

Student-Athlete Handbook



McCormick County Schools Interscholastic Athletics Handbook 2020-2021

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Philosophy of Interscholastic Athletics

The mission of South Carolina interscholastic programs is to foster the quest for excellence by creating an educational and competitive experience within an atmosphere of sportsmanship.

The goals and objectives within the interscholastic program of McCormick County Schools reflect the mission of the total educational program. We wish to maximize each student's intellectual, social, and personal development through competitive athletic experience. Through McCormick athletics, our student-athletes have the opportunity to develop individually and as a team by promoting high standards of competence, character, civility, and citizenship.

We expect excellence both on and off the field; academics, sportsmanship, safety, and chemical-free participation are emphasized. We strive for individual and team excellence, but not at a win at all costs approach. We advocate a balance of participation and being competitive at all levels. At the middle school level, the emphasis is based on development of fundamentals, technique, and participation. At the Junior Varsity (JV) level, the emphasis shifts to a more competitive focus with further development of technique and tactics. At the varsity level, the emphasis is on strategy and competitiveness.

McCormick Middle/High School Code of Conduct

In our schools, the academic program is the primary focus. When behavior interferes with the academic program and students are disciplined according to the code of conduct, the coaches may take the following steps to ensure that the student-athletes understand the importance of academics. These expectations apply to all student-athletes and cheerleaders.

- In-school suspensions (ISS) that are less than a full day - the coach has the discretion to determine the severity of the consequence.
- Detentions and tardies - the coach has the discretion to determine the severity of the consequence unless the behavior results in an out-of-school suspension (OSS).
- ISS – first (1st) time (Full Day or More) – the coach has the discretion to determine the severity of the consequence.
- ISS – Second (2nd) Time (Full Day or More) – One (1) game or track/field meet suspension for the next contest (home or away).
- ISS – Third (3rd) Time – (Full Day or More) – Two (2) games or track/field meet suspensions for the next two contests (home or away).
- ISS – Fourth (4th) Time – Dismissal from team for that sport.
- OSS –1st Time – 1 game or track/field meet suspension after his or her return to school for the next contest (home or away). Athlete will miss any contests that are played during the suspension.
- OSS –2nd Time – Dismissal from team for that sport.
- Alternative School Placement – Dismissal from the athletic program for a minimum of 45 days.

***Based on the severity of the action, the Athletic Director, Athletic Council, and/or principal(s) have the authority to discipline or remove an athlete from any team at any time. The administration also may consider extenuating and mitigating factors when determining the appropriate sanction.**

- Any athlete that does not finish a sports season, except for good cause, will not be allowed to participate in another sport until that season is complete. This includes playoffs.
- Athletes who consume or possess alcohol or other drugs, not prescribed by a physician, while on school property or during a school-sponsored event, will be suspended until enrolled in an approved drug or alcohol treatment program. If the student does not remain in the treatment program or engages in further misconduct, he/she will be **dismissed** from the team and from the athletic program for the remainder of that school year.
- The coach, Athletic Director, Athletic Council, and/or principal(s) will take appropriate action, which may include dismissal from the team and/or athletic program when a student-athlete is arrested.
- Athletes must be present for at least ½ the academic day to be eligible to practice or play in a game. Exceptions can be made for emergency and medical reasons, school business, or deaths in the immediate family, etc.
- Athletes must abide by the dress code regulations established by the head coach for both home and away games.
- Athletes ejected from a game will serve any suspensions handed down by the SCHSL and the head coach.
- Athletes will wear their uniforms in a manner in which it has been intended. There will be no sagging uniforms. Athletes will wear uniforms correctly or not at all. Any athlete not dressing for a game but accompanying any team should dress appropriately.
- Athletes must follow individual team rules established by the head coach.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is defined as:

- playing fair
- following the rules of the game
- respecting the judgment of referees
- treating opponents with respect

Good sportsmanship is an essential part of the game and we expect all of our student-athletes at McCormick Middle/High School to exhibit this type of behavior during practice and games.

A student-athlete who demonstrates unsportsmanlike conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions as noted in the Student-Athlete Handbook, MHS Student Handbook, and/or MCSD Code of Conduct Policy.

NCAA Eligibility (www.ncaa.org)

Your first step towards an Athletic Scholarship is registering with the NCAA Eligibility Center.

