

It is the expectation that all student-athlete and the parent/guardian of such will read and follow the policies contained in this handbook. All student-athletes will be held to these standards and expectations. These policies have been developed to help maintain a consistent and equitable athletic program for all of our students and to provide for the safety of all involved.

Academic Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in athletics, all students are expected to have at least a 1.5 on a 4.0 grading scale as well as meeting the following OHSAA guidelines.

OHSAA Bylaws for Students in Grades 7-12

Please familiarize yourself with the following OSHAA Bylaws:

1. All beginning seventh graders are eligible insofar as the scholarship bylaw
2. All beginning ninth graders must have passed a **minimum of four** subjects in which enrolled in for the immediately preceding grading period.
3. Eligibility for each grading period is determined by grades received the preceding grading period. Per Bylaw 4-4-1, a grading period is defined as the school Board's-adopted calendar (e.g. six week, nine week, 12 week or semester). **Semester and yearly grades have no effect on OHSAA eligibility.**
4. **Grades 9-12** To be eligible, a student-athlete must have received passing grades in a minimum of **five one-credit courses, or the equivalent**, in the immediately preceding grading period (Note: Students taking post-secondary options must comply with these standards along with those participating via state law that permits home educated, non-public, community and STEM school students to participate at public schools in the district of residence of the parents).
5. Grades 7-8 to be eligible, a student-athlete must have received passing grades in a minimum of four of all the subjects in which enrolled the immediately preceding grading period. Students must also comply who are participating via state law that permits home educated, non-public, community and STEM school students to participate at public schools in the district of residence of the parents.
6. For eligibility, summer school grades may not be used to substitute for failing grades received in the final grading period of the regular school year or for lack of enough courses taken the preceding grading period.
7. NOTE: "Grading period" is defined as your school's board adopted calendar. In most school districts, this is a nine-week period, while some districts use six-or-12 week periods or semesters. It should also be noted, however, that interim, biweekly or weekly evaluations are not considered "grading periods" and restoration of eligibility is NOT permitted after such evaluations.
8. Students on home education should refer to Board Policy IGDK for more information.

Required to Participate

At a minimum, the following items are required before a student can participate in any athletic practice. Please complete these in Final Forms.

- Completed and signed OHSAA Physical Form, including Concussion Information sheet and Lindsey's Law sign offs and Authorization Form
- Completed and signed Emergency Medical Form
- Signed Insurance Waiver Form
- Signed Athletic Handbook Form
- Signed Student Media Release Form
- A parent or guardian must attend the mandatory pre-season OHSAA meeting either in person or online.

Attendance

Each athlete is expected to be in attendance of at least 50% of the classes they are scheduled for on any given day in order to practice or compete in a game or event. An excused absence is the exception to this rule. If a student has an excused absence, they are permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities that day provided they are medically able to do so. If a student is suspended, they are also suspended from practice and competition. The principal has the final decision on matters of attendance.

Missing Practice/Games

Each athlete is expected to attend all practices and games unless excused by their coach. They must always consult his/her coach directly before missing practice for any reason. NEVER rely on a teammate to deliver this message for you! Specific penalties for violations will be determined by the coach as a part of the team's individual policies.

School Discipline

Participating in extra-curricular activities is a privilege. As such it is expected that our student-athletes maintain acceptable behavior during the school day and act like the leaders that we expect them to be. Teachers are encouraged to share any concerns they have with a student-athlete's behavior and grades with the principal, athletic director, and coaches. Any of these individuals can institute corrective actions in these situations. At a minimum, any student-athlete who is assigned to an ISR – while they should attend any practices or contests during this time period – will be subject to a ½ contest suspension. At a minimum, any student who is suspended from school cannot attend any practices or contests during this time and may be subject to a full contest suspension after the school suspension is completed. These are minimum consequences and additional consequences may also be instituted by either the coach, athletic director, or the principal.

Conflicts in Extra-Curricular Activities

Occasionally athletics and other extra-curricular activities may conflict with each other. The student has the responsibility to communicate to the coaches/advisors when this situation arises. This should be done and discussed before the start of the season if possible. When conflicts do arise, the advisors/coaches should work together to reach a solution. If a solution cannot be found, then the principal will make the final decision.

Dropping or Transferring a Sport

Student-athletes are encouraged to participate in any of the sports or extra-curricular activities at Fairlawn. However, we realize that not every sport is right for every individual. If a student-athlete goes out for a sport they have until the first regular season contest to decide if they want to commit. After that point it is expected that the student-athlete is committed for the season. It is important that student-athletes honor their commitment once they join a sport as coaches and your teammates rely upon you to be there on a daily basis. If a student-athlete is contemplating quitting a sport after that point, it is required that they talk with their coach to discuss whatever concerns they have to see if they can be resolved. If a student-athlete is uncomfortable talking with their coach they can talk with the athletic director or other administrator. If a student decides to quit their sport after they have committed they will not be allowed to participate in any other athletic activities (open gyms – weightlifting) for another sport until the season is completed for their original sport. They will also lose their varsity pass for that sport for the rest of the season. If a student-athlete fails to show up for 2 consecutive games or practices without prior communication to the coach they will be considered to have quit. Once again, honest and open communication is important in these situations. A student-athlete who is released from a team by the coach or the athletic director for non-disciplinary reasons can participate in preseason workouts or open gyms without penalty.

- If a student-athlete does not follow proper procedure in dropping a sport, they may be subject to denial of future participation in this sport or other sports. Also, they are not eligible for post season awards in the sport that they quit.

