

SEEKONK HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



2026-2027

***“GO WARRIORS!
BUILD OUR LEGACY.”***

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Seekonk High School
2026 – 2027 Athletic Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Seekonk High School is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and the South Coast Conference (SCC). The athletic programs offered are designed to be supportive of the educational curriculum at the school. We believe that participation in sports provides a wide range of opportunities and experiences, which will assist the Student-Athlete in personal achievement. At Seekonk High, student-athletes are students first.

Competitive athletics is developed within the context of good sportsmanship, health and scholastic achievement. Participation requires a sense of commitment, integrity, leadership, and sound judgment. The coaching staff, while interested in winning, also recognizes the importance of other aspects of their work. They serve as teachers and mentors to the members of their teams, and take an interest in the student's personal and academic progress. Interscholastic competition is only one of the avenues through which Seekonk students learn essential life skills.

The purpose of this handbook is to act as a guide for student-athletes, coaches, and parents, so that each may understand the accepted procedures and policies of the Seekonk Athletic Department in conjunction with the MIAA. Described within the handbook are the expectations and procedures that should bring about a more efficient operation of the athletic program. Each student-athlete and coach are required to read this handbook and acknowledge its receipt before participating in a sport. Student-athletes are also required to review this handbook with their parents before each sport season.

PHILOSOPHY

The Athletic Program at Seekonk High School shall be an integral part of the educational process. Competitive athletics shall be developed within the context of sportsmanship, health, and scholastic achievement. The program should occupy a position at Seekonk High School comparable to that of other extracurricular activities.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage participation in athletic contests on the part of as many student-athletes as possible.
2. Promote the observance of good sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play, in all athletic contests and practices.
3. Maintain essential standards of eligibility.
4. Promote an atmosphere that will enable student-athletes to realize their athletic potential.
5. Encourage self-discipline, high standards, team spirit, and individual responsibility.
6. Realize that academics are the primary concern of each student-athlete.

STUDENT-ATHLETE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Exhibit the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
2. Avoid actions that might degrade the school, the sport, or the student-athlete.
3. Demonstrate courtesy to visiting teams, coaches, and officials.
4. Respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
5. Establish an amiable relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. Encourage leadership, use of initiative, and good judgment by all players on the team.
7. Remember that an athletic contest is only a game. In addition to the rules established by the MIAA, Seekonk also has in place a set of expectations designed to strengthen the athletic programs at the high school. These expectations are binding on all individuals that are part of the athletic program.
8. The STUDENT HANDBOOK and all other school rules are automatically part of the code of conduct for student-athletes. Any violation of the rules outlined in this Athletic Handbook, the Student Handbook, and/or the code issued by the coaches, is to be reported to the Dean of Athletics & Programs within 24 hours of the violation. A written report of the violation must be filed on the following school day and submitted to the Principal or their designee.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

All rules and regulations governing secondary school students' interscholastic athletic contests and practices are established by the MIAA. The MIAA is an organization of public and private high schools in Massachusetts approved by the MIAA Board of Directors and fulfilling the conditions for membership. MIAA approves and sponsors athletics activities in 33 sports, involving more than 200,000 young men and women who compete in approximately 100,000 competitions annually. Governance and administration of MIAA is shared among members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, high school administrators, Dean of Athletics & Programs, coaches, game officials, and licensed physicians; all of whom serve without compensation on more than thirty-five MIAA standing committees. The MIAA Handbook is available at www.miaa.net.

All coaches and personnel concerned with the administration of the athletic program must be thoroughly familiar with these regulations. Coaches are responsible for properly administering all rules governing their particular sport.

In areas where Seekonk's regulations are more stringent than that of the MIAA, Seekonk's rules take precedence.

ATHLETIC USER FEES

Seekonk High will collect user fees for athletics. The fee is \$200 and covers participation for the full year, and not just one season. There is a family cap of \$400 for 6th-12th grade. Fees will be collected using UniPay on the school website and deadlines will be after rosters are finalized. Any student who qualifies for free and reduced lunch is exempt from the fee, and Unified Sports do NOT have a user fee.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM

I. Superintendent of schools

- A. Is ultimately responsible for all phases of the public-school program.
- B. Delegates their authority of administration of the interscholastic athletic program through the high school principal (on site manager), who in turn delegates authority to the Dean of Athletics & Programs.

II. High School Principal (on site manager)

- A. Is responsible for all activities affecting students in their building.
- B. Is closely involved with the operation of the athletic program.
- C. Coordinates the athletic program with other school activities.
- D. Appoints Coaches.

III. Dean of Athletics and Programs

- A. Directs the operation of the athletic program, including the following responsibilities:
 - 1. Responsible for all schedules.
 - 2. Responsible for transportation.
 - 3. Responsible for obtaining officials for games.
 - 4. Responsible for maintaining the Athletic budget.
- B. Recommends candidates for coaching positions to the principal.
- C. Evaluates the athletic program and the staff.
- D. Responsible for making recommendations regarding scheduling, and the maintenance and upgrading of all athletic facilities.

