

Lancaster City Schools

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Student-Parent



Approved May 2024

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Lancaster City Schools Vision Statement

Lancaster City Schools will prepare, inspire, and empower all students to be life-long learners and socially responsible citizens who are able to communicate and meet the challenges of an ever-changing global society.

Lancaster City Schools Mission Statement

Lancaster City Schools, the Place to Be for Learning, Caring, Succeeding

Athletic Department Mission Statement

The Lancaster City Schools athletic program dynamically supports the academic mission of the school and fosters competitive opportunities for its students while teaching teamwork, leadership, sportsmanship, commitment and respect

Athletic Department Objectives

- To provide the opportunity for student-athletes to develop wholeness through learning experiences that contributes to their physical, mental, emotional, and social growth.
- To provide each student-athlete with the opportunity to develop his/her individual skills and potential.
- To provide the opportunity for each student-athlete to learn how to function as a member of a team.
- To develop the qualities of leadership, good sportsmanship, respect, responsibility, and moral integrity within each student-athlete.
- To develop an appreciation of the value of physical fitness and conditioning within each student-athlete.
- To teach the student-athlete to accept victory or defeat in a gracious manner.
- To teach the student-athlete the value of hard work and commitment.
- To provide opportunities for growth and development through athletic competition that will contribute to a successful adult life for each student-athlete.
- To develop school spirit within each student-athlete.

Philosophy

Lancaster City Schools consider participation in athletics to be an integral part of the overall educational experience. The purpose of education-based athletics is to enrich a student's educational experience. Athletics provides opportunities for physical, mental, emotional, and social development. Athletic competition provides valuable experience, challenging each student-athlete to strive for excellence, discover his/her physical abilities and work cooperatively as a member of a team. While winning is a natural goal in the pursuit of excellence, the principles of good sportsmanship and enjoyment of competition take precedence and enhance the educational value of participation.

This handbook may be amended from time to time and the district reserves the right to revise its policies in accordance with the law. Each time a revised and updated handbook is issued, the current handbook replaces all prior versions.

Affiliations

Lancaster City Schools are a member of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the Ohio Capital Conference for varsity athletics. As a member of the O.H.S.A.A., Lancaster City Schools agrees to abide by and cooperate with all rules and regulations of the O.H.S.A.A. This shall take precedence over any and all stipulations that may guide the athletic policies of Lancaster Athletics.

The O.C.C. is an affiliated league composed of member schools in the Central Ohio area. Its primary purpose is to promote wholesome athletics, good citizenship, and to foster competitive rivalries through an effective league organization with a workable set of rules and regulations that work to insure a strong and effective athletic conference.

Alignment for 2024-2028

<u>Ohio</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>Cardinal</u>	<u>Capital</u>	<u>Buckeye</u>
Central Crossing	Dublin Coffman	Dublin Jerome	Big Walnut	Canal Winchester
Gahanna Lincoln	Hilliard Bradley	Hilliard Darby	Delaware Hayes	Groveport
Grove City	Hilliard Davidson	Marysville	Dublin Scioto	Lancaster
New Albany	Olentangy Liberty	Olentangy	Westerville North	Logan
Pickerington North	Olentangy Orange	Olentangy Berlin	Westerville South	Newark
Westerville Central	Upper Arlington	Thomas Worthington	Worthington Kilbourne	Pickerington Central
Westerville Central			Westland	Reynoldsburg
				Teays Valley

Junior High Affiliations

Lancaster City Schools are affiliated with the 7th-8th grade Ohio Capital Conference League. This league consists of all the Middle School/Junior Highs in the school districts that comprise the Ohio Capital Conference.

2024-2025

OCC MIDDLE SCHOOL LEAGUE

Big Walnut	Olentangy Orange
Delaware Dempsey	Olentangy Shanahan
Dublin Davis	Olentangy Berkshire
Dublin Grizzell	Pickerington Lakeview
Dublin Karrer	Pickerington Ridgeview
Dublin Sells	Reynoldsburg Baldwin
Gahanna East	Reynoldsburg Waggoner
Gahanna South	Grove City Brookpark
Gahanna West	Grove City Finland
Groveport	Grove City Jackson
Hilliard Heritage	Grove City Norton
Hilliard Memorial	Grove City Pleasant View
Hilliard Weaver	Upper Arlington Hastings
Lancaster Ewing	Upper Arlington Jones
Lancaster Sherman	
Marysville Bunsold	Westerville Blendon
Mount Vernon	Westerville Genoa
New Albany	Westerville Heritage
Newark Heritage	Westerville Walnut Springs
Newark Liberty	Worthington Kilbourne
Newark Wilson	Worthington McCord
Olentangy Hyatts	Worthington Perry
Olentangy Liberty	Worthington Worthingway

**Approved Sports for Lancaster City Schools
High School Athletic Programs
(Grades 9-12)**

Boys Cross Country	Girls Cross Country
Boys Football	Girls Volleyball
Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer
Boys Golf	Girls Golf
Boys Wrestling	Girls Field Hockey
Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball
Boys Swimming	Girls Swimming
Boys Bowling	Girls Bowling
Boys Tennis	Girls Tennis
Boys Track & Field	Girls Track & Field
Boys Baseball	Girls Softball
Cheerleading	Cheerleading
	Gymnastics (Club)

