CRAVEN COUNTY SCHOOLS
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK



Craven
COUNTY SCHOOLS
Today's Learners...Tomorrow's Leaders

NCHSAA
NORTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETIC
ASSOCIATION

Craven COUNTY SCHOOLS
Today's Learners...Tomorrow's Leaders

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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS OFFERINGS

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Cheerleading	Cheerleading	Baseball
Men's Cross Country	Men's Basketball	Men's Golf
Women's Cross Country	Women's Basketball	Men's Lacrosse
Football	Men's Indoor Track & Field	Women's Lacrosse
Women's Golf	Women's Indoor Track & Field	Women's Soccer
Men's Soccer	Men's Swimming & Diving	Softball
Women's Tennis	Women's Swimming & Diving	Men's Tennis
Girls Volleyball	Men's Wrestling	Men's Track & Field
Flag Football	Women's Wrestling	Women's Track & Field
		Boys Volleyball

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS OFFERINGS

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Cheerleading	Cheerleading	Baseball
Football	Men's Basketball	Men's Soccer
Golf	Women's Basketball	Softball
Women's Soccer	Wrestling	Men's Track & Field
Volleyball		Women's Track & Field

CCS Athletic's VISION - Craven County Schools Athletic Programs will be recognized as a program of excellence throughout the state and region. We will be guided by education-based decision making that promotes academic and athletic excellence for all student-athletes from all backgrounds and cultures. CCS athletes will set the standard in the classroom, in the community, and on the playing field/court, further enhancing our reputation and providing a worthwhile experience for all of our student-athletes.

CCS Athletic's MISSION - Participation in interscholastic athletics is an important part of the educational experience in the Craven County Schools (CCS). The primary goal of such activities is to teach students character and self-discipline skills that will enable student-athletes to develop to their fullest potential. As role models for their peers and younger students, students who participate in athletics are held accountable for their actions at a higher standard than other students. Because of the public nature of the athletic programs sponsored by CCS, participating students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect the high standards and ideals of their school and community.

PURPOSE - The purpose of this handbook is to communicate to athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators the philosophies, standards, guidelines and expectations applicable to participants in the CCS interscholastic athletic program. The clear understanding and consistent application of these expectations will help ensure that student athletes have the best possible experience in their respective athletic programs.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK - Participation in CCS interscholastic athletics involves the risk of possible serious injury, including physical or mental impairments and even death, as well as the risk of transmission of infectious disease such as MRSA, HIV and Hepatitis B. Although serious injuries are not common and the risk of HIV transmission is almost nonexistent in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk. Participants have a responsibility to help reduce that risk. Participants must obey all safety rules, report all physical and hygiene problems to their coaches, practice proper personal hygiene, inspect their own equipment daily, follow a proper conditioning program and refrain from the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances. Students, parents and guardians should be aware that Sudden Cardiac Arrest is the leading cause of death among student-athletes during exercise in the United States and can only be detected by cardiovascular screening. While every student is required to have a medical exam by a licensed medical professional every 395 days to participate in Craven County Schools' athletics programs, these medical exams do not typically include cardiovascular screenings. If a student experiences an injury/illness or change in his/her health status while participating on one of CCS sports teams, it is the responsibility of student-athlete

to inform his/her Head Coach and/or a Certified Athletic Trainer, First Responder and adhere to the established injury management guidelines, which includes total rehabilitation and reassessments before being released to return to full participation.

Participation in any sport exposes the participant to the risk of concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. All concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Any student removed from a practice or competition due to a suspected concussion will be unable to return to participation that day. After that day, written authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.) on the required NCHSAA Return to Play form will be required for the student to return to participation.

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Students must meet all requirements for athletic participation as established by the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), the State Board of Education (SBE), the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) and the Craven County Schools Board of Education (CCS). These include, but may not be limited to, the following.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS - A student must reside with his/her parent or legal custodian within a school's attendance zone or be assigned to the school by the Board of Education. Additionally, a student must be legally enrolled as a full-time student at the school and be in regular attendance at that school in order to be eligible to compete in athletics at that school.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS - Parents are encouraged to frequently monitor their child's grades through Infinite Campus. While the athletic department and coaches will do their best to keep student-athletes on track, it is the responsibility of the parent and student-athlete to ensure he/she is meeting the CCS and NCHSAA/NCDPI academic eligibility requirements.

High School

- Student is eligible to participate at the school to which he/she is assigned by the local board of education, within the administrative unit of domicile residence. (CCS policy 4120)
- Student must live with parent(s)/legal custodial guardian.
- Student passed at least **(70) percent** of the courses taken during the preceding semester.

- Student attended at least **(85) percent** of the total number of instructional days in the PSU during the previous semester, excluding absences qualifying as excused under the local policies of the PSU. (CCS policy 3620)
- Student must be on track to be promoted to the next grade level by meeting promotion requirements (This includes English) at their school to be eligible.
- A student upon entry into the ninth grade, is academically eligible for participation during the first semester on high school teams. All requirements must be met the first semester in order to be eligible for athletic participation during the second semester.
- Student must be an amateur to participate as defined by NCHSAA.
- Student cannot turn 19 years of age on or before August 31 of the current academic year.
- Students cannot participate in more than 4 seasons of any sport after initial entry into 9th grade.
- Students must have proper medical insurance coverage or purchase school insurance. Student-athletes who see the cost of insurance as a hardship need to let the athletic director at their school know.
- Students are required to have an annual physical exam every 395 days and the front page of the Pre-Participation Physical Exam must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian prior to the physical examination.
- Student must complete all participation paperwork and forms to try-out, practice and compete.
- Must attend pre-season parent/student athlete meeting.
- Student must agree to follow all CCS and NCHSAA policies, rules and regulations.

