



NADC Session #3 – Workshop #17

Athletic Handbooks for Student-Athletes and Coaching Staffs

Dan Armstrong - CAA: Northwestern HS, Kokomo, IN
Zac Stevenson - CMAA: New Mexico Activities Association



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TRAVERSE CITY CENTRAL

TROJANS



Traverse City Central High School

- 🏠
- FALL
- WINTER
- SPRING
- YEAR-ROUND
- REGISTRATION (FINAL FORMS)
- CALENDAR
- PHOTOS
- SUMMER CAMPS
- GET ALERTS
- MORE ▾

NADC 2019 - WORKSHOP #24

[Click Here for PPT - Code of Conduct and Student Legal Rights](#)

[Click Here for Presentation links to additional resources](#)

[Click Here for TCC Handbook](#)

[Click Here for NW Handbook](#)

[Click Here for TCC Due Process Form](#)

[Click Here for NFHS Transgender Guidelines](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

🏠 Boys Junior Varsity Basketball

(H) Tuesday Dec 10 @ 4:30PM vs Sault Area HS
@ Big Gym

🏠 Boys Freshman Basketball

(H) Tuesday Dec 10 @ 5:30PM vs Sault Area HS
@ Central HS





Athletic Handbooks for Student-Athletes and Coaching Staffs

In this session, we will review the development, discussion and annual review of the handbook, constitution, bylaws, and legal issues related to this process.



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LEGAL DISCLAIMER

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**The Information Provided In This Session
Is *NOT* A Substitute For Legal Advice.**

**There May Be Nuances Of State Or Local
Law That Could Affect Implementation Of
Strategies Or Policies Discussed.**

**Participants Are Strongly Encouraged To Seek The
Advice Of Their State Association Or School District
Legal Counsel.**

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Where do we start?

- **Beginning the process vs Annual Review process**
- **The handbook development team**
- **Topics that must be communicated – each handbook**
- **Communicating the information**



Developing the Handbook - Common Speedbumps

- Board Policy**
- Approval Process**
- Attorney Review**
- Vague and Generalized (Arbitrary and Capricious)**
- Morality Clauses – Conduct Unbecoming
(some leeway for schools)**



Important Points

- Who is involved?
(coaches, parents, students)**
- Do you review annually?**
- Are Board policies updated?**
- Does it follow legal standards?**



The Handbook Development Team

- Coaches, Administrators, Parents, Other Stakeholders

Thank you to the following stakeholders for their time, effort and energy in the development of the Coaches Handbook:

Tim Coleman – Boys / Girls Tennis

Keith Christnagel – Football

Mike Dennisuk – Boys Cross Country / Track

Sean Kelly – Boys / Girls Swimming

Jim Lambert – Softball

Zack Matzo – Hockey

Chris Norton – Baseball / Boys Basketball

Rick Smith – Boys Basketball

Bryan Sullivan - Hockey

Bernie Turner – Boys / Girls Soccer

Rudy Weirich - Wrestling

Melissa Yack - Volleyball



Topics that Must be Communicated - each Handbook

- Mission and Belief Statements**
- Expectations and Responsibilities**
- Legal Disclaimers, Transparency, Title IX, Reporting Procedures**
- Pertinent School Board and State Association Information**



Beginning the Process

Mission/Belief Statement

The purpose of _____ School District Athletics is to provide opportunities for all participating students to learn life-long values in a safe environment.

These values include: Cooperation, Sportsmanship, Pride, Respect, and Leadership Skills

The athletes, coaches and parents of the _____ Athletic Department believe:

- that student athletes will develop leadership characteristics through athletic competition that carry into the classroom and the future.
- that self-discipline and sportsmanship are essential to a sound athletic foundation.
- that pride builds respect, which helps create strong and lasting friendships through athletic competition.
- that a strong commitment is an important ingredient to the success of _____ Athletics.
- that athletics should be fun as well as character building.