IV. Coaching Staff

- A. Represents the school in interscholastic activities.
- B. Conduct their sport within the framework of the goals of the school system, the policies and procedures of the Athletic Department as contained herein, and the regulations of the MIAA.
- C. Hold pre-season meetings with students to discuss the philosophy of the program and inform them of responsibilities and regulations.
- D. Enforce the school's and coaches' code of conduct for student-athletes.
- E. Attend all meetings scheduled by the SCC and/or the Dean of Athletics & Programs.
- F. Supervise assistant coaches and assign their respective duties.

INSURANCE

A rider to the basic insurance plan covers all Seekonk student-athletes participating in the interscholastic athletic program. This policy is non-duplicating, which means that if you have any type of personal insurance coverage, our insurance will only pay what your insurance carrier does not and that will only be for what they determine to be reasonable and customary charges. If you do not have any type of personal coverage, our insurance will only pay reasonable and customary charges for treatment. Please note the limits for these charges will be determined by the carrier. It is understood that your insurance is primarily responsible for all medical bills. If your son or daughter is injured, no matter how slight, he or she should report it to their coach or the Athletic Trainer so that an accident form can be filled out. If a student-athlete is taken ill by an athletic-related injury after leaving practice or a game and receives medical assistance, they should report this fact to the coach or Athletic Trainer immediately upon returning to school. Additionally, student-athletes and/or parents may be required to complete a Head Injury Reporting Form.

RULES OF ELIGIBILITY: MIAA

In order to be eligible to represent a secondary school which is a member of the MIAA in athletic contests, the contestants must conform to all of the rules in this section. In the case of a game postponed or resulting in a tie, the eligibility of participants does not hold over until the game is actually played: the student-athletes who participate in any contest must be eligible under the rules on the date when the game is actually played. No special privileges, such as extra examinations, delayed marks, makeup opportunities or other favors not granted to every other student in the school are to be granted to student-athletes.

ABSENCE

Students who are absent from school may not participate in any school activity during that afternoon or evening. Students who arrive in school after 10:00 A.M. or who are dismissed before 11:00 A.M. are recorded as absent from school on that day. Any student who is absent from school is ineligible to play in a game that day or to participate in after school or evening activities on that same day. There may be extenuating circumstances that are exceptions to the above rule, however, only the building principal and/or their designee may decide when this rule may not apply.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Any student who fails more than one course during the academic quarter preceding an athletic season will be ineligible to participate until the next quarter's grades are released. Eligibility for the fall season will be determined by the fourth quarter grade from the previous year. An incomplete course counts as a failure until all course work is made up and the grade is recorded. A student cannot count for eligibility for any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject was pursued and failed during the immediately preceding academic year. A student who repeats work upon which they have once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility. A transfer student may not gain

academic eligibility if they were not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving school's eligibility standards. The Dean of Athletics & Programs will monitor athletic eligibility.

AGE LIMITS

A student-athlete shall be under nineteen years of age, except that a nineteen-year-old student-athlete may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that their 19th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of the year. For 9th grade competition, student-athletes shall be under 16 years of age, but a sixteen-year-old student-athlete may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that their 16th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. Principals must exercise great care in determining the ages of contestants, and in all doubtful cases, must secure birth certificates from the town clerk of the pupil's place of birth.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

All student-athletes and parents must realize that participation in sports carries a risk of injury including possible concussion, and, by agreeing to participate in athletic activities and signing a parental permission form on behalf of their student/themselves, they thereby assume the risks of such injury. It is imperative that extreme care and attention be used at all times.

AWARDS PRESENTATIONS

Each coach will provide a venue for the distribution of the varsity letters and certificates. It is recommended that the parents be invited. The Seekonk Boosters Club will donate to each team the varsity letters, certificates, most valuable team member, coach's award, and most improved team member awards.

CAPTAINS

The selection and removal of the captain of any sports team is at the discretion of the head coach. Becoming a captain is a privilege, not a right. It is up to the coach to determine if their behavior models proper and appropriate behavior.

DUTIES OF THE CAPTAIN (General - may change based on the sport):

1. Set the proper example for all to follow both in and out of the athletic program. Captains can be removed from their position if an incident occurs out of season.
2. Assist the coach as required.
3. Encourage team members to live up to the expectations related to their team.
4. Assume the role of spokesperson for the team.
5. Conduct practice duties under the supervision of the coach.

CHEMICAL HEALTH

From the start of the school year a student-athlete shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The student-athlete does not have to be participating in a sport or be in their sports season to be in violation of this rule. This rule applies to all student-athletes or would be student-athletes from the first day of school. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by their doctor.

