

Student-Athlete Handbook



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Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to give student athletes and other interested persons a guide to the operation of the interscholastic athletic program of the Lakota School District. By definition, cheerleaders are considered student athletes and are accountable for all the standards, rules and regulations as outlined in this publication.

The student athletes are obligated to conform to the “Student Code of Conduct” as established by the Lakota Board of Education, the Athletic Department substance abuse policies, and any other policies as established by the Lakota Athletic Department. Athletes are also responsible for specific rules and regulations as established by the coaches of each specific sport.

Student athletes and parents/guardians must understand that it is a **privilege** to participate in Lakota’s interscholastic athletic program. A condition to participating in the Lakota School District athletic program is a commitment to follow the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures established by the district for the implementation of its athletic program. It must also be understood that athletes who violate the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures shall face disciplinary action.

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The philosophy of athletics, in the Lakota Local School District, considers athletics to be an integral part of the school’s educational program, which provides experiences that will help them physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. We believe that by promoting sportsmanship at all levels, the athletic program instills pride and reinforces a sound value structure, and enhances the individual’s self-image, as well as the image of the school district and the community.

SPORTSMANSHIP

One of our goals is to develop athletes and cheerleaders who demonstrate good sportsmanship. We believe that the basic rules of good sportsmanship consist of:

- Showing respect for opponents at all times
- Showing respect for officials and their decisions
- Knowing, understanding, and following the rules of the contest
- Maintaining self-control at all times
- Recognizing and appreciating skill in performances regardless of affiliation

We believe that being a spectator is a “privilege” and not a “right”. It is a privilege to watch an educational process where teams demonstrate what they have learned in the athletic classroom. Spectators will be held accountable for good sportsmanship.

Athlete Registration in Final Forms

All athletes are required to Register for their sport in Final Forms prior to the start of the season. The Registration process includes electronically acknowledging all Lakota and OHSAA Rules and Regulations and Acknowledgement of Risk. The Athlete and the parent is required to sign all required forms in Final Forms **before** the athlete is permitted to participate in the sport/activity.

Physical Exam Form

No athlete is allowed to participate until a completed O.H.S.A.A. Physical Examination Form is on file in the athletic director's office. These forms require a physician's certification (signature and stamp) that the individual is permitted to participate in sports. The form is good for one year from the date of exam.

Lakota Athletic Department

Mission Statement

*The mission of Lakota athletics is to extend educational opportunities so students can compete in a manner that **promotes personal development, fosters teamwork, and teaches important life skills** necessary for becoming a valued member of society.*

Mission Statement Supporting Language

Personal Development

- Physical development prep, conditioning, strength.
- Develop individual skills in their sport.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Drive to your personal best.
- Personal discipline and accepting responsibility for actions.

Teamwork

- Promote sense of community.
- Being a part of big picture / commitment to a cause.
- Promote learning of team.
- Responsibility to the team.
- Teach cooperation.
- Promote the importance of team winning versus individual scoring.

Life Skills

- Teach young people how to compete.
- Reinforce classroom learning and academic achievement directly.
- Develop character.
- Teach life skills of hard work, dealing with success and failure.
- Coach as counselor.
- Tolerating others faults and shortcomings while appreciating their strengths.
- Leadership and following.
- Teaching tolerance.
- Teach sportsmanship.
- Social growth.
- Handling conflict.

Lakota Coaching Standards

This document is designed to provide all Lakota coaches with a common coaching frame of reference. These points of emphasis are to be considered guidelines in teaching interscholastic sports within the Lakota School District.

- Student athlete learning and teaching should be the center of all Lakota interscholastic athletics. Lakota coaches are expected to “teach” the fundamentals of the sport.
- Lakota coaches are expected to be exemplary role models both in and out of the athletic arena and leaders of young people in every sense of the word. Reinforcement of sportsmanship is critical.
- Lakota coaches are expected to communicate with the parents of their student athletes on a consistent basis. All parent phone calls are expected to be returned within 24 hours.
- Lakota coaches are expected to hold pre-season parent meetings to communicate team policies, coach's philosophy, substance abuse policy information and all other logistical information specific to the program. This is where the ground rules for parental communications are outlined.
- Student athletes should be coached from a constructive perspective. Demeaning the efforts of a young person does not reinforce learning and has no place in Lakota. Student athletes should never be ridiculed at any time especially in front of their peers.
- Profanity by any coach is unacceptable. It has no place in education.
- Lakota coaches need to be sensitive to the diversity of our student athletes. Multi-cultural and socioeconomic differences give athletes a wide variety of perceptions. Casual remarks or comments made in front of a diverse group of athletes may be offensive or hurtful to some young people. Coaches are strongly encouraged to be sensitive to **all the athletes** under their direction.
- Lakota coaches are expected to be consistent with discipline. Inconsistency leaves a coach open to charges of favoritism and undermines the morale of the squad.
- Keep a perspective on the grade level and who is being coached. Intensity levels of coaching should be commensurate with the age of the athletes. An overzealous approach can take all the fun out of a sport.
- Lakota coaches are expected to be punctual for all practices, meetings, and contests.
- Lakota coaches are expected to be thoroughly prepared for all practices and contests.
- Lakota coaches are expected to dress appropriately for practices and games. The professional dress of a coach sets the tone for the team and the athletic program.
- Lakota coaches are expected to be familiar with District Policies on depositing / fundraising and general monetary accountability procedures.
- When teams are selected by a “tryout” method, Lakota coaches must insure that athletes who have been cut are given the opportunity to understand what their deficiencies are and what they can do to improve their skills.
- Lakota coaches should be familiar with basic Ohio High School Athletic Association bylaws regarding eligibility contest restrictions and non-contact periods.
- If unclear on a policy or procedure, Lakota coaches should refer to their District Coaches Handbook and/or their respective Athletic Director.

The Role of Parents in Interscholastic Athletics

Communicating With Your Children

- Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
- Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
- Be helpful, but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the athlete to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
- Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying", to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
- Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. Don't pressure your child because of your pride. Athletic children need their parents, so you must not withdraw. Remember, there is a thinking, feeling, sensitive, free spirit out there in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when their world turns bad. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum achievement and enjoyment.
- Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted. Criticism of the coach to your child puts the athlete in a terrible "No Win" situation.
- Don't compare the skill, courage or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
- Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
- Always remember that children tend to exaggerate both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting. Many times athletes will define all coach criticism as being "yelled at".
- Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear and discomfort.

Communicating With the Coach

Communication You Should Expect from Your Child's Coach

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all players on the squad.
- Locations and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.).
- Procedure should your child be injured.
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation (eligibility, substance abuse, etc).

Communication Coaches Expect From Parents

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss With Coaches

- Team strategy.
- Play calling.
- Other student athletes.

