



STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

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ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE – IDF-R INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

7/1/20

RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE:

Participation in interscholastic/extracurricular (extracurricular) activities in Cobb County School District (District) schools is a privilege. Students participating in these activities are considered to be school leaders and role models who represent their school and more importantly, depict its character. With leadership comes additional responsibility and student participants must adhere to high standards of conduct. When students violate these standards of conduct, the District may withdraw the privilege of participation in interscholastic/extracurricular activities. The purpose of this code of conduct is to establish a minimum expectation of behavior.

RULE:

A. PROCEDURES:

1. Time in Effect:

Except as specifically provided, the following behavioral expectations and prohibitions apply 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, in and out of the specific extracurricular season, on or off school grounds, and through the use of school or outside technology resources.

2. Parental/Self Reporting:

Parents/guardians and/or students must report any violation of this rule or the District's Student Code of Conduct to their high school administration or coach within two weeks (14 calendar days) of the violation. The two-week time frame includes weekends, school holidays and summer vacation. Failure to report a violation may result in additional consequences which may include, but is not limited to, doubling of the student's consequences for the behavior in question.

3. Provisions:

- a. Sponsors/Coaches should investigate policy violations and report to the school administration. The principal or designee should make all determinations of penalties, in consultation with the coaches, sponsors and the District Athletic Director, as appropriate.
- b. Unless otherwise specified, periods of suspension from activities does not include preseason workouts and other preseason activities. Such student's ability to participate in preseason activities will be determined by the principal or designee in consultation with the coach. During the student's period of suspension, the student cannot have contact



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with the team during any team activities.

c. Students cannot attempt to evade the intent of the Rule by joining a new sport specifically to allow their suspension days to run their course. If a student athlete participates in a sport that he/she had not been previously involved with, he/she must complete the season of the new sport in good standing in order for the suspension days to count.

d. Transferring from one District school to another does not relieve the student from the consequences for a violation of this Rule. Should a student choose to transfer outside of the District, the designated school administrator or the school athletic director will contact the new school to inform them of the violation and the resulting penalty. The District may also honor the activity consequences from other private or public-school systems.

4. Notification:

a. Elementary/Middle Schools:

In addition to providing students with copies of the appropriate Student Code of Conduct (Administrative Rule JCDA-R), elementary and middle schools should make participants in extracurricular activities aware of this Administrative Rule.

b. **High Schools:** In addition to providing students with copies of the appropriate Student Code of Conduct (Administrative Rule JCDA-R), each high school should provide written notification of this Administrative Rule to all participants in extracurricular activities.

B. ALCOHOL/ILLEGAL DRUGS/INHALANTS:

The District believes very strongly that use, possession, selling or buying over the counter drugs or products to get high; alcohol; illegal drugs; or prescription drugs in an unauthorized manner at any time is an offense. Such use, possession or distribution by extracurricular participants is banned. **All misdemeanor driving under the influence (DUI) offenses will be dealt with according to this section. All felony DUI offenses will be dealt with under Section D, below. Offenses are cumulative at the high school level.**

- 1st Offense:

- o Suspension from extracurricular activities, including practice and regular/post season, for a minimum twenty-five (25) calendar days; plus
- o Suspension from regular/post season contests to equal a minimum of 30% of the number of regular season contests/performances; plus
- o Student must complete the GRIP (Gaining Results in Intervention and Prevention Program) which consists of one four-hour Saturday session attended by the student and



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the parent, or another comparable program. If the student cannot attend the program until after the suspension is lifted, they must still attend the program in order to be eligible to compete in their next extracurricular/athletic season. Failure to attend or complete the program as required may result in continued extracurricular/athletic ineligibility beyond the initial suspension.

- o If offense is during the off season, the first offense suspension will begin on the GHSA start date for the next season with which the recognized athlete is affiliated.

- o If the student has not completed his suspension at the end of the season, the remaining days will be completed at the beginning of the next affiliated GHSA activity.

- 2nd Offense:

Suspension from extracurricular activities for a minimum of one calendar year. The student will not be permitted to participate in preseason activities or practice.

- 3rd Offense:

Permanent suspension from extracurricular activities, including preseason activities and practices.

