



## IMPROVING STUDENT ATHLETE CODES OF CONDUCT

*Twelve ways to improve your athlete code:*

### 1. Statement of Purpose: What is your Code for?

Is our code to punish individuals for their mistakes or to educate them and to set clear and consistent boundaries for their behavior? A well written code should be a positive document that establishes a comprehensive structure for running a program of excellence.

#### *Statement of Purpose*

*First*, it defines the positive expectations that we have for coaches, parents and athletes. The common values in our program need to reflect shared goals, a framework of principles agreed upon by the stakeholders and a need for active support from other stakeholders, such as the school board, school administration, other school staff and the community.

*Second*, as in a clearly laid out playing field, it defines how we as a school will establish and maintain a healthy environment in which student athletes can mature in, through athletics, while considering the responsibilities of all stakeholders.

*Third*, this Athletic Code is meant to be a useable, dynamic document to guide the educational process **through our school's athletic program. It defines the mission, philosophy, goals and parameters of the program, and the priority activities.**

*Fourth*, it spells out the consequences for behavioral issues and violations but links the identified individual to a process for help and change. The code shall be a living document that is proactive and character based rather than reactive and punishment based. We shall simply tell our student athletes what is expected from them behaviorally, if they are to be afforded the privilege of representing this community. Consequences shall be universal and the timing of any incident shall not be any consideration in the logical series of events that are initiated upon any confirmed violation.

### 2. Use the Power of a Greater Authority

#### SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS CODES FOR ATHLETES

Sport and athlete specific Athletic Codes of Conduct and drug testing have been upheld five times by the Supreme Court of the United States of America. That is referred to as a shutout! The basis for that support is due to the fact that in athletics we must insure the health and safety of those that partake in high level physical activities.

### 3. Use the Law to Establish Every Rationale For Your Code

#### TRAINING RULES AND REGULATIONS and THE NH STATE LAW

First and foremost, the possession, including internal possession, of alcohol by anyone under the age of 21 years of age is against the law. Marijuana and all classified street drugs and controlled substances are illegal for all and punishable by criminal arrest and prosecution.



Prescription drug possession or use of without a medical authorization is against the law and punishable by criminal arrest and prosecution.

Our message to Student Athletes is loud and clear and should be understood by all Stakeholders: There will be **"NO USE" of alcohol or marijuana or any illicit substances.**

#### 4. Stop the problem by going after the source

Athletes Who Host Lose the Most Initiative

Ringleaders in parties- there shall be a greater consequence for any student athlete, if it is determined that they were involved in the organization, facilitation, promotion, or hosting of any gathering or social event where alcohol or drug are available or use has occurred. This penalty shall be a one year suspension. (Or a tier 2 violation - double the first violation status).

#### 5. Application of the Code

- *Parties/ Presence At Parties With Drugs (In The Presence Of)*

If a student-athlete attends a party/gathering, where alcohol or drugs are being illegally dispensed, the student-athlete must leave the party/gathering immediately (\*LEAVING MEANS LEAVING IMMEDIATELY \*) and report their attendance to a coach or administrator before the end of the next school day. Because possession and use of alcohol or drugs by youth under age 21, is against the law, it is our intent to prevent any community youth, including athletes from being in an environment which greatly increases the risk of use, danger and nearly all youth negative behaviors of concern.

If we allow our athletes to be present in this illegal environment, we promote and allow the possibility for them to be involved in this illegal culture and we must assume some will partake in the use of these substances and take as many of their teammates with them as possible.

- *Scope of the Code*

The Code of Conduct will apply to each student athlete for one calendar year (including summer) from the date of his/her most recent signature and will be in effect at all times, in all locations, including non-school activities. Violation of the Code will result in penalties, which are consistent with those identified within the code as determined by the coach and/or Director of Athletics. Each coach also has the prerogative to establish and implement additional guidelines specific to his/her particular team.

#### 6. Possession or Use on School Property (*DRUG FREE ZONE*) or at/during school sponsored events.

The following cannot be tolerated and shall result in immediate and permanent suspension for the remainder of student-athlete's career:

- Possession or use of ILLEGAL DRUGS on school property in conjunction with a school activity or sponsored event, including use or possession during transport to or from any event or activity.
- Participation in a contest or practice session while under the influence of an illegal substance.



- Distribution, dispensing or sale of any such drugs to any other student or student-athlete shall result in immediate and permanent suspension for the remainder of athlete's career.

There shall be no recourse for a student-athlete for any violation listed above.

#### 7. Cooperation during Investigation

You have the right to remain silent...**But you may be in the bleachers** on game day.

It is important for all student-athletes to understand that involvement in our athletic programs is a privilege. With the responsibility of being an athlete, comes a commitment, which are the conditions of this code of conduct. In the event that a student-athlete comes under investigation for possible violations to the provisions of this code, it is expected that:

1. The student-athlete shall be truthful.
2. That the student-athlete be forthcoming with information.
3. That the student-athlete not be deceptive or untruthful.
4. That the student-athlete be cooperative.

During the investigation of any student-athlete violation the student-athlete must be truthful and forthcoming with information, or the Athletic Director has within his/her power to impose a greater level of consequence, if it is determined that the student-athlete has lied, been deceptive or untruthful, prior to, or after the determination of guilt and or consequences. Great weight must be placed on the privilege of representing our community outside the confines of our community and any athlete that would fail to be truthful and/or cooperative, would jeopardize the perceived character of our programs.

Failure to comply with the above conditions may result in full expulsion from the athletic program for the duration of the student-athletes' **future career**.

