

# **GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL**



## ***PARENT - ATHLETE HANDBOOK***



## **HOME OF THE CARDINALS**

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*Interscholastic athletics are a vital part of school life and Greenwich High School offers a variety of opportunities. Our athletic program is one that reflects the needs and purposes of our students and community. We believe that participation in athletics provides many experiences in the development of young people. Our athletic program strives to provide our student-athletes with an educational, worthwhile, and memorable experience while enjoying the fun, teamwork and friendships that come from playing high school sports.*

- We will maintain a program based on values of family and team camaraderie.*
- We believe in honesty, care for others, confidence and strength of character.*
- We embrace a commitment to loyalty, unselfishness, trust, and humility.*

*High standards of courtesy, fair play and sportsmanship must prevail at all school athletic competitions, and all involved must pursue victory with honor. Student-athletes are expected to maintain respect for others, demonstrate fair play and always display high standards of good sportsmanship.*

# REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

## In order to participate:

- A student-athlete must be registered on the Greenwich High School Athletic Website by a parent/guardian and complete all emergency contact information.
- A student-athlete and parent/guardian must review our concussion management protocol on the Greenwich High School Athletic Website.
- A student-athlete and parent/guardian must review the sudden cardiac awareness plan [on](#) the Greenwich High School Athletic Website.
- A student-athlete and parent/guardian must review and agree to follow our athletic code of conduct on the Greenwich High School Athletic Website.
- A student-athlete must file a Greenwich High School Athletic Physical Form with the health office. An athletic physical is good for 13 months and must be valid at the time of tryouts and throughout the season.
- A student-athlete must visit the Greenwich High School Health Office. A school nurse must stamp and sign a physical verification card to certify a current athletic physical examination is on file. This card must be submitted to their coach prior to participation.

## In order to be eligible:

- A student-athlete must pass at least four core courses at the end of the regular marking period and have earned a minimum of four (4) credits towards graduation to be eligible for the fall athletic season
- A student-athlete may compete in interscholastic athletics up to their twentieth birthday. If their twentieth birthday falls during a season they may not start that season (start of season is defined as the date of the first scheduled game in that sport for that season)
- A student-athlete who transfers to Greenwich High School must have a legal change of address, and live at a legal residence with a parent/guardian in Greenwich
- A student-athlete will have eight consecutive semesters, or four consecutive years of eligibility from the date of entry into the ninth grade, to compete in high school interscholastic athletics
- A student-athlete will not be permitted to extend eligibility to a ninth semester or fifth year
- A student-athlete must not play under an assumed name on an outside team
- A student-athlete must not play or practice with an outside team in the same sport while a member of the school team after the first scheduled game in any season
  - Exceptions shall be: participation in parent-child tournament and individual rules with swimming, tennis and gymnastics

# GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Our athletes have a responsibility to provide a positive image in the classroom, on the playing fields, and in our community. They must be reminded that participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right. All athletes are expected to meet this athletic code and failure to comply during their season could result in suspension or removal from a team. All athletes and parents must sign our code of conduct prior to participation.

**While at school:** A good athlete is also a good student and one who obeys all school rules and regulations. This means good attendance, participation, effort and behavior. An athlete must be in school and attend all scheduled classes (including physical education) in order to participate in any practices or contests. If an athlete is suspended from school, she/he may not participate in practices or games during her/his suspension period.

**On the playing fields or courts:** Fair play and good sportsmanship is expected at all times. No athlete will use profanity. An athlete will respect teammates, opponents, officials and spectators.

**In our community:** The way an athlete acts in our community is very important. As an athlete, she/he shall respect the rights of others and represent our team, our school and the Town of Greenwich with dignity.

**The use of illegal substances:** Any use, possession or involvement with illegal substances (drugs/alcohol) of an athlete is prohibited. This is a twenty-four hour rule, extends beyond the school day, and includes the following circumstances:

- Being in a motor vehicle with alcohol or drugs regardless of whether the athlete is the passenger or driver, or whether the athlete is in personal possession of any alcohol or drugs.
- Permitting the illegal consumption of alcohol or use of drugs in the athlete's home or on an athlete's premises.
- Postings on blogs and social-networking web sites that confirm a violation.

