

Athletic Handbook

Athletics are an important component of the Stillwater Central School District's educational program. The Athletic Code of Conduct applies to student athletes from their initial interscholastic participation through their graduation from high school. The rules governing student athletes are in effect from July 1st through June 30th of each school year, and apply to all student athletes encompassing grades seven through twelve. This policy is in effect 24 hours a day, in or out of each athletic season, and covers student-athlete comportment both in and outside of school.

Student participation in athletics is a **privilege**, not a right. A student athlete's participation in interscholastic athletics is contingent upon their full compliance with all provisions of this Athletic Code of Conduct. The following goals will serve as the foundation for the specific provisions within this Code of Conduct:

Our goals are:

1. To develop and maintain the highest level of sportsmanship.
2. To develop proper attitudes toward winning and losing, success and failure.
3. To encourage and develop respect for fellow athletes whether they are teammates, members of other Stillwater athletic teams, or members of opposing teams.
4. To assure that the amount of time required for athletic participation does not interfere with academic success.
5. To develop proper attitudes toward individual health habits, appearance on and off the field, and citizenship in and out of school.
6. To encourage competition not only for the tangible rewards but also for the development of positive attitudes that makes athletic competition valuable and worthwhile.
7. To orient all athletic staff members to abide by the rules, regulations, and officials' decisions that govern each sport.
8. To maintain the highest standard of ethics, recognize each participant as an individual who will conduct him/herself in a manner befitting his/her responsibilities, and develop the kind of rapport with the broader school community that will improve the total educational program.

COACHING

In Stillwater, coaching is defined as a teaching station. This implies that teacher responsibility for supervision, preparation, and training is as essential in coaching as it is in the classroom, especially if we are to justify our interscholastic program on a sound educational philosophy. Therefore, we must assume that the individual coach will apply him/herself to athletic assignments in the same professional manner displayed in a formal classroom situation.

We believe that a coach has a unique opportunity to influence young people. A coach, through his/her interaction with student athletes during practice and game situations is considered an extension of the school day. The "Classroom" becomes the football/soccer field, the softball/baseball field, basketball court or the yellow school bus carrying athlete's home after

they've just suffered a tough loss. These are teaching opportunities a coach can use to help young people become better citizens and better human beings.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

1. Be positive with your son/daughter. Let them know that they are accomplishing something by being part of the team.
2. Do not offer excuses to them if they are not playing. Encourage them to work hard and do their best.
3. Encourage athletes to follow the rules. Whether they are a first string player or seventh string player, players must follow rules pertaining to curfew, drinking, smoking, promptness and school, etc.
4. As a fan, you are entitled to cheer enthusiastically for your team, but don't become belligerent. Coaches work with athletes and know their talents. Respect that!
5. Insist that the athletes respect team rules, school rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. Self-respect begins with self-control.
6. Encourage the athletes to improve their self-image by believing in themselves.
7. Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game.
8. Remember that the coach is involved as a coach because he/she is sincerely fond of children and is an experienced professional. Coaches have different ways of dealing with people and situations. Athlete's lives are enriched by interaction with different types of leaders.
9. Remember: at a competition you, the parent, represent your community, your school and your son/daughter. Please be a positive role model.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

As your son/daughter becomes involved in the sports program at the Stillwater Central School District, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. This is the opportunity for your child to talk with their respective coach and discuss the situation. When your child handles the problem, it becomes part of the learning and maturation process. There may also be situations that require a conversation between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It's important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please follow these procedures to help promote a resolution.

1. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolutions.
2. If the concern is not resolved between your child and the coach, call the Athletic Director to arrange a conference. A meeting will be arranged with the coach, parent, and Athletic Director. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.

