

NWLSD
STUDENT-ATHLETE
HANDBOOK
24/25



Northwest Local School District
Athletic/Performing Groups' Participation Consent Form

Northwest Board of Education policy, in accordance with Ohio High School Athletic Association Regulations and Ohio Revised Code, requires that the Participation Consent Form be signed and returned to the school before students may try out or participate in any Northwest Board of Education sponsored athletic/performing group activity. This form is valid for one school year (August 1 – July 31).

General Code of Conduct for Athletes and Members of Performing Groups

Violation(s) of any of the following rules may lead to the denial of the privilege of participating with a team or performing group.

1. All participants in athletic programs must meet the eligibility requirements set forth by the OHSAA and Northwest Board of Education.*
2. Athletes and members of performing groups are expected to exemplify good sportsmanship and follow the district code of regulations for conduct of students, however, the following prohibitions are expanded to cover all times that a student is a team member.
 - a. Possession/use/or under the influence of narcotics, alcoholic beverages, dangerous drugs or other potentially dangerous substances.
 - b. Possession of or use of tobacco.(Athlete-all times; members of performing group while performing or practicing as a group member)
 - c. Acts of vandalism.
 - d. Possession of a weapon.
3. Participants are expected to follow all rules/regulations developed by the coaches/sponsors and approved by the building principal.
4. Students shall not wear clothing or jewelry that promotes alcohol, drugs, or other harmful substances, nor shall students wear jewelry that creates a danger to the wearer or others. Students shall not wear articles of clothing that are adorned with sexually suggestive slogans, profanity, lewd pictures, or that which may be offensive to a student's religion, race or national origin.
5. Student-athletes/performers are directed to wear school-issued equipment/uniforms for practice and game competitions only. It is not to be worn at any social events, school use, or through the community unless permission is granted by the Athletic Director.
6. All participants in athletic or performing group programs are to be transported to and from away events only by school-approved transportation or by parent/guardian-organized transportation. District transportation regulations will be in effect during all trips.
7. The student must be in attendance for the majority of classes on the day of the performance or game to participate in the event. If a student is not in attendance for the majority of classes on the school day of the event, he/she may participate only with the approval of the athletic director and/or building principal. In the case of a Saturday event, the student must have been present for all classes on Friday. If the student was absent on Friday, the student can participate on Saturday only with the approval of the athletic director and/or building principal.
8. Any student disciplinarily removed from or quitting an athletic team after the season has begun, forfeits the right to all awards and participation fees connected with the program, and is ineligible to participate in other athletic activities or conditioning programs until the end of that sport season.
9. Participants are financially responsible for the Non-Refundable Pay to Participate fees and equipment and uniforms issued. Participants must return equipment and uniforms promptly after the end of the season. Those who fail to meet this obligation will have their awards and credits held and will not be permitted to try out for another team.
10. Neither the school nor the school district is responsible for money, clothes, or other items lost, stolen, or damaged while in the locker room.
11. Students must report all injuries to their coach/sponsor.
12. A doctor's release is necessary before a student will be permitted to participate after sustaining an injury/problem requiring a doctor's care.
13. Participants must remain on the sidelines (or bench) if there is an altercation on the field/court/mat/etc.
14. These rules and the coach's/sponsor's rules for each team or group will be a) given to each member of the team or group, b) discussed with participants, and c) posted in respective locker rooms.

**Ohio High School Athletic Association scholarship bylaw requires high school and 7th/8th-grade students to receive passing grades in a "minimum of five (5) one-credit courses or the equivalent" to maintain eligibility.*

Copies of Board of Education policies, Ohio High School Athletic Association policies on Scholastic Eligibility and Athletic and Performing Groups' Disciplinary Procedures are available upon request from principals and/or athletic directors. We acknowledge that we are aware that

I understand that my student may suffer serious injury, including but not limited to sprains, fractures, brain damage, paralysis or even death, by participating in any of the following sports/activities: football, soccer, volleyball, cross country, basketball, wrestling, track, baseball, softball, diving, swimming, golf, tennis, bowling, gymnastics, cheerleading, wrestlettes, drill team, flag corps, statisticians, managers, student trainers, weight training, and in-season and out-of-season conditioning, or any other board approved activity. With full knowledge and understanding of the risk of serious injury we grant permission to participate in any of the sports/activities mentioned above and available at the school. We are aware that when schools are closed for calamity days (such as inclement weather), all extracurricular activities will be canceled during regular school hours. Principals may approve activities after regular school hours, however, no penalties will be assessed to students unable to attend the activities. We understand that first aid or emergency treatment may be provided by designated athletic trainers. **We also have adequate insurance to cover any injuries incurred by the student while participating in an athletic or performing group program.** We are aware that a policy is offered through the school at the beginning of the year. Furthermore, we will not hold any school organization responsible for injuries received while participating as a member of an athletic or performing group program. By signing this form, the parent(s) and student are acknowledging that they have read, understand and agree to follow the General Code of Conduct, are aware of the inherent dangers of participation in athletic/performing groups and are giving permission for the student to travel with the athletic or performing group. The parent and student also give permission for the student's name, photo, and performance statistics to be shared with the media and to be posted on the school, district and/or league websites.