*Failure to comply with this code will result in the following consequences:*

- First offense - A two week suspension from all practices and games (minimum of two games). The athlete will be required to meet with her/his school social worker prior to rejoining the team. Upon completion of the suspension, the athlete may apply for reinstatement through a conference with the Athletic Director, Coach and Parent. A first offense could impact an opportunity to become a varsity captain.
- Subsequent offense - A subsequent offense during the school year, will result in the removal of the athlete from their team for the remainder of their current season and will exclude the athlete from participation in athletics for the remainder of the school year. The athlete will be ineligible for any post-season awards, recognition or participation at team events, and excluded from the opportunity of becoming a varsity captain.

**The use of androgenic / anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing substances:** Any athlete who has been determined to have used, in or out-of-season, androgenic / anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing substances shall be declared ineligible for all CIAC-controlled activities for one hundred eighty (180) school days on each occurrence. This one hundred eighty (180) school day period of ineligibility commences on the day the CIAC Board of Control makes such determination.

**The use of tobacco products:** An athlete shall not use or have in possession any tobacco products. This is a twenty-four hour rule and extends beyond the school day. Failure to comply with this code will result in a one-week suspension from all practices and games (minimum of one game). The athlete will be required to enroll in our high school smoking cessation course. Upon the conclusion of the suspension, the athlete will be reinstated with the understanding that the smoking cessation course must be completed.

The Greenwich High School Athletic Department does not wish to penalize an athlete attempting to act correctly in situations not of their own making or that could not be avoided. The Director of Athletics and Coach will assess each alleged violation and provide enforcement of this code when and where appropriate. A violation of the Athletic Code of Conduct or Cardinal Rules during team tryouts could negatively impact an athlete's selection to that team.

## EXPECTATIONS

We feel strongly that coaches and parents together can make a positive impact on our student-athletes. By working together, we can provide the necessary guidance, leadership, concern and encouragement which are so vital in the development of our children. Communication among coaches, student-athletes, parents and athletic director will offer all student-athletes an opportunity to succeed.

Parents should be positive and let their children know that something good is being accomplished simply by being part of a team. Any added pressures will only make it more difficult to improve self-image. We hope parents will encourage their children to work hard and to do their best. They should not criticize coaches or offer excuses if their children are not playing. As spectators, parents are entitled to cheer at sporting events, but should never become belligerent and arrogant. Any concerns a parent has regarding players, coaches, opponents or officials should be directed to the coaches or our high school athletic office.

Parents should assist their children in following the Greenwich High School Athletic Code of Conduct which includes the Athletic Substance Abuse Policy. Student-athletes must adhere to this athletic code and encourage teammates to do so. All coaches will monitor and maintain the Athletic Code of Conduct and should model appropriate behavior and language for student-athletes.

Coaches will establish high expectations and declare well-defined goals and should instill an enthusiastic commitment to excellence. They shall provide leadership that includes discipline, respect, and praise. They must create a safe, secure, and well-supervised environment for all student-athletes. Student-athletes academic eligibility shall be monitored, and coaches should encourage them to work hard, and to do their best in the classroom.

Student-athletes must possess a tremendous work ethic and never give up. They should take great pride in school accomplishments and team achievements should always take precedence over personal successes. Fair play and good sportsmanship is expected from our athletes at all times. They should pursue academic excellence through good attendance, participation, effort, and behavior.

If a conflict occurs between an athlete and a coach, it is expected that the athlete and coach first attempt to solve the conflict that exists between them. These are the steps to follow until a resolution is reached:

1. Athlete > Coach
2. Athlete / Parent > Coach
3. Athlete / Parent / Coach > Athletic Director
4. Athlete / Parent / Coach / Athletic Director > Headmaster

## COMMUNICATION

The Greenwich High School Athletic Department is continually attempting to improve communication with our athletes, parents and coaches. We strongly believe in being accessible to athletes and parents and being supportive of our coaching staff.

