

**EXETER TOWNSHIP
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**STUDENT
ATHLETE
HANDBOOK**

2009-2010

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STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

Revised **Summer 2008**

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

For Parents and Athletes

This material is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and you have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Your family interest in this important component of our school program is gratifying. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assist students in personal adjustments. In order for a student to participate in the athletic program the student and parent/guardian need to address several points.

PIAA Forms

Each athlete must have on file, in the athletic office, the forms mandated by the P.I.A.A. In order to be eligible for contests and practices, the parent/guardian must sign the form indicating the student has permission to play.

Physician Form

Each student athlete must have a physical dated after June 1. The parent/guardian and a physician must sign the physical form. No one may participate without this form. This form must be filed in the athletic office.

Emergency Medical Authorization

Each athlete's parent/guardian shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Card giving permission for treatment by a certified athletic trainer, physician or hospital when a parent/guardian is not available.

Acknowledgment of Athletic Policies

In order to participate in athletics, the student athlete shall read the **High School Student Handbook** and the **Student Athlete Handbook** and certify in writing that s/he understands the rules and policies of the school district. Each coach will provide a form for the athlete to document that s/he understands the student athlete handbook.

EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Conduct of Students Participating in Extracurricular Activities



A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the extracurricular activity program. The community, administration, advisors and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound extracurricular program. The welfare of the student(s) is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All participants of activities including athletics, intramurals, clubs, marching band, school plays and musicals, academic competitions, etc., shall abide by a code of ethics which will earn them the honor and respect that the participation in the activity program and competition in the interscholastic program provide. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the student, the team, or the school is unacceptable. Acts of unacceptable conduct such as disrespect and/or violations of the law (including but not limited to theft and vandalism) tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the school program and will not be tolerated.

All participants will be required to return a participation agreement signed by the student and a parent/guardian prior to participating in any school sponsored activity.

2. Substance Abuse Policy (Relative to Extracurricular Activities)

Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that the use of tobacco, alcohol, and any type of mood modifying substance produces harmful effects on the human organism. Students cannot compromise their behavior with substance abuse. The student who chooses to experiment with substances should remove her/himself from the team or extracurricular activity before she/he jeopardizes the group morale, reputation, success, and/or does physical harm to her/himself or another person.

Students have to decide if they want to be a part of a group. If they do wish to be a participant, they must make the commitment to accept the responsibilities associated with representing the school district, the school, and the community. A major part of this responsibility is following the guidelines set forth by the school district and athletic department with regard to the use of foreign substances in the human body.

Foreign substances include, but are not limited to:

Tobacco Products- Research emphasizes that the use of all tobacco products is harmful. The use of all tobacco products is prohibited during the student's school career. It is strongly encouraged that the students not use these products at any time.

Alcoholic Beverages- Research emphasizes that alcoholic beverages cause a negative influence or impairment of bodily functions. The use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited during the student's school career. It is strongly encouraged that the students not use alcoholic beverages at any time.

Drugs and Steroids- The consumption of any chemical substance to alter or enhance behavior or the smoking of some plant derivatives that cause mood modification is prohibited during the student's school career. It is strongly encouraged that the students not use drugs at any time.

Unknown Substances- The use of any foreign substance not mentioned above or unknown at this time is prohibited during the student's school career. It is strongly encouraged that the students not use any foreign substance at any time.

3. Self-Referral by Students

Students may take advantage of a self-referral procedure to seek information, guidance, counseling, and assessment with regard to the use of foreign substances. Voluntary referrals will not carry punitive consequences regarding the following:

- a) Referral is allowed one (1) time in a student's senior high career and one (1) time in a student's junior high career.
- b) Referral may be made only by the student, parent, or legal guardian.
- c) Referral must be made to a coach, advisor, athletic director, teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor.
- d) Referral must be previous to the first violation.
- e) Referral cannot be used by students as a method to avoid consequences once a code of conduct rule has been violated and a student has been identified as having violated the code of conduct rules.
- f) A positive urine screen eliminates all self-referrals as described in Category 1 of the *Drug and Alcohol Guidelines*.