Middle School

- Student must be in the sixth (6th) through eighth (8th) grades. (6^{th} graders cannot participate in football)
- Student must meet residency requirements set forth by CCS policy 4120, Domicile or Residency Requirements.
- Student must live with parent(s)/legal custodial guardian.
- In grades six, seven and eight, the student must pass at least **(70) percent** of the courses taken in the preceding semester and meet district promotion requirements.
- Student attended at least **(85) percent** of the total number of instructional days in the PSU during the previous semester, excluding absences qualifying as excused under the local policies of the PSU. (CCS policy 3620)
- If an athlete is “academically eligible” or “academically ineligible” at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full semester. An athlete becomes eligible or ineligible on the first day of the new semester.
- Student cannot turn 15 years of age on or before August 31 of the current academic year.

- Student can only compete in athletics for six (6) semesters after first entry into 6th grade.
- Student must have a current physical every 395 days and permission/insurance forms on file at their participating school.
- Student must complete all participation paperwork and forms to try-out, practice and compete.
- Must attend a pre-season parent/student-athlete meeting hosted by the athletic director.
- Student must agree to follow all CCS, NCDPI/SBE and Coastal Middle School Athletic Conference (CMSAC) policies, rules and regulations.

ATTENDANCE - When determining athletic eligibility, the student must be in attendance at least **85%** of the total number of instructional days in the PSU during the previous semester, excluding absences qualifying as excused under the local policies of the PSU. (CCS policy 3620) Exam days are considered instructional school days. A student may request an appeal for a waiver to the Student Services Management Team due to extenuating circumstances, per CCS policy 4400-R. The NCHSAA Handbook states that "At the end of each semester, any participant who has failed to meet the Public-School Unit (PSU) attendance policy of that semester is immediately ineligible. The NCHSAA Handbook also states that "A student not academically eligible at the beginning of the semester is not eligible at any time during that semester."

GAME DAY/PRACTICE ATTENDANCE - Athletes must be in attendance at least ½ the school day to be eligible to practice with their team, take part in any team activity, or participate in an athletic event on that day. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the principal or their designee. A field trip or school-related absence will not affect participation. An athlete placed in **In-School Suspension** or **Out of School Suspension** will not participate in practice or an athletic event during the days of suspension.

STUDENT TRANSFERS - After initial entry into the 9th grade, and absent a bona fide move as described by the NCHSAA:

- Students who transfer without a bona fide move from one high school in the Craven County Schools system to another high school within the county must sit out for 365 days for athletic participation.

- Students who transfer to Craven County Schools from another LEA (to include charter schools, private schools, home schools, etc.) must sit out 365 days for athletic participation. Exceptions for immediate athletic eligibility for transfers from an LEA outside of the Craven County Schools system will be heard by a special NCHSAA transfer committee.

CRAVEN EARLY COLLEGE & EARLY COLLEGE EAST (Havelock Campus) STUDENTS - Students enrolled in either Innovative High School (Craven Early College or Early College East) are NOT eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics or extracurricular activities.

HOMESCHOOL PARTICIPATION - A home school student is eligible to participate in athletics at the high school level in Craven County Schools, but only if (1) their domicile is located within the administrative boundaries of Craven County Schools and (2) the home school student must become dual enrolled by enrolling in Craven County Schools following the enrollment and assignment procedures/policies established by the Craven County Board of Education (Policy 3105). Students must participate in a class schedule within a Craven County High School that is at least one-half of the assigned school's instructional day. Dual enrolled home school students may only participate in athletics at the high school located within the attendance zone where their domicile or unit of residence is located (cannot request out-of-district placement). Additionally, home school students must notify the Principal or Principal's designee of their intent to try out for an athletic team at least ten days prior to the first practice date of the sport season they wish to participate in.

INSURANCE – Any student who participates in any interscholastic athletic program in Craven County Schools is required to be covered by student accident insurance and provide a photocopy of their insurance card. Students not covered must purchase student insurance coverage through the CCS student insurance program and provide a copy of the receipt. Purchase of the student accident insurance policy constitutes an agreement between the student and/or parent and the insurance company, not with the school district. The school district does not assume any contractual responsibility for any expenses not covered by insurance.

CCS Student Accident Insurance Coverage can be purchased through The Young Group, Inc. You can find this information at www.cravenk12.org under Student Life/Insurance for Students. Optional High School tackle football coverage must be purchased separately from student insurance coverage.

REQUIRED PREPARTICIPATION FORMS - No student will be allowed to participate in any try-out, practice, scrimmage, or contest before all required participation forms are signed in all appropriate spaces and on file with the school. These forms include, but may not be limited to, the following:

CCS Athletic Participation Forms - High School and Middle School student-athletes will register on Dragonflymax.com for athletic participation at their assigned school and submit electronic paperwork for the following forms as well as uploading their Medical Exam form and Insurance Card. The following forms are listed on Dragonfly for student-athletes and parents to sign and submit.

- NCHSAA Eligibility, Consent to Participate, and Release Form
- NCHSAA Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Statement
- NCHSAA Medical Exam Form
- CCS Athletic Code of Conduct
- CCS Student-Athlete Insurance Form
- CCS Extracurricular Travel Notification Form

Medical Exam Form - This form can also be found on the Craven County Schools website. Every student is required to have a medical exam performed by a licensed medical professional every 395 days. This is the medical exam form the licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant must complete, sign, and date.

