

Watertown City School District
Athletics Department
Student/Parent Handbook



Watertown High School
Case Middle School

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Watertown athletic program. This information is presented because you are interested in participating in athletics in middle school or high school.

We appreciate your interest in the athletics program and believe participation in athletics will provide a student-athlete with many gratifying experiences, including physical and emotional maturity. Our staff is committed to providing our student-athletes with proper equipment, facilities, and caring coaches.

A student-athlete's decision to participate in athletics is a commitment to their team. The decision to participate requires a commitment of self-discipline and self-sacrifice on the part of the student. The student-athlete must follow the rules for proper training, performance, and conduct.

As a student-athlete, parent, or legal guardian, we know you will ensure that you will participate in the Watertown athletic program with the full knowledge that you are expected to follow all NYSPHSAA, Section III, Frontier League, Watertown CSD, and any other governing bodies rules and regulations.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Athletic Department is to provide an educationally based interscholastic athletic program that supports the academic mission of the school district. Through participation in athletics, student-athletes develop character, leadership, teamwork, sportsmanship, responsibility, perseverance, and respect in a safe, inclusive, and competitive environment. We are committed to promoting academic excellence, personal growth, and lifelong healthy habits while preparing students to become responsible citizens. Success is measured not only by competitive achievement but also by the values, relationships, and life skills gained through the athletic experience.

GOALS of the INTERSCHOLASTIC PROGRAM

Support the Educational Mission

Reinforce the academic goals of the school district by teaching lessons that complement classroom learning through participation in athletics.

Promote Character Development

Foster integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, self-discipline, perseverance, and accountability in all student-athletes.

Develop Leadership Skills

Provide opportunities for students to lead by example, communicate effectively, make sound decisions, and positively influence their teammates and school community.

Encourage Academic Achievement

Emphasize that academic success is the highest priority and encourage student-athletes to maintain eligibility through consistent effort in the classroom.

Promote Physical and Mental Wellness

Encourage lifelong fitness, healthy lifestyles, proper nutrition, injury prevention, and positive mental health practices.

Teach Teamwork and Collaboration

Help students learn the value of cooperation, trust, communication, and working toward common goals.

Provide a Safe and Positive Environment

Ensure that all participants compete in an environment that prioritizes safety, inclusion, respect, and emotional well-being.

Develop Athletic Skills

Provide quality instruction that enables student-athletes to improve their sport-specific knowledge, skills, and physical abilities.

Promote Sportsmanship

Instill respect for teammates, opponents, officials, coaches, spectators, and the rules of the game while demonstrating graciousness in both victory and defeat.

Foster School Pride and Community Engagement

Build positive relationships among students, families, staff, and the community through athletic participation and representation.

Encourage Personal Growth

Help student-athletes develop confidence, resilience, time-management skills, goal-setting abilities, and the capacity to overcome adversity.

Prepare Students for Life Beyond Athletics

Teach transferable life skills such as commitment, work ethic, leadership, communication, problem-solving, and resilience that contribute to success in college, careers, and citizenship.

CORE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Support academic achievement.
- Promote character, integrity, and accountability.
- Foster sportsmanship and respect.
- Provide a safe and positive athletic environment.
- Develop leadership and teamwork.
- Encourage lifelong health and wellness.
- Pursue competitive excellence through ethical participation.
- Operate all programs in compliance with district, Section III Frontier League, NYSPHSAA, and state regulations.

STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. Student-athletes are expected to represent themselves, their team, their school, and the Watertown City School District with integrity, respect, responsibility, and sportsmanship.

- **Prioritize academics** by maintaining eligibility, attending classes regularly, and putting forth their best effort in the classroom.
- **Demonstrate commitment** by attending practices, contests, meetings, and team activities on time and prepared to participate.
- **Exhibit sportsmanship** by treating teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, spectators, and school personnel with respect and dignity.
- **Support a positive team culture** by demonstrating teamwork, leadership, responsibility, and inclusion while contributing to a safe and welcoming environment.
- **Promote health and safety** by following team rules, reporting injuries or illnesses, using equipment properly, and making healthy, responsible choices.
- **Respect school property** by caring for uniforms, equipment, facilities, and returning all issued items at the conclusion of the season.
- **Represent the district positively** in school, during athletic events, online, and within the community through conduct that reflects positively on themselves and the athletic program.

Student-athletes are responsible for understanding and complying with all team, athletic department, district, and applicable governing organization rules. Failure to meet these

expectations may result in disciplinary action consistent with team rules, district policy, and applicable athletic regulations.

PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

The Watertown City School District Athletic Department recognizes that parents and guardians play an important role in the success and development of our student-athletes. We ask that all parents and guardians support the following expectations:

- Encourage your child to demonstrate good sportsmanship, respect, and integrity at all times.
- Support the educational mission of interscholastic athletics by emphasizing effort, improvement, teamwork, and character over wins and losses.
- Respect the authority and decisions of coaches, officials, athletic administrators, and game personnel.
- Model appropriate behavior and language at all athletic events, both home and away.
- Refrain from coaching your child or other student-athletes from the stands or sidelines during practices and contests.
- Promote respectful communication with coaches and athletic staff. Concerns should be addressed privately and through the appropriate chain of communication.
- Follow the Athletic Department's communication protocol, including observing the 36-Hour Communication Guideline before requesting a meeting regarding concerns after a contest.
- Ensure your child attends practices and contests consistently and arrives on time. Notify the coach promptly if an absence is necessary.
- Support your child's commitment to academics by encouraging regular attendance, completion of schoolwork, and maintaining academic eligibility.
- Reinforce the importance of following team rules, school policies, district expectations, and the standards established by the coach.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for communicating directly with coaches regarding playing time, team roles, and other athletic concerns whenever appropriate.
- Respect the facilities of all schools by helping maintain a clean, safe, and welcoming environment.
- Demonstrate positive behavior toward opposing teams, spectators, and officials, recognizing that student-athletes learn from the example set by adults.
- Understand that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege that carries responsibilities and expectations for both student-athletes and their families.
- Partner with the Athletic Department to provide a safe, positive, and educational experience for all participants.

MODIFIED PHILOSOPHY

Middle school “modified” programs, in general, offer an introduction to the world of competitive athletics. Sport activities offered are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, facility availability, financial resources, and the relationship to the high school program. At this point, the focus is on learning basic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, social and emotional growth, and healthy competition. The emphasis is to provide an opportunity for children, through physical participation in a positive competitive environment, to learn about their capabilities and appreciate human physical potential. Athletes are introduced to the benefits of physical conditioning and encouraged to become responsible for maintaining an appropriate fitness level. The “modified” program allows for game rules and requirements of play to be adapted to match the competitive abilities of young, inexperienced, middle school athletes, who have not yet reached emotional, social, physiological, or physical maturity.

JV PHILOSOPHY

The junior varsity programs are intended for those who display the potential for continued development into productive varsity level players. In junior varsity programs, teams are comprised of mostly ninth and tenth grade athletes. At this point in the athlete’s development, the level of expectation increases substantially. The high school sport season is longer than the middle school sport season. The practice sessions are longer and more intense, and the skill requirements for participation in contests are greater. The atmosphere is more competitive, and in many cases athletes who were able to meet the demands of play at the modified program will not be able to meet the expectations of participation at the junior varsity level. Athletes must be prepared for a competitive tryout situation and should not assume that they will automatically make the team because they were involved in the program at the modified level. Each and every season is treated as a new year, and tryouts are conducted accordingly. Some athletes may not have as much playing time as they did on the modified level, however coaches will make a reasonable effort to play athletes in the contests.

VARSITY PHILOSOPHY

Varsity competition is the culminating experience for each sport’s program. It is an experience provided for the skilled athlete and is the most demanding and competitive of all programs. Although junior and senior athletes dominate most varsity team rosters, gifted ninth and tenth grade athletes are eligible for varsity level play. Prior participation in the program does not guarantee an athlete a spot on the roster, even if the athlete was a member of the varsity squad the preceding year. The number of participants on most varsity teams is a function of those needed to conduct effective and meaningful practice, and to play the contest. It is vital that each member understands and accepts their role on the team, as the number of roster positions is relative to the student’s acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of team goals. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed, since the outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level.

ELIGIBILITY

(NYSPHSAA HANDBOOK)

These standards are the rules of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Inc. and apply to grades 9-12. Athletes must meet all standards of eligibility for practice and competition. "All schools agree to abide by the minimum eligibility rules adopted by the Central Committee in all interscholastic competitions." – NYSPHSAA, Inc., Constitution, Article II. (2).

AGE AND GRADE:

Regulation of the Commissioner of Education:

A student shall be eligible for interschool competition in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue participating in all sports during that school year.

NOTE: Students may be eligible regardless of age or grade if approved through the State Education Department's Athletic Placement Process. A 15-year-old below the 9th grade must only meet the Athletic Placement Process maturity standards to be eligible at the high school level.

BONA FIDE STUDENTS:

Regulation of the Commissioner of Education

A contestant must be a bona fide high school student and take at least four subjects, including Physical Education. A foreign exchange student may be considered a bona fide if these eligibility rules are satisfied. A student in an education program in two schools may represent only the home school.

