

North Hills High School & Middle School



Parent-Student Athletic Handbook

2018-2019

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The North Hills School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap or limited English proficiency in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504. For more information regarding civil rights, contact:
Title IX Coordinator (412-318-1008), North Hills School District, 135 Sixth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15229.

Dear Parent and Student Athlete:

The purpose of this letter is to welcome your son/daughter into the North Hills Athletic Program and to provide the necessary information to help him/her succeed at their chosen endeavor. It is our goal to provide your son/daughter with an enjoyable athletic experience that is rewarding both on and off the playing field.

Being a member of a North Hills athletic team is a fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes hard work from many people over many years to develop. As a member of an interscholastic squad for North Hills Middle School or High School, you have inherited a wonderful tradition which you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We all strive to win, but only in a vein that is honorable to our athletes, school and community. Our programs have accomplished the highest goals from Section, WPIAL, and State Championships, to All-Conference, All-State, and All-American Athletes. We hope that you will always give North Hills Athletics 100% to uphold this high standard we have created. When you wear red and white, we assume that you not only understand our tradition, but are willing to accept the responsibilities that go along with it. These responsibilities include:

- 1.) **Responsibility to Yourself:** The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden and develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to derive the greatest benefit from your high school experiences. Your academic studies, participation in school activities as well as participation in sports, prepare you for your life as an adult.
- 2.) **Responsibility to North Hills School District:** North Hills cannot maintain its position as having an outstanding school unless each and every student and parent represents themselves with honor and dignity. By competing in athletics, you have the power to represent your school in a positive manner by demonstrating good sportsmanship while maintaining a strong desire to win.
- 3.) **Responsibility to Others:** Younger students in North Hills are watching you. They will copy you in many ways. Do not do anything to lead them astray or to let them down. Whether you realize it or not, you are one of the most influential people on the youth of our community.

The following pages comprise our athletic handbook for you to familiarize yourself with the district's policies and procedures. Many topics are included and may change on an annual basis. If you have a specific question regarding athletic scholarships, NCAA guidelines, eligibility, physical examinations, attendance, hazing, lettering, and other guidelines that have been set forth by the School District, please do not hesitate to call the athletic office at (412) 318-1437.

Good luck and GO INDIANS!

Sincerely,

Amy Scheuneman, Athletic Director

PHILOSOPHY OVERVIEW

Athletics plays an important part in the life of North Hills High School and Middle School students. Young people learn a great deal from their participation in interscholastic athletics. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, competition, and how to win and lose gracefully are an integral part of each team in our athletic program. Athletics play an important part, too, in helping the individual student develop a healthy self-concept as well as a healthy body. Athletic competition adds to our school spirit and helps all students (spectators as well as participants) develop pride in their school.

The major objective of the athletic program is to provide wholesome opportunities for students to develop positive habits and attitudes of social and group living.

Leadership should be of the highest quality so as to exemplify to the participants the desired type of behavior to be developed from the athletic program. Measurement of leadership success should not be in terms of the victory and defeat record, but rather in the personal development factors that are an outgrowth of the major objectives of the athletic program.

We believe that the opportunity for participation in a wide variety of student-selected activities is a vital part of the student's educational experiences. Such participation is a privilege and "not a right," and therefore can be taken away from a student if that student does not comply with the School District's policies and procedures as well as the PIAA Codes of Conduct. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable the student to make maximum use of his or her education.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies. While the Board of Education takes great pride in winning, it does not condone "winning at any cost" and discourages any and all pressures, which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health. At all times, the athletic program must be conducted in such a way so as to justify it as an educational experience.

Every effort should be made to support the activities program with facilities, equipment, and with the most qualified staff available. Coaches, directors, and sponsors should teach the specific skills necessary for improvement in athletics and provide guidance in the development of self-realization, good sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, ethical behavior, and an appreciation for the importance of practice.

SPECIFIC PHILOSOPHY AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

Middle School and Jr. High Philosophy:

The North Hills School District believes that students need to be able to explore athletics at the age when they are learning about themselves and their abilities. Middle School and Jr. High athletics are to focus on participation so that students can discover their abilities, build their confidence and improve their skills and learn time management in school. It is important for students to get involved with school activities, to meet new people and develop interests. Practices and games are to develop skills and learn about the game and rules. In turn, this preparation will prepare them to participate at the next level. While the district would like to offer every student the opportunity to participate, occasionally the number of students interested in participating becomes too large to effectively supervise or the athletes are not able to meet minimum expectations and safely compete at the appropriate level of competition. Therefore, squad reductions may occur at this level. Everyone who successfully makes the team should have the opportunity to play; however, playing time does not have to be equal for all.

Freshman and Junior Varsity Philosophy:

The Freshman and Junior Varsity levels serve as a transition from a developmental philosophy to a more serious philosophy. The focus of this level is to practice learned skills and prepare to play at the next level. Athletes are exposed to the traits it takes to be successful. Such traits include hard work, dedication, time management, desire, and sacrifice. If the number of athletes becomes too large to effectively supervise or the athletes are not able to meet the minimum expectations and safely compete at the appropriate level of competition, squad reductions may occur at this level. Everyone who successfully makes the team should have the opportunity to play; however, playing time will begin to be given to those student-athletes who show the most potential and skill for competing at the varsity level.

