

# **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 reflects the needs and purposes of our students and community. 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 family and team camaraderie values.
- 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.

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## REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

### To participate:

- A student-athlete must be registered using [Final Forms](#) found on the Greenwich High School Athletic Website by a parent/guardian and complete all emergency contact information and forms.
- A student-athlete and parent/guardian must review and sign off on our concussion management protocol on [Final Forms](#).
- A student-athlete and parent/guardian must review and sign off on the sudden cardiac awareness plan on [Final Forms](#).
- A student-athlete and parent/guardian must review and agree to follow our athletic code of conduct on [Final Forms](#).
- A student-athlete must have a current physical on file in the nurse's office at Greenwich High School and on [Final Forms](#). An athletic physical lasts 13 months and must be valid during tryouts and the season.
- A student-athlete must be cleared on [Final Forms](#) before participation.

### 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 toward 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 (the start of the 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 their original entry into the ninth grade, to compete in high school interscholastic athletics.
- A student-athlete cannot 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 tournaments and individual CIAC rules in golf, swimming, tennis, and gymnastics.

# GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Our student-athletes are responsible for providing a positive image in the classroom, the school campus, the playing fields, and in our community. They must be reminded that participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right. All student-athletes are expected to meet this athletic code, and failure to comply during their season could result in action taken by the athletic director, including suspension or removal from a team.

**While at school:** A good student-athlete is also a good student who obeys all school rules and regulations. This means good attendance, participation, effort, and behavior. A student-athlete must be in school and attend all scheduled classes (including physical education) to participate in any practices or contests. If a student-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 are always expected. No student-athlete will use profanity. A student-athlete will respect teammates, opponents, officials, and spectators.

**In our community:** How student-athletes act is very important. As student-athletes, they shall respect the rights of others and represent our team, school, and town with dignity.

**Failure to comply with the above expectations will result in action taken by the athletic director on a case-by-case basis.**

## **\*\*The use of illegal substances:**

Any use, possession, or distribution of illegal substances (drugs/alcohol) by a student-athlete is prohibited. This is a twenty-four-hour rule that extends beyond the school day and includes the following circumstances:

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

## **Failure to comply with the use of the illegal substances code will result in the following consequences:**

- **\*First offense** - A two-week suspension from all practices and games. The student-athlete must meet with her/his school social worker before rejoining the team. Upon completion of the suspension, the student-athlete may apply for reinstatement through a conference with the athletic director, coach, and parent. A first offense could impact an opportunity of remaining or becoming a varsity captain.
- **\*\*Subsequent offense** - A subsequent offense during the school year will result in the student-athlete's removal from their team for the remainder of their current season. It may exclude the student-athlete from participation in athletics for the remainder of the school year. The student-athlete may be ineligible for any post-season awards, recognition, or participation at team events and may be excluded from the opportunity of remaining or becoming a varsity captain.

**The use of androgenic/anabolic steroids or other performance-enhancing substances:** Any student-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. The one hundred eighty (180) school day period of ineligibility commences on the day the CIAC Board of Control makes such a determination.

**The use of tobacco products:** A student-athlete shall not use or possess any tobacco products (including electronic cigarettes or similar devices). 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 principal, dean of student life, director of athletics, and coach will assess each alleged violation and provide enforcement of this code when and where appropriate.*

## EXPECTATIONS

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 student-athletes, parents, coaches, and the athletic director will offer all student-athletes an opportunity to succeed.

Student-athletes must attend all meetings, practices, and games as team members. Practice rules must be explained and enforced, and players must practice to play in a contest. Student-athletes must understand that they will be expected to attend practices and contests that may be scheduled during school vacations. Players who cannot attend practice must leave early or will be late must notify coaches before practice starts. Physical activities should never be considered as a consequence.

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 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 our high school athletic office. Parents should assist their children in following the Greenwich High School Athletic Code of Conduct, including the Athletic Substance Abuse Policy. All coaches will monitor and maintain the Greenwich High School Athletic Code of Conduct and model appropriate behavior and language for student-athletes.

Coaches will establish high expectations, 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 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, team achievements should always precede personal successes. Fair play and good sportsmanship are always expected from our athletes. They should pursue academic excellence through good attendance, participation, effort, and behavior.

Student-athletes are expected to model the highest level of sportsmanship. Any student-athlete who receives a warning or card (infraction) for using foul or abusive language or disrespecting a coach, spectator, teammate, opponent, official, or staff member will have to meet with the athletic director before they are allowed to rejoin the team regardless if they were officially removed from the competition.

- First offense: Meeting with the athletic director and completing the NFHS Course on sportsmanship (student-athletes will not be able to rejoin the team until both are complete).
  - Second offense: Meeting with the athletic director and a one-game suspension
  - Third offense: meeting with the athletic director and parents, minimum 2-game suspension, and possible removal from the team. The student-athlete may lose athletic privileges for the entire school year
- \* Fighting will result in an immediate one-game suspension and a meeting with the athletic director and coach

# COMMUNICATION

The Greenwich High School Athletic Department continually attempts to improve communication with our student-athletes, parents, and coaches. We strongly believe in being accessible to student-athletes and parents and supporting our coaching staff. SportYou and Final Forms are the only official communication platforms authorized by the Greenwich High School Athletic Department.