Return to Play Form - Any student who is suspected of having suffered a concussion, or who has missed more than (five) 5 consecutive days of practice and competition due to illness or injury, must have this form signed by a licensed doctor before being allowed to return to practice or competition. This form can be found on the Craven County Schools website, as well as on the NCHSAA website www.NCHSAA.org

TRANSPORTATION - All transportation to and from athletic contests for team members (including managers and statisticians) is provided in CCS owned vehicles or leased by CCS and all team members MUST travel in these vehicles. The only exception to this policy is when both the coach and parent/guardian agree that it is beneficial for the student-athlete to ride home with parent/guardian. After the contest, Parents can only sign out their child to take home from away games. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the school principal or his/her designee prior to the contest.

Participation in golf and swimming requires practices and contests to occur at an off-campus venue. This requires student-athletes to provide their own transportation to and from practice and home contests. Parents must sign a transportation waiver giving permission for their child to drive and that they have proper insurance coverage.

CRIMINAL CHARGES - A student cannot participate in athletics in any capacity if he/she has been convicted of a felony, or any criminal offense that would have been a felony if committed

by an adult. A plea of No Contest will have the same results as being found guilty. Any student with pending felony charges will not be allowed to participate in any athletic contests until the case is adjudicated or charges are dropped. Furthermore, a student who is actively participating on a school team and has any pending criminal charges (other than minor traffic tickets) filed against him/her will not be allowed to participate in any contests until the case is adjudicated. The athletic director, in consultation with the school's administration and coach, will determine if the student can remain on the team (no practice or game participation) while awaiting adjudication of the case. It is the responsibility of any student who has any pending criminal charges (other than minor traffic tickets), or is on probation, or is in the deferred prosecution program, to notify his/her coach and athletic director of the violations and any subsequent disciplinary action stemming from those legal proceedings.

III. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

Participation in athletics is completely voluntary. It is a privilege to be a member of a school's athletic team; a privilege which can only be earned when one abides by the rules of the state, the district, the school and of that specific team. Our student-athletes and coaches are expected to be models of good behavior and sportsmanship. CCS and our schools provide coaches, facilities, transportation, and equipment for our athletic teams. The district and each individual school reserve the right to revoke or restrict the privilege of participating in athletics if a student fails to live up to expectations and/or violates school, district, state or team policies. Providing false information about residence, domicile, home address or with whom the student actually resides is grounds for revoking the privilege of participating in athletics and can lead to a 365-day suspension from participation in athletics statewide by the NCHSAA.

SPORTSMANSHIP - The NCHSAA defines sportsmanship *as* "the quality of responsible behavior characterized by a spirit of generosity and a genuine concern for opponents, officials, and teammates."

Students and spectators should:

- Realize you represent the school as does a member of a team; therefore, you have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory, therefore approve and applaud good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Remember that the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contest.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

- Respect the judgment and integrity of game officials.

All student-athletes and coaches are expected to exemplify and follow these guidelines. When an athlete exhibits behavior that is detrimental to these concepts of sportsmanship and fair play, he/she can be removed from a given practice or contest and disciplinary action taken, including possible removal from the team.

EJECTION POLICY – The NCHSAA Ejection Policy applies to all persons involved in an athletic contest, including student-athletes, coaches, managers, and game administrators. The following examples include behavior or conduct which will result in an ejection from a contest:

1. Fighting, which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
   A. An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs, or feet.
   B. An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made.
   C. An attempt to instigate a fight by committing any unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate.
   D. Leaving the bench area to participate in a fight (contact or no contact)
2. Biting observed by an official.
3. Taunting, baiting, or spitting toward an opponent.
4. Profanity, directed toward an official or opponent.
5. Obscene gestures, including gesturing in a manner as to intimidate.
6. Disrespectfully addressing an official (physically contacting an official is subject automatic expulsion and can result in permanent ineligibility)

Penalty for an ejection for the above reasons:

Football – For the first ejection, the person shall be reprimanded and suspended from participating in the next game at that level of play and contests in the interim (EXCEPTION: fighting equals 2-missed contest)

All other sports – Ejection from that contest; miss the next two contests at that level and all contest in the interim (EXCEPTION: fighting equals 4-missed contests)

- For a second ejection, the person shall be placed on probation and suspended for the next two games at that level of play. Receiving a third ejection in a school year will result in suspension from athletics for a calendar year (365 days from the date of the third ejection)
- Any student-athlete who is ejected or disqualified from a contest is required to complete the NFHS "*Sportsmanship"* course before being eligible to return to competition. There is no fee for this program.

- If a team has players ejected due to fighting, the head coach must take the NFHS Learning Course "*Teaching and Modeling Behavior*" ($20 fee). It must be completed before coaching in the next game.
- Any student-athlete ejected from a contest is also subject to more severe disciplinary sanctions by his/her school administration.

TAUNTING - Includes actions that are meant to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others. Any form of taunting is not in keeping with conduct or behaviors that promote sportsmanship. In all sports, taunting is considered a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul and is subject to immediate ejection from a contest.

HAZING - Hazing is defined as deliberately subjecting another person to physical injury, mental anguish, or personal embarrassment as part of an initiation or prerequisite for membership…. regardless of the individual's willingness to participate. Such actions violate North Carolina statute (G.S. 14.35), as well as CCS Board of Education policies 4329 and 7311. 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. Students found guilty of hazing will be removed from team membership and face criminal sanctions from law enforcement authorities.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE - Student-athletes are role models and leaders in their schools and communities. As a result, they are expected to adhere to high standards- physically and socially. CCS strongly discourages the use of any legal drugs, inhalants, or medications contrary to the manner in which they were prescribed, as well as any use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco products by our students. By discouraging the use and/or abuse of these substances, CCS emphasizes its concern for the health of our students and of the long-term physical and emotional effects of chemical use on student's health and well-being. CCS Board of Education policies 5026 and 7256 reflect the district's support of existing state laws that restrict the use and/or possession of illegal substances and establish standards of conduct for our students. CCS also does not support nor condone the use of any performance enhancing drugs. Any student-athletes found in possession of any illegal substances will face disciplinary actions mandated by Board policies, any relevant school policies, as well as any team policies which can result in permanent removal from sports teams.

IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION - Any student who is assigned is not allowed to attend any practices, scrimmages or contests and cannot participate in any fashion during the length of the suspension beginning on the date that the consequence was given. Individual schools may impose stricter penalties, including removal from the team.

1. If a participating student is assigned to In-School or Out of School Suspension, he/she will not be allowed to practice or participate in a game/team activity on the day suspension is assigned. Suspension will be carried out regardless of the game/activity days or events.

2. If a student is given Out-of-School Suspension for any reason, he/she will be subject to the following additional consequences:

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** A student-athlete will not be allowed to practice or play during the suspension/assigned time period and may regain eligibility the next calendar day following completion of ISS and OSS. If there is not a game during the suspension period, the student will not be permitted to play in the next game following the suspension period.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** The student will be removed from athletics for the remainder of that season.
- **REPEATED OFFENSES:** If a student continues to be suspended from school for consistent disciplinary infractions, the principal may remove that student from athletics for the remainder of that student's school career.

SOCIAL MEDIA - Craven County Schools recognizes and supports its student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of online social networks. However, each student-athlete must remember that participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes represent their school and are expected to portray themselves, their team, their school, and community in a positive manner at all times. Any online postings must therefore be consistent with team policies, federal and state laws, as well as any rules, regulations set forth by the CCS Board of Education policy 7335 and the NCHSAA. Any violations of the above listed rules, regulations and/or policies will result in disciplinary actions which can lead to removal from the team, suspension from school and possible criminal prosecution.

TEAM SELECTIONS - Students try out for sports teams voluntarily. For some of our athletic teams which limit the number of team members, students run the risk of being cut from that team. While selection of a team is a difficult process for all parties involved (coach, student-athlete, and parents) some things should be remembered:

- Try-outs are open to all students who meet all prescribed rules of eligibility, including completion of all required pre participation forms along with necessary parental signatures.
- The tryout period for each team should be of a sufficient duration to allow the coach to make a reasonable assessment of each candidate's ability and potential (minimum of 2 days)
- Students who are not present on the first day of tryouts due to lack of proper paperwork or without being excused by the coach in advance forfeit the minimum 2-day tryout period.
- High school seniors are not allowed to try out directly for Junior Varsity teams.
- Attendance is required at ALL practices/scrimmages/games scheduled including those on non-school days unless the student athlete has prior approval from the coach.
- Only the head coach, school Administration or Athletic Director can excuse a student-athlete from practices and contests. The failure of a student-athlete to attend practice or contests is grounds for removal from the team.
- Sunday practices or any required team gatherings are PROHIBITED.
- Holiday practice may be required and are allowed by the CCS & NCHSAA.

PLAYING TIME EXPECTATIONS - At the high school and middle school level, playing time is not guaranteed. Playing time is determined by a variety of factors including attitude, skill, work ethic, academics, behavior, teamwork, and much more. You may not agree with his/her assessment, but the coach's opinion is final. It is not a discussion that coaches will entertain with a parent. Athletes that have a concern about playing time should ask the coach for a meeting to discuss what they can improve upon to earn more playing time.

INCLEMENT WEATHER - If students are sent home because of inclement weather, practices or team meetings are not allowed. If students are not in school because of inclement weather, there will be no practice, team meetings, open gym, or use of the weight room, except with the direct permission of CCS Administration.

DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION -

(A) Participation on two (2) school teams during the same sports season may be permitted. Dual participation on two school teams in the same sports season provided the athletes and coaches involved can resolve all conflicts in advance regarding expectations, practices, and participation in games or contests. The school's Athletic Director and Principal must approve in advance dual participation during the same sport season of any athlete.

(B) Participation on a school and non-school team during the same sport season is allowed as long as the athlete commits to his/her school team as their primary commitment. No school

practice, contest, game, or team function can be missed for non-school participation without advance approval of the school coach and school athletic director. All non-school athletic participation during the school team season is secondary to participation in CCS athletic teams and not to be encouraged or discouraged by the coaching staff at any CCS school. Any athlete who, without written prior approval, misses a school athletic practice, contest, game, or function to participate in a non-school athletic event, can be suspended from all CCS school athletic participation.

QUITTING A TEAM – Commitment, dedication and perseverance are three-character traits that participation in athletics helps to promote. With that in mind, no student-athlete may quit one team in order to begin participating on another sports team at the school during the same sport season, unless by the mutual agreement of the athlete, the coach of the team the athlete is leaving and the school's athletic director. Quitting a sport is not to be viewed as a penalty that prevents an athlete from being allowed to participate on other sport teams. However, the athlete who quits a team cannot participate in another sport until the season of the team they quit has ended. No athlete may quit one sport and then participate in off-season workouts or skill development for another sport during the same season that the athlete quit.

RETURN OF EQUIPMENT - All uniforms and equipment issued by the school to an athlete must be returned in good shape or must be paid for before an athlete can play another sport. Seniors will not be eligible to participate in graduation exercises until all school-issued athletic uniforms and/or equipment is returned or paid for. Student-athletes who transfer to another Craven County school will not be allowed to participate in athletes until all equipment is returned or paid for at the previous school.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS - These sessions are allowed but shall not be held during any tryout period for an in-season sport. There is a 3 week in-season dead period along with the last 5 days of the first semester and the last 10 days of the year that must be a dead period. At no time may a coach require any student to attend off-season skill development sessions as a measure of continued participation on a team. To participate in out-of-season sessions, a student athlete must meet the eligibility and medical guidelines of the NCHSAA and CCS. Skill development/weight room sessions are not to exceed 1.5 hours in duration. Middle School athletes are not permitted to participate in high school open facilities or skill development sessions during the academic school year. During the summer, coaches are free to work with individuals or multiple players from their school and conduct practices, summer league games and open facilities.

