



# ALBANY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Code of Conduct for Student-Athletes

### **I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Board of Education of the City School District of Albany (“School District”) believes that involvement in extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, is essential to the development of a well-rounded individual and student, and should be encouraged. However, participation in extracurricular activities such as sports, is a privilege, and not a right. The purpose of this Code is to ensure that as a condition of extending the privilege, the School District ensures that any student who represents the District in interscholastic competition demonstrates at all times the characteristics of a good citizen of both the school and the community.

The student-athlete who participates in interscholastic sports should recognize that he/she has an obligation to one’s self, teammates, and the school community to strive for excellence. It is hoped that participation in interscholastic athletics will enable the student-athlete to value competition, instill self-discipline and self-control, and to exercise sportsmanship and mature judgment.

The following Code of Conduct shall govern all student participants involved in School District interscholastic athletics. These standards of conduct shall supplement, and not supplant or replace, the Code of Conduct or any additional or more stringent rules and standards of conduct that the governing or supervising authority of each athletic team lawfully imposes as a condition of participation in such activity. Discipline imposed as a result of a violation of this generally applicable code of conduct shall not preclude additional discipline or consequences under the rules, regulations or bylaws of the individual sport. These rules must be read, and the attached Acknowledgment must be signed, by all athletes and their parents/guardians indicating an agreement to abide by the rules contained herein. The signed Acknowledgment must be returned to the District before the student is allowed to participate. The signed Acknowledgment will be retained by the Athletic Director.

### **II. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Participation in all interscholastic athletics in the secondary schools will be based on the following standards. Failure to meet these standards may result in suspension or removal from a team.

- A. Students shall be responsible for knowing their eligibility status.
- B. Students must carry, at a minimum, a full academic schedule as determined by the School District and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association

(NYSPHSAA). A full academic schedule is, at a minimum, three (3) subjects as well as meeting the physical education requirement. Student-athletes must maintain a passing average in physical education at all times.

- C. Students must demonstrate good attendance. Unexcused absences, unexcused lates, "cutting" class or study hall, etc., may result in suspension or dismissal from the activity. Students are expected to attend all practices, games or other scheduled events unless excused by the coach. Failure to attend practices, games or other scheduled events may result in the student's suspension or dismissal from the team at the discretion of the coach or athletic director.
- D. Students must also demonstrate good behavior and abide by the rules set forth in the District Code of Conduct. Any referrals for misconduct that are approved by an administrator may result in suspension or dismissal. Students under in-school or out-of-school suspension may not participate in any athletic activity for the duration of their disciplinary action.
- E. Each student-athlete is expected to display good sportsmanship, win or lose. This means that student-athletes must demonstrate good citizenship in both school and the community at large. Misconduct in the community at large includes, but is not limited to, an arrest for, or conviction of, a crime.

Disrespectful comments, the use of foul language, or insubordination by a student-athlete directed toward any other person, including but not limited to game officials, coaches, advisors, teammates, athletes or members of opposing teams or schools, fans or spectators, or any other persons will subject the student to recourse by the School District.

Such recourse may include suspension or expulsion from any or all extracurricular activities. This liability applies to all practices and meetings and all times before, during and after games or school-sponsored events, as well as to bus trips to and from games or school sponsored events. Ejection from any contest or event for such conduct may result in additional disciplinary action by the District, including suspension or expulsion from extracurricular activities.

- F. When membership or participation in any athletic team is linked with involvement in hazing activities, the educational purpose of the endeavor is compromised or completely undermined. Moreover, such activities can endanger the safety of student-athletes. Because the School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment that promotes respect, civility and dignity for all members of the school community, hazing is strictly prohibited by the Board of Education.

No hazing activities will be tolerated under any circumstances. Members of the School District community may not participate or be involved in hazing activities. Any member of the School District community involved in such activity shall be

subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy.

The term “hazing”, as used in this Code of Conduct, means any conduct or methods of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, before, during or after school hours, which wilfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person, or which is reasonably likely to cause harassment, intimidation, physical, emotional or psychological harm, including embarrassment or loss of human dignity, to another person.

