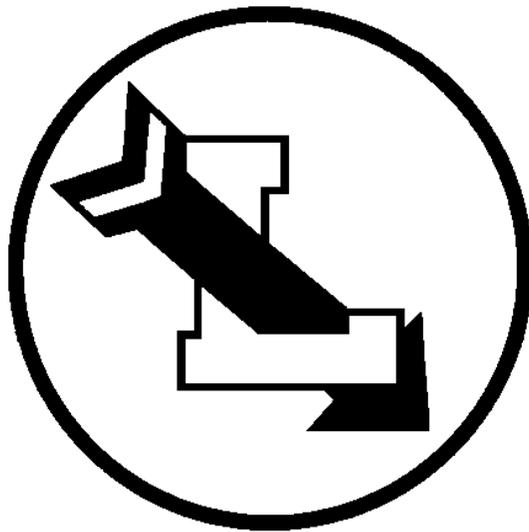


# **LOWELL AREA SCHOOLS**



## **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES & RULES**

Revised 2016

# CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Academic Eligibility.....                        | 8  |
| Activity Fees.....                               | 4  |
| Age .....  | 10 |
| Athletic Code.....                               | 11 |
| Attendance.....                                  | 5  |
| Awards.....                                      | 9  |
| Current Trimester Record.....                    | 11 |
| Disqualification Rule.....                       | 11 |
| Enrollment.....                                  | 10 |
| Equipment & Uniforms .....                       | 5  |
| Foreword.....                                    | 3  |
| General Conduct.....                             | 17 |
| Hazing.....                                      | 16 |
| Insurance .....                                  | 6  |
| Limited Team Membership.....                     | 10 |
| MHSAA Concussion Protocol.....                   | 19 |
| MHSAA Heat & Humidity Policy .....               | 22 |
| Penalties .....                                  | 16 |
| Philosophy .....                                 | 3  |
| Physical Exam.....                               | 9  |
| Potential Dangers in Athletic Participation..... | 6  |
| Previous Trimester Record.....                   | 10 |
| Problem-Solving Procedure.....                   | 17 |
| Quitting a Sport .....                           | 6  |
| Reporting Violations .....                       | 15 |
| Seasons of Competition .....                     | 10 |
| Seasons of Enrollment .....                      | 10 |
| Social Media Guidelines.....                     | 14 |
| Sportsmanship .....                              | 4  |
| Suspensions.....                                 | 6  |
| Team Rules.....                                  | 6  |
| Travel .....                                     | 7  |
| Tryout Out for a Sport .....                     | 7  |
| Violations .....                                 | 12 |
| Wireless Communication Devices .....             | 15 |

## **FOREWORD**

This document contains information to make the student-athlete and their parents aware of the policies and procedures that apply to all athletes participating in Lowell Area Schools' athletic programs. It is important that parents read this document, view the mandatory online parent presentation and complete the short test covering the presentation information.

It is also important to remember that athletics is a privilege and that all athletes are expected to live up to high standards in representing themselves, their family, the school, and the community. We expect all athletes' conduct to be one of good sportsmanship, whether in victory or defeat. We expect all athletes to respect opponents, officials, facilities and equipment.

We wish you the best of luck and support as you pursue the opportunity to develop new life-long skills in team work, self-discipline, and responsibility, and also to push yourself both physically and mentally to achieve both personal and team goals.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Lowell Athletic Department, Lowell High School, Lowell Middle School and the Lowell School District believe in the importance of extracurricular activities and athletics in general. They should be viewed as an extension of the learning process. We are striving to provide a program that the student body and community will be proud of. Success shall be measured in more than the number of wins and losses but in the type of individuals who graduate through our program.

Student/athletes should understand that participation in athletics is an honor and carries responsibilities to the team, school, and community. It is important that we teach and practice good sportsmanship, respect, self-discipline, teamwork, and self-esteem. While winning is always desired, it should not be the driving motivation of our program. Our goal should be to help guide the student/athlete in their quest to be the best athlete and person they can be and to teach the values of responsibility, respect, integrity, compassion, and honesty.