IV. EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

The role that parents play in the life of a student-athlete has a tremendous impact on the student's athletic experience. We encourage parents to support your student unconditionally. Making mistakes is part of learning. Recognize what your student is trying to do, the effort he/she is giving, not necessarily the results. You can also help your student learn the importance of teamwork and sacrificing for the greater good of the team by modeling teamwork. If possible, get involved in your school's athletic booster club or find ways you can volunteer to help support your student's team. Be ever mindful that your student's teammates, coaches, and game officials are not the enemy. Avoid being critical of other players, the coaches, or officials. It is extremely conflicting for a student to demonstrate respect for those whom he/she is fully aware that his/her parents do not respect. With these thoughts in mind, here are a few guidelines:

- Attend the pre-season parents' meeting; sign and return all required participation forms.
- Abide by all regulations, rules, and procedures for our athletic programs.
- Attend as many of your child's events as possible.
- Understand the ultimate purpose of athletics. It exists as an integral part of the total educational mission of the school and is meant to teach life-long lessons.
- Appreciate the educational opportunity that your child is receiving in our athletic program. This includes the enormous time and effort provided by the coaches.
- Understand that the goals of the team and athletic program are more important than the hopes and dreams you have for your child.
- Support the coach in public around other parents, fans and particularly at home in front of your student.
- Avoid putting pressure on your son/daughter to start, to score, or be the star of the team; emphasize team first. Dwelling on playing time or stats is a selfish act and not conducive to building the team-first concept.
- Be respectful of other players & their parents. You never know whose grandparents, aunt, uncle or family friend may be nearby.
- Serve as beacons of good sportsmanship, to your student and other parents as well. Show respect for opponents and game officials.
- Express concerns and questions in a courteous and civil manner and do it at the appropriate time and in the proper setting.

PARENT-COACH RELATIONSHIP – Parenting and coaching are both extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to children. As parents, when your child is involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on him/her. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the sports.

Appropriate Communication Between Parents and Coaches

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach

2. Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance
3. Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches

1. The treatment of your child
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues Not Appropriate for Parents to Discuss With Coaches

1. Playing time, positioning, and event entry
2. Team strategies, game tactics, play calling
3. Any discussion about other student-athletes

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 usually do not promote positive resolutions. Best practice is to wait 24 hours before contacting the coach.

Chain of Communication

1. Student-Coach – Open door policy for all coaches
2. Parent-Coach – Done by appointment
3. Parent-Athletic Director – Done by appointment

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS/SPECTATORS AT EVENTS - To facilitate the safety of all, and the integrity of the athletic programs, the following are expectations for parents and spectators to adhere to while in attendance at athletic events.

1. Parents/Spectators will be a positive role model and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, at every game, practice or sporting event.
2. Parents will practice good sportsmanship by refraining from negative comments about student athletes' performance.
3. Parents/Spectators will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting;refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
4. Parents/Spectators will encourage positive behaviors and safe practices that will benefit the health and wellbeing of the student-athletes.
5. Parents/Guardians will model and expect that student-athletes treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
6. Parents/Spectators agree to encourage and support the opposing team, its players, coaches, cheerleaders, fans and officials/judges with words and actions.

7. Parents/Spectators will respect the officials and their authority during games.
8. Parents/Spectators will respect that school property is drug, tobacco and alcohol free.
9. Parents/Spectators will refrain from coaching student-athletes during games and practices unless identified as one of the official coaches of the team.
10. Parents/Spectators will not throw any foreign object that may harass or injure a spectator, player or official.
11. Parents/Spectators will respect the athletic venues at all times by staying in designated spectator areas and not entering restricted zones such as playing fields/surfaces and locker rooms.

V. EXPECTATIONS OF COACHES

The coach is responsible for setting an example for his or her players and setting the tone for the program. A coach who behaves professionally will encourage others around him or her to do the same. Coaches must exhibit proper leadership and conduct, be fair and consistent disciplinarians, show respect to opponents and officials, and instruct, train, and encourage every player on their team. The coach must be a strong, positive, respectful role model for his/her athletes by being a consistent ambassador of the game, his/her school and Craven County Schools. Coaches should conduct pre-season meetings with players and their parents/guardians to convey expectations and team rules and establish a line of communication. All coaches are expected to understand conference, district, and state athletic policies, as well as the rules and regulations.

Craven County Schools expects that each athletic coach in our district, whether certified, classified, contracted or volunteer, who provides supervisory and instructional service in our interscholastic athletic programs shall follow the NCHSAA Code of Conduct for Coaches.

NCHSAA Code of Conduct for Coaches

- Coaches are now required to review the NCHSAA power point presentation on eligibility rules along with NCHSAA" Crash Course" Concussion video prior to the season in which they coach.
- The coach has tremendous influence upon student-athletes and shall never place winning above the values of instilling the highest desirable ideals of character.
- The coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethics and moral conduct with the student-athlete, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public.
- The coach shall discipline athletes who display unacceptable behavior.
- The coach shall know the game rules and be responsible for their interpretation to team members. Additionally, the coach shall not try to seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or the letter of the rules.
- The coach shall promote and work in harmony with the entire interscholastic program of the school.