Beginning the Process

Purpose of Coaches Handbook

- To serve as a reference for the coaches, Athletic Department, and other school officials who need to be knowledgeable of procedures, policies, duties, and responsibilities as they relate to the interscholastic athletic program in the _____ School District.
- To serve as a guide in the promotion of a well-planned program of interscholastic sports which subscribes to and promotes educational values, as expressed in the policies of _____ School District. To support _____ High School Athletic Association rules and to fulfill the Federal Title IX guidelines.



Vague and Generalized? *(Arbitrary and Capricious?)*

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The _____ High School athlete must respect the purpose of our school by being a good citizen and a good student.
2. Coaches retain the privilege of insisting on proper grooming and dress of each squad member.
3. Any athlete involved in any activity that would reflect unfavorably on the school shall be subject to disciplinary action. This could mean expulsion from athletics.
4. Gambling, profanity, hazing, and obscene language will be unacceptable at all times.
5. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all school activities.
6. Athletes must adhere to the training rules as listed on **Pages 12-14**.



Vague and Generalized? *(Arbitrary and Capricious?)*

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6. Athletes must adhere to the training rules as listed on **Pages 12-14**.

DRESS CODE

We expect our athletes to project a favorable image for our school. Dress must follow the High School handbook rules when athletes are in school. This includes uniforms.



Vague and Generalized? *(Arbitrary and Capricious?)*

Behavior Unbecoming a Student-Athlete

Participation in the athletic program is a privilege, and student-athletes are expected to *behave in a manner that will reflect positively* on their teams and on their school. As representatives of the athletic program and the school district, it is the responsibility of the student-athletes to *make positive decisions at school and in the community.* *Behaviors that violate* these expectations and reflect poorly on the student-athlete, athletic program, and school *will be met with proportional consequences.* Such behaviors will be identified *at the discretion* of the athletic director and principal.



Vague and Generalized? *(Arbitrary and Capricious?)*

Behavior Unbecoming a Student-Athlete

Participation in the athletic program is a privilege, and student-athletes are expected to behave in a manner that will reflect positively on their teams and on their school. As representatives of the athletic program and the school district, it is the responsibility of the student-athletes to make positive decisions at school and in the community. *Behaviors that violate* these expectations and reflect poorly on the student-athlete, athletic program, and school will be met with proportional consequences. Such behaviors will be identified at the discretion of the athletic director and principal...**but may include pictures of using and/or possession of alcohol, tobacco products, drugs, illegal performance-enhancing substances, vapes, or electronic cigarettes, as well as bullying, harassment, hazing, vandalism, theft, assault, and illegal acts resulting in police involvement.**



Communicating the Information

- Annual Acknowledgements**
 - Properly informed and documented!**
- Website Links**
- Parent/Team Meetings**



Important Points

- **Communicate adequately - if not, could be found Arb & Cap**
- **Built into online form? - how well do you educate?**
- **Specificity - lay it out in detail**
- **Enforce consistently!**
- **Participation is a Privilege, not a Right!**



Sample Language – Online Signatures

TCAPS



Manage ▾



Zac Stevenson
Athletic Director

Parker Welch's Forms



- Contact Information
- Health History & Medical Profile
- Medications
- Injuries & Hospitalizations
- Past & Ongoing Health Conditions
- MHSAA PPE Physician Questions
- Emergency Medical Authorization
- Media Release Form
- Athletics and Academic Eligibility
- Baseline Testing Consent
- Situational Forms
- Boys Basketball Rules and Agreement
- Concussion Awareness
- MHSAA PPE Physical (for Physicians)

Concussion Awareness Educational Material Acknowledgement

By my name and signature below, I acknowledge in accordance with Public Acts 342 and 343 of 2012 that I have received and reviewed the Concussion Educational Material for Parents and Student provided by Traverse City Central High School and the Michigan Department of Community Health.

The School must keep this on record for the duration of enrollment/participation and until age 18.