The minimum penalties for violating the Chemical Health rules are:

FIRST VIOLATION: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student-athlete to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student-athlete shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport or in the student-athlete's next sport of participation. No exception is permitted for a student-athlete who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student-athlete be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated, i.e., all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

SECOND & SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student-athlete to be heard, that a violation has occurred, the student-athlete shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport or in the student's next sport of participation. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated, i.e., all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If after the second or subsequent violations the student-athlete of their own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student-athlete may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events in that sport or the student's next sport of participation. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated, i.e., all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year. (e.g., a student-athlete plays only field hockey in the fall and they violate the rule in winter and/or the spring of the same academic year, then they would serve the penalty[ies] during the fall season of the next academic year).

COACH'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At the first meeting, the coach shall distribute and explain all pertinent forms and review the athletic handbook with the potential candidates. The information to be distributed should include the following:

1. Information sheets for specific sports, such as, schedules of practices and games, letters to parents, preseason conditioning programs (if any), and the coaches code of conduct.
2. A copy of the team rules and consequences for rule violations.
3. A copy of the requirements necessary to earn a varsity letter.
4. Information regarding disqualifications related to hazing, substance use, and concussions.

TEAM ROSTER

Coaches will submit a final roster 1 week prior to the first contest so that eligibility may be checked. Coaches should report promptly to the Dean of Athletics & Programs any additions or deletions from their squads, both for the coaches and athlete's protection. Initial rosters will be collected and overseen by the Dean of Athletics & Programs through arbiter registration.

SELECTION OF THE TEAM

Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the head coach. However, their actions must be governed according to the limits as determined by the athletic department and they must choose their team members in conformity with the philosophy of the athletic program. The decision of the head coach is final. Appeals of the coaches' selection by students and or parents/guardians should be made first to the head coach, then to the Dean of Athletics and Programs, and finally to the principal. Coaches shall provide students trying out for a sport with the following information:

1. Extent of the tryout period;
2. Criteria to be used to select the team;
3. Number of team members to be selected, and
4. Practice and game commitments.

PARENT / COACH COMMUNICATION

Parenting and coaching are both extremely difficult jobs. By establishing an understanding of both jobs, all involved will be better able to accept the actions of the other and provide guidance, benefit, and knowledge to our student-athletes. As parents, when your child decides to become part of the Seekonk High School Athletic Program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from your child's coach.

Communication You Should Expect from the Coach:

1. Philosophy of the head coach.
2. Expectations for individual team members.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.

4. Team Requirements (practices, special equipment, out of season conditioning, etc.).
5. Procedure followed should the student-athlete be injured during participation.
6. Consequences and discipline that may result in the denial of student-athlete participation.

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notifications of any scheduling conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concerns about Philosophy and Expectations.
4. Communication regarding your student-athlete, not other members of the team.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:

1. The treatment of your student-athlete, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your student-athlete improve.
3. Concerns about your student-athlete's behavior.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coach:

It is very difficult to accept your student-athletes not playing as much as you may hope. Please remember that coaches take their jobs very seriously and make judgments based on what they believe to be in the best interest of team success. There is certainly room for discussion with a coach on issues like the ones listed above, but other things, such as those that follow should be left to the discretion of the coach:

1. Playing Time.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student-athletes.

Protocol:

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. They should normally follow a conversation between the coach and the student-athlete in order to head off a problem. If, after this initial conversation or meeting, a resolution remains unclear, then such a meeting would be encouraged with the goal being that each party involved comes away with a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences occur, the following protocol should be followed in the interest of reaching a proper resolution.

1. Have your student-athlete address the matter with the coach first.
2. Contact the coach and set up a meeting to discuss your concerns.
3. DO NOT CALL A COACH AT HOME/CELL. A coach's time with family is limited enough as it is during a season, and a coach's privacy is to be respected. All communication should

take place through the parent square portal.

4. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFRONT A COACH BEFORE OR AFTER A CONTEST OR PRACTICE. This is far too emotional a time to approach a situation rationally. Such encounters do nothing toward resolving an issue.
5. If the coach cannot be reached, speak to the Dean of Athletics and Programs at 508-336-7272 ext 62122. A return call will be arranged.

DRESS CODE

Athletes represent their school and community at all times. Dress for all contests will be in accordance with the established policy of the head coach.

CONTESTS

All participants are expected to attend all contests. Permission of the coach is required of any athlete that will miss scheduled contests. Failure to abide by this rule could result in a punishment established by the team coach.

ATHLETE OR COACH CONTEST EXPULSION

Any coach excluded by an official from an inter-school competition is ineligible to coach any inter-school competition in that sport until the next contest at the same level has been completed. The coach may not be present at the game site. If a coach is expelled from a competition, by a game official, that game official must file a written game exclusion report form of the incident with the coach's Dean of Athletics & Programs and School Principal. The coach also shall fill out an exclusion form. Both reports should be completed and forwarded by the official and coach within 24 hours of the competition. The principal should immediately forward copies of the officials' report to the Dean of Athletics & Programs, the superintendent, school committee chair-person, and MIAA executive director. If the game official fails to file their report, the coach is still bound by the suspension.