Varsity Philosophy:

The Varsity level is the culmination of the athletic experience and is the highest level of competition in high school athletics. Emphasis at this level is on the use of the fundamentals of the sport, dedication, desire, hard work, and sacrifice. Playing time is at the coach's discretion and should be geared toward winning the competition while upholding both school and team rules. Success is not necessarily indicated by a win or loss, but measured by the quality of the effort, performance, and achievement of goals. Squad reductions may also occur at this level.

OBJECTIVES OF SPORTS

1. To enjoy the time spent playing and preparing for competition.
2. To strive to accomplish team & individual goals.
3. To understand the rules of the game essential to playing and being intelligent spectators.
4. To think and act as an individual and as a member of the group.
5. To improve motor skills.
6. To develop better health and physical fitness.
7. To create a desire to succeed and to excel.
8. To improve moral and ethical standards.
9. To practice self-discipline and emotional maturity.
10. To be socially competent and to realize the value of rules.
11. To show respect for the rights of others and for authority.
12. To learn high ideals of fairness in all human relationships.
13. To learn to practice proper decision making under pressure.
14. To place the good of a team before the glory of an individual.

MISSION STATEMENTS

NHSD Mission: The mission of the North Hills School District is to engage each student in a variety of educational experiences needed to achieve maximum potential as a positive, contributing member of a diverse and changing society.

NHSD Athletic Mission: To challenge all student athletes to achieve success and a sense of self-esteem through participation in competitive athletics. It is through participation in competitive athletics that students will develop the necessary skills to become productive members of a globally competitive workforce.

North Hills High School has a rich history of success in high school athletics. Not only are the administrators, staff, and community committed to building upon that history, but it is also committed to maintaining a high level of integrity throughout its athletic program. Students are encouraged to develop responsibility and commitment, an understanding of the importance of teamwork, and respect for self and others.

ATHLETIC OFFERINGS

All athletics at North Hills are governed by the rules set forth by the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS), the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL). The standards (including academic eligibility) of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association shall be followed as the basis for student eligibility for participation in interscholastic athletics. Sports are offered to 7th-12th graders unless otherwise noted. The number of teams and/or specific levels may vary from year to year based on interest.

FALL SPORTS:

Boys' - Cross Country, Soccer, Golf (HS Only), Football

Girls' - Cross Country, Soccer, Tennis (HS Only), Volleyball, Cheerleading

WINTER SPORTS:

Boys' - Basketball, Swimming & Diving (HS Only), Wrestling

Girls' - Basketball, Swimming & Diving (HS Only), Cheerleading

SPRING SPORTS:

Boys' - Baseball, Lacrosse (HS Only), Tennis (HS Only), Track & Field, Volleyball

Girls' - Softball, Lacrosse (HS Only), Track & Field

CLUB SPORTS:

Boys' - Ice Hockey (Fall/Winter), In-Line Roller Hockey (Winter), Bowling (Winter)

Girls' - Slow Pitch Softball (Fall), Bowling (Winter)

MULTI-SPORT ATHLETES:

In keeping with our philosophy, to fully develop our student athletes, and in line with keeping our athletic teams as competitive as possible, student athletes are strongly encouraged to participate in a variety of sports for North Hills if they are capable of doing so. Multi-Sport athletes develop various skills that all play in to making an individual a better all-around athlete, it also reduces the risk of injury from over-use of any given muscle group and lessens the probability of burnout from continually playing one sport all year round. Multi-sport athletes are also usually happier with their overall sports experience because they meet new people and develop more relationships.

A student's physical and mental health is just one of many concerns that the administration, coaches, and teachers have for your child's total well-being. Although there is no set policy against a student participating in more than one sport during any one season, and occasionally it works for the student-athlete, it is recommended that students should play only ONE sport during the fall, winter, and spring sports seasons. This is largely due to the grueling practice and academic workload for high school students. Students must remember that they are students first and athletes second. Trying to do too much will affect a student's health and also his/her academic and athletic performance.

CODE OF ETHICS

According to the PIAA Constitution and By-Laws, the following is the **Athletic Courtesy By-Law** that every school, student athlete, coach, official, athletic director, principal, and fan must abide by to ensure a strong Code of Ethics is maintained.

Athletics should foster clean sports. It is the privilege and duty of every person connected with athletics to exemplify these principles in that person's own actions and earnestly advocate them before others.

1. *The rules of the game are to be regarded as mutual agreements, the spirit or letter of which no honorable person would break. The stealing of advantage on sport is theft.*
2. *No advantages are to be sought over others except those in which the game is understood to show superiority.*
3. *Unsportsmanlike or unfair means are not to be used, even when they are used by opponents.*
4. *Visiting teams are to be honored guests of the home team and should be treated as such.*
5. *No action is to be taken nor course of conduct pursued which would seem unsportsmanlike or dishonorable if known to one's opponent or the public.*
6. *Remember that the student spectator represents his school the same, as does the athlete at all home and away contests.*
7. *Any spectator who continually evidences poor sportsmanship should be requested not to attend future contests.*
8. *Decisions of officials are to be abided by, even when they seem unfair.*
9. *Officers and opponents are to be regarded and treated as honest in intention. In games when opponents conduct themselves in an unbecoming manner, and when officers are manifestly dishonest or incompetent, future relationships with them should be avoided.*
10. *Good points in others should be appreciated and suitable recognition given.*
11. *The practice of "booing" is regarded as discourteous and unsportsmanlike.*

SQUAD REDUCTION and CONCERN/COMPLAINT PROCESS

According to the philosophy of the North Hills School District, we strive to provide an opportunity for student athletes to learn through active participation in sports. An athlete's success within the athletic program is often determined by the level in which he/she is participating. Fundamental growth, progression from one year to the next, increased physical fitness, personal development, as well as winning can all be successes of the individual athlete. With that in mind, it is the intent of the athletic program to involve as many students as possible. However, it is occasionally necessary to reduce the number of athletes on the roster. This may occur when the number of athletes becomes too large to effectively supervise or the athletes are not able to meet minimum expectations and safely compete at the appropriate level of competition.

