



Gretna Public Schools
11717 S 216th St, Gretna, NE 68028
Phone: (402) 332-3265

GRETNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



2023 - 2024

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

ACTIVITY

HANDBOOK



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS..... 3
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY PHILOSOPHY..... 3
SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES..... 10

ORGANIZATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND REGULATIONS – ALL GPS SCHOOLS

ACTIVITIES ON SUNDAYS..... 10
BUILDING USE..... 11
CIVIL RIGHTS..... 11
CONDUCT AT SPORTS CONTESTS..... 11
CONTACTING COACHES..... 11
EQUIPMENT AND LOCKS..... 11
GPS RULES..... 12
INJURIES..... 13
INSURANCE..... 13
MONITORING CAMERA SYSTEM..... 13
MRSA PROTECTION..... 13
PHYSICALS AND PARENT CONSENT/PRE-PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS..... 13
PICTURES..... 14
STORMY WEATHER PROCEDURES..... 14
TRANSPORTATION 14
USE OF WEIGHT LIFTING EQUIPMENT..... 14

ORGANIZATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND REGULATIONS – GPS MIDDLE SCHOOLS

ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE..... 15
INTRAMURAL PROGRAM..... 15
PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS..... 15
SPORTS SEASONS..... 16
STARTING TIME FOR PRACTICE/ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICE..... 16
TRAINING RULES..... 16
SPECTATOR CODE..... 17

IMPORTANT DISTRICT POLICY LINKS

ANT-DISCRIMINATION 18
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT..... 18
CONCUSSION INFORMATION..... 18
RECORDING OF OTHERS..... 18
STUDENT FEES POLICY..... 18
STUDENTS WITH ALLERGIES 18



PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The purpose of this handbook is to share important knowledge and explain rules and regulations to the student athlete. The Athletic Department of the Gretna Public School District is proud of the students and coaches who have made this athletic program a success.

The philosophy of athletics in Gretna Public Schools is such that athletics are considered an integral part of the school's program of education which provides experiences that will help students physically, mentally, and emotionally.

It is also our philosophical belief that the middle school sports program will emphasize student participation over sports competition. When students become ninth graders, participation and sports competition begin to shift in importance as our athletes are prepared for varsity competition. In high school, the emphasis is reversed and sports competition is emphasized over student participation. At no time does the athletic program place the total education curriculum secondary in emphasis.

Participation in athletics both as a player and as a student spectator, is an important part of a student's total educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries responsibilities to the school, to the parents, to the community, to the entire student body and to the athletes themselves. These experiences contribute to the knowledge and skill of the student athlete and will hopefully make them better people and better community citizens.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY PHILOSOPHY

Extracurricular activity programs enrich the curriculum of the school by making available a wide variety of activities in which a student can participate. Extracurricular activity programs are considered an integral part of the school's program of education that provide experiences that will help students physically, mentally and emotionally.

The element of competition and winning, though it exists, is controlled to the point it does not determine the nature or success of the program. This is considered to be educationally and psychologically sound because of the training it offers for living in a competitive society. Students are stimulated to want to win and excel, but the principles of good sportsmanship prevail at all times to enhance the educational values of contests. Participation in activities, both as a competitor and as a student spectator, is an integral part of the students' educational experiences. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, community and the students themselves. In their play and their conduct, students are representing all of these groups. Such experiences contribute to the knowledge, skill and emotional patterns that they possess, thereby making them better individuals and citizens.

Safety

The District's philosophy is to maintain an activities program which recognizes the importance of the safety of the participants. To ensure safety, participants are required to become fully familiar with the



dangers and safety measures established for the activity in which they participate, to adhere to all safety instructions for the activity in which they participate, to inform their coach or sponsor when they are injured or have health problems that require their activities be restricted, and to exercise common-sense.

Warning for Participants and Parents

The purpose of this warning is to bring your attention to the existence of potential dangers associated with athletic injuries. Participation in any intramural or athletic activity may involve injury of some type. The severity of such injury can range from minor cuts, bruises, sprains and muscle strains to more serious injuries to the body's bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, or muscles, to catastrophic injuries to the head, neck and spinal cord. On rare occasions, injuries can be so severe as to result in total disability, paralysis or death. Even with appropriate coaching, appropriate safety instruction, appropriate protective equipment and strict observance of the rules, injuries are still a possibility.

Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct

Purpose of the Code of Conduct: Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. The privilege carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, and the community. Participants are not only representing themselves, but also their school and community in all of their actions. Others judge our school on the student participants' conduct and attitudes, and how they contribute to our school spirit and community image. The student participants' performance and devotion to high ideals and values make their school and community proud. Consequently, participation is dependent upon adherence to this Code of Conduct and the school district's policies, procedures and rules.

Scope of the Code of Conduct

- Activities Subject to the Code of Conduct:

The Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities mean student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district in which participation is not otherwise required by the school.

Extracurricular activities include but are not limited to: all sports, clubs, vocal, band, speech and drama, and other school sponsored organizations and activities.

A participant means a student who participates in, has participated in, or will participate in an extracurricular activity.

- When:

The Code of Conduct rules apply to conduct which occurs at any time during the school year, and also includes the time frame which begins with the official starting day of the fall sport season established by the NSAA and extends to the last day of the spring sport season established by the NSAA, whether or not the student is a participant in an activity at the time of such conduct.

The rules may also apply when a student is participating in a board approved extracurricular activity (i.e. - Summer band trip, National FBLA competition, National Skills USA competition, etc.) that is held outside the school year or the NSAA season.



- Where:
The Code of Conduct rules apply regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds. If the conduct occurs on school grounds, at a school function or event, or in a school vehicle, the student may also be subject to further discipline under the general student code of conduct. A student who is suspended or expelled from school shall not be permitted to participate in activities during the period of the suspension or expulsion, and may also receive an extended activity suspension.

Grounds for Extracurricular Activity Discipline

Students who participate in extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate cooperation, patience, pride, character, self-respect, self-discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect for authority. The following conduct rules have been determined by the Board of Education to be reasonably necessary to aid students, further school purposes, and prevent interference with the educational process. Such conduct constitutes grounds for suspension from participation in extracurricular activities and grounds for other restrictions or disciplinary measures related to extracurricular activity participation:

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, bullying, harassment or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school or extracurricular activity purposes or making any communication that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.
3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property, repeated damage or theft involving property or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect another person shall not constitute a violation.
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from a student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon, or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks, on school grounds or at a school function or event, or in a manner that is unlawful or contrary to school activity rules.
7. Engaging in selling, using, possessing or dispensing alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. The term "under the influence" has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the



term may mean any level of impairment and may include the odor of alcohol or illegal substances on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.

8. Public indecency.
9. Sexual assault or attempting to sexually assault any person. Engaging in sexual conduct, even if consensual, on school grounds or at a school function or event.
10. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students, interferes with school purposes or an extracurricular activity, or reflects a lack of high ideals.
11. Repeated violation of any of the school rules.
12. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
13. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to a school employee, school volunteer, or student. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin, or religion.
14. Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school or of an extracurricular activity; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
15. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Gretna Public Schools buses or vehicles used for activity purposes.
16. Failure to report for the activity at the beginning of the season. Reporting for one activity may count as reporting on time if there is a change in activity within the season approved by the coach or the supervisor.
17. Failure to participate in regularly scheduled classes on the day of an extracurricular activity or event.
18. Failure to attend scheduled practices and meetings. If circumstances arise to prevent the participant's attendance, the validity of the reason will be determined by the coach or sponsor. Every reasonable effort should be made to notify the coach or sponsor prior to any missed practice or meeting.
19. All other reasonable rules or regulations adopted by the coach or sponsor of an extracurricular activity shall be followed, provided that participants shall be advised by the coach or sponsor of such rules and regulations in writing prior to the violation of the rule or regulation.
20. Failure to comply with any rule established by the Nebraska School Activities Association, including, but not limited to, the rules relating to eligibility.

All terms used in the Code of Conduct have a less strict meaning than under criminal law and are subject to reasonable interpretation by school officials.

Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Violations

Students who are a member of a Gretna Public Schools Extracurricular Activity/Athletic Program are not to violate Code of Conduct Rule 7.



- **Consequences:**

Students may be suspended from practices or participation in interscholastic competition or participation in extracurricular activities for violations of the Code of Conduct. The period of suspension or other discipline for such offenses shall be determined by the school administration.

The disciplinary consequence will be determined based on consideration of the seriousness of the offense, any prior violations, the student's compliance with the self-reporting obligations, the student's level of cooperation and willingness to resolve the matter, and the student's demonstration of a commitment to not commit future violations. Because of the significance of Code of Conduct Rule 7 violations on the student participants, other students and the school, the following consequences are established for such violations:

- **Meaning of Terms:**

Use or consume includes any level of consumption or use. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation.

Under the influence may mean any level of impairment and may include the odor of alcohol or tobacco on the breath or person of a student, or the odor of an illicit drug on the student. Also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.

An activity participant who violates the drug, alcohol or tobacco rules shall be prohibited from participating in any extracurricular activity for the following minimum periods:

1. First Violation: 42 days, with opportunities for reductions.
 2. Second or Any Subsequent Offense: 42 days, without opportunities for reductions. If the student has self-reported, the first violation shall be reduced to 28 days for the first violation.
 3. Reduction for Participation in Chemical Dependency Program: If the student has self-reported and parents agree to participate in a school-approved program for chemical dependency, the consequence will be reduced to 21 days. If the student did not self-report and parents agree to participate in a school-approved program for chemical dependency, the first violation will be reduced to 28 days. The program must be administered by a certified chemical dependency counselor and be approved by the school authorities. The student will need to successfully complete the approved chemical dependency program. Proof of successful completion of the program must be submitted in writing to the Activities Director. Failure to participate and successfully complete the approved chemical dependency program may cause the participating student to be suspended from extracurricular activities for one calendar year. All costs associated with the program are to be borne by the student/parent or guardian.
 4. More Serious Violations: In the event of more serious drug or alcohol violations, such as students engaging in use of especially serious drug offenses (cocaine, meth, etc.) or procuring alcohol for minors, the consequence of the violation is not limited by the foregoing, and may be established in the good discretion of the administration.
- **When Suspensions Begin:**
All suspensions begin on the day the Activities Director or Principal finds the student in violation of the school policy. During a suspension, participants may be required or permitted to practice at the sole discretion of the coach or activity sponsor.



- **Self-Reporting:**

A student who violates the Code of Conduct must self-report. The self-report must be made to: the principal, athletic director, or the head coach or sponsor of an activity in which the student participates. The student's parent or guardian may initiate the self-reporting process, but the student will be later required to give a written statement of the self-report. The self-report must be made the earlier of: (1) before the end of the next school day after the conduct occurred and (2) before participation in an extracurricular activity. In making a self-report, the student must identify the events that took place, what conduct the student engaged in, and will be required to put this information in a written statement.

- **Determining a Violation Has Occurred:**

A violation of the Code of Conduct will be determined to have occurred based on any of the following criteria:

1. When a student is cited by law enforcement and school officials have a reasonable basis for determining that grounds for the issuance of the citation exist.
2. When a student is convicted of a criminal offense. Conviction includes, without limitation, a plea of no contest and an adjudication of delinquency by the juvenile court.
3. When a student admits to violating one of the standards of the Code of Conduct.
4. When a student is observed to be in violation of Code of Conduct Number 7 by a certificated Gretna School employee.
5. When school officials otherwise find sufficient evidence to support a determination that a violation has occurred.

- **Procedures for Extracurricular Discipline:**

The following procedures are established for suspensions from participation in extracurricular activities:

1. Investigation. The school official(s) considering the suspension will conduct a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances and determine whether the suspension will help the student or other students, further school purposes, or prevent an interference with a school purpose.
2. Meeting. Prior to commencement of the suspension, the school official considering the suspension or their designee will provide the student an opportunity to give the student's side of the story. The meeting for this purpose may be held in person or via a telephone conference.
 - a) The student will be given oral or written notice of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the school has, and the opportunity to explain the student's version. Detail is not required where the activity participant has made a self-report or otherwise admits the conduct. Names of informants may be kept confidential where determined to be appropriate.
 - b) The suspension may be imposed prior to the meeting if the meeting cannot reasonably be held before the suspension is to begin. In that case the meeting will occur as soon as reasonably practicable. The student is responsible for cooperating in the scheduling of the meeting.
3. Notice Letter. Within two school days (two business days if school is not in session), or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Athletic Director or the Athletic Director's designee will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian. The statement will describe the student's conduct



violation and the discipline imposed. The student and parents or guardian will be informed of the opportunity to request a hearing.