**Junior High Athletic Programs
(7th & 8th grades)**

Boys Football	Girls Volleyball
Boys Cross Country	Girls Cross Country
Boys Golf (Developmental)	Girls Golf (Developmental)
Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball
Boys Wrestling	Cheerleading
Boys Track	Girls Track
Baseball	Softball
Boys Tennis (Developmental)	Girls Tennis (Developmental)
Boys Soccer (Club)	Girls Soccer (Club)
Boys Swimming (Club)	Girls Swimming (Club)

Note: Club Sports:

- a. Are not financially supported by Board of Education nor the Athletic Department.
- b. Participants do not pay participation fee to the LCS (fee may be required by the sport booster organization to off-set the cost for uniform, field prep., contest registration and officials fees).
- c. Can participate in OHSAA and OCC approved contests.
- d. All participants must meet all OHSAA and LCS eligibility requirements and must attend the mandatory parent-athlete meeting
- e. Participants are not eligible for school issued athletic awards.
- f. Transportation not provided by LCS.

Developmental Sports:

- a. Are not financially supported by the athletic department, but are partially funded through the Board of Education (coaches).
- b. Participants do pay participation fee to the LCS (additional fee paid to the sport booster organization to off-set the cost for greens fees, driving range expenses, indoor tennis court use, etc. may be required).
- c. Are instructional, not competitive programs. No league affiliation
- d. No school issued athletic awards are earned.
- e. Transportation not provided by LCS.

Article I Athlete

OHSAA Bylaws/ Codes/Responsibilities/Information

All athletes must meet the requirements for eligibility as set forth by the OHSAA and the Lancaster City School Board of Education.

OHSAA BYLAW 4 — STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Section I. Eligibility

4-1-1 Each student shall meet all requirements in this bylaw to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic competition. Students who have not met the high school or middle school scholarship requirement are not “substantively eligible”; and a student who fails to register for enough credit hours, fails a class(es) or drops a class that lowers the student below the requisite number of credits, always has a shared responsibility for this shortcoming.

4-1-2 If a student participates in an athletic contest and his or her eligibility has been established by falsified information (includes but is not limited to: name, address, transcripts, birth certificate, etc.), or if an attempt is made to establish eligibility for a student by falsified information, the students shall be ineligible in Ohio for a maximum of one year from the date the penalty is imposed.

4-1-3 A student who is determined to be ineligible in accordance with Bylaw 4, or who is ineligible in accordance with any policy, rule or regulation as set forth in the General/Specific Sports Regulations, shall be ineligible to participate in any interscholastic sports contests, shall not be dressed in full uniform for any such contests and shall not participate in pre-game warm-ups during the student’s period of ineligibility. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it shall remain within the discretion of the student’s school administrators as to whether the student may continue to practice with the team, assist the coaches/managers with pre-game warm-up drills, sit on the team bench/sidelines (jersey only), travel with the team and/or take part in other team functions during this period of ineligibility.

4-1-4 A student is a member of an interscholastic squad when the student participates in an interscholastic contest. Such status as a squad member continues until the start of the next school season in that sport. An athletic contest involving participants from another school or any non-interscholastic or any organized adult team is a game, preview or a scrimmage.

Section 2. Age Limitations

- A. Once a student attains the age of 20, the student will no longer be eligible for interscholastic athletic competition notwithstanding where that 20th birthday falls in relation to the sport season. See OHSAA Bylaw 4-2-1 for exception to this bylaw.
- B. If a student enrolled in grade 7 or 8 attains the age of 15 before August 1, the student shall be ineligible to participate in 7th and 8th grade interscholastic athletics for the school year commencing in that calendar year. See OHSAA Bylaw 4-2-2 for exceptions to this bylaw.
- C. An 8th grade student may, at the student’s option, become eligible for interscholastic athletics at the high school level when the student attains his/her 15th birthday before August 1 of the ensuing school year. The student who chooses to commence high school eligibility while still enrolled in grade eight is eligible at the school where the student is expected to enroll at the ninth grade level. A student opting to commence his/her eligibility at the high school level shall have no more than 8 semesters of high school eligibility taken in order of attendance in accordance with Bylaw 4-3-3

Section 3. Enrollment and Attendance

- A. A student becomes an athlete upon participating in the first scheduled day of coaching instruction for a sport. **Any student grades 9-12 new to the district must schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director to verify eligibility.**
- B. OHSAA Bylaw 4-3-1 All students participating in a school-sponsored sport must be enrolled in and attending full-time in accordance with all duly adopted Board of Education or similar governing

board policies of that school. (There are seven exceptions- see OHSAA Bylaw 4-3-1. See exceptions at www.ohsaa.org).

* A student enrolled full time in a postsecondary institution (now known as College Credit Plus) is eligible to participate at the high school where the student's records are maintained, provided the student is receiving high school credit for a minimum of five one credit courses in the postsecondary institution.

*Note: State law permits home-educated students in accordance with ORC 3312.04 (A)(2) to be afforded the opportunity to participate at the public school in the district of residence of the parents without any enrollment obligation. If the residential public school district does not offer the sport, the home-educated student MAY participate at another non-residential public school provided the superintendent of that district permits such participation.

* After a student completes the eighth grade or is otherwise eligible for high school athletics participation, the student may be eligible for a period not to exceed eight semesters taken in order of attendance, regardless of whether the student participates or is even eligible to participate in accordance with these eligibility bylaws.