4. Violations

Testing positive during the urine screen, being under the influence, possessing and/or distributing a foreign substance, performing acts of unacceptable conduct such as disrespect and violations of the law, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the school program and will not be tolerated. ***PLEASE NOTE: Out of season violations will be treated as those which occur during the season – penalties to be levied during the next season or period of extra-curricular involvement.***

5. Penalties for Violation

- a) **First Violation**- After confirmation of the first violation, the student will be immediately suspended for a minimum of 50 percent of the remaining scheduled contests in the sport in which the student is a participant. If the penalty cannot be fully administered during that sport season, the remainder of the penalty will be applied to the next interscholastic sport season in which the student participates. The student participating in extracurricular activities will be suspended from participation for 50 percent of the scheduled activities of the group. The student will be referred to the Student Assistance Program in accordance with school policy. If the student follows the recommendation of the SAP team, the student suspension may be reduced to 25 percent. The student must be evaluated by a licensed drug/alcohol facility within ten (10) days of the violation.
- b) **Second Violation**- After confirmation of the second violation, the student will be suspended from participating in all athletic/extracurricular activities for twelve (12) months from the date of the violation.
- c) **Third Violation**- After confirmation of the third violation, the student will be suspended from participation in athletics/extracurricular activities for the remainder of his/her senior high career.

1. Reduction of Penalty

Upon satisfactory completion of assessment, treatment, and completion of a substance abuse program, a student may be reinstated to participate by recommendation of the Student Assistance Program for the second violation.

EXETER TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Academic Status

A student must maintain a full-time curriculum. The student must maintain the following academic status to be eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics. Exeter Township School District academic eligibility requirements exceed those of the PIAA.

End of Marking Period

Each student athlete must maintain the Exeter School District standard of maintaining a marking period average of 72%. This is in addition to the PIAA requirement of passing 4 full credits or the equivalent. If at the end of any marking period, a student does not meet the district standards for eligibility but meets the PIAA standards, s/he will be allowed to practice but will not be eligible to play for 7 school days. The period of ineligibility will begin with the first day of the next marking period. Students will become eligible after this seven-day period, provided they meet district standards. If at the end of the marking period, the student can not meet the lower standards of the PIAA, they will be ineligible for a period of 15 days.

During a Marking Period

If students are not passing four full credits (or the equivalent) during a week, they become ineligible. The athlete may continue to practice but will be ineligible to participate in athletic contests for seven days (Sunday to Saturday) or until s/he meets our district eligibility standards.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION PLAN

Communications that Parents/Guardians Can Expect From the Coach.

Expectations the coach has for the athlete, locations and times of practices and contests, team requirements, team rules, and discipline.

Communication the Coach Can Expect from Parents/Guardians

Notification of schedule conflicts and information which is imperative to an athlete's safety

Appropriate Topics to Discuss with the Coach

Ways to help the athlete improve, concerns about the athlete's behavior, and the treatment of the athlete

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

Playing time, team strategy, and other team members

Procedure to Meet with Coach

- a) Encourage your son/daughter to speak directly to the coach.
- b) Call to set up an appointment. If the coach is employed in one of our school buildings, leave a message at the school to be put in the coach's mailbox.
- c) If the coach does not work in a school building, call the athletic office to leave the message. The coach will telephone you to make an appointment or to clarify the concern over the telephone.
- d) If the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, write a letter to the athletic director describing in detail the problem. The letter will help begin the inquiry process. The athletic director will then telephone to clarify the problem by phone or to set up an appointment. No one will discuss playing time or roster cuts.
- e) Under no circumstances should you confront a coach before or after contests.

ADDITIONAL RULES

Truancy/Attendance

Any athlete who is declared truant or is absent for a total of 20 days in a semester will be ineligible and will remain ineligible until s/he has been in attendance for a period of 60 days after the infraction is discovered. Absences due to confining illness, injury, or death in the immediate family may be waived by the district committee. No one may participate in an athletic contest if s/he is absent on the day of the contest. Students must be in school by 10:40 a.m. Students in ISR may not participate in a same-day athletic event but may practice.

Hazing

Hazing of any type is prohibited at all times. Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in any athletic organization. Any hazing activity, whether by individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates. Any student who believes that s/he has been subject to hazing or has knowledge of hazing activity shall report the incident to the athletic director or principal. The athletic director and the principal will investigate the alleged hazing. The principal will take appropriate disciplinary action as circumstances warrant.

Fighting in Interscholastic Sports

Fighting and flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct in interscholastic sports are prohibited. A violation of this rule shall bring a suspension for the remainder of that contest plus suspension from the next scheduled contest.

Individual Rules of a Coach

Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the athletic director and principal for their respective sports. These additional rules for a particular sport must be stipulated in writing to all team members and parents and explained fully at the start of the season. Penalties for violation of team rules will also be in writing and shall be administered by the coach. Copies of all additional team rules established by coaches are on file in the athletic office.

