

NORWICH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Extracurricular Handbook

10/13/2023

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Please carefully read this Extracurricular Handbook. The signature page at the back of the handbook is valid through the student's graduation date. We will ask that you complete and update the signature of acknowledgement form of the handbook for each athletic season/year.

Introduction

Extracurricular involvement is an important component of the district's educational program. The following guidelines are in effect from August 1st through June 30 of each school year and apply to all students in grades sixth through twelve. Participation in extracurriculars is a privilege, not a right. Students' participation in the district's athletic programs and extracurricular activities are conditional upon their adherence to the provisions of this handbook. In addition to the requirements set forth in this handbook, the Interscholastic Athletic Program and participating coaches, students, and parents shall be governed by the policies, bylaws, regulations, and any other requirements set forth by the Southern Tier Athletic Conference (STAC), Section IV Athletics, and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). This athletic portion of the handbook represents Board of Education (BOE) Policies A408.2.

Your child has expressed an interest in participating in the district's extracurricular program. Participation in this program provides many opportunities for enrichment in a student's educational experience. These guidelines are intended to set forth standards, rules, expectations, and procedures associated with such participation. All students who would like to participate in an extracurricular including sports, shall be subject to this handbook, the Student Code of Conduct, and all related matters as set forth by STAC, Section IV, and NYSPHSAA. Student-athlete-participants represent the school in a special way; therefore, must maintain a high standard of conduct, both in and out of school, on and off the playing field, as a host or guest of an opponent, and in all of your activities in the community.

Leadership Structure

If questions/concerns arise, all efforts should be made to resolve the issue with the Norwich City School District (NCS D) sponsored team coach/advisor before processing to the next level of the flow chart.

Flow chart:

1. Student to Coach/advisor
2. Parent/Guardian and student to Coach/Advisor
3. Parent/Guardian and student to Director of Athletics/Principal
4. Parent/Guardian and student to Superintendent of Schools

Eligibility for Interscholastic Sports and Extracurricular Activities

The NCS D strives to offer its students a comprehensive program that enables each to develop into successful, well-rounded individuals. In doing so, it is recognized that the fundamental purpose of any educational program is to focus on maximizing academic achievement. The district also recognizes that extracurricular activities for students provide additional growth and success; therefore, these are a desirable component of the district's overall program. The extracurricular experience should enrich, not detract from or compromise, a student's academic achievement. It is the expectation of the BOE that parents, administrators, coaches, advisors, teachers, and students must share in the responsibility to ensure that each student involved in extracurricular activities works to his/her academic potential.

Student Academic Eligibility

Students in co-curricular activities must balance the roles of being a full-time student and a part-time participant in the co-curricular activity. Our expectations are that the student can:

1. Maintain passing averages in their courses.
2. Seek extra help from staff when needed to help them maintain passing averages.
3. Always place a high level of importance on their academic achievement.

Every five weeks, the guidance department runs grades for all students. If a student is failing two or more courses (grade below a 65), the following policy will be implemented:

Level 1: If the student is failing two or more courses (grade below a 65), he/she will be placed on probation and cannot participate in games, performances, competitions, or any event associated with co-curricular activities until a grade of 65 or higher has been achieved. He/she may continue to attend rehearsals, practices, regular school-day meetings, or other routine activities associated with the co-curricular activity. At the end of the two-week period, the guidance office will generate a new grade report (those still on level 1). If the student is not failing two or more courses, he/she remains fully eligible to participate in co-curricular activities.

Level 2: If the student is still failing two or more courses, he/she cannot participate in rehearsals, practices, regular school day meetings, or other routine activities associated with the co-curricular activity and cannot participate in games, performances, competitions, or any events associated with the co-curricular activities until a grade of 65 or higher has been achieved.

Notes:

1. Failing status will be determined at the end of each five-week period of school. Failing status is determined by using the 5-week average. If a student is failing the 5-week period, but has a cumulative average of 65 or above, then the student in that course would not be considered failing.
2. The process described in the co-curricular academic eligibility policy emphasizes the importance of meeting a passing standard (grades of 65 or higher) for academic performance in order for the student to be eligible to take advantage of co-curricular activities.
3. Co-curricular activities include but are not limited to the following examples: Athletic teams, Clubs and Societies, Musicals, FFA, Student Council, Activity Nights, Dances (including Prom), Yearbook, Class Events, and Honor Society.
4. A student on probation can pick up an eligibility release form from the student services/athletic office that must be signed by the teacher(s) indicating a passing grade of 65 or higher in the classes they are failing. Once this occurs, the student will be eligible to return to co-curricular activities.
5. Under extenuating circumstances, the Athletic Director/Principal will make the final determination of the students eligibility.