C. TOBACCO [IN-SEASON USE]:

Student possession or use of tobacco, or tobacco product substitutes (e.g., tobacco lookalikes), cigarette look-alikes (e.g., electronic cigarettes), hookahs and hookah lookalikes (e.g. electronic hookahs), vaping devices, or vaping cartridges is prohibited.

- 1st Offense:

Suspension from all extracurricular activities for two (2) school days/

- 2nd Offense:

Suspension from all extracurricular activities for five (5) school days and must sit out 10% of games/matches/performances/competitions.

- 3rd Offense:

Suspension from all extracurricular activities for ten (10) school days and must sit out 20% of games/matches/performances/competitions.

- 4th Offense and Subsequent Offense:

Suspension from all extracurricular activities for ninety (90) calendar days.



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D. FELONY:

1. Guidelines:

a. A student who is arrested for, indicted for, convicted of, or charged with a felony or act that would constitute a felony if committed by an adult shall be automatically suspended from interscholastic/extracurricular activities;

b. Students will not be permitted to participate in preseason activities;

c. DUI:

All felony DUI offenses will be dealt with according to this section.

2. Duration:

a. The student shall remain suspended from extracurricular activities until:

(1) The charges are completely dismissed;

(2) The charges are reduced to a misdemeanor in which case the student may be subject to penalties outlined in Section E, below, or Section B, for alcohol offenses;

(3) The student is found not guilty; or

(4) The student serves his/her consequences as outlined below.

b. Once the student successfully completes the consequences assigned by the judge or agreed to by the student, including probation or diversion, the student may be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities. Evidence that the probation period has expired, fines have been paid and/or community service has been completed is required.

c. If a student has been arrested or charged with an offense, but the matter has been expunged, sealed, removed from a student's record, treated as a "first offender" action, or the behavior has not been prosecuted (nolle prosequi), that student may present or obtain documentation as required by the school to determine the circumstances of the matter and appropriate eligibility consequences, as determined at the discretion of school administration. Such incidents will be reviewed on an individualized basis and a legal determination in the matter may not be sufficient to change the student's consequences.

E. MISDEMEANORS:

1. A student who is arrested for, charged with, or found guilty of a misdemeanor shall receive consequences as outlined below. However, minor offenses that result in fines alone may be dealt with as a violation of Section G.7. below.

o 1st and Subsequent Offenses:

o Minimum suspension from extracurricular activities for one (1) school day up to a maximum of permanent suspension from extracurricular activities.



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2. Drug/Alcohol/DUI:

Any student who is accused of a misdemeanor alcohol/drug offense or a misdemeanor DUI will receive consequences as outlined in Section B above.

3. If the student produces proof that the charges are completely dismissed or the student is found not guilty, these consequences may be lifted. If a student has been arrested or charged with an offense, but the matter has been expunged, sealed, removed from a student's record, treated as a "first offender" action, or the behavior has not been prosecuted (*nolle prosequi*), that student may present or obtain documentation as required by the school to determine the circumstances of the matter and appropriate eligibility consequences, as determined at the discretion of school administration. Such incidents will be reviewed on an individualized basis and a legal determination in the matter may not be sufficient to change the student's consequences.

F. PARENTAL/SELF REPORTING OF LAW ENFORCEMENT:

Parents/guardians and/or students must report any charges against or arrest of a student or student behavior in which law enforcement is involved, to their high school administration or coach within two weeks (14 calendar days) of the arrest or behavior. The two-week time frame includes weekends, school holidays and summer vacation. Failure to report arrest, charges or behavior may result in additional consequences which may include, but is not limited to, doubling of the student's consequences for the behavior in question.

G. OTHER OFFENSES:

A student who commits the following offenses may be suspended or permanently dismissed from the team or activity. The head coach in conjunction with the school administration will determine consequences for the following:

1. Hazing:

School clubs and student organizations shall not use hazing or degradation of individual dignity (Administrative Rule JHC-R [School Clubs/Organizations and Student Organizations]);

2. Missing practice, rehearsal or activities (unless excused by the coach, teacher, or sponsor);

3. Truancy and/or skipping classes;

4. Acting in an unsportsmanlike manner when representing the school;

5. Violating curfew as established by the coach;

6. Any act at school or away from school, which results in any discipline by school administration; or

7. Any act at school or away from school which, in the opinion of the principal reflects in a negative manner on the school, athletic program, or activity.



