



Hamilton City Schools Athletic Handbook 2022-23



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Message from the Hamilton Athletic Administration:

The Hamilton City Schools Athletic Handbook has been prepared with the intention of being a reference guide for regulations, existing rules, and information currently in effect concerning the athletic policies and procedures of the Hamilton City School District.

This handbook is being presented to you because your son/daughter/ward desires to participate in interscholastic athletics in the Hamilton City School District. In addition, you as parent/guardian/custodian have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete.

The handbook should provide a better understanding of the policies and procedures of interscholastic athletics, thus providing a beneficial and efficient athletic program. We value your family's interest in this phase of your child's education.

We believe that participation in education-based athletics provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in well-rounded personal growth and development which contributes significantly to both the school and the community.

The Hamilton City School District believes in the development of young men and women through interscholastic athletics. Properly controlled, well-organized athletic programs meet the needs of students' self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is a goal to maintain an athletic program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

Likewise, we believe that you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations as a parent/guardian/custodian of a student-athlete. In accordance with the athletic manual, we would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

A role of the athletic department is to make rules governing interscholastic competition. These rules need broad-based community support to be fully effective. This is achieved only through effective communication between the athletic department and the parents/guardians/custodians of our student-athletes. It is our plan to accomplish this objective through this athletic handbook for student-athletes, parents and coaches.

In addition to the Hamilton City School District Student-Athlete Handbook, student-athletes are expected to conform to the "Student Code of Conduct" as adopted by the Board of Education as well as the regulations established by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and the Greater Miami Conference.

Moreover, Hamilton City School student-athletes are expected to follow the laws established by the federal and state governments. Failure to abide by these laws and regulations may result in the student-athlete being suspended indefinitely and/or removed from the team. Student-athletes, parents, guardians and custodians must understand that it is a privilege to participate in the Hamilton City School District's interscholastic athletic program.

Yours in scholarship, sportsmanship and success,

Melissa Harvey
Hamilton High School Athletic Director
Hamilton City School District

[Hamilton City School District Athletic Department Information](#)

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Greater Miami Conference

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Statement of Hamilton City School District Athletic Philosophy:

The Hamilton City School District Athletic Program should provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for the future.

The purpose of athletics in the Hamilton City School District is to provide for the pursuit of competitive excellence in all sports, with the understanding that the pursuit of excellence is educational in purpose.

The prime objective is to develop the student-athlete physically, mentally, socially and emotionally in a positive environment among all coaches, faculty advisors and participants. This implies the physical well-being and overall development of the student-athlete is the first consideration rather than maximizing use which the school or any team can get from his/her abilities.

Furthermore, it is understood that a **student-athlete is in a position of leadership within the school structure and greater demands are placed upon this individual concerning leadership, character, behavior, and dependability.**

The athletic department offers the following interscholastic activities:

High School Boys' Activities:

Baseball (Spring)	Soccer (Fall)
Basketball (Winter)	Swimming (Winter)
Bowling (Winter)	Tennis (Spring)
Cross Country (Fall)	Track & Field (Spring)
Football (Fall)	Volleyball (Spring)
Golf (Fall)	Wrestling (Winter)

High School Girls' Activities:

Basketball (Winter)	Soccer (Fall)
Cheerleading (Fall and Winter)	Softball (Spring)
Bowling (Winter)	Swimming (Winter)
Cross Country (Fall)	Tennis (Fall)
Golf (Fall)	Track & Field (Spring)

Middle School Boys' Activities:

Basketball (Winter)	Tennis (Spring)
Cross Country (Fall)	Track & Field (Spring)
Football (Fall)	Wrestling (Winter)
Golf (Fall)	

Middle School Girls' Activities:

Basketball (Winter)	Tennis (Fall)
Cheerleading (Fall and Winter)	Track & Field (Spring)
Cross Country (Winter)	Volleyball (Fall)
Golf (Fall)	Tennis

Policies and Principles Governing the Administration of High School Interscholastic Athletics

The regulations for High School Interscholastic Athletics for the Hamilton City School District are provided by The Ohio High School Athletic Association and are based upon the following principles and policies:

1. The major emphasis on interscholastic athletics should be upon skilled play and good sportsmanship. Competition should be equitable in order that full learning and enjoyment may be realized from game participation.
2. Every attempt should be made to provide favorable playing conditions in order that the competitive experiences of the students may be wholesome and result in the attainment of desirable attitudes and conduct.
3. The contest rules, regulations, and supervision of the program should ensure the maximum protection of the health and safety of student-athletes.
4. Athletic events shall be played according to the contest rules and regulations approved and adopted by the Ohio High School Athletic Association's Board of Control.
5. The administration shall provide a healthy, safe, and sanitary environment for all students.
6. The policies, rules, and regulations of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) may be found on their website at: www.ohsaa.org.

Competitive sports are an inherent part of the total education program for students in secondary schools. When properly organized and conducted, inter-school athletics provide numerous opportunities for students to participate in activities which promote growth and development, teach social and recreational skills and develop leadership qualities.

In addition to the policies of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Hamilton City Schools Board of Education may enact policies, rules, and regulations that exceed the minimum requirements of the OHSAA.

While the Board of Education takes great pride in winning, it does not condone "winning at any cost." The Board of Education discourages any and all pressures, which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health.

At all times, the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity. Infractions are all inclusive for disciplinary purposes no matter the nature of the offense.

Responsibilities of a Hamilton Student-Athlete:

Being a member of a Hamilton City School District athletic 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 athletic tradition is not built overnight. It takes hard work and dedication of many people over several years. As a member of an interscholastic squad, you have inherited a wonderful tradition - a tradition you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to win, but only with honor to our student-athletes, our school and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. Over many years, our teams have achieved numerous league and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and won All-League and All-State honors.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear our school colors, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. However, the contributions you make should be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family.

Responsibilities to Yourself:

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden yourself and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your school experiences. Your learning, your participation in other extracurricular activities as well as in athletics, prepare you for adult life.

Responsibilities to Your School:

Another responsibility you assume as a member of Hamilton's athletic teams is to your school. The Hamilton City School District cannot maintain its position as having outstanding programs unless you do your best in whatever activity you wish to engage in. By participating in athletics to the maximum of your abilities, you are contributing to the reputation of your school.

You assume a leadership role by being a member of an athletic team. The student body and citizens of the community know you. You are on the stage with the spotlight directly on you. The student body, the community and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the playing surface. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Make the Hamilton City School District proud of you and the community proud of your school by your faithful exemplification of these ideals.

Responsibilities to Others:

As a team member, you also bear a heavy responsibility to your home. You must measure up to all of the training rules. You should practice to the best of your abilities every day. If you have played the game "all out," you can keep your self-respect and your family can be justly proud of you whether you win or lose.

The younger students in the Hamilton City School District are watching you. They will mimic you in many ways. Do not do anything to let them down. Set excellent examples for them to follow.

Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.

The Role of Parents in Interscholastic Athletics

Communicating With Your Children

1. Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
3. Be helpful, but don't coach them. It's tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the athlete to be flooded with advice and critical instruction.
4. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying", to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them develop the feeling for competing, for trying hard, for having fun.
5. Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure. Don't pressure your child because of your pride. Athletic children need their parents, so you must not withdraw. Remember, there is a thinking, feeling, sensitive, free spirit out there in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when their world turns bad. If they are comfortable with you win or lose, then they are on their way to maximum achievement and enjoyment.
6. Don't compete with the coach. If your child is receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures, he or she will likely become disenchanted. Criticism of the coach to your child puts the athlete in a terrible "No Win" situation.
7. Don't compare the skill, courage or attitude of your child with other members of the team.
8. Get to know the coach(es). Then you can be assured that his or her philosophy, attitudes, ethics and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his or her leadership.
9. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting. Many times athletes will define all coach criticism as being "yelled at".
10. Make a point of understanding courage and the fact that it is relative. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear and discomfort.