A student-athlete who is expelled out of a contest is ineligible to participate in any inter-school competition in that sport until the next contest at the same level has been completed. The student-athlete may not be present at the game site. A student-athlete or coach expelled from two contests, in the same season, **shall be disqualified from further participation in that sport and in all sports during that season for a year from the date of their second disqualification.**

A student-athlete or coach who physically assaults an official shall be expelled from the game immediately and banned from further participation or coaching in all sports for one year from the date of the offense. The game official who excludes a student-athlete under the provision of this rule should immediately inform the coach of each team, official scorer, and state the violation. If the game official fails to file their report but notifies the coaches and the scorer, the player is bound by the suspension.

The Dean of Athletics & Programs in charge of the contest or their designee is responsible for having the official MIAA Game Exclusion forms available for the game officials and is also responsible for sending copies, of the completed forms, to the principal of each school involved, both athletic directors of each school involved and the executive director of the MIAA. The official should complete the forms before leaving the site of the game or competition.

Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be within the authority of an official at all times at the game site. Any student-athlete in any sport who willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously injures or attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the game immediately and shall not participate in that sport season for one year from the date of the incident. Some of the reasons that an official may eject a student-athlete from a contest that would lead to a game expulsion are: fighting (caution should be taken to ensure that a player who is defending themselves is not penalized if they is not the aggressor), punching or kicking an opposing player, spitting, and other flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct which is defined as, but not limited to, violent action toward a player, official, and spectator, the use of foul abusive language, and the like.

If a coach or student-athlete is ruled out of the last contest of the season, the penalty carries over to the following year in that same sport season. However, if a team is playing in a tournament competition, it is considered an extension of the sports season. A senior and/or a student in their last year of eligibility who is disqualified from the last contest of the season will be penalized at the start of the next season in which they are a participant.

In addition, and as provided below, student-athletes will be removed from contests if a coach has reason to suspect that the student-athlete has suffered a concussion, and will not be permitted to return to play (RTP) except in accordance with the RTP protocols described below.

JOINING A TEAM

While most athletic teams have a tryout period for prospective athletes to join a squad, it is extremely important for the participant to join the team during these tryouts. No student-athlete will be allowed to join a team more than fourteen days after the MIAA start date for the season or after the official roster has been established, whichever comes first.

COMMITMENT

When a student tries out for a team, they do so with the thought and deliberation about the many commitments required for the participation in that sport. Any student-athlete who quits a team after the selection of the squad has been announced will not be permitted to participate on another team during that same season. A student-athlete who leaves a team has the responsibility to meet with the coach and discuss the reasons for leaving the team. Typed messages on parent square or emails are not acceptable means of communication for leaving/quitting a team, you must meet in person. The student-athlete is expected to turn in all school issued equipment at the time they leave/quit the team. The coach will notify the Dean of Athletics and Programs when a student-athlete leaves/quits a team. In

the event that a student-athlete is cut during tryouts for a sport, that student-athlete will be permitted to join a non-cut sport if they so desire. There may be a case with extenuating circumstances that merit an appeal. Those situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis of appeal with the principal exercising final judgment. The head coach has the discretion to cut a student-athlete after a tryout period who quit/left the team the previous season if the student-athlete has not taken meaningful steps of growth and maturity since leaving the team the previous season.

MEMBERSHIP IN SCHOOL

A student-athlete shall have been a member of some secondary school for a minimum of two months (exclusive of the summer vacation) and have been issued a report card preceding the contest, unless entering from elementary or junior high school during the same school year. A pupil's attendance at school does not start when they register in that school, but rather when they begin attending school sessions. When a student-athlete drops out of school and then decides later to return to the same school, they cannot become eligible for athletics until a report card has been issued and until the expiration of a minimum of two calendar months from the date of their return to the same school, and until the requirements of the Rules of Eligibility are fully met.

PARTICIPATION

A student-athlete shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than 12 consecutive athletic seasons beyond 8th grade. In no case may a student-athlete be eligible to participate in more than four of the three annual athletic seasons. In special cases where a student-athlete has been absent because of an accident or illness which prevented school attendance, the executive director or their designee shall have the authority to extend the student-athlete's eligibility upon presentation of a doctor's certificate on the student-athlete's behalf and a letter from the principal attesting to the inability of the student-athlete to attend school during the period of the student-athlete's absence because of an accident or illness. In instances where an extended eligibility is granted the student-athlete may be declared eligible only for the season(s) that the student-athlete's illness prevented them from participating.

Obligations - A student cannot participate in any athletic sport/season unless all outstanding obligations (textbooks, athletic knitwear, etc.) are met and settled.

REGISTRATION AND PHYSICALS

All student-athletes are required to register on Arbiter prior to the start of the season. In addition, the MIAA requires that all participants have a yearly physical examination prior to the start of the first practice. All such examinations must be documented on the Medical Examination form provided by the Athletic Department and filed with the student-athlete's records by the school nurse before any student is allowed to participate in a practice or contest. It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that no one takes part in a practice or contest if the student has not provided proof of a current physical examination. Student-athletes who have had a physical exam are covered by school insurance. One exam

per year will be sufficient for student-athletes participating in multiple sports seasons. A student in violation shall be suspended for the number of contests in which they participated without a proper physical.