Students and parents should review and keep the educational materials available for future reference.

To learn more, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/index.html>.



Sample Language – Board Approval

Lakeview School District Board of Education Resolution



<https://www.lakeviewspartans.net/>

WHEREAS, the Lakeview School District Board of Education represents the public's interest in providing educational programs in a safe learning environment that develop knowledgeable, healthy, socially responsible citizens in the global community; and

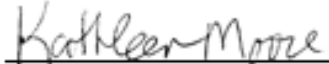
WHEREAS, members of the Lakeview School District Board of Education and administration have spent one and one half years dialoguing with and collecting information from students, parents, community members, coaches, and local and national health education experts to develop an athletic code of conduct that sustains district and community standards of excellence; and

WHEREAS, it is the Board's intent that the Code serve as a framework for expanding current efforts to ultimately provide the largest number of students possible with opportunities for growth and success by holding them accountable for the conditions set forth therein; and

WHEREAS, the Board regards the Code as a living document that may benefit from further development during and after its implementation in order to preserve the philosophy and intent for which it was created;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lakeview School District Board of Education adopts this Athletic Code of Conduct as the definitive document expressing to student-athletes, parents, and coaches those expectations that are essential in upholding district and community standards for world-class athletes and athletic programs.

Adopted March 15, 2010


Kathleen Moore, President
Board of Education



Sample Language – Board Approval

Athletes should realize that they are representing their school and community and should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

- **Adherence To Training Rules**

Athletes must abide by the training rules as set forth by the Athletic Department.

AWARDS PRESENTED BY THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT:

1. Athlete earning letter for the first time, receive "L" certificate, "L" letter, & sports pin. (varsity only)
2. Athlete already earned letter in another sport, receive "L" certificate & sport pin. (varsity only)
3. Athlete earned letter in this sport before, receive "L" certificate & bar. (varsity only)
4. Managers & captains receive "manager/captain pin". (varsity, JV, 9th grade)
5. Certificate of Participation is given to all J.V. & 9th grade athletes. (Athletes who didn't letter on varsity team also fall under this category.)

AWARDS PRESENTATION

Each individual team/coaching staff will arrange for an end of the season presentation of awards. This should be done in as timely a fashion as possible following the conclusion of the season. Date and time needs to be approved through the Athletic Office.



Board of Education Approval: April 20, 2015

<https://lebanonraiders.org/>





Sample Language – Table of Contents

Table of Contents

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Sample Language – Legal

LEGAL RATIONALE

Athletic codes of conduct exist to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the student-athlete and those he or she competes with and against. In Vernonia School District vs. Acton (1995), the Supreme Court of the United States of America held that drug-testing of athletes is permissible because students “voluntarily participate in interschool athletics” and “drug use by an athlete risks immediate physical harm to users and those with whom they play.” For these reasons, further legal challenges to athletic codes of conduct have not been successful, even in the absence of drug-testing.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with the Supreme Court’s position, the Lakeview School District is obligated, for legal and educational reasons, to maintain and require a “No Use” position when it comes to alcohol and drugs.



Sample Language – Privilege

<https://www.nwsc.k12.in.us/o/northwestern-high-school>

NORTHWESTERN HIGH SCHOOL TRAINING RULES

Revised: June 4, 2010

Participating in athletics is both an Honor and a Responsibility. Athletes are recognized for their achievements as representatives of their school and its ideals. Good physical conditioning and sound attitudes are integral to participation in Northwestern's athletic program.

It is a privilege to participate in athletics and this privilege is extended to all, provided that students are willing to assume certain responsibilities. A student participant must be a credit to oneself, the school, and the community. It is expected that all athletes will meet better than minimum standards in conduct.

