



Athletic Handbook



Lusk Albertson, PLC

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Introduction

The program of interscholastic athletics should provide students the opportunity to exercise and test their athletic abilities in a context greater and more varied than that which can be offered by a school or Jenison Public Schools (the District) alone. The program should foster the growth of school loyalty with the student body as a whole and stimulate community interest in athletics. Game activities and practice sessions should provide many opportunities to teach the values of competition and good sportsmanship.

The District believes that it is the purpose of an interscholastic program to provide the benefits of an athletic experience to as large a number of students as feasible within the District.

Since the primary purpose of the athletic program is to enhance the education of participating students as indicated in this policy, the District places top priority on student participation and the values of good sportsmanship, team play, and fair competition.

In accordance with Board Policy 2004, the District recognizes and adheres to the principle that participation in the District's athletic program is a privilege, not a right; participants are students first and athletes second. The District also recognizes that high school athletics holds a special place in the heart of the community. For that reason, the District's athletes' conduct is closely observed at all times and it is imperative all athletes act responsibly to reflect positively on themselves, their family, and the District.

This *Athletic Handbook* applies to all District students who try out for, participate in, or play for a District interscholastic team or club sport. All District students, including athletes, are also subject to the District's *Student Code of Conduct*, *Student Handbook*, Board of Education Policies and Administrative Regulations, and any other rules and/or regulations pertaining to District students.

Available High School & Junior High Sports

Please visit www.jpsonling.org to view an up-to-date listing of athletic participation opportunities.

Dual Sports

Generally, there is no right for an athlete to participate in more than one sport in a given season. For athletes who wish to participate in more than one sport in a single season, the following procedures must be followed:

- The coaches of both sports must consent to the athlete's dual participation;
- One of the sports must be a varsity level sport; and
- The athlete must designate one sport as his/her primary sport.

After completion of the above-mentioned process, a determination will be made regarding dual participation.

Equipment and Uniforms

Athletes are financially responsible for all school-issued equipment and uniforms and must reimburse the District for all destroyed, lost, or stolen items. Until such reimbursement is made, the athlete will be prohibited from:

- Participating in athletics during the next season;
- Receiving any season- or year-end athletics awards; and
- If applicable, participating in graduation.

School-issued warm-up clothing and/or jackets are to be worn for games and practices only and not as general clothing items at school. Similarly, game uniforms are to be worn only during games. School-issued uniform shirts and traveling suits may be worn to school on game days or as directed by the team coach. Athletes are prohibited from wearing any school-issued athletic clothing to school that does not comply with the District's dress code.

Transportation

The District will provide transportation for all athletic events unless the Athletic Director permits otherwise. To promote team camaraderie and the most efficient means of student supervision and safety, all athletes are expected and required to travel with their team to and from athletics events.

Travel Exceptions If an athlete is unable to travel with his/her team to or from an athletic event, the athlete must: (1) obtain written approval from the Athletic Director (or his/her designee) before the date of the athletic event to travel separately; (2) obtain signed permission from a parent/guardian to travel separately; and (3) return the parent's written permission (can be via email) to the Athletic Director. All travel exceptions must align with Board Policy 6008, Transportation and any corresponding administrative regulations.

Attendance

Athletes must be in attendance at school for at least half of the school day on the day of an athletic event or else risk being prohibited from participating in practice or contests. The following attendance-related rules and procedures apply to all athletes:

- Athletes suspended from regular classroom attendance for six class hours or longer on a given day, whether such suspension is in-school or out-of-school, are prohibited from participating in a same-day practice or athletic event.
- Athletes for whom the District's administrators determine absenteeism is a recurring issue may prohibit the athlete from participating in all District athletics.
- Any absence occurring on the day of an athletic event (half day maximum) must be excused in order for the athlete to participate in practice or contests.

Eligibility

The District follows the athlete eligibility requirements as promulgated by the Michigan High School Athletics Association (MHSAA). A link to the MHSAA website can be found [here](#). Any inconsistencies between this *Athletics Handbook* and the MHSAA eligibility requirements should be resolved in favor of the MHSAA eligibility requirements.

Academic Eligibility

Current High School Athletes.

