

Union County Public Schools Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Guidelines for Middle and High School Students

Welcome to Union County Public Schools Athletics (Effective July 1, 2018 version 2)

While academics are the primary focus of our school system, participation in an athletic program affords opportunities, training and experiences not ordinarily available in the regular curriculum. The Interscholastic Athletic Program of the Union County Public School System is an integral part of the total school program, and, as such, is designed to help our students become better school, community, state, and national citizens.

Mission Statement: To provide meaningful activities that develop sportsmanship, leadership, teamwork, commitment, responsibility, respect and pride in our community through participation on a team.

Vision Statement: We envision a school system that offers an athletic program for its students that is considered a model for all other districts in North Carolina. Athletic activities should be considered an asset to the academic mission of the schools and enhance all aspects of school life. We envision a program that offers quality and user-friendly facilities which will house quality coaches. Ultimately, we envision a program of which all of its participants can be proud and one that promotes lifelong personal and community wellness and contributing, productive citizens.

BELIEFS:

- We believe that athletic activities are an integral and unique part of the total education program.
- We believe athletic activities teach students many invaluable, intangible traits which are necessary for productivity in our society such as, but not limited to, self-discipline, personal commitment, loyalty, sportsmanship, teamwork, the value of preparation, a hard work ethic, a spirit of competition and the will to excel.
- We believe participation in athletic activities enhances student academic performance and attendance.

CONDUCT:

Participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics, is a privilege, not a right. The Union County Board of Education expects all students who represent their school through participation in extracurricular activities to be good representatives of their school community. Students should dress, act and conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on their school. Each student is expected to display good citizenship at all times. Any student who fails to conduct him or her appropriately may have the privilege of participation limited or revoked.

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Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activity Overview:

To the Parent/Guardians:

We feel that a properly controlled, well-organized interscholastic activity program meets the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound and will further each student's educational maturity.

Students who elect to participate in the interscholastic program are voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and self-denial.

Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from participation. This concept of self-discipline and self-denial is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of the team or activity. There is no place in high school interscholastic competition for students who will not discipline their minds and bodies for rigorous competition. We strive for excellence and do not want our students to accept mediocrity.

It is the role of the department of athletics to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school. These rules need a broad base of community support, which is achieved only through communication with the parent. We hope to accomplish this objective through this publication for students and parents.

We feel that you have committed to certain responsibilities and obligations. All high school sports' teams in the Union County Public School system are self-supported through gate receipts and fund raisers. We encourage you to join our Booster Club(s) to help provide the financial support essential to our program, and we would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with the specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program.

Student Athlete's Parent Pledge

As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school athletics is an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for the students. I must show respect for all players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. I will participate in cheers that support, encourage, and uplift the teams involved. I understand the spirit of fair play and the good sportsmanship expected by our school, our conference and the NCHSAA. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of a student athlete.

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To the Student Participant

Being a member of a UCPS interscholastic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great competitive tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work from many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic team, you will be faced with either the task of maintaining an already successful tradition or the task of establishing a successful tradition. It is not easy to build a great tradition in interscholastic competition in either athletics or other activities.

When you represent your school, we hope that you gain an understanding our goals and traditions, but we expect that you assume the responsibilities that go with them.

Student Athlete Pledge

As a student athlete, I understand and accept that I am a role model. I understand the spirit of fair play. I will refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including but not limited to inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking, and unnecessary physical contact. I understand the behavior expectations of my school, my conference, and the NCHSAA and hereby accept the responsibility and privilege of representing this school and community as a student athlete.

1) **RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF:**

The most important responsibility is to yourself. This responsibility provides you an opportunity to broaden your character and obtain many experiences during your school career. Your academic studies, your participation in extracurricular activities as well as athletics, will prepare you for life endeavors.

2) **RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR SCHOOL:**

A responsibility that you assume as a participant of athletics is to your school. Your school cannot build or maintain an outstanding reputation unless you do your best in whatever activity you choose to engage. By participating in interscholastic completion, you are contributing to the reputation of your school. You assume a leadership role when you are on an interscholastic team. The student body, your family and friends, and citizens of the community will be aware of you and your choices. Perceptions of your school are developed by your choice of conduct, behavior and attitudes, both in and out of school. You have a responsibility and accountability to represent your school at all times. As you represent school spirit and community pride, ensure that your school and your community are proud of you and your ideals.