NOTE: A student in shared services, part-time or full-time program, taking the equivalent of four subjects, including Physical Education, is considered registered in the home school. A shared services student is only eligible at one school per school year (home district or shared service school) regardless of the interscholastic athletic programs offered. (May 2020) Exceptions for special cases must be approved by League and Section. A student who satisfies all eligibility standards, enrolled in the equivalent of three requirements for graduation, may be enrolled in one or more college courses for advanced placement. The student must earn at least three high school credits and Physical Education to be eligible.

HEALTH EXAMINATION (NYSPHSAA HANDBOOK)

Regulation of the Commissioner of Education:

A student who may engage in interscholastic competition shall receive an adequate health examination and health history update when required and may not practice or participate without the approval of the school medical officer.

The results of the physical shall be valid for a period of 12 months during the last day of the month in which the physical was conducted. Unless the medical examination is conducted within 30 days of the start of a season, a health history update is required. Any pupil, whose safe participation is in question as a result of the health history interview, or injury, or prolonged absence, must be prequalified by the school physician prior to participation.

If the 12-month period for the physical expires during a sports season, participants may complete the season as long as a health history was conducted prior to the season. For example, a physical conducted on August 1 would be valid through August 31. If a student plays beyond August (ex. football), the student may complete that sports season as long as an interval health history was conducted before the start of the season. Immediately following the last sanctioned tournament competition for that season, a new physical is required if the student is going to play another sport. Sport season includes tryouts.

NOTE: NYSPHSAA recommends that each incidence of prolonged absence should be reviewed individually by the coach and the athletic director, consulting with the school physician when necessary, and a reasonable amount of practice time and playing time be established based on the athlete's readiness for safe return to competition.

ATHLETIC RULES

The privilege of participating in such activities shall be conditioned upon appropriate conduct, as established by the student code of conduct and any rules promulgated specifically for participation in extra and/or co-curricular activities. A student-athlete who is suspended from school by school authorities shall incur a suspension from his/her team equal in duration to the period for which the individual is out of school. The principal or assistant principal will notify the athletic director, who will notify the coach of the suspension. Habitual teacher or administrative detentions will affect eligibility as determined by the coach and/or athletic director.

CODE of CONDUCT (BOE POLICY)

All student-athletes are under the auspices outlined in the school and/or District code of conduct.

****Individual coaches may establish additional rules for their respective teams. It is the responsibility of the coach to clearly inform team members and parents/guardians of these rules. The coach will administer penalties for violation of these established team rules.

TEAM DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSION, & DISSMISSAL (ATHLETIC RULE)

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege that carries responsibilities. Student-athletes are expected to comply with team rules, the Student Code of Conduct, Athletic Department expectations, and district policies. When misconduct occurs, disciplinary action should be fair, progressive when appropriate, and consistent with the educational mission of the athletic program.

Coach Authority

Head coaches are responsible for maintaining team discipline and may impose appropriate consequences for violations of team rules or expectations. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal warnings or conferences.
- Additional team responsibilities or corrective action.
- Temporary suspension from practices or contests.
- Temporary suspension from team activities while the matter is reviewed.
- Other reasonable disciplinary measures consistent with team rules and district policy.

Coaches are expected to document significant disciplinary actions and notify the Athletic Director of any suspension extending beyond one practice or one contest, or any pattern of repeated misconduct.

Suspension of Team Activities

A coach may temporarily suspend a student-athlete from participation in practices, contests, or other team activities when immediate disciplinary action is necessary or while a concern is being reviewed.

Before imposing a suspension, when practical, the coach should:

- Inform the student-athlete of the specific rule or expectation that was violated.
- Provide the student-athlete an opportunity to explain their actions.
- Document the incident and the action taken.
- Notify the Athletic Director as soon as practical.
- Communicate the suspension to the parent or guardian in accordance with district procedures.

The length and conditions of the suspension should be reasonable, consistent, and related to the nature of the violation.

Dismissal from a Team

Permanent dismissal from an athletic team is an administrative decision and may not be imposed solely by a coach.

When a coach believes dismissal may be warranted, the coach shall:

- Document the incident(s) or pattern of behavior.
- Submit the documentation to the Athletic Director.
- Meet with the Athletic Director to review the circumstances.
- Continue to follow the Athletic Director's direction regarding the student's participation until a final decision is made.

The Athletic Director will review the available information, provide the student-athlete an opportunity to respond, consult with the parent or guardian as appropriate, and determine whether additional administrative review is necessary. The Athletic Director may also consult with the building principal or other district administrators before a final decision is made. A student-athlete will not be permanently removed from a team until the administrative review process has been completed and a final decision has been communicated.