PRACTICES

All participants are expected to attend all scheduled practices. Each coach will determine those guidelines, which are appropriate for each team. A team can function effectively only when all participants are present. Any player who skips practice is hurting themselves and the team. A player must notify the coach of any practice they may miss. The coach of the team will determine if the excuse is acceptable. Repeated offenses without an acceptable excuse could result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

PRACTICE LIMITATIONS

Definition of Practice: A practice is a reporting of a group of potential players who are under the direct or indirect supervision of a member of their high school coaching staff and who are receiving instructions in game skills or techniques.

Definition of Bona Fide Team members: A bona fide member of the school team is a student-athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions.

Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. First Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for 25% of the season. Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for MIAA tournament play for that sport and that season immediately upon confirmation of the second violation.

ATHLETES GOING ON VACATION DURING AN ATHLETIC SEASON

Individual coaches will make decisions on routine requests by evaluating the request and rendering their decision. Student-athletes who are accompanying their parents/guardians on vacation during extended vacation periods (Christmas, February, or April vacation) must understand that upon their return they would have to work to maintain their position on the team. There are no guarantees that they would be able to resume the role that they left prior to the vacation. Weekend trips and vacations taken by student/athletes that do not involve a parent/guardian could be subject to further penalties. Student-athletes who are absent because of conflicts with school-sponsored activities are allowed to select the most appropriate activity without penalty.

Note: A Winter Ski Trip is not academic in nature and therefore not an acceptable excuse for missing a Seekonk High School athletic contest or practice. Any student-athlete who will be away due to vacation, weekend trips, or school sponsored activities **MUST** inform the coach at the *beginning* of the season.

Failure to give prior notice for the above may result in a suspension of one game. The coach will evaluate all requests at the beginning of the season. There may be extenuating

circumstances that may merit an appeal. Such instances will be considered on a case-by-case situation with the principal exercising final judgment.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

It is recognized that all practice sessions should not conflict with the school day. All non-school day practice sessions must be cleared through the Dean of Athletics and Programs.

PENALTY FOR PLAYING IF INELIGIBLE

The principal of a school which plays a student-athlete who is later found to be ineligible, whether because of the student-athlete's own misstatements or lack of care on the part of the school authorities, shall notify in writing the principal(s) of the opposing school(s) and the executive director of the MIAA, forfeiting every competition in which the ineligible student/athlete competed. Since the principal is personally responsible for attesting to the eligibility of each contestant, and since allowing an ineligible player to participate in a contest is a serious matter, it is strongly advised that the principal give personal attention to this matter.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST BLOOD DISEASES

- * All open wounds must be covered.
- * Whenever possible, athletes should treat and cover their own wounds.
- * When rendering first aid to others, wear protective gloves at any time blood, body fluid containing visible blood, open wounds, or mucous membranes are involved.
- * Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after exposure to blood or other body fluid.
- * Do not use common towels to clean surfaces contaminated with blood or other body fluid containing blood.
- * Wash all soiled uniforms, towels, etc. in warm or hot, soapy water.
- * If blood or other body fluids containing visible blood are present during a practice session or athletic contest, play should be stopped immediately, the player's uniform removed, and the area cleaned.
- * An extra uniform should be available in the event that an athlete's uniform is soiled to the point that it presents an unsafe condition.
- * In general, use good hygienic practices.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

All student-athletes are required to register on Arbiter prior to the start of the season. As part of their registration students and families will be required to submit and/or agree to the following:

1. Physical examination form.
2. Receipt of concussion materials form as well as head injury reporting form if the student-athlete is injured during the sports season but not while engaging in school-sponsored activities.
3. Acknowledgement and agreement of the Anti-Hazing Law.

SUSPENSION

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to a game, practice, rehearsal, or meeting. Student-athletes cannot expect, and should not request disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic/activity reason. The school reserves the right to remove or suspend a student-athlete from an activity or team for disciplinary problems. It is expected that our student-athletes are model citizens both in and out of school and should set a positive example for all students.

When a student is suspended (whether in or out of school) the student is not permitted to participate in athletics during their suspension. At a minimum, upon return from the suspension an athlete must attend the same number of practices which they missed, prior to returning to play in games or competitions. *It should be noted that pregame routines and warm-ups will count toward a day of practice.* In areas where the MIAA's regulations are more stringent than that of this handbook, the MIAA's policies will always take precedence.

In all cases of discipline impacting a student-athlete's ability to participate in athletics, a student-athlete has the right to have their case reviewed. This may be done in the following manner:

1. The student-athlete and/or parent/guardian will have 2 school days after a disciplinary action has been assessed to request a meeting with the Dean of Athletics & Programs.
2. If they are not satisfied with the results of the meeting, the student-athlete and/or parent/guardian may ask to meet with the principal, Dean of Athletics & Programs, and the coach within 5 school days after step one has been followed.
3. If satisfactory disposition of the incident has not been reached after (1) and (2), then the parent may contact the Superintendent of Schools for possible further action. The decision of the Superintendent is final.