# GENERAL POLICIES

## SPORTSMANSHIP

As an athlete, you can help us continue to improve upon our reputation as a school, which is known for good sportsmanship. We must all work hard in conducting ourselves in a respectful manner. Displays of poor sportsmanship can and will result in sanctions against the offending athlete (i.e. suspension from the following event) and/or school. Always observe the following guidelines for good sportsmanship.

1. The good name of our school is more important than any contest won by unfair play. Accept and understand the seriousness of the responsibility, and the privilege of representing the school and community.
2. Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, classmates and younger students.
3. Accept decisions of officials without dispute. They are seldom responsible for your success, so do not blame them for your failure.
4. Refrain from making any kind of derogatory remarks to opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature.
5. Recognize and show appreciation for the fine play of your opponent. Congratulate them in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
6. Be proud of your school's reputation and work hard to protect it. Win with humility; lose with grace; do both with dignity.
7. Remember to practice "The Golden Rule" (do unto others as you would have them do unto you.)

## ACTIVITY FEES

Lowell Area Schools instituted an activity fee in the 1991-92 school year to help offset the costs of funding the athletic program. The fee has been modified several times to its current form which requires a fee of \$95.00 per season for high school sports and \$60.00 per season for middle school sports. The activity fee for non-funded sports will be determined on an individual sport basis.

To reduce costs for families or individuals who have multiple sport participants, pay for every two, get every third sport free was created. Families wishing to

take advantage of this program should pick up a form available in the Athletic Office, Middle School Office, or on the web site, fill it out and return it. This form is to provide verification of the athletes and the sports they have participated in. The pay-for-2 and 3<sup>rd</sup>-sport-free policy applies to school-funded sports only.

Those students who qualify for federal assistance through the free or reduced lunch program are exempt from the participation fee. Families should fill out and return the form sent to them by our Food Service Department. It is the parent or student-athlete's responsibility to inform the Athletic Office of receiving free or reduced lunch so that the participation fee may be waived.

The payment of the activity fee in no way guarantees playing time but rather the opportunity to be a member of the team, playing time decisions are made by the coaching staff.

## ATTENDANCE

The minimum requirement is that in order to participate in practice or competition, an athlete must be in attendance the entire school day. The only exceptions are if the athlete is excused by the office for an appointment, funeral, legal matter, college visitation or school-related activity. Documentation of a professional appointment (i.e., doctor, dentist, etc.) must be turned in to the attendance secretary upon return to school.

Coaches will review the daily attendance report, and if any issues arise due to attendance discrepancy, the student-athlete may be required to miss the next scheduled contest/practice. Final decisions will be determined by the Athletic Department.

## EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

1. An athlete is financially responsible for all equipment and/or uniforms issued to her/him.
2. Destroyed, lost or stolen equipment or uniforms must be paid for, or the athlete will:
  - a. not be allowed to participate in the next sport he/she goes out for;
  - b. not receive their athletic awards;
  - c. in the case of seniors, may not receive their diploma.

## INSURANCE

Athletics is a voluntary program in which students participate at their own risk. All athletes are encouraged to have insurance coverage as the participation in athletics puts students at risk for injury. The school district does not assume financial responsibility for medical, hospital, or ambulance expenses incurred because of athletic injuries. A voluntary coverage is available for purchase through First Agency.

## POTENTIAL DANGERS IN ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Parents and student-athletes should fully understand and appreciate the risk of serious injury associated with participation in sports programs provided by Lowell Area Schools. Athletic activities can be hazardous, and taking part in such activities is calculated risk-taking on the part of the student-athlete and parents. While reducing injuries to a minimum is a goal of our coaching staff and administration, the possible dangers must not be overlooked.

## QUITTING A SPORT

No student should quit any sport without first consulting the coach and explaining his or her intentions. An athlete will not be permitted to participate in another sport until the season of the dropped sport has been completed, or she/he has the authorization of both coaches involved.