***It is reasonable to expect a coach to provide the following information to athletes and parents:***

- tryout process (if applicable)
- expectations of athletes, parents and coaches
- team rules and regulations
- athletic code of conduct
- board of education policies
- CIAC rules on participation and eligibility
- practice and game schedules
- athletic award criteria

A student-athlete should always be encouraged to communicate with a coach. If a parent has the need to connect with a coach will be prepared to discuss any concerns candidly and professionally. The correct procedure for a parent to contact with a coach is to leave their name and phone number at the Greenwich High School Athletic Office.

***Typical issues that are appropriate for parents to discuss with coaches are:***

- a dramatic change in their child's behavior
- specific health concerns of their child
- a disciplinary action that results in their child being denied participation in a practice or contest
- how they can assist in their child's skill improvement and development
- to offer a contribution to help support their program

***It is inappropriate for parents to discuss these concerns with coaches:***

- their child's playing time
- team strategy or play calling
- their child's teammates

It is not appropriate for a parent to discuss the concerns with a coach before, during or immediately after an athletic contest. A coach should never be contacted by a parent at her/his home. If an athlete or parent initially approaches the athletic director or headmaster with a concern they will immediately be referred back to the coach.

## **BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES**

*Behavior Guidelines are all reflected in the following procedure:*

Good behavior is expected from all student-athletes. Mutual trust, fairness, and honesty are central to the very nature of learning. These values represent the highest possible expression of shared beliefs among the members of Greenwich High School. As members of the Greenwich High School community, we believe these principles should be upheld at all times in order to foster an environment in which integrity is respected and valued. In cases where conduct endangers or violates a published rule of the school or policy of the board of education, student-athletes will be subject to suspension and removal from teams, or expulsion from school. Student-athletes suspended or expelled may not be on school grounds or participate in any athletic activities during the dates of suspension or expulsion.

*Bullying Behavior in Our Schools*

In accordance with Board of Education policy, “bullying” means any overt act by an individual or group of student-athletes directed against another student-athlete, with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate. In accordance with this definition, the following factors (location, misconduct committed more than once, and type of conduct) will be considered when imposing appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct.

*Harassment Statement*

Greenwich High School has zero tolerance for harassment of any kind. Parents are urged to reinforce with their children that if they are harassed or witness harassment happening to someone else that they should report the behavior. Every attempt will be made to halt any harassment by this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

*Hazing*

The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) defines hazing as “any recurrent activity that humiliates, degrades abuses or endangers a person’s physical or emotional health.” Hazing may also involve forcing, coercing or intimidating any student-athlete to participate in illegal, inappropriate or embarrassing activities as a requirement to become a member of a team. Student-athletes who engage in hazing activities will be subject to disciplinary action by the school administration which could include exclusion from the team and suspension or expulsion from school.

## ELECTRONIC AND SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Student-athletes may use electronic communication devices (except in our locker rooms) as long as the device does not create a disruption. An electronic communication device that creates a disruption will be confiscated. Students-athletes are personally responsible for the security of their electronic communication devices. The school is not responsible for loss or theft of such devices.

Greenwich High School recognizes and supports our student-athletes' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of social networks. The following expectations should be considered when utilizing social media:

*Blogs and electronic chat rooms:* Many times student-athletes will post comments hoping to stimulate conversation with an opponent. Most comments posted on blogs and chats are based on emotion and student-athletes can be quickly lured into replying to comments on such sites. The best advice is to simply not read them.

*Texting:* A hasty negative message by one athlete can cause dissention among teammates and the athletic program. Student-athletes need to be reminded that once a text message is sent, it cannot be taken back. The message is to think before you hit send.

*Online photos:* Many student-athletes have a Facebook or Instagram account. While Facebook affirms a page is private and that users only "friend" people they know, student-athletes must be reminded that in reality nothing on the Internet is completely private. Once another person has access, there is no way to control who can and cannot view it.

*Twitter:* Overuse of a media tool will most likely lead to something a student-athlete did not want people to know. In addition, when faced with a character limit, it can be difficult to convey exactly the intended meaning. As a result tweets are often misinterpreted.