Squad Reductions:

The coach in charge of each individual team is responsible for the selection of the members of that team. They can choose to evaluate talent on their own, with a designated group of people, and/or hire outside professionals to aid in the process.

It is also the coach's responsibility to inform the athletes and parents of the tryout process and evaluation tool being used prior to the first day of tryouts.

If students must be eliminated from the squad, it is the coach's responsibility to personally inform the individuals either by a verbal or written communication. Impersonal methods of notification such as posting lists, reading names, or having other students report a team roster will not be utilized.

Concern/Complaint Process:

If a parent has a concern with the tryout process, they should follow the chain of command set forth below:

- 1 – Student should address question to coaching staff.
- 2 – Parent and student should request a meeting with the coach or coaching staff.
- 3 – Parent, student, and coach will meet with the Athletic Director.
- 4 – Parent, student, coach and Athletic Director will meet with the Principal.

The North Hills Athletic Department believes that coaches are in the best position to determine which athletes will remain on the roster.

The North Hills Athletic Department is always looking for areas to improve. If a student or parent has a concern or an improvement idea for the selection process, please address all concerns prior to the tryout. Otherwise, positive changes cannot be implemented until the following year.

ELIGIBILITY

Physical Examinations

Requirement: The North Hills School District must follow the guidelines set forth by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (P.I.A.A.) in requiring that all athletes participating in interscholastic athletic competition have a pre-participation physical examination.

This exam must occur no earlier than June 1st for all sports in the upcoming school year. The health and well-being of every student is our top priority. It is also important that our students learn responsibility and the ability to set priorities.

1. Students must obtain the PROPER forms from their coach, through the Athletic Office or online via the school website. **No other forms will be accepted.**
2. Completed physical forms are to be done electronically, turned in to the coach, athletic trainer or athletic office prior to the first official practice.
3. **If completed physical forms are not received, the student will NOT be allowed to practice or participate in that sport until all paperwork is received. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Students will have to do one of two things PRIOR to the first day of practice/tryouts in order to satisfy the physical requirement:

1 – IF the student has NOT had a physical ON or AFTER June 1 of the new school year, they will need to have a complete examination and fill out the entire packet. See “PIAA PHYSICAL PACKET” under the FORMS section on the athletic website.

2 – IF the student had a physical to participate during the fall or winter season of the current school year, they will only need to fill out the Section 7 of the PIAA PHYSICAL, which is labeled Re-Certification by Parent/Guardian. This form is also available in the Athletic Office or on the Athletic website under the FORMS section.

The ultimate responsibility for obtaining a physical exam and becoming eligible to participate in a sport will be up to the individual family.

Academics

In order to be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition, a pupil must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the principal as a full-time curriculum. Where required, this curriculum or its equivalent must be approved by, and conform to, the regulations of the State Board of Education and the Pennsylvania School Code, as well as any local policies established by the local school board. Students must be passing at least four full-credit

subjects, or the equivalent, as of each Friday during a grading period. If students fail to meet this requirement, they will lose their eligibility the immediate Sunday through the following Saturday. To keep academics a priority, if a student is ineligible due to not meeting the academic requirements for 4 consecutive weeks during their sports season, said student will lose their privilege of participation and will be removed from the roster and all team functions.

In addition students must have passed at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent during the previous semester. Students failing to meet this requirement will lose their eligibility for 15 school days of the following semester, beginning on the first day that report cards are issued

At the end of the school year, the student's final credits for the entire year shall be used to determine his/her eligibility for the fall season of the following school year.

Age

Maximum Age Rule: A student may not have reached the 19th birthday by June 30 immediately preceding the school year, (or the 15th birthday where interscholastic competition is limited to grades 7 and 8 or 16th birthday where competition is limited to grades 7 through 9) in order to be eligible to compete the following school year.

How to Determine Age: In determining the age of a pupil, the date of birth (as recorded in the State Bureau of Vital Statistics) shall be considered as conclusive if filed in a State Bureau of Vital Statistics within one year after the date of birth. If a birth record from a State Bureau of Vital Statistics is not available, proof of a pupil's age may be determined by requiring the submission of a birth certificate which was issued within one year after birth; or in lieu of a birth certificate, a passport with the date of birth recorded thereon; or in lieu of a passport, an affidavit by the parents or legal guardian, filed not later than one year after the pupil's admission to the first grade of an elementary school. In the event of the non-existence of any of these records of evidence, the earliest date of birth as recorded in the records of the school or schools attended by the pupil shall be considered the date of birth.

Attendance

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association and Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League are silent on the policy of attendance in school by an athlete on the day of a contest. However, NHSD does require students to be in attendance for at least ½ of the school day in order to be permitted to participate in athletics on the same day. A student's late arrival must be before 10:40am or an early dismissal must be after 10:00am. Pre-approved college visits, doctor appointments, funerals and court

ordered absences are to be considered excused absences and not applicable to this rule.

Students who are absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more days, will lose their eligibility until they attend school for a total of 45 school days following their 20th day of absence.

In order to be eligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest, a pupil must have been regularly enrolled in a secondary school and in full time attendance thereafter. A pupil is eligible only at the school at which he/she is enrolled.