DUE PROCESS

(EDUCATION LAW & ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE)

In the event of a reported action requiring discipline of an athlete, the following procedures must be followed:

- The Coach/Athletic Director/Principal shall conduct a reasonable investigation of the circumstances, including interviews, of the accuser, accused, eyewitnesses, and other key parties. As part of the investigation, the coach must contact the parents/guardians to determine if they have knowledge of or information concerning the reported violation.
- Upon completing the investigation and determining appropriate sanctions, the coach shall inform the student-athlete and parents/guardians of the alleged violation and the disciplinary action to be taken.
- Within two days of the communication with the Athletic Director, the student-athlete has the right to appeal the decision to the Athletic Director. All appeals must be presented in writing to the Athletic Director.
- Within five days of the submitted appeal, the Athletic Director shall conduct an appropriate review and rule on the appeal.

VIOLATION REPORTS

(ATHLETIC RULE)

Reports of alleged student-athlete violations of the training mentioned above rule policy must be personally witnessed and submitted in writing to the school administration and Athletic Director within three school days of the breach in question. Violation reports will be accepted from any coaching staff member, faculty/staff member, or reliable adult.

TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

(ATHLETIC RULE)

The Watertown CSD and the Athletic Department's to prevent and prohibit the possession of any amounts of alcoholic beverage, tobacco products, vaping, or unauthorized use of drugs (controlled chemicals or substances) by all student-athletes during the school year. The training expectations will be in effect in school and out of school for the entire sports season of participation (from the first legal practice of the season until the in season's final contest. Ideally, student-athletes are athletes the whole year and are encouraged to abide by training expectations in and out of season.

TEAM SELECTION

(ATHLETIC RULE)

Under our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students participate in the athletic program, we encourage coaches to keep as many athletes as possible without unbalancing their sport's integrity. The final decision on the number of student-athletes on a team will be made by the coach.

PARTICIPATION in INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC TRIPS

(ATHLETIC RULE)

1. Athletes are required to be transported to and from "away" athletic contests on school-approved transportation. This includes school minivans, leased buses in accordance with the district transportation contract or vehicles rented by the District. Any request for variation in transportation arrangements must be written to the Athletic Director for approval.
2. Parents/guardians of student-athletes who participate in interscholastic athletic contests must be given a copy of the schedule, including away games. Parents/guardians must also be provided with general information about travel arrangements to and from athletic contests and sign a general permission form for transportation for the season.
3. Parents/guardians may not transport children to or from interscholastic contests except with the prior written approval of the Athletic Director. Under no circumstances shall a parent/guardian transport any children other than his/her own. Parent permission forms must also identify the conditions under which a student-athlete is to be released from interscholastic athletic events following the team's return to school, e.g., walk, drive their own car, be picked up by parent/guardian, etc.
4. If the travel requires an overnight stay, the trip must be approved by the Board of Education. The school district Trip Approval form must be completed, and all procedures for submission must be followed. If the overnight travel is contingent upon the outcome of an athletic contest and the time for the trip approval is very short, the Athletic Director must submit a written request to the Superintendent for trip approval, citing exigent circumstances. The Trip Approval form must be presented to the Board for ratification following the trip.

36-HOUR COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

(ATHLETIC RULE)

Open and respectful communication between student-athletes, parents/guardians, and coaches is essential to a positive athletic experience. Coaches are responsible for making decisions that are in the best interest of the team while supporting the development of individual student-athletes.

36-Hour Rule

Parents/guardians may not approach or contact a coach, team personnel, or officials regarding concerns about a game or practice until 36 hours have passed following the conclusion of the contest or practice. This waiting period allows emotions to subside and promotes productive, respectful communication.

Appropriate Topics to Discuss with Coaches

- Your child's physical, mental, or emotional well-being
- Ways your child can improve and develop
- Concerns regarding your child's behavior or expectations

Topics Not Appropriate for Discussion

- Playing time
- Team strategy or play calling
- Other student-athletes
- Coaching decisions made during competition
- Communication Expectations

Coaches Will Communicate

- Team philosophy and expectations.
- Practice and game schedules.
- Team rules and participation requirements.
- Injury procedures.
- Team disciplinary policies.

Parents are Expected to

- Communicate concerns respectfully and directly with the coach
- Provide advance notice of schedule conflicts
- Support the program and encourage their child's commitment, sportsmanship, and personal growth

Resolution Process

If a concern arises, the following steps should be followed:

1. The student-athlete discusses the concern directly with the coach.
2. If unresolved, the parent/guardian contacts the coach after the 36-hour waiting period.
3. If still unresolved, a meeting is held involving the student-athlete, parent/guardian, and coach.
4. If the matter remains unresolved, the Athletic Director will meet with all parties to review the concern.

This protocol encourages respectful communication, reinforces student-athlete self-advocacy, and provides a clear process for resolving concerns while maintaining a positive educational athletic environment.