## SUSPENSIONS

Student/athletes serving out of school suspensions are ineligible to practice or compete during the time they are suspended. For suspensions ending on Friday, a coach may allow the athlete to compete on a Saturday. Depending on the student behavior event, in-school suspensions may or may not hinder a student/athletes ability to participate. After-school suspensions may or may not affect the athlete depending upon whether the required time conflicts with the practice or game schedule. After-school suspensions will be assigned on the next scheduled date, regardless of conflicts.

## TEAM RULES

Individual coaches may also establish "Team Rules" which do not conflict with the General Policies or Athletic Code of Conduct. Coaches are responsible for communicating these rules to student-athletes and parents.

## TRAVEL

When the school provides transportation to out of town contests, all athletes must travel to the contest in the transportation provided by the athletic department. Athletes will remain with their team and under the supervision of a coach when attending away contests. All regular school bus rules will be followed, including: food, noise, remaining in seats, care and respect for vehicles. An athlete may return from an athletic contest with their parent upon notification to the coach. Student athletes may ride with another parent, providing that the appropriate travel release information has been completed in advance and the coach has been notified.

## TRYING OUT FOR A SPORT

Any student who meets eligibility requirements may try out for an athletic team. Teams will be selected by the coaching staff in the sport or through other pre-arranged procedures. Coaches will select their teams based upon their judgment of talent and knowledge of the athletes.

Any student who desires to join a team after the first official practice (the day the coach has designated and announced as the beginning of practice which cannot be earlier than the MHSAA beginning practice date) must practice with the team for at least two weeks before he/she will be allowed to participate in a contracted athletic event. A student may try out for an athletic team before the mid-point of the season with coach's approval, unless the team has a player limit policy. Students who wish to participate or try out in these sports after the first official day, but prior to the mid-point of the season, must make arrangements with the head coach prior to the first official practice when the student-athlete is aware that he/she will not be available for the official try-out time frame.

No student may try out for an athletic team, with or without a player limit, after the mid-point in the season, unless approved by the head coach. A transfer student who is eligible to participate may try out after the mid-point of the season with the approval of the head coach, but must practice for at least two (2) weeks before competing in a contracted athletic event.

The athletic department desires student athlete participation. Coaches will be encouraged to keep as many athletes as can be handled reasonably within the facilities, budget, and to the relative ability of the group. Selecting the members for a team is the responsibility of the coach. Coaches should explain the criteria for gaining and maintaining membership on the team before practice begins.

The amount of playing time an athlete receives in certain team sports is entirely the coaches' decision. Athletes are expected to earn their playing time by their

performance in practice. Coaches will consider the athlete's practice attendance, attitude, physical ability and the athlete's ability to work together with his/her teammates and the coach.

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY FOR ATHLETES**

Lowell Area Schools have two academic eligibility policies; one relates to the high school athlete and the other to the middle school athlete. The high school policy follows the minimum requirements established by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. It should be noted that parents always have the final say in establishing academic requirements which may be stricter for their child.

### **HIGH SCHOOL:**

1. All in-season athletes must carry and pass at least four classes out of five (this is the equivalent to twenty hours).
2. All in-season athletes will be checked weekly during their season using current grades (the grade is based from the beginning of the trimester to the current date). Beginning at the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the trimester, if an athlete is found to be passing less than four classes, they will have one calendar week to raise the deficient grades. If at the end of the probationary week they are not receiving four passing grades, they will become ineligible for one calendar week (Monday through Sunday). Their status will be reviewed on a weekly basis.
3. Student athletes who are on probation should attend practice and remain on the team in good standing. They are also encouraged to work with their coaches and teachers for academic support.
4. Student athletes who do not pass four classes at the end of each trimester are ineligible to compete for the entire next trimester (if they complete makeup for the previous failure they may regain eligibility).
5. All incoming first-time freshmen have immediate eligibility for the first trimester regardless of their previous middle school academic record.
6. Deficiencies in the third trimester may be made up during the summer session, by correspondence, summer school, online courses, etc.

Eligibility may be reinstated during the fall trimester when LHS accepts the credit.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

1. If a student is failing two classes they are ineligible on a week to week basis. If a student is failing the same class two consecutive weeks they are ineligible. Passing grades are calculated from the beginning of the trimester to the current date and not weekly.
2. All students entering the seventh grade (for the first time) have immediate eligibility regardless of their previous trimester record.