Athletic Code of Ethics

- 1 Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility as an athlete and the privilege of representing your school and community.
 - 2 Learn the rules of your sport thoroughly. This will assist you in achieving a better understanding and appreciation of the game and promote fair play.
 - 3 Cooperate fully with coaches and officials, always exercise good sportsmanship, abiding by the rules as they are stated.
 - 4 Only the captain may communicate with officials on the clarification of rules. It is his/her responsibility to communicate what was said back to his/her teammates and/or coach.
 - 5 Always respect the official's judgment and interpretation of the rules. Never argue or make non-verbal gestures that indicate disagreement. This type of immature activity may invite undesirable behavior on the part of teammates or spectators. Remember, you are an important role model for others.
 - 6 Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat. This is a true measure of character and sportsmanship.
- (A) Abide by the Stillwater Code of Conduct, Athletic Code of Conduct, and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Guidelines.
- (B) Detention: An athlete may not participate in any extracurricular activity until detention has been completed.
- (C) Out-of-School/Alternative Learning Environment: An athlete may not participate in any extracurricular activity until the suspension period has concluded and the student has been formally readmitted to school.
- (D) School Absences: An athlete may not participate in any extra-curricular activity unless he/she has been present in school for a full day of attendance (must be in school no later than 7:40 a.m.). The only exceptions to this rule are legal excuses such as doctor/dentist appointments, college visitations, court appearances, or other extraordinary circumstances. It is incumbent that the parent ensures loss of school time is minimized when making such appointments. The high school principal shall have prior notice of such appointments and has the authority to approve or disapprove the absence. This applies to Saturday games if absent on Friday.

- (E) Vacation: A player is expected to be at all practices and games including those held during vacation periods. The entire team depends on full participation. In rare cases, a player may find it necessary to miss a practice or a game. The player must request permission from the coach and not pass on the reasons for being absent through another player. This applies even if the player is not in school that day.

If family obligations are known to a player in advance that would cause a player to miss a game or practice, this must be made known to the coach at the earliest possible time. The coach will let the player know if the reason is acceptable. Consequences will be established by the coach if necessary.

- (F) Dismissal/Quitting Team: Any student who quits or is dismissed from an athletic team will not be allowed to participate in that activity or attend that particular activity until that sport season has concluded. The student athlete will not be eligible to participate in the next sport season, including the next school year. We realize that some team members are unfamiliar with certain sports and may desire to drop out after trying the sport. They may do so without penalty if they drop out prior to the first game or meet. Any exceptions to this rule are subject to review by the Athletic Council (High School Principal, Athletic Director, representative of the coaching staff).
- (G) Sportsmanship: Any athlete who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior shall minimally be ineligible to participate in the next regularly scheduled contest. Repeat offenders may be removed for the entire season. The Athletic Director and Principal will be involved in extenuating circumstances.
- (H) Transportation: All athletes are expected to travel to and from athletic contests with their teammates on the school bus. With the coach's permission, parents can "sign-out" only their child from away contests.
- (I) If a team member is not functioning with a positive attitude, a formal meeting may/will be held with the coach/athletic administrator and the player to correct the situation. The coach/administrator may suspend the player for a period of time. If the condition continues, the individual may be terminated from the team.

- (J) **Alcohol and Substance Abuse:** The use, possession, sale or distribution of tobacco, tobacco products, e-cigarette, Vape Pen or Box, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or performance enhancing substances, or drug paraphernalia is a violation of the Stillwater Athletic Code of Conduct. The loitering of a student athlete in the vicinity where alcohol or drugs are used, possessed, sold or distributed illegally is also a violation of the Code of Conduct.
- The penalties for a violating the code of conduct for alcohol and substance abuse as defined in paragraph (I) are as follows:

First Violation:

- (1) Loss of eligibility to participate in 10% of scheduled interscholastic events. This includes post-season events such as sectionals, states, etc.
- (2) Student-athlete must still practice with the team during loss of eligibility.
- (3) Student-athlete will enroll and complete the Captains Course at: <http://nfhslearn.com/home/students>.
- (4) If captain of a team, the student-athlete will lose the captain privilege for the remainder of the season.
- (5) Any part of the 10% not completed during one sport season will carry over to the next season in which the student-athlete competes. The number of events in which the athlete may not participate will be determined by the Athletic Director and the Head Coach of that sport.
- (6) Parents will be notified by the Director of Athletics.

<u># of Events in Season</u>	<u>10%</u>
8-14	1
15 -24	2

For any **second offense**, the student-athlete will be suspended for 50% of the NYSPHAA maximum allowed scheduled games. Student-athlete may be assigned to participate in a designated drug/alcohol awareness program. This program will be facilitated by the Athletic Staff and/or a designated outside agency and have a designated length for participation for each violator.

For a **third offense** there will be a minimum one (1) calendar year suspension from participating in interscholastic athletics starting from the date of the infraction. Participation beyond that date will be determined by the Athletic Council, which is composed of the high School principal, athletic director, and a representative of the coaching staff.

For any subsequent violation the student would be precluded from any further participation in interscholastic athletics while a Student in the Stillwater Central Schools.