EXTRACURRICULAR STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

I. Extracurricular Student Code of Conduct

- A. Extracurricular activities in the Watertown City School District (the District) are open to all students. Students who elect to participate in these extracurricular activities are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct.
- B. The Student Code of Conduct will be followed by those secondary students in Grades seven through twelve (7-12) participating in all school-sponsored clubs/organizations, athletic teams, musical or instrumental programs, and major school events.
- C. In order to be a participant of an extracurricular activity, each student will be expected to:
 - 1. Be a good school and community citizen and adhere to the Student Code of Conduct;
 - 2. Be successful in their pursuit of academic studies (see Academic Standards section below);
 - 3. Refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, electronic e-cigarettes (vape pens), marijuana, and the use of other illegal drugs;

4. Fully participate in all practices, rehearsals, meetings, or events unless excused by coach/advisor; and
5. Represent the District in a dignified and respectful manner both in and out of school.

II. Academic Standards

Academic eligibility of students will be assessed by each mid-marking period progress report and by each marking period report card (roughly every five (5) weeks).

To remain eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports, students may be failing no more than two (2) classes.

- TEAM - If a student is failing more than two (2) classes - they are prohibited from participating in any contest/game/scrimmage. Students will be permitted to practice with the team. During this time, the student is strongly encouraged to work toward academic success in the classes that they are failing. Students who are academically ineligible will be reconsidered for team participation by the coach and athletic director on a weekly basis if they are no longer failing more than two (2) classes.
- CLUB - If a student is failing more than two (2) classes - they are prohibited from participating in club events, competitions, and/or productions. Students will be permitted to attend club meetings and rehearsals. During this time, the student is strongly encouraged to work toward academic success in the classes that they are failing. Students who are academically ineligible will be reconsidered for club participation by the club advisor on a weekly basis if they are no longer failing more than two (2) classes.

Academic Eligibility

A. Fall Sports/Extracurriculars

Students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) who end the school year failing more than two (2) courses and wish to participate in a fall sport or extracurricular activity have the following options:

- Students may take summer classes in the courses that they have failed in order to become academically eligible (upon successful completion). If the course(s) that they have failed is/are not available during summer school, the student may petition the Director of Health, Physical Education, and Athletics to substitute a different course for the one not available.
- If there are extenuating circumstances that preclude a student from attending summer school, they will be on a five (5) week probationary contract as outlined below.

Students entering seventh through twelfth (7th – 12th) grade in the Fall, with two (2) or more failing grades, will be on a five (5) week probationary contract to be eligible to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities. Students must have a recommendation from a teacher or administrator to be eligible to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities.

Probation includes dismissal from team/club/activity if any of the following occur:

- Student fails to meet teacher expectations for homework/class work
- Student has a behavioral referral
- Student has excessive absences from school or practice
- Student is removed from practice
- Student has failing grades at the five (5) week mark of the first (1st) quarter

Reason for denial of recommendation could include but are not limited to:

- Previous failure restrictions on participation
- Excessive referrals from the previous year

After the Fall season, all students will follow the current seventh through twelfth (7-12) grade Academic Eligibility Policy.

B. Waiver

An academic waiver process will be available at the beginning of the second (2nd), third (3rd), and fourth (4th) marking periods. A student deemed academically ineligible may request a one-time “waiver” to gain relief from ineligibility restrictions. The request for a waiver may only happen once during a student’s middle school career and once during a student’s high school career. The student may petition the building principal and Director of Health, Physical Education, and Athletics in extenuating circumstances for an additional waiver. The waiver form is available in the Guidance Office and must be initiated by the student.

C. Academic Eligibility Appeal Board (AEAB)

An Academic Eligibility Appeal Board (AEAB) will be established in the middle school and high school buildings, which will consist of a building administrative representative, the Director of Health, Physical Education, and Athletics, a teacher representative, and a school counselor. An appeal of any dismissal must be cosigned by the parent and the student and directed in writing to AEAB. If the decision rendered by the AEAB is not acceptable to the parties involved, a further appeal may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.

III. Behavioral Standards

- A. Students are ambassadors for the District and its programs both in and out of school. Students will refrain from the use, possession, or sale of alcohol, drugs, electronic cigarettes (vapes pens), marijuana, and/or tobacco products on or off campus during the time that they are a participant in school activities. Other forms of unacceptable behavior such as harassment, stealing, destruction of property, illegal absences, insubordination, etc. will be dealt with depending on the severity of the behavior and may result in the prohibition of involvement in future extracurricular activities. Behavioral issues including profanity, loss of temper, etc. will generally be dealt with at the coach/advisors discretion.

