

Marion City Schools



Athletic Department Handbook



***Section 1:
Athletic Code of Conduct for
Student-Athletes, Coaches, &
Parents***

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this handbook to present the rules, regulations and the philosophy of The Interscholastic Athletic Program of the Marion City Schools. The policies and philosophies are designed to promote:

1. The physical, mental, emotional and social development of the student.
2. The perspective of each team as part of the entire program.
3. The goal of improving sportsmanship and fair play at all athletic contests.

Furthermore, the policies and philosophies are also designed to support the Marion City Board of Education's Goals for those that supervise and lead our athletic programs. These goals include:

- 1 Educating the students about the fundamentals of the activity
- 2 Positive, NOT negative, reinforcement
- 3 Effectively evaluate and utilize student participants
- 4 Behaves in a professional manner on and off the field
- 5 Creates improvement in individual and team performance
- 6 Creates an environment of mutual respect among students and coaches
- 7 Appropriate mutual communication and cooperation among coaches of different sports during the season

Items not covered in this handbook, but which are rules of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and of the Marion City Schools are to be considered part of this handbook.

The policies and regulations outlined in this handbook will be followed starting the day after the Marion City Schools Board of Education approves and adopts these policies, or unless specified with a specific date of effect. From time to time the policies and regulations will be reviewed and recommendations will be made for changes and improvement.

Whenever a policy or regulation is changed, a copy of the same will be given to all coaches and administrators who receive a copy of this handbook.

The success of this program, for interscholastic athletics, will depend upon the team work and cooperation of all those connected with athletics in our schools.

As increased public attention is being focused on our schools, particularly at athletic events, it remains a major responsibility of the schools to foster a positive example of democratic citizenship to parents and the school community of the Marion City Schools.

PHILOSOPHY OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The Marion City Board of Education strongly believes that the student athlete is a person who has very strong influences both in the community and among the student body.

Student athletes and/or cheerleaders are highly visible and are seen by many in the public as indicators of what the Marion City Schools represents. In addition, their conduct forms both the model and the standard for the conduct of both their peers and countless young children in the community.

Therefore, we believe that the student athlete has an obligation always to exhibit moral and responsible conduct and to provide wholesome, positive leadership in the school community.

A student athlete is under the jurisdiction of the athletic code of conduct 365 days a year. These rules are minimum standards. Each coach may have additional rules established and approved by the administration prior to the beginning of his/her sport season.

Like all activities sponsored by the school, interscholastic athletics are educational in nature and accordingly, have worth for students who choose to participate. The interscholastic athletic program should supplement, rather than serve as a substitute for a comprehensive program of physical education and intramural activities.

The athletic program advocates that every student who comes out for athletics should be given an opportunity for instruction, coaching and participation to advance as far as his/her interest and skills will permit within the limits imposed by space and responsible supervision. Within the practical limitations of facility, financial resources, available competition, and qualified personnel, the athletic program must be diverse enough so that all students will have the opportunity to participate.

It must also be recognized that the desire to win underlies all competitiveness and is to a goal of all teams and coaches. However, the degree of success of the program is not dependent upon the won/lost record of the team. Particular emphasis should be placed on sportsmanship, health, safety and the personal well-being of the participant with consideration being given to the development of wholesome personality and citizenship characteristics.

A well-planned and properly executed athletic program will provide:

1. A wide variety of interscholastic competition
2. Sufficient skilled and talented students to enable varsity

teams to successfully compete with other schools of comparable size.

3. Developmental programs emphasizing fundamentals and maximum participation below the varsity level.

CODE OF ETHICS

It is the duty of all concerned with school athletics:

1. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. To eliminate all possibilities which tend to destroy the best values of athletic competition.
3. To stress the values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. To establish a positive relationship between visitors and hosts.
6. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
7. To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
8. To encourage leadership, use of initiative and good judgment by the players of the team.
9. To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the individual players.
10. To remember that an athletic contest is only a game – not a matter of life or death for player, coach, school, official, parent, fan or community.

POLICIES OF THE MARION CITY SCHOOLS ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Violation of Athletic Policy

When violating athletic policy or team policy, the following types of discipline could and can be issued to a student athlete. They include, but are not limited to: denial of participation, athletic work assignments, academic ineligibility, restitution, dismissal, attending a drug, alcohol, and/or tobacco assistance program, and other reasonable methods of discipline as outlined in the approved coaches training rules for each individual sport. Athletic awards will not be issued until punishment has been served for violations of the athletic training rules.