*Note: If a student competes at the high school level as an ineligible student, that semester(s) of eligibility shall count toward the eight semesters permitted.

*After a student completes the sixth grade or is otherwise eligible for 7-8th grade athletics participation and before the student enters the ninth grade, the student may be eligible for a period not to exceed four semesters taken in order of attendance, whether the student participates or not.

Section 4. Academic Eligibility

4-4-1 In order to be eligible in grades 9-12, a student must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period. For the purpose of this Bylaw 4, Section 4, the term "grading period" is defined as the school's Board-adopted calendar (e.g., six week, nine week, 12 week or semester) and does not mean an interim marking period. Furthermore, at the conclusion of the preceding grading period, the student must have received passing grades in a minimum of five (5) one-credit courses or the equivalent, each of which counts toward graduation. For the purpose of this bylaw, the term "immediately preceding grading period" refers to the grading period of the school which immediately precedes the grading period in question.

*Eligibility or ineligibility for the first grading period commences with the start of the fall sports season.

*A student coming off the "ineligible status" may become eligible after the fifth calendar day immediately following the end of the grading period provided those grades can be obtained and verified by a school administrator.

*A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed a minimum of four subjects during the immediately preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.

*A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades at the conclusion of that grading period in a minimum of four of those subjects in which the student received grades.

*Summer school and other educational options may not be used to bring a student into compliance with Bylaws 4-4-1,

** Lancaster Board of Education requirements:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Grades 9-10-11-12 | GPA minimum 1.75 |
| 2. Grades 7-8 | GPA minimum 1.75 |

POINTS OF EMPHASIS

*GPA for eligibility is calculated on 9-week period grades. It is not determined by cumulative GPA.

*GPA of 9 week grades preceding sport participation determines eligibility. (Exception – 7th grade students entering 1st nine weeks)

*An athlete who fails to meet the GPA minimum may request a WAIVER to reinstate eligibility. The waiver must be signed by the parent/guardian and can only be used one time at grade levels 7 and 8 and used only one time at grade levels 9-10-11-12.

*No athlete will make a schedule change (drop or add classes) without receiving approval of the Athletic Director and/or head coach. It is the responsibility of the athlete to know if they are taking enough classes to earn 5 credits.

*No athlete shall drop a class after grades have been posted in order to positively affect their eligibility.

*Athletes may practice with their team with the approval of the head coach during periods of academic ineligibility.

*Attendance at summer school will not make an athlete eligible the following school year.

Section 5. Conduct, Character, Discipline

*In matters pertaining to personal conduct in which athletic contests and their related activities are not involved, the school itself is to be the sole judge as to whether the student may participate in athletics.

* In matters pertaining to personal conduct in which athletic contests and their related activities are involved, the principal and game officials shall file a report and the Executive Director's office shall have jurisdiction to determine additional penalties including whether or not the student may participate in athletics.

4-5-5 Any student suspended or expelled from a member school shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletics at any member school for the duration of the suspension or expulsion. For the purpose of this bylaw, suspension refers to the denial of attendance at school for a period of not more than 10 days. Expulsion refers to the involuntary removal of a student for more than 10 days.

4-5-6 Any student who is subject to a penalty or consequences for violations of a school's Board adopted Code of Conduct (Student, Athletic) shall be declared ineligible in the event the student transfers to another school before the penalty or consequence has been fully served. Once the terms of the penalty or consequence have been fully served at the new school then the student is permitted to regain their athletic eligibility assuming they are eligible in all other respects. It is the responsibility of an administrator at the new school to inquire from the administrator at the student's former school of any violation of this nature that would affect the student's eligibility in interscholastic athletics and the duration of the suspension for that violation.

Section 6. Residence

4-6-1 The districts for all public schools are established by the State Board of Education and defined for athletic purposes. In addition, school districts with multiple high schools may establish attendance zones within those districts. In determining one's residence for purposes of these bylaws, the following criteria shall apply: (a) where the parents and family members sleep the majority of the time, (b) where the mail is received, (c) where the meals are prepared and eaten, (d) where the parents are registered to vote, and (e) where important family activities take place during significant parts of each day.

Note: It shall not be considered a "bona fide" change of residence as prescribed in Bylaw 4-7-2, Exception 1, or Bylaw 4-7-4 (1) if the parents of a transfer student vacate the residence prior to one year from the date that the student's transfer is approved, and the student remains in the school into which the transfer was approved.

4-6-2 A student whose parents, (biological or adoptive), reside outside the state of Ohio will be ineligible for interscholastic athletics in a member school. (See Bylaw 4-8-1 for eligibility requirements for international students). (see Bylaw 4-6-2 for 12 exceptions to this bylaw)

Note: Students affected by this out of state residence bylaw may still be affected by all other eligibility standards in Bylaw 4 including the transfer provisions in 4-7 and the international provisions in 4-8.