When a student-athlete/parent has a complaint or concern, they should communicate with the coach as soon as possible. Often an informal conversation can lead to a satisfactory resolution.

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

- Tryout process (if applicable)
- Process of signing and using sportsYou
- Expectations of student-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. It is always expected that the student-athlete and coach first attempt to solve any conflict between them. If a student-athlete or parent initially approaches the athletic director or principal with a concern, they will immediately be referred to the coach. These are the steps to follow until a resolution is reached:

- |    |  |                   |
|----|--|-------------------|
| 1. | Student-athlete >                                      | Coach             |
| 2. | Student-athlete / Parent >                             | Coach             |
| 3. | Student-athlete / Parent / Coach >                     | Athletic Director |
| 4. | Student-athlete / Parent / Coach / Athletic Director > | Principal         |

A coach will be prepared to discuss concerns candidly and professionally with a parent. It is inappropriate for a parent to connect with a coach before, during, or immediately after an athletic contest. A coach should never be contacted by a parent at their home. The correct procedure for a parent is to leave their name and phone number at the Greenwich High School Athletic Office. If a student-athlete or parent initially approaches the athletic director or principal with a concern, they will immediately be referred to the coach.

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 can they assist in their child's skill improvement and development
- How they may contribute in a way that supports the 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

# 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 essential to the very nature of learning. These values represent the highest possible expression of shared beliefs among the members of Greenwich High School and the GHS community. As members of the Greenwich High School community, we believe these principles should always be upheld to foster an environment where 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. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in action by the athletic director on a case-by-case basis. Student-athletes suspended or expelled may not be on school grounds or participate in any athletic activities during the dates of suspension or expulsion. Please click on the links below to review the Board of Education policy.

## **Bullying Behavior in Our Schools**

- [Bullying 5131.911](#)
- [Bullying Regulation 5131.911R](#)

## **Harassment Policy**

- [Harassment 4118.113-4218.113-5145.52](#)

## **Hazing**

- [Hazing 5131.91](#)

## ELECTRONIC AND SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Student-athletes may use electronic communication devices (except in our locker rooms) if 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 the loss or theft of such devices.

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

*Blogs and electronic chat rooms:* Student-athletes often 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 never respond to them.

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

*Online photos:* Many student-athletes use multiple social media platforms. These platforms may affirm that a page is private and that it is for users only "friends", student-athletes must be reminded that nothing on the Internet is entirely private. Once another person has access, there is no way to control who can and cannot view it.

*Social Media Platforms (Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, etc.):* Overusing 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 the intended meaning. As a result, comments are often misinterpreted.

*Cyberbullying:* Student-athletes should understand that negative comments towards others can be hurtful and even seen as cyber-bullying, which is unacceptable. The ramifications of bullying can be destructive for the victim as well as the individual doing the bullying. Student-athletes are reminded that once a comment is in writing, it becomes everlasting proof that the statement was made.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

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

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

### **UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT**

All uniforms and equipment are the student-athlete's responsibility 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 uniform washing instructions. The student-athlete will be responsible for the replacement cost if any equipment/uniforms are lost or stolen.

### **PRACTICE RULES**

Student-athletes must attend all meetings, practices, and games as team members. Practice rules will be explained and enforced, and players must practice to play in a contest. Student-athletes will be expected to attend if practices and contests are scheduled during school vacations. Players who cannot attend practice must leave early or will be late must notify coaches before practice starts.

### **TEAM CAPTAINS**

Before the varsity captain selection process begins, prospective candidates must pick up a Captain's Application from the athletic office. If a student-athlete decides not to apply, that athlete will not be considered for a captain's position. This application must be signed by both the athlete and the parent. To become a captain, the student-athlete must complete an online NFHS Captains Course and email it to the athletic director.

### **CAPTAIN'S PRACTICE**

The CIAC does not sanction, encourage or condone Captain's Practices in any sport. Depending on the school's involvement, Captain's Practices 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.

### **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 provide an early dismissal notice to the staff for all teams. The athletic director will schedule the early release time after considering the travel to the site and warm-up time needed. Student-athletes must collect their belongings, change quickly, and get on the bus when dismissed. We are an education-based athletic department, and the athletic office will try to keep students in class when possible.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The athletic office will arrange transportation to all away contests. All student-athletes must use transportation provided by the school. Any parent requesting a departure from this requirement must sign a release allowing their child to be transported only by their parent. The ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION REQUEST FORM will accompany all bus trips and must be completed before transporting the student-athlete. The Greenwich High School Main Office must approve other travel arrangements in writing. Student-athletes must remove all equipment, clothing, and trash from a bus when it returns home to school. All student-athletes are only expected to act and speak appropriately at all times.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM POLICY**

The training room is only to be used by a student-athlete 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 athletic trainer's role is to evaluate injuries, provide first-aid treatment, and 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 physical 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.

### **CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, that is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way a brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. The following is the Greenwich High School Protocol for Concussion Management:

- Step 1: Immediate Evaluation
- Step 2: Removal from Participation
- Step 3: Neurocognitive Testing
- Step 4: School / Activities Modified as Needed
- Step 5: Monitor Symptoms
- Step 6: Clearance / Progressive Return to Athletic Participation

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

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

### **STRENGTH AND FITNESS CENTER**

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