North Tonawanda City Schools

Interscholastic Athletics Coaches Handbook

(updated July 2026)

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North Tonawanda City Schools
Philosophy of Interscholastic Athletics

The mission of New York State interscholastic programs is to foster the quest for excellence by creating an educational and competitive experience within an atmosphere of sportsmanship.

At North Tonawanda City Schools, the goals and objectives of the interscholastic program reflect the mission of our total educational program. We wish to maximize each student's intellectual, social and personal development though the competitive athletic experience. Through North Tonawanda athletics our student-athletes have the opportunity to develop individually and as a team by promoting high standards of competence, character, civility and citizenship.

We have an expectation for excellence both on the off the field; academics, sportsmanship, safety and chemical-free participation are emphasized. We strive for individual and team excellence, but not at a win at all costs approach. We advocate a balance of participation and being competitive at all levels. At the modified level the emphasis is based on development of technique and participation. At the JV level the emphasis shifts to a more competitive focus with further development of technique and tactics. At the varsity level the emphasis is on competitiveness.

Program Objectives and Expectations

The interscholastic program for students of the North Tonawanda City School District shall be directed toward the following objectives/expectations:

1) To develop teams which the school and community can be proud.

2) To develop competence in terms of skill development, knowledge of the game, its strategies, and fitness of each student athlete.

3) To develop the character (responsibility, accountability, dedication, trustworthiness, sportsmanship, and self control) of the student athlete.

4) To develop the civility of the student athletes towards others (their teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, and fans) through showing respect, fairness and caring.

5) To develop citizenship through showing evidence of loyalty, commitment, leadership, and teamwork.

6) To develop within each student athlete a competitive spirit and desire to succeed.

7) To offer an experience which supplements the formal scholastic environment.

8) To offer students an enjoyable experience while they strive for excellence both on and off the field.

9) To provide the opportunity for every student athlete to work within their abilities and to understand success is based on everyone doing the best they are physically capable of doing.

Job Description – Head Coach

Reports to

The Director of Athletics

Program Responsibilities

1) **Provides guidance and direction for the entire program.**
2) **Keeps open lines of communication with the Athletic Director.**
3) **Evaluates the program annually and makes recommendations to the Athletic Director.**
4) **Makes recommendations for improvements of facilities, personnel, and equipment**.
5) Stays updated on latest developments and rules in the sport and share these with assistants, JV, modified, and freshman coaches.
6) **Supervises use of uniforms, equipment and supplies.**
7) **Develops budget for the next season for all levels**.
8) **Attends all meetings**– North Tonawanda Athletic staff pre-season meeting with Athletic Director, pre-season with parents, End of Season meeting with Athletic Director NFL preseason and post-season meetings, and Section 6 seeding meetings (if needed).
9) Establishes good rapport with the community, the recreation department, and the news media.
10) **Supports the entire school program**.
11) Knows the policies set forth by North Tonawanda City School District Board of Education, NFL League, Section VI and NYSPHSAA.

Pre-Season Responsibilities

1) Holds preseason meeting with assistants, JV, freshman, and modified coaches.
2) Holds preseason meeting with players and parents. Athletic Director should be invited to this meeting. The preseason meeting should include both JV and varsity players and their parents. Athletes and parents should be clearly advised of the training rules and academic regulations. Practice and game schedules should also be handed out. Players and parents should be informed of expectations, procedures and team rules. If cuts are to be made then athletes and their parents should be informed how and on what they will be evaluated.
3) **Develops and outlines season plan.**
4) Works with Athletic Director to check and issue uniforms and equipment. Please make sure that all equipment issued to players is in proper working order.

