

Lancaster Central School District
Athletic Code of Conduct

The Lancaster Central School District recognizes that interscholastic athletics are a significant part of the educational process. The combination of academics and athletics enhances the quality of student's lives and expands their options for learning and personal growth. Athletics provide an educational opportunity in which students can learn essential life lessons beyond those that can be learned in an academic classroom.

The Lancaster School District provides the opportunity for all students to take part in interscholastic athletics. Students who participate in athletics should realize that they have an obligation to themselves, their teammates, their coaches, their school, and their community to strive for excellence. Participation in athletics also demands a commitment, which implies sacrifice and dedication. This is required of not only student athletes, but also of coaches and parents.

It should be recognized that involvement in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. District students who participate in interscholastic activities are expected to conform to the standards which meet or exceed the requirements of the district's general Code of Conduct. In addition, respect for one's health and physical development must be an integral part of an Athlete's daily living. Adherence to the following rules is to be on a year-round basis including summers and lapse time between seasons, not just during the seasons of the sport(s) in which a student participates.

I. Eligibility/Required Conduct

Any middle school or high school student who wants to participate on a team (including players, managers and cheerleaders) during the school year (hereinafter "athlete") must:

- A. Adhere to the requirements set forth in Policy # 7420
 - B. Be enrolled in at least four (4) classes, in addition to physical education, per Regulation of the Commissioner of Education.
 - C. Maintain daily school attendance.
- 1. Any Athlete absent for the day, reporting to school after start time or leaving school prior to the end of that Athlete's regular school day is ineligible for that day meaning s/he Shall Not practice with his/her team or participate in any Athletic Contest.
 - "Athletic Contests" mean games, meets, matches, scrimmages, tournaments, or other interscholastic competition scheduled as part of a sport season. If an athlete is absent the last day of school before an athletic contest on a non-school day, the athlete must have administrative permission to participate. It is recommended that the parent/guardian contact the athletic director and/or head coach.
 - 2. Exceptions may be made concerning the above if extenuating circumstances exist for an athlete's absence, such as the athlete having an approved medical or legal appointment, field trip or educational trip, in which case, the athlete must present

a signed note from the parent/guardian and approval to participate must be granted by the building principal or the athletic director.

D. Maintain satisfactory academic standing (See Section II, below)

E. Demonstrate competence for the sport s/he wishes to participate.

- Competence means having the necessary knowledge and skill to sufficiently train and compete, which includes, but is not limited to: demonstrating knowledge of the rules, conventions and strategies of the game, demonstrating a level of physical conditioning and fitness sufficient to participate in the sport and to understand and demonstrate knowledge of healthy behaviors in order to achieve the positive benefits of interscholastic athletics.

F. Demonstrate character as a representative of the Lancaster Schools.

- Character means attitudes and behavior that relates to moral strength and essential qualities that embrace the positive values of the Lancaster Schools and community, which includes, but is not limited to: playing by the rules of the game and not cheating, accepting losing and winning graciously—to congratulate opponents and not sulk or display other negative behaviors, controlling anger and frustration, refraining from the use of bad language including vulgar, profane or unkind words, striving to excel and preserve even in difficult times, being committed and dependable—attending all scheduled practices and athletic contests.

1. If it becomes necessary that an athlete is late to or absent from a team activity (practice, athletic contest or other), he/she shall inform the coach prior to the activity taking place and the coach will decide whether the rationale for being late or absent is excused. If the athlete cannot reach the coach, he/she should contact the athletic director's office.
2. An athlete may be suspended from his/her team for a consistently bad attitude or poor sportsmanship towards the community, school administration, staff, coaches, opposing teams, referees and/or officials.

G. Demonstrate civility, that is, behavior that exemplifies appropriate concern and respect for others.

- Civility includes, but is not limited to: exemplifying good manners and respect for all on and off the field, not engaging in “trash talk” or other put downs of opponents and teammates, to listen to and try to understand others, to respect the integrity and judgment of the athletic contest officials, to actively support teammates and others, to be fair and treat others as one wishes to be treated.

1. Athletes must learn, understand and respect the rules of every sport not only as a participant, but also as a spectator.
2. Failure to respect the rules, the staff, other athletes, opposing teams, referees and/or officials may result in suspension from the athlete's team(s).

