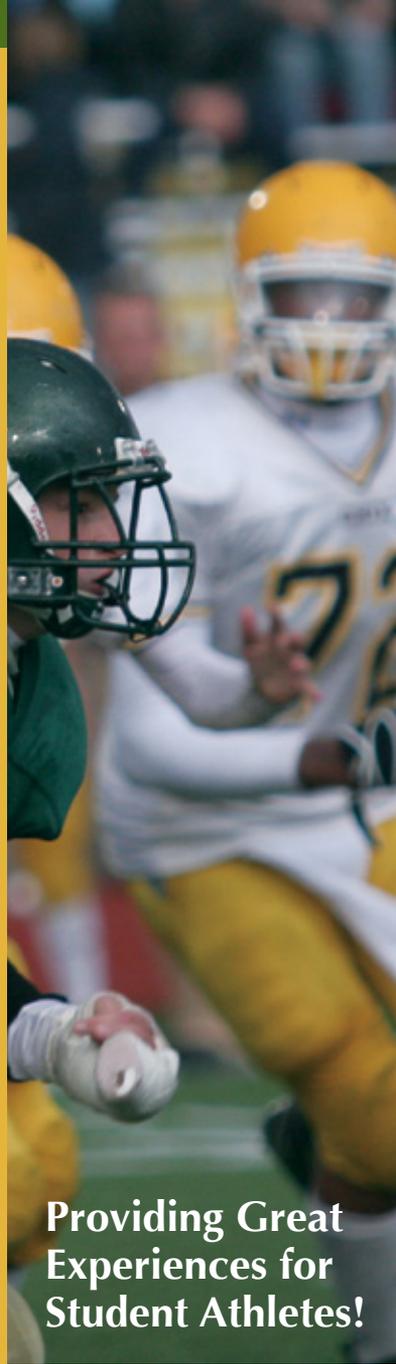




# ATHLETICS



Providing Great Experiences for Student Athletes!



# WELCOME

## TO ZEELAND EAST AND WEST HIGH SCHOOL

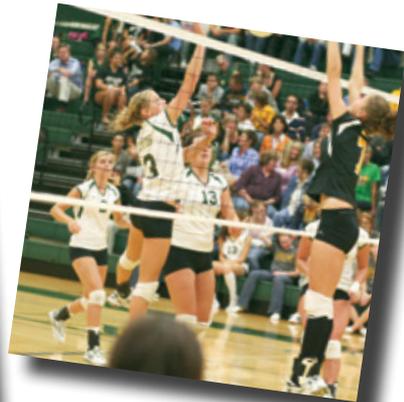
The purpose of interscholastic athletics is to make a positive contribution to the development of the participants, spectators, and community. At Zeeland East and West, students will enjoy a meaningful experience through practices and competition while growing physically and emotionally. Athletics will contribute to the development of sport skills and enhance the knowledge needed to enable students to pursue sports both on a competitive basis and in their leisure time. Interscholastic activities will contribute to the development of character, sportsmanship, attitudes, and behaviors. Through participation in athletics, students will learn to work cooperatively with fellow students and coaches.

### **Dear Parents,**

We sincerely hope all parents will encourage their children to take part in interscholastic athletics. We believe that athletic participation will help each student to adjust to the high school environment more quickly and will aid in the development of new and positive attitudes. In addition, physical fitness and health should show marked improvement while self-confidence rises.

As educators we have the welfare of our students uppermost in our minds. A well organized athletic program will meet your student's needs for self-expression, improved mental alertness, and positive physical and emotional growth. It is our hope and goal to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's education and social maturity.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and dedication. These are the reasons we place such emphasis on good training habits. We are striving for excellence and do not want our athletes to settle for mediocrity.



# ATHLETIC CODE

## ATHLETIC CODE

The purpose of the Athletic Code is to establish uniform standards for all student-athletes. The spirit of the Athletic Code is to accentuate the athletic experience while taking into account the student-athlete's well-being. The Athletic Code applies year-round, 24 hours per day, seven days per week, for the duration of the student-athlete's secondary athletic career (grades 7-12). Participation in extracurricular competitive athletics is a student's privilege, not a right, and can be revoked at any time for failure to meet the standards and requirements of Zeeland Public Schools and the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,500 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition.

