

Marion L. Steele High School Athletic Code of Conduct/Handbook

An Athlete's Responsibilities to Self and Others

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics, which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team, or the school will not be condoned. Acts of unacceptable conduct by student-athletes tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with Comet Athletics and the Amherst Exempted Village Schools.

As a member of an athletic team, you represent the Amherst Exempted Village Schools and the tradition of Comet Pride that it symbolizes. Interscholastic athletics are an integral part of the total educational program. High standards of scholarship, behavior, and citizenship are important to maintain in all aspects of school. Students volunteering to participate must assume the responsibilities of these privileges and are required to meet expectations beyond those set for non-athletes. The younger students in Amherst are watching you. They will emulate you in many ways. Do NOT do anything to let them down.

Eligibility Standards

In order to be eligible in grades 9-12, a student must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period (interscholastic only). During the preceding grading period, the student must have received passing grades in a minimum of five one-credit courses or the equivalent, which count toward graduation. Fall incoming 9th grade student's eligibility will be determined on the last grading period of the 8th grade.

A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first-grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in the school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during the period in 75% of those subjects carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.

Students may participate in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities if they receive a failing grade for any course in the immediately preceding grading period provided they meet the eligibility requirements above.

Transfer students shall have eligibility computed based upon an official transcript from the previous school of attendance. A student cannot participate in athletics until the transcript has been reviewed and the student has been declared eligible to participate.

The eligibility or ineligibility of a student continues until the start of the fifth school day of the next grading period, at which time the grades from the immediately preceding grading period become effective. For the purpose of this Bylaw, "School Day" includes faculty in-service days, calamity days, and regular school attendance days, but not holidays or school breaks.

Home School/Non-Public School

Effective September 29, 2013, Students who are educated at home or enrolled in non-public schools may be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics.

A. Participation in Extracurricular Activities for Chartered and Non-Chartered Non-Public School Students

Note: "Extracurricular Activity" has the same meaning as in Section 3313.537 of the Revised Code.

If the non-public school in which the student is enrolled does not offer the extracurricular activity, a student enrolled in a chartered or non-chartered non-public school, who is entitled to attend district schools under section 3313.64 or 3313.65 of the Revised Code, shall be afforded by the Superintendent the opportunity to participate in that extracurricular activity at the district school to which the student otherwise would be assigned during that school year by the Superintendent.

In order to participate in an extracurricular activity, the student shall be of the appropriate age and grade level, as determined by the Superintendent, for the school that offers the extracurricular activity, and shall fulfill the same academic; non-academic and financial requirements as any other participant. The district shall not impose additional rules and/or fees on a non-public student to participate in extracurricular activities that do not apply to other students participating in the same extracurricular activity.

B. Participation in Extracurricular Activities for Home Schooled Students

Note: "Extracurricular Activity" has the same meaning as in Section 3313.537 of the Revised Code.

A student who is entitled to attend school in the district under section 3313.64 or 3313.65 of the Revised Code and is receiving home instruction shall be afforded by the Superintendent the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular activity offered at the district school to which the student otherwise would be assigned during that school year by the Superintendent. If a student is afforded the opportunity to participate in an activity that is offered by the district, the student shall not participate in that activity at another school or school district to which the student is not entitled to attend.

In order to participate in an extracurricular activity, the student shall be of the appropriate age and grade level as determined by the Superintendent for the school that offers the extracurricular activity, shall fulfill the same non-academic and financial requirements as any other participant, and shall fulfill either of the following academic requirements:

1. If the student received home instruction in the preceding grading period, the student shall meet any academic requirements established by the State Board of Education for the continuation of home instruction.
2. If the student did not receive home instruction in the preceding grading period, the student's academic performance during the preceding grading period shall have met any

academic standards for eligibility to participate in the program established by the school district.

Eligibility for a student who leaves a school district mid-year for home instruction shall be determined based on an interim academic assessment issued by the district in which the student was enrolled based on the student's work while enrolled in that district.

Any student who commences home instruction after the beginning of a school year and who is, at the time home instruction commences, ineligible to participate in an extracurricular activity due to failure to meet academic standards or any other requirements of the district shall not participate in the extracurricular activity until the student meets the academic requirements established by the State Board of Education for continuance of home instruction as verified by the Superintendent. No student shall be eligible to participate in the same semester in which the student was determined ineligible.

The district shall not impose additional rules and/or fees on a student to participate that do not apply to other students participating in the same extracurricular activity.