- H. Demonstrate citizenship, that is, social responsibility as part of a community.
- Citizenship includes, but is not limited to: keeping commitments to the team(s), showing team spirit, encouraging others and contributing to good morale, putting the good of the team ahead of personal gain, working well with teammates to achieve team goals, accepting responsibility to set a good example for teammates, younger athletes, fans and the school community, and keeping in mind that improper behavior while representing the district (in and out of uniform) reflects poorly not only upon oneself but upon the Lancaster School and community.
- I. Abide by the District's Code of Conduct and understand that a violation of the code may result in suspension from participation in the any athletic activity in addition to any penalty imposed by the district.
- J. Athletes may not possess or use tobacco in any form (smoking, chewing or otherwise), at any time or place.
- K. Athletes may not possess or use drugs or alcohol in any form, at any time or place. (including sale, distribution or attempts to do the same concerning illegal drugs, alcohol as well as using prescription/legal drugs for a purpose they are not intended)
- L. Athletes may not participate in any hazing or initiation events of any form, at any time or place.
1. Hazing means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against any student any student or athlete in connection with being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the district; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning an individual or endangering the mental or physical health of the individual. "Hazing" also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.
 2. Examples of hazing include, but are not limited to: any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electrical shocks, placing a harmful substance on or in the body, or other similar activity; any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or other activity that creates or results in an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the athlete; any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that subjects an athlete to an unreasonable risk of harm; or any activity that induces, causes, or requires an athlete to perform a duty or task, which involves the commission of a crime or an act of hazing.
1. Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers the legitimate curricular or extracurricular goals of the district and provided that the activity or

conduct furthers those goals in a manner that is appropriate and normal and customary for similar public school programs. An example of this exception would include reasonable athletic training exercises.

- M. The administration, coaches and athletic review committee reserve the right to rule on any other infraction not covered above.

II. Academic Standards

- A. At the beginning of each activity or sports season, each coach shall formally counsel his/her athletes regarding the expected academic progress required for participation in interscholastic athletics.
- B. To be eligible to be a part of a sports team, an athlete must be in satisfactory academic standing.
- All student athletes must realize that their main purpose for attending school is to receive an education (high school diploma). In order to remain eligible for participation in the district's inter-scholastic athletic program, student athletes must maintain a minimum academic average of 72.00% for the previous marking period.
 - Summer school and final averages will not be used in determining eligibility.
- C. Athletes, who are not in satisfactory academic standing at the beginning of the sport season, may not tryout for a team. If the team does not require a tryout period, the athlete may be permitted to join the team when he achieves satisfactory academic standing and obtains approval from the coach. If an athlete who has signed up to participate in a sports team, or is currently on a sports team, does not have satisfactory academic standing, the athlete and his/her parents will be notified in writing of his/her ineligibility to participate.
- D. Athletes who require extra academic help at a time that conflicts with a scheduled practice shall provide their coach with a note from the detaining teacher. Athletes with such note shall not be denied the ability to participate during the remaining practice time for that day.

III. Additional Matters

- A. Athletes assume personal responsibility for all assigned equipment. Failure to maintain in adequate condition or to turn in at the end of the season, or whenever otherwise directed, may result in suspension from the team, or from future participation on other teams.
- B. Athletes must ride the school bus to and from all athletic contests. A head coach may permit an athlete to ride home with his/her parent or legal guardian upon written request presented to the coach prior to the trip. Athletes may only be released for travel with his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
- C. No Athlete shall quit or withdraw from a team without first talking with his/her coach to explain the reasons for leaving the team. Any athlete who violates this requirement will be unable to join another sport until the next sport season begins.

- D. Athletes who are suspended from school or assigned to a full day of suspension will not be allowed to try out for a team or participate in practice or contests until the suspension has been served or is lifted.
- E. Athletes must attend assigned detentions. Athletes may participate in practice or athletic contests as long as the detention time does not conflict with practice or after detention is served.
- F. Athletes who are suspended or dismissed for violating this code will be ineligible for awards given during that sport season.

IV. Participation/Training Standards

- A. The head coach of each sport shall clearly set his/her expectations and requirements for attendance. The athlete is required to follow the NYSPHSAA sports standards chart for interschool competition.
- B. Failure to adhere to the minimum level of participation or for any unexcused absence from practice or contests may result in suspension from his/her team.

V. Disciplinary Procedures for Violations of this Code of Conduct and/or Inappropriate Conduct Generally.

The punishment for any offense will be implemented by individual coaches, and where warranted, will be in consultation with the athletic director.

The information below demonstrates guidelines the district will refer to in imposing discipline. Depending on the severity, seriousness, type of and combination of violations, the punishment may be more severe than that which is identified below. The administration, coaches, athletic director and/or athletic review committee reserve the right to consider extenuating circumstances and evaluate each case on an individual basis.

- A. Any athlete who violates criminal law, civil law or the rules and regulations contained in the Lancaster Central School District Code of Conduct may be subject to additional penalties deemed appropriate by individual coaches, the athletic director, and/or the superintendent of schools.
- B. Use and/or possession of tobacco

First Offense: Suspension from athletic contests/practices for (10) calendar days. If there is less than (10) calendar days remaining in the season, the suspension will be carried to the next school year and/or season of any sport the athlete participates. The athlete cannot participate or attend practices/contests with the team.