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

School Year 24/25

Other Student-Athlete Topics

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Students of the Northwest Local School District participate in athletics under the regulations of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Greater Miami Conference, the Southwest Ohio Conference, and the Northwest Board of Education.

Eligibility Criteria

Interscholastic extra-curricular activities means a pupil activity program that a school or school district sponsors or participates in and that includes participants from more than one school or school district. Interscholastic extra-curricular activity does not include any activity included in the school district's graded course of study.

Grades 9 – 12 students must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediate grading period. During the preceding grading period, a student must receive a passing grade in a minimum of five (5) full credit courses or the equivalent, which count toward graduation; and

- * A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grades 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled in school the immediate grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of five of those subjects in which the student received grades.
- * A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of 5 of all subjects carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.
- * Summer school grades earned may not be used to substitute for failing grades or GPA calculations from the preceding grading period of the regular school year (relative to interscholastic athletic eligibility.)

Athletes may not try out or practice without all **necessary documents on Final Forms** being completed and a completed **physical**. Coaches are required to check all forms for completeness. Incomplete forms should be returned to the student-athlete, and the student athlete will not be allowed to practice or compete until corrected. Coaches are to provide the Athletic Director up to date rosters as soon as possible. It is the head coach's responsibility to review sport-specific eligibility with athletes and their parents and to review the eligibility certificates. This must be accomplished prior to the first contest. **Athletes may not compete until this process is complete.**

OHSAA Exceptions to Athletic Eligibility Due to Enrollment Status

See the athletic director regarding any exceptions to the eligibility requirements due to enrollment status.

Sponsorship of Individual Athletes – High School Only

High schools will sponsor athletes in individual sports when there is no school team for state meets. A school coach will be the coach of record. The private coach may become a volunteer coach for that student-athlete. During the school season, the athlete may not compete in outside contests.

Student Athlete Attendance

The student must be present for 50% of all classes on the day of the performance or game to participate in the event. If a student is not in attendance for all classes on the school day of the event, he/she may participate only with the approval of the athletic director and/or building principal. In the case of a non-school day event, the student must have been present for all classes on the preceding school day. If the student was absent on the preceding school day, the student can participate in a non-school day event only with the approval of the athletic director and/or building principal.

Early Excuse Student Requests

Requests to be excused early for athletic reasons must be approved by the building principal. If athletes are to be dismissed early from school to compete in a game/contest, a list of the student-athletes is to be generated and submitted to every teacher in advance. The Attendance Office must also receive this list.

Athletes are responsible for all classwork missed. Parents should be notified of the missed class time due to the early excuse.

Exemption to the Physical Education Graduation Requirement

Beginning School Year 2012-2013 students may be exempted from earning ½ credit of physical education and still meet the requirements of graduation from high school. Students who successfully complete two full seasons of sanctioned interscholastic athletics, marching band, and cheerleading offered within the district to be exempted from taking and completing the two required physical education courses needed during grades 9, 10, 11 to earn their diploma. Students must complete and submit a Physical Education Waiver Form to their counselor to be considered for this exemption. Interested students must talk with their counselors and review the Student Course Description Book for additional information.

RECRUITING

The guidelines below are from the OHSAA handbook. If you have any questions about recruiting issues, bring them to the attention of the athletic administration as soon as possible.

Section 9: Recruiting

4-9-1: A student is considered a prospective athlete after enrolling in the seventh grade, or the grade corresponding to the seventh grade for a student from a foreign country. Any attempt to recruit a prospective student-athlete for athletic purposes shall be strictly prohibited.

4-9-2: For purposes of this Bylaw Section 9, the term recruiting shall mean the use of influence by any person connected or not connected with the school to secure the transfer of a prospective student-athlete.

4-9-3: All member high schools are permitted to mass market their entire high school program and all of its elements for the purpose of informing and recruiting students.

