Zero Thalassemia. Sickle Cell trait (AS) is an inherited condition in which both hemoglobin A and S are produced in the red blood cells, always more A than S. Sickle cell trait is not a type of sickle cell disease. People with sickle cell trait are generally healthy. Sickle cell conditions are inherited from parents in much the same way as blood type, hair color and texture, eye color and other physical traits. The types of hemoglobin a person makes in the red blood cells depend upon what hemoglobin genes the person inherits from his or her parents. Like most genes, hemoglobin genes are inherited in two sets...one from each parent. Examples: If one parent has Sickle Cell Anemia and the other is Normal, all of the children will have sickle cell trait. If one parent has Sickle Cell Anemia and the other has Sickle Cell Trait, there is a 50% chance (or 1 out of 2) of having a baby with either sickle cell disease or sickle cell trait with each pregnancy. When both parents have Sickle Cell Trait, they have a 25% chance (1 of 4) of having a baby with sickle cell disease with each pregnancy.

In the United States people are often surprised when they learn that a person who is not African American has sickle cell disease. The disease originated in at least 4 places in Africa and in the Indian/Saudi Arabian subcontinent. It exists in all countries of Africa and in areas where Africans have migrated. It is most common in West and Central Africa where as many as 25% of the people have sickle cell trait and 1-2% of all babies are born with a form of the disease. In the United States with an estimated population of over 270 million, about 1,000 babies are born with sickle cell disease each year. In contrast, Nigeria, with an estimated 1997 population of 90 million, 45,000-90,000 babies with sickle cell disease are born each year. The transatlantic slave trade was largely responsible for introducing the sickle cell gene into the Americas and the Caribbean. However, sickle cell disease had already spread from Africa to Southern Europe by the time of the slave trade, so it is present in Portuguese, Spaniards, French Corsicans, Sardinians, Sicilians, mainland Italians, Greeks, Turks and Cypriots. Sickle cell disease appears in most of the Near and Middle East countries including Lebanon, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Yemen. The condition has also been reported in India and Sri Lanka. Sickle cell disease is an international health problem and truly a global challenge.

Precautions can enable student-athletes with sickle cell trait to thrive in their sport. These precautions are outlined in the references and in a 2007 NATA Consensus Statement on Sickle Cell Trait and the Athlete. Knowledge of a student-athletes sickle cell status should facilitate prompt and appropriate medical care during a medical emergency.

Student-athletes with sickle cell trait should be knowledgeable of these precautions, and institutions should provide an environment in which these precautions may be activated. In general, these precautions suggest student-athletes with sickle cell trait should:

- Set their own pace.
- Engage in a slow and gradual preseason conditioning regimen to be prepared for sports-specific performance testing and the rigors of competitive intercollegiate athletics.
- Build up slowly while training (e.g., paced progressions).
- Use adequate rest and recovery between repetitions, especially during “gassers” and intense station or “mat” drills.
- Not be urged to perform all-out exertion of any kind beyond two to three minutes without a breather.
- Be excused from performance tests such as serial sprints or timed mile runs, especially if these are not normal sport activities.
- Stop activity immediately upon struggling or experiencing symptoms such as muscle pain, abnormal weakness, undue fatigue or breathlessness.
- Stay well hydrated at all times, especially in hot and humid conditions.
- Maintain proper asthma management.
- Refrain from extreme exercise during acute illness, if feeling ill, or while experiencing a fever.
- Access supplemental oxygen at altitude as needed.
- Seek prompt medical care when experiencing unusual distress.

COMMOTIO CORDIS

Is sudden death that results from a lethal disruption of heart rhythm that occurs as a result of a blow to the area directly over the heart (the precordial region), at a critical time during the cycle of a heartbeat causing cardiac arrest. It is a form of ventricular fibrillation (V-Fib), not mechanical damage to the heart muscle or surrounding organs, and not the result of heart disease. It most often occurs during participation in sports, most often baseball, often despite a chest protector. It is most often caused by a projectile, but can also be caused by the blow of an elbow or other body part, striking the precordial region over the heart. The thorax of an adolescent, being less developed, is more prone to this injury given the circumstances. The US National Commotio Cordis Registry reported 188 cases between 1996 and 2007, with about half occurring during organized sports.

- It is the leading cause of death for youth baseball players averaging 2 to 3 deaths per year.
- 96% of the victims were male and averaged 14.7 years old

- Most cases were fatal, but the survival rate increased to 35% when automated external defibrillators were used within three minutes of the impact.
- Chest protectors are designed to reduce trauma from blunt bodily injury, but they do not offer protection from commotio cordis.
- Almost 20% of the victims in football, baseball, lacrosse and hockey were wearing chest protectors.