3) **RESPONSIBILITIES TO TEAM:**

As a team member, you have a responsibility to your teammates. During each practice, exhibition and completion, you should strive to compete to the best of your ability while maintaining self-control and respect for yourself and your teammates. You are an example to the members of your team as well as students watching you.

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GOVERNANCES

The Board of Education - The Board of Education is the ruling agency for UCPS Athletics. Its responsibilities include:

- Interpreting the needs of the community.
- Developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates and in accordance with educational needs and wishes of the people of Union County.
- Approving means by which professional staff may make these policies effective.
- Evaluating the interscholastic athletic program in terms of its value to the community.

The North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) -

The primary role of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, which is empowered by the North Carolina State Board of Education, is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the students and a balance with other educational programs. The NCHSAA solicits input and responds to requests for modification of rules from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations.

All schools are voluntary members of the NCHSAA and compete only with member schools or out-of-state schools that are approved by the NCHSAA. As a member school system, the secondary schools of Union County agree to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations set forth by the NCHSAA.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

NCHSAA Physical Examination - A yearly physical examination is required. The physical must be completed by a medical doctor and submitted to the coach prior to participation. The physical covers all sports for one calendar year. The form will be kept on file in the high school athletic office. This form must be the approved NCHSAA form.

Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act – The act was adopted by the NC General Assembly. Every athlete is required to have one completed each school year.

NCHSAA Sport Participation Form – Medical history required by NCHSAA

UCPS Athletic Participation/Eligibility Form – Eligibility verification required by UCPS

Emergency Medical Authorization - Each athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not available. The form will be kept by the athletic department.

Insurance - The school district does provide an opportunity to purchase insurance to cover student athletic injuries. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are required (at some schools) to sign a form stating that they either have purchased the necessary school insurance or possess a family insurance plan that covers athletic injury. If a family insurance plan is used, the family must

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provide the school with the name of the insurance company and the policy number on the appropriate form.

**If your athlete plays Forest Hills or Monroe please check with your Athletic Director or coach for more information about insurance at those schools.

Reporting of Injury

All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the trainer/coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury report form completed. Once a physician treats a student, the athlete must obtain written permission from the doctor to return to the activity.

Scholastic Eligibility—To be eligible to participate in an interscholastic activity, each athlete must have satisfied all of the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation.

NCHSAA Eligibility Regulations

Before practicing with ANY team, the following must be completed:

- 1. Meet all NCHSAA Requirements**
- 2. Have a current medical exam**
- 3. Gfeller-Waller Act**

Before participating with ANY team the following must be complete:

- 1. Turned in a signed Parental/Athletic Participation**
- 2. Turned in signed emergency form**
- 3. Turn in signed Parental Information Form**

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Criminal Charges:

Any student who is charged with a felony, Class A1 misdemeanor or a Class I misdemeanor or is petitioned for an offense that would be a felony or a Class I misdemeanor if committed by an adult, Class II or III misdemeanor or is petitioned for an offense that would be a Class II or III misdemeanor if committed by an adult which takes place in the course of participating as a student athlete, students involved in other extracurricular, or co-curricular activities:

Upon notification by student athlete/parent guardian and/or notification to school by other means:

- Student athlete(s) will be removed from participation in all school sponsored team(s) and/or activities for a minimum of twenty (20) calendar days with the suspension beginning on the date of notification.
 - Out of Season Sports: students whose team is not currently in season will be ineligible to participate in organized activities such as but not limited to weight lifting, skills sessions, training, etc.
 - Students charged with crimes during the summer months shall be subject to these guidelines.
 - **Co-Curricular Participation:** Students involved in co-curricular activities with a required extra-curricular component, such as band, chorus, vocational clubs, etc., will be given alternative assignments to avoid a negative impact on their academic standing in such classes.
- Student athlete(s) will remain ineligible until:
 - Charges have been resolved through the court system
 - Pleas of “No Contest” or as part of a deferred prosecution or “Prayer for Judgment Continued” (PJC) will be considered convictions
 - Charges have been dismissed **and** twenty (20) calendar day suspension has been completed

It is the responsibility of a student athlete and/or guardian to self- report incidents such as but not limited to charges filed against a student athlete.