* Recruiting a select athletic group or individual, i.e. eighth-grade team or individual sports' participants, is a violation.

* Coaches initiating contact with prospective student-athletes, who are not presently enrolled in the school's educational program, or their parents, prior to written acceptance notification (which cannot occur prior to January 2), is a violation.

4-9-4: Prior to enrollment, a student-athlete may visit a public or non-public school in contemplation of transfer, as long as that contemplated transfer is consistent with Board of Education or similar governing board policy formally adopted by that school district and arrangements for the visit are made through the principal and/or school administrator designated by the Board of Education or similar governing board.

Transfer Review Period – April 1 – July 1

Students applying for transfers may **NOT** participate in open gyms, weight room, practices, and contests until the transfer is granted.

Tryouts for Groups or Teams that occur during the Transfer Review Period:

Students who have requested a transfer may participate in pre-tryout activities and tryouts/auditions during the transfer review period provided that:

- The administrator in charge of the activity approves the participation
- The sponsor approves the participation
- The student meets any/all requirements to tryout/audition
- The only tryout/audition occurs during the transfer review period.

If a student makes the group or team but does not receive a transfer, an alternate candidate will fill the roster spot. The fact that a student makes the group/team is not a factor in deciding whether a transfer will be granted.

Communication Between Coaches and Students/Parents from other schools:

- **Coaches may NOT communicate with students/parents from other schools until the transfer is granted or the family establishes residency within the school's attendance area.**

- If a student/parent from another school initiates communication with a coach, the coach should refer the student/parent to the Athletic Director.
- The timing and type of communication between a coach and a student/parent from another school can be a factor in determining whether a transfer will be granted.

Communication Between District Coaches and Other Staff Members

- If a district coach or other staff member believes that another district coach has violated these guidelines, or the recruiting by-laws, the information should be reported to the school Athletic Director immediately.
- The school Athletic Director is responsible for investigating any reported allegations, and reporting his/her findings to the Chairperson of the District Athletic Council.

Home Schooled Students:

- A student who is receiving home education shall be afforded, by the Superintendent of the school district in which the student is entitled to attend school, the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular activity offered at the district school to which the student otherwise would be assigned during that school year. Any student who is receiving home education pursuant to statute and who resides in your district or is otherwise entitled to attend your schools shall have the same opportunities to participate on your school-sponsored teams (and all extra-curricular activities for that matter) as any and all other students in your district. The home-educated student must meet all other eligibility requirements, e.g. transfer, scholarship, age, semesters, etc., and pay the same fees (e.g. pay-to-play) as any other student.
- **Note:** A student who leaves a member school for home education during the school year in order to avoid the consequence of failing grades shall be ineligible for one grading period upon return to the member school's athletic programs.

NonPublic Student:

- If the nonpublic school in which the student is enrolled does not offer the extracurricular activity, a student enrolled in a chartered or non-chartered nonpublic school shall be afforded, by the superintendent of the district in which the student is entitled to attend school the opportunity to participate in that extracurricular activity at the district school to which the student otherwise would be assigned
- Chartered in this context should not be confused with a charter or community school, which by definition, is an independent public school that is part of the state's educational system created pursuant to ORC Section 3314.01. Charter or community schools are not addressed in this legislation, and thus students who attend those charter or community schools that are not OHSAA member schools, or are not sponsored by a school district's Board of Education (see Bylaw 4-3-1, exception three) would not have a participation option.

PROCEDURES FOR JOINING AN ATHLETIC TEAM DURING SEASON

This guideline governs situations where a student requests to join an athletic team after practices and/or games have started.

A. Alternative Tryout Schedule

Students who will be out of town or otherwise unavailable for tryouts may request an alternative schedule under the following conditions:

1. The request is made before tryouts start.
2. The student is fully enrolled in the school and able to attend school on a regular basis.
3. The student is academically eligible for the current season.
4. The parent or guardian has submitted a request in writing to the high school athletic director or middle school principal that includes documentation that the student will be unavailable for tryouts and that the absence is unavoidable.

B. Teams That Were Selected Through Tryouts and Candidates Were Cut

Students may submit a request for a special tryout for a team that was selected through tryouts and/or where candidates were cut under the following conditions:

1. The student was not enrolled in school during tryouts.
2. The student must be fully enrolled and able to attend classes at the time of the request.
3. The student must be academically eligible for the current season.

4. The student's parent or guardian must submit a written request that includes documentation of prior participation and or interest in the sport to justify the special tryout.
5. To be selected for the team, the student must:
 - a. Be rated superior to all students who were cut.
 - b. May not displace any current member of the team.