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Legal Reference

O.C.G.A. 20-17-2

O.C.G.A. 20-2-160

O.C.G.A. 20-2-315

O.C.G.A. 20-2-316

O.C.G.A. 20-2-411

O.C.G.A. 20-2-86

Rule 160-5-1-.18 20 USC 1681 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Determination of enrollment; determination of funding Gender equity in sports Athletic association defined; high school athletics School fund kept separate; use of funds; separation of school taxes; investments Operation of school councils; training; membership; management; roles and responsibilities Competitive Interscholastic Activities in Grades 6-12 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

ATTENDANCE

- Students will be permitted to participate in conditioning, tryouts, games, or practice of extracurricular activities only if they have been in attendance at least one-half of the school day. **Exceptions must be approved by the principal or his/her designee.**
- Students in ISS **may not attend or participate** in conditioning, tryouts, practice or games that day (CCSD Admin rule JDD-R). If ISS ends on Friday, students can play Saturday.
- Students under **out-of-school** suspension **may not** attend or participate in conditioning, tryouts, practice, or games until they return to class (GHSA by-law). Example: If suspension is through Friday, student cannot play or attend on Saturday. Suspension is considered ended when student is physically readmitted to the classroom.
- Students who are not making satisfactory progress in their classes may be prohibited from leaving class early for a game even though the team has received administrative approval to leave.
- Cobb County School District high school coaches have the authority to require high school student athletes to attend or participate in high school practices and contests over outside events.



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GHSA ELIGIBILITY – (SOURCE: GHSA Constitution and Bylaws)

1.21 To be eligible to participate and/or try-out for a sport or activity, a student must be enrolled full-time in grades 9-12 inclusive at the school seeking eligibility for that student.

a. Enrollment is defined as follows:

1. Fall Semester: when the student participates in a practice or contest before classes begin, or the student attends classes.
2. Spring Semester: when the student attends classes.
3. A student may be enrolled in only one (1) high school at a time.

b. The student must be in regular attendance.

c. The student must be taking courses that total at least 2.5 Units that count toward graduation.

1.30 – AGE - To be eligible to participate in interscholastic activities, a student must not have reached his 19th birthday prior to May 1st, preceding his year of participation.

1.41 Students must have a certificate of an annual physical examination on file at the school prior to participating in any athletic try-outs, practices, voluntary workouts or games that indicate the students are physically approved for participation.

***CCSD Physicals are required each school year after April 1st and are valid through the last day of the following school year.**

b. The physical exam must be conducted by a licensed medical physician, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant.

c. The exam must be signed by an M.D., D.O., or by a Physician's Assistant, or an Advance Practice Nurse who has been delegated that task by an M.D., or D.O.

d. The GHSA requires that member schools use the edition of the preparticipation physical evaluation form approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics, et. al., found on the GHSA web site.



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1.51 To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities, a student must be academically eligible. A student is required to pass classes that carry at least 2.5 Units counting toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation. Exception: First semester ninth-grade students.

1.53 Students must accumulate units towards graduation according to the following criteria:

- a. First-year students (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically. Second semester first year students must have passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units the previous semester in order to participate.
- b. Second-year students must have accumulated five (5) total units in the first year, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.
- c. Third-year students must have accumulated eleven (11) units in the first and second years, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.
- d. Fourth-year students must have accumulated seventeen (17) units in the first three years, AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units in the previous semester.
- e. Students may accumulate the required units for participation during the school year and eligibility will be reinstated at the beginning of the next semester.

1.62 A transfer student who has established eligibility at a former school in grades 9-12 shall be deemed a migrant at the new school for 365 days from the date of transfer unless the following criteria are met:

- a. The student moved simultaneously with the entire family unit, and all other persons he/she lived with at the former residence, and that residential unit moved into the service area of the new school with simultaneous enrollment of the student in the new school. This is known as a “bona fide move.” (NOTE: A move within the same service area does not constitute a bona fide move.)