## **MHSAA ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS**

Lowell High School is a volunteer member of the Michigan High School athletic Association, the governing body of high school athletes for public, parochial and private schools in the state. The MHSAA rules listed in this handbook are only a summary of the regulations effecting student eligibility. In addition, Lowell High School eligibility rules are listed. *The student athlete is responsible for knowing and following all eligibility requirements.*

### **PHYSICAL EXAM**

An annual physical examination must be completed and the card on file in the athletic office before an athlete may participate in try outs or practice. Current physicals are those received on or after April 15 of the previous school year.

### **AWARDS**

Student athletes may accept in kind, for participation in athletics, a symbolic or merchandise award which does not have a value over \$25. Banquets, luncheons, dinners, noncompetitive trips, and fees or admissions to be a spectator at events, are permitted in accepted in kind. Also, game ball presentations are allowable. However, awards in the form of cash, merchandise certificates, or any other negotiable document are never allowed.

## LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP

Athletes may not participate in any outside competition in a sport during the season after the athlete has represented his or her school except individual participation in a maximum of two individual sports meets or contests. Athletes may not have participated in so-called all-star charity or exhibition football or basketball games during the school year. As an example, an athlete may not play high school basketball or softball at the same time they are playing on a church basketball or softball team.

## ENROLLMENT

Student athletes must be enrolled in the school for which they compete. A student must be enrolled in and receiving credit in at least 66 percent of a full credit load potential. To be eligible to participate during the first and second trimesters, a student must be enrolled before the fourth Friday after Labor Day. To be eligible to participate during the second and third trimesters, a student must be enrolled before the fourth Friday in February.

## AGE

The student must be under 19 years of age at the time of the contest unless the student's 19th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of the current school year, in which case the student is eligible for the balance of that school year in all sports.

## SEASONS OF COMPETITION

A student athlete shall be allowed to compete in only four first, four second and four third trimesters.

## SEASONS OF ENROLLMENT

The student must not have been enrolled for more than twelve trimesters in grades 9 through 12, inclusive. The 10th, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12th trimesters must be consecutive. Three weeks enrollment or participation in one or more athletic contest constitutes a semester of enrollment.

## PREVIOUS TRIMESTER RECORD

A student must have passed four (4) classes during the previous trimester.

## CURRENT TRIMESTER RECORD

A student must be carrying and doing passing work in four (4) out of five (5) classes during the present trimester.

## DISQUALIFICATION RULE

The MHSAA Regulations Handbook states that students and coaches who are disqualified from one contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be disqualified from the next contest in all sports. *A disqualification in hockey will result in missing the next two contests.*

The student athlete will not be eligible to participate in the MHSAA tournament for that sport that season if he/she...

- Is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct three or more times during a season.
- Is ejected for abusive action to an official at any time during that season.

## **ATHLETIC CODE**

**The Athletic Code of Conduct is in effect year-round beginning with the first sport season a student participates in until the conclusion of their senior year.**

### **Athletic Code of Conduct:**

Student athletes participating in sports for Lowell Area Schools have a responsibility to family, school and community. *Participation in interscholastic sports is a privilege, and with that comes greater responsibility.* The conduct of Lowell High School athletes is observed closely both on and off the fields of competition. Therefore, it is important that athletes act in a responsible manner while representing their school, team and family. The purpose of this conduct code is to establish regulations and procedures to deal with violations which occur on or off school grounds. *Athletes are bound by the Athletic Code at all times, throughout the entire calendar year (365 days), for all four years.* The following code is in effect for all student athletes in addition to this Handbook and the Student Handbook. A student athlete is defined as any member of an interscholastic athletic team or recognized program.