- B. If a student chooses not to follow the Code of Conduct, consequences will be progressive as outlined in Superintendent Regulation 7600.1 (Team) and 7600.2 (Club).

IV. Attendance Standards

- A. Tardiness and unexcused absences from practices or events without prior discussion with a coach or advisor is unacceptable. A student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities if the student is absent from school due to truancy, suspension, or any other illegal absence on that day. Legal excuses for missing school include documented doctor's appointments, court appearances, academic activities, and college visits. If a student misses school as a result of sickness or is sent home early, they may not participate in extracurricular events.

Watertown City School District

Adopted: 04/06/93

Revised: 08/21/12, 07/07/15, 07/02/18, 06/18/19, 09/17/19*, 6/10/2020*, 07/05/22*

Regulation

STUDENTS

7600.1

TEAM BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS

Athletic Rules (To be enforced by the Principal or Assistant Principal of Case Middle School or Watertown High School in conjunction with the Athletic Director and appropriate Coach.)

Citizenship in School

- 1.) All athletes will adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. Students that receive In-School Suspension for a half-day or more or an Out-of-School Suspension will not be allowed to practice or play games on those days.
- 2.) Athletes will always lead by example. Students who face disciplinary action for bullying, name calling, inappropriate gestures, foul language, or anything else unacceptable will also face punishment relating to sports. These consequences will be progressive based on the severity and number of times the student is caught breaking the rules.

Sportsmanship

- 3.) Any student, coach, administrator, or parent who is removed from a contest will have to complete the NFHS Sportsmanship Course online and present their certificate of completion to the Athletic Office before they can attend another home contest. <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/sportsmanship-2>. Anyone removed again will not be allowed to attend another home contest for the remainder of the school year.
- 4.) Athletes will demonstrate outstanding sportsmanship at all times. Students caught taunting or “trash talking” anyone will face the following consequences: one game suspension **for each instance** of swearing, being disrespectful, unsportsmanlike, or anything else inappropriate.

Hazing

5.) Athletes found guilty of hazing through evidence (including eyewitness accounts, social media evidence, or photographic evidence) will be suspended for twenty-five percent (25%) of the initially scheduled games for that season for the first offense and for the remainder of the season for the second offense.

Alcohol, Tobacco, Illegal Drugs, Prescription Drugs, Vaping

6.) Based on the *Life of An Athlete Program*, students will sign a contract promising not to use, possess or distribute alcohol, tobacco or nicotine products including cigarettes, e-cigarettes (vape pens), cigars, pipes or chewing or smokeless tobacco, marijuana and other illegal substances. This contract must be signed before students can practice and will be kept on file in the Athletic Office. When there is evidence of students possessing or using any of these products (including eyewitness accounts, social media evidence, or photographic evidence) the student will be referred to appropriate cessation program and they can return to games either upon completion or the 25% mark, whichever comes first. The contract starts at the beginning of the season and runs through the school year.

Academics

7.) Students will be required to follow the academic standards set by the Watertown City School District's (the District) Extracurricular Student Code of Conduct (Policy 7600).

8.) Students must be registered for physical education classes in order to participate in athletics. Students who are unprepared for P.E. class will NOT be allowed to practice on that day or participate in a contest.

9.) Students must be in attendance all day long to participate in practices or games. Students who are late or absent without a legal excuse will NOT be allowed to participate (extenuating circumstances will be considered by the administration). (see Policy 7600)

Citizenship Outside of School and Other Rules

- 10.) Students who bully or degrade others (directly or indirectly) on social media will face a one (1) game suspension for the first offense followed by a two (2) game suspension for the second offense and dismissal from the team for a third offense.
- 11.) Students who face criminal charges may be dismissed from athletics for up to a year.
- 12.) Students defacing school property in the District or another school district will face a one (1) game suspension for the first offense followed by a two (2) game suspension for a second offense, and dismissal from the team for a third offense.

Other Rules

- 13.) Uniforms and other sports equipment borrowed from the District will be turned in within three school days of the final game. Students will be financially responsible for lost or broken school property.
- 14.) Students who choose not to participate anymore after the first contest of a season will NOT be allowed to join another team or participate in sports the following season (this will carry over the summer). Exceptions will be made only if agreed upon by the coach (of the team the student left) and the Athletic Director.
- 15.) Students are required to follow all Team Rules set by coaches as well as school rules. Team Rules may be more restrictive than school rules but NOT less restrictive.
- 16.) All paperwork (permission slips, health history, concussion sheet, emergency contact information) must be filled out completely and on file before students can practice.
- 17.) Students need to be supervised when they use any facility in the District. The first time a student is caught unsupervised in a gym, locker room, or other facility that student will be warned. For any continuous violation of this rule, the student will be suspended from one contest for each infraction.