Section 7. Transfers

- A. OHSAA Bylaw 4-7-1 The transfer bylaws apply to all students enrolled in grades 9-12 who are transferring high schools whether the schools are public or non-public, member or non-member or whether the high schools are within the same school system or district.
- B. OHSAA Bylaw 4-7-2 A student is considered to have transferred whenever a.) enrollment is changed from one school to another school and the student attends a new school, or b.) enrollment is changed from one school to become home schooled or vice versa, or c.) the student participates in a practice, scrimmage or contest in an OHSAA recognized sport with a school-sponsored squad of a school in which the student has not been enrolled and attending, or d) the participation opportunities afforded a student pursuant to state law change. Notwithstanding (c) and (d) above, if a non-enrolled student's participation is pursuant to O.R.C. §§ 3313.5311 (Ohio non-public school students) or 3313.537 (Ohio community/STEM school students), the non-enrolled student's participation opportunity shall transfer back to the non-public school or Community/STEM school in which the student is enrolled without transfer consequences. If the non-public school or Community/STEM school ever sponsors the sport/sports in which the non-enrolled student wishes to participate, the student's participation opportunity shall also be transferred back to the school of attendance without consequence. Furthermore, any in-season changes in the participation opportunities that may be afforded by state law shall be subject to Bylaw 4-7-3. If a student transfers at any time after commencing the ninth-grade year, the student shall be ineligible for all OHSAA tournaments in those sports in which the student participated during the 12 months immediately preceding this transfer. In addition, the student shall be ineligible for all contests at all levels AFTER the first 50% of the maximum allowable varsity regular season contests have been competed in those sports in which the student participated during the 12 months immediately preceding this transfer. The transfer consequence shall remain in effect until the one-year anniversary of the date of enrollment in the school to which the student transferred, at which time the student is no longer considered a transfer student. For purposes of the transfer bylaws, a student will be considered as having commenced the ninth grade year by either attending five or more days of school as a ninth grader or by establishing eligibility at a school by having participated in a contest. Furthermore, the term "participated in a contest" for purposes of the transfer bylaw means to have played at least one play in a scrimmage, preview/jamboree, Foundation game or regular season/ tournament game or contest. A student who did not participate in an OHSAA recognized sport in the 12 months immediately preceding the transfer is not subject to the consequence of this transfer bylaw. Notwithstanding the above, if a student transfers during the

season of a sport in which he or she has participated in a regular season contest, and if Bylaw 4-7-3 requires that the student is ineligible for participation in the remainder of the contests in that sports season, the student shall remain ineligible for the remainder of all regular season contests, as well as the OHSAA tournament, in that sport at the school into which the student has transferred (or at the school where the student is now permitted a participation opportunity). Furthermore, the student shall finish fulfilling his/her transfer consequence, for ONLY that sport in which the mid-season transfer occurred, at the start of the sport season during the next school year. unless an exception can be met to restore eligibility for the next sport season. This consequence requires that the student shall remain ineligible for all preseason contests (scrimmages, preview/jamboree, Foundation games) and all regular season contests until the total number of varsity regular season contests missed (including those missed during the previous season) equals 50 percent of the maximum allowable regular season contests in that sport.

Note 1: ORC 3313.5312 (Ohio home educated students) has been intentionally left out of the exclusions of subpart (b) addressing students participating in programs where they are not enrolled. Once a home-educated student participates with a school-sponsored squad of a school in which the student is not enrolled, the student's eligibility is established at that school. Participating on any other schools' sponsored squad will be considered a transfer for which the balance of this bylaw and its exception would be applicable.

There are 13 exceptions to this bylaw. If an event creates the need to transfer, i.e., creates a cause and effect relationship, then one or more of the 13 exceptions may apply. See your athletic administrator or go to www.ohsaa.org for more information on the 13 exceptions to the transfer bylaw.

Section 8. Lancaster Athletic Department Code of Conduct

Student-athletes are highly visible representatives of the Lancaster City Schools.

By agreeing to participate in interscholastic athletics at Lancaster, students are expected to understand and abide by the Code of Conduct.

It is required that students participating in athletic activities become familiar with and understand the rules and regulations required of students participating in athletic activities within the Lancaster City School District.

A. Student/Athlete Discipline:

- 1) Students participating in athletic programs are required to abide by the rules and policies as set forth in the code of conduct at all times. Students who violate the code may be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to suspension, expulsion or emergency removal from school in addition to athletic consequences. Student-athletes must abide by the rules regardless of whether or not the student is on school grounds, attending a school function or activity, on private property or at a private party. Behavior that occurs off school property but is connected to activities or incidents that have occurred on school property, or actions, regardless of where they occur, that are directed at a Lancaster City school official or employee, or the property of such official or employee may also be subject to the disciplinary actions listed above. **Any conduct serious in nature which is a violation of local, state, or federal law may cause the athlete to be declared ineligible by the administrative office. An athlete charged with a crime who is awaiting a court hearing may be deemed ineligible to participate until the case is heard.**
- 2) The Superintendent, other district administrative personnel, or personnel employed by the district to direct, supervise, or coach a pupil activity program may prohibit a student from participating in any particular or all extracurricular activities for such period of time as the person implementing the prohibition determines to be appropriate. Unless otherwise provided in any specific rules governing the particular extracurricular activity, prohibition from participation in extracurricular activities does not trigger the same notice, hearing and appeal procedures that apply to suspension, expulsion or emergency removal of students from school. **Any conduct in violation of**

any criminal status or any gross misconduct which is substantially likely to have adverse impact on Lancaster High School or the Athletic program may cause immediate removal from the team for the remainder of the season.