- The coach shall respect and support contest officials by avoiding conduct which will incite players or spectators against the officials.
- The coach shall actively promote good sportsmanship of spectators by working closely with administrators, cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, and booster clubs.
- The coach shall meet and exchange greetings with the opposing coach before and after the contest to set and maintain a positive tone for the event.
- The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, while stressing the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK – In accordance with CCS Board of Education policy 7100, all applicants offered a coaching position with any Craven County Schools, including substitutes, community volunteers and independent contractors who carry out duties customarily performed by school personnel, shall be required to provide any other information necessary to conduct a criminal history check. The criminal history check will be conducted at the Board's expense. Any applicant who refuses to consent will not be considered for a coaching position.

STAFF-STUDENTS RELATIONS - CCS Board policies 4040 and 7310 expressly prohibit all employees of CCS, including volunteer coaches, from dating, courting, or entering into a romantic or sexual relationship with any student while the student is enrolled in the Craven County School System, regardless of the student's age. Employees, including volunteer coaches, engaging in such inappropriate conduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal and may be subject to criminal action as provided in NCGS 14-202.4 and 14-27.7.

COMMUNICATIONS PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM COACHES

1. Expectations the coach has for your student and other players on the team
2. Locations and times of all practices and games/contests
3. Any additional team requirements- i.e., fees, special equipment, overnight trips, off-season conditioning programs
4. Procedure for dealing with injuries should they occur during practice or at away contests.
5. List of team rules and consequences including discipline that results in denial of a student's participation
6. Changes in practice or game schedule due to weather

VI. HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

Participation in Middle School and High School athletics is a privilege involving both responsibilities, risks, and rights. The athlete's responsibilities are to play fair, to give his/her best, to keep in training, and to conduct himself/herself with sportsmanship in a manner that will bring credit to the sport and school. Participation in athletics carries with it an inherent risk of accident and serious injury which can be reduced by obeying all safety rules, reporting all physical and hygiene problems to coaches, practicing proper personal hygiene, inspecting one's own equipment daily, following a proper conditioning program and refraining from the use of illegal drugs or controlled substances. The student-athlete has the right to optimal protection against injury which may be secured through good conditioning and technical instruction, proper regulation and conditions of play, and adequate health supervision. Periodic evaluation of each of these factors will help ensure a safe and healthful athletic experience for our students.

CONCUSSION AWARENESS - The Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act was drafted and implemented to protect the safety of student-athletes in North Carolina and was signed into law on June 16, 2011, by Governor Beverly Purdue. There are three major areas of focus in the law, and these include: education, emergency action and post-concussion protocol implementation, and clearance/return to play or practice following a suspected concussion. A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head. It results in the brain not working as it should. It may or may not cause a person to black out or pass out. It can happen from a fall, a hit to the head, or a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Every student-athlete and his/her parent or legal custodian is required by the Gfeller-Waller Act to review a concussion information sheet explaining the causes and symptoms of a concussion, and then sign a form stating that they have read the sheet and are now aware of the serious nature of concussions and will make the coaches aware if they notice any symptoms of a concussion. If a student-athlete is suspected of suffering a concussion, he/she must be seen by a doctor and go through a series of return-to-play protocols before being cleared by a doctor to resume participation in sports.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS - Every middle and high school is required to have an Athletic Emergency Action Plan. Emergency situations may arise at any time during athletic events and practices. Expedient action must be taken in order to provide the best possible care for the sport participant or spectator if emergency and/or life-threatening conditions arise. The development and implementation of an emergency plan will help ensure that the best care will be provided. As emergencies may occur at any time and during any activity, all coaches and those working at athletic events must be prepared. School athletic departments have a duty to develop an emergency plan that may be implemented immediately when necessary and to provide appropriate standards of emergency care. As athletic injuries may occur at any time and during any activity, the coaching staff must be prepared. This preparation involves formulation of an emergency plan, proper coverage of events, maintenance of appropriate emergency equipment and supplies, utilization of appropriate emergency medical personnel, and continuing education in the area of emergency medicine and planning. Hopefully, through careful pre-participation physical screenings, adequate medical coverage, safe practice and training techniques and other safety avenues, some potential emergencies may be averted. However, accidents and injuries are inherent with sports participation, and proper preparation should enable each emergency situation to be managed appropriately. These are the basic components of every emergency action plan for athletics:

1. Emergency Personnel
2. Emergency Communication
3. Emergency Equipment
4. Roles of Certified Athletic Trainers, Student Trainers, Coaches, and Administrators
5. Venue Directions

LIGHTNING POLICY – Lightning may be the most frequently encountered severe-storm hazard endangering physically active people each year. Millions of lightning flashes strike the ground annually in the United States, causing nearly death and injuries. Three-quarters of all lightning casualties occur between May and September, and nearly four-fifths occur between 10:00 am and 7:00 pm. Additionally, lightning casualties from sports and recreational activities have risen alarmingly in recent decades.

- The school athletic director or designee will be responsible for evaluating weather dangers and deciding to play prior to the event starting. Once the event is in progress, it is the referee's responsibility to make the call along with the athletic administrator on site to remove teams/athletes from the field. The first responder or coach will make the call to remove individuals from the practice fields/courts. At that time, all athletes, coaches and spectators will seek a safe location indoors.

- Once activities have been suspended, wait at least 30-minutes following the last sound of thunder or lightning flash prior to resuming an activity or returning outdoors.
- The first responder, coach or athletic administrator will be the designated weather watcher, actively looking for signs of threatening weather.
- The criteria for postponement and reassumption of activities will be the 30-second Flash-to-Bang method. After the first flash is seen, counting will commence. Counting ceases when the associated bang is heard. The count is divided by 5 to determine the distance in miles from the venue. When the count reaches 30, individuals should be in a safe shelter.