For more information concerning eligibility please visit

<https://www.ghsa.net/constitution-2025-2026-ghsa-constitution-and-by-laws>



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EXTREME WAEATHER CONDITIONS

Extreme Cold Weather

The local school principal, or designee, will make the final decision as to whether outdoor practice will be allowed. Any game cancellations due to extremely cold weather will be the responsibility of the two competing team's administrations.

Extreme Hot and Humid Weather

Schools must follow the statewide policy for conducting practices and voluntary conditioning workouts in all sports during times of extremely high heat and/or humidity that will be signed by each head coach at the beginning of each season and distributed to all players and their parents or guardians.

For more information, please see:

<https://www.ghsa.net/constitution-2025-2026-ghsa-constitution-and-by-laws>

INFORMED CONSENT AND INSURANCE (ATHLETICS)

- No student shall be allowed to participate in conditioning, tryouts, practice or contest until an informed consent form, signed by the parent/guardian, has been placed on file at the school. It is a local school decision whether this is done by hard copy, but all must be documented in the online Athletic Registration system accessed through ParentVue.
- The CCSD provides the opportunity for optional/additional insurance coverage. More information on this coverage is available from www.cobbk12.org.

NAME, IMAGE, & LIKENESS

The GHSA does not specifically prohibit students from engaging in certain commercial activities as individuals. These activities, commonly referred to as name, image and likeness (NIL), will not put a student's amateur status at risk provided the student meets all the requirements for maintaining amateur status in compliance with GHSA by-law 1.92-c and providing there is no violation of by-laws prohibiting influencing a student to attend or remain at a member school under GHSA by-law 1.70 (Recruiting/Undue Influence/Following The Coach).



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A student-athlete may benefit from the use of their name, image and likeness (NIL) in compliance with

GHSA by-law 1.92-c provided:

- The compensation is not contingent on specific athletic performance or achievement.
- The compensation is not provided as a incentive to enroll or remain enrolled at a specific school.
- The compensation is not provided by the school or any person acting as an agent for the school.

The following guidelines are in effect for NIL activities:

- Intellectual property - No “marks” may be used including, but not limited to, school logos, school name, school uniforms, school mascot, or any trademarked GHSA logo or acronyms.
- No school apparel or equipment shall be worn, which includes school name, school uniforms, school logo, school mascot or any apparel displaying trademarked GHSA logos or acronyms.
- No member school facility may be used for the purpose of name, image and likeness activities.
- No activities in conflict with a member school’s local school district policy may be endorsed. (Examples include, but are not limited to, tobacco products, alcohol products and controlled substances.)
- Students and their families should seek professional guidance as to how NIL activities could impact collegiate financial aid and/or tax implications, among other issues.
- Within seven (7) calendar days after entering into any type of NIL contract/agreement, a student, or the student’s parents/guardians, must notify the Principal or Athletic Director of the student’s school of entering into that agreement.

No student-athlete may be a member of nor receive compensation or any other benefit from a Collective or NIL Club. A Collective is defined as any group organized or existing for the purpose of compensating or benefiting an individual student athlete or a group of student athletes of a member school. NIL Clubs are defined as a group of student athletes organized or existing for the purpose of soliciting funds or other benefits from fans, members or other sources, managing or promoting NIL activities of student athletes or



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otherwise providing funds or other benefits to an individual student athlete or group of student athletes.

Booster Clubs are not considered Collectives or NIL Clubs if such Booster Club is operated under the supervision of a member school and provides monetary or other benefits to school athletic facilities, school athletic equipment, school team meals or other school team benefits rather than to an individual student athlete or group of student athletes.

Student athletes violating this guideline may be subject to loss of eligibility to compete in GHSA activities and any member school which knowingly allows any student athlete to violate these guidelines may be subject to fines, forfeiture of contests, probation and being declared ineligible to compete in post season GHSA contests or activities.

GHSA Position on Athletic Agents

GHSA does not permit high school student-athletes to hire, use, or be represented by athletic agents. Doing so immediately jeopardizes amateur status and eligibility.

