# NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

## ATHLETIC HANDBOOK AND CODE OF CONDUCT

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## INTRODUCTION

Grants Pass School District No. 7 encourages our student-athletes to set high standards of conduct for themselves and their teams. Athletes are defined as members of any SOMSAC sanctioned sport in which the school participates. Drug, alcohol, and tobacco use is dangerous and illegal and it interferes with their learning and development. The school district is committed to drug-free schools and does not tolerate the possession, selling, or use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco by our student-athletes. The Athletic Code of Conduct is designed to encourage high standards and to provide appropriate intervention for violations of state law and school district regulations.

## PHILOSOPHY

The middle school athletic philosophy is that athletics is a competitive environment that gives the student an opportunity to be a part of a team…to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves. It is also another vehicle in which to teach student athletes life-lessons like teamwork, commitment, perseverance, and how to become successful. Athletic programs should be a positive experience for all participants. The district strives to provide an opportunity to challenge all participants at an appropriate level, taking into consideration maturity, skill level, and safety. The purpose of an athletic program is to promote good health, sportsmanship development, develop special skills and talents and to pursue excellence at individual and team levels. Athletic competition reflects sound educational objectives and provides students with opportunities to develop and promote sportsmanship through success and defeat.

# GUIDELINES

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Grants Pass School District sets high expectations for all students. Students involved in extracurricular activities are held to a high standard of maintaining performance in all courses. Student athletes are expected to pass all of their classes. The school athletic director will do a check of grades weekly. If student athletes have more than one failing grade, they may not be eligible to play in athletic games the following week. Ineligibility to play in games will continue until grades have met adequate progress as determined by the athletic director. The athletic director will inform the athlete, coach, parent, and teachers on academic ineligibility by the end of each week. Athletes will be allowed to attend all practices even if they are ineligible to play in games.

## ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

A coach may have additional team rules or regulations, which will be defined in writing and will be explained to the athletes prior to the beginning of the season.

## AGE ELIGIBILITY

Only students in Middle School (Grades 6-8) will be allowed to practice and compete with the team. He/She will also only compete in the grade level sport they are participating in. ($7^{th}$ grade students will only play on the $7^{th}$ grade teams, $8^{th}$ grade students will only play on $8^{th}$ grade team)

## ATTENDANCE

A student athlete must attend school a minimum of four periods to be eligible for practice or to play in an athletic contest on that day. Violations or special circumstances can only be excused by the Principal or the Athletic Director. Parents and athletes should be in regular communication with coaches and school

about attendance. An unexcused or excused absence the day before a contest will result in a loss of or reduction in playing time for athletes as determined by the coach. 3 unexcused absences from practice or games will be grounds for dismissal from the team.

**DUAL ACTIVITIES/SPORTS:** Other activities do sometimes conflict with school- sponsored sports. School sponsored sports take precedence over other outside activities during the sport season. Athletes will not be allowed to miss a meet/game for other sports/activities. Students leaving practice early on a pre-approved plan may affect playing time and limit or exclude athletes from participating in specific track events.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

Each student that completes a season, with the recommendation of the coach, will receive an award. All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation provided by the Athletic Department. A special award is given to any 8th grade boy or girl who has completed a sport in each of the three seasons for both 7th and 8th grade. This means that the student has completed a fall and winter sport, as well as track, each of the years. At the end of each year, the coaches choose an outstanding boy and girl athlete from each grade and the awards are given at the end-of-the-year Awards Assembly.

**COACHES**

All coaches shall be certified teachers employed by the school district if and whenever possible. The building Principal must approve any volunteer coach or paid coach that is not employed by the school district.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

All student athletes will refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. Violation of this code will result in removal from the team and/or further disciplinary action. Coaches will go over all the expectations at the start of the season. All student-athletes must abide by the district's code of conduct. Parents will be invited to an informational meeting at the beginning of each sport season to review the code of conduct. Student-athletes will be held accountable to adhere to the tenets of the codes from the first day of practice until awards have been presented. The season will be considered complete after the awards have been given at the end of the activity. Reinstatement into the activity is contingent upon the participant complying with written recommendation of the Principal or his/her designee.

**CUT POLICY**

Currently we have a no-cut policy for all sports, but future circumstances could lead to reconsideration by District 7.

**EMERGENCIES**

In cases involving injury or emergency care to athletes, every effort will be made to notify parents or the emergency contact person. If a doctor or hospital visit is necessary, then every effort will be made to have a coach or another adult accompany the athlete. It is recognized that this may not always be possible, and the coach should exercise his/her best judgment.

**EXPECTATIONS OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

1. Attendance – students are expected to commit to being at every practice and every game…your coach and teammates will be!
2. Work ethic – students are expected to work hard every day, try to do what the coach is asking, and work to become a better skilled player, and better person.
3. Gain an understanding of how the game is supposed to be played – rules, movements, accepted behaviors
4. Have fun doing all of the above – it is middle school, we as coaches understand where we are, and that this needs to be a positive experience

Criteria for playing time:

- Talent - better skilled players will play more, this is the nature of competing in athletics (everyone will play, though)
- Being at practice every day…it's expected
- Working hard in practice to get better…without having to be reminded by coaches
- Having an understanding of what the team is doing…(offense, defense, out-of-bounds, special teams, etc.)

PLAYING TIME IS ***EARNED***, BY DISPLAYING THE BEHAVIORS LISTED ABOVE

**FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

The head coach is responsible for an outline detailing how the facility or the site should be prepared, safety concerns, or problems, which may exist, and the need to repair and replace items or equipment. All scheduling of District 7 athletic facilities is the responsibility of the building athletic director or principal. Coaches shall not promise the use of the facilities to outside groups.