## GENERAL RULES ELIGIBILITY

1. Student-athletes must have current physical exams dated on or after April 15 of the previous school year.
2. Student-athletes must be of an appropriate age for their grade. By the senior year, student-athletes cannot be 19 before the start of the school year and still participate. The proper age then adjusts down from there. If a student was 15 before the start of his/her eighth grade year, he/she would have to move to high school.
3. Student-athletes must be passing four of six classes. More information on academic eligibility follows.
4. Student-athletes must not accept any award exceeding \$25 in value.

## ACADEMICS

Student-athletes must be passing four out of six classes to participate, or 67%. An eligibility list will be given to all teachers. If an athlete is deemed ineligible, he or she will not be able to compete until his/her grades improve. Once a student-athlete is determined to be ineligible, he/she must sit out a minimum of one week before he/she can return to competition. Student-athletes can practice during this time, although some coaches may set aside part of the practice time to catch up on homework. After one week of ineligibility, the student-athlete can check to see if his/her grades have improved enough that he/she can return to competition.

Student-athletes must be in school for a minimum of at least half of the day to compete in that day's contest. Special consideration may be granted from the principal or athletic director. Any unexcused absences during a school day will result in the student-athlete being held out of practice or competition for that day. Often times, unexcused absences are not discovered until one or more days after they occur. When an unexcused absence is discovered, the student-athlete will be forced to sit

out a day equal to the day he/she was unexcused. In other words, if a student-athlete is unexcused on Tuesday and Tuesday was a practice day, and the unexcused absence is discovered on Thursday, the student-athlete must sit out the next practice. The student-athlete also must suffer any consequences for missing practice that the coach has established. If, in the example above, Tuesday was a competition day, the student-athlete would miss the next day of competition.

## PRACTICE

- Requirements regarding practice:
- Be on time and prepared to listen and learn. Lock all belongings in the locker room.
  - Respect your teammates and coaches. No putdowns!
  - Communicate to your parents when practices will be completed and your coach if you cannot attend or will be late for practice.
  - An emergency contact form must be completed and turned into the main office before an athlete may participate in practices.

## GAMES

- Requirements regarding games:
- A physical exam is needed from a doctor prior to the first game or contest.
  - Stay with your team and coach at all times.
  - Show respect to both your opponent and their facilities, win or lose.
  - If an athlete wishes to not ride the bus home from an away contest, he/she must be signed out by his/her parent with their coach. Coaches will have a sign-out sheet for parents at away games.
  - Remember that bus rules are the same for athletic contests as they are for school.

## ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

- **LOITERING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY** – Athletes are not to be in the locker rooms, gymnasium, or athletic facility unless properly supervised by their coach. Once a practice or contest has been completed, the student-athletes are to leave the building as soon as possible.
- **TEAM MEMBERSHIP (CUT SPORTS)** – In some sports, limiting team size is necessary. When this occurs, the coach will explain to the student-athletes the criteria for making the team before practices begin. Students not making the team are welcome to discuss the reasons with the coach, however, a coach's decision is final.
- **COACHES REGULATIONS** – Individual coaches may institute other regulations for their particular sport not contained in the handbook. These regulations are to be written and distributed to all student-athletes at the beginning of each season.

# ATHLETIC CODE

## ATHLETIC CONDUCT

It is understood that the athletic code of conduct is in effect 24/7, 365 days per year. The athletic director may suspend a student-athlete at any time when a student-athlete's conduct may have a detrimental affect upon the image of the Zeeland Public Schools.