Students may seek professional guidance regarding NIL activities, but representation that crosses into “managing an athletic career” risks an amateur-status violation.

PARTICIPATION

- In the Cobb County School District 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders are the only students who are eligible to participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities. 8th graders are ineligible for all high school athletic activities. (IDE-R)
- Seniors are not eligible for participation in junior varsity activities.
- Students will not be required to attend conditioning activities during the season when they are participating in another school sponsored sport.
- Weight/strength/speed training during the off season/summer may be encouraged but not required as a prerequisite for participation in a sport.
- Students competing on fall/winter teams will not be expected to try out for a winter/spring team until the first team completes its season.
(Exception: agreement by both head coaches involved and the local school principal/designee.)
- Students who quit a team will not be allowed to start “working out” with the next sport until the regular season of the team he/she quit is completed.



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(Exception: agreement by both head coaches involved and the local school principal/designee.)

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation may or may not be provided by the Cobb County School District. In the event transportation is not provided by CCSD, transportation will be the student's responsibility. Student drivers should not drive other students to/from practices/competitions. When parents and students volunteer to drive their own vehicles on school system business, such as sporting events or other school activities, the Cobb County School District does not provide liability insurance or medical insurance; the volunteer is the liable party.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

Concussions at all levels of sports have received a great deal of attention and a state law has been passed to address this issue. Adolescent athletes are particularly vulnerable to the effects of concussion. Once considered little more than a minor "ding" to the head, it is now understood that a concussion has the potential to result in death, or changes in brain function (either short-term or long-term). A concussion is a brain injury that results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. Continued participation in any sport following a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, as well as increased risk for further injury to the brain, and even death. Player and parental education in this area is crucial. Please read carefully the Concussion Awareness Form using the link below.

For more information see www.cobbk12.org/centraloffice/athletics

STUDENT-ATHLETE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Given consideration to accessibility and use of social media in today's society, the Cobb County Schools Athletic Department is recommending guidelines to assist our athletes in developing the skills needed to make positive decisions while using social media outlets. The need to understand what social media is appropriate, and what is not is paramount, as many employers and colleges now view potential candidate's social media activities before asking them to join their organization. This is specifically evident in collegiate athletics



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where students have had scholarships revoked, served suspensions, and are occasionally removed from teams.

The guidelines below should be used to assist student athletes with deciding what to post on social media outlets. They provide a set of parameters to stay within when deciding to post statements and photos. Coaches will assist by being a resource athletes can turn to for advice.

Guidelines:

1. Social Media use should not violate the CCSD Student Code of Conduct, JCDA-R (High).
2. Post should not be demeaning or disrespectful to teammates, coaches, peers or other institutions.
3. Post should not contain profane, vulgar, obscene or offensive language.
4. Photos should not contain nudity, be vulgar, obscene or offensive in nature.
5. Photos or written posts should not contain or reference illegal acts.
6. Post should not cast a negative image or negative perception of the athlete, team, or school.

PARENTS AND SPORTSMANSHIP

When your son/daughter enlisted in one of our interscholastic athletic activity programs, he/she has committed to certain responsibilities and obligations. Likewise, we feel you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. We would encourage you to join your school's Booster Club(s) to help provide the financial and volunteer support essential to your school's interscholastic athletic activities program, and we would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with expectations of parental involvement and sportsmanship.

Parent/guardian expectations:

1. Stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
2. Show courtesy and respect to visiting teams, visiting parents/fans, and officials.
3. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials and accept their decisions without showing inappropriate emotions.



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4. Do not confront coaches at the game – arrange another time to speak to them or the Athletic Director.
5. Do not use profane language or gestures.
6. Help your child set realistic goals. The primary value of athletics is the opportunity for self-development allowing them to develop life-long values and self-esteem.
7. Remember an athletic contest is only a game – not a matter of life or death for a player, coach, school official, fan, community, state or nation.
8. Parents and supporters understand that inappropriate behavior may result in criminal trespass charges which would prevent them from coming back on campus to watch their child's activities.

Let the players play

Let the coaches coach

Let the officials officiate

Let the fans cheer positively!