Appropriate Procedure for Discussing Concerns with Coaches

- The very first step in discussing a coaching concern is to meet with the coach.
- Call to set up an appointment with the coach (contact the athletic administrator to set up the meeting if unable to reach the coach).
- Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These are emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution.

What if the meeting with the Coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

- Call to set up an appointment with the athletic administrator.
- Determine the next step at this meeting.

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Athletic Code of Conduct

PERSONAL MISCONDUCT

In keeping with Board policy and the guidelines of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, student athletes are expected to fulfill their role in providing for an athletic program that is based on exemplary sportsmanship and behavior. Any athlete whose conduct is judged to reflect negatively upon themselves, the team or school will be subject to disciplinary action.

SPECIFIC AREAS OF MISCONDUCT, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- Violations of the Lakota Athletic Substance Abuse Policy
- Missing team practices or team meetings
- Insubordination and Unsportsmanlike Conduct to game or school officials
- Violations of policies as set forth by the Ohio High School Athletic Association Bylaws and Constitution
- Violations of the Lakota Student Code of Conduct as set forth by the Lakota Board of Education
- Non-alcoholic or drug violations of the Ohio Revised Code which are criminal in nature and cited as a charge other than a minor misdemeanor.
- Violations of team rules and policies as established by specific sports.

Communication

The athletic values of the Lakota Local School District shall be communicated to student athletes, parents, and supporters through various means, including, but not restricted to, the student athlete handbook, the student information packet provided to all student athletes, and the district's athletic website.

Discipline of Athletes

The discipline of athletes for conduct that is judged to reflect negatively upon themselves, the team or school shall be conducted and implemented by the Coach in accordance with School and Team Rules. In the event that the coach is recommending dismissal from the team, before disciplinary action is imposed, the coach shall provide notice to the student of the intent to dismiss the student regarding his or her participation in extracurricular activities, which shall include the reason for the dismissal. The student has the option to Appeal the decision to the Building Athletic Director. If necessary, a Final Appeal can be made to the Building Principal.

Conduct, Character and Insubordination:

In matters pertaining to personal conduct in which athletics are not involved, the school itself is to be the sole judge as to whether the pupil may play on its teams.

In matter pertaining to personal conduct in which athletics are involved, violations of sportsmanship, attacks on officials and other acts of misbehavior, the coach, school and the OHSAA shall have jurisdiction to determine the penalties involved and whether or not the pupil may participate in athletics.

Conflicting Activities:

When school athletic activities run concurrently one with another, an athlete who is actively participating in one sport or activity may not quit that sport or activity to join another ongoing activity without the consent of both coaches or sponsors involved.

When a cheerleader is selected to cheer for more than one sport and then withdraws from one, the athlete is withdrawing for the remainder of the school year.

Athletic Candidate Reporting Late

It is normal procedure for a coach to disqualify a student as a candidate for any sports activity when reporting late if:

1. That sport has actually been in session for one or more weeks.
2. Final team cuts have been made.
3. The first scheduled competition has been completed.

In the case of special or unusual situations, such as student transfer, student illness, injuries, etc., the good judgment of the coach and the best interests of the athlete must be the determining factor. Those situations judged special or unusual by a coach must be presented and approved by the athletic director.

Unexcused Absences

There are only three reasons to obtain an excused absence; illness, injury or a special reason approved by the coach. Permission to be absent from practice or a scheduled contest must be secured from the coach in charge of that activity **in advance**. In the event unexcused absences do occur for practice or a scheduled contest, the coach will follow a three-step procedure in dealing with the issue.

First offense – Absence is specifically recorded: Student and parent are notified that the student may be dismissed on the next offense.

Second offense – Student may be dismissed from team.

In order to participate in a contest, a student must be in attendance for at least one half of the regular school day, unless excused by the athletic director or principal. If a student has an unexcused absence on Friday, he/she cannot participate until they attend one-half day of school.

Suspension from School for Violation of School Code of Conduct:

In-School Suspension (ISS)-

1st Offense/2nd Offense- Athlete who receive ISS shall be suspended from Contests/Meets for the same number of games as assigned to ISS. An Athlete may practice while in ISS.

3rd Offense- Athlete shall be dismissed from the team.

Out of School Suspension (OSS) (3 days or less)-

1st Offense- Athlete cannot participate in practices or contests or be in attendance while on OSS. If the suspension goes through a weekend, athletes may not participate in practices or contests or be in attendance. In addition, Athlete shall be suspended from Contests for the same number of games as assigned to OSS.

2nd Offense any length or OSS 1st Offense of 4 days or more- At the discretion of the Athletic Director, athlete may be dismissed from the team.

****If the ISS or OSS also violates the Athletic Code of Conduct/Substance Abuse Policy, the Athletic consequence will run concurrent with the ISS/OSS consequence.**

Daily attendance Requirements

An athlete must attend school at least one half of the regular school day to be eligible to practice or compete, unless excused by the Athletic Director or Building Principal.

Lakota Athletic Department

Substance Abuse Policy

USE, SALE, POSSESSION, PURCHASE OR THE SOLICITATION OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ILLEGAL DRUGS OR POSSESSION OF PARAPHERNALIA IS PROHIBITED

- Beginning with the date that the athlete and parent(s) sign the Substance Abuse Policy Acknowledgement, the policy will be in effect for the athlete for a calendar year. **There is No “off season”** as far as adherence to the substance abuse policy is concerned. This policy is in effect “365 days a year / 24 hours a day”.
- The student athlete will be held accountable for the Substance Abuse Policy on a year-round basis. Cumulative accountability throughout his/her interscholastic career will run from grades nine through twelve. *For example: a violation during the 9th grade followed by a violation in the 11th grade would constitute a second offense circumstance.*
- Violations of which will lead to a denial of participation and/or removal from the Lakota School District interscholastic athletic program.
- Lakota’s Substance Abuse Policy is in effect for all student athletes grades seven through twelve. By definition, cheerleaders, chess team members, and academic team members are also considered student athletes.
- To participate in Lakota’s interscholastic athletic program, both athlete and parent(s) are required to sign the Substance Abuse Policy Acknowledgement form for each athletic season of participation. These dated forms will be kept in the respective athletic offices.
- If a Substance Abuse Policy violation occurs after completion of the athlete’s sporting season, but during the effective calendar year of policy coverage, the athlete must fulfill all facets of the program of reinstatement before his/her next sporting season. If it is a first offense violation, the athlete will be denied participation for 50% of the next season's interscholastic contests.
- Student athletes under the denial of participation penalty for an “out of season” substance abuse violation will be permitted to try out for an interscholastic squad. If the student makes the squad, the 50% denial of participation penalty will be enforced once the regular competition season begins. As with all violations, the athlete must complete all facets of reinstatement procedures to be considered for reinstatement.
- If the athlete is a multi-sport athlete and the first offense occurs with less than 50% of the regular season contests remaining, the outstanding percentage of the contest penalty will be carried over to the next interscholastic season of participation.
- If the athlete chooses to try out for another sport in an attempt to satisfy the denial of participation percentage, the athlete must successfully complete the season by satisfying the letter requirements of that sport.
- The athlete will be denied participation in the season awards program until the contest percentage penalty and the reinstatement procedure have been completed. Upon successful completion of the reinstatement process, the athlete will receive awards earned from the season during which the violation occurred.
- If a student athlete is implicated in a Substance Abuse Policy violation, the athletic director and/or assistant principal will fully investigate the situation to substantiate or refute the allegation.