TRANSFERS

A student-athlete who transfers from any school to a MIAA member high school is ineligible

to participate in any interscholastic athletic contests at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which that student-athlete participated at the varsity level during the one-year period immediately preceding the transfer (except as exempted on the next page). For the purpose of this rule, no transfer will be deemed to have taken place if a student-athlete returns to their former school on or before the eleventh school day from the date of the last attendance there.

Varsity participation is defined as any appearance, as a competitor, in a varsity inter-school contest other than a scrimmage. For a transfer student-athlete to be eligible in a specific sport within the year of their transfer, the sending school principal, Dean of Athletics & Programs, and the head varsity coach(es) of the sport(s) in which the student/athlete desires to participate must certify by signature that the student-athlete did not participate at the varsity level during the year prior to the actual transfer. If it is later determined that the sending school falsely or erroneously certified eligibility, then the sending school will be subject to minimally a letter of censure, copies of which will be mailed to the school committee, superintendent, principal, Dean of Athletics & Programs, and reported in the MIAA Newsletter. The MIAA certification form must be dated and filed at the receiving school before the student-athlete is declared eligible (as to the transfer rule only) by the receiving school principal. All other eligibility requirements must also be satisfied before the student-athlete is permitted to participate.

Foreign exchange students are not eligible until form 100(A) is properly executed. A student-athlete who transfers after the start of the practice season is ineligible in all sports during that sport season.

Exemptions to the transfer rule:

- * Change of residence of a student-athlete's parents; a student-athlete's transfer is necessitated by a change of residence of their parent(s) to the area served by the school to which they transfer.
- * Junior high school transfer: A student-athlete who enters the 9th grade of a 4-year school and who has not been enrolled previously in the 9th grade.
- * Closed school: If a school no longer exists, a student-athlete in attendance may be eligible at the school of their choice immediately after the closing of the school, which they had been attending.

TRAVEL

All student-athletes must travel on the transportation provided by the school department. If the occasion warrants, the student-athlete may drive themselves with written permission from the parents. Permission of the Dean of Athletics & Programs is also required.

UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT

All student-athletes are responsible for any and all equipment issued and used in the participation of their sports. Failure to return any and all issued equipment will be subject to the student-athlete's individual financial restitution, plus they will be additionally placed on the obligation list. These individual's Report Cards will be held by the school, until all obligations are cleared with the Assistant Principal and the Dean of Athletics & Programs.

VARSITY LETTER GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Each coach will distribute a copy of their requirements to earn a varsity letter to each student-athlete at the beginning of the season. They will spend some time explaining the requirements to the athletes. At the conclusion of the season, they will publish who earned a varsity letter or certificate. However, ALL the student-athletes must abide by the following general requirements:

- Must uphold all the rules and regulations set forth in this Athletic Handbook.
- Must uphold all the rules and regulations set forth by the coach of their specific sport.
- Must remain a member of that team for the entire season. Entire season is defined as the time the coach informs you your season has ended. Student-athletes should have a good attendance record and demonstrate a true commitment to the team by displaying a positive attitude and effort.

MANAGEMENT AND RETURN TO PLAY REQUIREMENTS

Student-athletes and Parents are required to read and sign off on the Concussion and Opioid fact sheets prior to athletic participation.

Concussion Management and Return to Play Requirements "When in Doubt, Sit It Out"

"A concussion is a complex disturbance in brain function, due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as a goalpost." (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009).

Part I Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

A concussion should be suspected if any one or more of the following signs or symptoms are present, or if the coach/evaluator is unsure.

1. Signs of a concussion (what the athlete looks like) may include the following:
 - Confusion / disorientation / irritability

- Act silly / combative / aggressive
- Trouble resting / getting comfortable
- Repeatedly ask same questions
- Lack of concentration
- Dazed appearance
- Slow response / drowsiness
- Restless / irritable
- Incoherent / slurred speech
- Constant attempts to return to play
- Slow / clumsy movements
- Constant motion
- Loss of consciousness
- Disproportionate / inappropriate reactions
- Amnesia / memory problems
- Balance problems

2. Symptoms of a concussion (what the athlete reports) may include the following:

- Headache or dizziness
- Over sensitivity to sound / light / touch
- Nausea or vomiting
- Ringing in ears
- Blurred or double vision
- Feeling foggy or groggy

Note:

DPH regulation 105 CRM 201 requires that a coach MUST immediately remove a student-athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred or (C) sustains a head injury or suspected concussion. Under this regulation, coaches must also prohibit student-athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic techniques and encourage techniques designed to promote safety. Failure to comply with this regulation may result in penalties including, but not limited to, personnel sanctions and the forfeiture of games.