Attendance Policy

A student-participant-athlete must be in school by 11:00am in order to attend a practice, contest or to participate in any event on that day. The coach/advisor reserves the right to refuse participation in practice or contest where student health is in question. Being on the injured list does not remove a student from his or her status as a team member in good standing. Absences from practice or contests without prior notification to the coach/advisor may result in consequences ranging from a warning to dismissal from the team/club/activity. Students participating in extracurriculars are expected to attend all of their classes that day. Students exhibiting a pattern of tardiness or absences (both excused and unexcused), as determined by the Principal/Athletic Director, may be prohibited from participation in a practice or contest. Students who attend an academic extra help session with a teacher after school must bring a pass from the teacher directly to the coach/advisor as this will be considered an excused absence. If a student is truant or absent on Friday, the student may not be allowed to participate in any event on the weekend. NOTE: The Principal/Athletic Director reserves the right to review the cause of absence and issue a decision regarding the student's eligibility to participate on the day in question.

If a student-athlete is on vacation during the season or attending a non-sponsored event, they should assume this will impact eligibility for future participation. The following protocol has been developed to address equity in participation. Eligibility penalty shall not exceed:

2 Practices = 1 Game 1 Game = 1 Game

STAC and Section IV schedule contests for most programs and school contests will not be changed due to conflicts with non-school sponsored conflicts. Student-athlete-participants and parent/caregivers are committing to a team with an understanding of this practice.

Athletic Placement Process

The NCS D participates in a New York State Education Department approved program that provides an opportunity for exceptional seventh and eighth grade student-athletes to participate on varsity and junior varsity teams. This program has been designed for those few students who have individual athletic skills that warrant moving to the commencement or intermediate sport competition level. The Director of Physical Education and Athletics has the sole responsibility for authorizing a student to participate in this program. Information must be collected and evaluated by the Director of Physical Education and Athletics before a student may be allowed to participate in this program.

The criterion that must be met includes (NYSED Rule):

- 1.) A recommendation by coaches, PE teachers, students or parents/guardians to the Director of Physical Education and Athletics.
- 2.) A medical examination by an NCS D physician and his/her assessment that the student has reached the development and maturity levels as specified by New York State Education Department guidelines.
- 3.) Sufficiently high scores on the New York State Physical Fitness Screening Test administered by a certified physical education teacher.
- 4.) Agreement between the student, parents/guardians, coach, and the Director of Physical Education and Athletics.
- 5.) Sport Skill Evaluation

Athletic Eligibility and Physical Examination

Eligibility to be a member of an NCS D interscholastic sponsored athletic team, you must be a bona fide student of grades seventh – twelfth. A student who reaches the age of 19 prior to September 1 will not be eligible to participate (NYSPHSAA Rule). Seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students between the ages of 12 and 15 may participate in a modified program. A student reaching the age of 16 during a modified sport season may

complete that season but must play on a junior varsity or varsity team the next season. Any student who wishes to participate on an NCS D interscholastic sponsored athletic team must be examined by the NCS D physician or his/her family physician. A student may not practice nor participate in a game or a contest without a physician's approval.

Bona Fide Student

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

Reporting an Injury

If an injury occurs during a practice, event or a contest and the coach/advisor does not witness it, the injury must be reported immediately. The coach/advisor will administer first aid, and if necessary, call for or recommend medical services to the parent/legal guardian. The coach/advisor will then complete an injury report and submit it to the school nurse for record and insurance purposes within 24 hours of the incident (please see attachment # 2 – Injury Report). Please know that the NCS D provides medical insurance for all extracurricular programs that are offered.

1. Primary coverage: Any and all claims must be submitted to the parent's/legal guardian's insurance first.
2. Secondary coverage: The school nurse must be contacted if there are any medical expenses not covered by the primary insurance company. The nurse will then supply to the parent/legal guardian, the appropriate insurance forms for completion. The school nurse will submit the initial form with an accident report attached. The parent/legal guardian is then responsible for submission of the forms and medical billing statements to the District's insurance carrier.