1. Conduct of all student-athletes, both in and out of school, shall be above reproach, and shall not bring discredit to the student-athlete, the team, school, parents or community.
2. Students athletes may not threaten the safety of or attack people or property (school or personal), physically or verbally. This includes, but is not limited to, theft or destruction of school or personal property and electronic bullying or harassment.
3. Student athletes may not have in their possession and/or use any form of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, including steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs or other un-prescribed drugs.
4. ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS:
  - a. A student-athlete must be in school for a half school day in order to participate in games or practice. Exceptions may be granted by the athletic director.
  - b. A student-athlete who is on suspension from regular school attendance may not practice or take part in interscholastic competition during said suspension.
  - c. A student-athlete who is marked unexcused in a class is ineligible to participate in practice or an athletic event that day.

In addition to the specific Athletic Conduct rules above, all general rules that are outlined in the student handbook will also be enforced.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Discipline for infractions of the Athletic Code shall be handled by the Athletic Director and other school administration. The student-athlete has the right of appeal. Appeals shall be handled by a review board made up of the Assistant High School Principal, Principal, a student and a citizen appointed by the High School Principal. Action of this board may be appealed to the Superintendent and then to the Board of Education. Appeals will be heard promptly. The student-athlete on suspension may not participate in games or contests during the appeal process.

***Discipline issues can be divided into one of four categories below:***

- **PERSONAL INTEGRITY OFFENSES** – These would include any violation of team rules. Examples would include misbehavior in class, on the bus or in the locker room. Other offenses would include unbecoming conduct, horse-play, or disrespect to coaches, teammates, opponents or officials. Discipline for Personal Integrity Offenses will be determined by the coach, in consultation with the Athletic Director as needed, and should always be communicated to the Athletic Office. Multiple Personal Integrity Offenses could become a Code Violation. Personal Integrity Offenses do not follow a student-athlete from middle school to high school.
- **CODE VIOLATIONS** – When we think of Code Violations, we typically think of violations for illegal activities, including but not limited to the use of alcohol and other drugs (including steroids), tobacco products, and other run-ins with law enforcement officials. These violations will result in suspension from the team using a punishment sequence, based on the number of offenses, found below.

Since we hold our student-athletes in Zeeland to a high standard, there are other Code Violations besides those relating to illegal activity. These would include any suspension from school, repeated Personal Integrity Offenses, or egregious unbecoming conduct (as determined by the Athletic Director). These actions are also considered Code Violations and will subject the student-athlete to the same punishment sequence found below.

Code violations for illegal activities will follow an athlete from middle school to high school. Those for lesser offenses will not. In other words, an athlete who is caught using alcohol in middle school will move on to high school with one "strike" on the punishment sequence. An athlete who received consequences in middle school for a suspension from school (not related to illegal activities) would have his or her record cleared for high school.

- **GROSS MISCONDUCT** – We feel strongly that in certain, rare circumstances, the consequence for egregious behaviors needs to jump beyond the traditional punishment sequence found below. With Gross Misconduct, the Athletic Director will work with other building administrators to determine an appropriate consequence. In cases

# ATHLETIC CODE

of Gross Misconduct, the traditional sequence of consequences may not apply. The Athletic Director and other building administrators could impose a one year ban for a first offense, for example, should circumstances warrant. Examples of Gross Misconduct would include, but are not limited to: arson, assault, criminal sexual conduct, dealing drugs, hazing, weapons, and felonies or other significant legal issues.

- **PUNISHMENT SEQUENCE** – When a student-athlete commits a Code Violation, the typical punishment sequence looks like this (keeping in mind that some of these steps can be skipped for Gross Misconduct):
  1. **First Offense** shall be suspension from 25% of the scheduled games in the student-athlete's current and/or next sport. Presentation of any awards will be at the discretion of the coach and athletic director. The student-athlete shall be suspended from the prescribed number of games immediately and successively after the rules infraction has occurred. The student-athlete will practice with the team throughout the suspension and complete the season in good standing to have served the athletic suspension unless otherwise decided by the athletic director and coach. For a first offense involving drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products, the student-athlete will be required to complete an assessment program before the suspension ends.
  2. **Second offense** shall be suspension in the current and/or next sport for 50% of the scheduled games with loss of award. The student-athlete shall be suspended from the prescribed number of games immediately and successively after the rules infraction has occurred. The student-athlete will practice with the team throughout the suspension and complete the season in good standing to have served the athletic suspension unless otherwise decided by the athletic director and coach. If the offense is the student's second offense involving drugs, alcohol or tobacco products, the student-athlete will be required to complete an assessment program, and treatment/education program before the suspension ends.
  3. **Third offense** shall be a suspension for one (1) calendar year from the date of offense. During this time the student-athlete may not practice or participate with any Zeeland