Investigation of Athletic Policy Violations

If there is a suspected infraction of the athletic department policies which might result in the suspension of an athlete from participation in contests and/or practices, the procedures listed below will be followed:

1. The coach and/or a district administrator will investigate the potential infraction and determine if enough evidence exists to recommend a penalty.
2. If sufficient evidence exists, a written notice will be given the student/athlete regarding the proposed penalty and the reasons for it.
3. The athlete will have an opportunity to present his/her side of the case, to challenge the reasons for suspension or to otherwise explain his/her actions.
4. If following the hearing, the administration decides to suspend the student from athletic participation, written notice of that decision shall be sent to both the athlete and his/her parent/guardian. A copy of that notice will be sent to both the principal and the superintendent. The notice shall include the reasons for the suspension and the right to appeal the penalty to the principal and/or the superintendent.

Grounds for Appealing a Policy Violation

In the case an athlete is denied participation for an extended period of time (more than 10% of a season), or dismissed from an athletic squad, the coach or advisor will inform the athletic director, the athlete, and the parents of his/her status. The coach will give all parties previously mentioned a written report of the situation.

If the athlete is not satisfied, he/she has a right to an appeal. This appeal is to be requested by the athlete within (48) hours after the coach has given the written report to the athlete.

- The appeal process will be initiated within (72) hours of the appeal request.
- The appeal board will consist of the following individuals: Athletic Director, Principal, A Coach selected by the Principal or Athletic Director, and the building Principal or their designee.
- ****DESIGNEE** – the administration can select another member of the staff if one of the appeal board members cannot attend or if a member of the board is the one who has either denied participation, or dismissed a student from the athletic squad.

The appeal board will give the athlete, the coach/advisor, and the superintendent a written report of their decision. This is to be done within a (48) hour period after they have made their decision. The athlete will not practice and/or participate in athletic contests during the appeal process. Under Ohio Revised Code, a pupil whose presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property may be removed without the notice and hearing requirements. However, due process must be instituted as quickly as possible following such removal.

Drug, Tobacco, & Alcohol Policy

We believe there is no place in school athletics for alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any behavior that reflects negatively on the athlete or the school.

Any athlete, grades 9-12 representing Marion City Schools School who uses, possesses, furnishes, or participates in the transportation of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs or related toxic material (e.g. inhalants used for huffing) will be subject to the following penalties for their violation(s). These violations will carry from one year to another.

- First violation: The athlete will be denied participation on his/her athletic team (practices, travel, team functions, etc.) and 100% of the scheduled athletic contests for the season.
 - a) Self Referral: The penalty for this violation may be reduced by the administration to 30% of the scheduled athletic contests if the student comes forward and admits to a violation on their own within (24) hours of the alleged violation. However, if a law enforcement agency is involved in the investigation of a potential violation, or charges are filed (formal or informal), the athlete will be denied participation for a minimum of 50% of the scheduled athletic contests. The athlete will be permitted to practice during the period of non-participation. The student will not be able to travel, dress with the team, or sit on the bench.

- b) **Non Self Referral:** A student athlete who has violated this policy, and did not self refer their actions, may apply to the administration to have their denial of participation reduced to no less than a minimum of 50% of the scheduled athletic contests for the season by following the steps under *REGAINING ELIGIBILITY*. The athlete will be permitted to practice during the period of non-participation. The student will not be able to travel, dress with the team, or sit on the bench.
- c) **Regaining Eligibility:** For a self-referring or non self-referring student to regain eligibility, the athlete (at his or hers own expense) will become involved in a MCS approved treatment/assistance program. The student athlete must complete the program and pass a chemical assessment as deemed appropriate by the approved agency. Until this is completed, the student athlete will remain ineligible to participate in any future athletic seasons for all sports.

Upon written release of this agency, the student athlete must apply in writing to the administration for reinstatement on the athletic team for the remainder of the season. If mutual agreement is reached between the head coach of the sport and the administration, the student athlete may be reinstated.

Should a violation occur at the end of one sports season, the remaining percentage would be carried over to the next sports season the athlete participates in. The athlete may not join another sport which they have not previously participated in to avoid punishment during a sports season that they have participated in previously.

- **Second Violation:** The second violation of this policy will result in the athlete being denied participation for one calendar year.
- **Third Violation:** The third violation of this policy will result in permanent denial of participation for the remainder of the athlete's career.

Reasons for Denial of Athletic Participation

Building Principal: The building principal may declare any athlete ineligible at any time he or she brings discredit upon the school or for continued violation of school rules or regulations. Behavior which reflects negatively on the athlete or department would include, but not limited to, offenses such as (1) Repeated truancy from school or class, (2) Acts of vandalism or abuse of persons, (3) Repeated infractions of school rules.

Criminal Action : An athlete shall not take part in crimes, major acts against individuals, property or acts, which by nature violate the sense of propriety and decency of the community.

Disciplinary Suspensions: An athlete serving “**ALC**” is eligible to practice, but not participate in an athletic contest. An athlete serving “**out-of-school suspension**” will not be allowed to practice or participate in a contest.

Removal from Team or Quitting: If an athlete participating in “Sport A” either quits the squad or is denied participation from the squad, he/she is NOT eligible to join the organized conditioning program or go out for “Sport B” until the other members of “Sport A” are eligible to come out.