If you want to participate in Division I or II athletics as a freshman, you must first register and be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. If you don't register you will not be eligible to play or practice during your freshman year.

Athletes who want to compete at college level must file a form with the NCAA Eligibility Center. This form is available from your high school counseling office.

Students must graduate from high school and have a grade point average (GPA) of 2.325 in a core curriculum of 16 academic subjects for Division I and Division II.

It is recommended that student-athletes register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at the start of their junior year in high school. There is no actual registration deadline, but you must be cleared by the eligibility center before you can receive a scholarship or compete in your sport.

Division III schools set their own admission standards. The NCAA does not set initial requirements for Division III schools.

IMPORTANT: All student-athletes and parents who are interested in their son or daughter participating in college sports should visit www.athleticscholarships.net for more information!

Policies, Procedures, and Miscellaneous Information

Requirements for Participation

1. **Age Limitations** – A student who becomes 19 years of age prior to July 1 of the upcoming school year, will not be eligible to compete in any athletic activities during that school year. Should a student become 15 years of age prior to July 1 of the upcoming school year, he/she shall be too old for a 7th and 8th-grade team; he/she will be considered as enrolled in the 9th grade for eligibility purposes.
2. **Physical Examination** – A yearly physical and parent permission form is required. The physical must be completed and submitted to the coach or Athletic Director prior to participation in any practices. The physical covers all sports for the entire school year. The form will be kept on file in the office of the Athletic Director.
3. **Birth Certification**
 - A. A copy of student's birth certificate must be on file in the Athletic Office.
4. **Academic Requirements** – Each Coach will be responsible for monitoring the academic progress of each student-athlete in their sport.
 - a. A student, who desires to participate in athletics, must be a full-time student as determined by the guidelines set forth by the State Department of Education. A student who is repeating a course for which he/she has previously received credit cannot consider the same course as one for eligibility. This is considered as monitoring a course.

- b. Students in grades 9-12 must achieve an overall passing average in his/her coursework to participate in interscholastic athletic activities. In addition, the following must be adhered to:
 1. To be eligible in the first semester a student must pass a minimum of five Carnegie units applicable toward a high school diploma during the previous year. At least two units must have been passed during the second semester or summer school.
 2. To be eligible during the second semester the student must meet one of the following conditions:
 - a. If the student met first-semester eligibility requirements then he or she must pass the equivalent of four, $\frac{1}{2}$ units during the first semester.
 - b. If the student did not meet first-semester eligibility requirements then he or she must pass the equivalent of five, $\frac{1}{2}$ units during the first semester.
 3. Students must satisfy eligibility requirements in the semester preceding participation.
 - a. Credits earned in a summer school approved by the State Department of Education may apply for first-semester eligibility. A maximum of two units per year may be used.
 - b. Students eligible for a first-semester sport will be permitted to complete that sport even if it extends into the second semester. Under the current League program, this will apply to participants in basketball in the high school and middle school programs.
 4. Students with Disabilities:
 - a. Students diagnosed with disabilities and being served in a non-diploma program shall be considered eligible for participation in interscholastic activities if he/she is successfully meeting the requirements of his/her Individual Education Plan.
 - b. Students diagnosed with disabilities and being served in a program leading to a state high school diploma must meet all eligibility requirements previously stated for participation in interscholastic activities.
 5. A course that is dropped after the 20th day of a semester with a failing average will be considered as a failed course when determining academic eligibility for the following semester.
 6. Credit courses used for eligibility purposes must be courses that are applicable as credit toward a state high school diploma. A student may also use college credit courses provided the student has met or is meeting all requirements for graduation.
 7. Academic deficiencies may not be made up through enrollment in adult education programs.
 8. A maximum of two credit recovery units may be used toward eligibility, to include the two units presently allowed in summer school. The course would have to be accepted by the State Department of Education for graduation and accredited by a certified teacher in that field.
 9. A student must not have received a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Academic requirements for students enrolled in the seventh and eighth grades, including first-semester 9th graders are:

1. Students passing the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades by academic promotion (not by social promotion or placement) are considered as having met the requirements for academic eligibility for first semester.
2. Students in grades seven and eight must be meeting the school district promotion policy at the end of the first semester in order to be eligible second semester. (Second-semester ninth grade students must meet League academic regulations.)
3. A seventh or eighth-grade repeater shall not be eligible during a school year if academic requirements for promotion were not met during the previous year.