NFHS Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests During Lightning or Thunder Disturbances (Revised and Approved October 2014):

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service. Proactive Planning:

- (a) Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
- (b) Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
- (c) Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - (1) When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty (30) minutes and take shelter immediately.
 - (2) Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - (3) Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
 - (4) Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
 - (5) Inform student-athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

Note: For more detailed information, refer to the "Lightning Safety" section contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Every middle and high school is required to have an Athletic Emergency Action Plan. Emergency situations may arise at any time during athletic events and practices. Expedient action must be taken in order to provide the best possible care to the sport participant or spectator if emergency and/or life-threatening conditions arise. The development and implementation of an emergency plan will help ensure that the best care will be provided. As emergencies may occur at any time and during any activity, all coaches and those working at athletic events must be prepared. School athletic departments have a duty to develop an emergency plan that may be implemented immediately when necessary and to provide appropriate standards of emergency care. As athletic injuries may occur at any time and during any activity, the coaching staff must be prepared.

This preparation involves formulation of an emergency plan, proper coverage of events, maintenance of appropriate emergency equipment and supplies, utilization of appropriate emergency medical personnel, and continuing education in the area of emergency medicine and planning. Hopefully, through careful pre-participation physical screenings, adequate medical coverage, safe practice and training techniques and other safety avenues, some potential emergencies may be averted. However, accidents and injuries are inherent with sports participation, and proper preparation should enable each emergency situation to be managed appropriately. These are the basic components of every emergency action plan for athletics:

1. Emergency Personnel
2. Emergency Communication
3. Emergency Equipment
4. Roles of Certified Athletic Trainers, Student Trainers, Coaches, and Administrators
5. Venue Directions

Link to: [NCHSAA - Emergency Action Plan Information](#)

SAFETY LIST FOR FOOTBALL PLAYERS

Football is a contact sport and injuries will occur. The coaches working in our program are well qualified, professional people. Fundamentals related to playing football will continually and repeatedly be emphasized on and off the field. The information contained within this list of rules and procedures is to inform the young men in our football program of the proper techniques to practice for maximum safety in the contact phase of the game.

Tackling, Blocking and Running the Ball

By the rule, the helmet is not to be used as a “ram.” Initial contact is not to be made with the helmet. It is not possible to play the game safely or correctly without contacting the helmet when properly blocking and tackling an opponent. Therefore, technique is most important to prevent injuries.

Tackling and blocking techniques are basically the same. Contact is to be made above the waist but not initially with the helmet. The player should always be in a position of balance, knees bent, back straight, body slightly bent forward, HEAD UP, target area as near to the body as possible with the main contact being made with the shoulder.

Blocking and tackling by not putting the helmet as close to the body as possible could result in shoulder injury such as a separation or a pinched nerve in the neck area. The dangers of not following the proper techniques can be from minor to disabling to even death. The reason for following the safety rules in contacting the upper body and helmet is that improper body alignment can put the spinal column in a vulnerable position for injury.

If the head is bent downward, the cervical (neck) vertebrae are in a bind and contact on the TOP OF THE HELMET could result in a dislocation, nerve damage, paralysis, or even death. If the back is not straight, the thoracic (mid back) and lumbar vertebrae are also vulnerable to injury with similar results if contact again is made to the TOP OF THE HELMET. Each daily workout includes isometric-type exercises; the development of strength in the neck muscles is one of the best methods of preventing head injury and enabling an individual to hold his head up even after getting tired during a workout or contest.

Basic Hitting (Contact) Position and Fundamental Technique

If the knees are not bent, the chance of knee injury is greatly increased. Fundamentally a player should be in the proper hitting position at all times during live ball play and this point will be repeated continually during practice. The danger is anything from strained muscles to ankle injuries to serious knee injuries requiring surgery. The rules have made blocking below the waist (outside a two-yard by four-yard area next to the football) illegal. Cleats have been restricted to no more than ½ inch to further help in preventing knee injuries. A runner with the ball, however, may be tackled around the legs.

In tackling, the rules prohibit initial contact with the helmet or grabbing the facemask or edge of the helmet.

These restrictions were placed in the rules because of serious injuries resulting from noncompliance to these safety precautions. Initial helmet contact could result in a bruise, dislocation, broken bone, head injury, internal injury, such as kidneys, spleen, bladder, etc. Grabbing the facemask or helmet edge could result in a neck injury, which could be anything from a muscle strain to a dislocation, nerve injury, spinal column damage causing paralysis or death.

The illegal play by participating athletes will not be tolerated and all players are repeatedly reminded of the dangers of unsportsmanlike acts.