NOTE: In a case where a family does not maintain health insurance, the District's insurance carrier will become the primary insurance company. In a case such as this, the District's insurance carrier must be notified.

If there are any questions or concerns, parents/legal guardians are asked to contact the HS school nurse at (607) 334-1600 ext. 1038 or MS school nurse at (607) 334-1600 ext. 2066

Returning to Participation After an Injury / Medical Release

A student-athlete-participant who is under the care of a physician for an injury must be released by that physician or the NCS D physician before they can resume participation. Whenever a student-athlete receives treatment for an injury sustained during a season, whether it is at home or in school, he or she must deliver to the school nurse a release

prepared by the appropriate medical personnel from whom treatment was received. Once this procedure is completed, the school nurse will notify the coach that the student- athlete is allowed to return to the sport.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the student-athlete-participant to deliver the medical release to the school nurse; do not leave this responsibility to some other person (i.e. coach, teacher, friend, etc.).

Transfer Rule

Per NYSPHSAA:

A student in grades 9-12 who transfers, with a corresponding change in residence of his/her parents (or other persons with whom the student has resided for at least six months), shall become eligible after starting regular attendance in the second school. A residence change must involve a move from one school district to another. Furthermore, when a student moves from a public school district to another public-school district for athletic eligibility, the student must enroll in the public school district or in a private school within that district's boundaries of his/her parent's residency.

A student who transfers without a corresponding change in residence of his/her parents (or other persons with whom the student has resided for at least six months prior), is ineligible to participate at the varsity level in any interscholastic athletic contest in a particular sport for a period of one (1) year if as a 9-12 student participated in that sport during the one (1) year period immediately preceding his/her transfer.

Code of Sportsmanship

As student-athletes, spectators, parents, guardians, staff, administrators, and participants, we all have a responsibility to the athletic program of our school district. We must extend to our guests whether that is officials, players, coaches, and spectators of neighboring schools the courtesy and sportsmanship that we wish to have extended to us when competing at their schools.

Our conduct at all sporting events is a direct reflection of the NCSD school community and ourselves. It is therefore most important that our behavior be friendly and supportive of our guests during their visit to Norwich.

STAC Sportsmanship Policy

Whereas good sportsmanship is a major concern among the member schools of the Southern Tier Athletic Conference, a season commitment with the student-athletes, their coaches, and their parents/guardians, is being made for the purpose of promoting good conduct among all players, coaches, cheerleaders, and fans of the member schools.

Therefore, we are asking all team members (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Modified), coaches, and parents/guardians, to certify and honor the following contest sportsmanship guidelines. The home school Athletic Director will collect and maintain the records certifying each team member to the STAC Sportsmanship policy. All Concerned Agree:

- To always live up to a high standard of good sportsmanship.
- To be a good host, treat visitors as guests.
- To treat opponents with respect.
- To respect the judgment of contest officials.
- To avoid profane and abusive language and obnoxious behavior.
- To always set a good example for others to follow.
- To accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion, never being boastful, or bitter.
- To remember that an athletic contest is only a game, not a matter of life or death.

Team Selection

The following guidelines will be used for selection of NCSD athletic teams:

- 1.) A coach, after consulting with the Athletic Director, and before conducting tryouts, determines the maximum number of team members there will be on the final roster. The process of tryouts and the number of student-athletes being considered for the team must be communicated.
- 2.) Tryouts for teams, if necessary, must be conducted for a minimum of three (3) days. This applies to all sport levels; Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Modified.
- 3.) The varsity coach will observe and take part in the selection process of the junior varsity and modified teams.
- 4.) In some situations, the number of participants on any given team may be limited. For those students who are not selected, every effort will be made to inform each of them what skills, techniques, and attitudes need improvement. Coaches should also make every effort to inform students of other athletic program opportunities and encourage them to participate.
- 5.) In general, students in grades 7 & 8 are expected to be members of a modified team, students in grades 9 & 10 are expected to be on a junior varsity team, and students in grades 11 & 12 are expected to be on a varsity team. However, the skill and maturity level of the student-athlete trying out may determine their playing on a different level than suggested above.
- 6.) Cuts can be made at any level and a sports specific evaluation criteria will be determined by the coach.