NOTE: A student failing the seventh or eighth grade is eligible during second semester if he has satisfactorily passed first-semester work.

Schools will follow the procedures outlined in the School Administrators Guide, published by the State Department of Education, in accepting or rejecting credits received by a student while the student is enrolled in private schools, including home schools and/or out of state schools.

In most cases on a traditional or AB block schedule, the following example would apply:

- If eligible first semester must pass four subjects
- If not eligible first semester must pass five subjects
- In a 4 X 4 block schedule where units or ½ units are granted at the end of the first semester the following will apply:
 - If eligible first semester must earn 2 units
 - If not eligible first semester must earn 2 ½ units

For more information, you may visit the High School website: www.schsl.org

Parental Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies

Upon participating in a sport, he/she will be presented with this handbook containing all the necessary information for participating in athletics. Each parent and athlete shall read all of the enclosed information and certify that they understand the rules. This signed document will be filed in the office of the Athletic Director.

Athletic Insurance

The Athletic Department provides coverage on a secondary/excess basis for those athletes that get injured in practice or games. If the parents of the athlete have any other primary coverage, they need to send the bills to their primary insurance first. If a player gets injured, they should notify the coach and he/she should obtain an injury form from the Athletic Director's office, fill it out and return it to the Athletic Director. The parents will then be responsible for picking up and initialing the form from the Athletic Director's office and submitting it to the appropriate place.

Sports Physicals

Sports physicals will be given at school in the spring of each year. Physicals are good for one school year.

If a student-athlete needs a physical during the school year, it is his or her responsibility to schedule an appointment. **See Appendix for copy of Physical form.**

Transportation

Away Games

Players must travel to and from games on the team bus. If a parent wishes to take their child home from an away game – they need to have an Athletic Travel Consent Form signed and on file. The parent must inform the coach if the student-athlete is leaving with the parent. The student-athlete will only be allowed to ride home with a parent or legal guardian unless permission is given by the Athletic Director. The student-athlete is responsible for his or her equipment and uniform.

Risk Factor in Sports

Participation in sports involves a certain degree of risk of injury. Such physical injury can occur in any type of sports activity and vary in nature. Athletic injuries can run from minor bruises and scrapes to the more serious injuries such as fractures, dislocations, concussions, paralysis, and even death.

Information on Awards

Athletic Award System

Athletes will receive awards during the Athletic Banquet in the spring. All athletes will receive a participation certificate. Other awards will be determined by the Head Coach of that sport and will be given out during the Athletic Banquet.

Award Regulations

Any student-athlete that is removed from the team or quits the team will lose credit for participation.

Awards

- MVP – Most Valuable Player – Will be determined by the coaches in each sport.
- Coaches award – Given to those student-athletes who are coachable, give great effort, and have a great attitude for the sport.
- Senior Athlete award – Given annually to all seniors who have participated in a sport
- Scholar-athlete award – Given annually to the senior boy and girl for having demonstrated excellence in the classroom as well as on the playing field.
- Miscellaneous award - Coaches may give other awards at their end of season banquet, i.e. hustle award, most improved, captain's award.

School Records

New records may be achieved only in a sanctioned event or contest.

In events where time is involved, there must be two or more coaches or adults with timers clocking the individual or a timing system being used.

All records should be submitted to the Athletic Director.

Athletic Lettering Policy

It is the athlete's responsibility to ask his/her coach if they have met the requirements for earning a letter or service bar in their respective sport.

Requirements for earning a letter:

1. If in the judgment of the coach, an injured player would have lettered had he/she been injured, he/she is eligible to receive a letter.
2. A senior who has participated in a varsity sport for two or more years is eligible to receive a letter.
3. Baseball/Softball – Must play in 50% of the innings played during the season.
4. Basketball – Must play in 50% of the quarters played during the season.
5. Cheerleading – Must have served for the entire varsity football or basketball season.
6. Football – Must play in 50% of the quarters during the season.
7. Track – Must qualify for the Upper State meet.
8. Volleyball – Must participate in 50% of the matches during the season.
9. Any student-athlete who is dismissed from or quits a team will not letter, receive a certificate or an award.