I (print name) _____ understand and promise to follow all of the above rules.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

I (print name) _____ give my child permission to participate in Interscholastic Sports in the District. I understand they will need to follow all the above rules and face the consequences when the rules are not followed.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Watertown City School District

Approved by the Superintendent: 06/18/19, 7/23/19*, 6/10/2020*, 07/05/22*, 08/13/24

Regulation

STUDENTS

7600.3

ACADEMIC INELIGIBILITY WAIVER REQUEST FORM

This form is to be completed by any student requesting an Academic Ineligibility Waiver. In accordance with Watertown CSD Board of Education Policy 7600, an approved waiver provides temporary relief from ineligibility restrictions for five (5) weeks.

Students are permitted to request one waiver during middle school and one waiver during high school. In extenuating circumstances, students may petition the Building Principal and the Director of Health, Physical Education, and Athletics for an additional waiver.

This form must be initiated by the student and submitted to the School Counseling Office for processing.

Student Full Name: _____

Grade Level (7–12): _____

Date of Submission: _____

Sport/Activity: _____

Marking Period (check one): ____ 2nd / ____ 3rd / ____ 4th

Have you previously used an academic waiver in middle or high school (circle one)?

_____ Yes, in Middle School.

_____ Yes, in High School.

_____ No.

Reason for Request:

Please explain why you should be granted a waiver and academic improvement plan:

ACADEMIC INELIGIBILITY WAIVER REQUEST FORM

Please explain the actions that you will take to improve your academic grades:

Acknowledgements (Student must initial each line):

_____ I understand this waiver is valid for five (5) weeks only and ends at the next 5week progress report.

_____ I acknowledge that I may only receive one waiver during middle school and one during high school, unless I successfully petition school administration for an additional waiver under extenuating circumstances.

_____ I understand that my eligibility will be re-evaluated and that I must meet academic, behavioral, and attendance expectations to remain eligible under this waiver.

_____ I understand that this request must be reviewed and approved by the Building Principal and the Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Building Principal Signature

Date

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

I. Statement of Policy

The Board of Education (the Board) of the Watertown City School District (the District) recognizes the importance of raising awareness about concussion throughout the school community and to educate students, parents and others about how to prevent, recognize, and respond to concussions.

II. Definition

For purposes of this Policy, **concussion** is defined as a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head or brain to move rapidly back and forth.¹

III. Staff Qualification

Each school coach, physical education teacher, certified athletic trainer, and nurse, who works with or provides instruction to students engaged in school-sponsored athletic activities, shall complete, on a biennial basis, a course of instruction relating to recognizing the symptoms of mild traumatic brain injuries and monitoring and seeking proper medical treatment for students who suffer mild traumatic brain injuries. This course must be approved by the State Education Department. Coaches may also meet the mandatory training every two (2) years by taking the approved course Concussion in Sports-V2.0 from the National Federation of State High School Associations or Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

IV. Return to School and Activity

- A. The student shall resume athletic activity only after being symptom free for not less than twenty-four (24) hours, and having been evaluated by and received written and signed authorization from a licensed physician or provider.
- B. The school District physician will make the final decision on return to activity including physical education class and interscholastic athletic activity.
- C. The authorization shall be kept on file in the student's permanent health record.
- D. The District shall follow any directives issued by the student's treating physician with regard to limitations and restrictions on school attendance and activities for the student.

¹ Center for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html>

- E. Any student who continues to have signs or symptoms upon return to school and/or activity must be removed from school sponsored class, extracurricular activity, or interscholastic athletic activity and be re-evaluated by a licensed physician or provider.

V. Awareness and Acknowledgement

- A. Any student exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors associated with concussion while participating in a school-sponsored class, extracurricular activity, or interscholastic sport shall be removed from the class, game, or activity and be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. The coach, athletic trainer, advisor, school nurse or doctor will notify the student's parents/person(s) in parental relation or legal guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring to parents/person(s) in parental relation or legal guardians. In the event that there is any doubt as to whether a student has sustained a concussion, the District shall presume that the student has been so injured until proven otherwise.
- B. If a student sustains a concussion at a time other than when engaged in a school sponsored activity, the District expects that the parent or person(s) in

parental relation will report the condition to the school nurse so that the District can support the appropriate management of the condition.

- C. Any permission form or consent form required to be signed and returned as a condition of participation in interscholastic sports will include a copy of the information posted on the State Education Department's website relating to mild traumatic brain injury, as referenced in Section 136.5(c)(1) of the Commissioner's Regulations.
- D. An informational packet provided by the New York State Department of Health's website about concussions and sub-concussive blows, and the injuries that might occur as a result of receiving such blows, will be provided by the District to parents and person(s) in parental relation or legal guardians of all students participating in sports.
- E. The District's website shall include a link to the State Education Department's website page relating to mild traumatic brain injury.