Amateur Status

Student athletes must be amateurs in order to participate in any PIAA sponsored contest. An amateur student is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the educational, physical, mental, social and pleasure benefits derived thereof. At the time of printing this Handbook, a loss of amateur status occurs when:

1. The student or student's parent receives compensation for related athletic ability, participation, performance, services, or training in a sport.
2. The student plays on a professional team or as an individual professional athlete in that sport.
3. The student signs a contract whereby the student agrees to compete in any athletic competition for consideration.
4. The student sells or pawns the student's athletic achievement awards.

It should be noted that the PIAA determines amateur status and the criteria for amateur status may change from time to time as dictated by the PIAA and if a question arises, the PIAA should be contacted directly.

Period of Participation

The period of participation is limited to students who have not:

1. Been in attendance more than 8 semesters beyond the 8th grade; except in cases of long, confining illness or injury which necessitates repeating a grade. To waive the 8-semester limitation, providing all other eligibility requirements are met; requires approval by the WPIAL Board of Directors.
2. Played four seasons beyond the 8th grade in any one form of interscholastic athletics; or
3. Completed the work of grades 9, 10, 11, 12 (inclusive).
4. NOTE: A pupil is considered as representing his school during a particular season or sport only if he has participated in a game or interscholastic scrimmage or any part of a game or interscholastic scrimmage. A pupil who enters school in the second semester and plays two partial seasons in

the same sport in separate school years shall be considered as playing the equivalent of one season.

The period of participation may change from time to time as dictated by the PIAA and if a question arises, the PIAA should be contacted directly.

All-Star Contests

It should be noted that the PIAA determines whether a student athlete loses athletic eligibility for participating in an all-star contest in that sport. The criteria for athletic eligibility may change from time to time as dictated by the PIAA and if a question arises, PIAA should be contacted directly.

You will lose your athletic eligibility in the respective sport for a period of one year if you participate in an all-star contest in that sport. You will also lose one year of eligibility if you participate in a contest to qualify for and/or determine a single national high school/interscholastic individual championship. Please contact the Athletic Director to determine if the competition in question falls under this rule.

Discipline

All athletes will abide by the current school discipline code set forth and approved since participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right and therefore can be taken away from a student if that student does not comply with the policies and procedures and Codes of Conduct of the School District.

Students may not practice or play while under an in or out-of-school suspension. For example, a student suspended for Friday, Monday, and Tuesday may not participate in weekend school-related activities, including practice. A student who completes his/her suspension on Friday remains ineligible to play or practice until the next calendar day.

All athletic events are directly sponsored by the North Hills School District regardless of the site. Students are expected to exhibit proper behavior at all times when representing the North Hills School District at athletic events as a participant, competitor, or spectator. All rules and policies established by the North Hills School District have jurisdiction over students at school sponsored athletic events. The North Hills Athletic Program is a student privilege. Students who exhibit improper behavior may lose their privilege to participate in, or attend any or all athletic events sponsored by the North Hills School District.

MEDICAL ISSUES

Health Insurance

North Hills School District requires all prospective student athletes to have adequate health insurance prior to any participation. North Hills offers supplemental medical coverage if medical bills are accrued after the family's insurance coverage is applied for injuries sustained during a school sponsored event or practice. If you wish to file a claim under this clause, please contact one of the school's Certified Athletic Trainers.

If you currently do not have adequate medical insurance, please contact the school nurse for health care options.

Athletic Trainers and Training Room Information

Athletic Trainers: Provided through Allegheny Health Network
Location: Lower Level of Middle School Annex and Martorelli Stadium
Hours: Approximately 1:15pm – 7pm plus varsity events during regular school days. If you need to set up a time to meet with the trainers individually, please call the athletic office.

Injury Procedure

The athletic trainer will be responsible for the management and treatment of all athletic injuries. All injuries must be reported to the athletic trainer as soon as possible.

Any athlete who is taken to a physician as recommended by the athletic trainer or by the parent as a result of a possible injury, must provide a written medical release to the athletic trainer in order to return to participation in his/her sport.

The coach or designee must notify the parents and/or guardians of any serious injuries. If necessary, the athlete will be taken to the hospital for necessary care.

The athletic trainer, not a coach, will determine whether an injured player is capable of practicing and/or playing.

If there is a difference of opinion between the athletic trainer and coach or the athletic trainer and parent in the athletes' ability to practice or play, the family is required to provide a written medical release to override the decision of the certified athletic trainer

ATHLETIC AWARDS

All awards will be distributed to the coaches by the Athletic Director and then to the individual athletes. Anyone who quits or is removed from a team prior to the completion of the season, including post-season playoffs, will not receive a letter nor any other individual or team award even if the criteria for earning that award had been met prior to quitting or being removed.

Middle School, Jr. High, Freshman, Junior Varsity

All students who successfully complete the season for the Middle School, Jr. High, and Freshman teams will receive a respective participation certificate.

Varsity

Requirements for earning a varsity athletic letter will be determined by the head coach. Requirements must be approved by the Athletic Director prior to the start of the season and a copy of these requirements will be retained in the athletic office. All students will be notified at the end of the season as to their lettering status.