B. Expectations:

Participation on an interscholastic team is a privilege, not a right, and should be treated as such. It has many benefits and brings with it a responsibility to be a positive and effective member of the team, school and broader community. High school student-athletes are expected to represent themselves, their teams and their schools with honesty, integrity, and character whether it be academically or socially. Student-athletes often are in the spotlight and, fair or not, their behavior is subject to scrutiny by their peers, members of the high school community, local and national communities and the media. The actions of one student-athlete may result in the generalization of all student-athletes and reflect on the individual, team and school whether it be positively or negatively. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Student-athletes who do not conform to the code of conduct may be subject to consequences for their actions that may include but are not limited to a warning, suspension from participation, dismissal from the team, etc. The code of conduct is in effect for all athletes 12 months of the year. **An athlete denied the privilege to participate is also denied the privilege to attend any Lancaster athletic contest during designated denial of participation unless approved by the building principal or designee.**

C. Tobacco, Alcohol, Drug Violations/Consequences

Together with the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the Lancaster City Schools Board of Education recognizes that the use and abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs have a negative effect on behavior, learning, athletic development and performance of the student-athlete. In addition, the use and abuse by an athlete affects teammates, family members and other significant members of his/her life. The Board has established this year-round policy in regards to tobacco, drugs and alcohol use.

- 1) An athlete may not possess, consume, distribute, or sell tobacco products (Nicotine in any form), alcohol, drugs, controlled substances, inhalants, vape-pens, e-cigarettes, juuls, look-alikes and/or other illegal substances, including drug paraphernalia and over the counter or prescription drugs. Any unauthorized use of prescription medication, not prescribed to the athlete, is a violation of the code of conduct.
- 2) An athlete may not remain in the proximity of illegal alcohol, tobacco or drug use. An athlete will be considered “in the *proximity*” if they do not remove themselves from the place where alcohol/tobacco/drugs are being used illegally. Athletes may call a parent, relative, coach, school administrator, or the athletic director to be removed from the situation.

Admission to violation: Athlete freely admits to violation of specific incident. An athlete will be given only one opportunity to freely admit during an investigation.

	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation
Consequence with Counseling	Denied privilege of Participation in 10% of scheduled games. 1 game minimum.	Denied privilege of Participation in 50% of scheduled games. 4 game minimum.	Denied privilege of Participation for remainder of high school/junior high career.
Consequence without Counseling	Denied privilege of Participation in 50% of scheduled games.	Denied privilege of Participation for 1 calendar year from date of violation.	Denied privilege of Participation for remainder of high school/junior high career.

	4 game minimum.		
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Example: 10% denial for an athlete whose sport has 20 games in the regular season = 2 game suspension

Non-admission to violation: Athlete does not freely admit and investigation concludes the athlete was in violation.

	First Violation	Second Violation	Third Violation
Consequence with Counseling	Denied privilege of Participation in 20% of scheduled games. 2 game minimum.	Denied privilege of Participation for 1 calendar year from date of violation.	Denied privilege of Participation for remainder of Jr./High School career.
Consequence without Counseling	Denied privilege of Participation in 50% of scheduled games. 4 game minimum.	Denied privilege of Participation for remainder of Jr./High School career.	

VOLUNTARY REFERRAL

An athlete, his/her coach, or parent/guardian may make a “voluntary referral” if it is strongly felt an athlete’s academic, athletic, and social life is being affected by the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. ‘Voluntary referral’ refers to individuals who are experiencing addiction/dependency issues as well as a mental health incident. A voluntary referral must be made in writing and provided to the athletic director. A voluntary referral can be made with no consequences if the referral is made without the intended purpose of not being denied participation because of a specific violation that has been, is, or will be investigated by the school administration. A recommendation of counseling services will be made to the athlete and his/her parent/guardian.

D. Other Violations-subject to criminal consequences, school consequences and/or athletic consequences

1. **Theft:**
2. **Vandalism**
3. **Hazing**

- a) All hazing by athletes is prohibited while participating in any athletic contest, practice, meeting, or activity. Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation toward any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk for causing mental or physical harm to any person. No athlete shall plan, encourage, or engage in any acts of physical or mental harm to any person.
- b) Penalty for hazing violation will be a minimum of 1 game denial of participation to a maximum of denial to participate for the remainder of the season.

4. **Sexting, Texting, and Emailing (of inappropriate language, pictures, messages)**

Posting of inappropriate materials (pictures, language, messages, etc.) on web pages or social network forums is not acceptable. Any and all such material must be monitored and maintained by the student-athlete. A student-athlete shall not, by any means, possess pornographic materials in any form.

5. **Social Networking (misuse)**

Participation in social network sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, and other digital platforms and distribution mechanisms that facilitate communication has both positive appeal and potentially negative consequences. The Lancaster Athletic Department supports and encourages the use of social network sites as a platform for individual expression and free speech. Student-athletes are not restricted from using any on-line social network sites and digital

platforms. However, users must understand that any content they make public via on-line social networks or digital platforms must comply with all policies, rules and regulations of the Lancaster Athletic Department and the OHSAA rules and regulations, as well as with federal, state and local law. Student-athletes must recognize the power of public media domains and the potentially negative image that they can portray about student-athletes, coaches, the athletic program and school district. Student-athlete violations of athletic policy (e.g., harassing language, drug or alcohol policy violations, etc.) evident in the content of on-line social networks or digital platforms are subject to investigation and sanction under the athletic code of conduct, and could be subject to the authority of law enforcement agencies. Student-athletes must be aware of these consequences and exercise appropriate caution if they choose to participate in social networking platforms.