Such conduct shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- whipping, beating, branding, or any other physical assault;
- forced calisthenics of any kind, such as sit-ups, pushups, any other physically abusive exercises, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such person;
- forced exposure to weather or the elements;
- forced consumption of food, liquor, beverage, drug or any other substance
- any forced activity which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation;
- forced total and/or partial nudity at any time;
- forced wearing or carrying of any obscene or physically burdensome or embarrassing article;
- forced transportation and intentional abandonment of any person or member at any location;
- any type of personal servitude performed for actives which is demeaning and/or of personal benefit to the active members;
- forced assignment of “pranks” such as stealing, painting objects, or harassing other organizations, institutions or activities;
- or
- calling or assigning prospective teammates demeaning names.

Consent of the victim of hazing shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution of hazing under this Code of Conduct. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing and is at the scene of such a hazing shall, to the extent that the person can do so without danger or peril to himself/herself or others, report such activity to an appropriate official as soon as responsibly possible. Any person who knowingly and unreasonably fails to report hazing activity shall be guilty as an accomplice in such activity. Employees who fail to report an incident of hazing may be subject to disciplinary action.

**G. Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Issues -**

1. The sale of illegal drugs, controlled substances, substances represented to be a controlled substance, non-prescription medicines or drug paraphernalia by student-athletes participating in School District interscholastic athletics, whether on or off school grounds, will not be tolerated.
  - a. Where a student is involved in conduct that constitutes the sale of a controlled substance or illegal drug, a non-prescription medicine or any substance represented as a controlled substance, on or off school property, (s)he will be subject to suspension from all interscholastic athletic activities for one calendar year.
  - b. Verification of completion of an alcohol/drug evaluation will be required before a student is permitted to return to any interscholastic athletic activities.
  
2. The possession, consumption or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, controlled substances, substances represented to be a controlled substance, or drug paraphernalia and inappropriate use of non-prescription medicines by student-athletes participating in School District interscholastic athletics, whether on or off school grounds, will not be tolerated. Students shall not attend or remain at any gathering where the illegal use of alcohol or any illegal drugs are present.
  - a. First Violation
    - i.) The student-athlete must complete the Code of Conduct consequences if the violation occurred on District property or at a District event. Athletic ineligibility will begin at the same time as the disciplinary consequence; **and**
    - ii.) The student-athlete will serve a three (3) week ineligibility from the interscholastic activity. The student may participate in practice, but *not* in official events. In the event the full consequence is not completed by the end of the school year, the remaining consequence will be carried over to the next school year; **and**
    - iii.) The student-athlete and their parent(s)/guardian shall meet with an Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council counselor prior to the end of the period of ineligibility for assessment; **and**
    - iv.) The student-athlete is required to abide by and complete any recommendation(s) made by the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council counselor in order to maintain eligibility.

Proof of compliance may be required by the Athletic Director

- b. Second Violation
  - i.) The student-athlete shall be suspended from participation in all interscholastic athletic activities for one (1) calendar year; **and**
  - ii.) Verification of completion of an alcohol/drug evaluation shall be required should the student-athlete wish to participate in interscholastic athletic activities after the one year suspension expires; **and**
  - iii.) The student-athlete is required to abide by and complete any recommendation(s) made by the evaluator in order to maintain eligibility. Proof of compliance may be required by the Athletic Director.
- c.) No student-athlete shall knowingly attend any party or other social gathering where underage drinking and illegal drug use occurs. This rule is intended to apply to gatherings of primarily students where underage drinking is occurring, usually without the knowledge or acquiescence of the students' parents/guardian, and shall not apply to any student-athlete attending an event which is hosted by his or her own family, such as a wedding or a family reunion. It shall not be a defense to this rule that a gathering of students at which alcohol and drugs are consumed was sanctioned by any parent/guardian, or held with parental consent. It is the **attendance** at such gatherings which is prohibited by this rule. Actual consumption of alcohol or use of drugs is not a prerequisite to establish a violation of this rule. Any student-athlete who has agreed to this Code of Conduct and who is found to have voluntarily remained in the vicinity of a gathering prohibited by this section shall be guilty of a violation of this rule whether he or she consumes or uses any substance at all.