## VIOLATIONS

The coaching staff and administration of Lowell High School will not condone *the possession or use of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco in any form, including electronic cigarettes, improper conduct, actions which would be deemed misdemeanors or felonies under the criminal code, or the engaging in activities considered to be unbecoming of an athlete.* It is understood that within the privacy of the home and under the supervision of an athlete’s own parent, jurisdiction is limited. However, parental assistance in this matter is expected. A student is considered an athlete and subject to the rules of this code when he/she first participates in an interscholastic sport and continues until the athlete graduates. *All training rules are applicable regardless of whether an athlete is “in session”.* Any information, circumstantial or otherwise, obtained by the school administrative team regarding a violation of these rules may result in an administrative investigation, but anonymous allegations will not be considered. If a violation of these rules is substantiated by an administrative team investigation or by the students’ own admission, upon accusation, the following consequences will be imposed.

Conduct Unbecoming of an Athlete will result in removal from contest participation as noted below.

| <b>Tier 1 Violation</b>   | <b>Tier 2 Violation</b>  | <b>Tier 3 Violation</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| Can include, but not limited to:<br>School offenses as outlined in student handbook that result in 1–3 days of out-of-school suspension<br>Gross misconduct*<br>Vandalism<br>Misuse of Social Media<br><br>Cheating in the classroom that results in a score of 0 | Can include, but not limited to:<br>Being in close proximity to:**<br>Alcohol<br>Drugs<br><br>School offenses as outlined in the student handbook that result in 4 or more days of out-of-school suspension. | Use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or steroids****, and/or misuse of prescription drugs, and/or actions that would be deemed as misdemeanors or felonies under the criminal code. |
| <b>First Offense</b><br>1 week or 10% of season whichever comes first per discretion of the Athletic Director.  | <b>First Offense</b><br>2 weeks or 20% of season whichever comes first and 10 hours of community service.  | <b>First Offense</b><br>25% of current and/or next sports season  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Second Offense</b><br/>3 weeks or 25% of season, whichever comes first.</p> <p><b>Third Offense</b><br/>50% of season</p> <p><b>Fourth Offense</b><br/>Loss of interscholastic opportunities for the remainder of their school career.</p> | <p><b>Second Offense</b><br/>40% of season</p> <p><b>Third Offense</b><br/>Loss of interscholastic opportunities for one year.</p> | <p><b>Second Offense</b><br/>Ineligible from interscholastic competition for 365 days</p> <p><b>Third Offense</b><br/>Loss of interscholastic opportunities for the remainder of high school career.</p> |
|--|--|--|

\*Any violation, action, behavior or other conduct that is offensive or socially unacceptable behavior that brings discredit to the athlete, parent, school, or team as determined by administration.

\*\*NOTE: Any athlete attending a party in which alcohol or drugs are involved (regardless if the student-athlete used the drugs or consumed alcohol) shall be guilty of violating this article. An athlete going to such a party who promptly leaves when she/he finds that alcohol or drugs are being used shall not be considered guilty of participation. An allowable exception to this rule would be if the athlete is a guest at a social event at which there is parental supervision (i.e., a wedding) and when the athlete does not indulge in the use of alcohol or drugs.

\*\*\*If a student self-reports, the consequence is reduced by 5% for first offense (cannot be less than one game).

**\*\*\*\*Steroids:** The illegal use of a performance enhancing substance (as published by the NCAA) by a student-athlete, is considered a violation of the athletic code in tier 3.

Student athletes who are under a physician’s care and who have been directed by a physician to use anabolic steroids due to a medical condition requiring such treatment, must present proof of the physician’s orders to the Athletic Department *prior to participating in any practice or contest.*

**Understanding the tier system:**

**Tier 1**

A tier one violation can be classified as a tier two or tier three violation by the administrative team depending upon the severity of the violation. (ex., theft over \$100 compared to food theft from cafeteria)

All tier one consequences will be determined by the coach and administrative team.

Consequences for additional tier one violations will remain in the tier one category.

### **Tier 2 and 3**

If an athlete gets a first offense violation in tier 2 and then gets a second offense violation in tier 3, the student-athlete would serve the penalty for tier 3 (365 days). If an athlete gets a first offense in tier 3 and then receives a second offense in tier 2, the student-athlete would serve the penalty in tier 2 (40% of season).

During the suspension, the athlete will participate in all practice and meet all the demands placed on other members on the team. The athlete must attend all games during this period, in street clothes, and sit/stand within close proximity of the team.