Coaches may hold special tryouts when a team does not have enough players to participate in games/meets. These special tryouts will be conducted in the same manner as the tryouts that were held to select the original team. The number of players needed to participate includes the starters and a reasonable number of substitutes

C. Open Teams That Were NOT Selected Through Tryouts and No Cuts Were Made

Students may request to join a team that was not selected through tryouts and cuts anytime during the season under the following conditions:

1. The student must be fully enrolled and able to attend classes at the time of the request.
2. The student must be academically eligible for the current season.
3. The student's parent or guardian must submit a written request/permission.

D. Participation Procedures That Apply To All Students Joining A Team During The Season

The participation for all students who join an athletic team under any of the procedures listed in this guideline is governed by the following procedures:

1. Students may participate in all practices and meetings immediately.
2. Students may not participate in scrimmages or games/contests until they have made up the number of days they missed during the season before joining the team.
 - a. The number of days missed will be calculated by adding the number of tryout days, practice days and game days in the season.
 - b. Students receive credit for one make-up day for every day of tryouts, practice and games they attend as a candidate or team member.
 - c. Students may sit on the bench in street clothes during a make-up period.
 - d. The maximum number of make-up days required will be 20 in middle school and 25 in high school.
3. If a team does not have enough players to participate in games or contests, the following exception will be made to the make-up procedures:
 - a. The coach may waive the make-up requirement for the number of players needed to participate in games or contests, as defined in Section B above.
 - b. A player who receives a waiver under this section may not take playing time away from the players who were on the team when the waiver was granted.
4. Students may not join a team during the season if their make-up period will extend past the end of the regular season.
5. Students who transfer into a Northwest Local School District School during a season, and can document full-time current season participation on an interscholastic team in the same sport at their previous school, may participate in scrimmages and games immediately.

PARTICIPATION FEE

Students in the Northwest Local School District shall be assessed a Non-refundable \$100 participation fee for extra-curricular activities. Payments must be made through an online payment system. The chairperson of the district Athletic Council shall be the superintendent's designee to administer the Participation Fee Program.

The following procedures will be used to assess and collect participation fees:

- The activities for which a participation fee will be assessed include teams and performing groups that participate in interscholastic contests and/or produce public performances that are not part of the required curriculum. Examples include athletic teams, show choirs, marching bands, drama groups and cheerleaders.

- a. Clubs, service organizations, and curriculum-related groups are exempt from participation fees. Examples include student government, foreign language clubs, concert choirs, concert bands, key club, drama stage crew, student trainers, managers, stats, and wrestlettes.
- The superintendent shall have the final authority to determine which groups must assess a participation fee.
- All participation fees collected will be deposited into the school activity account, or main athletic account for all athletics.
- Individual students will be assessed a maximum of \$200, or two participation fees, each school year. Fees will be assessed to students for the first two fee eligible teams or groups in which they participate. Athletic Directors should develop a system to identify the number of students who participate in more than two sports/activities to track the number of students who cap the \$200 fee.
- Only students who present proof that they are receiving OWF for the current school year will have their Pay to Participate fees waived.
- The school Athletic Director or Athletic Coordinator will be responsible for the following tasks associated with administering the participation fees:
 - a. Administering the school activity account.
 - b. Monitoring the collection of all participation fees and monitoring the two fee (\$200) individual student maximum.
- Coaches/Sponsors are required to keep an updated roster of students and the collection of the Pay to Participate fee. Fees not paid online are given to the Athletic Director to deposit daily. All Rosters must be maintained in DASL.
- The burden of responsibility for the collection and follow through of Pay to Participate rests on the Athletic Director and the Building Principal.

All secondary students participating in interscholastic athletics will be charged a fee per sport season. THIS PARTICIPATION FEE MUST BE PAID ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE FIRST CONTEST OR GAME OF THE SEASON.

No student may participate in the next sport until all financial obligations to the department have been paid. (Example: lost equipment) If an athlete quits a sport during the season, coaches should collect all equipment immediately. If the student does not cooperate, turn in fees owed to the athletic administrator immediately.

Please note that **the head coach is ultimately responsible for all money for his/her sport.**

Changing of Sports During the Season

Once a team has been chosen or a contest/scrimmage has been played, athletes forfeit their participation fee. Athletes may change sports only if it is before cuts, or if a non-cut sport, before the first scrimmage.

TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

- The Board of Education will provide transportation to selected extra-curricular contests and events. Transportation will be provided by one of the following methods:
- Board-owned buses at the Board's expense.
- Board-owned vehicles, driven by a sponsor or coach.
 - Must request permission from Transportation to utilize vehicles
 - Must be for school-sanctioned events and not individual student camps/recruiting events/etc.
 - The vehicle must be returned with a full tank of gas or the Athletic Department will be billed for gas.

- Keys must be returned to the proper personnel in person.
- Private vendor at the Board's expense.
- In each of these situations, school officials will ensure that all permission forms, medical forms and insurance forms have been completed and are on file.
- When the Board of Education does **not** provide transportation to extra-curricular contests and events, parents will be required to make their own arrangements.
- School administrators, with input from sponsors and coaches, will decide which method will be used for each event or contest. Parents will receive a minimum of one week notice when possible when the Board is **not** going to provide transportation to an event/contest.
- If NWLSD does not provide transportation to or from an event, no transportation waiver form is needed
 - School staff may not get involved in arranging rides for students.
- If NWLSD provides transportation to an event, but no returning transportation, it is up to parents to arrange the student athlete's ride home. School staff may not get involved in arranging rides for student
- If we provide transportation to an event and return transportation, and the student-athlete plans to ride home with their parent/guardian, they must inform the coach in a timely manner.
- Coaches should not provide transportation for students.
- **Students are expected to provide their own transportation home from school after practices and events.**

Bus Transportation for Athletic or School Sponsored Events

- For Teams with two (2) or more coaches: Minimum of two (2) coaches on each bus utilized to transport students. For Teams with only one coach, the coach is to ride the bus.
- In the event that the students are misbehaving or causing a disturbance or distraction on the bus, and the adult coach, sponsor, or chaperone fails to deal with the misbehavior, the bus driver will report the incident to the Transportation Supervisor who will report the incident to the appropriate Athletic Director and Dir. of Business for disciplinary action.
- The bus drivers will not confront coaches/sponsors/chaperones who are derelict in their responsibility of supervision regarding the behavior of the students on the bus.
- In a co-ed situation, male students sit in front of the bus, female students in back of the bus or vice versa, with coaches/sponsors/adult chaperones seated between the two sections.

High School and Middle School Who Quit A Sport/Activity Mid-Season

- a. If a student removes themselves from a sport or activity after the first competition/activity the student may NOT participate in training or weightlifting for another sport and will not be able to participate in any athletic activity for another sport for the remainder of the regular season in which the student stopped participating. Any appeal to this process starts with the Athletic Director.

GENERAL STUDENT ATHLETIC DISCIPLINE

Any breach of an individual coach's training rules or athletic department policies, which may result in a denial of participation as a team member must be submitted to the athletic director and/or principal for a decision.

PROCEDURES FOR REMOVAL/SUSPENSION OF TEAM/ACTIVITY

These procedures apply to situations when a student may be removed/suspended from a team or activity for longer than one week. These procedures do not apply to disciplinary action taken by a coach or sponsor for minor infractions of team or group rules, which could result in a short-term loss of participation privileges.

It is the responsibility of the coach or activity sponsor to ensure that all student members are aware of the rules and regulations of the team or group. This information should be shared with parents at the parent meeting each season. A written copy of all rules must be on file with the building administrator. If a

coach, activity sponsor, or administrator finds it necessary to suspend and/or remove a student from a team or extra-curricular activity, the following procedure must be followed:

- b. Students will be given written notice of the intention to suspend and/or remove. This notice must include the reason(s) for the intended suspension and/or removal. At this point the student is placed on Emergency Removal from the team or group until the informal meeting decision is rendered.
Parents are notified of the suspension/removal via phone.
- c. Students will be given an opportunity for an informal meeting with the administrator to challenge the reason(s) and/or to offer an explanation(s) for their actions.
- d. If the student is suspended or removed after the informal meeting, the administrator will provide written notification to the parents in writing within 24 hours. This notice shall include:
 - [1] The reason(s) for the suspension or removal.
 - [2] Notification that the student will be on suspension or removal during the appeal process.
- e. If the student requests a meeting with the principal, the principal will meet with the student, parents and sponsors to review the principal's decision. The Principal may meet with the Athletic Chairperson to review his/her decision. The principal's decision will be given to the student's parents in writing.
- f. The principal's decision is the final step in the appeal process.
- g. If a student is removed from a team, after the first competition/activity, the student may NOT participate in training or weightlifting for another sport and will not be able to participate in any athletic activity for another sport for the remainder of the regular season in which the student stopped participating. Any appeal to this process starts with the Athletic Director.