Communicating With The Coach

Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all players on the squad.
- Locations and times of all practices and contests. • Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.).
- Procedure should your child be injured.
 - Discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation (eligibility, substance abuse, etc).

Communication Coaches Expect From Parents

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance. • Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

Appropriate Concerns To Discuss With Coaches

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically. • Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

- Team strategy.
- Play calling.
- Other student athletes.

Appropriate Procedure for Discussing Concerns With Coaches

- The very first step in discussing a coaching concern is to meet with the coach.
- Call to set up an appointment with the coach (contact the athletic administrator to set up the meeting if unable to reach the coach).
- Do not confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These are emotional times for all parties involved and do not promote resolution.

What If The Meeting With The Coach Did Not Provide A Satisfactory Resolution

- Call to set up an appointment with the athletic administrator.
- Determine the next step at this meeting.

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Sportsmanship Philosophy and Guidelines:

The Hamilton City School District Athletic Department believes that interscholastic competition involving member schools of the Ohio High School Athletic Association should be governed by the basic principles of good sportsmanship. This document has been prepared to ensure that all participants have a common understanding of those basic principles.

We believe that student-athletes should be coached to play to the best of their abilities and to understand that to play well is to play honorably. The promotion of sportsmanship is the obligation of all school personnel (principals, athletic directors and coaches) and is directed to the behavior of spectators, coaches and players.

An additional component to consider is coaches' ethics. We believe the development of good sportsmanship through the practice of ethical behavior and moral reasoning is one of the acknowledged objectives of interscholastic athletics. We, therefore, expect school administrators, coaches, student-athletes and spectators to know and embrace the following fundamentals of sportsmanship.

Respect should be demonstrated for an athletic opponent and for their school at all times. Hamilton should treat visiting teams and their supporters as guests and accord them the consideration all human beings deserve.

Visiting schools should respect the property and dignity of their host school and its athletic teams. Knowledge of, and proper respect for the current rules of the contest should guide the behavior of all participants. Rules are essential for a fair contest. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as the "letter" of the rules.

All participants should strive to maintain self-control at all times. The desire to win should not be accepted as a reason for abandoning rational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained by all if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized.

In order for good sportsmanship to prevail, it is essential that all participants understand their individual responsibilities and expected modes of behavior before, during and after athletic competitions.

Student-Athletes:

Because student-athletes are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of spectators. It is important that student-athletes:

1. Treat opponents with the respect that is due them as guests and as fellow human beings.
2. Shake hands with opponents and wish them a good game when appropriate.
3. Exercise self-control at all times, accepting the judgment of the officials as the best judgment they could make given what they know and see. Never argue or make gestures indicating lack of respect for the official's judgment.
4. Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion.
5. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
6. Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing the school and community.

Spectator Sportsmanship Expectations:

Partisan spectators by their behaviors and reactions determine to a large extent the reputation for sportsmanship of their school. Spectators should be reminded and should keep in mind that student-athletes are friendly rivals as members of opposing amateur teams.

They are expected to be treated as such. Spectators should be reminded that the contest should be between the teams engaged in the competition and not between their supporters. It is important that all spectators:

1. Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
2. Respect, cooperate and respond enthusiastically to the cheerleaders, coaches, and student-athletes of all teams.
3. Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is unacceptable.
4. Be positive toward players and coaches regardless of the outcome of the contest.
5. Respect the judgment and the professionalism of the officials.

Spectator inappropriate behavior:

1. Verbal/physical abuse of officials
2. Berating players, coaches or other spectators through: chants, signs, cheers and profanity.

Unacceptable interruptions of a contest:

1. Throwing objects on the playing area.
2. Entering the playing area.
3. Disruptive behavior.

Suggested disciplinary actions:

1. Removal from contest.
2. Conference/hearing with school officials.

The Hamilton Athletic Department believes that each participant should be committed to upholding the ideals of good sportsmanship which is put forth in this document.

We also recognize the importance of communication and cooperation between school officials when incidents of inappropriate behavior arise. The quality of our athletic program depends upon this mutual respect. We also believe that being proactive is vital to the education of our students and spectators and therefore offer the following related activities:

1. Public Address announcements at contests
2. Letter to the community
3. Inserts in game programs
4. Team night promotion of sportsmanship
5. Sportsmanship award given at each sports awards program

Spectator Code of Conduct:

The Hamilton City School District, in association with the Ohio High School Athletic Association promotes interscholastic events and sportsmanship. Sportsmanship is an essential part of any athletic competition and is expected from student-athletes, coaches, officials and fans.

As a fan/spectator of the Hamilton City School District we ask you to be an example of positive encouragement while supporting student-athletes, coaches and officials. Your behavior should be positive, respectful and encouraging of the student-athletes, coaches, officials and the game.

Failure to be an example of these athletic practices and/or ejection from an athletic contest will result in the following procedures to be taken:

1. **First Offense** – Removal from the next two home athletic contests and/or one calendar week (7 days) of the same sport. A letter will be sent by the athletic director of the respective school to the spectator in question notifying them of the ejection and the dates that they must be absent from the contests.
2. **Second Offense** – Removal from all home athletic contests for that season. If applicable, relinquishing their season pass to the athletic department. A letter of ejection will be sent from the Office of the Superintendent notifying the spectator of the ejection.
3. **Third Offense** – Removal from all home Hamilton City School District athletic contests for the year. If applicable, relinquishing their season pass to the athletic department. A letter of ejection will be sent from the Office of the Superintendent notifying the spectator of the ejection.

Any athletic official, including but not limited to, officials, athletic directors/coordinators, principals, assistant principals, site directors and anyone else in an administrative role on the site, may uphold enforcement of an ejection.

Conduct of Student-Athlete:

The conduct of a student-athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that your behavior be above reproach in all of the following areas:

In the classroom – In the academic area, a good athlete becomes a good student. An individual must give maximum effort in the classroom at all times. As a student-athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies to ensure acceptable grades.

In addition to maintaining good scholarship, a student-athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times.

Student discipline referral – Any student-athlete referred to the office for a school rules violation ***may*** be denied the privilege of participation in all athletic activities for a period of time determined by either the coach or Athletic Director.

Citizenship/Character – Any conduct which may be deemed by the principal/designee to be both of a serious nature, or a violation of state, local, or federal criminal or juvenile law, ***may*** cause the participant to be declared ineligible by the administrative office. This includes, but is not limited to, actions in the classroom, on social media, and on the field or court.

On the field – In the area of athletic competition, a true student-athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics, and learns fast that losing is part of the game. You should be gracious in defeat and

modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well-played game after the contest, whether in defeat or victory.

Personal Misconduct:

Any student-athlete whose conduct is judged to reflect negatively upon themselves, the team or the school shall be subject to disciplinary action. Specific areas include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Violations of the Substance Abuse Policy
2. Missing team practices or team meetings.
3. Insubordination to school or contest officials.
4. Violations of OHSAA Bylaws and Policies
5. Violations of the Hamilton City School District Student Code of Conduct.
6. Criminal violations of the Ohio Revised Code resulting in charges other than a minor misdemeanor.
7. Violations of individual team rules and policies.
8. Inappropriate use of social media.

Student-athletes who engage in an act of personal misconduct shall be subjected to disciplinary action which may include being denied the privilege of participating in interscholastic athletics.

Communication with a coach is important.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.

Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

In addition, the athletic department requests that out of respect for the student-athletes, please be mindful to not air personal grievances on any form of social media. The athletic department policy requires a 24 hours "cool down" period before confronting a coach or scheduling a meeting with a coach.

