

**SAU 61
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK
2022-2023**



Trust – Integrity – Genuineness – Empathy – Respect – Success

**Farmington High School
40 Thayer Drive Farmington, NH 03835
603-755-2811**

**Henry Wilson Memorial School
51 School Street, Farmington, NH 03835
603-755-2181**

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FARMINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

THE FOLLOWING IS A GUIDE FOR BOYS' AND GIRLS' ATHLETICS AT ALL FARMINGTON SCHOOLS. THE TERM "ATHLETICS" REFERS TO ALL INTER-SCHOLASTIC TEAMS AT ALL LEVELS OF COMPETITION. WE ARE RECOGNIZED AS A NHIAA MEMBER SCHOOL. ([Policy JJIB](#))

THE DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS, DEAN OF STUDENTS, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CORRECT VIOLATORS ON THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND REGULATIONS:

A. General Eligibility

1. A student who has reached the age of 19 before September 1 may not represent the school in any interscholastic contest during the school year.
2. Special services received under I.D.E.A, 89:313, RSA 186.C and Americans with Disabilities Act (504), students may be declared academically eligible by their principal provided that all other eligibility requirements are met.

B. Academic standing:

1. Any student failing 2 classes during the school's previous marking period shall not represent the school in any interscholastic contest. Those students will then be put on academic probation until the next progress report comes out and it is deemed that student is academically eligible. A marking period is defined as the end of each quarter. A minimum of 3 classes per grading period is required for participation in interscholastic athletics.
2. If a student fails 2 classes at the end of progress reports, they will be put on academic probation. During academic probation a student may participate in practices, however they may not play in any games/events. Academic probation will last for 2 weeks; at the end of that period the student must be academically eligible in order to remain on the team. If a student fails to do so by the end of the 2 weeks, that student will be removed from the team and may not return until they are academically eligible. A weekly grade check, Fridays at 1:00pm, will be done by the Athletic Director through the end of the marking period to determine eligibility for the necessary students.
3. Fall sport's eligibility will be determined by the previous year's semester 2 grade.
4. A student may regain eligibility by making up academic deficiencies, failures, or incompletes of the regular school year through academic/credit recovery programs completed prior to the first date to play in a sport.
5. Incompletes are not to be considered passing grades for the purpose of eligibility.
6. A high school student will be notified if they are eligible to participate once the Athletic Department is notified of grades for that marking term's ineligible list from the guidance department. At this point, if the student does not meet eligibility requirements, they will be dismissed from an athletic team.

7. Freshmen entering Farmington High School will start their high school careers with a clean academic slate and their academic eligibility will begin after completion of their first marking period.

C. Attendance/Enrollment:

1. Student/Athletes must be in attendance for 100% of the student's scheduled school day in order to be eligible for practices and games/events. If a student arrives at school past 8:00am, unexcused, that student is ineligible to participate in practices and/or games/events that day.
2. Students/Athletes who have a personal or doctor's appointment on the day of an event must have their parent/guardian communicate with the school in advance to be excused. Hair appointments, shopping, drivers ed, having slept in etc. are NOT excuses for being absent, late or needing to be dismissed from school. Unexcused absences will deem the student/athlete ineligible to participate on that day.
3. A student who transfers with a corresponding move into a new school district by his/her parents or guardians shall be declared eligible immediately if all other eligibility requirements are met. NHIAA Policy
4. A student who moves/transfers enrollment without a corresponding move shall be required to be in attendance in the new school for one **(1)** year from the date of enrollment to establish athletic eligibility. NHIAA Policy
5. A student is eligible for competition, whether or not he/she competes in interscholastic athletics, for no more than **(8)** eight consecutive semesters beyond the eighth grade. NHIAA Policy
6. Students/Athletes who are not in school or who are dismissed from school due to illness are not allowed to participate in practice or games nor be physically present.