The primary concern of the athletic department in encouraging athletes to refrain from the use of certain substances is the health and physical/psychological well-being of the athlete. A secondary objective is to ensure that the athlete properly represents himself/herself, his/her family, and the school. Additionally, the ability of the athlete to physically perform to the best of his/her ability should be maintained. The mental well-being, assistance in making quality decisions, resisting peer pressure, and development of self-discipline in the young individual is a consideration when issuing discipline.

Contestants' conduct in and out of school shall be such as (1) not to reflect discredit upon their school or the Association; and (2) not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, moral or educational environment in the school (Rule 8-C-8-1), Indiana High School Athletic Association.







Sample Language – Progressive Discipline

- *Category I Violations – Fighting, malicious or spiteful insubordination toward school personnel, threatening or intimidating behavior and/or harassment of school personnel or destruction of school property. Threatening or intimidating behavior and/or harassment of another student in school or at any school function.*
 - **Penalty**
 - *First offense: 10% of the consecutively scheduled dates (days) of the season during which the violation occurred effective immediately*
 - *Second offense: 50% of the consecutively scheduled dates (days) of the season during which the violation occurred effective immediately.*
 - *Third Offense: Suspension for one (1) calendar year from the time the principal or athletic director is notified of the infraction. Before reinstatement after serving the year, the participant must present a written letter to the athletic director explaining why he/she should be reinstated.*
- *Category II Violations - Use or possession of tobacco in any form; use possession or under the influence of a controlled substance (other than prescribed by a physician) and paraphernalia related to those substances; consumption, possession or under the influence of alcoholic beverages; to steal or be an accomplice to the act of stealing.*
 - **Penalty**
 - *First offense: 10% of the consecutively scheduled dates (days) of the season during which the violation occurred effective immediately*
 - *Second offense: Suspension for one (1) calendar year from the time the principal or athletic director is notified of the infraction. Before reinstatement after serving the year, the participant must present a written letter to the athletic director explaining why he/she should be reinstated.*
 - *Third Offense: Procedure will be identical to that of the second violation.*



Sample Language – Appearance

Eliminate Potentially Discriminatory Policies

Avoid disparate impacts.... that isolate protected classes

- behavioral standards
- dress codes
- grooming requirements
- hairstyle mandates
- other requirements
- race
- ethnicity
- religion
- gender



Sample Language – Social Media

- **Include a social media policy in your student-athlete code of conduct.**
- **Begin the policy with a statement of purpose explaining the disruptive impact of inappropriate social media postings on the school, on the athletics program, and on the morale and success of the team.**
- **Avoid generalized, morals clause type language in the policy.**
- **Include “participation is a privilege not a right” language.**



Sample Language – Social Media

- **Include a social media policy in your student-athlete code of conduct.**
- **Begin the policy with a statement of purpose explaining the disruptive impact of inappropriate social media postings on the school, on the athletics program, and on the morale and success of the team.**
- **Avoid generalized, morals clause type language in the policy.**
- **Include “participation is a privilege not a right” language.**
- **Include precise language defining the specific prohibited behaviors:**
 - **Sexually explicit, profane, lewd, indecent, or defamatory language.**
 - **Derogatory language regarding school personnel or other students.**
 - **Comments designed to harass or bully students/school personnel.**
 - **Nude/sexually-oriented/indecent photos/images or altered pictures.**



Sample Language – Social Media

Social Media – (Class II Infraction) Athletic Code of Conduct

Social media refers to internet-based applications designed to create and share user generated content. Any form of digital magazines, internet forums, web-blogs, podcasts, photographs, video, rating and social bookmarking found on websites or applications such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or Tumblr that is open to public viewing is considered to be social media. This is a rapidly changing network as we move into the 21st Century, and many more not mentioned will arise, which are also included in this policy. Violations of this policy are subject to investigation and sanctions outlined in the Rocklin High School Code of Conduct (page 10) are also subject to review by state and federal law enforcement. These fall under Class II Infractions. Any and all disciplinary measures may apply depending on the severity of the infraction.