As a final step, call and set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics to discuss the situation if it was not resolved in the meeting with the coach

Communication with the Athletic Director is important.

Should you ever have the need to talk to the Athletic Director, please call to set up an appointment. Every effort will be made to meet as soon as possible. Please understand topics about other athletes, parents or personal coach attacks will not be up for discussion. We also welcome any positive discussions you would like to have. WE definitely want to hear all the great things going on in your child's athletic season

Ejection of Student-Athletes from Athletic Contests:

By adoption of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, any student-athlete ejected from an interscholastic contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or flagrant foul shall be ineligible for contests for the remainder of that day as well as for all contests in that sport until two (2) regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection (one contest in football).

If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the season, the student-athlete shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which the student-athlete participates. A student/athlete under suspension may not sit on the team bench, enter the locker room or be affiliated with the team in any way traveling to, during or traveling after the contest(s).

A student-athlete who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A student-athlete who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the Commissioner. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure that this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is enforced. When an ineligible student is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory.

This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Commissioner as specified in the OHSAA Tournament Regulations. In accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of the contest official are final.

Ejection of Coaches from Athletic Contests:

By adoption of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, any coach ejected from an interscholastic contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be suspended from coaching in contests for the remainder of that day as well as for all contests in that sport until two (2) regular season/tournament contests are played (one contest in football).

If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year.

A coach who has been suspended from coaching may attend the contest, but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest including halftime or intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the team to an away contest.

A coach who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time shall be suspended indefinitely and be required to attend a mandatory conference with the Commissioner at the OHSAA headquarters.

The principal or his/her designee of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 12.

This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the Commissioner as specified in the OHSAA Tournament Regulations. In accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

Parental Financial Obligations and Equipment:

Participation Fees:

All student-athletes in grades 7-12 will be required to pay an athletic program fee, which is referred to as a Participation Fee. The Participation Fee structure is as follows:

1. Student-athletes in grades 9-12 will pay a participation fee of \$100.00 per sports season. If a

- student-athlete receives permission to participate in more than one (1) sport in a sports season, they will not have to pay an additional participation fee.
2. Student-athletes in grades 7-8 will pay a participation fee of \$75.00 per sports season. If a student-athlete receives permission to participate in more than one (1) sport in a sports season, they will not have to pay an additional participation fee.
 3. There is a Family Cap of \$250.00.
 4. Payments for Hamilton High School student-athletes should be made in the athletic office. Payments for middle school students should be made in the main office of the middle school in which the student-athlete attends.
 5. Full payment of the participation fee is due on the date of the first regular season contest of that sport.
 6. In cases of financial hardship, the payment plan schedule below may be arranged through the athletic director.
 - a. A payment of half the participation fee is due on the date of the first regular season season contest of that sport with the remaining balance of the participation fee due on a mid-season date as decided by the athletic director that is communicated to the coaches, parents, and student-athletes at the beginning of the sports season.
 7. Student-athletes not paying the participation fee or meeting the established payment deadlines will be denied participation in Hamilton's interscholastic programs.
 8. All student-athletes and their families will receive a receipt for payment of their participation fees and all other fees. This receipt will come through Final Forms.
 9. Any district issued item, including, but not limited to uniforms, not turned in at the end of the season will be applied to the athletes school fees.

Requirements for Student-Athlete Participation:

Remember that as a student-athlete, participation in interscholastic activities is a privilege afforded to you by the school district and you are not eligible to participate in any sport until the following items have been completed:

1. Physical examination completed and on file in the athletic office. (Final Forms)
2. Emergency Medical Card/Form returned to the coach. (Final Forms)
3. All academic eligibility requirements have been satisfied.
4. Attend a pre-season rules meeting accompanied by parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the start of the season.
5. OHSAA Authorization Form on file, signed by parent(s)/guardian(s) and student-athlete. (Final Forms)
6. OHSAA Eligibility and Authorization Form on file, signed by parent(s)/guardian(s) and student-athlete. (Final Forms)
7. Hamilton City School District Equipment and Student-Athlete Assumption of Risk Waiver Form on file, signed by parent(s)/guardian(s) and student-athlete. (Final Forms)

Many of the requirements above must be completed through the Final Forms web-based program. The web address for Final Forms is: www.hamiltonbigblue.finalforms.com

Code of Conduct of Student-Athlete:

The Hamilton Board of Education and the Administration recognize that interscholastic activities are a valuable part of the student's total educational experience.

It is important to remember, however, that membership in these activities is a *privilege*, and student participants will have higher levels of behavioral expectations placed upon them.

Because participants in interscholastic activities serve as representatives of our school and community, they are expected to serve as role models in the areas of leadership, character, and dependability.

As a student-athlete of the Hamilton City School District, you have certain responsibilities. In addition to abiding by the rules and regulations as set forth by the OHSAA and the school district's Student Code of Conduct, student-athletes must also follow the rules established by the athletic department and the individual coaches.

Student-athletes who fail to fulfill these responsibilities and follow the established rules, will be handled in a firm, fair and consistent manner.

The following rules apply to all participants in interscholastic activities in grades 7 - 12:

1. The **Interscholastic Code of Conduct** will be in effect for the entire year (365 days) and is in effect at any time, whether or not the activity is currently in session or season, and any place, on or off the school property.
2. Any allegation of an infraction of this code of conduct shall be referred to the building administrator or his/her designee. He/she will determine if an infraction has occurred. If it is determined that an infraction has occurred, the student-athlete, the student-athlete's parents/guardians (if the participant is under the age of 18), and the student-athlete's coach will be notified.
3. Hamilton student-athletes take pride in their school, in superior conditioning, playing as a team and giving 100% to being successful. Therefore, a student-athlete should conduct himself/herself both in and out of school in a manner that reflects good citizenship.

Acts of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, violation of school/class rules, inappropriate social media activity, and violation of laws (excluding traffic violations) and unsportsmanlike conduct.

Consequences levied will be consistent with the nature of the offense and may include suspension from participation from all interscholastic activities for a period of one calendar year.

4. A student under a disciplinary out-of-school suspension, expulsion or exclusion will not be eligible to participate and/or attend (in any manner) any interscholastic activities during the suspension or expulsion.
5. It is a privilege to be a member of the school's athletic team; a right which can only be earned when one abides by the rules of the school and of the game. Our student-athletes are expected to be models of good behavior. They are representing the school and the community at athletic events throughout the area. We want to be proud of their efforts.

Rules concerning eligibility:

The Ohio High School Athletic Association rules concerning eligibility are to be discussed with each team. (**See Bylaw 4 of the OHSAA Handbook**)

1. In order to be eligible, a student in grade 9, 10, 11 or 12 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period, and received passing grades during that grading period in subjects that earn a minimum of 5.0 credits per year toward graduation.
2. Summer school grades earned may **NOT** be used to substitute for failing grades from the last grading period of the regular school year.
3. Exemplary attendance is expected of student-athletes at all times. A student-athlete who is not in school for the **ENTIRE** day may not be permitted to participate in an athletic contest that evening. In order to participate in a practice or game, student-athletes must be in attendance for a minimum of half of the school day the day of the contest. At the high school, this is considered to be present for four (4) periods.
4. It is recommended that a student be a member of no more than one interscholastic team at any one time. If a student-athlete obtains approval from both coaches and Athletic Director, he/she may participate in more than one sport during a single sports season. In this case, the student-athlete must declare which sport is the primary sport. If a conflict arises due to practices or games, the primary sport's schedule will take precedence over the declared secondary sport.
5. When a student-athlete is removed or quits a team, organized conditioning or participation on another team is forbidden until the original sport regular season (as defined by the OHSAA) is completed.
6. A student-athlete may be declared ineligible by the administrative office for reasons of discipline (which may include, but is not limited to a violation of local, state or federal criminal or juvenile law).
7. In accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 4-3 "Enrollment & Attendance", a student may participate in a school sponsored sport if they are attending full-time in accordance with all duly adopted Board of Education or similar governing board policies of that school.