Playing Time and Program Level Philosophy

Interscholastic sports do not always coincide with equality. A team member must understand that due to different levels of skill and work ethic, he/she may not receive the same amount of playing time as other members on the team.

Modified:

This level is designed to teach skills, fundamentals, rules, team play, and appropriate competitive behaviors for healthy competition. At this level we strive for team and individual success with limited emphasis placed on winning and seeking maximum participation levels.

Junior Varsity:

This level of interscholastic competition is designed for increasing awareness of team play, refinement of sport specific skills, and physical conditioning. At this level there will be a greater level of competition, higher expectations, and commitment levels increase. As a result, contest participation may not be equal and those who do play may not play equally.

Varsity:

This level of interscholastic competition is a culmination of the high school athletic program. Team members will continue the development of advanced level skills. The expectation is that team members will display high levels of sportsmanship, individual physical ability, motivation, and mental attitude. The team plays to win the contest at the varsity level. It is recognized that not all participants will play in every contest. It should be noted that the ultimate measure of success for each team will not be based solely on wins and losses. Team success can be measured by individual and team improvement, program development, and enjoyment from participation.

Student-Athlete Expectation During Competition

The NCSD student-athletes will show respect to coaches, school administrators, and teammates at all times. Student-athletes will treat all officials and opponents with the highest respect and dignity, never taunt an opponent or argue with an official. At NCSD we will accept defeat with grace and victory with humility. Any student-athlete who is ejected from a contest shall be sanctioned according to NYSPHSAA/Section IV/STAC policy. Depending on the severity of the violation, NCSD may apply additional penalties beyond that required of Section IV/STAC or the State; these sanctions may include a prohibition from playing in the next regularly scheduled contest, multiple future contests, or even for the remainder of the season. A complete copy of the misconduct policies are available online at www.nysphsaa.org, www.stacshowcase.com, www.sectionivathletics.com.

Care of Equipment and Uniforms

Proper care or maintenance of equipment and uniforms issued by NCS D to an athlete/participant will be the responsibility of the athlete/participant. Any uniforms or equipment not returned at the end of the season or determined to be deliberately damaged must be reimbursed to the school district. Suspension from future participation in athletics/activities or graduation activities could also result if reimbursement or the return of equipment and/or uniform does not occur.

Website / Communication / Social Media

The following platforms will be used to communicate information about schedules, news, and highlights:

Schedules: <https://www.schedulegalaxy.com/schools/72>

Website: <https://www.norwichcsd.org/page/athletics>
<https://www.norwichcsd.org/>

Transportation to Practice and Home Contests/Events

For students needing transportation from practice, meetings and home contests, parents/guardians must arrive at the school at the conclusion of practice, meetings or the home contest to transport. Coaches cannot and will not be expected to supervise student-athletes-participants for any unreasonable and extended amounts of time (more than fifteen minutes after the conclusion of practice/activity).

Transportation to and From Away Contests/Events

Student-athletes must travel to away contests via school supplied transportation. While some coaches may require that teams travel together, individual coaches may allow parents of athletes to sign them out and transport them home from contests. Other exceptions must have prior administrative approval by the Athletic Director.

Hazing

Hazing is a type of harassment and is forbidden. Any student-athlete-participant found guilty of hazing will be subjected to potential suspension from athletic participation/activity or dismissal from the team/activity. It is noted that police officials may be contacted while investigating incidents of hazing.

Physical Education Class

All students are expected to participate in their scheduled Physical Education classes unless medically excused. Students who do not participate in Physical Education, either excused or unexcused, will not be eligible to participate in practice or a scheduled contest.

Sport Specific Team/Activity Rules

Each coach, at their discretion and with the approval of the administration, may have additional standards pertinent to their teams. Participants of those sports/activities are expected to adhere to those additional guidelines including instances where outside activity/involvement conflicts with school team commitment and schedule.