6) **Turns in a final roster to the School Athletic Director by date asked.**

In Season Responsibilities

1) **Implements the North Tonawanda Athletic Philosophy**.
2) **Checks the approval list to make sure the nurse has cleared all athletes. It is imperative that athletes who have not been approved aren't allowed to practice**.
3) Becomes familiar with any existing medical conditions of athletes (asthma). Emergency contact information should be kept in medical kit at all times. Or have access to Family ID APP/ website.
4) **Checks athletic mailbox regularly** and email school email daily.
5) Checks eligibility list. (see Academic Eligibility, pg 8).
6) **Keeps a well-stocked med kit. (See the trainer for supplies**.)
7) **Keep daily practice plans. Should be very specific.**
8) **Contacts AD if they are will not be able to attend practice that day due to illness or an emergency**.
9) Keeps daily attendance records.
10) Checks the school attendance list. If a student is not in school for half a day he/she may not participate in a game or practice. There are exceptions – college visitations, funerals, or students arriving late (legally) to school. Students who are unprepared for physical education they may not participate in a game or practice.
11) Turn in all paperwork in a timely manner:
    a. Rosters – due to the Athletic Director as soon as team is chosen.
    b. Accident reports– complete immediately and turn into the trainer/AD office.
    c. Officials vouchers to Athletic Director.
12) Ensures that basic technique/ skills are being taught.
13) Reports scores to appropriate media. (See media sheet.)
14) Updates rosters as appropriate and make sure Athletic Director always has a copy.
15) Keeps athletic area safe and clean.
16) Carries out all supervision duties. (See supervision)
17) Schedules no practices on Sundays or major holidays Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & Day, New Years Eve & Day, Easter). Practices must be during regular building hours.
18) Notifies players and parents if there are any changes to the game or practice schedules.
19) Athletic Director must have current practice schedule and be notified with any changes.
20) All practices must be approved by the Athletic Director.

Post- Season Responsibilities

1) Collects and inventories uniforms and equipment as soon as possible following the last game of the season.
2) Attends NFL league post-season meeting.
3) Cleans and inventories equipment before putting into storage.
4) Holds end of season banquet.
5) Complete Individual Scholar Athlete Forms and Sportsmanship Ballot.
6) Hands in end of season report including to Athletic Director.
7) Schedule end of season meeting with Athletic Director.

Job Description – Assistant, Junior Varsity or Modified Coaches

Reports to

Head coach of the sport and the Athletic Director

Program Responsibilities

1) Attends staff meetings called by the head coach and/or athletic director.
2) Supports head coach, gives loyalty to the sport program and to the whole North Tonawanda Athletic program.
3) Carries out all duties assigned by the head coach including:
    a. Assists in scouting when requested.
    b. Assists in conducting varsity contests when requested.
4) Assumes responsibilities of head coach in their absence when approved by the Athletic Director.

Pre-Season, In-Season and Post Season Responsibilities

See the head coach's job description. Follow the responsibilities where applicable.

Characteristics of a Good Coach

The coach of an interscholastic team assumes a very responsible position in the education of student athletes. You are the one who will determine what kind of experience the student athletes will have. A coach has a unique opportunity to guide student athletes in developing personal living skills while also helping them develop their athletic skills to the greatest potential.

Since teams spend many hours together throughout the season, coaches often develop close personal relationship with the players. As a mentor you have an opportunity and obligation to help develop these student athletes into leaders.

As the coach, you are the official representative of North Tonawanda City Schools. You are often in the public "spotlight". You must project a professional image that exemplifies what North Tonawanda Lumberjack Athletics stands for:

1) Coach-Player Relationship- The ability to gain respect of players, have them follow your guidelines and work hard to develop their talents for the team and to communicate effectively with them.
2) Coach-Staff Relationship – the ability to develop a good relationship and to work cooperatively with your coaches and fellow staff members. It is imperative that coaches of different sports support each other's teams. We are one North Tonawanda Athletic program.
3) Coach –Administration Relationship – the ability to work cooperatively with and follow direction from the AD, principal, and superintendent.
4) Coach-Parent Relationship – The ability to develop a good relationship and communicate effectively with parents.
5) Coach – Media Relationship – The ability to develop a good relationship and effectively communicate the media.
6) Coach – Officials – the ability to maintain a good rapport with the officials and to keep officiating in its proper perspective in the game.
7) Conduct of a coach
    a. Bench conduct – the ability to control one's self, your emotions, and actions to set a positive example for players and fans. Your job is to coach– not berate players and officials.
    b. In school – the ability to understand and cooperate in carrying out school and league policies.
    c. Out of school– Remember you are in the public's eye, you are a role model.

Policies, Procedures and Miscellaneous Information

Academic Eligibility

In order to participate in an interscholastic sport, a North Tonawanda High School student must be passing four (4) class subjects and Physical Education at the close of the previous school year. During the academic school year, grades will be verified every five (5) weeks.