No student-athlete will be deemed to have violated this rule if he or she can show to the satisfaction of the building Principal, Athletic Director and coach that, immediately upon becoming aware that underage drinking and/or drug use is present at a party or social gathering, he/she completely removed himself/herself from the place where the party or social gathering was held, including parking areas.

- 3. The possession or use of tobacco products, including but not limited to;

cigarettes, cigars, or chewing tobacco, by student-athletes participating in School District interscholastic athletics, whether on or off school grounds, will not be permitted.

a.) First Violation

- i.) The student-athlete must complete the Code of Conduct consequences if the violation occurred on District property or at a District event; **and**
- ii.) The student will serve a three (3) week ineligibility from the interscholastic activity. The student can participate in practice, but *not* in official events. In the event the full consequence is not completed by the end of the school year, the remaining consequence will be carried over to the next school year; **and**
- iii.) The student-athlete must attend and satisfactorily complete the Tobacco Education Group.

b.) Second Violation

- i.) The student-athlete shall be removed from participation in all interscholastic athletic activities for that sport season; **and**
- ii.) The student-athlete is required to abide by and complete any recommendation(s) made by the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council counselor in order to maintain eligibility.

**III. PENALTIES**

The following are guidelines reflecting minimum penalties which may be imposed on student-athletes who participate in interscholastic athletics and who are found to have violated this Code of Conduct. These penalties shall not be construed as a promise or guarantee of any particular form of discipline, as the School District retains the right to impose discipline under this policy, which it deems appropriate under the individual circumstances of each case. These penalties shall be served in addition to any penalties assessed under the District's student discipline code of conduct.

Unless otherwise specified in Section II of this policy, students who violate the District's student code of conduct and receive a penalty other than suspension out of school shall also serve the following penalties:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense - One (1) day suspension from the activity
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense - Three (3) days suspension from the activity

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense - Seven (7) days suspension from the activity
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense - Dismissal from the activity.

Unless otherwise specified in Section II of this policy, students who are suspended from school shall also be suspended from interscholastic athletics for three (3) weeks. Students may only practice with the team during this three week period if their suspension from school has been completed. For example, a student suspended from school for one week would be suspended from the team for that week, and would not be eligible to compete for an additional two weeks.

Penalties for violations of this code which are not violations of the District's code of conduct and not specified in Section II shall be at the discretion of the coach, athletic director and/or building principal. Student involvement in an incident, on or off school grounds, in which a weapon is involved may result in a one year suspension from interscholastic athletics.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

As a condition of participation in School District interscholastic athletics, student-athletes shall be required to maintain acceptable academic standards. **It is the Board of Education's expectation that all student-athletes will strive to achieve their best academically as well as in their chosen sport.** In addition, student-athletes are encouraged and may be required to seek assistance after school in order to remedy the area(s) identified as unacceptable. The Board of Education recognizes that not all incomplete courses or unsatisfactory grades are the result of poor academic motivation or performance. In the event a student-athlete receives an "incomplete" in a subject due to extenuating circumstances which prevented his/her completing the course work, the principal, in his/her sole discretion, may waive scholastic eligibility requirements.

##### **A. Academic Eligibility Standards**

1. One (1) failure will result in PROBATION. Probation consists of mandatory study hall twice a week for a minimum of forty-five minutes per sessions.
2. Two (2) failures will render a student-athlete INELIGIBLE to participate in athletic competitions and scrimmages. Ineligible students are expected to attend and participate in practices and must attend four (4) forty-five minute sessions of study hall per week.
3. Three (3) failures will result in NO PRACTICE. Students are not permitted to attend practices, scrimmages and/or games and must instead attend study hall for a minimum of 45 minutes per day.
4. Return to Eligibility - Probation and ineligibility will last a minimum of three weeks. Student-athlete eligibility will be restored when the faculty notifies the athletic department that the student-athlete is once

again passing sufficient courses to be placed on probation or that the student-athlete is now passing all courses.

**B. Fall 2007 Sport Season Only**

Team rosters are e-mailed to all Albany High School teachers. Teachers are to notify the athletic office of failures at WEEK 6 (October 17); at that time, the above stated "Academic Eligibility Standards" shall apply.

**C. Winter Sport Seasons**

1<sup>st</sup> quarter grades will be used to determine eligibility.