Second Offense: Suspension from practice and athletic contests for eight (8) weeks. If there is less than (8) weeks remaining in the season, the suspension will be carried to the next school year and/or season of any sport the athlete participates. The athlete cannot participate or attend practices/contests with the team.

Any Further Offense: Suspension from any participation in athletics for a minimum of one calendar year.

- C. Use and/or possession of drugs (including performance enhancing drugs) or alcohol

First Offense: Suspension from practice and athletic contests for the equivalent of (8) weeks. If there is less than (8) weeks remaining in the season, the suspension will be carried to the next school year and/or season of any sport the athlete participates. The athlete cannot participate or attend practices/contests with the team.

Second Offense: Suspension from any participation in athletics for one calendar year.

Any Further Offense: Permanent suspension from participation in athletics, after review by the athletic review committee.

An athlete, who is suspended, will be required to attend an approved program in counseling/rehabilitation as a condition of gaining back eligibility.

- D. Participation in hazing or initiation events.

First Offense: Suspension for the entire sport season.

Any Further Offense: Permanent suspension from any participation in athletics, after review by the athletic review committee.

VI. Procedure to Report Eligibility/Conduct Violations

- A. Violations may be reported by athletes, parents, coaches, Lancaster Central School District employees, community members and any area law enforcement agency.
- B. Reports shall be made to the athletic director, the superintendent of schools, or the coach of the at-issue athlete. The report should be within 72 hours thru email or in writing with a signed signature. Included should be contact information.
- C. Athletes suspected of violating this code will be called to a meeting with the athletic director and/or administrator, notified of the accusation and given an opportunity for explanation.
- D. During the time when an allegation(s) is considered and reviewed and any potential penalty is being decided upon, the student may temporarily be denied participation in Lancaster athletics.
- E. The athletic director can institute required action as provided for in the code.
- F. Athletes who feel that the judgment of the athletic director and/or administrator is unjust may institute the appeal procedure in Section VII.

VII. Appeal Procedure

- A. An athlete may appeal any decision pursuant to these rules and regulations by submitting a letter in writing to the superintendent of schools within five school (5) days of the imposed penalty.
- B. The letter should include a description of the incident, the imposed penalty, the reasons for appeal, and a suggestion for an amended penalty.
- C. Upon receipt, the superintendent of schools shall review the letter, and confer with the athletic review committee regarding the matter. The “athletic review committee” is composed of an administrator, and (2) non-involved coaches. This committee will review the code violations and request for reduction of suspension.
- D. The athletic review committee will inform the superintendent of schools of its recommendation and decision to modify or affirm the suspension. The superintendent of schools will advise the athlete by letter of the athletic review committee’s decision in writing within five (5) school days of receipt of the letter and that decision will be final.

Athlete Acknowledgement and Contract

My signature below acknowledges my receipt of the Lancaster Central School District Athletic Code of Conduct. I have read and understand the code in its entirety. I am aware that compliance with this code is necessary if I wish to participate on a Lancaster sports team. I promise to comply with all of the code's provisions and I am aware of the penalties if I do not.

Parent Acknowledgment and Commitment

This material is presented to you because your child has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to participate. We request that you carefully read all of the materials and discuss them with your child before signing below.

Parents are an integral element of the success of individual athletes, sports teams and of the Lancaster Central School District's athletic program as a whole. We could not maintain the Program without your support and assistance. As a parent of an Athlete, you have certain responsibilities with respect to your child, his/her team, the Lancaster Central School District and the community as a whole. It is necessary that you read and understand the Athletic Code of Conduct. We ask that you, to the best of your ability, ensure that your child obeys the code. Compliance is necessary if your child wishes to participate on a Lancaster sports team.

Additionally, as a parent you must maintain your composure and a positive attitude no matter how many games the team wins or loses, or how many minutes each child plays. You must respect the coach, administration, staff, and officials. If you have a concern, we request that you discuss the matter with the coach or contact the athletic director at 686-3270 to set up a meeting. Under no circumstances should a coach be confronted with a problem or concern before or after a contest or practice. We depend on you to set a good example for your own children, and for all children and parents in the district and in the community.

*****Keep above for your records. Return below*****

My signature below indicates my agreement to abide by the rules as set out in the Athletic Code of Conduct and the Parent Acknowledgement and Commitment. I understand that my failure to do so may affect my child's ability to participate on Lancaster Central School District sports teams.

Athlete Signature

Parent Signature

Print Athlete Name

Print Parent Name

Team

Date