HEAT and HUMIDITY GUIDELINES - High temperatures and high humidity are potentially dangerous for athletes. Exertional Heat Stroke is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics. Exertional Heat Stroke also results in thousands of emergency room visits and hospitalizations throughout the nation each year. The National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury Research reports that 35 high school football players died of heat stroke between 1995 and 2010. Coaches and athletes should be aware of the signs and symptoms of exertional heat illness and distress, such as weakness, nausea/vomiting, paleness, headache, lightheadedness, clumsiness, confusion, stumbling, collapse, obvious behavioral changes and /or other central nervous system problems. To prevent heat related illnesses and ensure the safety of student-athletes the following precautions should be taken in extremely hot or humid situations:

- Wet Bulb Globe readings will be used during high heat and humidity conditions & NCHSAA practice modifications will be observed.
- Be sure athletes are well hydrated. Plenty of water should be consumed before physical activity begins and there must be frequent water breaks.
- Use heat acclimatization techniques in developing practice plans. Heat acclimatization is the process of allowing the body to progressively adapt to exercising in the heat, so it can cool itself effectively and one can then better and more safely tolerate physical activity in the heat. Full heat acclimatization can take up to 10-14 days for the most important adaptations to occur.
- Avoid physical activity in direct sunlight.
- Carefully monitor at-risk athletes - those who are obese, unfit, have been recently ill [particularly gastrointestinal illness], have a previous history of exertional heat illness, have the Sickle Cell Trait, or using certain medications.
- Recognize early signs of distress and developing heat illness, immediately remove athlete from activity and begin first aid.

FLUIDS & HYDRATION - Over 60% of a typical human's body weight comes from fluids. Being properly hydrated is one of the easiest ways for athletes to ensure optimal performance and lower the risk of heat illness. Dehydration is a condition that occurs when the loss of body fluids,

mostly water, exceeds the amount that is taken in. When this mismatch occurs, the body overheats, and it becomes more difficult to function properly. This results in impaired performance and leads to early fatigue and increased risk for heat illness, heat cramping, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. The signs and symptoms of dehydration range from minor to severe and include:

- Increased thirst
- Palpitations (feeling that the heart is jumping or pounding)
- Dry mouth and swollen tongue
- Inability to sweat
- Weakness
- Sluggishness
- Dizziness and/or fainting
- Decreased urine output
- Confusion
- Goose bumps and/or chills

Urine color may indicate dehydration. If urine is concentrated and deeply yellow or amber, it may indicate dehydration. Not all fluids that a person can consume will help to replenish the water and nutrients necessary. Water or sports drinks, which are specially designed to contain enough carbohydrates to boost energy during workouts, but not so much that they are hard to digest, are generally the best option for hydrating the body before and during physical activity. The longer the duration of exercise and physical activity, the more important it becomes to rely on sports drinks, with their higher concentrations of sodium and carbohydrates, for fluid replacement. Sports drinks can be especially helpful in heat and humidity since they replace electrolytes lost in sweat. Sports drinks may be the best option for individuals with poor caloric intake prior to participation.

SPORTS NUTRITION - Just as hydration is important to a student's health and well-being, caloric intake is also important to ensuring optimal athletic performance. Student-athletes should focus on eating lean proteins, fruits and vegetables and whole grains to ensure the body is prepared for training. Avoid going into any training session with an empty fuel tank. A high carb & protein meal (such as whole grain in breads, rice, pasta, fruits, vegetables, chicken, turkey, or low-fat yogurt) should be consumed 3-4 hours before practice or competition and an easily digestible snack 60-90 minutes before activity. Avoid eating a diet high in saturated or trans fats, as these are unhealthy and may limit athletic capacity. These types of fat are found in higher fat dairy products, meats, fried food, and processed foods/snacks. Primarily unsaturated fats such as olives, avocados, nuts, seeds, and salmon should be chosen instead. Carbohydrates are the most rapid source of energy for muscles and protein plays a major role in helping the body recover after exercise. When students eat a combination of carbohydrates and protein, the carbs are used to fuel the muscles during activity, while the protein is used to help build and repair muscle tissue. It can take up to 36 hours to reload the muscles of students

who delay refueling their bodies. To aid the body in faster recovery after exercise or competition, choose carbohydrate-rich foods with some protein within 30 min of finishing a training session or competition (e.g., chocolate milk, protein shakes or bars). Be careful to limit the intake of these prepackaged sports products. While they can be used effectively in an athlete's diet, whole foods should be consumed when possible. Great recovery foods include: granola, bagels with peanut butter, sub sandwiches with lean meats like chicken or turkey, as well as crackers and cheese. Making healthy food choices by students requires encouragement and commitment.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS (PEDs) - Often dietary supplements and performance enhancing drugs are seen as an easy way to enhance athletic performance, increase energy levels, lose, or gain weight and feel better. If taken to an extreme, this can create a culture more concerned about "quick fixes," rather than hard work, development of good nutrition practices and overall long-term health. The number of middle schools, high school and college students that illegally use and abuse anabolic, over-the-counter dietary supplements, human growth hormones (HGH) and other PEDs appears to be growing. In a 2011 survey, over 1.5 million high school students in the U.S. admitted to using anabolic steroids, not including those unknowingly ingested through spiked dietary supplements, and 35% of middle school and high school athletes admitted to using protein supplements. At the same time 85% of youth report never having a parent, teacher, or coach talk with them about the dangers of using PEDs. It is important to realize that dietary supplements are not subject to the same strict regulations as prescription or over-the-counter medications. Therefore, parents and students should closely examine the ingredients in any dietary supplement prior to ingestion. A recent study by Informed Choice Labs, which randomly selected 58 protein powders off the shelves of well-known supplement stores, found that 25% of those powders contained anabolic steroids. An additional 11% of the products tested positive for stimulants not indicated on the label. Young athletes often take the advice of the supplement store representative on what products are effective to gain muscle, drop body fat, and enhance performance. Warning to parents: speak with your son or daughter's physician and/or a board-certified sports dietitian before they take part in a dietary supplement regimen. To learn if a specific dietary supplement has been certified as safe, visit http://www.nsfsport.com/. For more information about the dangers of PEDs go to http://taylorhooton.org/