Appendix

Preparticipation Physical Evaluation - Physical Form

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Date of Birth _____

Examination			
Height:	Weight:		
BP: / (/)	Pulse:	Vision: R 20/ L 20/	Corrected ___ Yes ___ No

Medical	Normal	Abnormal Findings
Appearance: Marfan stigmata (kyphoscoliosis, high-arched palate, pectus excavatum, arachnodactyly, hyperlaxity, myopia, mitral valve prolapse (MVP), and aortic insufficiency)		
Eyes / Ears / Nose / Throat - Pupils equal / Hearing		
Lymph Nodes		
Heart - Murmurs (auscultation standing, auscultation supine, and +/- Valsalva maneuver)		
Lungs		
Abdomen		
Skin - Herpes simplex virus (HSV), lesions suggestive of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), or tinea corporis		
Neurologic		
Musculoskeletal:		
- Neck		
- Back		
- Shoulders/Arm		
- Elbow/Forearm		
- Wrist/Hand/Fingers		
- Hip/Thighs		
- Knees		
- Leg/Ankles		
- Foot/Toes		
- Functional: Double-leg squat test, single leg squat test, and box drop or step drop test		

Consider: electrocardiography (ECG), echocardiography, and referral to cardiologist for abnormal cardiac history or examination findings or a combination of those.

Preparticipation Physical Evaluation

- Medically eligible for all sports without restriction.
 Medically eligible for all sports without restriction with recommendations for further evaluation or treatment of _____
 Medically eligible for certain sports: _____
 Not medically eligible pending further evaluation.
 Not medically eligible for any sports.
 Recommendations: _____

I have examined the student named on this form and completed the preparticipation physical evaluation. The athlete does not have apparent clinical contraindications to practice and can participate in the sport(s) as outlined on this form. If conditions arise after the athlete had been cleared for participation, the physician may rescind the medical eligibility until the problem is resolved and the potential consequences are completely explained to the athlete and parents or guardians.

Name of health care professional (print or type): _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Signature of health care professional: _____ MD, DO, NP, or PA

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**INFORMED CONSENT, RELEASE OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK FOR
COVID-19**

_____ (**Student Participant**) desires to participate in the McCormick County School District (“District”) athletic program.

I, _____ (**Parent/Guardian/Student 18 or older**), for myself and my child, understand and agree as follows regarding risks associated with COVID 19 pandemic:

1. **Voluntary Participation:** I voluntarily elect for my child/Student Participant to access and use the District’s premises, facilities, and equipment, and on other school districts’ properties in the course of participating in the athletic activity, so that my child may participate in the District’s athletic program. I voluntarily elect for my child/Student Participant to receive athletic instruction and training from District employees and volunteers. I understand that if I do not feel it is safe or appropriate to begin in-person workouts at this time, the student participant will be allowed to return to team activities without repercussions when I feel it is appropriate to do so, and the student participant may participate without mandatory attendance requirements during the summer period.

I understand that student participants who either have pre-existing medical conditions that place the Student Participant at higher risk of infection, or those who do not want to risk contracting COVID-19, should refrain from participating in high school sports at this time.

2. **Acknowledgment of Risk:** I warrant that I am fully aware of the inherent risks of infection from the COVID 19 virus and pandemic, among other communicable diseases, in all public spaces, and particularly in recreational facilities such as those used by the District for its athletic programs. I understand that use of the District’s premises, or other premises and locations, and participation in athletic activities may result in an increased risk of exposure to COVID 19 because of, among other things, the sharing of equipment, close contact with other individuals during many athletic activities, and the prevalence of high touch surfaces inherently associated with the activities, the increased respiration and emission of respiratory droplets associated with physical exertion, the use of water bottles and other personal use objects, and the inherent and natural interaction and sharing behaviors of students.

I understand that COVID 19 is considered a highly contagious virus that may have serious health consequences that could result in prolonged hospitalization, permanent injury, and even death, and the potential spread to other individuals, including other household members, and I acknowledge that such risk cannot be fully mitigated or controlled.

3. **No Warranty:** I understand that the District will make reasonable efforts to comply with guidelines of South Carolina Department of Education, South Carolina High School League, Centers for Disease Control, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. However, the District cannot eliminate the risk of exposure to COVID 19, or guarantee that the facilities and athletic activities will be free of COVID 19; that faculty, staff, and volunteers will be or will remain free of infection; or that infected and contagious students or their families will not be present on the premises or participating in the activity. Accordingly, the District cannot and does not warrant, guarantee, or offer assurances that

individuals will not be exposed to COVID 19 while on the premises or engaged in athletic activities, or that individuals will not then expose others to COVID 19.