A student may meet one of the following exceptions:

- A) Be enrolled in a separate ninth grade building,
 - B) Be enrolled in a joint vocational school
 - C) Be enrolled full-time in a postsecondary institution (College Credit Plus),
 - D) Be enrolled in a non-traditional (alternative, magnet, career-oriented, digital, etc), or
 - E) Be receiving home instruction in accordance with division (A) (2) of section 3321.04 of the Revised Code and is enrolled in a non-public member school.
8. Medical clearance and insurance waivers are required prior to participation. Physicals are valid for a period of time as defined in the OHSAA Handbook (if the pre-participation athletic evaluation is conducted between May 1 and June 1, the pre-participation evaluation, signed by a medical examiner, is valid for one calendar year plus the remainder of the next school year).

Suspension from School:

A student-athlete is not permitted to participate while suspended from school. **If a student-athlete receives a second suspension during his/her sport season, the athlete will be removed from the team.**

The suspension from athletic participation will begin on the day that the athlete receives notification of his/her suspension from school. A student-athlete will not be reinstated for participation until the end of the school day following his/her return to school.

Attendance for Practices:

Athletes are expected to attend all practices. Absence from practice may cause the athlete to miss necessary preparation for an upcoming contest. Absences from practice may result in non-participation in that contest.

1. Excused Absence from Practice:

- a. Athletes may be excused due to illness, injury, or prior approval from the coach, preferably in writing.
- b. The reason for the absence must be considered unavoidable if the coach is to consider the absence to be an "excused" absence.
- c. Sudden illness and emergency situations may occur from time to time.
- d. Other extenuating circumstances or special exceptions will be handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the appropriate head coach and the Athletic Director.

2. Unexcused Absence from Practice:

An unexcused absence is considered to be any absence not falling into the excused absence category. In the event unexcused absences occur, the following procedures will be followed by each head coach of every Hamilton athletic program:

- a. **First unexcused absence** incident will be documented by the coach and will result in the student-athlete being denied participation in a minimum of the next athletic contest.
- b. **Second unexcused absence** incident will be documented by the coach and will result in the student-athlete being denied participation in a minimum of the next two (2) athletic contests.
- c. **Third unexcused absence** incident will be documented by the coach and will result in the student-athlete being denied participation in the remainder of the interscholastic athletic contest.

Attendance for Contests: (*Policy includes all weekend contests*)

1. Excused Absence from a Contest:

- a. An excused absence requires advance notice from the student-athlete to the appropriate coach. Athletes may be excused due to illness, injury, or prior approval from the coach, preferably in writing.
- b. The reason for the absence must be considered unavoidable if the coach is to consider the absence to be an "excused" absence.
- c. Sudden illness and emergency situations may occur from time to time.
- d. Other extenuating circumstances or special exceptions will be handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the appropriate head coach in conjunction with the District Athletic Director.

2. **Unexcused Absence from a Contest:** An unexcused absence is considered to be any absence not falling into the excused absence category. In the event unexcused absences occur, the

following procedures will be followed by each head coach of every Hamilton athletic program:

- a. First unexcused absence incident will be documented by the coach and will result in the student-athlete being denied participation in the next athletic contest.
- b. Second unexcused absence incident will be documented by the coach and will result in the student-athlete being denied participation in the next two (2) athletic contests.
- c. Third unexcused absence incident will be documented by the coach and will result in the student-athlete being denied participation in the remainder of the interscholastic athletic contest.

Insubordination and Unsportsmanlike Conduct:

Insubordination and unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. This is an extremely broad area which covers a wide variety of behaviors which cannot be specifically enumerated by this Student Athletic Handbook. Incidents of insubordination and unsportsmanlike conduct shall be dealt with in proportion to the seriousness of the behavior and the student's history of past incidents, if any. Students may face discipline up to and including suspension from competition, removal from the team and suspension and expulsion from school.

Vacation Policy:

Vacations by athletic team members during a sports season are discouraged.

Parents/student-athletes wishing to do so may want to reconsider their commitment to being a student-athlete.

However, in the event of an unavoidable absence due to a vacation, the athlete must:

1. Contact the head coach no later than one week prior to the vacation.
2. Assume the consequences related to their status on the team as a starter, backup, etc. deemed appropriate by the coaching staff

Transportation/Travel Rules:

Rules for school bus travel for athletic contests shall be essentially the same as for students being transported to and from school. Exceptions may be permitted by agreement between coach and bus driver, provided safety is not compromised.

1. Student-athletes must travel to and come from all athletic games or scrimmages in buses or vans when provided by the school district. Violation of this policy may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the team.
2. If an unusual event, extenuating circumstance or emergency arises the parent/guardian may transport their son/daughter to and/or from the contest. In such a case, the parent/guardian must submit the Alternate Transportation Form in advance (when possible) to the coach who will forward the document to the athletic director or other school administrator.
3. Under no circumstances is a student-athlete permitted to ride home from an away contest with another student or parent/guardian.
4. Excessive noise is a definite safety factor. Keep all conversations, music and victory celebrations to reasonable and safe levels.
5. Student-athletes should remain in their seats at all times.
6. State law dictates that there is no food to be eaten on school buses.
7. Littering is a fineable offense and reflects poorly on the entire athletic program. Do not throw anything from the windows of the bus. Also, please remove any trash at the

- conclusion of the trip. The bus should be in the same condition as when the trip began.
8. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and his / her directions must be followed the same as any teacher or coach. The driver is solely concerned with your safe transportation to and from the contest.
 9. Insubordination toward a school bus driver will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the misconduct section of the school Code of Conduct and the Athletic Handbook.

Student-Athlete Activity Termination:

When an athlete quits a sport team or sport activity prior to the conclusion of the sport season, the student-athlete will be required to sit out for 30 days or until the end of all contests in that sport season are complete, whichever occurs first.

Participation may not begin in the new sport until all obligations to the previous sport have been met. Obligations may include but are not limited to: completion of pay to participate fees, return of uniforms or other school property, etc.

Individual Coach/Team Rules:

Coaches will establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the Athletic Director. These additional rules for a particular sport must be stipulated in writing and distributed to all team members and parents prior to the season.

Penalties for violations of these rules must also be included. These penalties shall be administered by the coach. These penalties may be different from the ones in this handbook and must be followed according to coaches policies. Copies of all additional team rules of coaches are on file in the Athletic Office.

Candidates Reporting Late for Team Tryouts:

The coach may disqualify a candidate for any sports activity when the student reports late if:

1. The sport has been in session for two weeks or more
2. Final team cuts have been made
3. The first scheduled competition has been completed

In the case of special circumstances such as student transfer, student illness or injury, etc., the good judgment of the coach and the best interest of the athlete must be the determining factors in waiving these guidelines. The Athletic Director must approve any such waiving of these guidelines.

Discipline Records:

Prior to team selection, the head coach may have the responsibility of meeting with administrators to discuss prospective student-athletes' disciplinary records. The behavior and demeanor of students representing the Hamilton City School District through extra-curricular athletics should be reflective of both school and community standards.

Interscholastic Extracurricular Eligibility (Grades 7-12)

The Board of Education recognizes the values associated with and gained as a result of participation in those interscholastic extracurricular activities and further recognizes the incentives with participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities provide student-athletes to achieve success in the classroom.