Fitting and Use of Equipment

Shoulder pads, helmets, hip pads, pants including thigh pads and knee pads must have proper fitting and use. Shoulder pads which are too small will leave the shoulder point vulnerable to bruises or separations; it could also be too tight in the neck area resulting in a possible pinched nerve. Shoulder pads which are too large will leave the neck area poorly protected and will slide on the shoulders making them vulnerable to bruises or separations.

Helmets must fit snugly at the contact points: front, back and top of head. The helmet must be safety “NOCSAE ‘ branded, the chin straps must be fastened, and the cheek pads must be of the proper thickness. On contact, too tight a helmet could result in a headache. Too loose a fit could result in headaches, a concussion, a face injury such as a broken nose or cheek bone, a blow to the back of the neck causing a neck injury, possibly quite serious such as paralysis or even death.

The report does not cover all potential injury possibilities in playing football, but is an attempt to make the players aware that fundamentals, coaching and proper fitting equipment is important to their safety and enjoyment in playing football in Orange County Schools.

Daily Football Helmet Inspection Checklist

Players

Check Your Helmet Before

Each Usage as Follows:

1. Check foam padding for proper placement and any deterioration.
2. Check for cracks in vinyl / rubber covering of air, foam, liquid padded helmets.
3. Check that the protective system or foam padding has not been altered or removed.
4. Check for proper inflation of air helmets. Follow manufacturer guidelines. Air pressure adjustments are to be made by coaches, trainers or faculty equipment managers.
5. Check all rivets, screws, Velcro and snaps to assure they are properly fastened and holding protective parts.

***IF ANY OF THE ABOVE INSPECTIONS INDICATE NEED FOR REPAIR AND/OR REPLACEMENT,
NOTIFY A COACH OR FACULTY EQUIPMENT MANAGER.***

AS A PLAYER, THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!!!

Weekly Football Helmet Inspection Checklist
Coaches, Athletic Trainer or Faculty Equipment Manager
(Compare this checklist to the manufacturer's guidelines)

1. Chinstrap cup centered on the chin, anchoring straps flat and taut, passing under the facemask. Chinstrap buckles with teeth facing up. Straps not loose, stretched or broken. Replace as needed. Snaps in good repair
2. Bottom of forehead padding - 1 inch above the eyebrow. Adjust padding or air in the bladder.
3. Helmet ear openings aligned approximately with ear canals. Adjust padding or air in the bladder.
4. Facemask 3 finger widths from tip of nose. Check facemask for chipped paint, loose attachments, movement, denting or flattening. Repair attachments, replace dented or chipped masks as needed.
5. Rear padding covers the bony prominence of the skull. Adjust padding or air in the bladder.
6. Front to back torsion – forehead skin should wrinkle. Helmet should NOT slide forward and down on the nose or backwards on to the neck. Adjust chin strap, padding or air in bladder
7. Side torsion – grasp face mask with both hands and attempt to rotate sideways. Forehead and skin near the jaw pads should wrinkle. Player's nose should remain between the anchoring screws that hold the facemask in place on the forehead. Adjust padding, chin strap or air in bladder
8. Examine shell for cracks; examine mounting rivets, screws, Velcro and snaps for breakage, distortion or looseness. Replace as needed
9. Replace damaged or worn forehead, rear skull and jaw pads.

Lacrosse Helmet Checklist

Helmet Fitting

1. **The frontal rim** of the helmet should be 1 inch above the eyebrow. Once the correct height has been established, the chin strap must be correctly fastened. This will keep the helmet in the proper position while you check and adjust the fit of the helmet. To adjust the chin strap, hold the chin cup squarely on the chin, and then adjust and fasten the front straps and finally the back. Make sure the tension is equal on all four straps and that none is pulled out of alignment.
2. **Back of Head:** Use your fingers to feel just under the back rim of the helmet. The padding should be in firm, but comfortable contact with the head. If there are any gaps or if the helmet is too tight, try another size helmet.
3. **Back to Front:** The fit of the front and back should be checked at the same time, because they affect each other. First, grip the helmet firmly on each side and rotate it gently from side to side, then up and down. The skin of the forehead should move with the helmet. If the helmet moves without moving the skin, try another size helmet. Second, lock your fingers behind your head and pull firmly toward you. If a gap appears between the front lines and the forehead, try another size helmet.
4. **Facemask:** The clearance between the end of the nose and the inside of the mask should be at least two to three finger widths. Also, ensure that your vision has not been impaired by the placement of the horizontal bars.
5. **Final Grip Check:** The final goal is to obtain a firm, yet comfortable grip on the head.
6. **Top of Head Check:** Lock your fingers on the very top of the helmet and firmly pull straight down on your head. Ask yourself where the pressure is felt. If the pressure is felt evenly distributed all over then you have a good fit on top. If pressure is felt on top, this is still acceptable. However, if you feel pressure minimally in front and back, then the helmet is too tight.
7. **Side to Side Movement:** Place your hands on each side of the helmet and hold your head still. Gently force the helmet from side to side, watching the skin on the forehead. It should move with the helmet. There should be firm resistance to the helmet. The liner should bunch the cheeks, but not slide around to the nose. If there is too much movement, try another size helmet.
8. **Vertical Movement:** Place your hands on each side of the helmet and hold your head still. Gently force the helmet up and down. The skin on the forehead should move with the helmet, and with enough force it will eventually slip a little, but it should catch on the eyebrow without coming down on the nose.