Upon completion of the above requirements, the athlete will become fully eligible for athletic competition.

### **Tier 3 Provision Second Offense:**

If a student-athlete completes a substance abuse program and/or completes community service at the discretion of the administration, the violation will be reduced to a minimum of 75% of the next season. The scope and sequence of the substance abuse program and the community service must be approved by administration before the student athlete begins the program. The student athlete cannot participate in interscholastic competition until the program is complete or the 365 days has passed. This substance abuse program is voluntary and expenses will be covered by the family.

### Appeals

Any decision by the High School Athletic Department regarding a suspension may be appealed to the High School Principal. The Superintendent will have final decision making authority regarding any athletic suspensions. In the event that a student athlete is facing a permanent ban from interscholastic athletics, the decision can be appealed to the Board of Education.

### **Social Media Rules/Guidelines:**

Social networking websites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) are a representation of the student-athlete, along with Lowell Area Schools. *The administrators and coaches have the right to monitor these sites and student-athletes will face discipline depending on the scope of the infraction. Administration along with coaches will determine if the violation is tier 1, 2, or 3.*

*Disclosure* It is mandated that student-athletes or coaches do not post information about specific student-athletes, unless it is related to an award, honor or game performance (in a positive way). Please follow the guidelines of FERPA and good taste.

*Sportsmanship* It is mandated that student-athletes not talk about internal matters of a specific sport, Lowell Area Schools, OK conference or the MHSAA. Always practice sportsmanship. Find something good to say, or don't say it.

### **Wireless Communication Devices (WCD)**

The use of WCDs in locker rooms, classrooms, bathrooms is prohibited.

WCDs, including but not limited to those with cameras, may not be possessed, activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, shower facilities, restrooms, classrooms, and any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The building principal has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where possession of a WCD is absolutely prohibited.

No expectation of confidentiality will exist in the use of WCDs on school premises/property.

Students are prohibited from using a WCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated. For further information, see School Board Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Other Forms of Aggressive Behavior.

## **REPORTING VIOLATIONS**

1. If a signed written report of violation is submitted to the Athletic Director, Principal or Coach within a reasonable amount of time after the alleged violation occurred, the Athletic Director or Principal shall make a determination of what further action under this section is warranted.

2. Once a decision about further action is made, the Athletic Department shall notify the athlete and/or the athlete's parents of the decision within a reasonable amount of time.
3. Within ten (10) school days following notification of a violation to the athlete and the athlete's parents, the Athletic Director shall communicate with the athlete and/or the athlete's parents to discuss the violation and to advise the parents and/or athlete of the penalty being assessed against the athlete. The penalties shall be imposed immediately and continue during any appeal of the decision.
4. If the decision of the Athletic Director is unsatisfactory to the parents and the athlete, they may appeal the decision to the Principal within two (2) school days. The Principal shall meet with the athlete and the parents within two (2) school days.
5. If the decision of the Principal is unsatisfactory to the parents, they may appeal to the Superintendent within three (3) school days by submitting a written request to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall meet with the athlete and parents at a mutually agreed upon time but not later than five (5) school days following the appeal. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final in all matters involving violations of these rules.
6. If an athlete is determined to be guilty of such violations, after the conclusion of a sports season during which the violation occurred, any punishment under these rules may be applied to the next sport in which the athlete may participate for the entire season.

## PENALTIES

Any student transferring into Lowell Area Schools with an athletic penalty in effect will retain the penalty and duration until completion in the Lowell Area Schools.

## HAZING

The Board of Education believes that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and prohibits all such activities at any time in school facilities, on school property, and at any District-sponsored event.

Hazing shall be defined for purposes of this policy as performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any

class, group, or organization that causes or creates a risk of causing mental, emotional, or physical harm. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

Hazing involves conduct such as but not limited to:

- A. illegal activity, such as drinking or drugs;
- B. physical punishment or infliction of pain;
- C. intentional humiliation or embarrassment;
- D. dangerous activity;
- E. activity likely to cause mental or psychological stress;
- F. forced detention or kidnapping;
- G. undressing or otherwise exposing intimates.