Interscholastic extracurricular eligibility will be evaluated during each nine-week grading period.

Therefore, in order to be eligible to participate in any interscholastic extracurricular activities, students must meet the following requirements as established by Board policy.

Criteria for Eligibility Grades 9-12:

1. Students must meet all Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) guidelines as listed and explained in the OHSAA student bulletin and listed in the Hamilton City Schools Student Handbook, *and*
2. Students must be currently enrolled in Hamilton High School and be passing a minimum of FIVE (5) units of credit the previous grading period. (All classes at Hamilton High School and the Hamilton Freshman Campus are considered core classes **EXCEPT**: Fit for Life, Team Sports and Strength and Fitness), *and*
3. In addition to passing the minimum of five (5) units of credit, the student must maintain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of a 1.75 derived from the previous quarter grades, *or*
4. Maintain a cumulative (overall) non-weighted GPA of 1.75.

Good Citizenship:

Good citizenship is a condition in which a student's nine week GPA and cumulative GPA are below a 1.75, but the student-athlete meets the requirements of the Ohio High School Athletic Association Eligibility Bylaw 4 which states that the student-athlete must be passing the equivalent of five (5) core classes with no specific GPA requirement.

If a student-athlete meets this criteria but falls short of achieving a 1.75 GPA, but is above a 1.00 GPA may participate in athletics if they meet the following criteria:

1. The athlete will attend a mandatory study table that must be approved by the Athletic Dept and run by the coach of the season the athlete is participating in. Failure to participate in the approved plan will result in the athlete being declared ineligible. Accountability for this will be maintained by the head coach.

If a student-athlete does not attend a session due to an unexcused absence, the student-athlete may be removed from the athletic team for the remainder of that season. These are mandatory to continue participation.

There would be no appeal process associated with this exemption.

Additionally student athletes:

- Students in grades 9-12 must pass five (5) subjects that carry the weight of five (5) credits per year toward graduation during the preceding grading period or the equivalent.
- These standards become effective based on a student's grades from the first grading period of the affected school year.
- A student entering the ninth grade for the first time must have passed at least 5 of their courses during the preceding grading period of the eighth grade year, and must meet the attendance requirements.
- The establishment of eligibility of a student who attended another school during the preceding grading period rests with the receiving school. This must be confirmed by academic records from the sending school.
- Scholastic deficiencies at the end of any grading period for the seventh and subsequent grades cannot be removed by summer school, night school, tutoring, or by examination other than that accorded every other student because of illness, certified by a physician and concluded within seven (7) days after the official close of the grading period. However, summer school or night school may be used to improve the cumulative GPA.
- The eligibility of a transfer student is to be based on the rules of the Ohio High School Athletic Association until the student has an opportunity to meet Hamilton City School District eligibility standards. This would be based on a preceding grading period GPA for a minimum of one full grading period and a cumulative GPA for a minimum of one full semester.
- Any student who has entered the school through the district's open enrollment policy is not automatically eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. A transfer student's eligibility must be established and confirmed before they will be permitted to participate.
- Prior to team selection, the head coach will have the responsibility of meeting with administrators to discuss prospective athletes' disciplinary records. The behavior and demeanor of students representing the Hamilton City School District through extra-curricular athletics should be reflective of both school and community standards.

Criteria for Eligibility Grades 7-8:

1. Students enrolled in the High School after advancement from the eighth (8) grade must meet OHSAA guidelines, which is passing a minimum of five (5) courses of all subjects taken from the preceding grading period in the eighth (8) grade.
2. Students enrolled in the Middle School after advancement from the seventh (7) to the eighth (8) grade must also meet OHSAA guidelines, which is passing a minimum of five (5) courses of all subjects taken from the preceding grading period in the seventh (7) grade and also meet the guidelines as stated above of the Hamilton City Schools.
3. Students enrolling in the seventh (7) grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. However, following the end

of the first (1) grading period, all students will be held to the eligibility standards of the Hamilton City School District as described above.

The Board of Education adopts the Ohio High School Athletic Association rules for all other eligibility and participation issues regarding interscholastic athletic programs. The Board will periodically review this policy and make the necessary adjustments when required.

In addressing Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3313.535 (D), the Board has adopted these policies and they shall apply to all students enrolled in the District.

Student-Athlete Transfers:

The transfer bylaws of the OHSAA apply to all students in grades 9-12.

Student Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Policy – Interscholastic Athletics:

Participation in interscholastic activities with the Hamilton City School District is not a right but a privilege which may be regulated by the Board of Education. It is required that students participating in athletic activities become familiar with and understand the rules and regulations required of student-athletes within the Hamilton City School District.

Students participating in athletic programs are required to abide by the rules and policies as set forth in the policy at all times regardless of whether or not the student is on school grounds, attending a school function or activity, on private property or at a private party.

Therefore, any use or possession of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol or attempting to do the same shall not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct and this Student Athletic Handbook, regardless of where such conduct occurs.

Students participating in athletic activities must become familiar with and understand the rules and regulations for students participating in athletic activities. With prior approval by the building principal or his/her designee, as may be appropriate, additional standards and rules may be established in writing by the activity advisor/coach and become effective when given to the student-athlete.

The standards or rules shall be a part of the Code of Conduct for the specific activity. Students are expected to abide by all rules and regulations as well as any and all training rules or organizational rules associated with the athletic activity. Violation of these rules and regulations and/or the Hamilton City School District Code of Conduct are prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action could lead to suspension, expulsion or removal from school and/or the athletic activity in accordance with these rules and the Ohio Revised Code.

The student code of conduct and all interscholastic organization rules shall be accessible in the main office of the school, on the District's website and/or the Athletic Department website.

It must be understood by all student-athletes and their parents/guardians that a condition to participating in the athletic program at the Hamilton City School District requires a commitment to follow the rules, regulations, policies and procedures established by the District for the implementation of its athletic program.

It should also be understood that a student who violates these rules, regulations, policies and procedures shall face disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include removal from school pursuant to the student code of conduct and the Ohio Revised Code 3313.66. A student removed from participation in athletics shall be given an informal hearing with the building principal.

Substance Abuse Offenses and Disciplinary Action:

Use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance not specifically prescribed by a physician is expressly forbidden.

Anyone who aids or abets another in committing an infraction concerning alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or illegal drugs, will be considered in violation of this code.

The policy is in effect 24 hours a day from the first date that a student joins a team until the end of the student's high school career. The policy applies to alcohol, tobacco or any controlled substances. Any offenses to this policy are considered cumulative.

A student's second infraction builds on the student's first infraction no matter the type of offense. For example, a student with a disciplinary incident of citizenship/character as a freshman and then an alcohol/drug/tobacco offense as a junior will be dealt with on the second offense level and vice versa.

Consequences for first offense for use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance not specifically prescribed by a physician:

1. The student is suspended from school and from all team activities indefinitely.
2. The participant will not participate in the next practice, contest/event after determining an infraction has occurred and will be removed from any leadership role (i.e. officer, captain) for the remainder of the year or sport season.
3. The suspension includes all practices, tournament games, contests, and events.
4. The suspension period **may** be reduced to a minimum of 20% (rounded to the nearest whole number) of regular season contests/events upon successful completion of a substance abuse assessment. To be considered for reinstatement, the student and the parent/guardian must have complied with the following and must have been fully honest and cooperative.

** Prior to consideration for reinstatement, a student must show evidence of scheduling a complete tobacco, drug, and/or alcohol assessment. The assessment will be at the family/student expense. The student must follow any suggestions/recommendations by the counselor.*

Failure to complete such agreed class or counseling within one calendar year shall itself be considered a violation of this Code of Conduct. Any number of suspended games, contests and/or events not fulfilled by the current season will be carried over into the next co/extra-curricular activity in which the student participates (for the entire season).