- *Criteria I* – All athletes, including athletes participating in club sports, must maintain a 2.0 GPA during each 9-week marking period or they may become immediately ineligible to participate in any athletic practice or event. Athletes whose GPAs fall below 2.0 in the second and fourth 9-week marking period may use their current semester GPA instead. An athlete's eligibility may be reinstated using the following process:
 1. The athlete must meet with the Athletic Director to develop a Personal Eligibility Plan;
 2. The athlete must meet the requirements stated in the Personal Eligibility Plan; and
 3. The athlete must maintain the requirements set forth in the Personal Eligibility Plan for the duration of the sport season.
- *Criteria II – MHSAA Eligibility.* A student must pass 66% of his/her coursework (i.e., four out of six classes) each semester. If an athlete does not to pass 66% of his/her coursework, the athlete will be prohibited from participating in any sports the following semester.

Incoming 9th Grade Athletes. All athletes, including athletes participating in club sports, must have a 2.0 GPA in the fourth 9-week marking period or they may become immediately ineligible to participate in any athletic practice or event. Athletes whose GPAs fall below 2.0 in the fourth 9-week marking period may use their current semester GPA instead. An athlete's eligibility may be reinstated using the follow process:

1. The athlete must meet with the Athletic Director to develop a Personal Eligibility Plan;
2. The athlete must meet the requirements stated in the Personal Eligibility Plan; and
3. The athlete must maintain the requirements set forth in the Personal Eligibility Plan for the duration of the athletic season.

Physical Examinations and Screenings Athletes must undergo yearly physical examinations (on or after April 15) with a physician before they are permitted to participate in the District's athletic program. Each athlete must submit a completed physical form to the Athletic Department before trying out for a District sport. Physical forms and information can be found at: <https://jenison-mi.finalforms.com/>

Play Time

While the District's coaches and administrative personnel believe it is important to broaden the experience of its athletes, and that such broadening is enhanced by playing time, the District's athletic program also strives towards excellence. Therefore, playing time decisions are within the discretion of the team coaches and the District does not intend to establish rules or regulations related to minimum per game playing time or minimum number of interscholastic competitions for its athletes.

Team Fundraising

All team fundraising activities must be in accordance with Board of Education Policy 2004 and Administrative Regulation 2004-AR.

Discipline

Athletes are expected to behave in a manner that positively represents the District at all times, including while off school premises and during the summer. The Principal or his/her designee, or another school administrator, may suspend an athlete from participating in an athletic event when the athlete behaves in a manner that is detrimental to the image of the District.

Team Suspensions When an athlete is serving a suspension from participating in an athletic event, the athlete is still required to attend all team practices and, unless excused, must be present at all athletic events.

Subsequent or Concurrent Suspensions. If another suspension is imposed on an athlete while the athlete is already suspended, the consequences imposed for the second suspension will not be served until the consequences imposed for the first suspension have been fully served. If the consequences for a given offense are not served during the sports season they were incurred, the portion not served will be carried over to the next sport that the athlete has previously participated in at the high school level. All athletic-related suspensions or offenses will accumulate throughout an athlete's high school career.

Transfer Students. The District will uphold all suspensions imposed by a previous school district if an athlete enrolls in the District while suspended.

Prohibited Conduct

The Athletic Director has discretion in deciding whether an alleged infraction falls into one or more of the following categories of prohibited conduct. The Athletic Director may revise a suspension or other form of discipline imposed by the Principal or other administrator, upon appeal from the athlete, and in accordance with the appeals process, below.

Category I: Conduct Unbecoming an Athlete (Minor Infraction)

Definition. Conduct in or out of school that brings discredit to the athlete, his/her parents, the school, the District, or the team. Examples include, but are not limited to: classroom misconduct, use of social media in a derogatory manner towards other individuals or grounds, disrespect of authority, petty theft, fighting, profanity, abusing school property, etc.

Consequences.

- *First Violation.* Documented warning up to suspension from one athletic event. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must:
 1. Show remorse for his/her conduct; and
 2. Engage in a restorative practice to address/admit wrongdoing and apologize by addressing his/her coaches and teammates.
- *Second Violation.* Suspension from one athletic event up to suspension from 15% of all competitions for the present sport (applies to athletic clubs and teams). If the consequence imposed is 15% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must:
 1. Show remorse for his/her conduct;
 2. Address his/her coaches and teammates; and

3. Meet with a school counselor or other administrator to determine whether there are additional issues the athlete should address in his/her personal life.
- *Third Violation.* Suspension from 15%-25% of all interscholastic regular season dates for a given sport. If the consequence imposed is 25% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must:
 1. Show remorse for his/her conduct;
 2. Address his/her coaches and teammates; and
 3. Meet with a school counselor or other administrator to determine whether there are additional issues the athlete should address in his/her personal life.
 - *Fourth Violation.* Suspension from the athletics program for up to one calendar year, including practice and athletic events.

Category II: Conduct Unbecoming an Athlete (Major Infraction)

Definition. Conduct in and out of school that brings discredit to the athlete, his/her parents, the school, the District, or the team. All activity that is unlawful in nature, with the exception of substance abuse, falls into this category and includes, but is not limited to: theft, destruction of property, fighting which causes injury to others, vandalism, inappropriate use of the internet, hazing, harassment, and knowingly attending a gathering for an extended period of time where illegal substances are present. Please see the following definitions:

- *Inappropriate Use of Electronic Devices, Internet, Social Media.* Pictures or videos found online or distributed amongst students which show the athlete smoking a cigarette, electronic cigarette, vape, or any other product that stimulates smoking tobacco and/or marijuana; holding an alcohol container, regardless of whether the container is full, empty, or contains something other than alcohol; consuming illegal drugs or holding drug paraphernalia, even in jest; or engaged in any other inappropriate act.
- *Hazing.* Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation in or affiliation with an athletic team. All students subjected to hazing activities will be presumed to not have consented to the activities, even if they willingly participated. The District prohibits all forms of initiation, harassment, hazing, or any other similar activity. No student, athlete, coach, volunteer, or other District employee will plan, direct, encourage, assist, or engage in any hazing activity. Suspected acts of hazing should be reported to the coach, Athletic Director, Principal, or other school administrator.
- *Harassment.* Harassment includes, but is not limited to slurs, jokes, gestures, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to any individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, genetic information, sex, national origin, age, or disability. The District prohibits all forms of harassment.

Consequences.

- *First Violation.* Suspension from one athletic event up to suspension from 25% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport. If the consequence imposed is 25% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates.

- *Second Violation.* Suspension from 25%-50% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must provide written evidence that s/he received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist.
- *Third Violation.* Suspension from 50% of all athletics for up to one calendar year (this may span more than one athletic season), including practices and competitions. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete:
 1. Should be referred for assessment by a community agency or professional individual outside the District and provide documentation of participation/completion; and
 2. If the athlete participates in a treatment program, s/he may be permitted to return to the athletics program after at least six weeks from the date treatment began, upon certification from the treatment center that the student has been in active treatment for at least six weeks.
- *Fourth Violation.* Suspension from all athletics for up to the remainder of the athlete's high school career.

Category III: Alcohol, Marijuana, and Tobacco Use All athletes must maintain a high degree of physical fitness and alertness to perform at their optimal capacities. Thus, the use of illicit substances, in any form, whether legal or illegal, is strictly forbidden. Specifically, this means no alcohol consumption all year or knowingly attending a gathering for an extended period of time where illegal substances are present.

Drug-Free Status Requirement. Athletes must adhere to a drug-free status, including being free of alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco, year round, in and out of season, and on and off the field.

Educational Component for Substance Abuse Violations. As a pivotal part of the District's consequences for substance abuse violations, athletes will be required to complete on their own, an educational program. Evidence of completion must be provided.

Consequences.

- *First Violation.* Suspension from one athletic event up to suspension from 30% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport. If the consequence imposed is 30% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must:
 1. Complete the required *Educational Component for Substance Abuse Violations* on p. 9;
 2. Show remorse for violating the *Student Code of Conduct*; and
 3. Address his/her coaches and teammates
- *Second Violation.* Suspension from one athletic event up to suspension from 50% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport. If the consequence imposed is 50% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must provide written evidence that s/he has received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist.

- *Third Violation.* Suspension from 50% of all athletics up to one calendar year or any part thereof, including practices and competition. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete:
 1. Should be referred for assessment by a community agency or professional individual outside the District; and
 2. If the athlete participates in a treatment program, s/he may be permitted to return to the athletics program after at least eight weeks from the date treatment began, upon certification from the treatment center that the student has been in active treatment for at least eight weeks.
- *Fourth Violation.* May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Category IV: Street/Illicit Drugs (Illegal Drugs)

Description. Athlete use or possession of illicit drugs is strictly prohibited at all times. The associated nature of consequences for such violations will be more severe than other violations as they constitute a greater degree of danger and potential legal action.

Performance-Enhancing Drugs/Supplements. In accordance with Board of Education Policy 2007, athletes are prohibited from using or being in the possession of any performance-enhancing substances, including, but not limited to, those that may be listed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the Michigan High School Athletic Association, or the Michigan Department of Community Health. Examples include anabolic steroids, diuretics, and peptide hormones and analogues (HCG, ACTH and HGH).

The use of prohormones and hormone precursors also involves significant health consequences for young athletes and may cause users to test positive for anabolic steroids. Due to the long-term unknown health consequences of such supplements, athletes are prohibited from using prohormones or hormone precursors

Consequences.

- *First Violation:* Suspension from one athletic event up to suspension from 40% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport. If the consequence imposed is 40% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must:
 1. Show remorse for violating the *Student Code of Conduct*;
 2. Address his/her coaches and teammates; and
 3. At the athlete's expense, undergo a drug test that shows the absence of drugs in the athlete's system.
- *Second Violation.* Suspension from one athletic event up to suspension from 60% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport. If the consequence imposed is 60% of all interscholastic regular season dates for the present sport, that percentage will account for the remaining regular season dates. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete must:
 1. Show written evidence that s/he has received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a school counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist, or psychologist;
 2. Address his/her coaches and teammates;

3. Show remorse for violating the *Student Code of Conduct*; and
 4. At the athlete's expense, undergo a drug test that shows the absence of drugs in the athlete's system.
- *Third Violation.* Suspension from 60% of all athletics up to one calendar year or any part thereof, including practices and competition. In order to return to the athletics program, the athlete:
 1. Should be referred for assessment by a community agency or professional individual outside the District;
 2. If the athlete participates in a treatment program, s/he may be permitted to return to the athletics program after at least eight weeks from the date treatment began, upon certification from the treatment center that the student has been in active treatment for at least eight weeks;
 3. Show remorse for violating the *Student Code of Conduct*;
 4. Address his/her coaches and teammates;
 5. Re-sign the *Student Code of Conduct* in front of teammates and team coaches; and
 6. At the athlete's expense, undergo a drug test that shows the absence of drugs in the athlete's system.
 - *Fourth Violation.* May bring a suspension from all athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

Procedures for Reporting Violations and Rule Enforcement A signed, written report of the alleged violation must be submitted to the Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director, Principal, Assistant Principal, Police Liaison Officer, or the team coach. The school administration will convene a meeting with the athlete to determine whether a violation occurred. During the meeting, the athlete will be provided verbal notice of the reported violation. If necessary, appropriate personnel will interview any students or other persons who may be aware of additional facts supporting or defending against the reported violation. The Athletic Director will attempt to notify the athlete's parents, verbally and in writing, concerning the reported violation and the potential consequences.

Within five days of the meeting with the athlete or end of the investigation, the athlete will be notified verbally and his/her parents will be notified in writing of the District's decision. If applicable, the Athletic Director will assist the athlete in contacting the school counseling department for substance abuse counseling.

Appeals

Declaration of Appeal. If the parents believe equity has not been served with respect to their child, they may submit a written appeal of the discipline decision to the Athletic Director within three school days of verbal or written confirmation that disciplinary action will be taken. Appeals submitted after this three day window will be denied.

Informal Discussion/Meeting. Upon receipt of the written appeal, the Athletic Director will schedule an informal discussion between the athlete's parents and the District personnel who made the disciplinary decision, to determine if the issue can be resolved. The Athletic Director will be present at the meeting.

Formal Appeal. If an agreement cannot be reached informally, the Athletic Director, or his/her designee, will submit the appeal to the chairperson of the Athletic Appeals Board. The Athletic Appeals Board

(appointed by the Principal and Athletic Director) will be comprised of: (1) one female coach; (2) one male coach; and (3) an administrator not involved in the disciplinary decision.

Formal Hearing. When possible, a hearing will be held within seven days (or as soon as possible thereafter) of the Athletic Appeals Board's receipt of the appeal. The athlete or his/her parents and the District personnel who made the disciplinary decision will attend and present their arguments to the Athletic Appeals Board. The Athletic Appeals Board will meet in private to discuss the matter. Within three days of the hearing, the Athletic Appeals Board will submit their decision, in writing, to all parties.

While an appeal is pending, the athlete is prohibited from participating in interscholastic competitions or other athletic events. If the appeal concerns a post-season tournament, the appeal must be submitted within one day before the tournament begins. All levels of appeals, as applicable, will be heard before the tournament begins when possible.

Additional Rules and Regulations

Each coach may establish and submit, for approval by the Athletic Director, his/her own rules and regulations as they pertain to his/her sport. No team rule may impose a greater consequence than the consequences discussed in this Handbook. All team rules must be in writing, clearly communicated to each athlete and his/her parents at the beginning of the season, and available for review. Coaches have the right to dismiss athletes from the team whose conduct is detrimental to the management, image, safety, health, or well-being of team. All disciplinary decisions made by coaches are subject to the appeal process contained in this *Athletic Handbook*.

Student Activities Conflict Guide

Many of the District's students participate in more than one activity in a given season. Administrators, teachers, coaches, athletes, and activity sponsors will work together to help avoid conflicts, when possible, and resolve conflicts when they occur. These guidelines are intended to address school-related scheduling conflicts and are not intended to apply to family or personal scheduling conflicts.

Communication Teachers, coaches, and activity sponsors will review event dates with their students to ensure conflicts are identified as early as possible. Students are responsible for informing their teachers, coaches, and activity sponsors of conflicts as soon as possible and no later than two weeks (10 school days) prior to the conflict date. Students who fail to alert their teachers, coaches, and activity sponsors to conflicts at least two weeks prior to the date of the conflict may be disciplined as deemed appropriate by the student's teachers, coaches, or activity sponsors for the event missed. Teachers, coaches, and activity sponsors will first attempt to assist the student in resolving the conflict without discipline by employing one of the following solutions:

- **Performance/Interscholastic Competition vs. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Activity.** A performance or interscholastic competition takes precedence over a practice, rehearsal, or other optional activity. When possible, students should be allowed to leave the performance or interscholastic competition to attend the other event once their responsibility in the former is complete.
- **Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Activity vs. Practice/Rehearsal/Optional Activity.** Teachers, coaches, and activity sponsors should make every attempt to devise a schedule so a student can participate in both events. *The Athletic Office strongly recommends athletes do not donate blood at the NHS Blood Drive on days in which an athletic event is scheduled.*
- **Scheduled Activity vs. Rescheduled/New Activity.** Activities included on the spring calendar take precedence over activities that were rescheduled or added at a later date, except when an activity is rescheduled due to a conflict to a date in which no conflict exists, and another activity

causing a conflict is also added to that date. In such cases, the rescheduled event takes precedence.

- **Performance/Interscholastic Competition vs. Performance/Interscholastic Competition.** In the event that one performance or interscholastic competition conflicts with another, teachers, coaches, and/or activity sponsors will work with parents to amicably resolve the conflict. If an amicable resolution cannot be reached, the conflict will be mediated and resolved by the Principal or his/her designee.
- **District/Regional/State/National Activity vs. "Regular" Activity.** A district, regional, state, or national performance or athletic activity takes precedence over a regular school practice, rehearsal, performance, or interscholastic competition. These types of conflicts are sometimes unavoidable due to tournament scheduling, draws, and/or continued success by a team or activity. To ensure the best chance for continued success by a team or activity, the district, regional, state, or national performance or athletic activity will take precedence over other school related activities even though the other activity may have been scheduled first.