D. Team Participation

1. Teams may not participate more than 6 consecutive days of practices and/or games without a day off.
2. Students/Athletes who miss a game due to unexcused absence will be required to miss an additional game. The students will miss 1 game for every unexcused game absence. The students/athletes are required to attend the games even though they may not play. If this is not followed, then the student will be required to miss the next game.
3. Students/Athletes who miss a practice the day before a game will be determined ineligible to play in that game. The student will be required to still attend the game and sit with the team. If the student does not attend then it will be deemed an unexcused absence.
4. Student/Athletes are allowed a total of 3 separate unexcused absences in a given sport season. Once a student reaches 4 separate unexcused absences they will be terminated from the team.
5. The following are considered excused absences:
 - Doctor's appointments (With a note)
 - Family emergencies
 - School sponsored events

**Note that if an excused absence is not communicated in advance then it will become unexcused unless deemed an emergency.*

6. The following are considered unexcused absences:
 - Personal trips: Hair appointments, shopping, concerts, sporting events etc...
 - Drivers Education
 - Vacations
 - School consequences: Detention, ISS & OSS
7. Student/Athletes will be chosen on teams based on their ability, their experience, their attitudes and other skills and traits deemed important by their coaches. Athletes are not chosen by what grade they are in.
8. Athletes used as swing players (one team to another) are primarily JV team members with their prime obligation to that team, unless the situation warrants "need" by the varsity team.
9. It is rare that a student may join a team following the tryout period. There will need to be extenuating circumstances for this to happen:
 - Student/athlete was injured before or during tryouts
 - Student/athlete legally transfers into the school after the tryout date
 - Injuries bring the rosters to a level that prohibits optimal success.
 - Teams need to add players to avoid forfeiting games.
10. Once an athlete starts a season in accordance with NHIAA starting dates, they will not be allowed to try-out for another/sport if they choose to discharge themselves from that team. They must wait until the next season to try-out for another team.

E. Athletic Physicals

Physicals will be mandatory for all athletes entering grade 9 with a strong recommendation of annual physicals thereafter.

1. Student/Athletes will not be allowed to participate, including try-outs, until a physician's statement is on file in the nurse's office. Each family is responsible for this expense.
2. Physical exams are considered valid from 1 year prior to entering grades 7 or 9.
3. Athletes shall be considered ineligible for athletic activity until an annual athletic participation health questionnaire is filled out. This form must be updated prior to each season by their parents/guardians prior to try-outs.
4. If evidence indicates any abnormalities an updated physical will be required. These forms are available on the District website, from the Coach or Director of Athletics.
5. Each athlete will supply proof of either private or school insurance on the health questionnaire. It must include the name of the insurance company, identification number. School insurance is available for purchase in September through the main office.

Prior to the beginning of each season, all athletes and their parents are highly encouraged to attend a MEET THE COACHES NIGHT. This meeting is designed to acquaint players and parents to the expectations of the coach and athletic department for that season. IF YOU DON'T ATTEND, YOU ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING THE CONTENT OF THE MEETING.

F. Sportsmanship

1. Tenets of good sportsmanship, fair play, courtesy, and self-control shall not be sacrificed by the desire to win.

G. Awards:

1. The Athletic Department would like our athletes to be recognized for their accomplishments, both athletically and academically. There are a variety of awards athletes can be honored with, each with different criteria.
2. Awards will only be distributed at the Sports Banquets. If an athlete is not able to attend the banquet, they must tell the Athletic Director before the day of the banquet. In an emergency, if they are not at the banquet and they have not communicated with the Athletic Director, they may not be able to receive their award.

H. Varsity letters, pins and certificates:

1. Athletes that participate on a varsity team will receive ONE letter. After their first year on varsity, they will receive a varsity pin for each year they play on that varsity sport.
2. It is highly recommended that athletes participate in community service. If there is an athlete that participates in at least 10 hours of documented community service per school year, they will be honored during the spring banquet. We will have three categories of Community Service Awards (see below)
 - 10-15 hours of community service = Silver Community Service Award
 - 16-20 hours of community service = Gold Community Service Award
 - 21+ hours of community service = Platinum Community Service Award

I. NHIAA Awards:

The NHIAA has awards that they give to students/athletes. There are times when these awards are announced after the athletic banquets. If they are given prior to the banquets, the student/athletes will be recognized at the banquet.

J. Coaches Awards:

Each coach will be given awards to give out at the banquet. They will give out these awards based on the criteria they set up for their individual team. The criteria can include attitude, leadership, spirit, sportsmanship, commitment, achievement, improvement and a team player.