Consequences for second offense for the use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance not specifically prescribed by a physician:

1. The student is suspended from school and from all team activities indefinitely.
2. The participant will not participate in the next practice, contest/event after determining

an infraction has occurred.

3. The suspension includes all practices, tournament games, contests, and events.
4. The suspension period **may** be reduced to a minimum of 50% (rounded to the nearest whole number) of regular season contests/events upon successful completion of a substance abuse assessment. To be considered for reinstatement, the student and the parent/guardian must have complied with the following and must have been fully honest and cooperative.

** Prior to consideration for reinstatement, a student must show evidence of scheduling a complete tobacco, drug, and/or alcohol assessment. The assessment will be at the family/student expense. The student must follow any suggestions/recommendations by the counselor.*

Failure to complete such agreed class or counseling within one calendar year shall itself be considered a violation of this Code of Conduct. Any number of suspended games, contests and/or events not fulfilled by the current season will be carried over into the next co/extra-curricular activity in which the student participates (for the entire season).

Consequences for third offense for use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or any controlled substance not specifically prescribed by a physician:

1. The student is denied participation in the interscholastic sports program for one calendar year from the date of the offense.

Reinstatement Procedures:

Any reinstatement, if granted, is probationary and can be rescinded at any time during the period of the initial suspension. **The reinstatement will be revoked if the student does not make timely progress toward completing any remaining requirements for probationary reinstatement or for any action considered derogatory to the school system, its students, employees and/or programs.** Revocation shall be at the sole discretion of the building administrator and the decision will be final.

NOTE:

Student "self-referrals" are encouraged and should be directed to the building administrator or his/her designee. If the self-referral takes place prior to an investigation, involving that student and others involved, consideration will be given to the student's willingness to cooperate.

Additionally:

1. Student-athletes denied participation for a limited period of time may be eligible for athletic awards at the End of Season Awards Program.
2. Reasonable accommodations may be made for the student-athlete to train in preparation for the next game or season in which they are eligible to participate. The accommodation granted will be at the discretion of the building administrator or his/her designee in agreement with the advisor/coach.

Self-Referral Policy:

Any Student who feels that they have a substance abuse problem and seeks assistance prior to any documented violation of the policy shall receive no consequence, but shall be expected to seek and complete a professional assessment. Refusal or failure to complete the assessment will result in the first violation penalty as provided in this policy. Self-referrals which result in no prohibition from

participation are provided in this policy. A self-referral cannot be used by a student-athlete as a method to avoid consequences once the policy has been violated and a student has been identified as having violated such policy.

Notification Procedures:

The student-athlete and his/her parent or guardian will be provided a copy of the Student Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Policy in the Athletic Manual at the beginning of each season, activity or time of entry into a program. This policy is to be explained to the student-athlete by the head coach, advisor, director or teacher.

Relationship of these Policies/Regulations to the Code of Student Conduct:

These policies and regulations supplement the District's Code of Student Conduct and are administered independently of that code. A violation of these regulations may also independently violate the Code of Student Conduct and result in suspension or expulsion from school or removal from curricular or extracurricular activity under the provisions that Code and addition to any disciplinary penalty that may be called for under these regulations.

Costs:

All costs for any rehabilitation program or counseling for an alcohol, drug or tobacco problem under these regulations shall be the responsibility of the student.

Exclusion from Participation in Extracurricular Activities:

The student will be afforded the opportunity to appear at an informal hearing to challenge the reason(s) for intended suspension from extracurricular activities.

The informal hearing will be held with the athletic director or other building administrator. Within 24 hours following suspension, a letter of notification will be sent to the parent or guardian specifying the reason for the student's exclusion from participation, the period of time for the exclusion and options, if any.

The parent or guardian shall be notified by telephone, when possible, of the exclusion from participation.

The Right of Appeal:

Extracurricular suspensions may be appealed. If the suspension was issued by the building principal, an appeal is to be made to the Superintendent or Designee. In any case, the suspension may be appealed to the Board of Education.

Appeal to the Superintendent or Designee:

Should a student who is eighteen (18) or older or parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student who is a minor choose to appeal the suspension, they must do so within ten (10) days of the notice of suspension. The procedure for such will be provided in the regulations approved by the Board of Education.

Appeal to the Board of Education:

The student who is eighteen (18) or older or parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student who is a minor may appeal the Superintendent or designee's decision to the Board of Education if filed within ten (10) days of the notice of suspension. The procedure for such will be provided in the regulations approved by the Board of Education.

1. It shall be the responsibility of the principal, athletic director or coach to discipline an athlete for:
 - a. Violation of rules stated above.

- b. Violation of Board policies and school rules.
 - c. Violation of established team rules.
 - d. Violation of Ohio High School Athletic Association rules. Copies shall be available in the Athletic Office or Main Office of the school.
 - e. The Code of Conduct for student-athletes applies seven (7) days a week, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.
2. Students may be removed from an athletic team for the following offenses:
- a. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages, drugs, or other mind-altering substances.
 - b. The use of tobacco in any form.
 - c. Destroying or stealing athletic equipment or other school property.
 - d. Violation of athletic manual rules, team rules, Board of Education policies and/or OHSAA rules.
 - e. Any conduct which may be deemed by the principal/designee to be both of a serious nature and a violation of local, state or federal criminal or juvenile law.
 - f. Inappropriate use of social media.

Hazing and Bullying:

Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. This can include actions and words on social media accounts.

Throughout this policy the term bullying is used in place of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation is an intentional written, verbal or physical act that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once.

The intentional act also includes violence within a dating relationship. The behavior causes both mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student. This behavior is prohibited on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

Hazing, bullying and/or dating violence can include many different behaviors. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and/or attacks;
2. Threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. Extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors;
5. Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other web-based/online sites (known as cyber-bullying), such as the following:
 - a. Positing slurs on websites, social media sites, blogs or personal online journals;
 - b. Sending abusive or threatening emails, web site postings or comments and instant messages;
 - c. Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs or videos of students and/or distributing or posting the photos or videos online;
 - d. Using websites, social networking sites, blogs or personal online journals, emails or instant messages to circulate gossip and rumors to other students.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing, bullying and/or dating violence does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

Prohibited activities of any type, including those activities engaged in via computer and/or electronic communication devices are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times.

No administrator, teacher or other employee of the District shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any hazing and/or bullying activities. No students, including leaders of student organizations, are permitted to plan, encourage or engage in any hazing and/or bullying.

Administrators, teachers and all other District employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing, bullying or dating violence. If any of the prohibited behaviors are planned or discovered, involved students are informed by the discovering District employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all such activities immediately.

All hazing, bullying and/or dating violence incidents are reported immediately to the Superintendent/designee and appropriate discipline is administered.

School administrators shall notify both the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who commits acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or dating violence and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of students against whom such acts were committed, and shall allow access to any written reports pertaining to the incident, to the extent permitted by law.

The Superintendent/designee will provide the Board President with a report of any such incidents of hazing and/or bullying following all provisions as outlined in ORC 3313.666.

The administration provides training on the District's hazing and bullying policy to District employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students. Additional training is provided to elementary employees in violence and substance abuse prevention and positive youth development.

District employees, students and volunteers have qualified civil immunity for damages arising from reporting an incident of hazing and/or bullying. Administrators, teachers, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with State and Federal law.

No one is permitted to retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance or assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of hazing and/or bullying of an individual.

Sexting, Texting or Emailing:

In accordance with HB 1, HB 132 and Ohio Revised Code 2907.323, possessing, taking, disseminating, receiving, keeping or sharing of nude, obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images of photographs, by electronic data transfers does constitute a crime under state and/or federal law.