Weekly Checklist

1. Check each helmet for fit using the above criteria (1-8). Change any helmet that does not meet the fitting requirements.
2. Visually inspect the shell for cracks.
3. Visually check the mask for cracks and distortion. Any mask distorted by 1/8 of an inch or more from the standard form should be replaced.
4. Check snaps and hardware and make sure they are free of distortion and function properly.
5. Helmet liners should be checked for deterioration.
6. Check chin straps for deterioration and general wear and tear.
7. Remove any helmet immediately that fails to meet the above quality standards.

Athletic Job Responsibilities

Athletic Director

1. Responsible for and work under the direction of the High School Principal and the overall athletic program.
2. Responsible for administering all interscholastic policies and procedures working within the confines of the Rules and By-Laws of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.
3. Observe coaches sufficiently in order to make future recommendations of job expectancies and job assignments to the School Principal.
4. Assist the Principal in evaluating all new candidates for original appointments.
5. Responsible for all recommending facility improvements to Principal consideration and referral.
6. Responsible for the development of all interscholastic game schedules (supported by a filed contract form) and approval schedule publication.
7. Responsible for contracting all game officials.
8. Provide guidance on athletics and athletic program requirements for staff under his or her supervision as well as recommendations to the school principal.”
9. Resolve conflicts that may develop within the Athletic Department.
10. Discover ways for appropriately supporting and financing the athletic program.
11. Submit a year-end financial report to the Principal annually.
12. Arrange for transportation, lodging, and meals for all interscholastic events, when required.
13. Receive and evaluate equipment quotations and approve appropriate orders from authorized coaches.
14. Attend all home athletic contests and/or arrange for proper supervision of home athletic contests by administrative personnel.
15. Responsible for the Principal, after consulting the Head Coach, for the cancellation or postponement of contests because of non-playing conditions.
16. Supervise all radio broadcasts, as well as public address system operation at the various games.
17. Maintain a permanent file of players, medical examinations, insurance forms, records, parent consent forms, payment, etc.
18. Maintain permanent records for each sport, such as wins and losses, outstanding records, letter persons, etc.
19. Maintain a file of all athletic suspensions and expulsions from teams in regard to giving each athlete “Due Process.”
20. Responsible for determining scholastic eligibility of all candidates for athletic teams on semester basis and for certifying their eligibility on the proper state forms.
21. Coordinate with the Principal and coaches’ request to attend coaching clinics.
22. Work in conjunction with the principal in developing the yearly budget for the athletic program, as requested by the head coaches.
23. Work with the Principal, cheerleading advisors, and coaches involved in scheduling all athletic assemblies and pep rallies.

24. Coordinate the use of all athletic facilities in the school with the Principal by groups outside the school.
25. Responsible for game management at all home interscholastic contests and, when admission is charged, is responsible for the safekeeping and deposit of gate receipts if so directed by the school principal.
26. Provide for the cleaning, repairing, and storing of all athletic equipment and maintaining a perpetual inventory of all equipment.
27. Establish procedures for the control of the training room.
28. Arrange for medical doctors at all home varsity football games and larger athletic events.
29. Supervise the physical equipment and schedule facilities for all interscholastic athletic contests.
30. Plan, organize, and supervise all athletic awards programs with the Booster Club, with the approval of the Principal.
31. Promote publicity for all interscholastic sports, such as sports brochures, press, and radio for all schools and shall assist the Booster Club in the organization of the game programs.
32. Coordinate with the Principal the repair and maintenance of varsity athletic field, track, baseball field, and gymnasiums, including physical education facilities.
33. Manage athletic facilities and control their use by band, football team, track squad, etc. Hire or make necessary arrangements to provide ushers, parking, security and other services required by the athletic operation.
34. Assume responsibility for assignment of keys to athletic facilities and gymnasiums, including physical education facilities.
35. Represent the school in all athletic business at Conference, State, and National meetings.
36. Design a reasonable and equitable program for the utilization of the concession stands.
37. Responsible for scheduling physical examinations in accordance with the requirements of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.
38. Responsible for the operation and organization of the press boxes.
39. Attend and serve as school liaison at all Athletic Booster Club meetings.
40. Liaises between the coaches and the Athletic Booster Club.
41. Responsible for the sales of any athletic supplies and jackets to qualified athletes through the athletic office.
42. Maintain an active program that promotes sportsmanship and welcomes the competing teams and guests.
43. Responsible for the annual review of the Athletic Policy and Staff Handbook.
44. Constantly evaluate the program, always seeking ways of improving interscholastic athletics.
45. Perform other duties as assigned by the superintendent or school principal in keeping with the Orange County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