Coach/Athlete/Parent Communication

Involvement in athletics will allow a student-athlete to have many rewarding experiences, aid in personal growth and helps to provide a well-rounded high school experience. However, there will be times when things do not go their way, or they disagree with a coach. It is important that student-athletes and parents realize these situations are also part of the learning process. Our coaches work hard to ensure the success of every athlete in our program, and we ask that you respect their position on issues within the team. We encourage the athlete, not the parents, to talk with the coach about team issues. This is the most direct means of communication and a way of teaching responsibility.

The following are the steps to take, in order, to try and resolve an athletic conflict:

1. The athlete should talk with the coach about the issue.
2. If the issue persists, the parent should contact the coach to make an appointment to discuss the situation.
3. If for some reason the Coach cannot be reached, contact the AD who will set up an appointment for you.
4. Do not confront a coach before or after a game or practice as these are emotional times and the coaches have duties during these times that require their attention.
5. Under no circumstances, except in those instances of a rule or policy infringement, will a conference with a Coach have an adverse consequence on the standing of the athlete.

Appropriate concerns to address: Treatment of your child, ways your child can improve, or your student's behavior

Inappropriate concerns to address: Playing time, team strategies, other athletes

What if you hold a meeting with your Coach and the issue is not resolved?

1. Contact the AD to set up a meeting to discuss the issue.
2. The appropriate and necessary steps will then be determined.

Chain of Command

If you elect to pursue any concerns you have with the athletic department, you are asked to follow the chain of command listed below:

1. Coach (Athlete to Coach and then Parent to Coach)
2. Athletic Director
3. Building Principal
4. Superintendent

Riding the Bus

The philosophy of the athletic department is that team unity is important and that traveling together aids in building team unity. We expect that athletes, managers and coaches travel to and from away contests with the team. The expectation is that all bus rules and regulations will be followed. We understand there may be an occasional situation when this may not be practical. In this event, the parent should personally contact the coach prior to the event to ask permission for other arrangements. We do not want to have student-athletes traveling with anyone other than their parents/guardians.

Social Media

Fairlawn Local Schools recognizes and supports its student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression and association, including the use of social networks. In this context, each student-athlete must remember that participating and competing for Fairlawn is a privilege, not a right. The student-athlete represents Fairlawn, and therefore, they are expected to portray themselves, their teams and

their school in a positive manner. Any online postings must be consistent with federal and state laws, as well as team and district regulations (including those listed below).

Specifically prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Sexually explicit, profane, lewd, indecent, illegal, or defamatory language/actions
- Derogatory language regarding school personnel or other students
- Comments designed to harass or bully students or school personnel
- Nude, sexually oriented, or indecent photos, images or altered pictures

Drugs, Alcohol and Other Illegal Substances

It is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to drink alcohol and for anyone to use illegal substances. Any use of these at school constitute a Code of Conduct violation as well as an Athletic Handbook violation. Student-athletes are held to the Athletic Handbook standard both on and off of school property from the first day of practice until their season has officially ended. It is also prudent for persons under the age of 21 to not be in the presence of underage alcohol consumption. Any reported violations of this policy will be investigated by the athletic director. While we hope that all our students make wise choices, the following are guidelines for disciplinary consequences:

First Offense

- Suspension from participation for 25% of the contests of a given sport
- If a drug & alcohol assessment/education class (at parental expense) is appropriate and followed through upon, a reduction to a 10% suspension of contests may be granted.
- If there is not enough contests remaining in a season, suspension will carry over to the next sport of participation.
- The coaching staff may outline additional team-based consequences as well.

Second Offense

- Suspension from participation for 50% of the contests of a given sport
- If a drug & alcohol assessment/education class (at parental expense) is appropriate and followed through upon, a reduction to a 25% suspension of contests may be granted.
- If there is not enough contests remaining in a season, suspension will carry over to the next sport of participation.
- The coaching staff may outline additional team-based consequences as well.

Third Offense

- Dismissal from the team and from future participation during their high school career

Multiple violations at the same time of this policy may be dealt with jointly or individually and could result in multiple consequences or escalation to the next level of offense.

Voluntary Self-Reporting

- If a student-athlete self-reports a violation, no suspension will be issued if this is the athlete's first offense. This report must be made prior to any police involvement in the situation; thus this may not be possible in all situations.
- All future violations will be dealt with at the next increasing level of severity.

Disciplinary Hearing

- A student has the right to request a disciplinary hearing when a consequence has been issued for violations related to illegal or unethical activities. This hearing would allow the student to ask questions, determine the reason for the suspension, and/or otherwise explain their actions.
- Hearings will consist of the Athletic Director, the Head Coach and a Principal.
- Hearing requests to appeal a suspension must be made within 72 hours of the date of the initial ruling.

Additional

- If a student-athlete has a violation of this policy and then has two full years with no further violations – their record will be considered to be clean.
- Denial of practice during any suspension will be at the discretion of the coach.
- Participation in other sport's open gyms, conditioning, etc. is prohibited during a suspension period until that sport's season has ended.

Criminal Acts

Students charged with any criminal act may be denied participation until the student is cleared of the charges. Convictions may result in a denial of participation.

Public Conduct at Events

No person may disrupt, disturb, or interfere with any activity conducted by the school at any time. Students and parents participating in extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate responsible behavior and good conduct. Fairlawn encourages the development and promotion of sportsmanship in all phases of extracurricular activities. Rules are posted at the entryways to all athletic events for all participants and spectators to review.