- An athlete, who feels that he or she has a substance abuse problem, may personally report this circumstance to the athletic director, coach, or a member of the school teaching staff. The athlete must submit to a professional assessment and complete an educational substance abuse awareness program consisting of three hours of counseling but may continue to participate in athletics. Regardless of assessment findings, three hours of counseling sessions will be required as part of the reinstatement process. All self-referral information will remain confidential. If the assessment indicates treatment, the athlete must follow through with the program to remain on the squad. Parent(s) may also make referrals on their own student athletes. Procedurally, parent referrals will be treated as self-referrals.
- A self-referral or a parent referral cannot be made in an attempt to circumvent an active investigation into a Substance Abuse Policy violation. One “self-referral” is permitted during an athlete’s interscholastic career at Lakota. A “self-referral” counts as the first substance abuse violation. A second subsequent violation of the Substance Abuse Policy will result in a denial of participation for one calendar year.
- Self-referrals cannot be made when there has been evidence of police intervention surrounding a violation of the Substance Abuse Policy.
- For the purpose of a potential tobacco violation. E-Cigarettes/Vape Pens and similar paraphernalia are and will be considered a violation per the Lakota Athletic Department Substance Abuse Policy.

CONSEQUENCES OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY VIOLATIONS

FIRST OFFENSE: POSSESSION AND/OR USE

- Student athlete is denied participation in Lakota’s interscholastic athletic program for 50% of the total of regularly scheduled interscholastic contests (**Scrimmages are not considered as regular season contests**). **The OHSAA maximum number of regular season contests permitted is used a percentage benchmark in determining the number of contests in which the athlete will not participate. Participation denial penalties will extend into OHSAA playoff and OHSAA tournament contests in order to attain the specified number of contests to be denied. OHSAA playoff games and tournament game possibilities are not counted in the initial 50 % contest denial calculation.**

(Fractions of athletic contests will be rounded up. For example, in a 17-game regular season schedule, 50% of the contests would be 8.5 games. In this instance, the athlete would be denied maximum participation for 9 games.)

- To be eligible for reinstatement in the interscholastic athletic program the following requirements **must be met:**
 - a) **The student athlete must submit to a professional drug/alcohol assessment.** Proof of assessment completion must be provided to the athletic director. The professional assessment agency must be accredited and acceptable to the school district.
 - b) If the assessment indicates treatment procedures, the athlete must follow the prescribed program to be eligible for athletic reinstatement. Parents are permitted to seek qualified “second opinions” of professional assessments.
 - c) **With a drug/alcohol violation, the student athlete is required to attend three substance abuse counseling sessions.**
Given that counseling sessions may extend over a period of time longer than the number of contests dictated by the 50% denial of participation, to proceed with the

reinstatement process, the student athlete will need to provide proof of enrollment in a specific counseling program. **If at any time** the athlete discontinues the counseling program, he/she will be immediately denied participation in the athletic program. This denial of participation will include all subsequent seasons until the reinstatement program is completed.

All proof of program attendance must be reported to the athletic director and is the responsibility of the student athlete.

- d) With a tobacco violation, the student athlete will be denied participation for 50% of the total interscholastic contests for the season and be required to attend a smoke/tobacco cessation program. Upon completion of the smoke/tobacco cessation program, the student athlete may then request an appeal hearing for athletic reinstatement.

All proof of program attendance must be reported to the athletic director and is the responsibility of the student athlete.

- e) **For all Substance Abuse Policy violations, the final phase of athletic reinstatement will require a hearing with the student athlete and his/her parent(s) before an appeals board. Parent(s) must accompany the student.**

It is the athlete's responsibility to schedule the appeal hearing with the athletic director. The appeals board will consist of the building athletic director, principal or designee, head coach of the athlete's sport, member of guidance department and/or the district substance abuse coordinator.

Upon hearing the appeal made by the student athlete and his/her parent(s), the appeals board will make a recommendation to the principal as to whether reinstatement to the interscholastic program is justified. If the athlete is reinstated, he/she must re-sign the substance abuse pledge form. If the reinstatement appeal is refused, the athlete will be denied participation until the next sports season.

- If the first offense occurs after the end of the athlete's season, but prior to the awards program, the athlete will be denied participation in the awards program. The student athlete will receive his/her awards only upon successful reinstatement to interscholastic athletics.
- Student athletes under denial of participation for Substance Abuse Policy violations may practice and travel with the squad but not dress for any interscholastic contests.
- Positions of leadership (i.e. captain) are forfeited by violation of the Substance Abuse Policy.
- Financial responsibility of the professional assessment and counseling sessions lies with the parent(s) of the student athlete.
- A student who has tried out and been selected for a high school squad (grades 9-12) is considered to be a high school athlete at that time. Their first substance abuse violation will be counted as their first offense toward their high school record.

SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES: POSSESSION AND/OR USE

- Student athlete is denied participation in Lakota's interscholastic athletic program for **one calendar year from the date of the infraction.**
- The "second offense" penalty will be enforced **regardless of the time interval between the first offense and the second offense.** The student athlete is accountable for adherence to the Substance Abuse Policy **continuously** from grades nine (9) through twelve (12). Junior school students entering the ninth grade will have previous substance abuse offenses expunged from their **athletic** record.
- Second offenses can be any combination of drug or alcohol or tobacco substance abuse violations.
For example: one alcohol violation + one tobacco violation = a second offense and the consequences as defined under policy guidelines.
- In order to be reinstated to the interscholastic program after one year of denial of participation, the student athlete must complete all aspects of the reinstatement criteria as outlined in the "first offense" section.
- It is the student athlete's responsibility to communicate with the athletic director concerning all aspects related to the completion of the reinstatement criteria.
- If the second offense occurs after the end of the athlete's season but prior to the awards program, the athlete will be denied participation in the awards program and will not receive interscholastic awards.
- Financial responsibility for all professional assessment and counseling sessions lies with the parent(s) of the student athlete.