Assistant Athletic Director

1. Thorough knowledge of all the Athletic Policy approved by the Orange County Schools Board of Education and is responsible for its implementation by the entire staff of the sports program.
2. Knowledge of existing system, state, and conference regulations; implement them consistently and interpret them for staff.
3. Understand the proper administrative line of command and refer to all requests of grievances through proper channels. Awareness of all public/staff/departmental meetings that require attendance.
4. Establish the fundamental philosophy, skills, and techniques to be taught by staff. Design conferences, clinics and staff meetings to insure staff awareness of the overall program as needed.
5. Train and inform staff, encourage professional growth by encouraging clinic attendance according to local clinic policy.
6. Delegate specific duty, supervise implementation, and at season's end, analyze staff effectiveness and help evaluate staff as needed.
7. Maintain discipline, adjust grievances, and work to increase morale and cooperation.
8. Assist the Athletic Director in scheduling, providing transportation, and requirements for tournament and special sport events.

9. Assist in the necessary preparation to hold scheduled sport events or practices and adhere to scheduled facility times. Coordinate program with maintenance and school employees.
10. Provide documentation to fulfill state and system requirements concerning physical examinations, parental consent, and eligibility.
11. Provide proper safeguards for maintenance and protection of assigned equipment sites.
12. Advise the Athletic Director and recommend policy, method or procedural changes.
13. Provide training rules and any other unique regulations of the sport to each athlete who is considered a participant.
14. Give constant attention to a student athlete's grades and conduct.
15. Presence at all practices and games. Provide assistance, guidance, and safeguards for each participant.
16. Initiate programs and policies concerning injuries, medical attention, and emergencies.
17. Complete and submit proper paperwork on all disabling athletic injuries to athletic office within 24 hours.
18. Determine discipline, delineate procedures concerning due process when the enforcement of discipline is necessary and contact parents when a student is dropped or becomes ineligible.
19. Assist athletes in their college or advanced educational selection.
20. Participate in the budgeting function with the Athletic Director by establishing requirements for the next season. Recommend guidelines as to type, style, color, or technical specifications of equipment. Assist with operating within budget appropriations.
21. Properly mark and identify all equipment before issuing or storing.
22. Monitor equipment rooms and coaches' offices, authorize who may enter, issue or requisition equipment.
23. Permit the athletes to only be in authorized areas of the building at the appropriate times.
24. Examine locker rooms before and after practices and games, checking on general cleanliness of the facility. Be responsible for cleanliness and maintenance of specific sport equipment.
25. Secure all doors, lights, windows, and locks before leaving the building if custodians are not on duty.
26. Instill in each player a respect for equipment and school property, its care and proper use.
27. Help organize parents, coaches, players, and guests for pre-season meetings.
28. Promote the sport within the school through recruiting athletes who are not in another sports program. Promote the sport outside the school through news media, Little League programs, or in any other feasible manner.
29. Responsible for maintaining good public relations with news media, Booster Club, parents, officials, volunteers, and fans.
30. Present information to news media concerning schedules, tournaments, and results if needed.
31. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or the school Principal in keeping with Orange County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