4. Informal Hearing Before Superintendent. The student or student's parent/guardian may request an informal hearing before the Superintendent. The Superintendent may designate the Athletic Director or another administrator not responsible for the suspension decision as the Superintendent's designee to conduct the hearing and make a decision. A form to request such a hearing must be signed by the parent or guardian. A form will be provided with the notice letter or otherwise be made available by request from the Principal's office.

The request for a hearing must be received by the Superintendent's office within five days of receipt of the notice letter.

If a hearing is requested:

- a) The hearing will be held within ten calendar days of receipt of the request; subject to extension for good cause as determined by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.
 - b) The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will notify the participants of the time and place of the hearing a reasonable time in advance to allow preparation for the hearing.
 - c) Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written decision will be rendered within five school days (ten calendar days if school is not in session). The written decision will be mailed or otherwise delivered to the participant, parents or guardian.
 - d) A record of the hearing (copies of documents provided at the hearing and a tape recording or other recordation of the informal hearing) will be kept by the school if requested sufficiently in advance of the hearing by the parent/guardian.
5. No Stay of Penalty. There will be no stay of the penalty imposed pending completion of the due process procedures
 6. Opportunity for Informal Resolution. These due process procedures do not prevent the student or parent/guardian from discussing and settling the matter with the appropriate school officials at any stage.
- **Attendance:**
Student participants are expected to meet the following attendance expectations:
 1. Attend school regularly.
 2. Be on time for all scheduled practices, contests and departure for contests. In the event a participant is unable to attend a practice or contests the participant should contact the coach or sponsor in advance.
 3. On the day of a contest, performance or other activity, be in attendance for the full day. A student who is not in attendance the full day is ineligible for the contest, performance, or activity.
 - a) Exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances, such as doctor/dentist appointments or family emergencies. The exception must be approved by the Principal or Athletic Director.



- b) Every attempt should be made to be in attendance the day of a contest. Sleeping in to rest up for the game will not be considered an extenuating circumstance, nor will going home ill and then returning to play in the contest later that day.
- Academic Standards:
Participation in extracurricular school activities is encouraged and desirable for all students. At the same time, the primary mission and responsibility for each student is to establish a firm academic foundation. A student participating in extracurricular school activities must show evidence of sincere effort towards scholastic achievement. To be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities, students must meet the academic requirements of the Gretna Public Schools and the NSAA Eligibility Standards.

Social Media Guideline

Activity participants are reminded that anytime you share information electronically, it is no longer private information. Examples may include, but are not limited to: Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, computers, cell phones (including text messages), personal blogs, and any other electronic platforms.

Students are thus notified that the school administration, while not necessarily involved initially in securing information in the sharing process of electronic information, will follow normal investigative procedures if a possible school violation and/or activity suspension may be involved.

ORGANIZATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND REGULATIONS ALL GRETNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ACTIVITIES ON SUNDAYS

According to the Nebraska School Activities Association, no activity contests may be scheduled on Sunday. In addition to this, the school wishes to work cooperatively with the churches of the community.

Coaches and sponsors will avoid scheduling practices on Sundays. EXCEPTION: When a team or activity is required to play or perform in a district or state competition on Monday at the varsity level, practices may be scheduled after 2:00PM, Sunday afternoon. Team and activity banquets, as well as limited performances, may also be scheduled after 2:00PM on Sunday afternoon. For any event scheduled on a Sunday, a high school administrator must first grant permission. When these rare instances occur, the school will make an attempt to notify the local churches

FAMILY NIGHT - SCHOOL WORK / ACTIVITIES ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

Students should not be given homework on Wednesday or given a test on Thursday. Assignments, projects, papers, speeches should not be due on Thursdays as well.