SELLING OF ALCOHOL OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

- Student athlete will be denied the privilege of participating in the interscholastic program and practices for **one calendar year** from the date of the infraction.
- For reinstatement to Lakota's interscholastic athletic program, the student will be required to successfully complete all facets of the reinstatement program. This would include submitting to a professional assessment, attending three counseling sessions, and appearing before the interscholastic appeals board.
- A second offense involving the sale of alcohol or controlled substances will result in a **permanent** denial of participation in Lakota's interscholastic athletic program.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
LAKOTA LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Adoption date: 4/8/2013
Revised: 4/8/2013, 5/13/2013, 8/12/13

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The Board of Education recognizes the value to the students of the District and to the community of a program of interscholastic athletics for students as an integral part of the total school experience.

For purposes of this policy, the program of interscholastic athletics shall include all sanctioned activities relating to competitive sport contests, games, events or sport exhibitions involving individual students or teams or teams of students of this District with those of another district.

The Superintendent shall annually present to the Board any changes in the program of interscholastic athletics, as well as the anticipated costs and number of students to be served by the program.

Since the primary purpose of the athletic program is to enhance the education of participating students as indicated by this policy, the Board places top priority on maximum student participation and the values of good sportsmanship, team play, and fair competition.

The Board shall determine the standards of eligibility to be met by all students participating in the interscholastic program. Such standards shall require that each student be in good physical condition, be free of injury, and have fully recovered from illness before participating in any interscholastic athletic event. In addition to the eligibility requirements established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, to be eligible for any interscholastic extra-curricular activity, a student must have maintained at least a 1.0 grade point average for the grading period prior to the grading period which s/he wishes to participate. If a student who becomes ineligible under these standards improves his/her grade point average during the current grading period to meet the eligibility standard, s/he may be reinstated.

The Board further directs that only those students may participate in the program of interscholastic athletics who have maintained a satisfactory academic record on a weekly basis during the current grading period.

Students identified as disabled under R.C. 3323 and the IDEA are subject to the eligibility standards established by this policy unless specifically exempted by the express terms of their individualized education program (IEP). An IEP can specify the criteria by which a grade will be determined for (a) course(s), given the individualized student's disability.

No student shall be excused from a class or supervised study for any extended periods of time to participate in interscholastic athletics.

The Superintendent shall develop appropriate administrative guidelines for the operation of the interscholastic athletic program which provide for the following safeguards:

- A. Prior to participating in any sport, each participant shall submit to a thorough physical examination by a licensed physician.
- B. Prior to participating in any sport, parents shall report any past or current health problems along with a physician's statement that any such problems have or are being treated and pose no threat to the student's participation.
- C. Any student who is found to have a health condition which may be life-threatening to self or others shall not be allowed to participate until the situation has been analyzed by a medical review panel that has determined the conditions under which the student may participate. The District shall assume no liability for any student with a health condition who has been authorized to play by the parents and their physicians but not by the District.
- D. Any student who incurs an injury requiring a physician's care is to have the written approval of a physician prior to the student's return to participation.
- E. All staff members serving as coaches or advisers will have annual first aid and safety training.

In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes and maintain ethical standards, school personnel, coaches, athletic trainers, and lay coaches shall not dispense, supply, recommend, or permit the use of any drug, medication, or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes. The Superintendent shall cause to be posted in all locker rooms in buildings that include students in any grade higher than the sixth grade, the following:

“Warning: Improper use of anabolic steroids may cause serious or fatal health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, growth deformities, infertility, personality changes, severe acne, and baldness. Possession, sale, or use of anabolic steroids without a valid prescription is a crime punishable by a fine and imprisonment.”

Any student practicing for or competing in an interscholastic event whom exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury shall be removed from the practice or competition by the student's coach (and/or the referee serving during the practice or competition).

Any student who has been removed from practice or competition by a coach or referee because she/he has exhibited signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with having sustained a concussion or head injury shall not be permitted to return to any practice or competition for which the coach or referee is responsible until the student receives written clearance that it is safe to return to practice or competition from a physician, in accordance with requirements set forth in R.C. 3313.539(E)(2), to grant such a clearance.

The Superintendent shall also develop an Athletic Code of Conduct and guidelines for ensuring that sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity characterize the manner in which the athletic program is conducted and the actions of students who participate. Such guidelines should include:

- A. criteria for judging these important qualities;
- B. procedures by which these values will be communicated to students, parents and supporters;
- C. means for ensuring that the behavior of these groups reflect high standards.

In order to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics, students and their parents must sign the Athletic Code of Conduct.

The Superintendent is authorized to implement suitable disciplinary procedures against those who violate this Athletic Code.

In order to support the OHSAA's program to strengthen sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity, the Board commits itself to recognize and support students, coaches and school administrators who demonstrate these traits and to confirm the value of school athletic activities as a vital part of education.

Students will be informed that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege and not a right. Students may be suspended or excluded from participation by authorized school personnel for any violation of the Student or Athletic Code of Conduct or violations of published rules and regulations established by individual coaches or sponsors.

Before a suspension is imposed pursuant to this policy, the Superintendent shall provide notice to the student of the intent to suspend the student from participation in interscholastic athletics which shall include the reason for the intended suspension and the exact conditions of the suspension.

**Lakota will follow all the by-laws of the OHSAA with respect to transferring students.
(OHSAA link – <http://www.ohsaa.org>)**

Ohio High School Athletic Association

Lakota East, Lakota West, Liberty Junior, Hopewell Junior, Plains Junior and Ridge Junior are members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and, as such, agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations set for by the Member Schools of the OHSAA. It is important for athletes and parents understand these Rules and Regulations.

Links to important OHSAA Information:

- [Student Eligibility Guide for Interscholastic Athletic Participation in High School](#)
- [Student Eligibility Guide for Interscholastic Athletic Participation in 7/8 Grade Schools](#)
- [Transfer Eligibility Requirements](#)

Please contact your Building Athletic Director if you have any questions about OHSAA Rules and Regulations.

Lakota Athletic Eligibility Program

Lakota East High School and Lakota West High School subscribe to the following athletic eligibility plan in an effort to maintain a balanced commitment to athletics and academics on the part of Lakota Student Athletes.

After reading the weekly eligibility program, if you have any questions or concerns please contact the head coach directly.

WEEKLY ELIGIBILITY PROGRAM

1. By school board policy, academic eligibility will be checked weekly.
2. Student Athlete eligibility will be completed electronically.
3. Teachers will be responsible for having updated grades in **HAC** each week. Eligibility lists will be collected from **HAC** and emailed directly to Athletic Administration.
4. Each week eligibility lists will be provided to coaches. Coaches are to communicate with players on their eligibility status from week to week.
5. The Athletic Department will email home notification of ineligibility; however all coaches are expected to enforce ineligibility standards.
6. Students who are found to be ineligible will be ineligible on the following Monday through Saturday. The competitive week runs from Monday through Saturday with no exceptions.
7. To maintain weekly eligibility, student athletes must accomplish:
 - a. The athlete must have a 1.0 accumulative grade point average
 - b. **Pass courses which total at least (5) solid subjects**
8. Ineligible athletes are not permitted to dress for contests. They may practice at the head coach's discretion.
9. Student athletes involved in the "post secondary options" program are directed to the Athletic Office to work out a weekly reporting system.