Suspension for longer than one game

General rules are developed that are consistent for all athletic teams. In addition to these general rules, each coach may develop additional rules for his/her particular team. The athletic director and the principal will administer the general rules. The coach is responsible for administering reasonable disciplinary action for violations of all specified team rules.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Participation

An athlete may participate in only one sport per season. Exceptions may be granted by the athletic director in exceptional cases. In these cases, the student/athlete must make a request to the athletic director. The request must be in writing and stipulate which sport is to be the primary sport and which is to be secondary. Both coaches must agree to the stipulation and be prepared to refer to the stipulation to resolve conflicts of schedule.

Dropping or Transferring Sports

Completing a season is highly desirable. However, on occasion an athlete might find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the student athlete should consult with the head coach. The student shall return all equipment. If an athlete wishes to change sports during the season, s/he should consult with both coaches and the athletic director. The receiving coach must consent to the transfer.

Equipment

School equipment issued to the student-athlete is his/her responsibility. S/he is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School-furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests and practice. Athletes who do not return all equipment at the end of the season will pay for its replacement. In several sports, athletes will be required to purchase a portion of the game uniform, which will after the season become their property.

Missing Practice/Game

An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice. Missing practice or a game without good reason will be dealt with through team discipline.

Travel

All athletes must travel to and from out-of-town athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department unless the parents make previous arrangements for an exceptional situation. Athletes will remain with their team and under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests.

Conflicts between Extracurricular Activities

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities might create a conflict of obligations or interests. Students have a responsibility to do everything possible to avoid continuing conflicts. Positive efforts might include being cautious about joining too many activities where conflicts are unavoidable. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches immediately when a conflict arises. When a conflict cannot be resolved, the principal will make the decision based on the following:

- a) The importance of each event to the student.
- b) The importance of each event to the school.
- c) The relative contribution the student can make.
- d) A talk with the parent/guardian.

Once a decision has been made and the student has committed to that decision, s/he will not be penalized in any way by either faculty sponsor/coach. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, s/he should withdraw from that activity.

Release from Class

It is the responsibility of athletes to see their teacher the day before missed classes caused by an athletic contest. All work shall be made up at the direction of the teacher.

Grooming and Dress Policy

A member of an athletic team is expected to be well groomed. Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school.

Vacation Policy

Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. Parents/Guardians and athletes wishing to go on vacation should reassess the student's commitment to being an athlete. In the event of an absence due to a vacation, an athlete must be willing to assume the consequences related to his/her status on that team.

Squad Selection and Reduction

Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective team size for any particular sport. Selection is based on performance and includes technique, tactics, conditioning, attitude and overall value of contribution to the team. Varsity team selection is made with the above factors as the most important criteria.

Choosing the members of a team is the sole responsibility of the coaches of that team. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

- a) Extent of try-out period
- b) Criteria used to select the team
- c) Number to be selected
- d) Practice commitment on making the team

Reporting Of Injury

All injuries which occur during participation in athletics should be reported to the trainer and coach. Once a physician treats an athlete, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity.

Locker Room Regulations

- a) **Roughhousing is not allowed in the locker room**
- b) No one except coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
- c) No **glass** containers are permitted in locker rooms.
- d) Spiked and cleated shoes taken off outside of the locker room at all times.

ATHLETIC AWARDS POLICY

Varsity Letter Requirements

The varsity award shall be presented to an athlete who satisfied the participation requirements listed below, completed all team obligations, and received the recommendation of the coach.

- a) An athlete should participate in 50% of the scheduled contests in a season
- b) A coach will have the prerogative to letter a **senior** who has not met the seasonal requirements for lettering.
- c) Injury Rule: Any athlete who is a starter or plays regularly and was thereafter injured may be awarded a letter, if, in the coach's judgment, he/she would have met the lettering requirements.
- d) Managers/ Statisticians/ Student Trainers Award will parallel the regular awards system for someone who completes the entire season.
- f) An athlete must complete the season in good standing with the school and coach.

Varsity Awards

- (a) First year award: Chenille award letter with gold medal insert signifying the sport and gold service bar indicating one year of lettering
- (b) 2nd-year award: Gold service plate.
- (c) 3rd-year award: Gold service plate.
- (d) 4th-year award: Gold service plate.

Championship Award

All members of a varsity team that wins a league, district, or state championship will receive a picture plaque commemorating the championship.