Any person involved in any of the above can be punished under the Code of Conduct and may be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. Students and families should be aware of these guidelines as legal charges and/or convictions do constitute some long lasting penalties. For additional clarification, please refer to the state and federal laws mentioned above.

Hamilton High School Athletic Awards Policy:

If any student-athlete is not a team member in good standing as a result of violating an existing Board of Education policy or not proving substantial effort to complete the required educational assistance program or assessment and follow-up program, the student-athlete will forfeit the privilege to attend the Sports Awards Program and to receive all letters and/or awards.

In addition, any student-athlete who quits a team and/or sport prior to the completion of the entire season (including any and all postseason tournaments), forfeits all rights to earn any awards for that sport.

Athletic Awards Program Format:

The Hamilton High School Sports Awards Program shall be open to the public and the press and is organized by the athletic administration.

Sports Awards Program Guidelines:

Award programs for Hamilton High School athletes should be conducted within 1 month of the season ending. The coach will communicate the date and time of the event to both players and parents. The athletic dept will make sure all awards are together for the coaches prior to the date of the recognition.

Student Managers and Statisticians Awards:

Student managers and statisticians must have the recommendation of the head coach of the athletic team to be eligible for an athletic award.

Uniforms:

In some sports, the student-athlete will be required to purchase a portion of the game uniform necessary for participation in the individual sport. Items purchased by the athlete will become their property.

District Purchased Uniforms and Equipment:

1. All student-athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them.
2. All equipment issued to a student-athlete is to be worn only at practice or scheduled games or scrimmages involving that particular sport. Exceptions must be approved by the coach.
3. Before any item is attached, added to, removed from or worn with a uniform that is issued to a student-athlete for a specific sport, the student-athlete must secure permission from the coach.
4. Each student-athlete is responsible for all equipment issued to them. Keep it clean and in the best possible condition. The Hamilton City School District is not responsible for lost or stolen equipment. Student-athletes are required to use a lock on athletic lockers to avoid theft.
5. All athletic equipment is the property of the Board of Education and the Athletic Department, therefore, school equipment may not be taken from the school building for the use of any other organization or personal use. Any exception must be approved by the Athletic Director.
6. All equipment issued to an athlete must be returned at the end of the sports season. Equipment that is not returned for any reason or is damaged beyond normal wear and tear must be paid for at REPLACEMENT cost. Equipment is to be returned or lost equipment paid for within one week of the last athletic contest. Any student-athlete who has not returned or paid for lost or damaged equipment within one week will be denied the right to participate in

athletics until the equipment is returned or paid.

7. Under certain circumstances equipment (i.e. helmets) may be sold to team members at the end of the season. This sale will be controlled by the head coach and the Athletic director. The price will be set by the Athletic Director. The money will be collected by the head coach or Athletic Director prior to the equipment being given to the student-athlete.

Lockers and Locker Room Procedures:

Section 3313.20 of the Ohio Revised Code authorizes a Board of Education to adopt a policy which authorizes a principal or his/her designee to search any student's locker and the contents thereof upon reasonable suspicion that the contents contain evidence of a criminal or school rule violation.

Lockers remain the property of the Hamilton City School District while on loan to students and are therefore subject to supervision and inspection by school authorities when and where necessary. It is the student's responsibility to use lockers for school purposes only.

Lockers are not to be used for articles which are harmful, dangerous, in violation of school or legal restrictions or disruptive to the school process. Such articles are subject to confiscation. Students are not permitted to mark or deface the outside of lockers. In such cases, the student breaking locker rules will be assessed a fine.

Locker Room rules:

1. Rough-housing of any kind is not permitted in the locker room.
2. Activities by individuals or teams that are meant to humiliate, degrade, intimidate, or employ physical force to other individual team members or coaches will not be tolerated. Participation in any form of hazing, or having knowledge about hazing taking place, and doing nothing, will not be tolerated.
3. No glass containers should be used in the locker room.
4. All spiked or cleated shoes must be put on and taken off outside the locker room in extreme or muddy weather conditions. No metal or hard plastic spikes or cleats are allowed in any other part of the school building.
5. Make sure that any valuables are locked up at all times. The Athletic Department is not responsible for lost or stolen objects. Student-athletes must supply their own lock.
6. Do not knowingly or unknowingly borrow anyone else's equipment.
7. Make sure you check all of your protective equipment everyday before practice or a game. If your equipment is damaged or you have any problems with it at all, please notify your coach immediately. Do not use damaged or faulty equipment.
8. Equipment must be removed from all lockers by the end of the first school day following the conclusion of each sports season.
9. The neatness and cleanliness of locker rooms are the joint responsibility of athletes, coaches and appropriate school personnel.
10. Students are not to be in the locker rooms at any time without the supervision of a coach.
11. Cell phones and cameras are **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** and may **NOT** be used in the locker room at any time.

Weight Room Use:

Strength training is a vital component of our athletic program. An increase in strength and speed may allow the student-athlete to become more competitive, as well as, aid in the prevention of injuries. All student-athletes are encouraged to utilize the weight room facilities of the Hamilton City

School District. No students are permitted to use any facilities of the Hamilton City School District unless they are under the direct supervision of a coach or approved staff member. When using these facilities, it is always important to exercise all safety precautions set forth by the coaches and trainers.

College Recruitment Policy:

In the event a student-athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. Inform your coach of such contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is available in the Athletic Office, Guidance Office, Main Office, on the Hamilton City School District website or the Hamilton High School Athletic website.

See the NCAA Eligibility Center website for additional information.

Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities:

An individual student who attempts to participate in too many extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities; and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts. Students are responsible to do everything they can to avoid a continuous conflict. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are unavoidable. It also means notifying the coach and faculty sponsors involved immediately when a conflict does arise. When conflicts do arise the sponsors will meet and attempt to work out a solution being extra careful as not to pressure the student or put them in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, the principal or his/her designee will have to make a decision based on the following criteria:

1. The "performance" (athletic contest, music concert/competition, school play or school musical) has priority over any scheduled practice or extra rehearsal.
2. The event a practice or extra rehearsal is scheduled at the same time as an athletic contest in which the student-athlete is participating, the athletic contest will have priority and the student-athlete is excused from the practice or extra rehearsal without penalty. However, make-up work or alternate assignments for grade compensation may be assigned.
3. The event that a "performance" conflicts with an athletic practice, the "performance" takes priority and non-participation by the student-athlete will not be penalized.
4. At times when events must be rescheduled and there exists a conflict, the previously scheduled performance or athletic contest has priority over the rescheduled event.
5. Any tournament game takes precedence over a regularly scheduled performance.
6. The relative importance of each event. (Should any team make it to the State Tournament, the participating student-athlete will be excused for the music or drama performance to participate in this experience. Other students not involved in the State Tournament and acting as part of the student body, will be expected to fulfill their other obligations first.
7. The relative contribution the student can make.
8. How long each event has been scheduled.
9. The event that practice occurs at the same time in music, drama, sports, etc., the practice time is divided equally between the two (2) activities.
10. Talk with the parent(s) or guardian(s).

Risk of Participation:

All student-athletes and parents or guardians must realize the risk of serious injury, permanent disability or death which may be the result of athletic participation. The Hamilton City School District will use the following safeguards to make every effort to eliminate injury:

1. Maintain a continuing education program for coaches to learn the most up-to-date techniques and skills to be taught in their sport.
2. Instruct all student-athletes about the dangers of participation in their particular sport.