K. Coaches Communication to Parents

1. Program philosophy
2. Individual and team rules and expectations
3. Location and times for all practices and games
4. Team requirements: practices, special equipment, off-season conditioning
5. Any discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation

L. Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:

1. While your child is involved in interscholastic athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding and inspiring moments of their lives. It is also important to understand that there will probably be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, the following communication chain of command will be followed in numerical order:
 1. Student/Athlete talks to coach
 2. Parent talks to coach
 3. Student/Athlete, Coach and Parent talk with Athletic Director
 4. Student/Athlete, Coach and Parent talk with Principal
 5. Student/Athlete, Coach and Parent talk with Superintendent
2. The following are appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches
 - Concerns about your child's behavior
 - The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
 - Ways to help your child improve and develop
 - Notification of illness or injury
 - Notification of schedule conflicts well in advance
 - Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
 - Support for the program and the attributes of dedication, commitment and responsibility that are essential ingredients for success and excellence

M. Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches :

Other things, such as those below, should be left to the direction and discretion of the coach:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student/athletes

PLEASE DO NOT attempt to confront a coach (whether a Farmington coach or the coach of our opponents) before, during or after practice or a game. When you are emotional, things can escalate in a negative way very quickly. This type of situation sets a poor example to our Students/Athletes and does not promote resolution or objective analysis. We subscribe to the 24+ rule. Wait 24 hours before speaking with the coach, and go with a calm and respectful demeanor. Make an appointment and share your concern(s).

N. Conduct

1. An athlete removed from a contest for fighting will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season
2. An athlete removed from a contest for an unsportsmanlike conduct will draw a two game suspension. An athlete removed for a second infraction will be suspended from that team for the remainder of the season and a letter placed in the athlete's file detailing the offense and disciplinary action.

3. There are instances where an athlete is suspended from participating in any sports for the remainder of one school year.
4. Any athlete who receives a yellow card, red card or technical foul will be required to have a meeting with the coach and the athletic director to decide if there is a need for further corrective action.
5. Technical fouls and red cards are defined by the National Federation of Rules and are given at the discretion of the officials. Technical fouls are non-negotiable. A technical foul may result in loss of playing time; that decision will be at the discretion of the coach and athletic director.
6. For sports that are governed by the Referee's Associations, disqualifications will be handled by the National Federation of Rules. These sports are soccer, football, golf and volleyball.
7. **Athletes are expected to behave in a mature and reasonable manner while traveling to and from events. The bus coordinator and driver have certain behavioral standards on the bus that must be adhered to.**
8. Players are required to go to and from away games on school provided transportation. If an athlete misses the bus and is late for the game, that player may not be allowed to participate unless accompanied by their parent/guardian to explain the tardiness. The coach and/or Athletic Director will determine eligibility.
9. Under unique circumstances players may be given permission to return home with their parent/guardian if a note is submitted to the Athletic Director prior to leaving for the game/event. If permissible by the Athletic Director, a player may ride home with another parent/guardian, if that is permitted by their parent/guardian with a signed note.
10. A player may not drive themselves home or be driven home from away games by another student, friend or sibling.
11. Athletes are responsible for the purchase of personal items, including, but not limited to sneakers, cleats, socks, hats, gloves, support garments, knee pads, spandex, fitted mouth guards, etc..
12. All uniforms will be returned to your coach within one week after the last contest. The uniform must be cleaned and in a reasonable condition. Athletes owing debts to the Athletic Department will not be issued a uniform for any other sport or receive any athletic awards until all debts are paid. Please understand, when you don't pass in your uniform, it could have an impact on your ability to try out for another athletic team at FHS.
13. It is the policy of the Farmington School District to maintain a healthy environment free from all forms of harassment. Speech or actions which are hateful, demeaning or insulting of another person(s) age, race color, religion, national origin, disability, gender, sexual orientation or any other differences is considered unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
14. Any welcomed or unwelcome physical or sexual advances, verbal or non-verbal, or conduct directed toward another person including bullying or hazing, is considered unacceptable. Any individual who retaliates against any person who reports any form of harassment is in violation of state and federal law.
15. Any violation of this policy will be cause for disciplinary action. Violators may have to go to the Athletic Director, Athletic Committee, Superintendent and/or School Board.
16. Harassment or behavior deterring sportsmanship directed towards officials, fans, coaches, players, visiting teams or students at home or away events shall result in meeting with the Athletic Director, Athletic Committee and/or School Board to determine disciplinary action.