4. **Assumption of Risk:** I understand and acknowledge that my or my child's access and use of the premises, facilities, equipment, and participation in the activities involve inherent risks to me or my child, and I understand the District has no control over these risks, nor the ability or duty to eliminate such risks, and even strict adherence to guidelines cannot eliminate risk. Consequently, for myself, and for my child, I assume such dangers, risks, and hazards by participating in athletic activities at this time.

5. **Indemnification, Waiver, Release:** I hereby waive, release, discharge, and hold harmless the District, including its employees, Board, directors/officials, officers, agents, and volunteers from any and all liability associated with any injury to the Student Participant, including personal injury or illness or even death, loss of income or educational opportunity, property damage, and all losses, damages, expenses, liabilities, or claims of any nature arising out of, related to, or in any way connected to the Student Participant use of the premises, facilities, and participation in the activities.

Other Acknowledgements:

- a. I represent that I have the authority to give this Informed Consent, Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk for the Student Participant's participation in the District's athletic program and use of District premises and facilities. I am the parent/legal guardian of the Student Participant, or I am 18 years of age or older, and have the unrestricted right to enter into this Informed Consent, Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk.

- b. I have received a copy of information on COVID 19, including FAQ Regarding Return to Team Sports and Guidelines for Return of High School Sponsored Team Sports and shall abide by them and make all reasonable efforts to equip and instruct my child to abide by them at all times while on the District's premises, or while otherwise engaged in the athletic activity, even on other districts' premises, for purposes of participating in the District's athletic program.

- c. I agree that in the event that the Student Participant or any member of our household tests positive for COVID 19, is informed by a health care provider that that the Student Participant or member of my household is likely symptomatic for COVID 19 infection, or otherwise becomes aware of information that a reasonable person should in good faith recognize as indicating exposure to COVID 19, I will immediately notify the District.

- d. I hereby give consent for emergency transportation and treatment in the event of illness or injury, and I accept responsibility for the payment of any emergency transportation or treatment on behalf of my child.

- e. To the best of my knowledge I further certify that my child is in good physical condition and has no medical or physical conditions that would restrict his/her participation in this event.

MY SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT I HAVE READ THIS INFORMED CONSENT, RELEASE OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK; I FULLY

UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS; I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM WAIVING RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT; AND I HAVE SIGNED IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY. I INTEND MY SIGNATURE TO BE A COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF LIABILITY TO THE EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.

Signature of Parent/Guardian for Minor Student

Date

Signature of Student Participant

Date

Print Name of Parent/Guardian

Print Name of Student Participant

Employee/Coach

Date

Parent's Permission & Acknowledgement of Risk for Son or Daughter to Participate in Athletics

Name (please print) _____

As a parent or legal guardian of the above named student-athlete. I give permission for his/her participation in athletic events and the physical evaluation for that participation. I understand that this is simply a screening evaluation and not a substitute for regular health care. I also grant permission for treatment deemed necessary for a condition arising during participation of these events, including medical or surgical treatment that is recommended by a medical doctor. I grant permission to nurses, trainers and coaches as well as physicians or those under their direction who are part of athletic injury prevention and treatment, to have access to necessary medical information. I know that the risk of injury to my child/ward comes with participation in sports and during travel to and from play and practice. I have had the opportunity to understand the risk of injury during participation in sports through meetings, written information or by some other means. My signature indicates that to the best of my knowledge, my answers to the above questions are complete and correct. I understand that the data acquired during these evaluations may be used for research purposes.

Signature of Athlete _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date: _____



Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Dear Parents:

It is important that you and your child/children are aware of the school's policies as found in the Parent/Student Handbook. Please read, become familiar with and discuss with your child the appropriate items from the district and specific school portions of the handbook.

Your signatures below acknowledge that you and your child/children agree to abide by school procedures, regulations and policies discussed in this handbook. Ignorance of the policies is not an excuse for not following them.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read and am familiar with McCormick School District policies and procedures set forth in the Parent Handbook.

Print Child's/Children's Name(s) _____

Print Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Student's Signature (MMS or MHS) _____

Date _____