Head Coach

32. Thorough knowledge of all the Athletic Policy approved by the Orange County Schools Board of Education and is responsible for its implementation by the entire staff of the sports program.
33. Knowledge of existing system, state, and conference regulations; implement them consistently and interpret them for staff.
34. Understand the proper administrative line of command and refer to all requests of grievances through proper channels. Awareness of all public/staff/departmental meetings that require attendance.
35. Establish the fundamental philosophy, skills, and techniques to be taught by staff. Design conferences, clinics and staff meetings to insure staff awareness of the overall program.
36. Train and inform staff, encourage professional growth by encouraging clinic attendance according to local clinic policy.
37. Delegate specific duty, supervise implementation, and at season's end, analyze staff effectiveness and evaluate all assistants.
38. Maintain discipline, adjust grievances, and work to increase morale and cooperation.
39. Assist the Athletic Director in scheduling, providing transportation, and requirements for tournament and special sport events.
40. Assist in the necessary preparation to hold scheduled sport events or practices and adhere to scheduled facility times. Coordinate program with maintenance and school employees.
41. Provide documentation to fulfill state and system requirements concerning physical examinations, parental consent, and eligibility.
42. Provide proper safeguards for maintenance and protection of assigned equipment sites.
43. Advise the Athletic Director and recommend policy, method or procedural changes.
44. Provide training rules and any other unique regulations of the sport to each athlete who is considered a participant.
45. Give constant attention to a student athlete's grades and conduct.
46. Presence at all practices and games. Provide assistance, guidance, and safeguards for each participant.
47. Initiate programs and policies concerning injuries, medical attention, and emergencies.
48. Complete and submit proper paperwork on all disabling athletic injuries to the athletic office within 24 hours.
49. Direct student managers, assistants, and statisticians.
50. Determine discipline, delineate procedures concerning due process when the enforcement of discipline is necessary and contact parents when a student is dropped or becomes ineligible.
51. Assist athletes in their college or advanced educational selection.
52. Participate in the budgeting function with the Athletic Director by establishing requirements for the next season. Recommend guidelines as to type, style, color, or technical specifications of equipment. Responsible for operating within budget appropriations.
53. Accountable for all equipment and/or collection of fees for any lost or unreturned equipment. Arrange for issuing, storing, and reconditioning of equipment and submit annual inventory and current records.
54. Properly mark and identify all equipment before issuing or storing.
55. Monitor equipment rooms and coaches' offices, authorize who may enter, issue or requisition equipment.
56. Permit the athletes to only be in authorized areas of the building at the appropriate times.
57. Examine locker rooms before and after practices and games, checking on general cleanliness of the facility. Be responsible for cleanliness and maintenance of specific sport equipment.
58. Secure all doors, lights, windows, and locks before leaving the building if custodians are not on duty.
59. Instill in each player a respect for equipment and school property, its care and proper use.
60. Organize parents, coaches, players, and guests for pre-season meetings.
61. Promote the sport within the school through recruiting athletes who are not in another sports program. Promote the sport outside the school through news media, Little League programs, or in any other feasible manner.

62. Responsible for the quality, effectiveness and validity of any oral or written release to local media.
63. Responsible for maintaining good public relations with news media, Booster Club, parents, officials, volunteers, and fans.
64. Present information to news media concerning schedules, tournaments, and results.
65. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or the school Principal in keeping with Orange County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

Assistant Coach

1. Thorough knowledge of all the athletic policies approved by the Orange County Schools Board of Education and is responsible for their implementation.
2. Knowledge of the existing system, state, and conference regulations; implements them consistently.
3. Understand the proper administrative line of command and refer all student and parent requests of grievances through proper channels. Awareness of all public/staff/departmental meetings that require attendance.
4. Maintain discipline and work to increase morale and cooperation within the school sports program.
5. Assist the Head Coach in scheduling, providing transportation to tournaments and special sport events.
6. Assist in the necessary preparation to hold scheduled sport events or practices and adhere to scheduled facility times. Coordinate program with maintenance and school employees.
7. Provide documentation to the Athletic Director to fulfill state and system requirements concerning physical examinations, parental consent, and eligibility.
8. Provide proper safeguard for maintenance and protection of assigned equipment sites.
9. Provide training rules and any other unique regulations of the sport to each athlete who is considered a participant.
10. Presence at all practices and games. Provide assistance, guidance, and safeguards for each participant while traveling.
11. Direct student managers and statisticians on respective teams.
12. Determine discipline, delineate procedure concerning due process when the enforcement of discipline is necessary, contact parents when a student is dropped or becomes ineligible.
13. Accountable to the Head Coach for all equipment. Collect the cost of any equipment lost or not returned. Arrange for issuing and storing of equipment and submit an annual inventory and current records to the Head Coach.
14. Recommend program area budgetary items for subsequent years to the Head Coach.
15. Monitor and authorize entrance to equipment rooms and coaches' offices.
16. Authorize approved areas and times for athletes to enter the building.
17. Examine locker rooms for general cleanliness before and after practices and games. Responsible for cleanliness and maintenance of specific sport equipment.
18. Secure all doors, lights, windows, and locks before leaving the building if custodians are not on duty.
19. Instill in each player a respect for equipment and school property, its care, and proper use.
20. Assist the Head Coach in carrying out his responsibilities.
21. Make press releases and school announcements.
22. Instruct team members as to changes in the rules and teach fundamentals of the sport as outlined by the Head Coach.
23. Maintain a record of team statistics and requirements for lettering (for both Head Coach and Athletic Director).
24. Work within the basic framework and philosophy of the Head Coach of that sport.
25. Attend all staff meetings and carry out scouting assignments as outlined by the Head Coach.
26. Arrive early enough before practice, contests, and meetings to adequately prepare and remain long enough afterwards to help players with problems and/or be involved in staff discussions.
27. Help in the planning and implementation of both in-season and out-of-season conditioning and weight programs.