6. Violating Team Rules:

All athletes are expected to follow all team rules as set forth in writing by the head coach.

7. Physical Confrontations:

Initiating, instigating, or willfully participating in a physical confrontation before, during, or after an athletic event will result in a minimum one contest suspension to a maximum of removal from the team.

8. Ejection From Contest:

OHSAA sports regulation 14.1

- a) Denial for the next two contests (one for football)
- b) Second offense: Denial for remainder of season

Any violation of codes 1-8 listed above, in-season or out-of-season will result in a penalty which may consist of a warning to denial of participation for the remainder of the student's athletic career. In the event that the Athletic Code of Conduct or other school policies or procedures do not cover situations that arise, the administration reserves the right to establish such rules, conditions, and penalties to respond effectively to unanticipated or unique circumstances.

Points of Clarification

A. School Discipline Suspensions:

1. *Out of School Suspension (OSS)*: Athlete is denied the right to participate in practice, meetings, and contests during the term of the suspension.
2. *In-School Suspension (ISS) and Individualized Study Option (ISO)*: Athlete may participate in practice, meetings, and contests during the term of the suspension (coaches discretion)
3. *"In Lieu of Expulsion"* – During this period of time, the athlete may not participate in practice, team meetings, contests or any team activities.

B. Repeat Offenses:

Repeated violations of code of conduct and team rules, except as designated, may result in denial to participate for remainder of a sport season or remainder of present school year.

C. Appeals:

Athletes may appeal to have a hearing for any denial to participate.

The hearing will be held with, but not limited to, the Athletic Director, Associate Principal, Assistant Principal and the Building Principal or designee. The decision of the Building Administration and/or its committee is final.

D. This policy is effective year-round and conclusive through grades 7-8 and again for grades 9-12.

E. "Denied Privilege" percent (%) of scheduled games is defined as games scheduled for a sport's season excluding League and OHSAA tournaments.

F. Counseling: Athlete must attend counseling sessions with a counselor that is approved by the school administration. (LCS is not financially responsible for counseling.)

G. Violation enforcement:

- 1) If violation is discovered during the in-season, the enforcement will take place during the in-season and if necessary carry into the next sport season of participation.

- 2) If the violation is discovered in the off-season the enforcement will occur in the next sport season of full and complete participation, fulfilling the requirements of that season and remaining in good standing with the in-season coach and athletic director.
- H. During academic ineligibility, an athlete may (at the discretion of the coach) practice with, travel with and sit on the team bench (in street-clothes)
During code of conduct ineligibility, an athlete may (at the discretion of the coach) practice with the team, but cannot travel with the team nor sit on the team bench unless permission is granted by the building principal or designee.

Section 9. School Absence

- A. **A student must be in school ½ of the school day to participate in practice or contest.** *This requirement may be waived by the Athletic Director or Building Principal for some excused absences (Example: Funeral). This absence must be approved in advance by the building principal or Athletic Director. In emergency cases, a phone call must be made to the athletic office.*
- B. Any time an athlete is required to miss class to attend an athletic contest, the Athlete is to consult with the teacher and obtain all assigned work prior to absence.

Section 10. Physicals

All athletes must have a physical to participate in any practice, organized team instruction, conditioning session or contest.

Section 11. Insurance

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide medical insurance for the athlete. Lancaster City Schools does NOT offer medical insurance for athletic injuries. The OHSAA does provide insurance for catastrophic injuries incurred during a school related practice session or contest, but only as a secondary insurance when personal insurance is exhausted.

Section 12. Equipment

Athletes are responsible for equipment issued to them. Failure to return issued equipment will result in loss of awards, payment for replacement cost, and grade reports/transcripts/diplomas not being released. Athletes may not be issued uniform for subsequent teams until past uniform is returned or paid for.

Section 13. Participation Fee

All athletes are required to pay the participation fee as set by the Board of Education to be a member of a team. The fee is due before the first contest is played of a sport season is played. An athlete may not participate in a contest until the fee is paid. No fees will be returned after an athlete has participated in a scrimmage or contest. The participation fee is waived for any athlete who presents written documentation of being eligible for ADC (Aid to Dependent Children) or ODA (Ohio Disability Assistance). Fees are payable at www.myschoolbucks.com

Section 14. Overnight Trips

- A. All contests played, necessitating overnight stays, will follow OHSSA regulations.
- B. All overnight trips are subject to the approval of the Building Principal, Superintendent and Board of Education
- C. Coaches will submit to the Athletic Office: an itinerary, a place of lodging, and phone numbers to contact in case of emergency. This information should be given in writing to each athlete and the parent/guardian.
- D. Coaches and/or approved chaperones are responsible for the supervision of all student athletes on overnight trips at all times. Chaperones must be fingerprinted and Board approved.
- E. Expectations:

- 1) Room assignments will be made by the coach in charge and a list given to all coaches and chaperones. A request will be made for a block of rooms in one area. A request to block all pay per view movies will be made.
- 2) Periodic room checks must be made every two hours until one hour past designated "lights out".
- 3) Athletes will be instructed not to leave assigned room after designated "lights out".
- 4) Athletes will be instructed not to receive visitors without prior approval by the coach.
- 5) Athletes will be instructed not to have members of the opposite sex in assigned rooms.
- 6) Plans must be made for use of time when not in active competition. Activities will be done in groups under the supervision of the coach or chaperone.
- 7) Meals will be eaten in groups and under the supervision of the coach or chaperone.
- 8) One coach/chaperone per 10 athletes/students will be followed.
- 9) Coaches and chaperones will accompany and supervise athletes and students on all modes of transportation used to travel to hotel and competition sites.
- 10) Coaches will use good moral judgment in selection of restaurants and planned activities.
- 11) Board approved drug/alcohol free workplace policy applies to all coaches, chaperones, athletes and students on overnight trips.