Norwich City School District Athletic/Activity Code of Conduct

Student participation in co-curricular activities, whether their basis is academic, performance arts, or athletics is considered an honor. It is expected that students representing the Norwich City School District will act as role models and be held to the highest standards of behavior. Members of our interscholastic athletic teams are expected to abide by the following policy as well as the STAC sportsmanship policy. It is expected that all athletes conduct themselves in an exemplary manner at all times. This especially pertains to all interactions with faculty, staff, students, parents, teammates, contest opponents, spectators, and officials. Failure of an athlete-participant to meet his/her responsibilities as a positive school and community citizen may result in dismissal from the team.

Athletes-participants will not use or possess alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, tobacco products (vapes, e-cigarettes, Juul's, etc.), stimulants, drug paraphernalia or performance enhancing substances.

Student-athletes-participants found in violation of any of the above will be suspended as follows:

- 1st Offense - Minimum of 10% of scheduled contests (at least 2 contests).
- 2nd Offense - Suspension from team/activity for the entire season.
- 3rd Offense- Suspension from participation on any team/activity for 3 consecutive seasons.

Disciplinary action for violations: all violations in this section are cumulative for all sports played during a school year, carrying over into subsequent seasons.

In/Out of School Suspension

Students-athletes-participants assigned to half a day or more of in-school suspension will be immediately suspended from the next team or club event or contest. If the student-athlete- participant receives a second in-school suspension consisting of half a day or more it may result in immediate dismissal from further participation.

For athletes, dismissal from a team will result as ineligible for postseason awards and team honors.

Athletes-participants assigned to out-of-school suspension will be immediately suspended from the next team contests or event. The athlete will be allowed to practice after they have fulfilled the out-of-school suspension. A second out-of-school suspension during the same season may result in immediate dismissal from participation for the remainder of the season. Dismissal will result in the athlete being ineligible for postseason awards and honors.

An athlete-participant that receives (1) ISS and (1) OSS during the same season is subject to dismissal from participation for the remainder of the season and may be ineligible for postseason awards and team honors.

Student-Athletic Council

This team has been created to cultivate positive relationships, good decision making, and develop leadership skills in our student-athletes. This group will participate in community service events, unified sports activities/events, and projects for the greater good of the school community. Student-athletes will be nominated by Head Varsity Coaches of their respected programs and the Athletic Director. All Team captains are required to be active in this Council.

Dominic Murray Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevent Act

The [Dominic Murray Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act](#) is a new law as of July 1, 2022. This law requires schools, students, and parents/guardians have information on sudden cardiac arrest risks, signs, and symptoms. Please note that sudden cardiac arrest in children and youth is rare. The incidence of sudden cardiac death (SCD) on the playing field is 0.61 in 100,000.¹

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is an emergency that happens when the heart suddenly stops working. SCA can cause death if not treated immediately, and even with treatment death may occur. Immediate treatment is cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED). All public schools must have a staff member trained in the use of CPR and AED in school and at all school athletic events.

Preventing SCA before it happens is the best way to save a life[1]. Both your family health history and your child's personal history must be told to healthcare providers to help them know if your child is at risk for sudden cardiac arrest. Ask your child if they are having any of the symptoms listed below and tell a healthcare provider. Know your family history and tell a healthcare provider of any risk factors listed below.

The signs or symptoms are:

- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise or with excitement or startled
- Racing heart, palpitations, or irregular heartbeat
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, or extreme fatigue with exercise
- Chest pain or discomfort with exercise
- Excessive shortness of breath during exercise
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

Student's Personal Risk Factors are:

- Use of diet pills, performance-enhancing supplements, energy drinks, or drugs such as cocaine, inhalants, or "recreational" drugs.
- Elevated blood pressure or cholesterol
- History of health care provider ordered test(s) for heart related issues

Student's Family History Risk Factors are:

- Family history of known heart abnormalities or sudden death before 50 years of age
- Family members with *unexplained* fainting, seizures, drowning, near drowning or car accidents before 50 years of age
- Structural heart abnormality, repaired or unrepaired
- Any relative diagnosed with the following conditions
- Enlarged Heart/ Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy/Dilated Cardiomyopathy
- Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy
- Heart rhythm problems, long or short QT interval
- Brugada Syndrome
- Catecholaminergic Ventricular Tachycardia
- Marfan Syndrome- aortic rupture
- Heart attack at 50 years or younger
- Pacemaker or implanted cardiac defibrillator (ICD)

SCA in students at risk can be triggered by athletic activities. To decrease any chance of SCA in a student, the [Interval Health History for Athletics](#) must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian before each sports season unless a physical examination has been conducted within 30 days before the start of the season. This form has questions to help identify changes since the last physical examination or health history

was completed. School personnel may require a student with health or history changes to see a healthcare provider before participating in athletics.

