

# **Harrah Public Schools**



## **Athlete and Parent Handbook**

## **HARRAH ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of the Harrah Public Schools Athletic Department to help all student athletes become stronger academically and athletically for the betterment of the community. The athletic faculty will be committed to working with athletes to help them better understand the importance of dedication, work ethic, and cooperation. We will always strive for a family atmosphere that embraces diversity. It is the desire of our faculty to always provide a safe and competitive environment. The Harrah Athletic Department goal is that all athletes become great citizens while learning to compete at the highest level.

## **OKLAHOMA SECONDARY SCHOOLS ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION (OSSAA)**

The Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association is the state governing body of high school sports and activities. Harrah Public Schools is a member of the OSSAA.

More specifically, the OSSAA provides effective coordination, leadership, supervision, and regulation for secondary school activities including the program of interscholastic activities and contests in which its member schools may participate. The OSSAA will serve member schools by providing leadership in the development, supervision, and conduct of co-curricular activities, which enrich the educational experiences of high school students. It will provide for equitable participation opportunities and positive recognition to students as a whole, while working cooperatively with schools to enhance the achievement of desired educational goals.

### **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR**

Guy Worth  
[gworth@harrahschools.com](mailto:gworth@harrahschools.com)  
Office: 405-347-2105

### **HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

Kenneth Riddle  
[kriddle@harrahschools.com](mailto:kriddle@harrahschools.com)  
Office: 405-347-2100

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

Steve Kieffer  
[skieffer@harrahschools.com](mailto:skieffer@harrahschools.com)  
Office: 405-347-2700

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

A. Athletes are expected to ride to and from an event with their team. Students may travel home from an out of town event with either their parents or another adult. If an athlete is returning home with their parents, parents are to make contact with the coach before taking their student. If an athlete is returning home with another parent, parents must contact the coach prior to taking the student. Each coach may have team guidelines regarding their team's travel.

B. If circumstances warrant, athletes may be transported to a scheduled event by their parents or an adult designated by their parents. Prior to the event a written explanation seeking such an exemption must be approved by the coach and Athletics Director. This should only occur during extreme circumstances.

### **CHANGING OF SPORTS**

***Sport Season Definition - 1 week prior to the first OSSAA regular season competition until the last OSSAA regular season competition.***

Athletes who choose to leave a team before the season will be allowed to move to another sport or request a schedule change out of athletics.

Athletes who choose to leave a team during the season or have been dismissed from a team will not be allowed to change to another sport until the end of the season.

## **CONDUCT**

Athletes are expected to refrain from any activity that may be discrediting to the team, school, community or themselves. Any action by an athlete which is considered to have brought discredit upon the individual, the team, and or the school could be suspended from competition. The athlete will be warned that any further conduct of this nature will result in his/her dismissal from the athletic program for the remainder of the year.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

Everything you post is public information. Any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, and comments) may be accessible even after you remove it. Once you post a photo or comment on a social networking site, that photo or comment becomes the property of the site and may be searchable even after you remove it.

What you post may affect your future. Many employers and college admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posters).

Similar to comments made in person, we will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:

- derogatory language or remarks that may harm my teammates or coaches; other student athletes, teachers, or coaches; and student-athletes, coaches, or representatives of other schools, including comments that may disrespect my opponents.
- incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; full or partial nudity; inappropriate gestures; vandalism, stalking; underage drinking, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.
- creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
- indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation—regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.

In short, do not have a false sense of security about your rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. The online social network sites are NOT a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. Any of the above actions, but not limited to, may be considered conduct detrimental to the team. The information you post on a social networking site is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image of which you can be proud for years to come.

### **Failure to follow the Social Media Guidelines will result in the following possible actions:**

- meeting with coach to discuss infraction
- suspension from practice/game(s)
- removal from team
- denied participation in future Harrah Athletics

All team suspensions and removals are subject to approval from the Athletic Director and administration.