- The organized conditioning program is defined as the conditioning period just prior to the sport season as defined by the Ohio High School Athletic Association.
- Open gyms and open weight rooms are not considered as an organized conditioning program.
- This policy also applies to the athlete who becomes academically ineligible for “Sport A”.
- This policy does not apply to the athlete who is “cut” from the squad by the coaching following a tryout.
- Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the coach of “Sport A: and the athletic director.

Hazing: Is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do or initiate any act to another student that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person (“swirling” is considered hazing). Athletes involved in any hazing activity will be subject to the minimum of two weeks denial of participation to denial of participation from teams for the remainder of the school year.

OHSAA Eligibility Requirements (grades 7-12)

Attendance: All members of an athletic team are to be in school for the majority of the school day of an athletic contest. Failure to be in school for this duration would keep the student from playing in a game that day. Students not in school would not be allowed to play or practice on any athletic team. Exceptions to this policy would be determined by the school administration on a case by case basis, and in accordance with other school attendance policies.

Enrollment: In order to be eligible, a student must be currently enrolled in the Marion City Schools, and must have been enrolled, in school the immediately preceding grading period (*home schooling or alternative education facilities outside of the district are subject to review based on revisions of OHSAA & BOE Policy*). During the preceding grading period, the student must have passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one credit courses or the equivalent which count toward graduation.

End of Grading Period: The eligibility or ineligibility of students continues until the start of the fifth (5th) school day of the next grading period, at which time the grades from the immediately preceding grading period become effective. **EXCEPTION:** Eligibility or

ineligibility for the first grading period commences with the start of the fall sports season, as opposed to the fifth (5th) school day of the grading period.

GPA Requirement: A student dropping below a **1.5 GPA** in the previous grading period will be excluded from participating in any athletic activity.

Minimum Credits: To remain eligible on a weekly basis, an athlete must have passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one-credit courses or the equivalent which count toward graduation.

Class Failures: Students will be ineligible to participate if they fail more than **(1) class** in the previous grading period.

7th Grade Athlete Waiver: A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student/athlete must pass all their classes except one for each nine-week period currently enrolled. A student must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period.

Summer School Grades: Summer school grades earned may **NOT** be used to substitute for failing grades from the last grading period of the regular school year.

Failure to Comply: Failure to comply with the grading period eligibility requirements will result in athletic ineligibility for the succeeding grading period.

Practicing if Declared Academically Ineligible

An athlete may continue to practice with the team during a period of ineligibility unless denial of participation is indicated by the coach, athletic director, or building principal.

Definition of an Athletic Season

A sport season shall be defined as the time span from the first practice until the coach releases the participants following the last team involvement in any competition.

Time Off Between Sports

Student athletes who are multi-sport athletes are entitled to 5 (five) days of rest before starting the next sport. These 5 days can include weekend days as part of the 5 days. A coach cannot and will not hold these days against an athlete.

Resolving Issues with A Coach

Any disagreement between an athlete/parent and a coach that cannot be resolved by having a face-to-face meeting, should be brought to the immediate attention of the athletic director. The athletic director will schedule a meeting with the parties involved to discuss the situation in more detail. The athletic director will try to bring about resolution to the issue. If the athlete/parent is not satisfied, they have the right to take the unresolved concern to the building principal. If satisfaction is still not achieved with the principal, the next step would be to request a meeting with the superintendent. If satisfaction is not achieved with the superintendent, the athlete/parent may request to meet with the Board of Education.

Special Policies of the Athletic Department

1. Schedules will meet league obligations and enough independent contests to maintain a continuous competitive level. The athletic department may need to schedule games over vacation periods to ensure that these criteria are attained.
2. All school sport teams whose seasons overlap vacation periods are expected to conduct reasonable practice sessions.
3. Athletes are expected to attend all meetings, practices and games if not excused by their coach. During the team's orientation program, the coach shall inform athletes of vacation schedules and obligations owed by the athletes during vacation periods. It is the athlete's responsibility to inform the coach, in advance, of the necessity of missing team activities.
4. Individual player (non-family) vacations are discouraged. Disciplinary action for such offenses will be determined by the coach. The building principal and/or the athletic director will be consulted as needed.
5. It is recognized that family vacations may conflict with scheduled team contests and/or practices. In such instances and only to the extent necessary, individual athletes will be excused from attending team functions. Before an athlete may resume his or her former role with the team, the athlete will be expected to prove to the coach's satisfaction that the absence has not significantly affected his or her ability to perform.
6. There are to be no practices or games scheduled on Sundays or holidays. Exceptions: When a state-sponsored tournament contest is scheduled on the next Monday or if a postponed game is re-scheduled on a Monday, Sunday practices are permitted. Other exceptions must be cleared with the athletic director or school administration.