First Year: Certificate, chenille "NH", respective sport pin

Second Year: Certificate and "Second Year" Pin

Third Year: Plaque

Fourth Year: Plaque

Special Awards

Team Captains: Captain Pins

College-Bound Student-Athlete: Key Chain

Varsity Jackets

Varsity letterman's jackets are handled by an external company. Contact information for said vendor along with general jacket information will be available in the athletic office. It will be the family's responsibility to deal with the individual company if they are dissatisfied with the product or service they receive when ordering a varsity jacket.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The North Hills School District provides transportation to all scheduled away events. It is important for students to ride the bus to and from all contests for many reasons. Such reasons include: team unity in victory and defeat, shared responsibility for team equipment during travel, coach's discussions and instructions before and after contests, etc. However, certain occasions arise that a parent must drive their child to or from a contest. In such cases, parents must certify in writing that they will be transporting their child and release NHSD from any and all responsibility for that child.

STUDENT TRANSFERS

All transfer students and questions of residence will be thoroughly checked by the Athletic Director and approved by the Principal to see if they are in compliance with all PIAA rules before the students can be declared eligible to compete on an interscholastic sports team. Please contact either the Principal or the Athletic Director immediately if you have transferred in to the district or plan to transfer out.

HOME-SCHOOLERS IN ATHLETICS

All home-schooled students must abide by the same set of rules as set forth by the PIAA and described in this handbook. Home-schooled athletes must also show evidence of academic eligibility, required immunizations, and appropriate health screenings. If there are any questions regarding home-schooled children, please contact the Athletic Director immediately.

EQUIPMENT RETURN PROCEDURE

Students are responsible for any and all equipment (including uniforms and practice gear) issued by the school. You will be expected to return all equipment at the end of the season; otherwise, you will be financially responsible for any missing items.

Issued equipment is not to be used for any activity outside of the practices and competitions of the school sport in which it was issued. It is unfortunate that some people steal but that does not void your responsibility for returning or paying for all that was originally issued to you. If you fail to pay for non-returned or overly-abused equipment, you will not be permitted further athletic participation at North Hills and records and transcripts will not be released until all obligations have been cleared.

TEAM RULES

Coaches are encouraged to develop a set of “Team Rules” which governs the individual sport. These rules must be approved by the Athletic Director and kept on file in the athletic office. When a student becomes a member of a team or group, he/she is committing to all the rules and expectations of that team/organization and coach/advisor.

These rules, regulations, and expectations are published prior to the season and provided to the student and his/her parents/guardians at that time.

Full participation in extracurricular activities by any student requires skillful time management and prior planning for involvement in multiple events and activities. This is part of the skills and advantages that participants develop and nurture through membership in extracurricular activities.

Acknowledging that students by nature of their youth and inexperience are still developing life skills which include time management and prioritization of responsibilities, the Board of School Directors, Administration, and Coaches shall encourage each extracurricular activity participant to strive to achieve the highest academic as well as athletic standards as an individual and as a team.

All coaches and sponsors will reinforce the premise that the student has the responsibility to maintain sound academic standings.

If, during the course of planned season activities, a situation develops which places an academic activity at risk, it is the **student’s responsibility** to bring this issue to the attention of their **immediate team head coach or sponsor** with a proposed resolution **prior to the start of the activity**.

Full participation and attendance at all competitions, practices, and events is expected of all participants. In the event of an extreme personal or family emergency and/or a conflict with academic demands, at the request of the parents/guardians and with the approval of the immediate team head coach or Athletic Director participation may be excused or abbreviated. This may only be arranged at the discretion of the team head coach or Athletic Director prior to the event. The head coach or Athletic Director may also grant these exceptions when the schedule presents an undue burden or academic strain on the students as a result of competitions/events being scheduled on two or more consecutive school evenings. **All arrangements must be made prior to the start of the event/competition.**

HAZING POLICY

It is the goal of the North Hills School District to provide a safe and positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district. The school's staff, administration, and coaches do not and will not condone any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing. Please refer to the School District Policy #234 for full text of the current policy and any other relevant policies.

ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS AND RECRUITING

Student athletes should conduct a meeting with their high school coach(es) at the end of their junior season. Let your coaches know that you are interested in participating in collegiate athletics and discuss your potential as an NCAA Division I, II, or III player. Do not be afraid to ask for their help. Your coach will help you, but there are limitations as to how much he/she can do. There are over 3,000 colleges and universities that offer athletic programs. Contacting each and every one of them is impossible for your coach. See the informational section of this handbook for more recruiting tips.

DISCIPLINE CODE OF CONDUCT

All athletes will have to abide by the school's current Student/Parent Handbook and Discipline Code of Conduct throughout the entire school year. Please review the Parent-Student Handbook and Discipline Code of Conduct for complete descriptions and full details.

CANCELLATION OF EVENTS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Based on a cancellation or early dismissal of school, as directed by the Superintendent of Schools, due to inclement weather, the following shall apply:

1. All rehearsals, practices, competitions, performances are cancelled unless administrative approval is given. Administrative consideration will be given to the need for the rehearsal/practice based on the immediacy of the competition/performance and the severity of the weather/road conditions.
2. All student activity coaches/sponsors may request permission to use school facilities on the day of cancellation. This must be done on a single day basis.
3. Students cannot be required to attend an approved activity/practice/rehearsal during a school closing. Participation must be voluntary.
4. All home activities involving spectators are cancelled unless administrative approval is given.
5. If an early dismissal occurs, all activities are cancelled.

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT ATHLETES

1. Athletes should report immediately to practice, the shuttles, locker rooms or library after the dismissal bell in the afternoon.
2. No practice arrangements – formal or informal – are permitted without the presence of supervisory coaching personnel.
3. Students are not to roam the school after hours.
4. Athletic shoes with spikes are not to be worn in the building.
5. At no time should athletes change clothes (practice gear or uniforms) on a bus.
6. You may not practice without properly signed physicals turned to your coach.
7. You are responsible for all of the enclosed guidelines.