VI. Concussion Management Team

- A. A Concussion Management Team shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation in the District of Section 136.5 of the Commissioner's Regulations, and for making recommendations to the Superintendent for the dissemination of information about mild traumatic brain injury to parents and persons in parental relation to students. A Concussion Management Team may also establish and implement a program which provides information on mild traumatic brain injuries to parents and persons in parental relation throughout each school year.
- B. The Concussion Management Team shall consist of: the Athletic Director; the athletic trainer; a school nurse; the school physician; a coach of an interscholastic team, or other appropriate personnel as designated by the District.

Watertown City School District

Legal Ref: NYS Education Law §§207, 305(42), 2854; 8 NYCRR 136.5; NYS Public Health Law §2595

Adopted: 09/25/12 Revised: 02/25/14, 07/07/15, 11/29/16, 09/17/19, 6/10/2020/
4/4/2023, 9/19/23

Regulation

STUDENTS

7601.1

ATHLETIC CONSENT FORM

We do hereby acknowledge that we have been fully advised, cautioned, and warned by the proper administrative and coaching personnel of the Watertown City School District (the District) that serious injury including but not limited to, sprains, fractures, brain damage, paralysis, or even death may occur by participating in the sport of _____. Notwithstanding such warnings and with full knowledge and understanding of the risk of serious injury which may result, we give our consent to participate.

Concussion Management and Awareness Act Adherence Policy:

A concussion is defined as a mild traumatic brain injury. Concussions occur when normal brain functioning is disrupted by a blow or jolt to the head. Signs and symptoms include, but are not limited to: *amnesia, confusion, dizziness, headache, loss of consciousness, nausea, poor attention, poor coordination, slurred speech, visual disturbance, vomiting*. Recovery from a concussion will vary.

The District has established the following protocol to guide the return of students to school and activities following a suspected concussion, regardless of whether such injury occurred outside of school. The District reserves the right to develop more stringent protections at any time, and to act in a manner that is more cautious in protecting the health and well-being of its students.

When an athlete shows ANY signs or symptoms of a concussion:

1. The athlete will not be allowed to return to play in the current game or practice.
2. The student's general cognitive status should be determined by the school nurse, an athletic trainer, or if appropriate, medical personnel are not available, the coach or District personnel responsible for supervising the student.
3. The athlete should not be left alone. Regular monitoring for deterioration is essential over the initial few hours following injury.
4. Following the injury, the student shall be instructed to see their primary care physician or an emergency department physician within twenty-four (24) hours.
5. Return to play must follow a medically supervised stepwise process.

The cornerstone of proper concussion management is rest until resolution of all symptoms, clearance by the student's treating physician, and a graded program of exertion before return to sport. The program is broken down into six steps in which only one step is covered a day. The six steps involve the following:

RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL STEPS

(For use with Return to Play documentation Chart for Coaches)

- Day 1:** Low impact, non-strenuous, light aerobic activity such as walking or riding a stationary bike. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to:
- Day 2:** Higher impact, higher exertion, and moderate aerobic activity such as running or jumping rope. No resistance training. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to:
- Day 3:** Sport specific non-contact activity. Low resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to:
- Day 4:** Sport specific activity, non-contact drills. Higher resistance weight training with a spotter. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to:
- Day 5:** Full contact training drills and intense aerobic activity. If tolerated without return of symptoms over a twenty-four (24) hour period proceed to:
- Day 6:** Evaluation by the School Nurse. Return to full activity **“after”** clearance by the District Medical Director.

If the athlete remains without symptoms, they may return to play.

Special note: Athlete must remain asymptomatic to progress to next day. If symptoms return, the athlete must return to the previous level (provided there are no other mitigating circumstances).

Additional information on concussions is available at the websites of the New York State Education Department and the New York State Department of Health:

www.nysed.gov; http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/injury_prevention/concussion.htm

*IMPORTANT Parents/Guardians should understand that return to play may not be immediate because of the medical significance of head injury. Patience and understanding are requested while the District follows New York State Law and takes all appropriate steps to manage concussion injury.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Watertown City School District

Approved by the Superintendent: 07/07/15, 11/29/16, 09/17/19, 6/10/2020, 4/4/2023,
5/15/23

Please note that the NYSPHSAA, Section III, the Frontier League, the Watertown CSD, and other governing bodies update their rules, regulations, & policies periodically and it is the responsibility of the student-athletes and the parent/guardian to stay up to date with these changes.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

[NYSPHSAA](#)

[Frontier League Landing Page](#)

[Section III](#)

[FinalForms](#)

[Arbiter Live Schedules](#)

[Positive Coaching Alliance](#)