*Cyber-Bullying:* Student-athletes should understand that negative comments towards others can be hurtful, and even seen as cyber-bullying, which is not tolerated. The ramifications of bullying can be destructive for the victim and for the one doing the bullying. Student-athletes must be reminded that once a comment is in writing, it becomes everlasting proof the statement was made.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **LOCKER ROOMS AND PLAYING AREAS**

All athletes must be made responsible for the condition of their locker room. The locker room must be kept neat and clean. Glass bottles are prohibited. All equipment must be kept in the athlete's assigned lockers. All student-athletes must secure their lockers with a lock. Visitors must not be brought into the locker room without permission from the coach.

### **UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

All uniforms and equipment are the responsibility of the athlete during the season and are on a loan basis to be worn only when authorized by the coach. The athlete must take good care of equipment and follow washing instructions on uniforms. If lost or stolen, the athlete will be responsible for the replacement cost.

### **PRACTICE RULES**

As a member of a team an athlete should be required to attend all meetings, practices and games. Practice rules will be explained and enforced. For many sports, practices and contests are scheduled during school vacations and athletes must understand that are expectations that they will attend. When a player cannot make practice or must be late, that player should notify the coach prior to the start of practice.

### **TEAM CAPTAINS**

Please remember before the varsity captain selection process begins, prospective candidates need to pick up a Captain's Application from the athletic office. It must be completed and handed in to the coach prior to any captain selection process. If an athlete decides not to hand in an application, that athlete will not be considered for a captain's position. This application must signed by both the athlete and parent.

### **CAPTAIN'S PRACTICE**

The CIAC does not in any way sanction, encourage or condone Captain's Practices in any sport. Captain's Practices, depending on the school's involvement, may be a clear violation of Rule II.D (Season limitations) or certainly a violation of the spirit of Rule II.D. The Greenwich High School Athletic Office does not permit Captain's Practices during off-seasons.

### **T-SHIRT SLOGANS**

Many teams in the past have purchased t-shirts with various slogans. This is usually an opportunity to promote great team spirit. On occasion, our student-athletes have created a shirt that although they assume is completely harmless, has the potential to offend. Please remember to have any T-shirt reviewed by a coach before ordering. If you are unsure of the appropriateness of the message, please see the director of athletics.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **EARLY DISMISSALS**

The athletic office will dismiss a varsity team early if an afternoon scheduled varsity event is played at a school where transportation is extensive, or if a varsity team is involved in a post season competition. Please be reminded that only in an extreme circumstance will a sub-varsity team be permitted to be dismissed early from school, such as when a junior varsity team is traveling with the varsity or if a sub-varsity football starting time is impacted by daylight savings time. The only other instance for an early dismissal will be when an earlier starting time is set due to a religious holy day.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The athletic office will provide transportation to all away contests. All athletes must use transportation provided by the school. Any parent requesting a departure from this requirement must sign a release, which will allow an athlete to be transported by that player's parent only. The ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION REQUEST FORM will accompany all bus trips and must be completed prior to transporting the athlete. Any other travel arrangement must be approved in writing by the Greenwich High School Main Office. Athletes should make sure all equipment, clothing and trash is removed from a bus when it returns home to school. All athletes are expected to act and speak appropriately at all times.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM POLICY**

The training room is to be used by an athlete only under the supervision of the athletic trainer or coach. A certified athletic trainer is on the athletic staff at GHS. The trainer's hours are posted for each season. The role of the athletic trainer is to evaluate injuries, provide first aid treatment and to oversee the rehabilitation of injuries. The athletic trainer or a physician has the authority to remove any athlete from participation until he or she is deemed fit to return to activity. Any athlete who has been held out of an activity by a physician will require a written note from a physician before returning to play. If a significant injury occurs, the student-athlete, coach and trainer must complete an accident report in the athletic office.

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

The Town of Greenwich provides accident insurance for sports participants. This policy provides excess coverage and commences only after other insurance has been exhausted. Athletes should be encouraged to obtain regular student accident insurance available in the GHS main office.

### **STRENGTH AND FITNESS CENTER**

The fitness center is to be used by an athlete only under the supervision of fitness room personnel, athletic trainer or coach.