Additionally, coaches, licensed athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, school and team physicians, school nurses, administrators, marching band directors, students engaged in athletic activities and their parents must annually read, sign, and acknowledge understanding and receipt of DPH approved concussion education materials provided by the school. While this information provides a useful reference regarding indicators of concussion in student-athletes, it is not a substitute for reading, signing, and acknowledging receipt of those materials.

Part II Return to Participation (RTP)

Currently, it is impossible to accurately predict how long concussions will last. There must be full recovery before someone is allowed to return to participation. Massachusetts Law now requires that no athlete may resume participation until they have received written medical clearance from a licensed health care professional (Physician or the following individuals in consultation with a licensed physician: Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, Neuropsychologist or Athletic Trainer). Therefore, the following procedures will apply when a Pre-Participation Head Injury/ Concussion Form reveals a recent prior concussion (beginning with procedure 5) or when a concussion occurs during the sports season:

Concussion management requirements:

1. No student-athlete shall return to participation (RTP) on the same day of concussion.
2. The coach shall communicate the nature of the injury directly to the parent in person or by phone and the licensed athletic trainer immediately after the practice or competition in which a student-athlete has been removed from play for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness. The coach or licensed athletic trainer also must provide this information to the parent in writing in English and in the language of the home on the Report of Head Injury during Sports Season Form, whether paper or electronic format, by the end of the next business day. If the athlete is injured during the season but not while involved in any school athletic or extra-curricular activity, the parent must complete the Report of Head Injury during Sports Season Form and provide it to the student-athlete's licensed athletic trainer/coach.
3. The licensed athletic trainer/coach shall communicate, prior to the next school day with the Dean of Athletics & Programs and school nurse that the student-athlete has been removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loss of consciousness. The licensed athletic trainer/coach will provide the Report of Head Injury during Sports Season Form to the nurse and Dean of Athletics & Programs. The school nurse will contact the student's teacher and guidance counselors.
4. If a student-athlete is suspected of having a head injury or concussion, the student-athlete will be referred immediately to their primary care physician or the emergency room and will be given a symptom checklist for review by medical personnel. Any loss of consciousness, vomiting or seizures the student-athlete MUST be immediately transported to the hospital. Any student-athlete with signs or symptoms related to a concussion MUST be evaluated from a licensed health care professional Physician or the following individuals in consultation with a licensed physician: Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, Neuropsychologist or Athletic Trainer). These individuals must have received the appropriate training to make certifications.
5. Each student-athlete who is removed from practice or a competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion must have a graduated reentry plan to return to full academic and extracurricular activities. The plan will be developed by teachers, guidance counselor, school nurse, licensed athletic trainer if on staff, parent, and the child's treating medical provider.

6. Close observation of a student-athlete MUST continue following a concussion. This should be monitored for an appropriate amount of time following the injury to ensure that there is no escalation of symptoms.
7. Schools will follow the primary care physician's written orders concerning return to school and physical activity.
8. The student-athlete MUST obtain written clearance from one of the licensed health care professionals mentioned above directing them into a well-defined RTP stepped protocol similar to one outlined below. If at any time signs or symptoms should return during the RTP progression the student-athlete should cease activity*.
9. After the RTP protocol has been successfully administered (no longer exhibits any signs or symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussions), final written medical clearance is required by one of the licensed health care professionals mentioned above for them to fully return to unrestricted participation in practices and competitions. This clearance may be provided via a DPH Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance Form or school-based equivalent.
10. The student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion must be completely symptom free at rest in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities. The student-athlete must be symptom free at rest, during exertion, and with cognitive activity in order to complete the graduated re-entry plan and be medically cleared to play.

Medical Clearance RTP Protocol (Recommended one full day between steps)

Rehabilitation stage - Functional exercise at each stage of rehabilitation - Objective of each stage:

1. No activity - Complete physical and cognitive rest until recovered and asymptomatic. School may need to be modified.
2. Light aerobic activity - Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping - Increase Heart Rate intensity, <70% of maximal exertion; no resistance training.
3. Sport Specific Exercise - Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer - Add Movement; no head contact.
4. Non-contact training - Progression to more complex training drills, i.e., - Exercise, coordination and drills passing drills in football and ice hockey; may start cognitive load progressive resistance training.
5. Full Contact Practice - Following medical clearance, participate normally - Restore confidence and assess training activities functional skills by coaching staff.

- If at any time symptoms should return during the RTP progression the student-athlete should stop activity that day. If the student-athlete's symptoms are gone the next day, they may resume the RTP progression at the last step completed in which no symptoms were present. If symptoms return and don't resolve, the athlete should be referred back to their medical provider.

Additional MIAA Requirements for Football and Hockey

A doctor, licensed trainer, or certified EMT must be in attendance and on duty for all interscholastic football games and all varsity ice hockey games. The medical person shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting team has its own medical coverage. Their

judgment will be final with regard to the condition of a player after injury. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice. The penalty for violation of this provision is forfeiture of the game.