R.C. 2305.23, 2305.231, 3313.53, 3313.535, 3313.752, 3315.062

Ohio High School Athletic Association

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

REMEMBER THAT AS AN ATHLETE YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE UNTIL THE FOLLOWING ITEMS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED (FORMS AVAILABLE IN THE ATHLETIC OFFICE AND ONLINE)

1. Insurance Form

The school district does not carry insurance to cover individual student athletic injuries. Parents will need to sign the insurance form stating they have purchased insurance or possess a family insurance plan.

2. Eligibility Requirements

3. Code of Conduct/Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

4. Physical Examination Completed and OHSAA Form on file in the Athletic Office

A Yearly physical examination is required. The physical form must be completed by a physician and submitted to the coach or athletic office prior to the official starting date of the sport. The form will be kept on file in the student office for one year.

5. Emergency Medical Form

Each athlete's parents shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parents are not available. A copy of the card will be kept with the coach at all times.

6. Scholastic Eligibility

In order to participate on an Amherst Exempted Village Schools athletic team, each student athlete must have satisfied all of the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation.

7. Drug Testing Policy Consent Form On File in the Athletic Office

8. Pay To Participate has been taken care of with the Business Office

Every attempt will be made by the administration and coaches to assist student athletes in meeting the standards set by the state and school board, but ultimately the responsibility lies with the student.

Risk of Participation

All athletes and parents must realize the risk of serious injury and in the extreme cases, death, which may be result of athletic participation. The Amherst Exempted Village School District will use the following safeguards to make every effort to eliminate injury:

- All Coaches will follow OHSAA guidelines concerning coaching certifications
- A certified athletic trainer will be available to all athletes for consultation and rehabilitation of injury.
- Maintain a continuing education program for coaches to have the opportunity to learn the most up to date techniques and skills to be taught in their sport.

Guidelines for Possible Cutting of Student-Athletes from Athletic Teams

Time, space, facilities, equipment, economics, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible to participate in the athletic programs, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without compromising the integrity of the sport.

The most difficult job of any coach is when they must make decisions regarding the personnel of their team. We ask each coach to be as empathetic as possible to each student athlete who has tried out but does not make the team. Each coach should communicate with those that will not make the team in the manner deemed best by that individual coach.

Parent Meeting

If a parent would like to meet with the Athletic Director regarding an issue with an athletic program, here are the steps:

1. Meet with the sport Head Coach and Student Athlete
2. If the result is does not meet your expectations, please contact the Athletic Director for a meeting that will include the Head Coach, Student Athlete, and Parents.

The Athletic Director would be glad to meet with a parent to discuss any items, except the student athlete's playing time.

Athletic Behavior Code

Students who participate in athletic programs not only represent themselves, but the Amherst Exempted Village School District and our local community. Since student participants are representative of their school, they are expected to maintain a high standard of exemplary behavior.

All students who wish to participate in athletics shall be willing to accept the guidelines, rules, and regulations that govern the sport they wish to participate. Since participation on an athletic team is a privilege for each participant, it is important that students and parent/guardians be aware of the rules and regulations which are in effect 24/7 during said athletic season. An athletic season is defined as the official start date set forth by the OHSAA to the completion of the final competition for their sport.

Forbidden Conduct

1. Disruption of Activity: A participant shall not cause disruption or obstruction of athletic programs by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, or words.
2. Damage of Property: A participant shall not willfully or recklessly cause or attempt to cause damage to property owned by the Board of Education, private individuals, or other public agencies.
3. Assault and Battery: A participant shall not intimidate, threaten, assault, or commit battery upon any person, nor shall a student behave in such a manner that could cause physical or emotional injury to such persons.
4. Dangerous Weapons and instruments: A participant shall not illegally use, possess, handle, transmit, or conceal dangerous weapons, substances, or instruments which include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives, mace, tear gas, firecrackers, explosives, incendiaries, or other similar devices.
5. Obscenity: A participant shall not use obscenity, profanity, or other offensive language or gestures.
6. Theft: A participant shall not wrongfully take, carry away, or exercise dominion and control over property of others.
7. Insubordination: A participant shall not fail to comply with the rules and regulations of the governing body of the Ohio High School Athletic Association. A student shall not fail to comply with any additional rules as required by a coach/advisor.
8. Criminal Activity: A participant shall not engage in activities that violate local, State, or federal criminal laws.
9. Use of Tobacco: A participant shall not use or possess any tobacco product which shall include, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, or pipes.
10. Alcohol, Chemical Use and/or Abuse: A participant shall not at any time possess, use, sell, deliver, conceal, consume, or be under the influence of any drugs of abuse, including alcoholic beverages, or any counterfeit drugs of abuse. This includes attending parties where alcoholic beverages or illegal substances are openly used or consumed. Counterfeit drugs of abuse include any substance that is directly or indirectly represented as a drug of abuse. Use of drugs authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule. Participants shall not possess, use, sell, offer to sell, deliver, or conceal any instruments or paraphernalia for use with drugs of abuse.