**D. Spring Sport Seasons**

2<sup>nd</sup> quarter grades will be used to determine eligibility.

**E. Fall Sport Seasons**

1. 4<sup>th</sup> quarter grades from the prior academic year will be used to determine eligibility; OR
2. Final class average from the prior academic year will be used to determine eligibility; OR
3. Summer school grades will be used to determine eligibility.

The highest grade of any of the above categories shall be used to determine athletic eligibility.

**F. Additional Information**

1. Ineligibility begins on the day of the first game (scrimmages are not included).
2. This rule shall not apply to instances where ineligibility is the result of an error in grade calculation.
3. When a student has failed three (3) or more classes in the marking period preceding a sport season, they will not be permitted to try out for a sport during that season.

**V. PROCEDURES**

A. All suspected violations of this Code of Conduct shall be reported to the appropriate building Principal by the coach of the applicable sport, or by the Athletic Director.

B. Any student-athlete suspected of violating this Code of Conduct shall be notified of such allegations by his/her building Principal or the Athletic Director.

The student-athlete and his/her parent/guardian shall have an opportunity to meet with the coach and the building Principal or the Athletic Director, to discuss such allegations. A finding shall be made by either the coach, Athletic Director, or building principal, or any combination thereof. Upon a finding of a violation of this Code of Conduct by the coach, Athletic Director, or building principal, an appropriate consequence shall be assigned in accordance with this Code. The accused student-athlete will be notified in writing of the disciplinary decision within three (3) school days.

C. A student-athlete found to have violated this Code of Conduct by either the building Principal, the Athletic Director, or the coach, shall have the right to appeal the disciplinary decision to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent or his/her designee may alone hear the appeal, or in his/her discretion, appoint other persons to a panel to join him/her in hearing the appeal. Additional members shall be appointed on a case-by-case basis, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Superintendent/designee, provided that the panel shall not contain as a member any person involved in making the determination appealed from. For example, if the Athletic Director found the student-athlete guilty of swearing at a referee and instituted a one-game suspension, the Athletic Director would no longer be eligible to sit on the appeal panel. Such appeal must be taken within five (5) days of the initial decision. The decision of the Superintendent/designee or the review panel, as appropriate, shall be final unless appealed to the Board of Education within five (5) calendar days.

D. The decision of the Superintendent/designee or the review panel, as appropriate, may be appealed to the Board of Education by a written request filed with the Board within five (5) calendar days from the date of such decision. The Board shall receive all relevant documentation and may, in its sole discretion, permit the accused to appear before the Board at its next regular meeting or render its decision solely on the record.

**NOTICE OF ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION**

To: Parents/Guardian and Student-Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_

Please be advised that I have received information which, if true, may constitute a violation of the School District's Athletic Code of Conduct governing the participation in interscholastic athletics. As a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ team, you have agreed to be bound by this Code of Conduct and any violations may affect \_\_\_\_\_ continued eligibility to participate.

Provision of Code Alleged to be Violated: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of Violation (time, place, specifics):

Please be advised that, in accordance with the School District Athletic Code of Conduct, I must render a decision with respect to the above allegations. You (parents and student-athlete) have the right to meet with me and the coach to discuss these allegations. A meeting for that purpose has been scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_:\_\_\_ in my office. If you do not attend such meeting, I will render a decision based on the information which has been provided to me. If you cannot attend the meeting at the prescribed time, please notify me so that the meeting can be rescheduled at a mutually convenient time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Building Principal or Athletic Director

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

PLEASE RETURN THIS SHEET TO THE COACH OR ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

I have read the above Code of Conduct and agree to follow it. I understand the consequences of my actions which violate these rules, as set forth above, which may include suspension or removal from the \_\_\_\_\_ team.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student-Athlete (Sign name)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Student-Athlete (Print name)

I have read the above Code of Conduct and am aware of its implications for my son/daughter. Further, I will do my best to see to it that he/she follows said rules. In addition, my signature confirms that my child has had no illnesses or injuries that should limit his/her participation in high school athletics or the extracurricular activity of his/her choice.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian (Sign name)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian (Print name)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.:

(home)

(business)

(cell)