## **DRUG TESTING**

Students enrolled at Harrah Public Schools in grades 7th - 12th must consent to a random testing procedure in order to be eligible for participation in extracurricular programs. Through a confidential random number generating process, a percentage of all participating students will be tested each month.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Athletes who are ineligible academically will not be allowed to participate in the Athletic Development period. During the time they are ineligible, athletes will be required to attend Study Hall. Students who remain ineligible for more than 4 weeks consecutively will be removed from athletics.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

### ***Responsibilities of Sportsmanship - A Goal for Everyone***

#### **1. The Player**

- a) Treats opponents with respect.
- b) Plays hard, but plays within the rules.
- c) Exercises self-control at all times, setting the example for others to follow.
- d) Respects officials and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument.
- e) Wins without boasting, lose without excuses, and never quits.
- f) Always remembers that it is a privilege to represent the school and community.

#### **2. The Spectator**

- a) Attempts to understand and be informed of the playing rules.
- b) Appreciates a good play no matter who makes it.
- c) Cooperates with and responds enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
- d) Shows compassion for an injured player; applauds positive performances, does not heckle, jeer or distract players, and avoids use of profane and obnoxious language and behavior.
- e) Respects the judgment and strategy of the coach and does not criticize players or coaches for loss of a game.
- f) Respects property of others and authority of those who administer the competition.
- g) Censures those whose behavior is unbecoming.

## **ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION FORMS**

**Physical Exam Form (Sports Physicals):** Every athlete must have a sports physical on file prior to tryouts or the beginning of practice for the athletic season. Physical must be dated after May 1, of the current school year.

Students must turn in a completed physical form dated after May 1, *to the Athletics Department* at the time of tryouts or before any physical activity with the team for the current school year.

**There will be no exceptions.**

**Physicals performed by an M.D. or D.O. are recommended. ALL OTHER REQUIRED FORMS MUST BE FILLED OUT ONLINE PRIOR TO AN ATHLETE COMPETING. PLEASE GO TO [harrahschools.com](http://harrahschools.com) AND CLICK ON THE ATHLETICS TAB.**

## **OSSAA RULES GOVERNING INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES**

### **RULE 1 - AGE, PHYSICIAN AND PARENTS' CERTIFICATE**

Section 1. Any student who reaches his/her nineteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible for athletic competition. Any student who reaches his/her sixteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible if enrolled in the ninth grade or below. Any student who reaches his/her fifteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible for the eighth grade or below. Any student who reaches his/her fourteenth birthday before September 1 will not be eligible for the seventh grade or below. Non-athletics: Any student who reaches his twenty-first birthday before September 1 will not be eligible.

Section 2. No student shall be eligible to represent his/her school in athletics until there is on file with the principal a physical examination and parental consent certificate. The form used shall contain the information on the standard OSSAA form. Other forms may be utilized, by the physician, physician's assistant, or the advanced practice nurse, if the information contained is compliant with the information on the OSSAA form. Any other information, depicting the athlete's previous history, can be added to this form for the purpose of clearance for athletic participation. A qualified physician, physician's assistant, or an advanced practice nurse covered by professional liability insurance shall give the physical examinations. If you have questions concerning the qualifications or the insurance coverage of a healthcare practitioner offering to give examinations, it is suggested that you check with your school district attorney for an opinion. Physical examinations are required for students each year. All physicals given for OSSAA participation must be given no earlier than May 1 of the preceding year in which the students are to participate and before the first day of practice in that student's particular sport. The physical will be valid from the date of the physical given until the next required physical. Parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign the parental consent form each year before the student participates in any organized athletic practice session including contest participation.

Section 3. Each non-athletic activity organization which assists in the sponsorship of interscholastic activities may operate under a constitution, or set of rules, which complies with the Constitution and Rules of the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association. This constitution or set of rules should be approved by the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association.

### **RULE 2 – ATTENDANCE**

A student who has not attended classes ninety percent of the time for the semester in a member school becomes ineligible. Exceptions may be made by the principal due to illness, injury, death in the immediate family, valid reasons for late enrollment, or late with the beginning of attendance. See Board Policy XLIV for supplemental online courses.

Question: At what point in the school year does the attendance rule begin?

Answer: Attendance for the semester begins with the first day of the semester, and continues throughout the entire semester. A student must be in compliance with the 90% attendance rule for each class in which a student is enrolled.

### **RULE 3 - SCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY**

OSSAA scholastic eligibility standards are required of all students engaging in extracurricular activity programs.