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Convictions:

Felonies:

- Any student athlete, students involved in other extracurricular, or co-curricular activities who is convicted of a felony or is adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult is barred from participation in interscholastic athletics for the remainder of their high school career per NCHSAA guidelines

Misdemeanors:

- Students found guilty of a Class A1 misdemeanor, a Class I misdemeanor or are adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a misdemeanor if committed by an adult are not eligible to participate in teams and/or activities for the remainder of the school year.
 - Middle School Students: These guidelines also apply to middle school students; however, eligibility is restored once the student first enters ninth (9th) grade per NCHSAA guidelines.
- Students found guilty of a Class II or III misdemeanors or are adjudicated delinquent for an offense that would be a Class II or III misdemeanor if committed by an adult are not, Middle and High School Students, eligible to participate in teams and/or activities for the remainder of the semester.

Secondary Conviction:

Second unrelated felony or misdemeanor conviction or a juvenile petition for an offense that would be a felony or misdemeanor if committed by an adult, will automatically result in removal from all teams and/or activities for the duration of the school year.

Note: The student athlete eligibility calendar runs from July 1 – June 30.

Out of School Suspension:

Middle and High School Students who are serving in OSS, will not be eligible to participate in co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

Middle school sports guidelines: a second out-of-school suspension during the sports season will result in the student being removed from the team/squad for the remainder of the season.

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Notification to Student Athlete/Guardian:

Upon notification from student athlete, guardian or other means, the principal and/or their designee will complete a notification to the guardian associated with the above referenced eligibility.

Appeal Process:

As outlined in the notification regarding eligibility, a parent/guardian has the ability to request an appeal to the Eligibility Letter in writing.

This appeal should take place as follows:

1. Parent/Guardian submits written appeal to building principal
2. Building Principal will notify his/her school performance officer or designee of the request for an appeal.
3. The school performance officer or designee will review the case details with the building principal, athletic director, coaches, etc. as deemed appropriate by him/her for circumstances associated with the case.
4. A determination of appeal will be made to the parent/guardian in writing within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the request for an appeal

Athletic Team Rules

Co- curricular and extracurricular teams may have rules that address the behavior and conduct of students/athletes. These rules will outline consequences that limit and/or prohibit participation by students/athletes involved in such activities. As such, National and State organizations, school clubs, and athletic teams with rules or by-laws that prescribe stricter consequences for student misconduct will supersede the above guidelines.

Individual Coaches' Rules

Coaches may establish rules and regulations with the approval of the athletic director and principal for their respective activities. These rules, as pertaining to a particular activity, must be given by the coach in writing to all team members and explained fully at the start of the season. Penalties for violation of team rules will be in writing and shall be administered by the coach.

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Appendix A: TEMPLATE LETTER FOR NOTIFICATION TO PARENT REGARDING ELGIBILITY

INSERT ON UCPS LETTERHEAD

Name and Address

Dear Ms. /Mr.:

On <Insert Date>, I became aware that <insert student name> has been charged with <insert charge title> by < Insert notification method>. In accordance with the Union County Public Schools Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Guidelines for Middle and High School Students, the following will take place effective <Insert Date>:

<Insert Student Name> will:

- Be ineligible to participate in <insert athletic/co-curricular activity> effective <Same Date as notification date> and will be ineligible to participate again until at least <insert calendar date>.
- The student athlete will remain ineligible to participate until charges have been resolved through the court system or dismissed with service of the twenty (20) calendar day suspension serviced.
- If the student athlete is convicted of a crime, please reference the Union County Public Schools Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities Guidelines for Middle and High School Students for additional guidance associated with his/her eligibility to participate in co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

If you would like an appeal to be considered associated with the charges involving your student athlete, please notify me in writing of such within ten (10) calendar days of the date of this letter.

Sincerely,

Principal

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Appendix B; Appeal Considerations

If a parent/guardian requests an appeal of the eligibility of their student athlete, the following should be considered:

- . Mitigating circumstances may include:
 - a. having no history of disciplinary problems;
 - b. having a significant amount of time pass since the student's last disciplinary problem;
 - c. being a passive participant or playing a minor role in the offense;
 - d. reasonably believing the conduct was legal;
 - e. acting under strong provocation;
 - f. aiding in the discovery of another offender;
 - g. making a full and truthful statement admitting guilt at an early stage in the investigation of the offense;
 - h. displaying an appropriate attitude and giving respectful cooperation during the investigation and discipline process; or mitigating circumstances do NOT exist solely because of demonstrated prowess in a sport or activity or the potential of scholarships or grants in aid.