athletic teams. If the offense is the student's third offense involving drugs, alcohol or tobacco products, the student-athlete will be required to complete an assessment program and a treatment/education program before the suspension ends.

4. **Fourth Offense** shall be suspension for the duration of his/her high school career.

## PARENT/COACH CONFERENCE

Communication between parents and coaches is essential for a successful athletic program. We strongly encourage our coaches to be in regular communication with parents and to be proactive in communicating expectations, schedule changes, and anything that could impact the student-athlete or his or her parents. There is also a proper time and place for a parent/coach conference. Please follow the guidelines below when scheduling a conference with your child's coach:

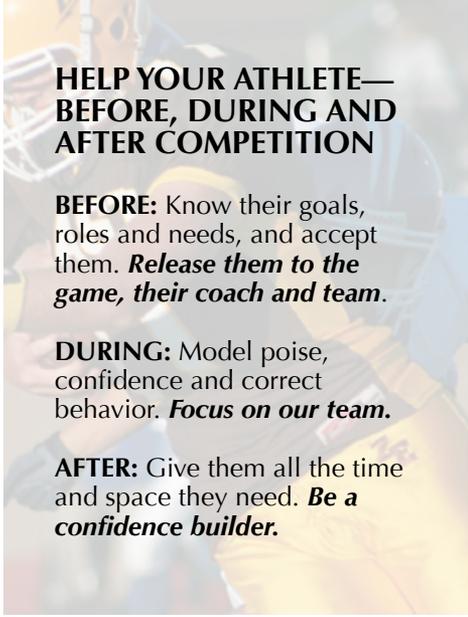
1. Call to set up an appointment. Many coaches will share contact information with parents. If you do not know how to contact your child's coach, call the main office at middle school or the athletic office at high school.
2. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both parents and coaches.
3. If you have further concerns after speaking with the coach, please feel free to contact the Athletic Director. Tim Ritsema, Athletic Director for Cityside and Zeeland East, can be reached at 616-748-3124. Mark Werley, Athletic Director for Creekside and Zeeland West, can be reached at 616-748-4541.

In the end the purpose of interscholastic athletics is to make a positive contribution to the development of the participants, spectators, and community. At Zeeland Public Schools, student-athletes will enjoy a meaningful experience through practices and competition while growing physically and emotionally. Athletics will contribute to the development of sport skills and enhance the knowledge needed to enable student-athletes to pursue sports both on a competitive basis and in their leisure time. Interscholastic activities will contribute to the development of character, sportsmanship, attitudes, and behaviors. Through participation in athletics, students will learn to work cooperatively with fellow students and coaches.

# COMMUNICATION

For the benefit of athletes, coaches, and you as parents, **please follow these communication guidelines:**

- Know your coaches' philosophy for athletic participation.
- Realize that the coach has many difficult decisions to make during the course of a season.
- Communicate with your student athlete before discussing issues with the coach.
- Discuss issues with the coach at a mutually convenient time. *Please allow 24 hours after a contest.*
- Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:  
1) Playing time 2) Team strategy  
3) Play calling 4) Other athletes



## HELP YOUR ATHLETE— BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER COMPETITION

**BEFORE:** Know their goals, roles and needs, and accept them. ***Release them to the game, their coach and team.***

**DURING:** Model poise, confidence and correct behavior. ***Focus on our team.***

**AFTER:** Give them all the time and space they need. ***Be a confidence builder.***

If you have further concerns after speaking with the coach, please feel free to call Zeeland East Athletic Director Tim Ritsema at 616-748-3124 or Zeeland West Athletic Director Mark Werley at 616-748-4541.