28. Never criticizes, admonishes, or argues with the Head Coach or any staff member within ears or eyes of players or parents.
29. Strive to improve skills by attending clinics and using resources made available by the Head Coach.
30. Attend most of the contests, when possible, of other teams in the program.
31. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or the School Principal in keeping with Orange County Schools Board of Education Policies and North Carolina Administrative Code of Statutes.

Licensed Athletic Trainer

1. Must maintain annual BOC certification.
2. Maintain NC Licensure status
3. Is responsible for giving basic instruction to athletic staff members in the prevention and care of injuries.
4. Is responsible for training and supervising sports medicine student assistants, as well as scheduling them.
5. Is responsible for referring athletic injuries to physicians for diagnosis and/or treatment.
6. Carry out appropriate instructions and treatment as directed by the (athlete's) physician.
7. Develop and supervise appropriate rehabilitation programs for athletes under the direction of the physician.
8. Assist and advise the athletic staff regarding conditioning programs and the selection, care and fitting of protective equipment.
9. Determine if a player is capable of continued participation in a game and/or practice if the player is injured.
10. Is responsible for the treatment and supervision of treatment for all athletic injuries and conditions.
11. Is responsible for the organization, inventory and requisition of all training room supplies with the advisement and approval of the athletic director.
12. Should be present at all NCHSAA sponsored home athletic competitions, as the various sports calendars will permit. Coordinate an extension of sports medicine services when appropriate.
13. A licensed athletic trainer or first responder must attend all football practices and games and home wrestling contests, unless excused by the superintendent/designee due to emergency.
14. Shall make and/or assist with proper arrangements for scheduling athletic physicals for student athletes.
15. Shall remain on campus and/or be available until 5:30 pm each school day during the winter and spring seasons to treat athletic injuries. Coordinate an extension of sports medicine services when appropriate.
16. Is responsible for the care and cleanliness of the athletic training room.
17. Is responsible for the maintenance of student athletic files, which may include physicals, injury reports, treatment logs, etc.
18. May not have coaching responsibilities during the season in which the person is working as a licensed athletic trainer.
19. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or school principal in keeping with Orange County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

First Responder/Medical Supervisor

1. Is responsible for giving basic instruction to athletic staff members in the prevention and care of injuries.
2. Is responsible for training and supervising sports medicine student assistants, as well as scheduling them.
3. Is responsible for referring athletic injuries to physicians for diagnosis and/or treatment in accordance with the Emergency Action Plan.
4. Carry out appropriate instructions and treatment as directed by the (athlete's) physician.
5. Assist and advise the athletic staff regarding conditioning programs and the selection, care and fitting of protective equipment.
6. In accordance with qualifications, determine if a player is capable of continued participation in a game and/or practice if the player is injured.
7. Is responsible for immediate first aid care for all athletic injuries and conditions.
8. Is responsible for the organization, inventory and requisition of all training room supplies with the advisement and approval of the athletic director.
9. Should be present at all school sponsored home athletic events, as the various sports calendars will permit. Coordinate an extension of sports medicine services when appropriate.
10. Is responsible for providing sports medicine supervision at all other major school sponsored home athletic events, which would involve a number of teams and a significant amount of time, i.e. all day as opposed to 2-3 hours (volleyball invitational, wrestling tournaments, track invitational, etc.).
11. Shall make and/or assist with proper arrangements for scheduling athletic physicals for student athletes.
12. Shall remain on campus and/or be available until 5:30 P.M. each assigned school day during the winter and spring seasons to treat athletic injuries.
13. Is responsible for the care and cleanliness of the athletic training room.
14. Is responsible for the maintenance of student athletic files, which may include physicals, injury reports, treatment logs, etc.
15. May not have coaching responsibilities during the season in which the person is working as a first responder.
16. Perform other duties as assigned by the school principal in keeping with Orange County Schools Board of Education Policy and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

Cheerleading Coach

1. Responsible for the directing, supervising, and training of the cheerleaders.
2. Responsible for completing the requirements of the NCHSAA and Orange County Schools.
3. Responsible for the conduct of the cheerleaders at practice sessions and at all contests.
4. Schedule, attend, and supervise cheerleader practice sessions.
5. Lead and direct the cheerleaders in such a way as to encourage good sportsmanship by example and leadership.
6. Conduct himself/herself before the students and the community so as to instill respect and good sportsmanship.
7. Assume responsibility for an energetic public relations program for the cheerleaders and their activities.
8. Responsible for uniforms and supplies.
9. Assure cheerleaders carry out all the duties set forth in their guidelines.
10. Serve as the liaison between cheerleaders and the school administration.
11. Ensure that Board Policy and sound business practices are followed in planning school trips, fundraisers, and other activities.
12. Perform other duties as assigned by the Superintendent or school Principal in keeping with Orange County Schools Board of Education policies and North Carolina Administrative Code and Statutes.