Section 15. Transportation

- A. The athletic department in conjunction with the coaching staff will arrange transportation to athletic contests. The athletic director must approve arrangements other than the provided transportation.
- B. Athletes may travel home with their parent/guardian with the coach's permission. The request from the parent must be in writing.

Section 16. Withdrawals/Dismissals

- A. Any athlete who withdraws (quits) from a team within the first five days of practice from the beginning of the official OHSAA start date may participate in another in-season sport or off-season program. Any athlete who withdraws (quits) after the first five days of practice must receive the written permission of the head coach of the sport withdrawn, to participate in another in-season sport or off-season program.
- B. Any athlete who is dismissed from a team for violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct or Team Rules may not participate in another in-season sport or off-season program without the written permission of the head coach from the sport dismissed and the Athletic Director. The coach must inform the Athletic Director and communicate to the parent the reason for the dismissal.
- C. Any athlete who is dismissed from a team for violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct or Team Rules will not be eligible to receive any team or individual awards.
- D. Any athlete who withdraws from a team before the season is completed will not be eligible to receive any team or individual awards.(excluding injury or illness)

Section 17. Conflicting Participation in Extra-Curricular and/or Co-Curricular Activities

- A. Conflicting Student Activities Guidelines:
 1. The following guidelines apply in the event that a student wishes to be considered for participation in extra or co-curricular activities that have conflicting practice and/or performance times outside of school. The student is responsible to inform the staff members in charge of the activities **prior to trying out for the conflicting activity**.
 2. The coaches and/or directors of the student activity are to discuss the potential practice and performance conflicts to see if an agreement can be reached. If an agreement can be reached, the agreed upon schedule is to be in writing with coaches and/or advisors and the student receiving copies. If an agreement cannot be reached between the coaches and/or advisors, the student will have to choose between activities. In the event a student chooses to drop from a co-curricular activity to participate in an extra-curricular activity, the student will be permitted to

withdraw without receiving a failing grade. Alternative assignments may be assigned to replace the performance grade.

Section 18. Awards

- A. Junior High: Each athlete will receive a certificate upon completion of his/her season. She/he shall receive either a one year or two year certificate of participation.
 - B. High School: Each athlete will receive a certificate of participation upon completion of his/her sport.
 - C. Junior Varsity: Each athlete will receive a junior varsity certificate of participation for successful completion of a sport season.
 - D. Varsity: Each athlete will receive a varsity letter certificate of completion each year the athlete letters in a particular sport.
 - 1st Year: 7" chenille letter, 3" numerals, and gold sport pin (second sport –gold sport pin)
 - 2nd Year: chevron (bar) for letter and certificate
 - 3rd Year: chevron (bar) for letter (seniors – 3rd year plaque)
 - 4th Year: chevron (bar) for letter (seniors – 4th year plaque)
1. All athletic awards will be determined at the discretion of the head coach of each individual sport in conjunction with the Athletic Director. Each head coach shall have written requirements for season letters and awards. The coach shall share these requirements with his/her athletes.
 2. All special awards will be purchased by each sports individual booster group/parent organization and are subject to the approval of the athletic director. Coaches must build special awards into the budget of their individual sport booster group/parent organization.
 3. The scheduling of Award Programs is the responsibility of the head coach. Dates are to be scheduled through the athletic office.
 4. Athletes must return all team issued gear prior to receiving athletic awards.

Section 19. Athletic Injuries

- A. Athletes are expected to report all athletic injuries to the coach and/or the Athletic Trainer on duty.
- B. The Athletic Trainer may evaluate the injury and determine the proper course of care. This may include a recommendation to be evaluated by a physician.
- C. The Athletic Trainer is available to evaluate the injury, and, based upon this evaluation, determine the proper course of care. Treatment will be based upon established policies set forth by Lancaster High School's team physicians. In most cases, injuries are minor in nature and the athlete can be successfully treated in the athletic training room. If the injury is extensive or will require a physician's evaluation, the parent/guardian of the athlete will be contacted by the Athletic Trainer. It is imperative that ALL athletic injuries be reported to the coaching staff when they occur.