- (K) Participation is defined as the competing in interscholastic competitions. The athlete will continue to practice with his or her team and participate in scrimmages, as these are a means to prepare the athlete for scheduled competitions. The suspended athlete will be required to attend all games dressed in appropriate street clothes.

- (L) Bullying, harassment and hazing, as defined in Board of Education Policy , is prohibited in all forms on school grounds, buses, school sponsored program and activities, including school events that take place at locations outside of the school district. Any offender shall be subject to the conditions outlined in this policy.

- (M) Community Representation: Athletes are role models who should represent their team, school, and community in a positive manner. Consequently, any inappropriate or unlawful action committed by an athlete on or off school property is subject to penalty. Such penalties may include referral to Youth Court and/or suspension from the athletic team.
 If in the discretion of a coach or administrator a student's citizenship or image is extremely poor, a conference will be held with the student and coach if applicable. Consideration will be made at that time to the student's future participation on athletic teams that represent Stillwater Central School. It is expected that these conferences will rarely be necessary.

- (N) Students who are waiting for practice should not be in the academic wing unless assigned to a teacher. Students waiting for practice should not congregate in the lobby area. Athletes should report to academic study hall in the high school cafeteria. Coaches will notify players where they should be.

- (O) Academic ineligibility

Philosophy

All parties (school personnel, parents, students and fans) of SCS acknowledge that academic endeavors have priority over athletics and extra-curricular activities. Participation in these activities is an honor and a privilege. The School District recognizes that while extra-class activities provide opportunity for personal improvement, contribution to the school, self-realization of potential, and education of the whole person, participation in these activities cannot take precedence over academic pursuits. Every effort must be made to keep grades stable or improving.

Eligibility Criteria and Participation Guidelines

1. Students' eligibility will be governed by rules set by the Stillwater Central School District Board of Education, NYS Public High School Athletic Association, Section II, and the league association to which we belong.

2. Parents/guardians each set individual goals and standards for their children, and as such, may conclude the student's participation at any time.
3. **Academic probation** is defined as a warning period in which a student is expected to achieve a passing grade in all courses.
4. **Ineligibility** means that students will not participate in ANY interscholastic activity. Extenuating circumstances must be approved by the principal and athletic director.

Procedure:

1. On the first day of a sports season a list of potential athletes will be sent out to all teachers and counselors. Teachers and counselors then have 48 hours to indicate if a student is currently failing any course. (Exception: During the fall sports season only, the list of athletes will be sent to teachers and counselors two weeks after the beginning of the school year for teachers to indicate if a student is currently failing any course.) These students, if they attain a position on a team, will then be given a two week probationary period to raise their course grade to 65 or higher. During this period they will be allowed to practice and participate in games/meets with the team.
 2. If a student fails to raise his/her course grade(s) to 65 or higher during the probationary period, he/she will become ineligible. Ineligible students will not be allowed to practice/play with the team. They are encouraged to use the time away from athletics to work on academics. They will be reinstated upon passing.
 3. Full weeks of vacation, such as winter or spring breaks, are not included in the period of probation.
 4. Grades for all athletes will be monitored on a continual basis to ensure that athletes remain in good academic standing throughout the sports season.
 5. It is the responsibility of the coach to be sure that no academically ineligible student participates in team activities, as well as maintain student/school/home contact during this period.
- (P) Appeal Process: If a parent/guardian disagrees with a penalty placed upon their child the following are the guidelines for appealing the judgment:
1. The student-athlete or parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision to the Athletic Council. The Athletic Council, chaired by the high school principal, athletic director, and a representative of the Stillwater coaching staff.
 2. An appeal, in writing to the high school principal, must be requested by the parent within ten (10) calendar days of the receipt of a declaration of ineligibility. The Athletic Council will be convened within five (5) calendar days of the written request. The student-athlete and parent/guardian are expected to attend this meeting.
 3. The Athletic Council will render a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the appeal meeting.

4. A further appeal would be to the school superintendent. This appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the Athletic Council's decision. A formal meeting would be scheduled within five (5) calendar days of the request. Both the student and parent would be required to attend the appeal meeting. A written decision would be made within five (5) calendar days of the appeal meeting with the school superintendent.

5. If displeased with the remedy at this stage the parent could appeal to the board of education. The appeal would be in writing to the board of education president within ten (10) days of the school superintendent's written decision. The board of education would hear the appeal within ten (10) calendar days of the written request. The board of education would render a written decision within five (5) days of the formal hearing.