#### 8. Mandatory Seasonal Meetings

**Get it right from the start...**

Pre-season meetings: Seven non-negotiable areas are discussed with all stakeholders. It is also impressed upon all stakeholders, that by signing the codes an individual indicates that they have knowledge, understanding and agreement to all standards set forth for the privilege of being involved in the athletic program. Coach and athletes discuss their expectations for the team, **define 'success' and set goals for individuals and teams for the season ahead and communicate with parents.** (Create a climate of KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS. All stakeholders sign a Code of Conduct together).

9. Time to help our athletes, not just have them sit out two **games...** Process for Return to Athletic Privileges

EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT FOR CHEMICAL HEALTH VIOLATIONS



As a pivotal part of our consequences for chemical health violations, the student athlete and or parent/guardian shall be required to complete an educational program as part of the process that may lead to resumption of participation in athletic programs. If we fail to educate athletes and parent/guardians when such violations occur, we fail to help them learn from their mistakes and are negligent in our duties as an educational institution.

## STUDENT ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROCESS

If a violation of the [insert school name] code occurs, the Code requires immediate administrative action and involves a STUDENT ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROCESS.

This process must be attended by the student athlete and a parent or guardian.

Parents/Guardians must take parental responsibility for their child and be involved with this process. This helps insure that they are informed and aware of the nature of the violation and in full understanding that any future violations will result in greater consequences. The parent can also come to understand their role in helping their child learn a valuable lesson. Every incident or violation must be documented. It is the first time the student has been caught in a violation but not likely the first time they have used these substances.

Failure by a parent or guardian to comply will result in the athlete being able to practice but not compete, provided the athlete completes the process.

This process is educationally based and is patterned after the restorative justice model. This process shall include provisions that the student-athlete and parent/guardian shall receive the following:

- ▶ **EDUCATION:** The parent and student-athlete must see a qualified Chemical Health specialist. The parent/guardian and student-athlete must attend an informative intervention seminar, concerning the implications of use and the effect on physiological, psychological, social development and learning as well as discussion of harm reduction issues and personal and collective responsibility. The education must address affect on athletic performance, brain development, learning and development of the student as a young adult.
  - ▷ The process requires the parent/guardian and student-athlete to see the SRO (School Resource Officer) to discuss the legal ramifications of the behavior of concern and to discuss the law and youth risk behaviors such as drinking and driving.
  - ▷ The process requires that the parent/guardian and student-athlete see a qualified Chemical Health Specialist, counselor or social worker to discuss the magnitude and status of the chemical health of the individual.
- ▶ **CORRECTIVE:** The student-athlete and parent/guardian must come to an understanding, that corrective measures are necessary, in order to resume the athletic career or to practice and compete again. This shall include a document, signed by the student-athlete and parent/guardian, which clearly states agreed to changes and conditions. This document acknowledges that a violation has



occurred, that they (parent/guardian and student-athlete) are willing to make changes in order to resume/ continue, athletic participation and that they will adhere to the code standards. It also indicates that the parent/guardian and student-athlete are aware of the next level of consequence that would result, should another violation occur.

- ▶ **RESTORATIVE:** The student-athlete must address the teammates and coaches and admit to the violation, show remorse, ask to come back to the team and recommit to provisions of CODE by resigning it in front of teammates and coaches.

*Failure of any Parent /guardian, student-athlete to complete any part of this process will result in permanent suspension for any future involvement in athletics.*

#### 10. Team Leaders Held to Higher Standards

Recent AAI surveys indicate that as many as 48% of team student leaders are involved in the party culture. Who is in charge of your teams?

Student-athlete leaders will be held to the highest standard of behavior, because they chose to be an example to their peers. Any student-athlete in a leadership role will face a greater consequence for violations of the code than team members.

A team leader should receive a tier two or tier three violation for any serious code violations.

See Job Description for Student-Athlete leaders below.

Student-Athlete Leadership Job Description:

A caring and nurturing individual willing to exemplify the highest standards of character and duty to team, school and community. Must conduct yourself on and off the fields of play with behavior that is an example to others. This individual must possess high level communication skills and be willing to confront any behaviors of concern or violations of standards of student-athlete code of conduct among peers. Must act as a conduit between team and coach. Must be willing to bring any serious concerns to the attention of adult authority. Must be willing to hold team meetings to discuss chemical health and behavioral issues. Must act to insure and inspire team goals and effectiveness. You will be held to the highest levels of conduct and character because you are in charge of the group.

#### 11. Cyber Image Policy

Any identifiable image, photo or video which implicates a student-athlete to have been in possession or presence of drugs (including, but not limited to Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, and Prescription Medication **without a doctor's order**) or portrays actual use, or out of character behavior or crime, shall be confirmation of a violation of the code. Since there is no way to establish a timeframe for when or location of where the image was taken, it shall be a responsibility that the student-athlete must assume. It must also be noted that there may be persons, who would attempt to implicate an athlete, by taking such images, to place them in a situation where they might be in violation of this code standard. This is our rationale for demanding that our athletes not place themselves in such environments.



12. What are we agreeing to?

You really need to get the point across to parents/guardians on your code night, as to what signing the code means. Rather than simply having a line with "parent sign here", you can use this clause...

By signing this document, I \_\_\_\_\_parent/guardian, indicate that I have knowledge, understanding and agreement to these standards, set forth in order for my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_to be afforded the privilege of representing \_\_\_\_\_High School as a student-athlete. I am also aware that any violation on the part of my child, to any of these standards, shall result in the consequences contained within this policy.