#### **Section 1. Semester Grades**

A student must have received a passing grade in any five subjects to be counted for graduation that he/she was enrolled in during the last semester he/she attended fifteen or more days. (This requirement would also be five school subjects for the 7th and 8th grade students.) If a student does not meet the minimum scholastic standard he/she will not be eligible to participate during the first six weeks of the next 18-week grading period they attend. A student who does not meet the above minimum scholastic standard may regain his/her eligibility by achieving passing grades in all subjects he/she is enrolled in at the end of a six-week period. Pupils enrolled for the first time must comply with the same requirements of scholastic eligibility. The passing grades required for the preceding 18-week grading period should be obtained from the records in the school last attended.

#### **Section 2. Student Eligibility during a Semester**

- a. Scholastic eligibility for students will be checked after three weeks (during the fourth week) of a semester and each succeeding week thereafter. Schools may choose to run eligibility checks on any day of the week. The period of probation and ineligibility will always begin the Monday following the day eligibility is checked. Methods should be devised to check weekly grades of Career-Tech students and all concurrently enrolled students. Schools may choose to run eligibility checks on any day of the week. The period of probation and ineligibility will always begin the Monday following the day eligibility is checked.
- b. A student must be passing in all subjects he/she is enrolled in during a semester. If a student is not passing all subjects enrolled in on the day of the grade check, he/she will be placed on probation for the next one-week period. If a student is still failing one or more classes during the next week on the grade check day, he/she will be ineligible to participate during the next one-week period. The ineligibility periods will begin on Monday and end on Sunday.
- c. A student who has lost eligibility under this provision must be passing all subjects in order to regain eligibility. A student regains eligibility under Rule 3 with the first class of the new one-week period (Monday through Sunday).
- d. "Passing grade" means work of such character that credit would be entered on the records were the semester to close at that time.

#### **Section 3. Special Provisions**

- a. A senior student maintains eligibility by passing the classes required for graduation. The number of classes which a student is enrolled can be no less than four. A junior or senior student who is concurrently enrolled in high school and college may use the college courses to meet the minimum number of subjects needed to maintain eligibility. These may be a combination of high school and college subjects equivalent to four high school units which are accepted by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.
- b. An ineligible student who changes schools during a semester will not be eligible at the new school for a minimum period of three weeks. A student may regain his/her eligibility by achieving the scholastic standard in Rule 3, Section 2-b at

the end of a three-week period. (Any part of a week is considered a full week.)

c. Incomplete grades will be considered to be the same as failing grades in determining scholastic eligibility. School administrators are authorized to make an exception to this provision if the incomplete grade was caused by an unavoidable hardship. (Examples of such hardships would be illness, injury, death in family and natural disaster.) *A maximum of two weeks is allowed for make-up work.*

d. One summer school credit (1/2 unit or one subject) earned in an Oklahoma State Department of Education accredited program may be used to meet the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1-a, for the end of spring semester.

#### **Section 4. Special Education Students**

Special students, who are enrolled in special education classes, have an Individual Educational Plan and have been certified by the principal as doing a quality of work may, with the approval of the Board of Directors, be accepted as eligible under this rule.

### **RULE 4 - CONDUCT OF STUDENTS**

#### **Section 1.**

a. A student who is under discipline or who is suspended from school or an activity shall be ineligible until reinstated by the school principal.

b. A student who is disqualified during a game or contest because of a flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible until reinstated by the principal. It is recommended that a disqualified student forfeit the right to participate in at least one contest before he/she is reinstated by the principal. A student whose flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct consists of fighting, cursing or using foul language toward a game official will be automatically suspended from participating in a minimum of the next two regularly scheduled games or contests on the same level of competition that his/her team plays. (Exception: See Soccer) Fighting is defined, but is not limited to, any player or non--player (bench personnel) striking an opponent with arm(s), leg(s), foot (feet), or other object(s), attempting to strike an opponent with arm(s), leg(s), foot (feet), or other object(s) regardless if there is contact with an opponent, biting, or instigating a fight by committing an act(s) that causes an opponent to retaliate by fighting related to an OSSAA sponsored activity in which the players and non-players are participating. A player or non-player who retaliates by fighting is in violation of the fighting rule. The fighting rule will apply to pre-contest and post-contest sponsored activities. It is mandatory that all head coaches remind his/her team that fighting during the post-game hand shaking ceremonies or conducting themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner after the game will be severely penalized. The head coach and team will be subject to additional suspension penalties beyond the normal penalties imposed on fighting and unsportsmanlike acts that occur during the contest. Injuries have occurred because of fans climbing over walls and fences, being trampled, or partaking in dogpile celebrations, etc., at the conclusion of a contest. The celebration by fans, players, or coaches acting in an unsportsmanlike manner (example: pouring water on the coach) after a contest will result in possible penalties imposed against the school. School administrators should be aware that if their student body and fans come onto the playing area after a contest, penalties may be imposed. Any substitute or team member who leaves the team bench (football player leaving the team box, baseball or softball player leaving the dugout, basketball player or wrestler leaving the team bench, etc.) and enters the playing area during a fight or any other serious unsportsmanlike