O. Tobacco, Vaping, Alcohol and Illicit Drugs

1. SMOKING (TO INCLUDE E-CIGARETTES), DRINKING, VAPING, OR USE OF ILLICIT DRUGS IS PROHIBITED.
2. In the interest of upholding the law and promoting a substance free life-style for student athletes, it is expected that athletes will not participate in the use of alcohol, tobacco or any other controlled substance at any time.
3. Student/Athletes knowingly in the presence of underage drinking or illicit substance use, found in possession of or in use of tobacco products (includes e-cigarettes), in possession or use of any type of vape, possession of alcohol or controlled substances, participation of underage drinking or use of controlled substances will need to meet with the Athletic Director with a parent/guardian present.
4. The following discipline will be followed:
 - 1st offense: Ineligible for 25% of the sport games
 - 2nd offense: Ineligible for 50% of the sport games
 - 3rd offense: Ineligible for 365 days
5. If an incident occurs towards the end of the season and the suspension has not been fully carried out, it will continue to the next season. I.E. if a student needs to sit 2 games at the end of spring season, that student will have to continue serving those 2 games left during the fall season.
6. Students will be required to meet with the Student Assistance Program (SAP) Counselors and complete meaningful community service.
7. Repetitive incidents accumulate throughout the student/athlete's 4 years at Farmington High School

P. Hazing

The practice of hazing, as a means to initiating new members of an athletic team will NOT be encouraged, condoned, or tolerated by the NHIAA member schools. "Hazing" is defined as a conduct or method of initiating students onto any student team or organization, which subjects a student to physical or mental abuse and/or publicly embarrasses or humiliates the student. Hazing or initiation practices in any other area of student life (e.g., freshman hazing by upperclassman will be disciplined according to the School Board policy and will be reported to the police, in accordance with the State of NH Student Hazing Law RSA 631.7.

Q. Gifts

Any student/athlete, who at any time has received financial remuneration, played under an assumed name, signed a contract, or accepted any award other than those symbolic in nature, for participation in athletics recognized by the NHIAA shall be declared ineligible for all high school athletics from the date of the infraction. NHIAA Policy

R. Discipline

1. Student/Athletes represent their team during the school day, whether in the classroom, walking in the hall, on a bus, in the cafeteria or any other area connected to the school day. Their behavior has a direct impact on the team. If a student/athlete is involved in any disciplinary action at school, it is at the discretion of the Coach, Athletic Director or Administration to take action on the team level, as well.
2. Any disciplinary infraction in accordance with these policies by the athlete will be submitted to the Athletic Director and Principal by the respective coach for appropriate disciplinary action with a copy placed in the student's file, including disciplinary action taken.
3. Student/Athletes missing a practice or a game due to ISS will be subject to the following:
 - 1st offense: 1 game suspension
 - 2nd offense: 3 game suspension
 - 3rd offense: Remainder of the season
4. Student/Athletes missing a practice or a game due to OSS will be subject to the following:
 - 1st offense: 3 game suspension
 - 2nd offense: Remainder of the season
5. It is the Athletic Department's expectations that our athletes, coaches and fans represent Farmington High School well at athletic events around the state. Many people will base their ideas about the town of Farmington on what they see from our athletic teams. If, at any point, our athletes, coaches or even parents are not representing our school in a positive way, they may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director to come up with a plan to make sure future actions are positive.

S. Social Media

There is a balancing act involved when it comes to social media, especially for students/athletes. While we support freedom of speech, expression and association, we also ask that you be cognizant of the fact that you are representing yourself, your team, the Farmington Athletic Department and our school every time you use social media. The Athletic Department advises students/athletes to exercise extreme caution in their use of social media applications (Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Youtube, etc...). As always remember that inappropriate postings can follow you for life. Keep the following in mind before participating on social networking websites:

- Nothing is ever fully private. Even if you are locked, your followers can make your postings public.
- Once a post or photo is placed online, it is completely out of your control, regardless of whether you limit access to your page. Even if you delete, someone could have saved it or screen-shot it.
- Do not post inappropriate information or photos that could damage or embarrass individuals, teams, the Athletic Department or our school.
- Do not allow yourself to be photographed in a compromising situation. Remember that anyone can post a cell phone photo of you and tag or ID you, leaving you with little control over the content or usage of the photograph.
- Do not post disrespectful comments or engage in inappropriate behavior such as:
 - Derogatory or defamatory language about anyone, including coaches, officials, opponents, our Athletic Department or our school

- Comments that constitute a credible threat of physical or emotional injury to another person
- Comments or photos that describe illegal behavior
- Comments that disclose confidential, sensitive or private information such as athlete injuries, roster, playbooks, game plans, officiating, etc...
- For safety reasons, do not post your personal information. You could be opening yourself up to online predators.
- Coaches, Athletic Department, Administrators, the NHIAA, faculty, staff, residential life, employers, alumni, and the media can and do review these websites.
- Violations for the misuse of social media by a student/athlete could constitute a team suspension or dismissal. There may be circumstances that the student/athlete may be removed from participating on any athletic teams for an extended period of time. The student/athlete and his/her parents will either meet with school administration and/or Athletic Director to determine any disciplinary action.