OHSAA QUARTERLY ELIGIBILITY

1. In order for an athlete to be eligible by OHSAA standards the student athlete must pass (5) solid subjects in the grading period preceding their respective season.
2. Failure to meet quarterly eligibility will result in ineligibility for the full following academic quarter.
3. Athletes coming off ineligibility status can regain their eligibility 24 hours after final grades are posted by the school district.

Example: Softball / Baseball Player

- Student only passes 4 solids during 2nd quarter
- Student is ineligible for the entire 3rd quarter
- Eligibility is regained 24 hours after the final 3rd quarter grades have been posted by the school district
- Note: For Spring sports this could be 1-2 weeks into the 4th quarter.

4. Fall sports quarterly eligibility will be determined by 4th quarter grades from the previous school year.
- 5.

Points to consider:

- Only courses that earn at least .5 credits per semester are considered a **solid subject**.
- If student athletes are only taking 5 solid courses there will not be any margin for error. One failure will result in ineligibility for that week or quarter.
- If an extended absence will factor into weekly or quarterly eligibility, please contact the Athletic Office for an assessment of the situation.
- With the changes in the bell schedules at both campuses it is vitally important that individual student athletes make sure that they are enrolled in the proper classes and the correct number of classes. Coaches and Guidance Counselors will not be assessing schedules for potential errors.
- All senior student athletes must be enrolled in and passing 5 solids through the completion of their season.

OHIO HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION **Athletic Eligibility Guidelines**

1. Athletic eligibility is based upon academic performance in each individual nine-week grading period. Semester grades are not considered for eligibility purposes.
2. Athletes must pass the equivalent of five solid subjects in a nine-week grading period to be eligible athletically for the next nine-week grading period.
3. A solid subject is one which, over the course of the school year, adds up to ½ credit toward graduation per semester. At Lakota East and West High Schools, the only courses which do not meet full ½ credit requirements are physical education classes.
4. Athletes cannot reestablish athletic eligibility by taking course work in summer school.
5. All fall athletes will qualify academically by their grade performance in the last nine-week grading period of the preceding school year.
6. Athletes who have been ineligible for their season do not qualify for athletic awards. This rule applies even though the athlete may have continued to practice with the team throughout the ineligibility period.
7. To be athletically eligible for the current grading period, junior high athletes must have passed 75% of all classes taken during the preceding nine-week grading period.
8. Athletes participating in “**Post Secondary Option**” programs need to personally see their athletic director to work out the details of reporting and ascertaining eligibility.

****BY LAKOTA SCHOOL BOARD POLICY, ANY ATHLETE NOT MAINTAINING A 1.0 GRADE POINT AVERAGE FOR A NINE WEEK GRADING PERIOD WILL BE JUDGED INELIGIBLE FOR INTERSCOLASTIC COMPETITION THE SUBSEQUENT NINE WEEK GRADING PERIOD.**

If you have any eligibility questions, contact the Athletic office for clarification.

Physical Education Waiver

What is it?

- For eligible student athletes, the PE Waiver waives the PE requirement for high school graduation.
- It does NOT award credit. However, it allows the student to pursue other options to earn the 0.5 credit, rather than taking two, PE courses (0.25 credit each). The student is still required to meet the minimum number of credits for graduation.

Who is eligible?

- Students who are participating in interscholastic athletics at the high school are eligible to use the waiver after they have successfully completed two, full seasons. This can be two seasons in two, different sports, allowing the student to meet the requirements for the PE Waiver in one school year.
- In addition to **cheerleading** and **marching band, winter guard, interscholastic athletic** teams currently recognized by the Ohio High School Athletic Association in Lakota Local Schools include the following:

Baseball	Basketball, Boys & Girls	Bowling, Boys & Girls
Cross Country, Boys & Girls	Diving, Boys & Girls	Football
Golf, Boys & Girls	Gymnastics	Soccer, Boys & Girls
Softball	Swimming, Boys & Girls	Tennis, Boys & Girls
Track, Boys & Girls	Volleyball, Boys & Girls	Wrestling
Lacrosse, Boys & Girls	Dance Team	

- Under the Ohio state law, local boards of education may NOT add additional areas of participation beyond **interscholastic athletics, marching band, or cheerleading** which may be used to excuse a student from the high school physical education requirement.

What does the student need to do?

- The student needs to participate in the two, full seasons and let his/her counselor know that he/she plans to use the PE Waiver for the PE graduation requirements.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Can my student use participation in a sport from before August 2012 toward the waiver requirement?**
No, the waiver is not retroactive. The Lakota Board policy was not in effect until August 2012.
2. **Can my student waive the 8th grade PE course because he/she plans to participate in sports or Marching Band in high school?**
No, students are required to have a PE experience in the junior high grades. The 8th grade course allows students to gain that experience and earn credit, but the waiver does not apply to the requirements for junior high curriculum.
3. **Why can't a club sport count toward the waiver?**
By Ohio law, the sports for the PE Waiver need to be recognized as interscholastic athletics.
4. **If my student only participates in one, full season of an eligible sport or Marching Band, can he/she receive partial credit and waive one of the PE courses?**
No, there is no partial waiver of the PE requirements.
5. **Does Winter Guard count towards the waiver?**

No, Winter Guard does not count on its own toward the PE Waiver, nor does it count as a second season. If a student is in both Color Guard and Winter Guard, it is one season (Color Guard) that counts towards the waiver because Color Guard counts under marching band.

For more information, please see the Ohio Department of Education site about the state guidance regarding the PE Waiver.

(7/13)

Attention Athletes

All SAT and ACT test scores **must** be reported to the eligibility center **directly** from the testing agency. Test scores will **not** be accepted if reported on a high school transcript.

When registering for the SAT or ACT, input the eligibility center code of **9999** to make sure the score is reported directly to the eligibility center.

**THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON AT THE STUDENT
ATHLETE'S HIGH SCHOOL WILL COORDINATE ALL CLEARING HOUSE
MATERIALS FOR THE NCAA.**

**PARENTS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO REVIEW THE NCAA
CLEARINGHOUSE APPROVED AND NON-APPROVED COURSE LISTS
WITH THEIR STUDENT ATHLETES.**

**IT IS HIGHLY ADVISABLE THAT THE PARENT(S) OF EACH STUDENT
ATHLETE TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN MONITORING THE SUCCESSFUL
COMPLETION OF NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE APPROVED COURSES. NOT
ONLY ON A YEARLY BASIS BUT ALSO THROUGHOUT THE STUDENT'S
ENTIRE HIGH SCHOOL CAREER.**

Athlete Equipment/Uniform Responsibilities

As an athlete participating in interscholastic athletics in the Lakota School District, you have the following responsibilities concerning school issued uniform and equipment items:

- It is extremely important that your equipment provides you the protection for which it was designed. It is your responsibility to periodically (at least weekly) examine your equipment for damage. Damaged equipment must be repaired **before** you compete or practice. You cannot be adequately protected with defective equipment. Bring all your equipment problems immediately to the attention of your coach for resolution.
- Your equipment and uniform are issued to you alone. You are responsible for the security of these items. Do not loan your equipment or uniform to others. **Keep all items under lock.** All school issued items will be numbered for inventory purposes. **Equipment or uniform items that are lost or stolen are your financial responsibility.** Athletes will be placed on the student fine list and report cards withheld until restitution is made to the athletic department.
- It is your responsibility to attend the proper care and use training provided by your coach.
- Care should be exercised in laundering uniforms. Read manufacturer's label for washing instructions. At the completion of your season, please launder all school issued practice and game uniforms prior to off-season storage.
- Participation in future athletic activities will not be permitted until all equipment is returned or assessments paid.

Athletic Medical Procedures

It is your responsibility as an athlete competing in interscholastic athletics in the Lakota School District to understand and comply with the following medical and injury procedures:

1. Before an athlete may compete or practice, you must have all forms completed in Final Forms and Physical Form submitted to your coach.
2. In the case of an athletic injury, it is your responsibility to notify your coach of the situation immediately so the best course of care can be undertaken as soon as possible. If there is any question as to whether you are injured or not, take the time to see the trainer for an evaluation. Don't attempt to continue to compete or practice with an injury of an undetermined severity and/or extent. Doing so could possibly cause further injury and considerably lengthen recovery.
3. If your injury requires a visit to a physician's office, we must receive a written release from that office in order for you to return to competition.
4. You have a personal responsibility to follow through on prescribed rehabilitation. You must make a commitment to complete the rehabilitation instructions faithfully.
5. While injured, you are expected to attend all practices and contests unless excused by your coach. Even though you may be out of action, you are still a part of the team. You will still be able to pick up on new strategies and techniques by observing practice sessions. It is very important that you do not let an injury adversely affect your attitude in the classroom.
6. Return to Play/Medical Clearance:
 - a. Every athlete that receives medical care, and is under the treatment of a physician, must have a doctor's note in order to return to play.
 - b. Please make sure that you mention to your physician that we have physical therapy services at your High School. Your doctor can provide us with treatment and therapy protocols.
7. In the event of an injury that results in a The Ohio High School Athletic Association carries a "catastrophic injury insurance program".

Transportation Guidelines

When using district provided transportation, the following rules apply:

- Noise is a definite safety factor. Keep all conversations, radios, and victory celebrations to reasonable, safe levels.
- Athletes should remain in their seats at all times.
- State law dictates that there is no food to be eaten on school buses.
- Make sure the bus is in the same condition as when the trip began. Please take your trash with you at the conclusion of the trip.
- Littering is a fineable offense. It reflects poorly on our entire program. Do not throw anything from the windows of your bus.
- The bus driver is in charge of the bus and his/her directions must be followed the same as any teacher or coach. The driver is solely concerned with your safe transportation to and from the contest.
- Insubordination toward a school bus driver will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the misconduct section of training rules.
- As an athletic department, we are dependent upon the cooperation of our Transportation Department if we are to meet our various scheduling demands. We definitely want to foster a positive working relationship with the Transportation Department by making every effort to be cooperative and courteous.
- If district transportation is not provided, parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their student athlete to and from practice and competitions.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM FEE GUIDELINES

In order to minimize the cost of operating an athletic program from the District's General Fund, it is necessary to collect athletic program participation fees from every student participating in interscholastic athletics. Fees are approved annually by the Board of Education. See your building Athletic Office for fee collection protocol and specific payment information.

Student athletic fees are used to defray the cost of interscholastic athletics at Lakota. Such costs include, but are not limited to, entry fees, officials, uniforms, equipment, training supplies, maintenance, transportation, coaching salaries, awards, etc.

1. All athletes will be assessed an athletic program fee for every sport in which they participate. Students on Free/Reduced Lunch fees will be waived.
2. All athletes in grades 7 and 8 will be assessed a \$150 fee per athlete / per sport.
3. All athletes in grades 9 through 12 will be assessed a \$200 fee per athlete / per sport.
4. Student athletic program fees are non-refundable.
5. Family cap for Athletics, Marching Band and Winter Guard:
 - Students must reside at the same address and share a parent/guardian.
 - School fees or club fees do not count toward the family cap.
 - The cap request form is available on line or in the athletic office. Caps are not automatically applied.
 - School fees must be paid in full for cap credit to be applied.
 - 1 student - \$400 • 2 students - \$600 • 3 students - \$800 • 4 or more - \$1000
6. At the Jr. High (grades 7 and 8), minimum participation numbers must be met or certain sports may be consolidated or cancelled. This will require fees to be paid in advance so District Administration can determine what sports will be offered before the start of each season. For "try-out" sports, fees must be paid before published fee deadlines. Refunds will be made through the District Treasurer's Office for any student not making the team.
7. At the High School (grades 9 through 12), fees are due on the date(s) designated by the District Athletic Director. A clear and well-defined system for fee collection will be provided to coaches and families.
8. Students not paying fees or meeting payment deadlines will be denied participation in Lakota's interscholastic athletic program. This includes the ability to attend post-season banquets, win post-season awards, and be placed on a roster for another sport.
9. Coaches are responsible for collecting athletic program fees for their respective teams. It is expected that coaches collecting fees should keep accurate records and provide receipts for all funds received.
10. Coaches are to turn program fee funds in to the athletic office within 24 hours.
11. Every student-athlete on a team must be accounted for in the program fee process. Students with special financial circumstances should be referred directly to the district athletic director.
12. Checks that have been returned from the bank as uncollectable must be paid immediately in cash for the student to remain eligible for participation.

Locker Room Rules

1. Roughhousing of any kind is not permitted in the locker room.
2. The harassment or hazing of others is not permitted. Incidents are to be reported to the coaching staff immediately.
3. No glass containers will be permitted in the locker room.
4. All spiked or cleated shoes must be put on and taken off outside of the locker room in extreme or muddy weather conditions. No metal or hard plastic spikes or cleats are allowed in any other part of the school building.
5. Equipment must be removed from all lockers by the end of the first school day following the conclusion of each sports season.
6. **Make sure that your locker is locked at all times.**
7. Do not borrow another person's equipment.
8. Make sure you check all of your protective equipment every day before practice or a game. **If your equipment is damaged or you have any problems with it at all, please notify your coach immediately. Do not use damaged or faulty equipment.**

Diet/Strength Supplements

(EROGENIC AIDS)

Erogenic Aids are defined as any drug or nutritional supplement that is used by an athlete to increase his/her strength, speed, or general athletic performance.