Coaches and sponsors will not schedule activities and/or practices on Wednesday evenings, past 6:00PM at the high school level and 5:15 PM at the middle school level. EXCEPTION: When a team or activity is required to play or perform in a conference event, district, or state tournament competition. In a rare instance, a rescheduled event may be considered based on a unique circumstance. When these instances occur, the school will make an attempt to notify the local churches.



BUILDING USE

No one is allowed to be in the buildings without a coach or a faculty sponsor. Offenders will be disciplined by the administration.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Compliance Requirement. No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, handicap, sex, or religion be excluded from participation in or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity.

CONDUCT AT SPORTS CONTESTS

Athletes should conduct themselves in a manner which exemplifies good sportsmanship and conduct. Any athlete who discredits the Gretna School System will be disciplined by the coaches/administration.

CONTACTING COACHES

Parents are asked not to approach coaches with concerns (other than health related) about their children before, during, or after games. If a parent/player has concerns, the player needs to discuss these concerns with the coach first. If the issue is not resolved, the parents may contact the coach during regular school hours or set up a meeting with the coach through the Activities Director.

EQUIPMENT AND LOCKS

The athletic department will furnish equipment and locks needed for each program. It will not furnish shoes or any equipment of a personal nature. All equipment checked out to a participants is their responsibility. Student athletes and their parent(s) or guardian(s) will abide by the following rules regarding uniforms and equipment for any school activity:

In-Season Check-out and Use: School district uniforms and equipment checked out to the student athlete for use during the activity season shall be the student's responsibility; the check-out procedure for any school uniforms and/or equipment shall include the following:

1. The student-athlete shall use only school district provided uniforms and equipment for all practices (where applicable) and contests, and shall not substitute uniforms or equipment obtained and/or provided by the student, parents or others. If a licensed physician provides a written statement to the Activities Director requiring alternate school-issued equipment for student safety purposes the school district will purchase such equipment.
2. The student shall keep all school district provided uniforms and equipment clean and in good condition.
3. The student-athlete shall be responsible for reimbursing the school district with the replacement cost for damaged (except normal wear-and-tear) or lost/stolen school uniforms and/or equipment assigned to him/her.

Out-of-Season Check-out and Use: The school district may authorize the use of school equipment outside the season for such activity established by the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) if such use is allowed under NSAA by-laws and is approved by the Activities Director. An agreement for the use of such equipment must be signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian and must include:



1. a statement that the equipment will be used for its intended purpose and activity, and
2. a release of liability for the use of such equipment.

GREटना PUBLIC SCHOOL RULES

1. Any student participating in an extracurricular athletic program shall be subject to any and all rules outlined in the high schools' Parent-Student Handbooks. Any student who is suspended or expelled under the conditions stated in the Parent-Student Handbook, is also excluded from participation in interscholastic competition or other participation in extracurricular activities for the period that the suspension is in effect.
2. Permission to Participate: No participant shall be allowed to represent the school in athletics until there is on file with the coach and/or activities director the following two forms:
 - a) One completed statement from a licensed physician stating that the athlete is physically able to compete in the sport/s designated. Obligation for the physical examination is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. The examination must be given after May 1 of each year. This certifies that the athlete is qualified for the entire school year, May 1 through the following closing day of school, or the current school year. **THE NSAA REQUIRES EACH ATHLETE TO HAVE A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION EACH YEAR.** This physical shall be taken after May 1 of any given year and is good until school is out that spring.
 - b) One completed statement must be signed by the student and the parent or guardian having custody of the athlete, giving their consent for the child or ward to participate in sport/s under the conditions stated on the Gretna Public School Student Participation and Parent Consent form. This request is Board of Education policy for the well-being of the parents, the athlete, and the school district.
 - c) Students and parents/guardians must electronically sign the **RECEIPT OF ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK** through the Online Student Verification process.
3. Due Process for Extracurricular Activities: In the case of alleged infractions of the rules and regulations set forth in or adopted under Paragraph II. A, the participant may be suspended from practices, participation in the interscholastic competition or other participation in extracurricular activities. In any case, the due process procedures adopted by the Gretna Public Schools Board of Education will be followed:
 - a) If an alleged infraction occurs, the coach or supervisor, athletic director (if appropriate), and the principal shall make an investigation of the alleged conduct or violation and determine if a suspension is necessary to help any participant, or to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with school purposes.
 - b) Before the suspension shall take effect, a participant shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student and an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and an opportunity to present the student's version.
 - c) If, after the above, a determination is made to suspend the participant, the suspension shall take immediate effect, and the coach or supervisor shall send a written notice to the participant and the student's parents or guardians of the action taken.
 - d) If a participant and the student's parents or guardian are not satisfied with the determination by the coach or supervisor, a hearing may be requested before the building principal. The hearing must be delivered to the building principal within five days of receiving notice of suspension.
 - e) If a hearing is requested, it shall be held within ten days of the request, and a notice of the time and place of the hearing will be given to the participant and participant's parents or guardian