Rocklin High School student athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a respectable manner as a member of their teams and our Athletic program. As a student athlete you are responsible for your social media use. Any malicious use of social media platforms shall not be tolerated. Malicious use may include, but not be limited to:

1. Derogatory language or remarks regarding fellow athletes, students, coaches, administrators, faculty and staff of Rocklin High School or other high schools.
2. Demeaning statements or threats that endanger the safety of another person.
3. Incriminating photos or statements regarding illegal criminal behavior, underage drinking, use of illegal drugs, sexual harassment or violence.

As a student athlete I have reviewed and carefully read, with my parent(s) / legal guardian, the Social Media Policy and agree to abide to all provisions contained within. Furthermore, I understand that a violation of said rules may result in loss of athletic privileges and/or suspension from participation.

Student Name (please print)

Student Signature

Date

Parent Name (please print)

Parent Signature

Date



Rocklin High School



Sample Language – Social Media



Sample Language – Drug Testing



Sample Language – Drug Testing

Drug Testing Policy

The Huron School District believes athletes perform at their best when they adhere to good training habits. In order to insure our athletes follow proper training rules we conduct random drug testing of athletes 3 times per year. Test dates are unannounced and completely random. Tests are performed once during each season. Any athlete found to be using any illegal drugs becomes immediately ineligible for one week and in order to remain eligible must seek drug counseling for a length of time determined by the athletic department. If you would like a copy of our complete drug testing policy please contact the athletic department.

<http://huronschools.com/>



HURON HIGH SCHOOL
COMPLETELY COMMITTED TO KIDS!

Huron High School
32044 Huron River Drive
New Boston MI 48164
Phone: 734-782-1436
Fax: 734-783-1534



Reviewing what we have

- **Do Student Handbook and Coaches Handbooks Align?**
- **Do all Handbooks Align across the District?**
- **Do Handbooks connect with State Association policies?**



Applying to ALL areas

- **Hall of Fame**
(Dan enter example link)
- **Club and Activities**
www.lebanonraiders.org
- **Student Leadership Organizations**



Legal-ease, dot the I's and cross the T's

- **Broad v Defined – Do you meet the Legal Standard?**
- **Constitution and Bylaws**
- **School Board review and approval**
- **Onboarding, acknowledgement, collecting signatures**



*Legal-ease, dot the **I**'s and cross the **T**'s*

- **Be mindful of Constitutional Law**
 - **First Amendment: Freedom Of Speech**
 - **First Amendment: Freedom Of Assembly**
 - **First Amendment: Free Exercise Of Religion Clause
& Establishment Clause**
 - **Fourth Amendment: Search & Seizure [Drug Testing]
& Invasion Of Privacy**
 - **Fifth & Fourteenth Amendments: Equal Protection**
 - **Fifth & Fourteenth Amendments: Due Process**



*Legal-ease, dot the **I's** and cross the **T's***

- Be mindful of *State Laws* and *District Policies* Prohibiting:
 - Discrimination in schools based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
 - Bullying of students based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
 - *hundreds of districts have policies; for a complete listing, consult www.transgenderlaw.org/#schools or your district legal counsel.*
- Be mindful of Student Privacy regarding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
 - *FERPA & HIPAA protect students against unconsented-to release of information in educational/health records, including transgender status*



Potential Work

- **Handbook review brainstorming sessions**
 - What do you have?
 - What should you have?
 - What are you missing?



Potential Work

- **Annual reviews**
 - **Small committees to conduct reviews (*across the district!*)**
 - **Student Handbooks**
 - **Athletic Handbooks**
 - **Athletic Codes**
 - **Booster Bylaws**
 - **Coaches Handbooks**
 - **Collective Bargaining Agreements**



NADC - Denver, 2021 – Workshop #3

Athletic Handbooks for Student-Athletes and Coaching Staffs

Discussion?



NADC - Denver, 2021 – Session #3 – Workshop #17

Athletic Handbooks for Student-Athletes and Coaching Staffs

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