# INJURY PROTOCOL

## WHEN INJURED:

- 1) Report to the coach and one of the athletic trainers—when the injury happens. An accident report will be made.
- 2) Without an accident report at the time of the injury, insurance companies will not pay.
- 3) An athletic trainer will evaluate the injury and develop an appropriate treatment plan.
- 4) Parents will be given written documentation.
- 5) Athlete will be sent to a physician if needed.
- 6) A doctor's release must be returned to the athletic trainer or coach before returning to practice/game.
- 7) Contact the Athletic Trainers:  
**Brindy Skinner: 616-748-4543 (ZWHS)**  
**Diana Albers: 616-748-3129 (ZEHS)**

# EXPECTATIONS

The Zeeland Athletic Department believes that many problems/issues can be avoided if expectations are clearly communicated and followed by:

## COACHES

- 1  
Communicate athletes' roles to players and parents.
- 2  
Possess an up-to-date knowledge of the skills, rules and techniques of their sport and be able to teach them to their players.
- 3  
Develop fair, unprejudiced relationships with all squad members.
- 4  
Allow athletes to develop skills and interests in other athletic and non-athletic activities.
- 5  
Give the highest degree of attention to athletes' physical well-being.
- 6  
Teach respect for one's self, opponents, school officials, contest officials, the media, and the general public.

## ATHLETES

- 1  
Know and adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct.
- 2  
Exceed all attendance and academic standards as required by Zeeland East and West High Schools and the M.H.S.A.A.
- 3  
Practice and play fairly, giving complete effort in all circumstances and credit in victory to teammates and to opponents in defeat.
- 4  
Accept favorable and unfavorable decisions, as well as victory and defeat, with equal grace.



## PARENTS

- 1  
Know and support the Athletic Code of Conduct for your student athlete.
- 2  
Refrain from criticizing the coach in front of your child. Have your athlete talk with the coach about any concerns first; then you may wish to talk to the coach directly if you have any further concerns.
- 3  
Support all attendance and academic standards as required by Zeeland East and West High Schools and the M.H.S.A.A.
- 4  
Encourage and model "Good Sportsmanship" for all athletes, opponents, contest officials, school officials, the media, and the general public.
- 5  
Give the highest degree of attention to athletes' physical well-being.
- 6  
Accept favorable and unfavorable decisions for your athlete, as well as victory and defeat, with equal grace.
- 7  
Concerns should be expressed directly to the coach, notifying him/her well in advance if possible.



# SPECTATORS & FANS



## HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS PROGRAMS

### FALL

Girls: Golf, Cross Country, Swimming & Diving, Volleyball

Boys: Football, Cross Country, Tennis, Water Polo, Soccer

### WINTER

Girls: Bowling, Competitive Cheer, Basketball

Boys: Bowling, Wrestling, Basketball, Hockey, Swimming & Diving

### SPRING

Girls: Softball, Soccer, Tennis, Track & Field

Boys: Baseball, Golf, Lacrosse, Track & Field

## SPECTATORS AND FANS THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE FOR US!

The spectators at an athletic contest play an extremely important role in displaying good sportsmanship. As a group, the actions of our fans have the biggest impact on how others perceive our school and community.

## FANS SHOULD ALWAYS

- Compliment student athletes in their attempt to learn and improve.
- Respect players, coaches, and fans of both teams.
- Respect the decision of the officials.
- Cheer good performances and good effort, regardless of uniform color.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Zeeland East Athletic Director:**

**Tim Ritsema, 616-748-3124**

**Zeeland West Athletic Director:**

**Mark Werley, 616-748-4541**



## **Goals of our program:**

- To compete at the highest level in all sports.
- Have 100% graduation rate with all our student athletes.
- Provide an environment that encourages a healthy lifestyle.
- Develop student athletes who have the ability and the understanding of what it takes to compete at the collegiate level.
- Foster a climate where athletes and coaches are able to excel to their full potential.
- To be recognized by the State of Michigan as an exemplary athletic department.