Scholar Athlete Award

It is expected that all coaches should strive for their team to be recognized as a Scholar Athlete Teams. The coach is responsible for completing all necessary forms relating to this program.

Budget Process

1) All supplies and equipment for all phases of the athletic program will be purchased through the AD.
2) If your team wishes to purchase equipment out of your fundraising budget, please keep the AD informed of what you are purchasing.
3) Each varsity coach shall put in a budget request at the completion of each season. This budget should include supplies for your sport at each level. The requests should also include special needs such as invitational, clinics, and other anticipated expenses.
4) Athletic budget requisition sheets will be provided with end of season reports.
5) It is assumed that a coach would not request an item that he/she did not believe such item essential to a good program. It may be necessary for the AD to determine which items are absolutely necessary if budget cuts needed to occur.
6) Please put no sub (substitution) next to an item if that is the exact make and model of the item requested.

Equipment

1) Check equipment condition before the season and periodically during the season. If something is damaged beyond repair throw it away after talking with the Athletic Director. If it can be repaired and needs to be done professionally, consult the Athletic Director.
2) Make sure that your athletes are taking proper care of the equipment and uniforms. Uniforms returned with normal wear and tear are acceptable. Be sure that each athlete understands that he/she is responsible for the care and return of his or her issued equipment.
3) Missing or damaged equipment or uniforms will be charged to the student. A student will not be issued a uniform the next season if they have not handed in one the previous season.
4) Any athlete in possession of unauthorized equipment or uniforms from North Tonawanda or competing schools will be suspended from the team. A coach must emphasize that all protective equipment must be worn during practice and games. If it is mandated for a game, it must be worn in practice. This includes personal protection.

Fund Raising
The Athletic Director and High School Principal must approve all fund-raising projects.

Game Day Responsibilities

1) Greet opposing coach.
2) Greet officials. Make sure they have a place to change (if necessary).
3) Have officials fill out claim vouchers. Please return completed claim vouchers to the Athletic Director following the contest. **Do not send vouchers in with your student**.

Claim Vouchers

- All vouchers MUST BE COMPLETED IN PEN.
- All vouchers for officials MUST HAVE THEIR ID CARD NUMBER.
- All areas must be filled out completely (make sure this includes the bottom area of the form where proper information MUST be checked off.
- All vouchers must be turned in within a day or two of the game. Turn them into the Athletic Director.

Medical Attention/Injuries
If a player goes down with an injury, immediately call for trainer. Medical attention needs to be prompt and competent. Make sure you know the location of the nearest AED and telephone.

911- Emergency Number

1) Serious injuries
    a. Contact parent
    b. Report injury to the Athletic Director no later than the next day.
    c. Complete an accident report form immediately and turn into trainer/ AD office the next school day after the accident.
    d. Do not let the athlete resume competition until our school doctor has cleared them.
2) Non-Serious Injury
    a. Call for Trainer when he/she is available.
    b. Administer first aid.
    c. Make a note of the injury.
    d. Give player instructions for that night – i.e. ice.
    e. Follow up with phone calls, to parent and student to check on injury.
    f. Complete an Accident Report and turn it in to the Athletic Office with assistance from trainer.

Physical Education Requirements for Athletes

North Tonawanda athletics is an outgrowth of the physical education program. Participation in a sport in no way is to act as a substitute for the wide range of activities offered through physical education. Because of the importance of physical education all athletes are required to participate in the full physical education program throughout the year.

Student athletes must participate in physical education to be able to practice or play in their game that afternoon. Music lessons, field trips or excused absences of a doctor's appointment (must have note from Doctor's office), college visitation, or a funeral are acceptable reasons for missing class.

Post Season Banquet

All teams are encouraged to have some type of post-season celebration (banquet, dish-to-pass, picnic). This event can include parents but doesn't have to. If the celebration is at a restaurant or being catered, collection of money prior to the event is preferred.

Publicity

1) Varsity coaches should contact appropriate media. Parents and athletes like to read about the North Tonawanda athletes, please make this a priority.

2) Coaches should submit morning announcements citing the score, a few player or team highlights and when the next home game will be.

Scheduling

Games

1) The Niagara Frontier League/ ECIC or Federation determines the league schedule of games. The AD will schedule non-league games with recommendations from the coach.
2) Rescheduling of postponed contests will be done by the AD.
3) Scheduling of scrimmages need to be approved by the AD.