WEIGHT ROOM REGULATIONS

1. Shirts and shoes are required at all times; tank tops are acceptable.
2. Nobody is to be in the weight room alone. Wait outside the weight room for a coach or supervisor. Under NO circumstances is any student permitted to be in the weight room unsupervised.
3. Lifters must work with a partner.
4. Replace all weights on racks immediately following use.
5. Know your limits! Work with the instructor in determining your limits.
6. Do the lifts correctly. It is better to use lighter weights for lifting than heavier weights and run the risk of injury.
7. Warm up with the proper stretching exercises.
8. No food or drinks (except water or sport drinks) are allowed inside the weight room.
9. No horseplay or profanity.
10. Do not abuse the equipment. This equipment will have to be used for years to come. Please respect all the school district property.
11. Any equipment that is broken must be reported immediately to the Athletic Director.
12. To reduce the risk of infections, wipe equipment after use to sanitize before the next individual uses the equipment.

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Social Media Guidelines for Student-Athletes

The following guidelines are intended to provide the framework for student-athletes to conduct themselves safely and responsibly in an online environment. As a student athlete at North Hills, you should:

1. Be careful how much and what kind of identifying information you post to online social network sites. Anyone can access your page. It is unwise to provide information such as full date of birth, social security number, address, cell phone numbers, class schedules, bank account information, or details about your daily routine. All can facilitate identity theft or stalking. Social Media provide numerous privacy settings for information contained in its pages – use these settings to protect private information. Once posted, the information becomes the property of the website. Please understand, privacy settings may help protect private information, but it is not a guaranteed safeguard. Any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online, even if you limit access to your site.
2. Be aware that North Hills employees, including coaches, faculty, and administrators, can access these sites just as easily as your peers. Colleges, current and future employers often access online social network sites for information. Many graduate programs and scholarship committees search these sites to screen applications. You should think about any information you post on Social Media as it provides an image of you to a prospective employer. The information posted is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image of which you can be proud.
3. Do not have a false sense of security about your rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. Inappropriate postings on social network sites may easily result in serious repercussions.
4. Be cautious about what you share about your team. You may not post information about yourself, your teammates or your coaches that will put you or your team at a competitive disadvantage, including but not limited to injury reports, game plans and strategy.
5. Be aware that you are personally liable for any copyright violations you may commit, whether intentional or inadvertent. Copyright violations may include posting photographs, audio, or video of people or things that are not you or your personal property, or for which you do not have express written permission to distribute.
6. Be aware that you are personally liable for any violations of other students' privacy rights, including violation of rights protected by state and federal privacy laws.
7. Understand that malicious use of online networks, including derogatory language or comments about any person, demeaning statements about, or threats to any

third party, incriminating photographs or statements that depict private behavior, hazing, sexual harassment, vandalism, stalking, underage drinking, illegal drug use, or other inappropriate behavior will be subject to investigation and possible sanctions by the police.

8. Individual athletic teams may have a more restrictive social networking policy. You are responsible to be aware of your teams' policy and are subject to its guidelines.

9. Consider these recommended practices:

- Profile/privacy settings are set to only friends.
- Contact information is set to only friends.
- Be selective in what information your friends can share about you.
- Even though pictures are included in "profile information," be very careful of what types of pictures you place on a social networking site.
- Be mindful of what pictures you are allowing to be taken that can be posted.

M.R.S.A. Prevention

Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) infections, once seen primarily in hospital settings among older and sicker patients, have become increasingly common in recent years in community settings among healthy adults and children, including athletes who are in close contact with one another and share athletic equipment and locker room facilities. Anywhere from 20% to 50% of the general population may have staph bacteria present in or on their body without causing illness, and some proportion of these staph are antibiotic-resistant. Any staph can penetrate the skin and cause infection, which may result in redness, warmth, pimples or boils, sometimes with or without puss. Staph bacteria are spread mainly by skin-to-skin contact, especially via openings in the skin such as cuts, wounds or abrasions; by direct contact with contaminated items or surfaces; and also may result from poor hygiene.

Health officials recommend the following precautions to reduce the risk of MRSA infections:

- Wash hands with soap and warm running water frequently, especially after contact with nose secretions and drainage from skin openings.
- Skin openings -- cuts, wounds or abrasions -- should be covered at all times with clean, dry bandages.
- Dispose of used bandages in a manner so others don't have contact with infectious drainage.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, washcloths, razors and clothing that may have come in contact with an infected wound.
- Wash soiled linens and clothing in hot water and detergent. Drying in a hot dryer is better than air-drying.
- Clean potentially contaminated surfaces with a commercial disinfectant or a bleach-water solution -- ¼ cup of household bleach to one gallon of water.

For more information contact the Allegheny County Health Department.

C3Logix - Concussion Management System

In the interest of safety for student athletes, the North Hills School District has invested in the C3Logix Concussion Management System. This program helps assist medical personnel in making safe return to play decisions following a concussion. The C3Logix program incorporates a pre-season iPad based baseline evaluation of cognitive functioning and balance. Athletes who participate in the “at risk” sports are given the baseline test by the athletic trainer.

Following a suspected concussion, the athlete will undergo a second evaluation identical to the first. Baseline data from the initial evaluation (along with current injury symptoms) will serve as a direct comparison to determine the athlete’s recovery from injury. At that time, the injured athlete should see a certified medical doctor trained in reading the specific results of this test. From there a diagnosis can be rendered.