Finally, the law requires any student who has signs and symptoms of pending SCA be removed from athletic activity until seen by a **physician**. The physician must provide written clearance to the school for the student to be able to return to athletics.

Please contact the State Education Department's Office of Student Support Services for questions at studentsupportservices@nysed.gov or 518-486-6090.

Spectator/Parent Guidelines for Extracurricular Contest/Activities

The NCS D has high expectations in regard to sportsmanship and conduct at both home and away extracurricular contests/activities. Spectators are to adhere to these expectations at all times when interacting with coaches, advisors, opposing teams, officials, administration, event staff, and other spectators.

The following guidelines apply for spectators physically at an extracurricular contest or through the use of electronic mediums (i.e. email/internet, etc.):

DO:

- Appreciate the efforts of participants, players, officials and coaches.
- Learn and understand the rules of the game.
- Encourage youth that doing their best is of the utmost importance.
- Cheer for your team.
- Encourage sportsmanship and be a role model by supporting and showing respect for all coaches, players, spectators, advisors, and officials.
- Remember that interscholastic athletics/extracurricular activities are part of the educational process. It is for the students, not the adults.
- Support the decisions of advisors, coaches and players.
- Be gracious in victory and defeat.
- Demand that others treat advisors, players, coaches, administration, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of religion, race, gender, color, or ability.
- Emphasize that a good work ethic, high level of effort, commitment, and cooperation with advisors and coaches are imperative for doing one's best.
- Understand that attendance provides you with the opportunity and privilege to support an extracurricular event, not to berate players, advisors, coaches or officials.
- Show your school spirit and PURPLE PRIDE!

DO NOT:

- Taunt or criticize players, coaches, advisors, administration, officials, or other spectators.
- Display any kind of unsportsmanlike behavior, humiliate or intimidate any participant or attendee.
- Coach or interfere with coaching from the grandstand, bleachers or sidelines.
- Confront advisors, coaches, or officials in an inappropriate/hostile manner before, during, or after games/practices/events. Instead, contact the advisor or coach to make arrangements to speak at an appropriate time and location.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

- Show support for the entire team.
- Please encourage your child to have communication with their coach or advisor while emphasizing how to improve their status on the extracurricular team.
- Support team and program goals rather than individual goals.
- Please follow the flow chart when addressing an issue:
 - Students talk to the head coach/advisor.
 - Student, parent, and head coach/advisor meet.
 - Student, parent, head coach/advisor, and Athletic Director meet.
 - Student, parent, head coach/advisor, Athletic Director and Superintendent meet.

Any spectator or parent/guardian who engages in misconduct as described above or who is removed from an interscholastic contest/event will be subject to the following:

1st Offense:

Offender(s) will be removed immediately from the contest/extracurricular event and will be prohibited from attendance at the next home contest/extracurricular event regardless of sports season or time of extracurricular activity.

2nd Offense:

Offender(s) will be prohibited from attending ANY home school district athletic events and extracurricular activities for the remainder of the season in question (fall, winter, spring) or for a period of 4 months commencing from the date of the second offense, whichever is longer.

3rd Offense:

Offender(s) will be prohibited from attending ANY home school district athletic events and extracurricular activities for one full calendar year. The prohibited period will begin at the time of the 3rd offense.

Social Media and Online Communication Expectations

Students and caregivers are encouraged to always exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of online communication or social media within the NCSD community and beyond. This handbook is meant to serve as a reminder to protect students and parents from unintended issues and consequences. Students and parents who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts reflect on the entire NCSD community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards outlined in the Extracurricular Handbook and Student Code of Conduct.

All parties are expected to abide by the following:

- Social media sites and online communications may not be used to publish disparaging or harassing remarks about NCSD community members, faculty, coaches, teammates, opponents, referees, athletic or academic contest rivals, etc.
- No photos, videos, comments, or posters showing the personal use of alcohol, drugs, vapes and tobacco.
- No photos, videos, or comments that are sexual in nature.
- No content that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning, or threatening toward any individual or entity as well as any acts of violence.
- No posts should depict or encourage unacceptable, violent, or illegal activities: hazing, sexual harassment, discrimination, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, underage drinking, and illegal drug use.
- Content online that would constitute a violation of team, school, STAC, or Section IV rules.