Drug Supplements

The use, sale, or possession of erogenic aids that are **classified as drugs by the FDA** will be viewed by the Lakota Local School District as use, sale, or possession of an illegal drug. This is a violation of the Training Expectations and the disciplinary process for the use, sale, or possession of an illegal drug will be followed (refer to the Lakota Student Athletic Handbook).

Examples: Anabolic Steroids; Human Growth Hormone; Clentuterol; Testosterone Patches; etc.

Nutritional Supplements

The use of erogenic aids that are classified by the FDA as **nutritional supplements** is strongly discouraged by the Lakota Local School District. **No member of the athletic department, no matter his/her personal opinion or belief, will promote the use of these nutritional supplements.** Questions about nutritional supplements from athletes and parent(s) should be forwarded to the athlete's family physician.

Examples: Creatine Monohydrate; Chromium Picolinate; Amino Acids; Carnitine; Caffeine; etc.

Diet Aids

The use of diet aids in an effort to lose weight for an increased athletic performance is **strongly discouraged by the Lakota Local School District.** No member of the athletic department, no matter his/her personal opinion or belief, will promote the use of these diet aids.

Examples: Dexatrim; etc.

PLEASE REVIEW – SYMPTOMS & TREATMENT FOR HEAT STRESS

Acclimatization generally takes from two to four weeks, necessitating a gradual pre-season conditioning program. During acclimatization, athletes’ bodies learn to sweat better. Sweat glands enlarge to produce more sweat, while blood vessels dilate to carry more heat to the skin and away from the body through evaporation. In hot weather, the heart works harder to supply more blood to a larger area of the skin. **A high level of fitness is therefore necessary for football players to safely compete in hot weather.** Note the conditioning of your players when pre-season drills begin and keep an eye on athletes whom you suspect to be in less than acceptable condition.

Never to be underestimated is the importance of selecting proper uniforms for hot weather practices. Authorities on heat stress say that under certain conditions the uniform can be a death trap, locking in moisture and heat. Initial practices should be conducted in socks, shorts and short-sleeved tee shirts as acclimatization proceeds. All early-season practices and games should be conducted in lightweight uniforms with short-sleeved net jerseys and socks. Long sleeves and full stockings are indicated only when the temperature is low.

Gone are the days when it was believed that depriving football players of water toughened their character. During intense drills or competition, the body loses tremendous amounts of fluid through the sweating process, and these fluids need to be replaced. The point to remember is that the stomach is capable of emptying only a certain amount of fluid in a given time. So it’s useless to drink a large volume of water at a single break because most of it will simply remain in the stomach. Schedule short fluid breaks every 15 to 25 minutes.

In addition to providing enough fluids, another measure coaches and trainers can take to prevent heat illness is to record athletes’ weight before and after practice. Then, by comparing the difference, they can determine how much fluid athletes should consume before the next practice. A general rule of thumb recommends replacing fluids in a ratio of one quart for every pound of weight loss during practice.

Despite these precautions, heat illness can still occur. Every coach and athletic trainer should therefore be familiar with and know how to handle heat-related conditions. Heat illness is classified into two conditions – heat exhaustion (excessive depletion of salt and water) and heatstroke (overheating from a breakdown of the sweating process). Both can result in serious physical harm unless the coach or trainer takes proper action.

	Heatstroke	Heat Exhaustion
Face	Red & Flushed	Pale
Skin	Hot & Dry	Moist
Temperature	Extremely High	Normal
Pulse	Strong & Rapid	Weak/Rapid
Unconscious	Usually	Not Usually

Heatstroke

Heatstroke is caused by high body temperature, salt loss and dehydration. The body’s mechanisms for dissipating heat will have stopped working, and a tremendous increase in body temperature will occur rapidly. Heatstroke is a medical emergency, and must be treated as a life-threatening situation. The signs and symptoms of heatstroke are as follows:

1. The victim may be dizzy, weak, mentally confused, euphoric, or have a sense of impending doom before becoming unconscious.
2. With little warning the victim may become unconscious.
3. The victim will have an exceedingly high temperature. The skin will feel hot to the touch. Rectally, the temperature will be above 105°, and it may range as high as 109°F.
4. The victim’s skin will be extremely dry and will appear flushed. The pulse rate will be strong and rapid.

First Aid Procedures

Coaches and trainers must review first aid treatment before the season starts. Because heatstroke is caused by the body’s acute inability to lose heat rapidly, the following steps must be taken immediately:

1. Make immediate arrangements to have the athlete transported to the nearest medical facility. Severe neurological, circulatory, and hepatic (liver) conditions may occur if quick and definitive medical attention isn’t sought.
2. Remove all clothing and pads and place the athlete in the coolest available place.
3. Cool the athlete’s body by any means possible. Many physicians recommend placing the victim in an ice bath. Any method, however, that would help lower the body temperature--cold water, chemical cooling packs, ice rubbed vigorously over the body--would suffice.
4. If the patient can cooperate, give him cold drinks to aid in heat loss.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is sometimes difficult to recognize. Its symptoms generally are less severe than those of heatstroke and vital signs may even appear normal. Coaches should look for the following signs to determine if the victim is suffering from heat exhaustion:

1. The victim may experience progressive weakness, inability to work, and loss of appetite.
2. The skin is usually moist and clammy, and may be pale or ashen gray.
3. The pupils may be dilated, and the pulse may be weak and slightly more rapid than normal (less than 100)
4. The victim is usually conscious but it isn’t uncommon for fainting to occur.
5. The victim may be suffering from muscle cramps.

First Aid Procedures

Heat exhaustion is an emergency situation, but it usually is not life-threatening. The following first aid steps should be followed:

1. The athlete should lie in the coolest available place and be given cool drinks.
2. Encourage the athlete to drink as much as possible.
3. Remove excess clothing and rub the athlete’s body with a cool, wet cloth.
4. The athlete should be instructed to stay out of the heat for the rest of the day and be taken to a hospital in case of other complications.

It is essential that coaches and trainers know the signs of heat exhaustion and heatstroke. The above chart should be reviewed frequently during this season when football and the training hazards that accompany it are in the spotlight.

Preventing the Spread of MRSA and Other Staph Related Skin Infections

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water. Scrub briskly for at least 15 seconds. Frequent hand washing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infections.
- Hand Sanitizer with at least 62% alcohol can be used for times when soap and water are not accessible.
- Shower immediately after all sport practices and competitions.
- Be sure to keep cuts and scrapes clean and bandaged.
- Avoid contact with other people's cuts, scrapes, and bandages.
- Do not share personal items. Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, sheets, razors, bar soap, clothing or athletic equipment.
- Wear practice clothes / uniforms only once, then wash in soap and water and dry in hot dryer.
- Report all skin abrasions, wounds and potential skin infections to a coach, trainer or school nurse.

Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet

For Interscholastic Athletics

Dear Parent/Guardian and Athletes,

This information sheet is provided to assist you and your child in recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Every athlete is different and responds to a brain injury differently, so seek medical attention if you suspect your child has a concussion. Once a concussion occurs, it is very important your athlete return to normal activities slowly, so he/she does not do more damage to his/her brain.

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain that may be caused by a blow, bump, or jolt to the head. Concussions may also happen after a fall or hit that jars the brain. A blow elsewhere on the body can cause a concussion even if an athlete does not hit his/her head directly. Concussions can range from mild to severe, and athletes can get a concussion even if they are wearing a helmet.

Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Athletes do not have to be "knocked out" to have a concussion. In fact, less than 1 out of 10 concussions result in loss of consciousness. Concussion symptoms can develop right away or up to 48 hours after the injury. Ignoring any signs or symptoms of a concussion puts your child's health at risk!

Signs Observed by Parents of Guardians

- ◆ *Appears dazed or stunned.*
- ◆ *Is confused about assignment or position.*
- ◆ *Forgets plays.*
- ◆ *Is unsure of game, score or opponent.*
- ◆ *Moves clumsily.*
- ◆ *Answers questions slowly.*
- ◆ *Loses consciousness (even briefly).*
- ◆ *Shows behavior or personality changes (irritability, sadness, nervousness, feeling more emotional).*
- ◆ *Can't recall events before or after hit or fall.*

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- ◆ *Any headache or "pressure" in head. (How badly it hurts does not matter.)*
- ◆ *Nausea or vomiting.*
- ◆ *Balance problems or dizziness.*
- ◆ *Double or blurry vision.*
- ◆ *Sensitivity to light and/or noise*
- ◆ *Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy.*
- ◆ *Concentration or memory problems.*
- ◆ *Confusion.*
- ◆ *Does not "feel right."*
- ◆ *Trouble falling asleep.*
- ◆ *Sleeping more or less than usual.*

Be Honest

Encourage your athlete to be honest with you, his/her coach and your health care provider about his/her symptoms. Many young athletes get caught up in the moment and/or feel pressured to return to sports before they are ready. It is better to miss one game than the entire season... or risk permanent damage!

Seek Medical Attention Right Away

Seeking medical attention is an important first step if you suspect or are told your child has a concussion. A qualified health care professional will be able to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports and other daily activities.

- ◆ *No athlete should return to activity on the same day he/she gets a concussion.*
- ◆ *Athletes should **NEVER** return to practices/games if they still have ANY symptoms.*
- ◆ *Parents and coaches should never pressure any athlete to return to play.*

The Dangers of Returning Too Soon

Returning to play too early may cause Second Impact Syndrome (SIS) or Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS). SIS occurs when a second blow to the head happens before an athlete has completely recovered from a concussion. This second impact causes the brain to swell, possibly resulting in brain damage, paralysis, and even death. PCS can occur after a second impact. PCS can result in permanent, long-term concussion symptoms. The risk of SIS and PCS is the reason why no athlete should be allowed to participate in any physical activity before they are cleared by a qualified health care professional.

Recovery

A concussion can affect school, work, and sports. Along with coaches and teachers, the school nurse, athletic trainer, employer, and other school administrators should be aware of the athlete's injury and their roles in helping the child recover.

During the recovery time after a concussion, physical and mental rest are required. A concussion upsets the way the brain normally works and causes it to work longer and harder to complete even simple tasks. Activities that require concentration and focus may make symptoms worse and cause the brain to heal slower. Studies show that children's brains take several weeks to heal following a concussion.



www.healthyohiprogram.org/concussion

Rev. 02.15

Returning to Daily Activities

1. Be sure your child gets plenty of rest and enough sleep at night – no late nights. Keep the same bedtime weekdays and weekends.
2. Encourage daytime naps or rest breaks when your child feels tired or worn-out.
3. Limit your child's activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (including social activities, homework, video games, texting, computer, driving, job-related activities, movies, parties). These activities can slow the brain's recovery.
4. Limit your child's physical activity, especially those activities where another injury or blow to the head may occur.
5. Have your qualified health care professional check your child's symptoms at different times to help guide recovery.

Returning to School

1. Your athlete may need to initially return to school on a limited basis, for example for only half-days, at first. This should be done under the supervision of a qualified health care professional.
2. Inform teacher(s), school counselor or administrator(s) about the injury and symptoms. School personnel should be instructed to watch for:
 - a. Increased problems paying attention.
 - b. Increased problems remembering or learning new information.
 - c. Longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments.
 - d. Greater irritability and decreased ability to cope with stress.
 - e. Symptoms worsen (headache, tiredness) when doing schoolwork.
3. Be sure your child takes multiple breaks during study time and watch for worsening of symptoms.
4. If your child is still having concussion symptoms, he/she may need extra help with school-related activities. As the symptoms decrease during recovery, the extra help or supports can be removed gradually.

Resources

ODH Violence and Injury Prevention Program
www.healthyohioprogram.org/vipp/injury.aspx

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/Concussion

National Federation of State High School Associations
www.nfhs.org

Brain Injury Association of America
www.biausa.org/

Returning to Play

1. Returning to play is specific for each person, depending on the sport. *Starting 4/26/13, Ohio law requires written permission from a health care provider before an athlete can return to play.* Follow instructions and guidance provided by a health care professional. It is important that you, your child and your child's coach follow these instructions carefully.
2. Your child should NEVER return to play if he/she still has ANY symptoms. (Be sure that your child does not have any symptoms at rest and while doing any physical activity and/or activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration).
3. Be sure that the athletic trainer, coach and physical education teacher are aware of your child's injury and symptoms.
4. Your athlete should complete a step-by-step exercise-based progression, under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.
5. A sample activity progression is listed below. Generally, each step should take no less than 24 hours so that your child's full recovery would take about one week once they have no symptoms at rest and with moderate exercise.*

Sample Activity Progression*

Step 1: Low levels of non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: walking, light jogging, and easy stationary biking for 20-30 minutes).

Step 2: Moderate, non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: moderate jogging, brief sprint running, moderate stationary biking, light calisthenics, and sport-specific drills without contact or collisions for 30-45 minutes).

Step 3: Heavy, non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: extensive sprint running, high intensity stationary biking, resistance exercise with machines and free weights, more intense non-contact sports specific drills, agility training and jumping drills for 45-60 minutes).

Step 4: Full contact in controlled practice or scrimmage.

Step 5: Full contact in game play.

*If any symptoms occur, the athlete should drop back to the previous step and try to progress again after a 24 hour rest period.



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www.healthyohioprogram.org/concussion

Rev. 02.13