[NOTE: If the school club or organization does not have an official and approved initiation procedure, and if no school staff is involved in the activity, there is a significant likelihood that the activity may result in violation of this policy. Michigan law also makes hazing a crime, punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.]

Administrators, faculty members, and other employees of the District shall be alert particularly to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, the students involved shall be informed by the discoverer of the prohibitions contained in this policy and shall be ordered to end all hazing activities or planned activities immediately. All hazing incidents shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent. Students, administrators, faculty members, and other employees who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and may be held personally liable for civil or criminal penalties.

The Superintendent shall distribute this policy to all students and District employees, and shall incorporate it into building, staff, and student handbooks. It shall also be the subject of discussion at employee staff meetings or in-service programs.

## GENERAL CONDUCT

Conduct reflecting poorly on the athletic program or the Lowell Area Schools shall be brought to the attention of the athletic director or the assistant principal.

# PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURE

When an issue arises that is appropriate for discussion, the coach will welcome the chance to discuss it with you. *However, the issue must first be brought to the coach's attention by the athlete. This ensures that the problem-solving is initiated by the athlete.* If, after discussion the issue is still not resolved, the parent may contact the coach to set up a meeting. *The athlete must also be present at this meeting.*

## **Issues with a Coach:**

Coaches are special people who play an extremely important role in the lives of athletes. Most coaches coach for two reasons: 1) they love the game, but more importantly 2) They love working with kids. Please keep the above items in mind when issues arise.

The following section summarizes appropriate and inappropriate issues for discussion with a coach.

### **Appropriate Issues:**

The following issues are considered appropriate issues to discuss with coaches.

- Expectations during practices and games
- Strategies for the student-athlete to improve
- Academic/family concerns or issues

*If student-initiated problem solving does not result in a satisfactory resolution, a meeting should be scheduled that includes parents, the student-athlete and coaches involved. Parents should use the 24-hour rule.*

### **Inappropriate Issues:**

The following issues are inappropriate items to discuss with coaches:

- Team and/or game strategy
- Play calling
- Playing time
- Other student athletes

# MHSAA PROTOCOL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL FEDERATION SPORTS PLAYING RULES FOR CONCUSSIONS

“Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.”

The language above, which appears in all National Federation sports rule books, reflects a strengthening of rules regarding the safety of athletes suspected of having a concussion. This language reflects an increasing focus on safety and acknowledges that the vast majority of concussions do not involve a loss of consciousness.

This protocol is intended to provide the mechanics to follow during the course of contests when an athlete sustains an apparent concussion.

1. The officials will have no role in determining concussion other than the obvious one where a player is either unconscious or apparently unconscious. Officials will merely point out to a coach that a player is apparently injured and advise that the player should be examined by a health care professional for an exact determination of the extent of injury.

2. If it is confirmed by the school’s designated health care professional that the student did not sustain a concussion, the head coach may so advise the officials during an appropriate stoppage of play and the athlete may reenter competition pursuant to the contest rules.

3. Otherwise, if competition continues while the athlete is withheld for an apparent concussion, that athlete may not be returned to competition that day but is subject to the return to play protocol.

a. The clearance may not be on the same date on which the athlete was removed from play.

b. Only an M.D., D.O., Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner may clear the individual to return to activity.

c. The clearance must be in writing and must be unconditional. It is not sufficient that the M.D., D.O., Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner has approved the student to begin a return-to-play progression. The medical examiner must approve the student’s return to unrestricted activity.

d. Individual school, districts and leagues may have more stringent requirements and protocols including but not limited to mandatory periods of inactivity, screening and post-concussion testing prior to the written clearance for return to activity.

4. Following the contest, an Officials Report shall be filed with a removed player's school and the MHSAA if the situation was brought to the officials' attention.

5. Member schools are required to complete and submit the forms designated by the MHSAA to record and track head injury events in all levels of all sports.

6. In cases where an assigned MHSAA tournament physician (MD/DO/PA/NP) is present, his or her decision to not allow an athlete to return to activity may not be overruled.