Penalties of Athletic Behavior Code

The administration has the obligation to determine the appropriateness of any penalty, including the right to increase or reduce the penalty imposed in light of the violation. The coach and athletic director will meet with parents and students when a violation occurs so that all understand what the consequence will be and what is required to become eligible again.

1. **First Violation:** A first violation of the Athletic Behavior Code will result in removal from participation for 20% of the regular season contests. If the penalty cannot be completed prior to the end of the current scheduled season, the remainder of the penalty will be carried over to the next "established sport or activity." An established sport is one in which the student participated in the previous school year. A participant is allowed to practice with the team or organization, but may not participate in public playing dates or activities.

Any participant violating the Athletic Behavior Code sections regarding alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or criminal activity will be subject to the terms, rules, regulations, and penalties of the Amherst Exempted Village School District Drug Testing Policy. Penalties for all criminal activity violations will be determined by the Administration on the severity of the violation and disciplined accordingly.

2. **Second Violation:** A Second violation of the Athletic Behavior Code will result in a student being removed from participation in 50% of the regular season contests. If the penalty cannot be completed prior to the end of the current scheduled season, the remainder of the penalty will be carried over to the next "established sport or activity." The student will be allowed to practice with the team during this suspension.

Any participant violating the Athletic Behavior Code sections regarding alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or criminal activity will be subject to the terms, rules, regulations, and penalties of the Amherst Exempted Village School District Drug Testing Policy. Penalties for all criminal activity violations will be determined by the Administration on the severity of the violation and disciplined accordingly.

3. **Third Violation:** A Third Violation of the Athletic Behavior Code will result in dismissal from the athletic team and all subsequent participation in athletic programs for the remainder of said school year.

Any participant violating the Athletic Behavior Code sections regarding alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or criminal activity will be subject to the terms, rules, regulations, and penalties of the Amherst Exempted Village School District Drug Testing Policy. Penalties for all criminal activity violations will be determined by the Administration on the severity of the violation and disciplined accordingly.

Social Media

The Athletic Department acknowledges social media is a part of everyday life. Student-Athletes are a representation of their family, program(s), school, district and community. Administration, if made aware of alleged improper/inappropriate social media postings will investigate. Consequences will be administered according to the Athletic Behavior Code.

Hazing

It is the policy of the Amherst Exempted Village Schools Board of Education, the School District, and the Athletic Department that hazing activities of all types are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited. Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any organization that uses or creates substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person or persons. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. Hazing will NOT be tolerated by the Marion L. Steele Athletic Department and will be dealt with swiftly and harshly.

Care of Equipment

The Steele Athletic Department has attempted to provide adequate and safe equipment. Student Athletes are responsible for the proper care and safekeeping of the uniform and/or equipment issued to them. All athletic equipment used is school property and may be used only during a particular sports season. It is the responsibility of each student athlete who is issued any type of uniform and/or equipment to return that equipment to their coach at the completion of their participation of each sports season. Each student athlete will be held financially responsible for lost equipment. The replacement of lost equipment is necessary. The student athlete will be expected to reimburse the school for lost equipment according to actual replacement prices. School purchased or booster club athletic equipment shall only be worn during practice or contest unless authorized by the coach for game day wearing. All equipment obligations must be completed before an athlete will receive equipment for the next sports season.

Athletic & Activity Participation Conflicts

Steele students are encouraged to participate in many school activities and it is not uncommon for students to be involved in more than one extra-curricular activity at a time. While such conflict is not encouraged or recommended, it does happen. It is strongly encouraged that student athletes, their parents, coaches, and advisors of other activities openly communicate with each other to maximize our student's participation in all activities.