Practices

1) Outdoor and indoor practices should be held Monday through Friday and Saturday mornings as necessary.
2) All practices need to be approved by the Athletic Director.
3) Practices during school vacations – the AD needs a copy of your practice schedule and times must coincide with when the building will be open.
4) In the event of school is cancelled or being dismissed early due to inclement weather, all practices and contests will be cancelled.

APP

The APP Program is a New York State regulated process for screening students to determine their readiness to compete in interscholastic athletic competition. This program was designed for mature and exceptionally skilled students to advance to a level that is suited to their development and ability, i.e. a 7th or 8th grader playing a JV or varsity sport or a girl playing on a boy's team.

The following must be competed before allowing an athlete attempt to try out:

1) A signed parent consent (on Family ID).
2) Coach or Physical Education Teacher recommendation.
3) A health and development rating by the school physician.
4) The Athletic Performance Fitness Test.
   These can be found on the NT School District webpage under Athletics.

Sports Physicals

1) Sports physicals will be given in periodically throughout each year. Physicals are good for one year.

Supervision of Players

All coaches are responsible for team members and managers during scheduled practices, games, and during travel.

1) If a coach calls off practice, make sure all players are notified and transportation home has been arranged.
2) The weight room is open only under the direct supervision of a coach.
3) The locker room is the responsibility of the coach(es) whose team is using the room at that time and must be supervised.
4) No cleats should be worn in the school building.
5) The coach is responsible for behavior of the team on the school bus.
6) The coach is responsible for the team's behavior when visiting another school. Make sure players are supervised in the locker room.
7) After practices or games, the coach is responsible for supervision until all team members have been picked up.
8) At no time may a player be transported in your own personal vehicle.
   Use of district vehicle may be pre-arranged following district protocols.
9) **AT NO TIME SHOULD STUDENTS BE LEFT UNSUPERVISED.**
10) Make sure lights are off and areas locked up when you are the last to leave.

Bullying/Hazing/Harassment

Bullying/Hazing/Harassment of team members, managers, or coaches will not be tolerated. If an incident is witness by the coach the coach must take immediate corrective action and report the incident to the Athletic Director or Building Principal.

Transportation

Away Games

1) **Transportation arrangements will be made by the AD office. Please check the schedule galaxy for accuracy and immediately advice the AD office of any errors or omissions.**
2) **Coaches need to notify the AD if a trip is added during the season– i.e. Championships and sectionals.**
3) **Coaches should make sure that their team members are on time for the bus, so that it leaves on time.**
4) If a bus doesn't show up at the scheduled time, please call transportation office 807-3874 if after school, or contact AD Office.
5) Players must travel to and from games on the team bus. If a parent wishes to take their child home (must only be own child) from an away game – they need to make a written request to the Coach and they must sign this request.
6) The coach is responsible for the supervision of team members while on the bus. The coach should position himself/herself so that he/she can properly supervise all team members on the bus.

Thunderstorms

In the event of **thunder or lightening** players are required to go inside. Practice or play may resume 30 minutes from the last thunder or lightening.

Student Athlete Conduct

All student athlete conduct expectations are outlined in the Extracurricular Activities Handbook. These handbooks are available on athletic website. Athletes and their parents/guardians must sign on Family ID. Failure to do so will make the student ineligible to participate.

Students are subject to all rules for their individual team, the NYSPHSAA, Section VI, Niagara Frontier League and the NTHS Student Handbook.

TELEPHONE LISTING

Athletic Director:	
Matt Cook	807-3647 (office) / 803-5529 (cell)
Superintendent:	
Jeff Jachlewski	807-3500
Executive Director of Educational Services:	
Patrick Holesko	807-3535
Superintendent of Building and Grounds:	
James Hart	807-3520
Principals:	
Brad Rowles– High School	807-3604
Lauren Miranto– Middle School	807-3126
School Nurse:	
High School	807-3643
Middle School	807-3124
Transportation	807-3874
Eric Wood (Director)	998-4967
Brandon Licht (Head Bus Driver)	550-3843

Buffalo News:	849-4461
WGRZ-TV (Channel 2)	849-2200
WIVB-TV (Channel 4)	876-7333
WKBW-TV (Channel 7)	845-6100