Medical Insurance:

The Hamilton City Schools does **NOT** provide medical insurance for the student-athlete. Parents or legal guardians must provide all medical coverage and be responsible for any and all medical bills incurred as a result of an injury.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association does provide limited catastrophic accidental insurance that covers some medical expenses not covered by other insurance. The catastrophic insurance covers the period within one year of the date of injury.

The OHSAA insurance has a \$25,000 deductible and a maximum benefit of \$250,000. Coverage under this policy is provided automatically when a student is a member of an athletic team.

Parental Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies:

Upon entering the Hamilton City School District or at the time a student tries out for an athletic team, he/she will have access to this handbook which contains all the necessary information for accessing forms and information for participating in athletics.

Each parent or guardian is responsible to read all of the enclosed material and certify via Final Forms, that they understand the Athletic Eligibility Rules and Policies of the Hamilton City School District. In addition, each parent or guardian will be required to recertify each year via Final Forms.

Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet

For Interscholastic Athletics

Dear Parent/Guardian and Athletes,

This information sheet is provided to assist you and your child in recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Every athlete is different and responds to a brain injury differently, so seek medical attention if you suspect your child has a concussion. Once a concussion occurs, it is very important your athlete return to normal activities slowly, so he/she does not do more damage to his/her brain.

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain that may be caused by a blow, bump, or jolt to the head. Concussions may also happen after a fall or hit that jars the brain. A blow elsewhere on the body can cause a concussion even if an athlete does not hit his/her head directly. Concussions can range from mild to severe, and athletes can get a concussion even if they are wearing a helmet.

Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Athletes do not have to be “knocked out” to have a concussion. In fact, less than 1 out of 10 concussions result in loss of consciousness. Concussion symptoms can develop right away or up to 48 hours after the injury. Ignoring any signs or symptoms of a concussion puts your child's health at risk!

Signs Observed by Parents of Guardians

- ◆ *Appears dazed or stunned.*
- ◆ *Is confused about assignment or position.*
- ◆ *Forgets plays.*
- ◆ *Is unsure of game, score or opponent.*
- ◆ *Moves clumsily.*
- ◆ *Answers questions slowly.*
- ◆ *Loses consciousness (even briefly).*
- ◆ *Shows behavior or personality changes (irritability, sadness, nervousness, feeling more emotional).*
- ◆ *Can't recall events before or after hit or fall.*

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- ◆ *Any headache or “pressure” in head. (How badly it hurts does not matter.)*
- ◆ *Nausea or vomiting.*
- ◆ *Balance problems or dizziness.*
- ◆ *Double or blurry vision.*
- ◆ *Sensitivity to light and/or noise*
- ◆ *Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy.*
- ◆ *Concentration or memory problems.*
- ◆ *Confusion.*
- ◆ *Does not “feel right.”*
- ◆ *Trouble falling asleep.*
- ◆ *Sleeping more or less than usual.*

Be Honest

Encourage your athlete to be honest with you, his/her coach and your health care provider about his/her symptoms. Many young athletes get caught up in the moment and/or feel pressured to return to sports before they are ready. It is better to miss one game than the entire season... or risk permanent damage!

Seek Medical Attention Right Away

Seeking medical attention is an important first step if you suspect or are told your child has a concussion. A qualified health care professional will be able to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports and other daily activities.

- ◆ *No athlete should return to activity on the same day he/she gets a concussion.*
- ◆ *Athletes should **NEVER** return to practices/games if they still have **ANY** symptoms.*
- ◆ *Parents and coaches should never pressure any athlete to return to play.*

The Dangers of Returning Too Soon

Returning to play too early may cause Second Impact Syndrome (SIS) or Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS). SIS occurs when a second blow to the head happens before an athlete has completely recovered from a concussion. This second impact causes the brain to swell, possibly resulting in brain damage, paralysis, and even death. PCS can occur after a second impact. PCS can result in permanent, long-term concussion symptoms. The risk of SIS and PCS is the reason why no athlete should be allowed to participate in any physical activity before they are cleared by a qualified healthcare professional.

Recovery

A concussion can affect school, work, and sports. Along with coaches and teachers, the school nurse, athletic trainer, employer, and other school administrators should be aware of the athlete's injury and their roles in helping the child recover.

During the recovery time after a concussion, physical and mental rest are required. A concussion upsets the way the brain normally works and causes it to work longer and harder to complete even simple tasks. Activities that require concentration and focus may make symptoms worse and cause the brain to heal slower. Studies show that children's brains take several weeks to heal following a concussion.



<http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/vipp/child/returntoplay/concussion>

Rev. 09.16

Returning to Daily Activities

1. Be sure your child gets plenty of rest and enough sleep at night – no late nights. Keep the same bedtime weekdays and weekends.
2. Encourage daytime naps or rest breaks when your child feels tired or worn-out.
3. Limit your child's activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (including social activities, homework, video games, texting, computer, driving, job-related activities, movies, parties). These activities can slow the brain's recovery.
4. Limit your child's physical activity, especially those activities where another injury or blow to the head may occur.
5. Have your qualified health care professional check your child's symptoms at different times to help guide recovery.

Returning to Learn (School)

1. Your athlete may need to initially return to school on a limited basis, for example for only half-days, at first. This should be done under the supervision of a qualified health care professional.
2. Inform teacher(s), school counselor or administrator(s) about the injury and symptoms. School personnel should be instructed to watch for:
 - a. Increased problems paying attention.
 - b. Increased problems remembering or learning new information.
 - c. Longer time needed to complete tasks or assignments.
 - d. Greater irritability and decreased ability to cope with stress.
 - e. Symptoms worsen (headache, tiredness) when doing schoolwork.
3. Be sure your child takes multiple breaks during study time and watch for worsening of symptoms.
4. If your child is still having concussion symptoms, he/she may need extra help with school-related activities. As the symptoms decrease during recovery, the extra help or supports can be removed gradually.
5. For more information, please refer to Return to Learn on [the ODH website](#).

Resources

ODH Violence and Injury Prevention Program
<http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/vipp/child/returntoplay/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/index.html>

National Federation of State High School Associations
www.nfhs.org

Brain Injury Association of America
www.biausa.org/

Returning to Play

1. Returning to play is specific for each person, depending on the sport. Starting 4/26/13, Ohio law requires written permission from a health care provider before an athlete can return to play. Follow instructions and guidance provided by a health care professional. It is important that you, your child and your child's coach follow these instructions carefully.
2. Your child should NEVER return to play if he/she still has ANY symptoms. (Be sure that your child does not have any symptoms at rest and while doing any physical activity and/or activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration).
3. Ohio law prohibits your child from returning to a game or practice on the same day he/she was removed.
4. Be sure that the athletic trainer, coach and physical education teacher are aware of your child's injury and symptoms.
5. Your athlete should complete a step-by-step exercise-based progression, under the direction of a qualified healthcare professional.
6. A sample activity progression is listed below. Generally, each step should take no less than 24 hours so that your child's full recovery would take about one week once they have no symptoms at rest and with moderate exercise.*

Sample Activity Progression*

Step 1: Low levels of non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: walking, light jogging, and easy stationary biking for 20-30 minutes).

Step 2: Moderate, non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: moderate jogging, brief sprint running, moderate stationary biking, light calisthenics, and sport-specific drills without contact or collisions for 30-45 minutes).

Step 3: Heavy, non-contact physical activity, provided NO SYMPTOMS return during or after activity. (Examples: extensive sprint running, high intensity stationary biking, resistance exercise with machines and free weights, more intense non-contact sports specific drills, agility training and jumping drills for 45-60 minutes).

Step 4: Full contact in controlled practice or scrimmage.

Step 5: Full contact in game play.

*If any symptoms occur, the athlete should drop back to the previous step and try to progress again after a 24 hour rest period.

<http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/vipp/child/returntoplay/concussion>