All equipment and uniforms must be returned before an athlete will be allowed to participate in the new sport. In the case of lost equipment or damage to equipment caused by negligent behavior, reimbursement to the school must take place before the athlete will be allowed to participate in another sport. When athletic equipment becomes obsolete, disposition will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director or Principal. Non-standard or non-certified safety equipment shall be destroyed.

**FUNDRAISERS**

All fundraising activities will be with the approval of the building Principal only.

**GENERAL CONDUCT**

The commission of/or participation in any activity prohibited under Oregon State Law and/or school district regulations regarding student rights and responsibilities shall be considered a breach.

**INSURANCE**

Accident insurance coverage is required for all students participating in athletics. Proof of family accident insurance will be accepted or insurance can be purchased from the school.

**LEAGUE PARTICIPATION**

District participation in interscholastic athletics shall be subject to approval by the School Board. This shall include approval of membership in any league, association, or conference. District Middle Schools

are a member of the Southern Oregon Middle School Athletic Conference (SOMSAC) and in all athletic matters will adhere firmly to the rules and regulations of that body and to the philosophy of that body.

**OFF-SEASON**

With the recognition that successful athletes and successful teams are not developed only during the regular season, we encourage out-of-season conditioning programs with SOMSAC/OSAA guidelines, provided that each athlete is guaranteed complete freedom of choice.

Coaches must emphasize that the athlete with any ability or inclination to do so should turn out for the sport season. Knowing that an off-season conditioning and training program is planned, coaches must not keep an athlete from turning out for the current sport. The current sport must always remain the primary concern for the coaching staff. Our aim is to make all District 7 teams successful by getting all possible athletes to participate.

The coach shall never advise an athlete to not go out for a sport so that he/she may work in an off-season program. Violation of this provision shall be considered a major breach of athletic regulation and coaching ethics.

**PARENT MEETINGS**

A general meeting to meet the coaches will be held at the beginning of each sport season. All players and parents shall be invited.

**PARTICIPATION FEE**

Participation fees are required for all middle school athletes. These fees cover participation costs and do not guarantee equal playing time. As a participant in middle school sports, you are responsible to pay the required fee of $75.00 per sport (up to $150.00 maximum per student per year) before the beginning of each season in which you are taking part. For financial assistance and payment plans, an appointment needs to be made with the Athletic Director at your school. Students will not be able to participate in sports until all requirements are met (or arrangements have been made with the athletic director). Students who quit for any reason (including injury) after the first week of practice will not be issued a refund.

**PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT**

Every effort will be made to allow for participation of the student-athlete at his or her level of competition. Due to inequities such as the number of participants, the number of coaches, facility availability, finances, and opponents, participation will not always be equal.

**PHYSICALS**

No student-athlete shall participate in practices or contests without a physical examination.

Student-athletes will have a physical starting with the first sport they want to participate in that is only good for 2 years.

**PRACTICES AND GAMES**

Practices are for conditioning the athlete for peak performance during competitions.

Conditioning will not be used to punish athletes for poor performances during games or practices.

Scheduling of practices is at the discretion of the head coach in cooperation with the Athletic Director. There are no after-game practices or Sunday practices without the consent of the Principal or Athletic Director. Daily practice is an expectation and cancellation of practice should only be done with the

advanced agreement of the Athletic Director. No student athlete will be allowed to practice without prior proof of eligibility, a signed Code of Conduct, physical, insurance, all fees paid, and a coach's card.

Starting dates will be established by SOMSAC. All athletes must have enough practice to ensure proper physical conditioning before playing in a contest. A minimum of 10 regularly scheduled practices is recommended before participation in the first contest. Missed practice regulations are at the discretion of the head coach. Each head coach should explain his/her philosophy and the consequences of missed practice to the team prior to the beginning of the season and present them to the team in writing.

**SATURDAY/SUNDAY**
There will be no athletic practices on Sundays or holidays, except with special permission from the building Principal. Athletic meetings, practices and/or contests may occasionally occur on Saturdays, but generally they will be scheduled at the beginning of the sports season.

**SCHOOL CANCELLATION**
All contests and practices will be canceled.

**SUSPENSIONS**
Any student that is suspended in or out of school for disciplinary reasons will not be allowed to participate in any school sponsored event during the suspension.

**TEAM DROP-OUTS**
An athlete that has quit one sport will not be allowed to participate in another sport that season without the consent of both coaches. An athlete dropped for disciplinary reasons may not participate in another sport for the remainder of that sport season from which he/she is dropped.

**TOBACCO, DRUGS, ALCOHOL**
In cases involving the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol, the participant will be removed from the team and/or receive further disciplinary action. A second offense in a school year will result in full suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the school year. Appeals of any decision may be submitted in writing to the Principal. Further appeals may be made to the Superintendent or his designee who may refer it to the Grants Pass School District No. 7 Board of Education.

**TRAVEL**
Athletes must ride to contests in transportation provided by the school in order to participate. Any exceptions must be cleared with the coach and/or Athletic Director prior to the scheduled trip. No athlete can return home with another parent or student without prior notification through the office prior to the event. The office will issue a stamped and/or signed note to the student prior to departing the school for the event.

Athletes will be allowed to eat on the bus at the coach and bus driver's discretion. It is the responsibility of the coaches to check the bus for litter or damage. Meals are not provided for trips.