Parents’ Guide for Head Injuries

The following is informational only and parents should contact a doctor for specific direction and not rely solely on the information contained in the guide.

Any head, face, neck or jaw injury has the potential to become dangerous if not treated properly. The danger may not appear immediately so the first 24 hours is vital to determine possible severity. The following is offered to help guide parents during the time after their child’s head injury. These guidelines are not meant as, and should not be used as substitutes for competent medical care.

1. Awaken the athlete every two hours to check for these symptoms and his/her general mental clarity.
2. Administer NO medication during the first 24 hours, including aspirin, Tylenol or Advil unless they are prescribed by a physician.
3. Allow only clear fluids, avoid excessive eating or drinking.
4. If any of the following occur, seek medical assistance immediately:
 - a. Severe or increasing headaches
 - b. Dizziness
 - c. Inability to arouse or awaken the athlete
 - d. Pupils of unequal size
 - e. Nausea or vomiting
 - f. Tingling, numbness or lack of control in arms or legs
 - g. Blurred or double vision
 - h. Mental confusion

- i. Clear drainage from the ears of nose
- j. Breathing difficulties

Collegiate Athletic Options (Levels of Play)

1. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

NCAA Division I. This is the highest level of play and they offer the most scholarships. These are the large schools with large student populations.

NCAA Division II. Smaller specialty schools that provide scholarships as well as financial aid grants.

NCAA Division III. No athletic scholarships but many high school graduates receive academic scholarships, financial aid, grants, and jobs on campus, also known as work-study programs.

2. National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)

NAIA can give athletic scholarships as well as other benefits to enable a player to attend school.

3. National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)

Financial aid is provided for the cost of tuition and books. If you are not ready physically or mentally to attend a 4-year college, then a junior college that offers athletic programs may be the answer.

Recruiting Tips

1. Determine if you are good enough to participate at the collegiate level. Build support groups that can give you good sound advice that would consist of your parents, coaches, principals, Athletic Director, and community members that have participated in collegiate athletics that have seen you play.
2. Once you have set your goals for collegiate athletics, begin to market yourself. You can only be offered a college scholarship if a college coach or scout has an opportunity to see you play. This is where you need to begin to market yourself to the colleges of your choice.
 - a. Go to the guidance office, athletic office, or the Internet and obtain addresses of the colleges that you would be interested in.
 - b. Prepare a letter to be sent to the college coaches.
 - c. Prepare a resume of your career.

- d. Prepare a highlight tape and game tape to send with the resume (be sure to label your game tape with the appropriate information – name, address, school name, etc.).
3. Send the information before your senior season.
4. The majority of the colleges will send you a questionnaire; complete it and return it to the colleges immediately.
5. If you are an outstanding student, you will have opportunities to obtain athletic and academic scholarships. Many of the top academic universities have stringent minimum academic entrance requirements where many athletes cannot qualify. Talk with your guidance counselor/coach to obtain the names of academic universities in which you may obtain an athletic scholarship. This is a great opportunity for you if you are an outstanding student.
6. It is suggested that you attend a summer camp to increase your chances of being noticed. You will have the opportunity to perform in front of the college coaching staff for four or five days. Your high school coach or the Athletic Director can help you obtain information for summer camps.
7. If all else fails, you have the opportunity to walk on at the college of your choice and have the chance to earn a college scholarship later. It is very feasible to walk on a team and earn a partial or full scholarship for your remaining years if you become a starter.

College coaches are looking for all around athletic ability first. They look for coordination, speed, jumping ability, size, and strength. College coaches recognize that superior all-around athletes are usually good at a variety of sports. Just by participating in different sports, you are showing scouts that you have some unique gifts – unique because most young athletes can barely excel at one sport, much less two or three. If you are a standout at two or three sports, then you are a special talent.

NCAA Eligibility Center and Guide for College-Bound Student Athletes

A guide for college-bound student athletes and their parents may be obtained by logging on to <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/> or by calling the Athletic Office for a printed copy.

Find out if you are on track to meet academic eligibility and core-course requirements. See what the graduation rate of the athletic program is and that the athletes in your sport are at the colleges in which you are interested. Ask what academic support services are available and how academic progress is tracked.

The NCAA Quick Reference Sheet information is listed on the following page with a brief outline of core courses.

For athletes who receive a scholarship from a Division I university, their initial eligibility will be evaluated under the 16 core course rule:

4 years of English
3 years of Mathematics (Algebra I or higher)
2 years of Natural/Physical Science (1 must be a lab science)
1 year of additional Science, Math or English
2 years of Social Sciences
4 years of additional core courses (they can be from any listed above or from non-doctrinal religion or philosophy or foreign language)
Minimum 2.3 GPA Required

For athletes who receive a scholarship from a Division II university they will be evaluated under the 16 core course rule:

3 years of English
2 years of Mathematics (Algebra I or higher)
2 years of Natural/Physical Science (1 must be a lab science)
3 years of additional Science, Math or English
2 years of Social Sciences
4 years of additional core courses (they can be from any listed above or from non-doctrinal religion or philosophy or foreign language)
Minimum 2.2 GPA Required

The "sliding scale" used by the NCAA now allows a higher core GPA to reduce the SAT component.

2.5 core GPA will need a 820 SAT score

2.75 core GPA will need a 720 SAT score

3.0 core GPA will only require a 620 SAT score

3.55 core GPA will just need a 400 SAT score

The NCAA has stated that their research now indicates that core class grades were the best indicators of academic success during a student-athlete's freshman year.