T. Concussions and Head Injuries

Policy JLCJ - Concussions and Head Injuries

1. The School Board recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The Board acknowledges the risk of catastrophic injuries or death is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed. The Board recognizes that the majority of concussions will occur in "contact" or "collisions" sports. However, in order to ensure the safety of all District student-athletes, this policy will apply to all competitive athletic activities as identified by the board and administration.
2. Consistent with the National Federation of High School (NFHS) and the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA), the District will utilize recommended guidelines, procedures and other pertinent information to inform and educate coaches, youth athletes, and parents/guardians of the nature and risk of concussions or head injuries, including the dangers associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.
3. Annually, the district will distribute a head injury and concussion information sheet to all parents/guardians of student-athletes in competitive sport activities prior to the student-athlete's initial practice or competition.
4. For purposes of this policy, "student-athlete" means a student involved in any intramural sports program conducted outside the regular teaching day or competitive student sports program between schools in grades 4 through 12.
5. For purposes of this policy, "student sports" means intramural sports programs conducted outside the regular teaching day for students in grades 4 through 12 or competitive athletic programs between schools for students in grades 4 through 12, including all NHIAA sanctioned activities, including cheer/dance squads, or any other district-sponsored sports or activities as determined by the board or administration.'
6. For purposes of this policy, "head injury" means injuries to the scalp, skull, or brain caused by trauma, and shall include a concussion which is the most common type of sports-related brain injury.

7. All coaches, including volunteers, will complete training as recommended and/or provided by NHIAA, New Hampshire Department of Education and/or other pertinent organizations. Additionally, all coaches of competitive sport activities will comply with NHIAA recommended procedures for the management of head injuries and concussions.
8. Athletic Director or Administrator in Charge of Athletic Duties
 - a. Updating: Each spring, the athletic director or designee shall review any changes that have been made in procedures required for concussion and head injury management or other serious injury by consulting with the NHIAA or the District's on-call physician, if applicable. If there are any updated procedures, they will be adopted and used for the upcoming school year.
 - b. Coach Training: All coaches shall undergo training in head injury and concussion management at least once every two years by one of the following means: (1) through viewing the NHIAA sport-specific rules clinic; or (2) through viewing the NHIAA concussion clinic.
 - c. Parent Information Sheet: On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet shall be distributed to the student-athlete and the athlete's parent/guardian prior to the student-athlete's initial practice or competition. This Page 1 of 2 information sheet may be incorporated into the parent permission sheet that allows students to participate in extracurricular athletics.
 - d. Coach's Responsibility: A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury or other serious injury in a practice or game shall be immediately removed from play.
 - e. Administrative Responsibilities: The Superintendent or his/her designee will keep abreast of changes in standards regarding concussion, explore staff professional development programs relative to concussions, and will explore other areas of education, training and programs.
9. Removal From Play and Protocol For Return To Play
 - a. Any coach, official, licensed athletic trainer, or health care provider who suspects that a student-athlete has sustained a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall immediately remove the student-athlete from play.
 - b. A student-athlete who has been removed from play shall not return to play on the same day or until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives medical clearance and written authorization from that health care provider to return to play.
 - c. The student-athlete shall also present written permission from a parent/guardian to return to play.
 - d. The District may limit a student-athlete's participation as determined by the student's treating health care provider.
10. Concussion Awareness and Education: To the extent possible, the District will implement concussion awareness and education into physical education and/or health education curriculum.
11. Academic Issues in Concussed Students
 - a. In the event a student is concussed, regardless of whether the concussion was a result of a school-related or non-school-related activity, school district staff should be mindful

that the concussion may affect the student's ability to learn. In the event a student has a concussion, that student's teachers will be notified. Teachers should report to the school nurse if the student appears to have any difficulty with academic tasks that the teacher believes may be related to the concussion. The school nurse will notify the student's parents and treating physician. Administrators and district staff will work to establish a protocol and course of action to ensure the student is able to maintain his/her academic responsibilities while recovering from the concussion.

- b. Section 504 accommodations may be developed in accordance with applicable law and board policies.