Article II Parents/Guardians

Section 1. Contact Information

- Athletic Office hours: 8:00am to 4:30pm
- Phone numbers: 740-681-7553 office, 740-681-7552 fax
- Email: Pam Bosser, Athletic Director: p_bosser@lcsschools.net
 - TE Assistant: Mark Pezo: m_pezo@lcsschools.net 740-687-7347
 - GS Assistant: Jared Stewart: j_stewart@lcsschools.net 740-687-7344
 - Office Assistant: Amanda Barnes: a_barnes@lcsschools.net 740-681-7553
- Web site: www.lancastergales.com
- Twitter: @lancastergales

Section 2. Responsibilities

- A. Parent or Guardian AND student-athlete must attend a mandatory Parent/Athlete Information meeting at the beginning of a sport season. Athletes will not be permitted to participate without a parent/guardian attending the meeting. Only one meeting is required per school year.
- B. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to sign (electronically) all forms necessary for athletic participation at www.studentcentral.bigteams.com. These include but not limited to: receipt of athletic handbook, physical, emergency medical, field trip permission, insurance waiver, team rules, participation fee (Payable at www.myschoolbucks.com), and the OHSAA Eligibility and Authorization Statement. **NO ATHLETE SHALL BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY INTERSCHOLASTIC TRYOUT, PRACTICE OR CONTEST WITHOUT A VALID PRE-PARTICIPATION PHYSICAL EXAM.**, uploaded to their account at www.studentcentral.bigteams.com
- C. Transportation of athletes to practices and scheduled home events is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
- D. Pay all participation fees for son/daughter
- E. All requests for practice absence due to attending to family matters or vacations shall be submitted to the coach in writing

Section 3. Expectations

- A. Foster and promote good sportsmanship with son/daughter, teammates, other parents, and fans.
- B. Read and review the athletic code of conduct. Emphasize to your son/daughter the importance of abiding by the athletic code of conduct.
- C. Understand that athletic participation is an extension of the academic classroom. Many of the values of teamwork, sportsmanship, integrity, ethics, goal setting, self-discipline, leadership, self-confidence, loyalty, responsibility, respect, and skill development are developed by team participation and not necessarily by earning a starting position in the lineup. These values and experiences remain with your son/daughter for a lifetime. Constructive encouragement and support to be the best athlete possible will lead to a positive experience for your son/daughter.
- D. Support the coaching staff in public and with other parents and fans. Understand there is a time and place to discuss questions you may have about your son's/daughter's participation and that it should be done in a calm and rational manner and never in public. *Constant criticism of a coach to your son/daughter only gives them an excuse to not work hard in practice and improve their skills. Understand the goals for the team and athletic program may supersede the hopes and dreams you have for your son/daughter.*
- E. Do not constantly criticize the play or skills of your son/daughter. They know when they have not performed well and the coaching staff will correct mistakes. *Athletes need encouragement from parents/guardians, not constant criticism.*
- F. Participate as members of the parent support groups for athletic teams. Volunteering to assist in projects is essential to the success of our athletic programs.
- G. Do not constantly criticize officials. Accept that officials will make mistakes. The number one reason officials quit officiating is constant criticism from parents and fans.
- H. Spectators who are ejected from a contest will be suspended from attendance for the next 2 contests at the level of the ejection. A second ejection in a season will exclude you from attendance for the remainder of the season.

Section 4. Parent Support Groups

- A. Each head coach may organize a parent support group with the approval of the Athletic Director. The purpose of the group will be to financially assist the sports program. The group shall have a constitution and by-laws that govern the group. Actions and fund raisers of the group are subject to the approval of the Athletic Director, Building Principal, Superintendent, and Board of Education.

Section 5. Athletic Injuries

The OHSAA has made a concerted effort to provide educational resources to member schools on this vital topic of concussion management. The following are resources that are currently available:

- 1) **REAP: Remove/Reduce • Educate • Adjust/Accommodate • Pace - a community-based model for Concussion Management**– a publication from HealthONE
<https://www.nfhs.org/media/1015690/reapaugust2015.pdf>
- 2) **Questions vital to diagnosing concussion** – Q & A and a video from an ESPN special on concussions <http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/e60/news/story?id=5162747>
- 3) **Concussion in Sports – What you Need to Know** - A 20-minute course is available at no cost to the user at www.nfhslearn.com. The course was designed for coaches, parents, officials and students to assist in recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion and to take the appropriate steps to manage them.
- 4) **Fact Sheets for Parents, Coaches and Athletes**
<http://ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Sports-Medicine/ParentsFactsheet.pdf>
<http://ohsaa.org/Portals/0/Sports-Medicine/CoachGuideConcussion.pdf>
https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/youthsports/factsheet_athletes_ages14-18-a.pdf
- 5) Video: Recognizing Sports Concussions: Keeping Youth Athletes Safe
https://youtu.be/sEFQkMo_Oe0
- 6) The OHSAA has adopted the following sports regulation:
Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest/practice and shall not return to play until cleared ***with written authorization*** by an appropriate health care professional (no sooner than the following day). In Ohio, an “appropriate health care professional” shall be a physician, as authorized under ORC Chapter 4731 and includes both doctors of medicine (M.D.) and doctors of osteopathy (D.O.) and an athletic trainer, licensed under ORC Chapter 4755.

Section 6 Mental Health

Mental health concerns can be genetic (Biology) or due to a child’s life experiences (i.e., Backstory, Biography, or Behaviors). Stress and trauma can reshape pathways in the brain that influence children and adolescents’ behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and physical demeanor. If your athlete is experiencing mental health concerns, please notify his/her coach, athletic trainer, athletic administrator and/or school guidance counselor for information concerning resources available in our community. For immediate assistance, dial 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline