



O L E N T A N G Y | L O C A L S C H O O L S

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

FOR

ATHLETES, PARENTS, AND COACHES

Sixth Adoption Date: June 22, 2011
Fifth Adoption Date: June 29, 2010
Fourth Adoption Date: June 9, 2009
Third Adoption Date: June 30, 2008
Second Adoption Date: June 10, 2007
Adoption Date: April 4, 2006

A MESSAGE FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

This handbook is being presented to you because your son or daughter desires to participate in interscholastic athletics at Olentangy Local Schools. You have also expressed your willingness to permit him or her to compete. Your family's interest in this phase of our school program is gratifying. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that assist students in personal growth and development.

The Olentangy Local School District is interested in the development of young men and women through athletics. We feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each student's educational maturity.

Likewise, we believe that you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations as a parents or guardians of an athlete. We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the Athletic Department to make rules governing interscholastic competition. These rules need broad based community support to be fully effective. This is achieved only through communication between the Athletic Department and the parents or guardians of our athletes. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic handbook for students, parents and coaches.

Yours in scholarship, sportsmanship and success,

Athletic Directors

Tom Gerhardt: Hyatts Middle School, Liberty High School, and Liberty Middle School

Tony Milano: Berkshire Middle School (Boys Sports), Orange High School, and Orange Middle School

Jay Wolfe: Berkshire Middle School (Girls Sports), Olentangy High School, and Shanahan Middle School

Olentangy Local Schools Athletic Handbook

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STATEMENT OF OLENTANGY LOCAL SCHOOLS ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

The Olentangy Local School District's athletic program should provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life in a democratic society.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Board of Education policies, rules and regulations. The board discourages any and all pressures that might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health. The athletic program must at all times be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

If an unusual or extreme circumstance warrants it, exception to athletic policies may be made at the discretion of the superintendent of schools. The superintendent may only make an exception within the applicable regulations of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and the statutes of the State of Ohio.

ATHLETIC GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: The student shall become a more effective citizen in a democratic society.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To learn teamwork – To work with others in a democratic society, an individual must develop self-discipline, respect for authority and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. Athletes must place the team and its objectives higher than personal desires.
- 2) To have fun – the main reason people participate in sports and games
- 3) To be successful – Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication. Develop a desire to excel.
- 4) Sportsmanship – To accept success and defeat like a true sportsman, knowing you have done your best. We must learn to treat others as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
- 5) To improve – Continual improvement is essential to good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and constantly try to reach that goal. Try to better yourself in the skills involved and in those characteristics set forth as being desirable.
- 6) Enjoy athletics – It is necessary to acknowledge all of the personal rewards we derive from athletics and to give sufficiently of ourselves in order to preserve and improve the program.
- 7) To develop desirable personal health habits – To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits and to develop a desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN OLENTANGY ATHLETE

Being a member of an Olentangy athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight. It takes the hard work of many people over the years. As a member of an interscholastic squad, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our school and our community. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. Over many years our squads have achieved numerous league and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and won all-conference and all-state honors.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear your school colors, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but also are willing to assume the responsibilities that go along with them. However, your contributions should be personally satisfying to you.

- **Responsibilities to Yourself** - The more important of these responsibilities is to broaden yourself and develop strength and character. You owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your school experiences. Your studies and your participation in other extra-curricular activities, as well as in sports, prepare you for life as an adult.
- **Responsibilities to Your School** - Another responsibility you assume as a team member is to your school. Olentangy Local Schools cannot maintain its position of having outstanding programs unless you do your best in the activities in which you participate. You should participate in athletics to the best of your ability; you are contributing to the reputation of your school.

You assume a leadership role when you are on an athletic squad. The student body and citizens of the community know you and will judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Make Olentangy proud of you and your community proud of your school by your faithful exemplification of these ideals.

- **Responsibilities to Others** - As a team member, you also bear a heavy responsibility to your home. You should always strive to make your family proud. You must measure up to all of the training rules. You should practice and play to the best of your ability every day.

The younger students in the Olentangy district are watching you. They will copy you in many ways. Set good examples for these students.

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SPORTSMANSHIP PHILOSOPHY AND GUIDELINES

The Olentangy Local Schools Athletic Department believes that interscholastic competition involving member schools of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) should be governed by the basic principles of good sportsmanship. This document has been prepared to insure that all participants have a common understanding of those basic principles.

We believe that participation is as important as winning. We believe that students should be coached to play to the best of their ability and to understand that to play well is to play honorably. The promotion of sportsmanship is the obligation of all school personnel (principals, athletic directors and coaches) and is directed to the behavior of spectators, coaches and players. An additional component to consider is coaches' ethics. We believe the development of good sportsmanship through the practice of ethical behavior and moral reasoning is one of the acknowledged objectives of interscholastic athletics. We, therefore, expect school administrators, coaches, athletes, cheerleaders and spectators to know and embrace the following fundamentals of sportsmanship:

- 1) Respect should be demonstrated for athletic opponents and for their school at all times. Olentangy should treat visiting teams and their supporters as guests and accord them the consideration everyone deserves. Visiting schools should respect the property and dignity of their host school and its athletic teams.
- 2) Respect should be demonstrated for the officials at all times. As impartial arbiters who are trained to do their jobs to the best of their ability, officials should be given respect and an attitude of good sportsmanship regardless of the outcome of the contest.
- 3) Knowledge of and a proper respect for the current rules of the contest should guide the behavior of all participants. Rules are essential for a fair contest. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the rules.
- 4) All participants should strive to maintain self-control at all times. The desire to win cannot be accepted as a reason for irrational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained by all if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized.
- 5) All participants should learn to recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of school affiliation. Recognition of the good performance of an opponent is a demonstration of generosity and good will that is encouraged in all member schools. In order for good sportsmanship to prevail, it is essential that all participants understand their individual responsibilities and expected modes of behavior before, during and after contests.

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Cheerleaders: Cheerleaders are representatives of the student body. By setting a good example, cheerleaders can influence and control the actions of the student spectators. They should embrace the following behaviors:

- 1) Establish standards of desirable behavior in keeping with the fundamentals of good sportsmanship for the cheerleaders and pep club.
- 2) Use positive cheers which encourage their own team without demeaning their opponents.
- 3) Use discretion in deciding when to cheer and which cheers to use. Give encouragement to injured players on both sides.
- 4) Never attempt to distract opposing players or in any way to interfere with their performance.
- 5) Serve as hosts for visiting cheerleaders.
- 6) **Cheerleaders must follow team rules established by coaches as well as the *Code of Conduct*.**

Cheerleaders are to refrain from the following inappropriate behaviors:

- 1) Taunting officials, opponents or spectators
- 2) Use of profanity
- 3) Damage/destruction of school property
- 4) Theft of school or personal property

Disciplinary actions include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Benching of participant | 5) Conference/hearing with school official |
| 2) Removal from contest | 6) Violations of the <i>Code of Conduct</i> may result in school discipline. |
| 3) Suspension of a portion of the season | |
| 4) Restitution | |

Players: Because players are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of spectators. It is important that athletes embrace the following behaviors:

- 1) Treat opponents with the respect that is due them as guests and as fellow human beings.
- 2) Shake hands with opponents and wish them a good game when appropriate.
- 3) Exercise self-control at all times, accepting the judgment of the officials as just that, the best judgment they could make given what they know and see. Never argue or make gestures indicating lack of respect for the officials' judgment.
- 4) Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion. Congratulate opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.
- 5) Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing the school and community.
- 6) Players must follow team rules established by coaches as well as the ***Code of Conduct***.

Players are to refrain from the following inappropriate behaviors:

- 1) Taunting officials, opponents or spectators
- 2) Violation of bench rule: If an athlete leaves the bench area and is involved in an altercation on the playing field/area, the athlete will be suspended for two contests. The suspension should include non-conference and tournament games and should carry over into the next sports season if it occurs at the end of a sports season. **If an athlete leaves the bench area and is involved in an altercation in the stands, the athlete will be suspended from contests for one calendar year.**

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- 3) Use of profanity
- 4) Damage/destruction of school property
- 5) Theft of school or personal property

Disciplinary actions include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) Benching of participant | 5) Conference/hearing with school official |
| 2) Removal from contest | 6) Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in school discipline |
| 3) Suspension for a portion of the season | |
| 4) Restitution | |

Spectators: Spectators, by their behaviors and reactions, play an important role in their school's reputation for sportsmanship. Spectators should be reminded and should keep in mind that athletes are friendly rivals as members of opposing amateur teams. They are expected to be treated as such. Spectators should be reminded, too, that the contest should be between the teams engaged in the competition and not between their supporters. It is important that all spectators embrace the following:

- 1) Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
- 2) Respect, cooperate and respond enthusiastically to the cheerleaders, coaches and athletes of all teams.
- 3) Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is inappropriate.
- 4) Be positive toward players and coaches regardless of the outcome of the contest.
- 5) Respect the judgment and the professionalism of the officials and coaches.

Spectators are to refrain from inappropriate behaviors:

- 1) Verbal/physical abuse of officials and coaches.
- 2) Berating players, coaches or other spectators through chants, signs and/or cheers.
- 3) Interruption of contest by behaviors such as throwing objects on the playing area, entering the playing area and/or disruptive behavior.

Disciplinary actions include:

- 1) Removal from contest
- 2) Conference/hearing with school officials
- 3) Removal from future athletic contests
- 4) Violations of the **Code of Conduct** may result in school discipline.
- 5) Entering the playing area may result in a suspension from all athletic contests for one calendar year from the event.

Student Managers/Statisticians/Trainers: These individuals are considered participants of the sporting event and should follow the same guidelines as players and cheerleaders for their sport.

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Ejection of Players/Cheerleaders/Student Managers/Student Trainers from Athletic Contests

By adoption of the OHSAA, any student ejected from an interscholastic contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or a flagrant foul shall be ineligible for contests for the remainder of that day as well as for all contests in that sport until two (2) regular season/tournament contests are played at the same level as the ejection (one contest in football). If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the next sport in which the student/athlete participates. A student under suspension may not sit on the team bench, enter the locker room or be affiliated with the team in any way traveling to, during or traveling after the contest(s).

A student who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A student who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time in the season during the last contest shall be ineligible for a period of time/number of contests subject to the discretion of the commissioner. The period of ineligibility shall commence during the next sport in which the student participates.

It is the responsibility of the local school authorities to ensure that this regulation is enforced. When an ineligible player is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the commissioner as specified in the OHSAA Tournament Regulations. In accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

Olentangy Local Schools believe that each participant should be committed to upholding the ideals of good sportsmanship put forth in this document. It is in this spirit that the suggested disciplinary actions are proposed. Olentangy Local Schools also recognizes the importance of communication and cooperation between school officials when incidents of inappropriate behavior arise.

Coaches: The coaches bear the greatest responsibility for the development of sportsmanship as they have the greatest influence on the attitudes and behaviors of players, the student body and the community. Coaches must value sportsmanship and teach it through their words and through example. Therefore, coaches should embrace the following appropriate behavior:

- 1) Shall establish team rules beyond the **Code of Conduct**
- 2) Teach the value of conforming to the rules
- 3) Instill team discipline and sportsmanship with appropriate consequences for team members who display inappropriate behavior
- 4) Instruct their players in the fundamentals of sportsmanship
- 5) Respect the officials' judgment and interpretation of the rules
- 6) Demonstrate publicly the ideals of good sportsmanship by such acts as shaking hands with officials before contests and with opposing coaches before and after contests

Coaches are to refrain from the following inappropriate behaviors:

- 1) Use of profanity
- 2) Ejection from contest
- 3) Berating officials or players
- 4) Inciting spectators/players to inappropriate behavior

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Ejection of Coaches from Athletic Contests

By adoption of the OHSAA, any coach ejected from an interscholastic contest for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be suspended from coaching in contests for the remainder of that day as well as for all contests in that sport until two (2) regular season/tournament contests are played (one contest in football). If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the season, the coach shall be ineligible for the same period of time as stated above in the same sport during the following season in the next school year.

A coach who has been suspended from coaching may attend the contest, but must be seated in the spectator area and may not give instructions to the players or to the individual who has been assigned to coach the team any time prior to or during the contest, including half-time or any intermission. A suspended coach shall not travel with the squad to an away contest.

A coach who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time shall be suspended indefinitely and required to attend a mandatory conference with the commissioner at the OHSAA headquarters. The principal of the school shall be required to attend this conference as well. Any penalty shall be determined in accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 12.

This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests and shall in no way limit the discretionary authority of the commissioner as specified in the OHSAA Tournament Regulations. In accordance with OHSAA Bylaw 8-3-1, the decisions of contest officials are final.

Procedure to Resolve Parent/Coach Disagreements

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole, a Board member as an individual, the Superintendent, Principal or other administrator, it will be referred to the appropriate building administrator. A coach who is the object of a complaint will be informed promptly.

A. Step No. 1 - Direct Conversation

If a parent or community member (complainant) has a disagreement or misunderstanding with a coach, the complainant should address the concern to the specific coach directly involved with the circumstances surrounding the concern. The coach will meet with the parent as soon as possible, but in no case longer than five calendar days after the coach has been notified of the concern (subject to change by mutual agreement).

B. Step No. 2 - Fact and Possible Resolution

If the complainant or the coach is not satisfied with the outcome of Step No. 1, or the complainant or coach is unwilling to meet independent of an administrator, a meeting with the coach, appropriate administrator and complainant will be arranged at a mutually convenient time, but in no case more than five calendar days after the meeting in Step No. 1. This step is to be informal and verbal. No further action will be taken beyond Step No. 2 unless the complainant submits in writing a signed and dated statement of facts giving rise to this concern, the name of the coach involved and the remedy sought.

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C. Step No. 3 - Formal Process

If a complainant's concern is not satisfactorily resolved at either the first or second level, the complainant should then refer this concern to the superintendent or superintendent designee in writing. At that time another meeting will be arranged at the convenience of the complainant and coach directly concerned, but in no case more than ten calendar days (subject to change by mutual agreement). The coach has the right to be at all meetings with or without a representative as he/she so determines.

D. Dispositions

Dispositions at Step 3 will be sent in writing to all parties within ten calendar days of the meeting with reasons stated.

E. Decision

The decision of the superintendent or superintendent designee is final.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

CITIZENSHIP POLICY

All athletes shall abide by a **Code of Conduct** that will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct such as, but not limited to, theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the school and will not be tolerated.

CONDUCT OF ATHLETE

- 1) The conduct of an athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that your behavior be above reproach in all of the following areas:
- 2) **In the classroom** - Strong academics reinforce strong athletics. As an athlete, you must plan your schedule so that you give sufficient time and energy to your studies.
- 3) In addition to maintaining strong academics, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty at all times.
- 4) **On the field** - In the area of athletic competition, a true athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics and understands that losing is part of the game. You should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well-played game after the contest, whether in defeat or victory.

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Disciplinary Procedures

School discipline referral - Any student referred to the office for a rules violation may be denied the privilege of participation in all athletic activities for a period determined by either the principal, athletic director or head coach.

When school personnel learn that a student has violated or is suspected to have violated any rule, the athletic director, principal or principal's designee shall be notified immediately. The investigation shall be initiated within 72 hours of notification.

The student may be temporarily removed from an athletic contest and/or practice by the principal or principal's designee, athletic director, coach or faculty manager responsible for supervision of that activity.

Violations shall be determined based on the totality of all reasonable available evidence. The building principal or principal's designee shall have the authority to hear testimony, receive sworn statements and evidence and take any other reasonable actions necessary to reach a decision.

The building principal or principal's designee will inform the student and attempt to inform parents of the disciplinary action.

Due Process Rights

When a student is being considered for a suspension from a team by the principal, athletic director, coach, or other administrator:

- 1) The student will be informed in writing of the potential suspension and the reasons for the proposed action.
- 2) The student will be afforded an opportunity for an informal hearing to challenge the reason for the intended suspension and to explain his/her actions.
- 3) An attempt will be made to notify parents or guardians by telephone if a suspension is issued.

Right to Appeal a Suspension from a Team

Suspensions may be appealed to the appropriate chain of command: coach, athletic director, building principal, then superintendent or superintendent designee.

During an appeal, the student may practice but **may not participate** in any official activity pending the outcome of the hearing conducted by the superintendent or superintendent's designee. The decision is final.

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ATHLETIC DRUG, ALCOHOL and TOBACCO POLICY

Principles and Philosophies

The policy is designed to help students and parents cope with drug, alcohol and tobacco use. Therefore, the policy is in place to provide guidelines for each student/family to receive assistance as needed.

- Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Students are in a highly visible setting of leadership and/or competition/performance. Therefore, students will be held to a higher accountability of conduct and behavior than the student who chooses neither to participate nor to represent Olentangy Schools.
- The responsibility of an athlete to his/her fellow athletes is a year-round commitment and does not end with the season. Therefore, this policy is in effect for all four years of a student's high school career or all years of a student's middle school career and is enforced all twelve months of the year.

The expectations and consequences are in effect and ***will be enforced for twelve (12) months of the year*** and may carry over to the next season of participation. Consequences will be cumulative during middle school years and then high school years. (High school begins the day after completion of the middle school year.)

Definitions

- **Assessment & Follow-Up Program** – A program operated by a certified chemical dependency counselor or at agency by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services or a licensed physician trained in chemical dependency
- **Athletic Director** - The individual hired by the school or district to oversee all athletic programs of the school or district
- **Athletic Year** – Beginning July 1st of upcoming year and continuing for 365 days thereafter
- **Banned Substance** - A substance defined by school policy as being banned from use by students
- **Code of Conduct** – Anything in this handbook
- **Controlled Substance** – A drug, compound, mixture, preparation or substance included in Schedule I, II, III, IV or V established pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code
- **Counterfeit or Look-Alike Drug** – Any drug that bears or whose container or label bears a trademark, trade name or other identifying mark used without authorization of the owner or rights to such trademark, trade name or identifying mark
 - any unmarked or unlabeled substance that is represented to be a controlled substance/mood-altering chemical, manufactured, possessed, packed or distributed by a person other than the person that manufactured, processed, packed or distributed it
 - any substance that is represented to be a controlled substance/mood-altering chemical, but is not a controlled substance/mood-altering chemical or is a different controlled substance/mood-altering chemical
 - any substance other than a controlled substance/mood-altering chemical that a

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reasonable person would believe to be a controlled substance/mood-altering chemical because of its similarity in shape, size and color or its markings, labeling, packaging, distribution or the price for which it is sold or offered for sale

- **High School Career** – The day after completion of middle school, through graduation
- **Illicit Substance** - A drug classified by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as being available only by prescription from a physician or classified as being controlled and having no therapeutic use
- **Mood-Altering Chemicals** – Includes, without limitation, narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, counterfeit drugs, marijuana, alcohol and any common substance such as “*Wite Out*”, glue, gasoline, etc. used for its mood-altering affect- prescription drugs are included in this unless authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed physician and kept in the original container. This container shall state the student’s name and the directions for proper use.
- **Possession** – Having control over an event (such as a party) or substance. This may not be inferred solely from mere access to the thing or substance
- **Paraphernalia** – Spoons or kits and any other items normally or actually used for the packaging, conveyance, dispensation or use of drugs will not be permitted on any school property or vehicle and will be subject to confiscation. Possession of drug paraphernalia will be treated the same as possession of a controlled substance
- **Student Athlete** - A qualified student participating on a sanctioned athletic team as defined by the State Athletic Association-this may include cheerleaders as well
- **Tobacco** – All types of tobacco products, including smokeless products
- **Trafficking** – Sell, offer to sell, distribute, possess with intent to distribute, cultivate, manufacture or otherwise engage in any part of the production of a controlled substance

POSSESSION/USE OF ALCOHOL, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES/MOOD-ALTERING CHEMICALS and TOBACCO

A. First Offense

- 1) Loss of any leadership position in athletic activities for the remainder of the school year. Future leadership positions are at the discretion of the head coach.
- 2) A letter shall be put in the athlete's file that advises the athlete of the violation and informs the athlete of the consequences of further violations. A copy of this letter will be mailed to the parent or guardian.
- 3) The athlete will be denied the privilege of participating on the team for twenty-five percent (25%) of the total contests in which the team engages for the entire season. (Twenty-five percent of a ten-game schedule is three games.) Participation denotes competing in events against outside competition at all levels (varsity, junior varsity, freshman and middle school levels), including dressing for contests. The athlete may practice with the team and shall attend (out of uniform) all contests for which he or she is suspended.

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- 4) For infractions involving alcohol and controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals, the denial period may be reduced to ten percent (10%) of the scheduled contests if the athlete participates in an assessment and follow-up program. The student must set an appointment for assessment within five days of notification of the violation. The student/athlete must participate in the evaluation process to its completion and follow the counselor's recommendations. The student/athlete must waive his/her rights of confidentiality so that a written report can be prepared. The counselor must provide verification of this evaluation to the building principal or principal's designee. Any cost for the assessment and follow-up program will be the responsibility of the athlete. The principal may reinstate the athlete upon evidence of beginning an assessment and follow-up program. The principal's designee will monitor the progress of the assessment program and report to the principal any failure to comply.
 - 5) For infractions involving tobacco, the denial of privilege may be reduced to 10% of the scheduled contests if the athlete participates in a tobacco intervention/education program. The principal/designee may reinstate the athlete upon evidence of participation in a tobacco intervention/education program.
 - 6) The denial of the privilege to compete will begin with the last contest in which the athlete has been eligible to compete or the date on which a violation of the substance abuse policy has been determined.
- B. **Second Offense** will result in denial of the privilege to participate in athletics for one calendar year from the date of suspension.
- C. **Third Offense** will result in denial of participation in athletics for the remainder of the student's middle school or high school career.

NOTE: Students who in any way aid another student in violations involving possession/use of alcohol, controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals and tobacco will be disciplined as if he or she were the principal offender.

**SELLING/ATTEMPTING TO SELL ALCOHOL - TRAFFICKING IN CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES/
MOOD - ALTERING CHEMICALS**

- A. **First Offense**
- 1) A letter shall be put in the athlete's file that advises the athlete of the violation and informs the athlete of the consequences of further violations. A copy of this letter will be mailed to the parent or guardian.
 - 2) Dismissal from all athletics for one calendar year from the date of suspension.
 - 3) Information collected related to trafficking may be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- B. **Any Additional Offense** will result in denial of participation in athletics for the remainder of the student's high school career.

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- C. Students who in any way aid another student in violations involving selling/attempting to sell alcohol, trafficking in controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals will be disciplined as if he or she were the principal offender.

Voluntary Referral Opportunity

Voluntary referral must occur prior to any report of violations. Involvement by law enforcement officials negates the option of voluntary referral. The student may use the option of voluntary referral once in his/her athletic or academic career at Olentangy Local Schools.

Students have the opportunity for a voluntary referral procedure to seek information, guidance, counseling and/or assessment in regard to the use or possession of tobacco, alcohol and other controlled or non-controlled substances. Voluntary referrals may be made by the student or his/her immediate family. Voluntary referrals will not carry violation consequences on the first offense only.

Any subsequent violations will be enforced accordingly. If the student requesting the voluntary referral opportunity does not complete the assessment recommendations by the established time schedule, the violation consequence will be put into effect immediately.

For an alcohol and/or controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals referral, the student must have, within five (5) days, an appointment for an assessment with a chemical dependency counselor and notify the principal or designee of the appointment. The student must participate in the assessment process (the cost of any and all assessment will be the responsibility of the student and/or parents) and follow the counselor's recommendations to completion. If treatment or counseling is recommended it must be with an Ohio-certified chemical dependency counselor. The student must waive his/her rights of confidentiality so that verification of this assessment and a written report can be given to the principal or designee. The student will also attend an out-of-school education program approved by the school principal or designee. Confirmation of the attendance must be made to the school designee. It is the responsibility of the student and his or her parents to keep the school designee apprised of the student's progress throughout this entire process.

For a tobacco referral, the student must within five (5) days provide verification of enrollment in an out-of-school tobacco education/cessation program approved by the principal or designee. Parents must sign a release of information to the school designee so that the student's progress in the program can be followed and written verification of completion given to the designee. The student must complete the program or receive the original discipline.

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ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

In order that local eligibility standards reflect a greater emphasis on classroom achievements and with participation in athletics viewed as a privilege, the following are the Olentangy Local School District policies for athletic eligibility for grades 7-12:

Students Enrolled in Grades 9-12

- 1) A student's eligibility will be determined according to his/her GPA (grade point average) for the immediately preceding nine week grading period. Semester and final exams are not to be calculated in the nine week GPA assessment because of the comprehensive nature of exams. A student's eligibility will be determined by examining each student's nine week grade independent of prior grading periods. Students must maintain a quarterly GPA of at least 1.5 (based on a 4.0 scale).
- 2) In the grading period immediately preceding, a student must receive a passing grade in a minimum of five (5) one-credit courses or the equivalent, which count toward graduation.
- 3) Incoming freshmen must be passing a minimum of five courses taken during the final grading period of their eighth grade year to be eligible and have a GPA of 1.5 for the fourth quarter. A student may apply for a one-time GPA waiver to be used during his or her freshman year. The passage of five (5) one-credit courses must be met, per OHSAA regulations, in order to make application. Application to the athletic director may occur after the 4th quarter of the 8th grade through the 3rd quarter of the freshman year.
- 4) A grade of "incomplete" will be considered a failing grade until work is completed per O.H.S.A.A By-law 441, exception 3.
- 5) Summer School and other educational options may NOT be used to substitute for failure to meet the academic standards during the last grading period of the school year.
- 6) A student enrolled in credit flex courses must, at the conclusion of the high school's grading periods, be "passing" their credit flex course in order for this course to be counted toward the five-one credit (or equivalent) courses used to establish athletic eligibility.
- 7) The NCAA does not allow "credit by exam" courses to be applied to core course eligibility requirements.
- 8) Students who are being home-schooled and who desire to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities must fulfill the requirements as established by the Olentangy School District related to eligibility, attendance, enrollment, and participation guidelines (please refer to policy 2431.03).

Students Enrolled in Grades 7-8

- 1) In order to participate in an interscholastic sport or to cheerlead, a student must be passing five courses and have a minimum 1.5 GPA. Eligibility audits will be conducted in conjunction with progress reports mid-way through the quarter and at the end of each grading period. Individuals with more than one failing grade or a combined GPA of less than 1.5 (based on a 4.0 scale) at the mid-quarter check will be ineligible for one week. At the end of that one-week period, grades will be reevaluated. If the grades have improved, the student is no longer failing more than one class and has at least a 1.5 GPA, he or she will be declared eligible again. If the grades are still below minimum standards (failing more than one class or GPA below 1.5), he or she will remain ineligible for the next week.

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- 2) A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of five of all subjects carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.
- 3) A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of the previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during that grading period in a minimum of five of those subjects in which the student received grades.
- 4) Students who do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements at the end of a quarter will be ineligible to participate for the entire following quarter.
- 5) Individuals declared academically ineligible may not attend practices, games or travel with the team during the period of ineligibility.
- 6) Seventh grade students will be eligible the first quarter regardless of their previous academic performance.

Additional Academic Standards for Grades 7-12

- 1) The eligibility or ineligibility of a student continues until the start of the fifth (5th) school day of the next grading period, at which time the grades from the immediately preceding grading period become effective. **Exception: Eligibility or ineligibility of athletes for the first grading period begins with the start of the fall sports season.**
- 2) The following conditions will be established for a student who is ineligible for a grading period:
 - a. A student will be permitted to try out for any sport or activity in which the number of participants is restricted by team selection. (ex., baseball/softball/tennis)
 - b. With approval from the coach/advisor and parent/guardian/custodian, a student can practice with a team or group.
 - c. The student cannot participate in any athletic contest, scrimmage or in exhibition situations during the period of ineligibility, nor will activity fees be refunded.
- 3) A student who would become ineligible for two consecutive grading periods would lose all practice condition privileges and would be released from any athletic squad.

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OTHER O.H.S.A.A. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Age Limitation – Ohio High School Athletic Association Rule

If a student enrolled in high school attains the age of 19 before August 1, the student shall be ineligible to participate in high school interscholastic athletics for the school year commencing in that calendar year. If a middle school student attains the age of 15 before August 1, the student shall be ineligible to participate in middle school interscholastic athletics for the school year commencing in that calendar year.

A student shall become eligible for high school athletics when the student attains the fifteenth birthday before August 1, or when the student attains ninth grade standing. The student is eligible at the school where the student is expected to enroll at the ninth grade level.

In determining the age of a student, the date of birth as recorded in the school records shall be considered as final, except that when birth records, filed within six years after date of birth, are available in the State Bureau of Vital Statistics or a comparable government agency shall be used. If this information is not available and if the school records do not agree, the earliest date of birth shall be considered the valid date of birth.

Family Bibles, physician's statements, parents' affidavits, baptismal certificates, etc. will not be accepted in lieu of birth certificates. Amendments to birth certificates filed after six years from date of birth will not be considered.

Residence and Transfer Requirements

There are many complicated rules governing residence. Generally an athlete's parents or legal guardian must live in the Olentangy local school district for the student to be eligible. If you have a residency or transfer question, please refer to the O.H.S.A.A. Web site (www.ohsaa.org) for up to date and complete information or discuss with the principal/athletic director. All district and O.H.S.A.A. by-laws apply.

O.H.S.A.A. transfer bylaws (section 7) have been developed which permits a student to become eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics when moving from one school district to another, from a private school to a public school or vice versa, and from different high schools in the same district insofar as the transfer bylaw is concerned.

- 1) When moving from one school district to another, a bona fide legal change of residence form must be on file with the new district and the O.H.S.A.A. to participate in athletics. Please note, merely signing a lease for an apartment in the new district does not constitute a *bona fide legal change of residence*. The form required for legal change of residence may be obtained from the OLSD New Student Welcome Center (NSWC), school athletic offices, or on-line at www.ohsaa.org.
- 2) When moving from a private to public school, an O.H.S.A.A. Exception Form Six must be on file with the new district and O.H.S.A.A. in order to participate in athletics. This form may be obtained from the NSWC, school athletic offices, or on-line at www.ohsaa.org.
- 3) When moving from different schools in the same district, an Intra-District Transfer Request Application must be submitted prior to the beginning of the school year. This request form and the deadlines for submission are available at the NSWC or on the district's Web site. Be advised that student's approved for an intra-district transfer may be denied participation in athletics for one calendar year.

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ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Attendance Policy

1) Absence from Practice:

A. Excused

1. Advance notice from athlete in writing to the appropriate coach
2. Reason considered unavoidable and excusable by the coaches

Consequence:

Athlete may miss necessary mental and physical preparation for contest resulting in non-participation in that contest.

B. Unexcused - All absences not falling into the excused category above

Consequences:

First offense	Suspension for the next contest
Second offense	Suspended for the next two contests
Third offense	Suspension for the remainder of the season

2) Absence from Contest (including Saturday):

A. Excused

1. Advance notice to coaches
2. Emergency situation

Consequences are the discretion of the head coach and athletic director

B. Unexcused- All absences not falling into the Excused category above

Consequences:

First offense	Suspension from next two contests
Second offense	Suspension for the remainder of the season

3) Holidays/Vacations

- A. Excused** - If an athlete is going on a family vacation with parent or guardian_or is attending a school-related activity during a school recess, **advance notice must be given to the coach by the first day of official team practice and the coach will then inform the athletic director.**

Consequences

If a contest is missed, the consequences are:

1-2 contests missed:	Suspended one contest
3-4 contests missed:	Suspended two contests
More than 4 contests missed:	Suspended rest of season
If practice is missed:	See 1A

- B. Unexcused** - Not going with parent or guardian or with a school-related group is an unexcused absence. See 1B.

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Awards

- **Earning an Athletic Letter** – It is desired that the athletic letter be something the athlete must earn by athletic ability, but not be so unattainable that only the outstanding athlete can achieve it. It is also desired that the coach of each sport have a large amount of leeway in determining who receives the letter. Middle school athletes are not eligible to earn school letters.
- **Wearing of Awards** – It is the firm belief of the district Athletic Department that awards should be worn with dignity and class. Athletes are to display their awards in such a manner and are expected to behave in an appropriate manner when wearing them; the athlete represents the team and the school when wearing the award – actions that detract from a positive image will not be accepted.
- **Booster Scholar Athlete Awards** – All sophomore, junior and senior students are eligible for this award. Students qualify for the award if their cumulative GPA is at least 3.250 on a 4.0 scale. Because high school students do not earn credits until the end of their freshman year, they are not eligible for this award.
- **Managers/Statisticians/Student Trainers** – Any student who manages or trains satisfactorily for the entire sports season is entitled to the appropriate awards for that sport.

Banquet – At the conclusion of the season, if any student athlete is not a team member in good standing, the athlete will forfeit the privilege to attend the banquet and to receive all letters and/or awards.

Cancellations Due to Weather - In the event of a school closing or early dismissal, all middle school and freshman athletic events and practices will be canceled unless it is associated with a varsity event (example: a triple header basketball event).

However, in accordance with the practice of the majority of Ohio Capital Conference schools, varsity and junior varsity level athletic activities may still take place later that evening, weather permitting. The decision to cancel varsity and junior varsity contests and practices will be made by the athletic directors, building principals, the executive director of secondary learning and/or the executive director of operations in cooperation with representatives from the competing district(s).

A decision will be made no later than 2:00 p.m. If the executive director of operations determines that it is unsafe to transport students by district buses or van(s), the athletic director, building principals, and the executive director of secondary learning, may elect to have parents transport our athletes to the contest. Notification of any such closings will be available on the district's Web site, at the link, Cancellation and Delay Notices.

Conflicts In Extra-Curricular Activities – An individual student who attempts to participate in too many extra-curricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations.

The Athletic Department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extra-curricular activities and, to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts.

Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid a continuous conflict. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

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Dropping a Sport – An athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedures must be followed:

- 1) Talk with your immediate school coach and then the head coach.
- 2) Return all equipment issued to you.

If a student drops a sport for any unauthorized reasons, the athlete may not participate or join a team for the next sporting season of the school calendar until the first day that season is allowed to start and athletic fees will not be refunded.

Equipment – The athlete is responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to him or her. All equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to a financial penalty.

- All equipment issued to a player is to be worn only at practice or scheduled games or scrimmages involving that particular sport. Exceptions must be approved by the coach (i.e. jerseys).
- The athlete must secure permission from the coach before any item is attached, added to, removed from or worn with a uniform that is issued to an athlete for a specific sport.
- Each athlete is responsible for all equipment issued. Keep it clean and in the best possible condition. The Olentangy Local School District is not responsible for lost or stolen equipment. It is suggested that athletes use a lock on athletic lockers to avoid theft.
- All athletic equipment is the property of the Board of Education and the Athletic Department. Therefore, school equipment may not be taken from the building for the use of any other organization or for personal use. Any exception must be approved by the coach or athletic director.
- All equipment issued to an athlete must be returned at the end of the athletic season. Equipment that is not returned for any reason or that is damaged beyond normal wear and tear must be paid for at current replacement cost. Any athlete who has not returned or paid for lost equipment within one week will be denied the right to participate in athletics until the equipment is returned or paid for. In addition, these costs will be added to the school fees owed to the school.
- Under certain circumstances, equipment (i.e. uniforms) may be sold to team members at the end of the season. This sale will be controlled by the head coach and athletic director. The price will be set by the athletic director and will be the current replacement cost of the item. The money will be collected by the head coach prior to equipment being given to the athlete.

Game Day Participation

In order to participate in a school-day practice or contest, a high school or middle school student athlete must be in attendance four periods of the school day. A block scheduled class is equal to two regular class periods. Field trips, Alternate Learning Experiences, concurrent enrollment, medical/dental appointments and special family situations may be excused by an administrator.

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Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying- Hazing, harassment, intimidation and/or bullying toward a student athlete, whether by other athletes, coaches or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse. Hazing means doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of intimidation or harassment to any student athlete or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Harassment, intimidation or bullying is any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical act that an athlete has exhibited toward another particular student athlete or athletes more than once and the behavior causes mental or physical harm to the other athlete (s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other athlete(s). It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, hazing, and violence.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing and/or bullying does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. Prohibited activities of any type including those activities engaged in via computer and/or electronic communications devices are inconsistent with the Athletic Code of Conduct and Expectations and are prohibited at all times. No administrator, coach or other employee of the District shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any hazing and/or bullying activities. No student athlete may plan, encourage or engage in any hazing and/or bullying.

Administrators, coaches and all other district employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events that might include hazing and/or bullying.

If hazing and/or bullying or planned hazing and/or bullying is discovered, involved student athletes are informed by the discovering district employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all hazing and/or bully activities immediately. All hazing and/or bullying incidents are reported immediately to the building administrator or appropriate administrator. An investigation will result and shall include documentation of the event, response and strategy for protecting the victim. The Superintendent/designee must provide the Board President with a semiannual written report of all reported incidents of bullying and post the report on the District's Website.

The student athlete may be denied participation in athletics for violation of this policy and may be subject to **Code of Conduct** violation.

Individual Coach's Rules – Each coach is encouraged to set team rules in addition to the rules in the Athletic Handbook. Rules and penalties for tardiness, curfew violations, inappropriate practice/game dress and misconduct are examples of acceptable coach's guidelines. These rules should be given in writing to all athletes, parents and the athletic director at the beginning of each season.

Insurance – Students participating in an athletic program must be protected by an accident insurance policy in one of the following ways: school insurance or a school insurance waiver form signed by the parent or guardian stating that they have adequate insurance coverage.

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Lockers – Section 3313.20 of the Ohio Revised Code authorizes a board of education to adopt a policy which authorizes a principal to search any student’s locker and the contents thereof upon reasonable suspicion that the contents contain evidence of a criminal or school rule violation. Lockers remain the property of Olentangy Local School District while on loan to students and are, therefore, subject to supervision and inspection by school authorities when and where necessary. It is the student’s responsibility to use lockers for school purposes only and to use a lock to secure all belongings. Lockers are not to be used for articles which may be of such nature as to be harmful, dangerous, in violation of school or legal restrictions or disruptive to the school process. Such articles are subject to confiscation. Students are not permitted to mark or deface the outside of lockers. In such cases, the student breaking locker rules will be assessed a fine.

Parental Acknowledgment of Athletic Policies – Each parent or guardian shall read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the Athletic Eligibility Rules and Policies of the Olentangy Local School District. This signed document will be filed in the athletic director’s office.

Pay to Participate – Olentangy Local Schools has adopted a policy that requires a \$75 fee for participation in interscholastic athletics. There is a \$25 fee for participation in the second sport, and no charge for the third sport. There is a maximum fee of \$100 per family per building and \$200 per family per year for participation in interscholastic athletics.

The student fees are to defray only a part of the expenses of our activity programs. Fees for activity participation are to be assessed for one full year. Each building is responsible for collecting these fees. Athletic activity fees are to be paid by check/money order to Olentangy Local Schools. Return forms and checks to the individual buildings. Please indicate the name of the student and the activity for which the fee is being paid in the “memo” area of the check. Payments may also be made in full by credit card online (go to www.olentangy.k12.oh.us, then “myOlentangy”) where available. At the end of the school year, report cards or course credit may be withheld until all fees are paid. For athletes, all fees are non-refundable after the first game and paying the fee does not guarantee the athlete’s playing time.

Required Forms - The following forms must be completed and on file in the Athletic Office prior to the first day of participation:

- 1) Athletic **Code of Conduct** Agreement (located on the last page of this handbook)
- 2) Emergency Medical Form
- 3) Insurance Waiver
- 4) OHSAA Pre-Participation Physical Form
- 5) Pay-to-Participate Fee and Form
- 6) Permission to Treat Form

Most forms are distributed to students but are also available on the district Web site or athletic offices.

Risk of Participation – All athletes and parents or guardians must realize the risk of serious injury, permanent disability or death which may be a result of athletic participation.

Salary of Coaches – The Olentangy Local School District will maintain sole authority of O.H.S.A.A. Bylaw 6-2-1. The Board of Education or other similar governing body shall have exclusive jurisdiction on matters of salary, stipend or compensation of its coaches.

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Transportation – All athletes are expected to travel to and from contests in a district bus or van when the district provides transportation. In special situations a parent or guardian may provide transportation with advance written permission approved by the Athletic Director.

Two-Sport Participation – Athletes may participate in more than one sport at Olentangy Local Schools in any one sport season (fall, winter or spring) **if both coaches concur and cooperatively** work out the details of practices, games, etc. with the athlete. The athlete who is attempting to “double up” must declare one of the sports as a “sport of first priority”. This means the athlete will attend all “events” (contests, practices, meetings, etc.) connected with that squad. The athlete may participate with the other squad during the time there are no obligations to the sport of first priority. It should be emphasized that the school can benefit from multi-sport participation and that disciplined athletes can be successful.

Notes:

- 1) Cheerleading is considered to be a sport at both middle and high school levels.
- 2) Middle school athletes will only be allowed to participate in one sport per season.

Middle School Cheerleaders –

- 1) Cheer for football or basketball. Eighth grade cheerleaders cheer for both seasons.
- 2) Cheerleaders may not participate in another sport during the season they are cheering.
- 3) Football cheerleaders will cheer for all games, home and away.
- 4) Basketball cheerleaders will cheer for all home games, both boys and girls.

Uniforms – In several sports, the athlete will be required to purchase a portion of the game uniform, which will become his or her property.

COLLEGE INFORMATION

Prospective Student Athletes – NCAA Clearinghouse Rules

As a prospective student athlete at a Division I or II institution, you have certain responsibilities to attend to before you may participate. Information concerning who needs to register with the Clearinghouse and what documents should be submitted can be found in *The Guide for College-Bound Student Athletes*, located on the NCAA Clearinghouse Web site. This link can be accessed at www.naaclearinghouse.net. Click on “Prospective Student-Athletes” link. Athletes should be ready to report their SAT or ACT scores before establishing eligibility. This is a requirement for athletes who are planning on becoming student athletes in college. If there are any questions concerning this important part of becoming a student athlete in college, you should make arrangements to see the athletic director.

OLENTANGY SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS
AGREEMENT

Student Name _____ Grade _____ School _____

AS A STUDENT:

- I understand and agree that participation in athletic activities is a privilege that may be withdrawn for violations of the ***Athletic Code of Conduct and Expectations***, hereinafter ***Code of Conduct***.
- I have read the ***Code of Conduct*** (found on the District Web site or obtained from your Athletic Office) and thoroughly understand the consequences that I will face if I do not honor my commitment to the ***Code of Conduct***.
- I understand and realize that there is risk of injury in participating in athletic activities.
- I understand this is binding while a student at Olentangy Schools.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN/CUSTODIAN:

- I have read the ***Code of Conduct*** (found on the District Web site or obtained from your Athletic Office) and understand the responsibilities of my son or daughter as a participant in athletic activities in the Olentangy Schools.
- I understand and realize that there is an assumed risk of injury involved for my son or daughter as a participant in athletic activities.
- I understand this is binding while my son or daughter is a student at Olentangy.

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

This agreement must be signed and on file in the Athletic Office before a student may participate in athletic events for the Olentangy Schools.