### **SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Following are the consequences for not complying with National Federation and MHSAA rules when players are removed from play because of a concussion:

- A concussed student is ineligible to return to any athletic meet or contest on the same day the concussion is sustained.
- A concussed student is ineligible to enter a meet or contest on a subsequent day without the written authorization of an M.D., D.O., Physician's Assistant or Nurse Practitioner.

These students are considered ineligible players and any meet or contest which they enter is forfeited. In addition, that program is placed on probation through that sport season of the following school year. For a second offense in that sport during the probationary period – that program is continued on probation through that sport season of the following school year and not permitted to participate in the MHSAA tournament in that sport during the original and extended probationary period.

The MHSAA Return to Activity form must be signed by the MD, DO, PA or NP unconditionally and turned in to the Athletic Department before the student-athlete may return to practice or competition. The required form is located on the following page.



**RETURN TO ACTIVITY**

This form is to be used after an athlete is removed from and not returned to activity after exhibiting concussion symptoms. MHSAA rules require unconditional written authorization from a physician (MD/DO/ Physician’s Assistant/ Nurse Practitioner) before an athlete may return to activity after exhibiting concussion symptoms that caused that athlete to be removed for the duration of a contest.

In cases where an assigned MHSAA Tournament physician (MD/DO/PA/NP) is present, his or her decision to not allow a student to return to activity may not be overruled.

Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Event/Sport: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

**REASON FOR ATHLETE’S INCAPACITY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Action of M.D., D.O., Physician’s Asst. or Nurse Practitioner**

- The clearance must be in writing and must be unconditional. It is not sufficient that the M.D., D.O. Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner has approved the student to begin a return-to-play progression. The medical examiner must approve the student’s return to unrestricted activity.
- Individual school, districts and leagues may have more stringent requirements and protocols including but not limited to mandatory periods of inactivity, screening and post-concussion testing prior to or after the written clearance for return to activity.
- A school or licensed health care professional may use a locally created form provided it complies with MHSAA regulations. (See MHSAA Concussion Protocol)

I have examined the named student-athlete following this episode and determined the following:

**Permission is granted** for the athlete to return to activity (may not return to practice or competition on the same day as the injury).

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE (Must be MD/ DO/PA/NP)

Examiner’s Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Copies to: Team Coach and Athletic Director (Duplicate as Needed)

**In addition to this return to activity form, member schools are required to complete and submit a report on MHSAA.com to record and track concussion events in all levels of all sports.**

# MHSAA POLICY FOR MANAGING HEAT & HUMIDITY

1. Thirty minutes prior to the start of an activity, and again 60 minutes after the start of that activity, take temperature and humidity readings at the site of the activity. Using a digital sling psychrometer is recommended. Record the readings in writing and maintain the information in files of school administration. Each school is to designate whose duties these are: generally the athletic director, head coach or certified athletic trainer.

2. Factor the temperature and humidity into the Heat Index Calculator and Chart to determine the Heat Index. If a digital sling psychrometer is being used, the calculation is automatic.

### **3. If the Heat Index is below 95 degrees:**

- Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- Ice-down towels for cooling.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.

### **If the Heat Index is 95 degrees to 99 degrees:**

- Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- Ice-down towels for cooling.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- Contact sports and activities with additional equipment:
  - Helmets and other possible equipment removed while not involved in contact.
- Reduce time of outside activity. Consider postponing practice to later in the day.
- Recheck temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index.

### **If the Heat Index is above 99 degrees to 104 degrees:**

- Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire.
- Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.
- Ice-down towels for cooling.
- Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.
- Alter uniform by removing items if possible.
- Allow for changes to dry t-shirts and shorts.
- Reduce time of outside activity as well as indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable.
- Postpone practice to later in the day.
- Contact sports and activities with additional equipment
  - Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact or necessary for safety. If necessary for safety, suspend activity.
- Recheck temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased Heat Index.

### **If the Heat Index is above 104 degrees:**

All sports

- Stop all outside activity in practice and/or play, and stop all inside activity if air conditioning is unavailable.

**Note: When the temperature is below 80 degrees there is no combination of heat and humidity that will result in need to curtail activity.**