- within five days of receiving the request. The notice shall contain an outline of the alleged infraction.
- f) At the hearing, as provided above, witnesses should testify, the participant will be given an opportunity to confront and cross examine such witnesses, the participant will be allowed counsel if desired, the participant will be allowed to call witnesses and present evidence, and the participant will have the right to have a decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.
 - g) Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written statement of findings of facts from the hearing will be compiled and a decision rendered. The statement of findings of fact and the decision will be mailed to the participant, parents, or guardian. A record of the hearing shall be kept by the school.
4. Nothing contained in this policy shall prevent the participant and his/her parents, guardian, or representative from discussing and settling the matter with the appropriate school personnel at any stage provided herein.

INJURIES

All injuries should be reported to the coach and athletic trainer immediately. As a general rule, ice should be applied to the injured area for the first 72 hours. The injured area should also be elevated and a compression wrap applied.

INSURANCE

The Gretna Athletic Department provides no insurance coverage. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide adequate insurance to cover any medical expenses which may be incurred while the student is participating in athletics and activities.

MONITORING CAMERA SYSTEM

GPS School are monitored by a camera system.

MRSA PROTECTION

Due to the threat of infection caused by MRSA and other staph infections, all athletes are required to properly launder their practice clothing and game uniforms. Any athlete that wears unwashed clothing for practice or games may be withheld from participation.

PHYSICALS AND PARENT CONSENT/PRE-PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS

Every athlete must have a Physical Evaluation/Clearance Form on file and a N.S.A.A. Student and Parent Consent form completed online to participate in an athletic activity. Notice the signatures that must be obtained before these forms are considered complete. An athlete cannot participate in practice or contests until they have a completed Physical Evaluation/Clearance Form on file and a N.S.A.A. Student and Parent Consent Form completed online. Additionally, every parent and student must sign an “eligibility” form to verify they have access to and understanding of the Activities Handbook, which explains rules and provides information pertaining to the inherent risks of participation in athletics before participating in an extracurricular activity.



PICTURES

Individual and team pictures will be taken of all teams and individuals who want them. Individuals must order pictures using the form provided and make payment to the photographer on order.

STORMY WEATHER PROCEDURES

In Nebraska, strong storm systems often come through our state, bringing with them heavy rains, snow, ice, and occasionally hail and tornadoes. With this in mind, it is important that we be clear on what coaches and sponsors will do during severe weather conditions.

Certificated staff members are directly responsible for all students under their supervision in the classroom, and at any school sponsored activity. When severe weather strikes with little or no warning, staff members directly in charge of activities must determine in their best judgment, what action or actions will be in the best interest concerning the safety of their students.

At away events, when severe weather becomes a concern, coaches or sponsors along with the bus drivers will determine the best course of action to take, keeping in mind the safety of the students.

Coaches and sponsors should make every effort to keep school officials informed of any changes or deviations from the normal routine of events if weather dictates that such action be necessary. In the event that an activity may be canceled due to weather, students will be allowed to contact parents, and emails will be sent by the district or school.