act shall be ejected. Those players or team members identified by game officials, school administrators, or videotape will be suspended a minimum of one game if they were not involved in the altercation and a minimum of two games (exception: soccer) if they were involved in the altercation. This rule applies to both regular season and play-off games. The suspension applies to individuals/teams on the same level of competition; i.e., varsity to a varsity game, junior varsity to a junior varsity game, etc. Any additional penalties by the National Federation Rule Book and the OSSAA Rules and Regulations Handbook would also apply. The rule would apply to all OSSAA sponsored activities. Any student involved directly or indirectly for fighting or any other serious unsportsmanlike act a second time during the season shall be suspended for the remainder of the season.

c. Students ineligible under (a) or (b) are not eligible until reinstated by the principal after the minimum penalty is enforced.

d. A disqualified student shall be ineligible until reinstated by the principal and a written report of details of the incident and action taken has been filed with the Executive Director for review with the Board of Directors.

e. If a student who is ineligible under (a) or (b) transfers, the sending school principal shall notify the principal of the receiving school (School Law, Section 488.3). The receiving school must require an *OSSAA Eligibility Record Form* (OSSAA Rule 9) to ensure compliance with this section.

f. Any student currently suspended from an activity or expelled from school who enrolls in another school will be ineligible for the duration of the original suspension or expulsion or until reinstated by the OSSAA Board of Directors.

Section 2. No person shall enter a contest under an assumed name.

Section 3. Any pupil who is a member of a gang, or secret society in violation of the State Law of Oklahoma or the regulations of any local Board of Education is not eligible. Any school violating this rule will be subject to suspension for a period of one year.

## **THE ROLES OF PARENTS IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

A. Make sure your child knows that win or lose; you appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them.

B. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition.

C. Teach them the importance of working hard to improve their skills and attitudes.

D. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship, and actual skill level.

E. Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitude of your child with other members of the team.

F. Don't compete with the coach. A child receiving mixed messages from two different authority figures can place a child in a difficult situation.

G. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.

H. Be a role model for your child when it comes to sportsmanship, demonstrate the guidelines listed above.



## **COMMUNICATING WITH THE COACH**

### *A. Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach*

Expectations the coach has for your child

Locations and times of all practices and contest

Team requirements (fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning)

### *B. Communication Coaches Expect from Parents*

Concerns expressed directly to the coach

Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance

### *C. Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches*

The treatment of your child, both mentally and physically

Ways to help your child improve

Concerns about your child's behavior

### *D. Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches*

#### **Playing time**

Team strategy

Play calling

Other student athletes

### *E. Appropriate Procedure for Discussing Concerns*

If a parent has a problem, question or concern with the athletic program or policy, the following procedure should be followed.

- If the concern or question is about a coach's rules or actions the parent should:
  - Set up a meeting with the coach
  - If no resolution is reached, contact the Athletic Director and a meeting will be set up with the coach, parent, and Athletics Director.
- If the concern or question is about an athletic department rule or actions the parent should:
  - Set up a meeting with the Athletic Director
  - If no resolution is reached, contact the High School Principal and a meeting will be set up with the Athletic Director, parent, and Principal.

***NEVER CONFRONT A COACH BEFORE OR AFTER A GAME OR PRACTICE. THESE CAN BE EMOTIONAL TIMES FOR ALL PARTIES INVOLVED AND DO NOT PROMOTE A RESOLUTION.***

## **HARRAH ATHLETE / PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

We have read and discussed the athlete/parent handbook and understand the expectations, rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Harrah Athletic Department. We understand the commitment we are making and we agree to abide by the expectations, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures set forth in this document.

---

Athlete Signature

Date

---

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date