References:

1. NFHS. Concussions. 2008 NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook (Third Edition). 2008: 77-82.
<http://www.nfhs.org>
2. McCrory, Paul MBBS, PhD; Meeuwisse, Willem MD, PhD; Johnston, Karen MD, PhD; Dvorak, Jiri MD; Aubry, Mark MD; Molloy, Mick MB; Cantu, Robert MA, MD. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Zurich, November 2008. Clinical Journal of Sport Medicine: May 2009 - Volume 19 - issue 3 - pp 185-200
<http://journals.www.com/cjsportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000ConsensusStatementonConcussioninSport3rd.1.aspx>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports.
http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A Fact Sheet for Coaches. (2009). Retrieved on June 16, 2010. http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/pdf/coaches_Engl.pdf
Resources: C Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Injury Prevention & Control: Traumatic Brain Injury. Retrieved on June 16, 2010. <http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/index.html>
C Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Guide for Coaches. Retrieved on June 16, 2010.

The Seekonk Public Schools strives to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment in which all students can thrive and succeed in its schools. The Seekonk Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles, sex, age, gender identity, disability, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions or homelessness and ensures that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study.

APPENDIX B

Copy of Student-Athlete's

Athletic Code of Conduct (found in registration)

STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

I agree to the following expectations as a privileged member of an athletic team at Seekonk High School. If I do not fulfill my responsibilities, actions will be taken and removal from the team could result.

ACADEMICS: I will strive to achieve academic excellence. Two class failures in any quarter will result in my removal from eligibility.

SPORTSMANSHIP: I will portray myself in a positive and productive manner. I will win and lose with dignity.

CITIZENSHIP: I will act appropriately on the playing field, in the classroom, at school and in the community. I will always be supportive of others and do my best to extend a helping hand.

RESPECT: I will display respect and care for the equipment issued to me, as well as for the facilities I use. I will also display respect for my teammates, my coaches, Visiting Team's Athletes and Coaching Staff, the game officials, the administrators in school and at sporting events, plus everyone else while practicing and competing for Seekonk High School.

CHEMICAL HEALTH: I will not use drugs, alcohol, and tobacco or be associated with others who do during the school year. I will accept the ramifications of my actions related to the policies set forth by the MIAA, the Seekonk School District, and the team.

GAME AND PRACTICE: I will approach games and practices positively with encouragement, humor, and enjoyment. I will do my best to focus on dedication, discipline, and desire in my efforts.

SELFLESSNESS: I will do my best to put the needs of the team and the program ahead of myself.

COMMUNICATION: I will always communicate with my teammates and coaches with respect, dignity, integrity, and honesty.

HAZING: I have read and understand the Massachusetts laws on Hazing, found at G. L. c. 71, §§ 16-19. Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization or team, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person, is not allowed. Such conduct is a crime under Massachusetts Law and will not be tolerated. There is to be no initiation of any kind to be a member of any team at Seekonk High School. I understand that student-athletes and coaches found in violation will be dismissed from participation in the participating program. While it is the responsibility of all coaches to inform team members of the hazing law and guidelines, I take responsibility to report any incidents of hazing I see to a coach, teacher, or administrator and will not participate in any activities that will humiliate or physically harm a member of the team.

CONCUSSION: I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Massachusetts Department of Public Health approved CDC Heads Up – Concussion In

High School Sports Fact Sheet For Athletes in accordance with MDPH 105 CMR 201.008(A)(1).

OPIOID USE & MISUSE PREVENTION: I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Massachusetts Department of Public Health educational materials (4 Fact Sheets) regarding the dangers associated with OPIOID USE and MISUSE PREVENTION.

This information is found on this

website: [<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/information-for-parents-on-preventing-youth-alcohol-and-other-drug-use>].

I, (a student-athlete at Seekonk High School,) understand that I am responsible for adhering to all rules and regulations in the **Seekonk High School Student Handbook**, the **Seekonk High School Athletic Handbook**, the information associated with the **CDC Heads Up Concussion materials**, the **OPIOID Misuse Prevention materials**, and the current **MIAA Rules and Regulations**.

I will also do my best to abide by the following sportsmanship goals set by the MIAA:

1. Accept and understand the seriousness of my responsibility and the privilege of representing my school and community.
2. Live up to the standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
3. Demonstrate self-control at all times.
4. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to promote me and my sport. Respect will make a positive impression of me and my team in the eyes of the viewers. Never argue or make non-verbal gestures which indicate disagreement. This type of immature activity may incite undesirable behavior by teammates and/or spectators in the stands.
5. Treat opponents the way I would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. Many lasting relationships may be developed through competition.
6. Wish opponents good luck before the event and greet them graciously.
7. Avoid use of profanity to an opposing player or coach.
8. If I see a well-done play by an opponent, remember that there is nothing wrong with positive acknowledgment.
9. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat. This is a true measure of character.
10. When leaving the playing site after a victory, refrain from gloating. I will be happy that our team won, but it is not necessary to show enthusiasm at the expense of our opponents.
11. Promote sportsmanship and my athletic experience positively whenever and wherever the opportunity rises.