What Do I Need To Do?

- **Grade 9**
 - Verify with your high school guidance counselor and the online core-course listing to make sure you are on track.
- **Grade 10**
 - Verify with your high school guidance counselor and the online core-course listing to make sure you are on track.
- **Grade 11**
 - Register with the eligibility center.
 - Make sure you are still on course to meet core-course requirements (verify you have the correct number of core courses and that the core courses are on your high school's 48-H with the eligibility center).
 - After your junior year, have your high school guidance counselor send a copy of your transcript. If you have attended any other high schools, make sure a transcript is sent to the eligibility center from each high school.
 - When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").
 - Begin your amateurism questionnaire.
- **Grade 12**
 - When taking the ACT or SAT, request test scores to be sent to the eligibility center (the code is "9999").
 - Complete amateurism questionnaire and sign the final authorization signature online on or after April 1 if you are expecting to enroll in college in the fall semester. (If you are expecting to enroll for spring semester, sign the final authorization signature on or after October 1 of the year prior to enrollment.)
 - Have your high school guidance counselor send a final transcript with proof of graduation to the eligibility center.

PARENTS

Positive Athletic Parenting

- Be a positive motivator.
- Do not degrade the coach or their staff; we all make mistakes. Instead emphasize loyalty and perseverance, and use it as a teaching moment.
- Encourage your child to play for the enjoyment of the experience.
- Do not focus on personal statistics, game scores, or athletic scholarships.
- Encourage participation in several sports. Specialization leads to decreased enjoyment and burnout.
- Be realistic about your child's abilities.
- Be a good role model for your child.
- Encourage good decision making.
- Talk to your child on a daily basis.

Parent/Coach Relationship

Communication/Information Coaches Should Provide to Parents:

- Coach's expectations of players and their parents
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements (i.e. special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.)
- Team rules and guidelines
- Lettering requirements
- Disciplinary procedures
- Information regarding procedures to contact coaches

Communication / Information Parents Should Provide to Coaches:

- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns in regard to the coach's expectations of their child
- Information regarding student injuries and medical condition

Appropriate Concerns for Parents to Discuss with Coaches:

- Treatment of their child
- Ways to help their child improve
- Concerns about their child's behavior

Concerns NOT Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

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

Procedures for Discussing Parental Concerns:

- Parents should not confront coaches or engage in controversial discussion with coaches, either in person or via telephone, immediately before, during or after a practice and/or game. Failure to comply with this request will result in a meeting with the Administration and consequences may include being prohibited from attending next event, multiple events, or up to and including the remainder of the season. *Discussions during times of high emotions do not promote resolution of issues.*
- Parents may discuss concerns with coaches via the telephone or request a meeting with the coach.
- If a parent meeting is desired, the parent should call the coach to schedule an appointment in advance.
- If the coach cannot be reached, the Athletic Director should be contacted to schedule the meeting.
- If the meeting with the coach does not provide satisfactory resolution, the parent may schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
- Coaches may also schedule a meeting with the Athletic Director to discuss issues with parents.
- If the situation is still unresolved, additional meetings with appropriate administrators may be scheduled.

Parents' Responsibility as Fans

In recent news, the role of the parent as a fan at youth or high school athletic events has become a concern. In another state, a parent was sentenced to jail for the murder of a fellow parent during a high school hockey practice. In our state not too long ago, several parents were accused of attacking a referee during a high school basketball game. It is important for fans (parents or otherwise) to realize that just like participants, they play an important role in every contest.

First, the fan must realize the participants are playing the game because of their love and enjoyment for the sport.

Second, a fan must realize that these are youth or high school athletes. They will not be able to perform at the collegiate or professional level at which you are accustomed to watching on television or attending in person.

Third, remember the athletes are trying to succeed and give their best effort every time. Fans should recognize and appreciate their successes and not criticize their failures. Their efforts are pure and genuine. Realize that some athletes will have more advanced skills than others. As a fan, you must be aware of the simple fact that even though your team may give a solid effort, they will not always win.

Fourth, the fan needs to understand the coach. Coaches work and prepare to put forth the best game possible with the resources they have. They are interested in the success of the athlete and team and are working together toward common goals. They are also educators. Along the way, coaches may be forced to sideline a player for lack of effort or

violation of team rules. While people may not always know the whole story, or agree with the decision, it is part of the coach's responsibility. The athlete may not always agree with these tough decisions either, but they will remember the reason a lot longer than they will remember the score of that game.

Fifth, remember the future of the participant. There is no need to dwell on the score, because a year from now, the score will not matter. What will matter is the impression you left on everyone and how the school will be perceived in the future. How fans behave has a larger impact on the game than you may think.

Sixth, it is the responsibility of the fan to show the athlete how to react to success and failure with the proper attitude. The fan needs to understand that everyone involved – players, coaches, officials – is trying to do their best. Appreciate that effort and be patient and understanding when mistakes occur. When success occurs, for the Black Hawks or for the opponent, recognize it with class and refrain from taunting or flaunting.

Seventh, attending an athletic contest should be an enjoyable activity for the fan. As stated before, the athletes are playing for the love of the game. Help them to look forward to participation in contests and appreciate you coming to support them. Do not make them dread this experience because of your inappropriate behavior.

Finally, always remember you are the role model. You are modeling for the athlete (your son or daughter), the community and yourself. Continue to support the sport(s) of your choice but please do so in a manner that will make the team and community proud.