When conflicts occur, the student should notify the coach and/or advisor of the conflicting activities as soon as possible so a solution may be derived in everyone's best interests. Whenever possible, the staff discussions should consider the following prioritization of activities:

- State Level Activity
- Regional Level Activity
- District Level Activity
- Conference Level Activity
- Building Level Activity (banquets or culminating activities, concerts, etc)
- Practice/Rehearsal

Training Rules and Regulations

It is a privilege to be an athlete and all athletes must follow general training rules for that sport prescribed by the coaching staff. In order to assure parental awareness and involvement, all coaches must conduct a preseason parent meeting to fully explain the athletic policies. Parents and/or guardians must sign all appropriate paperwork prior to the individual participation in that

sport. Individual coaches may supplement Athletic Department training rules by adding their own rules and regulations.

Training rules and team rules apply 24 hours a day, seven days a week from the first day of practice through the last contest of that activity. Examples of times the student is considered under the school's jurisdiction may include but are not limited to the following:

- School sponsored activities on weekends and holidays
- Preseason, in-season practice, e.g. August Practices
- Clinics and camps attended by students if such clinic/group participation is to facilitate participation in, or is a prerequisite to participation in the sport
- Violations of Amherst Exempted Village Schools Code of Conduct
- Any unlawful activity outside the schools jurisdiction

The Athletic Department or Administrator in charge of Student Activities or activity will keep records of all violations.

Dropping or Transferring Sports

On occasion, an athlete may find it necessary to drop out of a sport for necessity. If this is the case, a discussion should take place between the athlete and the coach and all issued equipment (and other team items) should be returned should the athlete drop off the team. Those individuals of any athletic team shall be considered members of the team through the completion of that particular sport season unless they are removed for disciplinary reasons, academic issues, or mutual agreement between player and coach. They will NOT be able to participate in other sports pre season or off season activities until the previous sport season is completed. All Team members who complete the season in good standing are expected to participate in the athletic award ceremonies at the end of the season. Any issues pertaining to this should be brought to the Athletic Director.

Absences/Attendance Prior to Contest or Practice

School Day: Attendance is required for at least 4 academic periods per school day in order to be eligible to participate in an after school or evening practice or performance/contest. In addition student may participate only if verification of the absence as being excused is received. The principal may approve special circumstances.

Day Preceding a Weekend: A student who is absent the entire day prior to a Saturday contest or performance may participate only if verification of the absence as being excused is received. If this becomes habitual, the student may be denied permission to participate.

Travel

All Athletes must travel to and from athletic contests as a team, when transportation is provided by the School District. Athletes will remain with their squad and under supervision of a coach while attending away contests. If a parent/guardian wishes to take their child home after the contest due to a special circumstance, that parent/guardian must:

- Provide a note to the coach with that information
- Personal contact with the coach. The student will only be released to their parent or guardian. The responsibility for the safety and accountability of each student athlete is too

important for coaches and administrators to permit any deviation from the transportation policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action.

- Communication with the Athletic Director may also be a requirement by a head coach for separate transportation requests.

Cancellation Policy

If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, contests and practices may still be played. This decision will be left up to the discretion of the Athletic Director in conjunction with the Principal and Superintendent. Student Safety will take precedence during these times.

College Recruitment Policy

In the event a college recruiter should contact an athlete, they have an obligation to work through their coach and the Athletic Department. Inform your coach of such a contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is in the Guidance Office. It's the student's responsibility to meet and complete the requirements of the NCAA Eligibility Center. Please see a Guidance Counselor or the Athletic Director for more details. The Athletic Director is available to meet with students and/or parents on the college recruitment process and requirements.

NCAA Initial Eligibility requirements are subject to change. It is imperative that student athletes be informed about the NCAA Eligibility Center and the initial eligibility requirements. Information for prospective student athletes, parents, and high school administrators regarding Initial NCAA Eligibility is currently available at <http://www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.org>. Among the topics covered are eligibility requirements to compete in college; the recruiting process, and services available for students with disabilities. Based on this review it may be necessary to initiate schedule changes in order to satisfactorily meet or exceed the NCAA requirements for Initial Eligibility for course work, GPA, and/or standardized test scores. If any questions exist, please contact your high school guidance counselor or the Athletic Director.

Athletic Awards

Freshman Certificate: Participation and completion of a Freshman Sport Season

Junior Varsity Certificate: Participation and completion of a Junior Varsity Sport Season

First Overall Varsity Letter: Varsity 'A' with that sport specific pin

First Varsity Letter in another sport: Sport Specific Pin

Second Varsity Letter: Plaque

Third Varsity Letter: Sport Specific Trophy

Fourth Varsity Letter: Framed Letter

Letter awards are determined at the discretion of the head coach.

An athlete must complete the sport season in good standing in order to be eligible for these awards.