TRANSPORTATION

The school district will provide transportation to all contests. Team members will travel to and from contests as a unit. If a student is not returning with the team on school transportation, the student's parent or guardian must communicate this to the coach on the day of the scheduled event. **School policy states that a student may be released to a parent or guardian only.**

Note: Some coaches may require that participants travel to and from contests on school transportation.

If a student is not returning with the team on school transportation, the student should follow these guidelines:

1. Inform coach on the day of the scheduled contest.
2. Parents/guardians must pick up the student and personally identify themselves to the coach.
3. **Students can only be released to their parents or guardians.**

USE OF WEIGHT LIFTING EQUIPMENT

Any student may have access to the school's weight lifting equipment, provided they follow the rules and guidelines established for such use. The weight lifting equipment is the property of Gretna Schools. Equipment will be kept in an assigned area and the following rules must be observed:

1. Do not use equipment without qualified supervision.
2. Before using, inspect equipment for loose, frayed, or worn parts. If in doubt, do not use it until parts are fixed or replaced.
3. Make sure that spotters are used when necessary.
4. Report all injuries to the supervisor immediately.



5. Safety is the main concern for everyone. Actions that threaten weight room safety will not be tolerated.

ORGANIZATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND REGULATIONS ALL GREटना MIDDLE SCHOOLS

ACTIVITY ATTENDANCE

All students who participate in any school activity must be in regular full day attendance the day the activity is scheduled (8 periods). This applies to practice sessions as well as games, meets, band and vocal concerts, class activities, etc. An exception may be made if a student shows verification of having a doctor's appointment or has permission in advance from the administration for an absence.

INTRAMURAL PROGRAM

It has become increasingly difficult to create an environment that allows for participation, growth, and quality instruction in the games of volleyball and boys basketball for all 7th and 8th grade boys and girls interested in playing volleyball and basketball at the middle school level. If we continue to have a large number of girls interested in volleyball or boys interested in basketball, we are going to have an intramural program. The structure of the program will be as follows:

The top players will be selected to the traveling teams. The 7th and 8th grade traveling teams will play A and B games against the other schools on our schedules. Those not selected to the traveling teams will play intramural volleyball and basketball games. The 7th and 8th grade intramural teams will practice one to two times per week, and will play games on Wednesday afternoons beginning at 3:30. All athletes will practice together for the first week of practice. At the conclusion of the first week of practice, traveling teams and intramural teams will be selected. All athletes will be issued uniforms.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

The athletic program for middle schools in Gretna Public Schools is designed to provide wholesome opportunities for those middle school students who desire activity in sports. A sports program is available for both middle school boys and girls. For grades seven and eight the program is designed so that students may participate in each sport offered. The program for grades seven and eight is to provide the broadest range of experiences in the most positive manner, so that students can make an informed choice as to what programs they wish to continue being involved in at the high school level.

NOTE: If a student in grade seven or eight reaches age 15 prior to August 1, that student may participate on a Senior High School team.

The following are the objectives of the athletic program for Gretna students in grades seven and eight. Student athletes will:

1. Develop specific physical skills in each respective sport.
2. Demonstrate responsibility to others and self by working toward achievement of common goals.
3. Demonstrate self-discipline.
4. Demonstrate the ability to set goals and make a plan to achieve those goals.



5. Demonstrate the ability to accept coaching in a positive manner.
6. Demonstrate good sportsmanship when experiencing success/failure.
7. Represent the Gretna Schools and community in a positive manner.
8. Demonstrate positive leadership skills.
9. Be provided with a valuable learning experience.

Any student is welcome to try out for any of the interscholastic activities available to them, providing they meet the criteria established by the NSAA constitution and Nebraska State Law.

[Full time/Part Time Enrollment \(Policy 5004\)](#), [Extracurricular Activity \(Policy 5103\)](#)

SPORTS SEASONS (7TH AND 8TH GRADE)

All interscholastic sports for the seventh and eighth grade students are divided into four seasons: fall, early winter, late winter and spring. The division of sports, the date of the first organized practice, and the closing of the season is established as follows.

FALL

Football JV/V	August 16	October 5
Volleyball 7-8	August 16	October 10
Cross Country 7-8	August 16	October 3

EARLY WINTER

Boys Basketball 7-8	October 16	December 11
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LATE WINTER

Girls Basketball 7-8	January 4	February 26
Wrestling 7-8	January 24	March 9

SPRING

B&G 7/8 Track	March 18	May 3
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STARTING TIME FOR PRACTICE - ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICE

All starting times of practices will be designated by the individual coach and activities director. All athletes are expected to be on the field or court at the time set by the coach. Under normal conditions, all athletes will be required to report to practice dressed. A team member is not allowed to practice if s/he is not in attendance a full day of school. A full day consists of all periods. A school sponsored activity is an exception as are doctor and dental appointments, along with other reasons approved by the administration.

If an athlete is unable to attend, s/he must contact the coach before the practice begins. Each coach may have specific attendance requirements which will be given to each player before the season.

TRAINING RULES

In order to reach optimum athletic potential, athletes must avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Gretna Public Schools strongly discourage the use of and the association with alcohol, tobacco, and all drugs that are not prescribed by a licensed physician.



Athletics often provide valuable lessons for students. Some of these lessons include; the importance of being a contributing team member, dedication to a common set of goals, self-discipline, and the importance of being a role-model. Athletics are a part of our school's total curriculum and participation in them is a privilege.

No student who is a member of a Gretna School Athletic Program may be in possession of or use the following:

1. Tobacco in any form
2. Alcoholic beverages
3. Drugs or drug paraphernalia that are not prescribed by a licensed physician
4. Any controlled substance prohibited by law

These rules apply to any student who is a member of a middle school athletic team. These rules become effective with the first day of team practice for each respective sport. These rules remain in effect until the completion of the last team contest for a respective sport and/or until the final individual has finished competing for his/her respective teams. A violation of the following rules will result in a suspension from all contests for the

remainder of the season, or 42 calendar days, whichever shall occur first. The suspension begins at such time as a student is judged by the Activities Director or Principal to have violated the rule, and continues from that date. A student may continue to practice if the coach desires. At the conclusion of the 6-week suspension, the student may be reinstated provided s/he has met any and all additionally agreed upon conditions during that period.

Proof of violation shall be defined as follows:

1. Admission of a violation of rules to a coach or Gretna School Administrator.
2. Being observed in violation of Gretna training rules by any certified Gretna School employee.
3. Being observed or cited by a law enforcement officer.

SPECTATOR CODE OF SPORTSMANSHIP BEHAVIOR, ETHICS, AND INTEGRITY

- **Keep cheers positive.**
- **Avoid actions that offend visiting teams or individual players.**
- **Show appreciation of good play by both teams.**
- **Learn the rules of the game in order to be a better informed spectator.**
- **Treat all visiting teams in a manner in which you would expect your team to be treated.**
- **Accept the judgment of coaches and officials.**
- **Encourage other spectators to participate in the spirit of good sportsmanship.**



- Obey the instructions of school employees and officials supervising the activity.

IMPORTANT DISTRICT POLICY

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

The policy of Gretna Public Schools is to not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other protected status, in admission or access to, or treatment with regard to employment or with regard to its programs and activities.

Please select the following links for information and forms related to the Gretna Public Schools Anti-Discrimination Policies.

- A. [Anti-discrimination \(Policy 1200\)](#)
- B. [Title IX - Procedures for Complaints of Sexual Harassment \(Policy 1211\)](#)
- C. [Title IX - Discrimination \(Policy 1210\)](#)
- D. [Notice of Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment Form](#)
- E. [Sexual Harassment Complaint Form](#)
- F. [Designation of Coordinator \(Policy 1250\)](#)

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES/WELFARE

The following links provide information outlining policies to provide for equal opportunities, safety, and welfare of all students.

- A. [Child Abuse and Neglect \(Policy 5402\)](#)
- B. [Concussions \(Policy\) 6283](#)
- C. [Concussions: Return to Learn Protocol \(Policy 6283A\)](#)
- D. [Recording of Others \(Policy 1102\)](#)
- E. [Student Fees Policy \(Policy 5416\)](#)
- F. [Students with Allergies \(Policy 5602\)](#)