Failure to abide by these expectations may result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or permanent removal from the team.

Best Practices when using Social Media

- Think twice before posting. Don't post anything you wouldn't say openly in a classroom setting.
- Be respectful. Be positive. Treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- Remember, many different audiences will see your posts, including fans, alumni, kids, student-athletes, parents, staff, and faculty.
- Remember that the internet is permanent. Even if you delete something, it's still out there somewhere.

Concussion Protocol

Overview:

The NCSD Athletic Program recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported in children and adolescents who participate in sports, physical education, and recreational physical activity. Therefore, the district adopts the following guidelines to assist in the proper evaluation and management of head injuries.

A Concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury. Concussions occur when normal brain functioning is disrupted by a blow or jolt to the body or head. Recovery from concussion will vary. Avoiding re-injury and over-exertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management.

Any student demonstrating signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in interscholastic athletic activity will be removed from the game or activity, be evaluated immediately and will not return to play that day. The NCSD will notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring.

Concussion Management Team/Training:

The NCSD may assemble a concussion management team (CMT), at the discretion of the district. The CMT may consist of representation from some or all of the following groups: the athletic director, school physician, school nurse, athletic trainer, administration, coaches, teachers, parents and student-athletes. The athletic director will set the time and agenda for each meeting, at least one time per year if such a team is assembled.

The District's athletic director should coordinate training for all physical education teachers, nurses, and athletic trainers. Training will be mandatory for all coaches, assistant coaches and volunteer coaches that work with these student-athletes regularly. In addition, information related to concussions should also be included at parent meetings, on the athletics website or in information provided to parents at the beginning of sports seasons. Parents must be aware of the school district's policy and how these injuries will ultimately be managed by school officials.

Training should include: signs and symptoms of concussions, post-concussion and second impact syndromes, return to play and school protocols, and available area resources for concussion management and treatment. Particular emphasis should be placed on the fact that no athlete will be allowed to return to play the day of injury and also that all athletes should obtain appropriate medical clearance prior to returning to play or school.

The school nurse and/or athletic trainer will act as a liaison for any student athlete returning to school and/or play following a concussion. The school nurse, in collaboration with the district's Chief Medical Officer and Athletic Trainer, will review and/or design an appropriate plan for the student athlete while the student is recovering.

*The NCSD CMT can utilize the NYSPHSAA website as well as www.keepyourheadinthegame.org for information related to the signs and symptoms of concussions and the appropriate return to play protocols. A handout describing the Concussion Management protocol is also available on the NYSPHSAA website. A Concussion Management Checklist that has been approved and recommended by NYSPHSAA is available on this site.

NCSD Concussion Management Plan:

The concussion program consists of four components:

- Education
- Proper sideline management/guidelines
- Proper Medical follow-up
- Proper Return to Play Protocol/Clearance back to athletics

Education/Information/Training:

Each school coach, physical education teacher, nurse, and athletic trainer will have to complete an approved course on concussion management on a biennial basis.

- School coaches must complete the approved NFHS course. All NFHS courses are accessed at www.nfhslearn.com. The direct link to the Concussion Course is: <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=38000>.
- Physical education teachers must complete the Center for Disease Control (CDC) course. www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html
- School nurses and certified athletic trainers must complete the concussion course. <http://preventingconcussions.org>

Education of parents will be accomplished through parent meetings, on the athletics website, or in information provided to parents at the beginning of sports seasons. This education program covers the definition of concussion, signs/symptoms, guidelines for removal from play, guidelines for return to play, possible consequences of mistreatment of concussions.

The district will provide concussion management information and sign off with any parental permission forms.

The concussion management and awareness information on the State Education Department's website will be made available on the athletics website.

Proper Sideline Management:

Coaches, nurses, athletic trainers and school physicians will be trained on the proper guidelines for removing a student-athlete from play. As per the NY State regulation; any student removed from play because of suspected head injury cannot return to play on that day unless cleared by a certified physician.