Volunteer Coaches Hiring Process

1. Complete Background check with AD, Allow time for approval from District AD
2. Complete OCS Volunteer Coaches Form
3. Complete I 9 form
4. Attend OCS Coaches Intake session (Fall, Winter, Spring).
5. AD will add the Volunteer Coach to the Schools Coaches Roster.

Paid Coaches Hiring Process

1. Complete Background check with AD, Allow time for approval from District AD
2. Complete Coach's Recommendation form (If New to the District)
3. Complete Coaches Verification of Experience form (If New to the Sport)
4. Complete I 9 tax form
5. Attend OCS Coaches Intake session (Fall, Winter, Spring)
6. AD will add the Paid Coach to the Schools Coaches Roster.

ATHLETIC FACILITIES

All athletic facilities are managed and supervised by OCS. The use of athletic facilities is limited to OCS events, athletic programs, and OCS approved outside usage. All requests for athletic facility usage from individuals and groups must be done using the OCS facility use application. For OCS coaches, teams and athletic staff, Athletic facility use beyond in-season practice and competition, team off-season workouts and summer camps, must be approved through the OCS facility use application process. Rental fee and agreements for use of athletic facilities are established per Board of Education Policy. Unauthorized use of athletic facilities is strictly prohibited.

***ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS FOR SIGNS, BANNERS & FLAGS
DISPLAYED AT SPORTING EVENTS***

The Orange County Board of Education supports the participation of individuals at athletic and sporting events which fosters and creates a positive experience for our athletes, students and community. These regulations shall guide school administration to ensure safe school climates are maintained by all individuals attending sporting events.

- Signs, banners or flags must not exceed 24x24 inches, may not employ poles, sticks, or rigid support structures, and must not obstruct the view of any spectators.
- Signs, banners or flags may not be affixed to fences, structures, bleachers or any part of the school property. Signs must be handheld.
- Only signs, banners or flags supporting a participating sports team will be permitted. Signs, banners or flags displaying messages not related to supporting a participating sports team are not permitted.
- Signs, banners or flags that are not related to supporting a participating team, contain vulgar or obscene language, encourage violence or unlawful acts, or otherwise violate Board Policy or the Student Code of Conduct will not be permitted.
- Size limitations do not apply to signs, banners or flags created and displayed by the team or cheerleaders that are supporting a sports team.
- Sign paint may not be brought onto the school grounds.

Individuals that display signs that do not adhere to these regulations will be asked to remove the sign, flag or banner. Individuals that refuse to adhere to these regulations will be asked to leave the event and refunds will not be issued.

Updated Athletic Related Policies

[OCS Board Policy 4202](#)

[OCS Board Policy 5010](#)

[OCS Board Policy 7122](#)

[OCS Board Policy 7310](#)

[OCS Board Policy 7335](#)

***ATHLETIC PASSES:**

The policy regarding athletic passes is as follows:

Employee ID Card/Badge: All employees of Orange County Schools Badge (just for OCS **Employees ONLY!**) This badge will admit One employee to all athletic contests held within Orange County Schools. It will not be honored for any games outside of Orange County Schools. The North Carolina High School Athletic Association will not honor these badges for any State Playoff /Championships games.

***ATHLETIC FEE PROCEDURES:**

The Athletic Department wishes to offer to the extent practical its Athletic programs without charging fees.

Before any fee may be charged, it must be approved by the School Principal and Athletic Director. The athletics fee request must be presented by the coach to the athletic director and principal at least one month before the fall, winter, and spring season. The School's Athletic Director will submit the schedule of fees to the Principal each athletic season for approval, and the approved fees will be submitted to the District Athletic Coordinator.

Any fees imposed for participation in the Athletic programs will be waived or reduced for students who demonstrate real economic hardship.

The Principal will be responsible for establishing procedures to review requests for fee waivers or reductions, including the process for appeals.

1. The Athletic Directors and Coaches will hold student fees to a minimum.
2. The Principal may authorize fee waivers or reductions in individual cases based on demonstrated economic hardship.
3. All applications for waiver or reduction of fees shall be handled in a confidential manner, and no public reference shall be made by any school personnel to the fact that a student has not paid a fee or fees or has applied for or received a waiver or reduction with regard to the payment of fees.
4. Each coach will publish or post the schedule of fees and notify students and parents of the availability of and the process for requesting a fee waiver or reduction.
5. Once fees have been paid, any student transferring to another school within the school system will not be assessed additional fees for the same services in the new school for that school year.
6. Fees annually approved by the Principal shall be collected and accounted for through school or school district accounts.