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) - is a type of staph bacteria that is resistant to many antibiotics. In the community, most MRSA infections are skin infections. In medical facilities, MRSA causes life-threatening bloodstream infections, pneumonia, and surgical site infections. Anyone can get MRSA through direct contact with an infected wound or by sharing personal items, such as towels or razors that have touched infected skin. MRSA infection risk can be increased when a person is in certain activities or places that involve crowding, skin-to-skin contact, and shared equipment or supplies, such as athletes during competition. There are the personal hygiene steps that can reduce the risk of MRSA infection:

- Maintain good hand and body hygiene. Wash hands often, and clean body regularly, especially after exercise.
- Keep cuts, scrapes, and wounds clean and covered until healed.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels and razors.
- Get care early if you think you might have an infection.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) - Weakens a person's immune system by destroying important cells that fight disease and infection. Only certain body fluids from a person who has HIV can transmit the virus to others. These fluids must come in contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue or be directly injected into the bloodstream (from a needle or syringe) for transmission to occur. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in only extremely rare cases, has HIV been transmitted by:

1) Being bitten by a person with HIV. Each of the very small number of documented cases has involved severe trauma with extensive tissue damage and the presence of blood. There is no risk of transmission if the skin is not broken.

2) Contact between broken skin, wounds, or mucous membranes and HIV-infected blood or blood-contaminated body fluids.

3) Eating food that has been pre-chewed by an HIV-infected person. The contamination occurs when infected blood from a caregiver's mouth mixes with food while chewing. The only known cases are among infants.

HIV does not survive long outside the human body (such as on surfaces), and it cannot reproduce outside a human host. HIV **is not** spread by:

- Mosquitoes, ticks, or other insects.
- Saliva, tears, or sweat that is not mixed with the blood of an HIV-positive person.
- Hugging, shaking hands, sharing toilets, sharing dishes, or closed-mouth or "social" kissing with someone who is HIV-positive. Other sexual activities that don't involve the exchange of body fluids (for example, touching).

As a result, in the athletic setting the risk of spreading HIV can be all but eliminated by following simple personal hygiene steps.

HEPATITIS B - Is a liver disease that results from infection with the Hepatitis B virus. Severity can vary from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Hepatitis B is usually spread when blood or another body fluid from a person infected with the hepatitis B virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen through sexual contact with an infected person or sharing needles, syringes, or other drug injection equipment. Hepatitis B can also be passed from an infected

mother to her baby at birth. Therefore, in the athletic setting the transmission of Hepatitis B from one person to another is extremely rare.

Signs and symptoms of Hepatitis B include:

- Abdominal pain
- Dark urine
- Fever
- Joint pain
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Weakness and fatigue
- Yellowing skin and eyes (jaundice)

SICKLE CELL DISEASE - Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects red blood cells and is not uncommon in the African American community. One of the questions that is on the current pre-participation medical form has to do with sickle cell disease, so it is important that everyone involved in interscholastic athletics has some awareness and understanding about the disease.

People with sickle cell disease have red blood cells that contain mostly hemoglobin* S, an abnormal type of hemoglobin. Sometimes these red blood cells become sickle-shaped (crescent shaped) and have difficulty passing through small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease. There is currently no universal cure for sickle cell disease. Hemoglobin – is the main substance of the red blood cell. It helps red blood cells carry oxygen from the air in our lungs to all parts of the body. Normal red blood cells contain hemoglobin A. Hemoglobin S and hemoglobin are abnormal types of hemoglobin. Normal red blood cells are soft and round and can squeeze through tiny blood tubes (vessels). Normally, red blood cells live for about 120 days before new ones replace them. People with sickle cell conditions make a different form of hemoglobin A called hemoglobin S (S stands for sickle). Red blood cells containing mostly hemoglobin S do not live as long as normal red blood cells (normally about 16 days). They also become stiff, distorted in shape, and have difficulty passing through the body's small blood vessels. When sickle-shaped cells block small blood vessels, less blood can reach that part of the body. Tissue that does not receive a normal blood flow eventually becomes damaged. This is what causes the complications of sickle cell disease.

COMMOTIO CORDIS - Is sudden death that results from a lethal disruption of heart rhythm that occurs as a result of a blow to the area directly over the heart (the precordial region), at a critical time during the cycle of a heartbeat causing cardiac arrest. It is a form of ventricular fibrillation

(V-Fib), not mechanical damage to the heart muscle or surrounding organs, and not the result of heart disease. It most often occurs during participation in sports, most often baseball, often despite a chest protector. It is most often caused by a projectile but can also be caused by the blow of an elbow or other body part, striking the precordial region over the heart. The thorax of an adolescent, being less developed, is more prone to this injury given the circumstances. The USA National Commotio Cordis Registry reported 188 cases between 1996 and 2007, with about half occurring during organized sports.

- It is the leading cause of death for youth baseball players averaging 2 to 3 deaths per year.
- 96% of the victims were male and averaged 14.7 years old
- Most cases were fatal, but the survival rate increased to 35% when automated external defibrillators were used within three minutes of the impact.
- Chest protectors are designed to reduce trauma from blunt bodily injury, but they do not offer protection from commotio cordis.
- Almost 20% of the victims in football, baseball, lacrosse and hockey were wearing chest protectors.

REFERENCES -

- North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA)
- North Carolina Department of Public Education (NCDPI)
- The National Federation of State Association (NFHS)
- National Interscholastic Athletic Administration Association (NIAAA)

VII. CRAVEN COUNTY SCHOOLS ATHLETICS -

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