Proper Medical Evaluation:

It is imperative that a student-athlete who sustains a head injury be seen by a trained medical officer familiar with concussion signs and symptoms. NCSO offers services of a nurse/athletic trainer who is on site for many athletic events. If on-site evaluation is not available then student-athletes will be directed to the nearest urgent care facility or hospital for emergency room care.

Proper Return to Play Protocol and Clearance:

Once a student-athlete is diagnosed with a concussion, they must be cleared back to athletics by a certified physician.

Any student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion will be immediately removed from play.

The student-athlete will be evaluated per concussion management protocol. The student-athlete will be transported immediately to the emergency room if:

- There is prolonged loss of consciousness
- There are focal neurologic findings on exam
- There is change in sensorium on exam
- Serial exam reveal deterioration in clinical status

Any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion will not be allowed to return to play until he/she is:

1. Cleared by a certified physician.
 - Clearance from the Emergency Department, Walk-In, or similar office will not be acceptable.
 - The patient may be seen and treated by their Primary Care Physician .The PCP will certify that an athlete is asymptomatic and has a normal exam. Once that notification is received, the athlete can be evaluated and start the return to play protocol under the care of the athletic trainer/school nurse.
2. Has been evaluated by the school nurse or athletic trainer and found to:
 - Be asymptomatic at rest and with exertion
 - Has returned to school without symptoms
 - Has a normal exam
 - return to "normal" cognitive (Serial 7's, delayed recall, digits backwards)
 - return to "normal" VOMS--Vestibular Ocular Motor Screening
 - return to "normal" Balance--modified BESS testing
3. Has completed a graded return to play protocol
 - a. Once a student-athlete is found to have shown adequate improvement, they will undergo a graded step by step return to play protocol under the supervision of the school nurse or athletic trainer. Return to full practice, competition, or physical education will only occur after successful completion of the return to play protocol.
 - This step-wise process starts the student-athlete at a low level of non-contact activity and gradually increases in intensity and contact.

- This will vary from sport to sport depending on level of contact and intensity. The athlete should be asymptomatic during a full practice prior to participating in a competition.
- Progression is based on whether the student-athlete's symptoms return with increasing intensities. The student-athlete will need to go through all steps without their symptoms returning. If the symptoms return, they will return to the previous step until their symptoms resolve and before they attempt the next step again.

The following criteria will be utilized before any athlete is cleared to return to play:

Asymptomatic during return to play protocol and cleared for return by certified physician.

Post-Concussion Management

Cognitive rest requires the student athlete avoid participation in, or exposure to, activities that require concentration or mental stimulation.

Physical rest includes getting adequate sleep, taking frequent rest periods, and avoiding physical activity that requires exertion.

Return to school activities may begin once a medical provider clears the student and may recommend a gradual return to activities, after the student has been symptom free for 24 hours.

The school nurse and/or athletic trainer will oversee return to play protocol on site and in consultation with the athletic director. All documentation will be kept with the school nurse and/or athletic trainer; including but not limited to activities, signs/symptoms and response. Protocol will be documented and kept on record.

Supervised Return-to-play Program:

Once the student athlete is symptom free at rest for 24 hours and has a signed release by a certified physician, she/he may begin the return to play progression below (provided there are no other mitigating circumstances). A note from a certified physician "return to play/return to sports" following a head injury diagnosis will initiate the Return-to-play Program. ***For interscholastic athletics, clearance must come from the school medical director.*** A general outline of this stepwise program is listed. A certified physician/medical director may also require a sports specific 6 step return-to-play for student-athletes.

Step 1: Light aerobic activity

Step 2: Sport-specific activity

Step 3: Non-contact training drills

Step 4: Controlled Contact training drills (hitting the sled, one on one/two on two drills)

Step 5: Full Contact practice

Step 6: Return to Play

Each step should take at least 24 hours. If any post-concussion symptoms occur while in the stepwise program, then the student should drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and try to progress again after a further 24-hour period of rest has passed.

Acknowledgement and Understanding of Handbook:

We acknowledge that we have read and understand the regulations for participation in extracurricular activities in the Norwich City School District and agree to comply with the contents of the Norwich CSD Extracurricular Handbook.

Parent/Guardian (Print)

Parent/Guardian (Signature)

Date

Student (Print)

Student (Signature)

Date